



Royal Wootton Bassett

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2017 – 2026

Made April 2018

Table of Contents

Foreword	i
1 Introduction	1
1.1 What is Neighbourhood Planning?	1
1.2 Sustainability	1
1.3 Achieving the aims of the community	2
1.4 Promoting the economy	2
1.5 Preserving our environment	3
1.6 Background	3
Key Milestones:	5
1.7 Context	7
Plan 1: Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Area	8
2 Strategic Vision for the Neighbourhood Development Plan	9
2.1 Strategic Objectives	9
2.1.1 Has a strong, independent Market Town identity and an attractive vibrant town centre	9
2.1.2 Provides all the facilities and services its residents require to improve its self-containment	9
2.1.3 Provides well planned, good quality housing for all for every life stage, in line with sustainability principles and community views.	9
2.1.4 Offers accessible, attractive green spaces for all to enjoy	9
2.1.5 Is attractive to investors and employers as a location for growth	9
2.1.6 Promotes sustainable transport choices encouraging walking and cycling both within and outside the town.	9

3 Services, Facilities and Retailing **10**

3.1 Context	10
3.2 Aim	11
3.3 Objectives:	11
Policy 1: Services and Facilities	11
3.4 Services – Health	11
3.5 The Town Centre and Retail	11
Policy 2: Convenience and comparison retail	12
Plan 2. Royal Wootton Bassett Town Centre	13
Plan 3: Map of Royal Wootton Bassett showing Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Allotments and Rights of Way	14
3.6 Education	15
3.7 Services – Leisure	15
Plan 4: Existing Development Plan allocations and Brynard’s Hill developments	17
3.8 Services – Cemetery	18
3.9 Integrated Community Facilities	18
Policy 4: Integrated community facilities	18
Policy 3: Town Park and Row-de-Dow	18
Plan 5: Town Park and Row-de-Dow footpath	19

4 Development and Housing **20**

4.1 Context	20
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4.2 Development and Housing Aim	20
4.3 Development and Housing Objectives	20
Policy 5: Infill development	21
Plan 6: Royal Wootton Bassett Settlement Boundary	21
Policy 6: High quality mixed development	22
Policy 7: Design	22
Policy 9: Visitor accommodation and facilities	23
Policy 8: Employment land	23
Policy 10: Landscape Setting	24
5 Transport	25
5.1 Context	25
5.2 Aim	26
5.3 Objectives	26
5.4 Public Transport	26
Policy 12: Road safety, traffic and transport	26
Policy 11: Railway station	26
6 Conclusions	27
Appendix 1 - Issues Report	28

Foreword

For decades, local communities have deplored the lack of control they have in planning matters impacting on their towns and villages. Under the Localism Act 2011 communities now have the opportunity to positively shape their communities through the creation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.”

(DCLG, Planning Practice Guidance: 2014)

In Royal Wootton Bassett, we began by reaching out to the community to discover what it was people really wanted. We consulted at public meetings, in our schools, on-line and through publications circulating locally. We then brought together all that information and with the help of volunteers from the community, began to write policies that would make sense for our town and would reflect the views of local people. Every policy is based upon the information received in the consultation, and aims to guide development in a way that is positive for the future of the town, as articulated by local people.

Once the Neighbourhood Development Plan has passed independent examination and community referendum, it will be used by Wiltshire Council in helping to determine planning decisions affecting Royal Wootton Bassett, allowing local people’s voices to be heard in the planning system.

Mike Leighfield

Chairman, RWB Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

March 2017



1 Introduction

1.1 What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood Development Plans offer communities the opportunity to shape their environment and have more influence over planning decisions taken which affect them. They are developed by the community, but provided they achieve necessary legislative milestones, they become “made” and are used by the Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications. Neighbourhood Development Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan, in this case the Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted on 20 January 2015.

Neighbourhood Development Plans must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 which sets out the structure for the planning of sustainable development. The Wiltshire Core Strategy is the strategic plan for Wiltshire, and provides both generic

and place-based policies to guide development. The Wiltshire Core Strategy provides the local context for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, whose policies and proposals must be in general conformity with its policies.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan offers the specific, place-based detail to show the type of development local people would like to see, and shows the appropriate locations for this. In drawing up the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Royal Wootton Bassett, the principal aim was to meet the needs and aspirations of our community in a sustainable way.

To align with the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the plan period of the Neighbourhood Plan is 2017 to 2026.

1.2 Sustainability

There are many definitions of sustainable development, but the most widely used one is

from the World Commission on Environment and Development, presented in 1987. It states that sustainable development is “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainable development promotes the idea that Social, Environmental and Economic progress are all attainable within the limits of our earth’s natural resources. In planning for the future of our own community, we should seek to balance these three elements.

The process of Neighbourhood Development Plan writing, and the Plan and supporting documents themselves have been subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment, to ensure that they have evaluated all possible alternatives and designed policies to achieve the most sustainable outcomes. This monitoring and review process is one of the safeguarding methods, along with constantly referring to higher level policy at local and national level, which will help to ensure the

creation of a balanced, credible Neighbourhood Development Plan which will be deliverable and implemented through the development management system.

1.3 Achieving the aims of the community

In seeking to control and guide development in Royal Wootton Bassett in a way which meets the social part of the sustainability equation, it is essential to find out what the aims of the community are. The Neighbourhood Development Plan process has therefore included substantial elements of public consultation. In addition, the work of the Community Led Plan has been an important foundation in setting the Neighbourhood Development Plan policies. It is recognised that understanding and promoting the social elements of sustainability is key to the success of the Plan as a whole and for this reason, the community consultation has included the “softer” elements, gathering information on social facilities, recreation, health facilities, education and patterns of travel. These elements formed a substantial part of the information collected in the Issues stage of

the Plan development, when we asked what people like about living in Royal Wootton Bassett and how it could be improved in the future.

1.4 Promoting the economy

Originally called Wodeton, a clearing in the woods, our town was a desirable place for settlement due to its hill top location. Above the clay ground of the Dauntsey Vale, atop a ridge of permeable corallian limestone, the location benefits from this geology which results in a line of springs. With water, stone and timber to hand and productive hunting forests and farmland surrounding it, Wodeton thrived. Granted a royal charter to hold a market in 1219, Royal Wootton Bassett has been a

market town for nearly eight hundred years. The town still holds a weekly market, and in every other respect it can be considered a “market town” – acting as a centre for goods and services to its own inhabitants and for surrounding villages.



Still to this day the town’s economy has strong links with agriculture, construction and commerce. The strategic location of the town and its neighbouring settlement of Swindon no doubt helped in ensuring that successive waves of transport infrastructure came to the town: the former Wiltshire & Berkshire Canal; the Great Western Railway and the M4 motorway.

Even before the advent of the Great Western Railway, Swindon was the larger town; but it was the construction of the railway works at Swindon, and the subsequent engineering and technological legacy, that

spurred its growth, whilst Royal Wootton Bassett grew at a more organic pace. These days it is therefore, economically, overshadowed by Swindon. Many of Royal Wootton Bassett's population commute into Swindon for work; this is only too evident during the morning and evening rush hours, when junction 16 of the M4 acts as a bottle neck for commuting traffic. The Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community area as a whole has a very high level of car ownership, with 51.5% commuting to work by car, compared to only 3.6% using public transport (source: Joint Strategic Assessment 2013-2015)

In seeking to promote the economic progress of our community, the Neighbourhood Development Plan has to both maintain and build upon the market town pedigree, and at the same time encourage employment growth to reduce dependence on, and commuting to, Swindon.

1.5 Preserving our environment

Royal Wootton Bassett is a distinct settlement with an identifiable character. Its hill top location, surrounded by productive farmland

on the edge of an escarpment makes it “easy to read”. The Neighbourhood Development Plan needs to ensure that the features which make the town distinct and give it its identifiable character are maintained. The heritage of the town is very important, and there are a number of prominent Listed Buildings within the town centre (as shown on Plan 3), including the Town Hall and St Bartholomew's Church. Maintaining robust and meaningful gaps or buffers between the town and neighbouring settlements is important for this reason. The Neighbourhood Development Plan needs also to encourage only development which is sympathetic to our landscape setting – recognising and protecting obvious and not-so-obvious physical boundaries such as roads, water courses and other geographical and man-made features.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that no town can exist in isolation, and so communication with neighbouring settlements and the wider world is essential. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will address ways of improving access and communication in a sustainable way through public transport, cycle paths and safe walking routes.

1.6 Background

This Neighbourhood Development Plan process was started in 2013 and has been undertaken in parallel with the production of Wiltshire Council's Core Strategy. The development of the Neighbourhood



Development Plan has been led by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council, as the “qualifying body”, but work has been undertaken by a specifically tasked Steering Group, comprising Town Council Members and staff, and individuals representing

interests around the town, including the schools, local businesses, residents, young people and retailers. The Steering Group has met at least monthly throughout the period to progress the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Information about the process of plan preparation has been available at all times on the dedicated Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Development Plan website, which is linked to the Town Council website. The supporting documents, in particular the Strategic Environmental Assessment, have been developed alongside the policies in the Plan and have been evaluated to ensure they reflect the most sustainable solutions. The

vision, aims, objectives and policies have been compiled using the evidence collected from the community at the various phases of engagement throughout the process. The initial data collected from the community, which looked at the broad topics the Neighbourhood Development Plan should cover, is contained in the Issues Report at Appendix 2. This shows the aspects residents were concerned about for the future, and how they hope Royal Wootton Bassett will change and grow.

Key Milestones:

Neighbourhood Planning Statutory Process	Date	Tasks/Activities
Process initiated by a qualifying body/establish a steering group	December 2012	Inaugural meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Development of communications and engagement strategy
Sustainability appraisal and evaluation shaping process and outcomes	Throughout preparation period	
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	January 2013	Preparation for public engagement/consultation
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	February 2013	Public consultation event. Wide range of local groups invited to attend interactive workshop sessions on the future of Royal Wootton Bassett
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	March 2013	Analysis of data collected at public consultation event, alongside Core Strategy and key sustainability criteria
Defining the neighbourhood area, submission of application	March 2013	Application for Area Designation made by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council to Wiltshire Council
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	April 2013	Engagement with Royal Wootton Bassett Academy to obtain views of students on the future of the town
Area designated	March 2013	Area Designation approved by Wiltshire Council
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	May 2013	Public engagement online/paper survey went live. The survey was promoted to all local groups in the Community Magazine list. It was publicised on the Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan websites, and via posters around the town.
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	July 2013	Stall set up at the Newsham Fire Pump event to promote the online survey and hand out fliers
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	August 2013	Promotional beer mats placed in all local pubs to promote the Neighbourhood Plan online survey, resulting in a surge of new responses

Neighbourhood Planning Statutory Process	Date	Tasks/Activities
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	September 2013	Online consultation closed
Developing objectives, priorities and vision	October 2013	Analysis of all information received via the engagement/consultation events and survey leading to the production of an Issues Report
Developing draft plan	December 2013	Development of options for SWOT analysis
Developing draft plan	January 2014	Options analysed, Steering Group begins to develop policies
	March 2014	Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan completed
Developing draft plan	May 2014	Evaluation of housing issues, appraisal of Strategic Housing Land Availability sites
Developing draft plan	September 2014	Written engagement with local landowners and developers in writing
Developing draft plan	December 2014 and January 2015	Presentations from local landowners/ developers to the Steering Group, include in appraisal of site options
Developing draft plan	February - June 2015	Draft Neighbourhood Plan in progress
Period of public consultation and statutory consultation on draft plan	July - September 2015	Consultation via events, website to gather views, and time to respond to the views expressed
Further consultation on significant changes in response to consultation	Spring 2016	Significant changes consulted on including the removal of one of the housing sites from the Plan
Pre-submission Consultation (Regulation 14)	Winter 2016/2017	Community / Statutory consultees – final alterations
Finalise and submit plan to Wiltshire Council	Spring 2017	Alterations to draft, submission to Wiltshire Council
Independent examination	Summer 2017	Directed by Wiltshire Council
Community referendum	Summer 2017	Directed by Wiltshire Council
“Make” the plan (becomes part of the development plan for Wiltshire)	Autumn 2017	Directed by Wiltshire Council

1.7 Context

This Neighbourhood Development Plan corresponds to the area of the parish of Royal Wootton Bassett (see Plan 1 on the following page). The official population residing within the parish at the 2011 census was 11,385; composed of 4,905 households. The area of Royal Wootton Bassett is 2,048 hectares, and the population density is 5.56 persons per hectare.

Other key statistics on the population of Royal Wootton Bassett include:

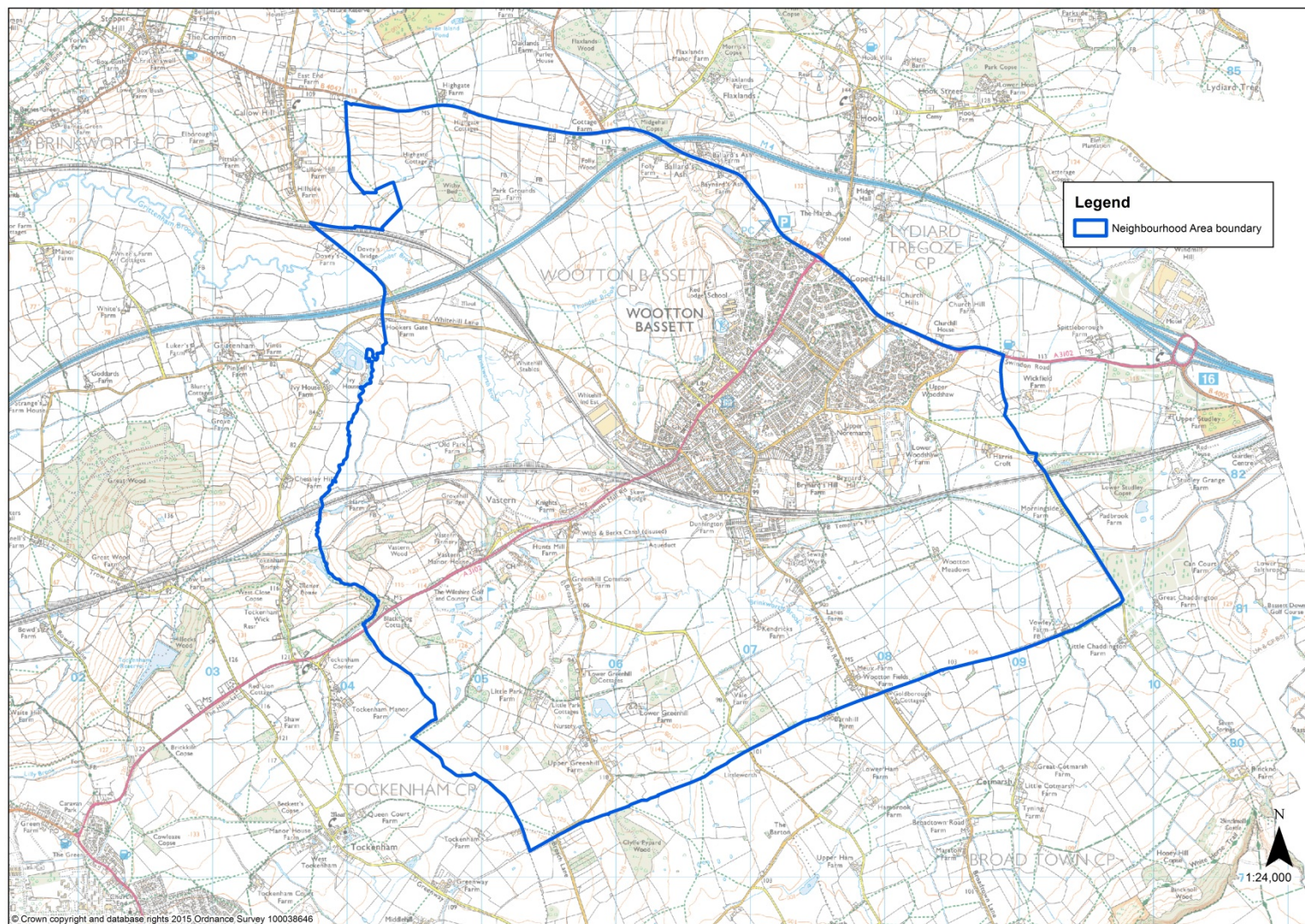
	Economically active employees, full time (%)	No car in household (%)	No qualifications (%)	Long term unemployed (%)	16-24 year olds unemployed (%)
England	38.62	25.8	22.46	1.72	1.21
South West England	37.41	18.9	20.70	1.21	0.93
Wiltshire	42.17	14.76	18.63	1.08	0.85
Royal Wootton Bassett	42.13	15.72	20.97	1.20	1.07

(Source: Wiltshire Intelligence Network data derived from 2011 Census)

The Joint Strategic Assessment for Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area (2013) presents the following statistics for the area (which includes Royal Wootton Bassett as its largest centre of population and employment):

- Total population: 28,990; population density 188 people per km²
- Healthy life expectancy: 66.4 years (male); 67.5 years (female)
- Affordable housing is in high demand with 979 households seeking affordable housing in the Community Area (2012-3), an increase of 308 households in 2 years.

Plan 1: Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Area



2 Strategic Vision for the Neighbourhood Development Plan

To provide a high quality sustainable environment for all who live, work, visit and study in Royal Wootton Bassett both now and in the future.

2.1 Strategic Objectives

To develop and enhance a town which:

2.1.1 Has a strong, independent Market Town identity and an attractive vibrant town centre

2.1.2 Provides all the facilities and services its residents require to improve its self-containment

2.1.3 Provides well planned, good quality housing for all for every life stage, in line with sustainability principles and community views.

2.1.4 Offers accessible, attractive green spaces for all to enjoy

2.1.5 Is attractive to investors and employers as a location for growth

2.1.6 Promotes sustainable transport choices encouraging walking and cycling both within and outside the town.

3 Services, Facilities and Retailing

3.1 Context

As a market town Royal Wootton Bassett offers services and facilities not only for its own residents but also for surrounding villages and hamlets.

Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council recognised that the closure of RAF Lyneham combined with the effects of the economic downturn which commenced in 2008 threatened the economic strength of the town. In order to address this, the Council set up an Economic Regeneration Action Group in September 2011. As part of its work, the group commissioned Action for Market Towns to undertake a Benchmarking Survey in July 2012 which was updated in 2013.

This survey included consultation with business people and shoppers, as well as objective data gathering including car parking usage, pedestrian footfall and an analysis of the current shopping provision. These data were then compared against similar size

towns in our region and nationally so that we can “benchmark” ourselves.

Interesting findings included:

- Pedestrian footfall is generally higher than expected, but the increase on market day is less than for similar towns;
- There is an over-supply of convenience goods retail space and an undersupply of comparison goods space;
- The off-street car parking in town is not used at capacity, even on market days
- A relatively high percentage of shoppers are from “out of town”; a shopper survey carried out by the Town Council in 2013 revealed that 45% of shoppers were from outside Royal Wootton Bassett.

As well as this objective data gathering, the Neighbourhood Planning process has, through its own consultations and the work of the Community Led Plan, looked at subjective issues raised by local residents and other stakeholders.

Some of the primary views expressed include:

- The town centre is well loved by the people of Royal Wootton Bassett who want to see an attractive street scene with thriving shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes and services which not only are used by the local people but also attract visitors to the town.
- A greater variety of shops and restaurants, fewer empty shops and plenty of locally run independent stores were highlighted as being desirable.
- People coming in to the town from other settlements do so because they like the atmosphere *“The people are generally extremely polite and friendly. It is great to have everything on your doorstep”*

Issues report quote in response to being asked what is best liked about Royal Wootton Bassett *“Community. Small enough for strong sense of community, large enough to retain shops on High Street.”*

The Issues Report, which is a primary source of community evidence in the development of the Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan, is at [Appendix 2](#).

Given the above, the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been drawn up to encourage retail based activities and services to remain within the town centre and to encourage local residents to use these facilities rather than travel to competing centres such as West Swindon.

The Aims, Objectives and Policies in this section meet Strategic Objectives:

[2.1.1 Has a strong, independent Market Town identity and an attractive vibrant town centre](#)

[2.1.2 Provides all the facilities and services it residents require to improve its self-containment](#)

3.2 Aim

To enable the people of Royal Wootton Bassett to meet their needs for high quality services and facilities locally, reducing the need to travel outside the town by improving the vitality and viability of the town.

3.3 Objectives:

- To attract a greater variety of shops and restaurants to the town centre, encouraging independent shops, avoiding empty premises promoting a vibrant town centre.
- To nurture an attractive street scene in the town centre, maintaining and enhancing the Conservation Area and providing an appealing environment to local people and visitors alike
- To ensure that population growth is matched by the growth in services and facilities to serve the existing and new population
- To encourage opportunities for sports, leisure, entertainment and culture in the town, in particular supporting an integrated approach to the development of community facilities.
- To maintain and enhance safe and accessible parks and green spaces in Royal Wootton Bassett, promoting opportunities for new, interlinked green spaces wherever possible.
- To provide opportunities for young people, through improvements to schools, and

additional informal leisure facilities such as playgrounds and a skate park.

3.4 Services – Health

Health and wellbeing provision is essential for any population. There is a shortage of doctors within the plan area and its environs. This will require careful monitoring and management, given the forthcoming growth in population.

Policy 1: Services and Facilities

The provision of new or improved community services and/or community facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents will be supported.

3.5 The Town Centre and Retail

The town centre is performing well against national, regional and other market town standards in terms of vacancies, convenience / comparison split, shopper spend, key attractor units and regularity of visits. The AMT Survey finds that 59% of town centre users visited RWB for convenience shopping,

17% higher than national average. These visits would certainly be impacted significantly by an out of town supermarket development; this would adversely affect retail within the town centre.

Whilst identifying there is room for improvement the AMT Survey found that 69% of Town Centre Users rated the ‘variety of shops’ as either ‘good’ (61%) or ‘very good’ (8%), a figure much higher than the National



Small Towns (49%) and Regional (46%) figures.

Shopping can be broken down into two distinct areas, convenience and comparison. Convenience goods are defined as low-cost, everyday items that consumers are unlikely to travel far to purchase. All other shopping accounts for “comparison” goods.

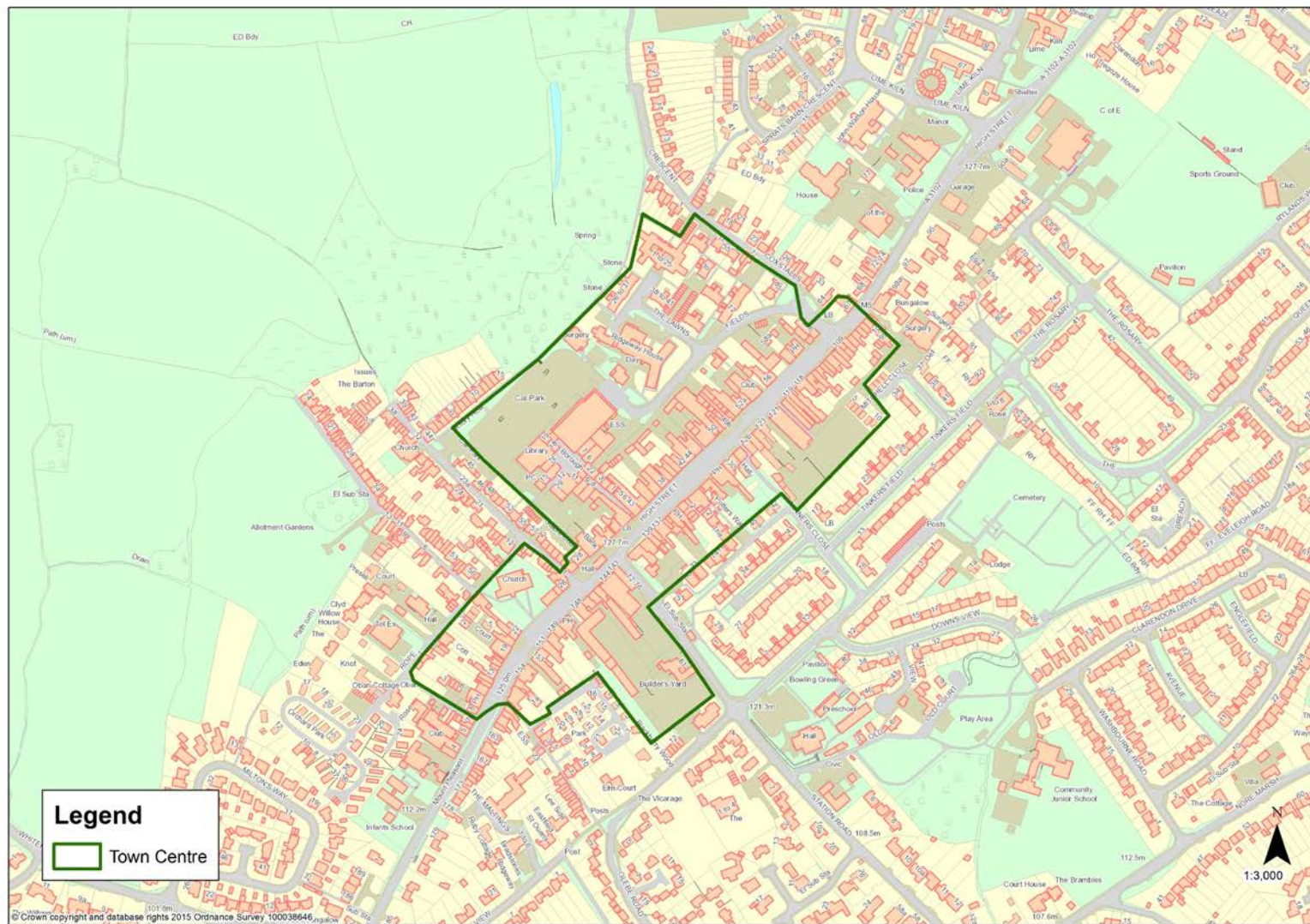
An increase in the provision of comparison goods shops would be welcomed, though the AMT Survey found that comparison shopping accounted for 68% of shopping, and convenience for 32%, therefore providing a relatively healthy mix. There is a wish to retain shopping of all types within rather than out of the town, and therefore if a site were to be assembled for a larger convenience shop within the centre, this too would be welcomed by residents. A greater provision of shopping of all types in Royal Wootton Bassett would help avoid retail spend leaking out to other settlements, most notably West Swindon.

The AMT Survey noted that Royal Wootton Bassett has a slightly smaller share of A1 shop uses (both convenience and comparison) within the town centre (50% of units) than would be expected for a small town in the South West of England (an average of 55% of units). The policy aims to support ground floor units remaining in Class A and D uses to keep the town centre strong and vibrant.

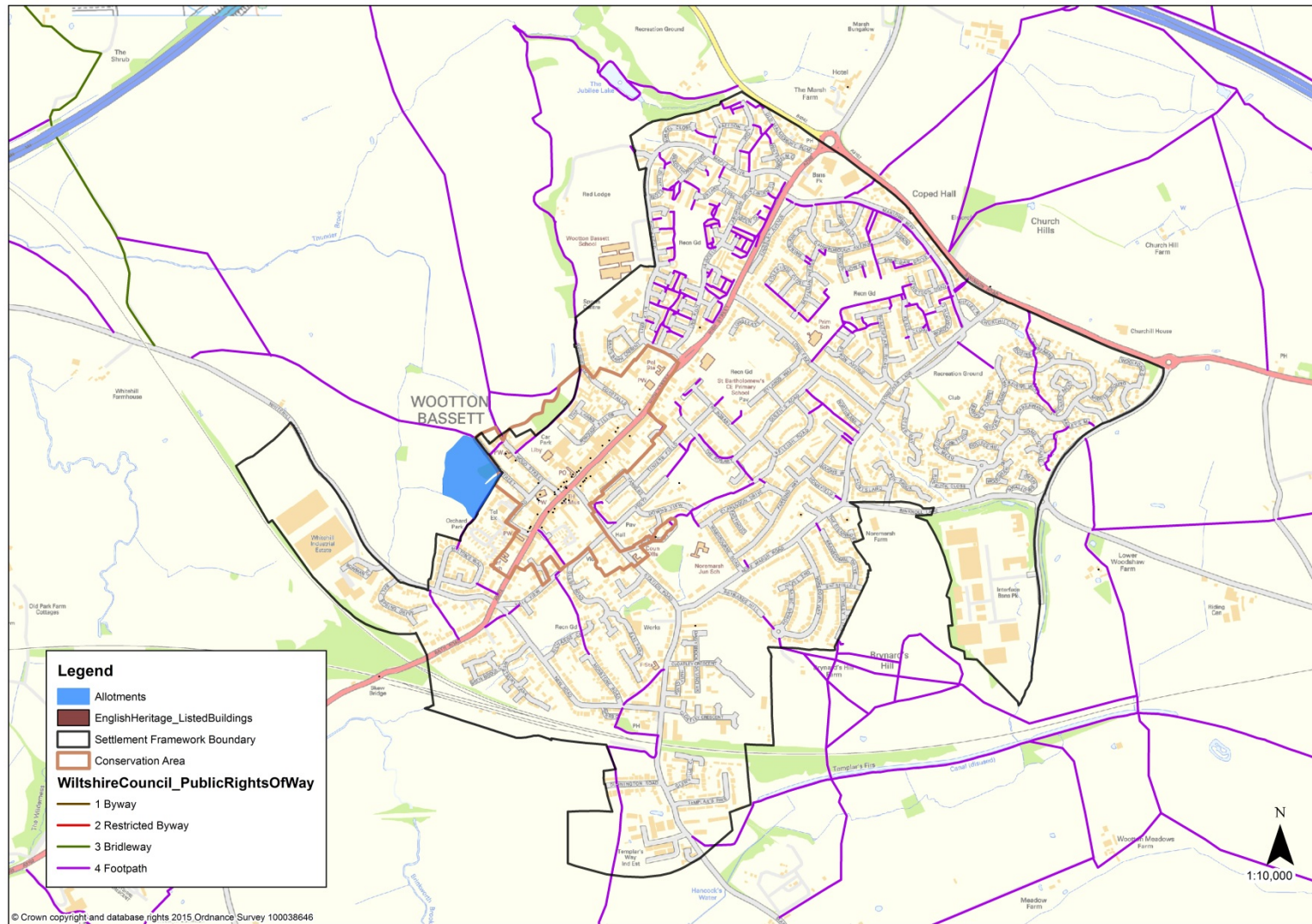
Policy 2: Convenience and comparison retail

The development of new and the retention of existing shops in the town centre will be supported, subject to such development respecting the character and appearance of the town centre. The town centre is shown on Plan 2.

Plan 2. Royal Wootton Bassett Town Centre



Plan 3: Map of Royal Wootton Bassett showing Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, Allotments and Rights of Way



3.6 Education

In line with increasing housing numbers in the area and a growing population, the existing schools in the town are under pressure and almost at capacity and there is a need to secure additional places both at primary and secondary level. This pressure is likely to increase as consented residential developments are occupied and as the MoD's training college in Lyneham is occupied. As a result, future residential developments may be required to contribute towards the delivery of additional primary and secondary school capacity and this may include the provision of a new primary academy.

Numbers at early years providers are expected to increase from September 2017 with the

introduction of the entitlement to 30 free hours and increasing uptake for 2 year olds.

3.7 Services – Leisure

The town has recently been fortunate to benefit from the development of new rugby club facilities, funded from the sale of the former site for residential development, but only possible due to the efforts of the club's committee and members. The facility will help the club continue to progress, and promote the name of the town.

The sports hub is now complete. This was funded by the sale of their former site for residential development; the new facilities would not have been possible but for the efforts of a handful of dedicated members of the Royal Wootton Bassett Sports Association.

The town now has football, cricket, hockey and tennis facilities of an exceptional quality.

These developments act as a springboard to improving health and well-being in the town and ensure that current and future residents have access to enviable facilities. It is recognised that Green Infrastructure, including public open space, walking, cycling routes, allotments, parks and gardens are important and have multiple benefits around biodiversity, physical and mental health, flood risk management and sustainable transport.

The town's Lime Kiln leisure centre is too small and outdated. A serious fire in December 2010 acted as a catalyst for discussions on the redevelopment of these facilities, and there is overwhelming support for new leisure and community facilities. Wiltshire Council and Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council have been working together to bring plans to fruition.

Leisure is not just about sport, and the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation process has identified a number of additional requirements:

School Type	Current Capacity	Numbers on Roll Oct 2016	Evidenced from
3 Pre-schools, 1 nursery	207	Occupancy currently at 65% but expected to increase in Sept 2017	Most recent Ofsted reports, LA data
1 infant 1 junior 1 Primary VA 1 Primary Academy	1,015	979	DfE performance tables data, LA Census returns
1 Secondary Academy (11-18)	1630	1677	DfE performance tables data, LA Census returns

Allotments – there is a long waiting list for the current allotments around the town (shown on Plan 3), and future development may present the opportunity to help meet the need for additional allotment space.

Skateboard park – over the last few years there has been a consistent demand for a skateboard park. Locating such facilities is often difficult – with neighbours concerned about noise and anti-social behaviour, but should such a facility be provided, it will be important that it is in a safe place with good access for emergency services.

Play areas and parks – the Town Council has been maintaining and improving existing play areas for a number of years, and has developed an expertise in this field. Some recent residential developments have, as a result of planning conditions, installed play areas which, in the Council’s opinion, are below our desired standard. The Town Council will seek to ensure that future residential development will be required to contribute towards the cost of the upkeep of existing play areas, as well as work with the Town Council to provide additional play areas to the correct standard. Jubilee Lake, New Road and Old Court parks are popular with a range of

users. The Town Council has invested in these facilities over the years and Jubilee Lake, in particular, is a success story.

The consultation process has revealed strong and wide support for the development of a Town Park. The intention is that the Town Park be available as an area for informal recreation for all residents and visitors, and will offer opportunities for wildlife conservation and enhancement. Land has been identified for this – the unused, sloping land to the West of Borough Fields Car Park and Springfields. This land has the benefits of being close to the town centre and adjacent to the Row-de-Dow footpath. Development of a park in this location will not only add to the facilities available for people within the town centre, but will also enable the improvement (to create a combined footpath and cyclepath) and extension of the Row-de-Dow. Once completed this would enable residents to walk or cycle from Boroughfields car park, past the Academy, Lime Kiln, potential Campus, Jubilee Lake and on to the Rugby Club without crossing a single road. At the same time this would open up views across the Dauntsey Vale. The Town Council will seek to prevent disturbance to, and promote the preservation

and enhancement of a reptile and amphibian relocation area within the Town Park site.

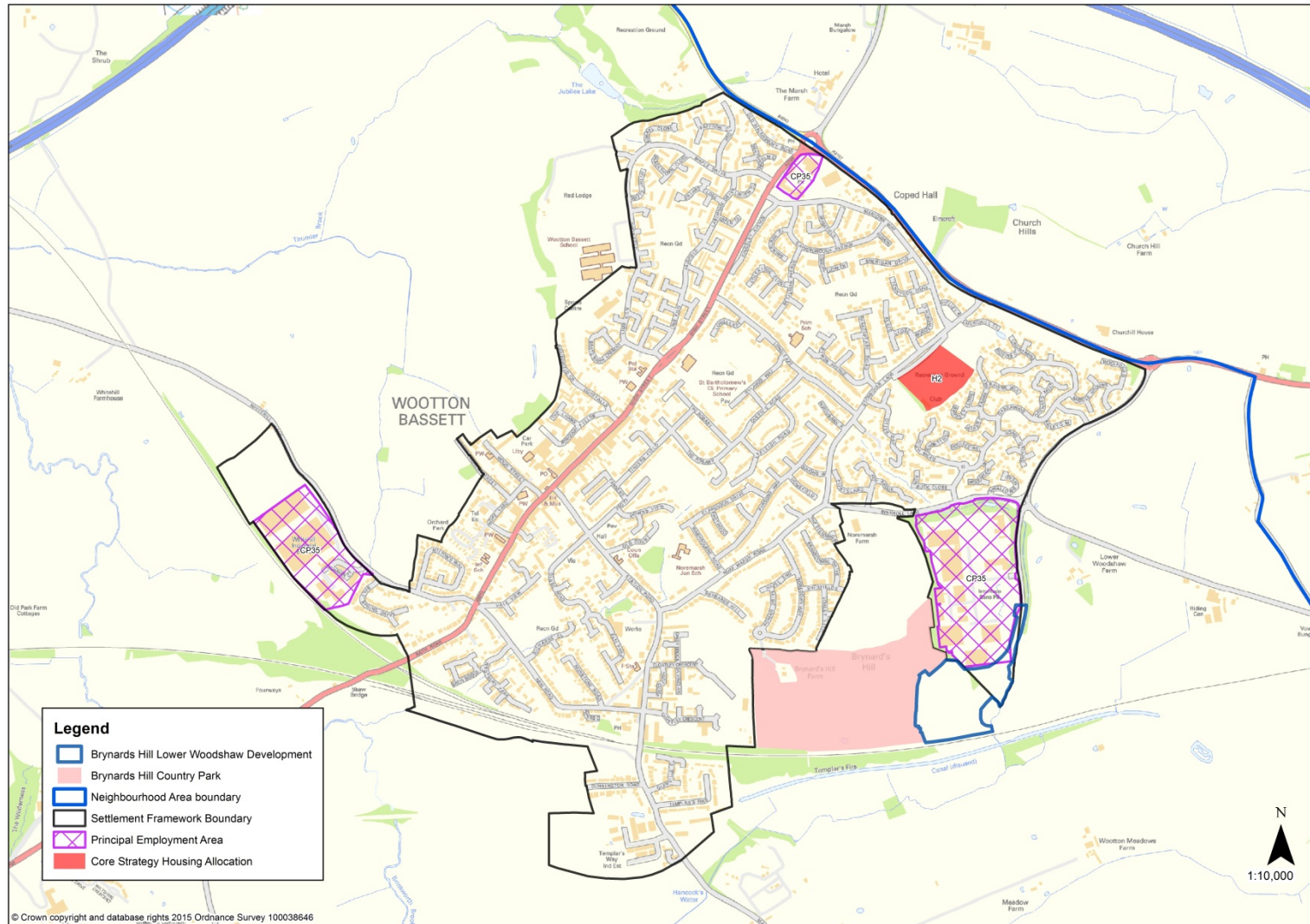
A new Country Park is expected to come forward as part of the developer contributions relating to the Brynards Hill residential development (as shown on Plan 4), to meet community needs for such a facility and offer informal recreation space to residents and visitors alike.

Community Action:

The Town Council considers Royal Wootton Bassett’s infrastructure requirements to comprise the following;

- Provision of, and improvements to, new allotments;
- Improvements to the canal;
- Provision of a skate park;
- Improvements to the local cemetery;
- A town park;
- Dedicated pedestrian cycle routes;
- Community facilities (meeting spaces and mixed use facilities; and
- Provision of an appropriate level of school places to satisfy any additional demand generated by development.

Plan 4: Existing Development Plan allocations and Brynard's Hill developments



The Town Council will seek to work with third parties to deliver as much of the above as possible.

The parks and playgrounds currently maintained by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council include:

- New Road Play Park
- Old Court Play Area
- Jubilee Lake Play Area
- Jacqui Woolford Memorial Park
- Otterway Play Area
- Poets Field Play Area
- Woodshaw Play Area
- Showfield Play Area

3.8 Services – Cemetery

The Town Council currently provides and maintains the cemetery and has identified that it is reaching capacity. A new cemetery will be required to be provided within the plan period, and developer contributions may be sought to fund this provision.

3.9 Integrated Community Facilities

There is an identified need for the development of additional community

facilities in Royal Wootton Bassett. This would include space for services including social services, health and community meeting space; the Library is not included within these proposals and will not be affected. Discussion over the provision of these facilities has been underway for a considerable period by a partnership including Wiltshire Council and Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council. The proposals are costly, and it is likely that this project will need to be undertaken with the assistance of a variety of stakeholders working together, including landowners and developers. Development which contributes to the implementation of integrated community facilities must be undertaken in a location which is appropriate for the Town and must help to enhance its independent market town status, offering growth away from Swindon.

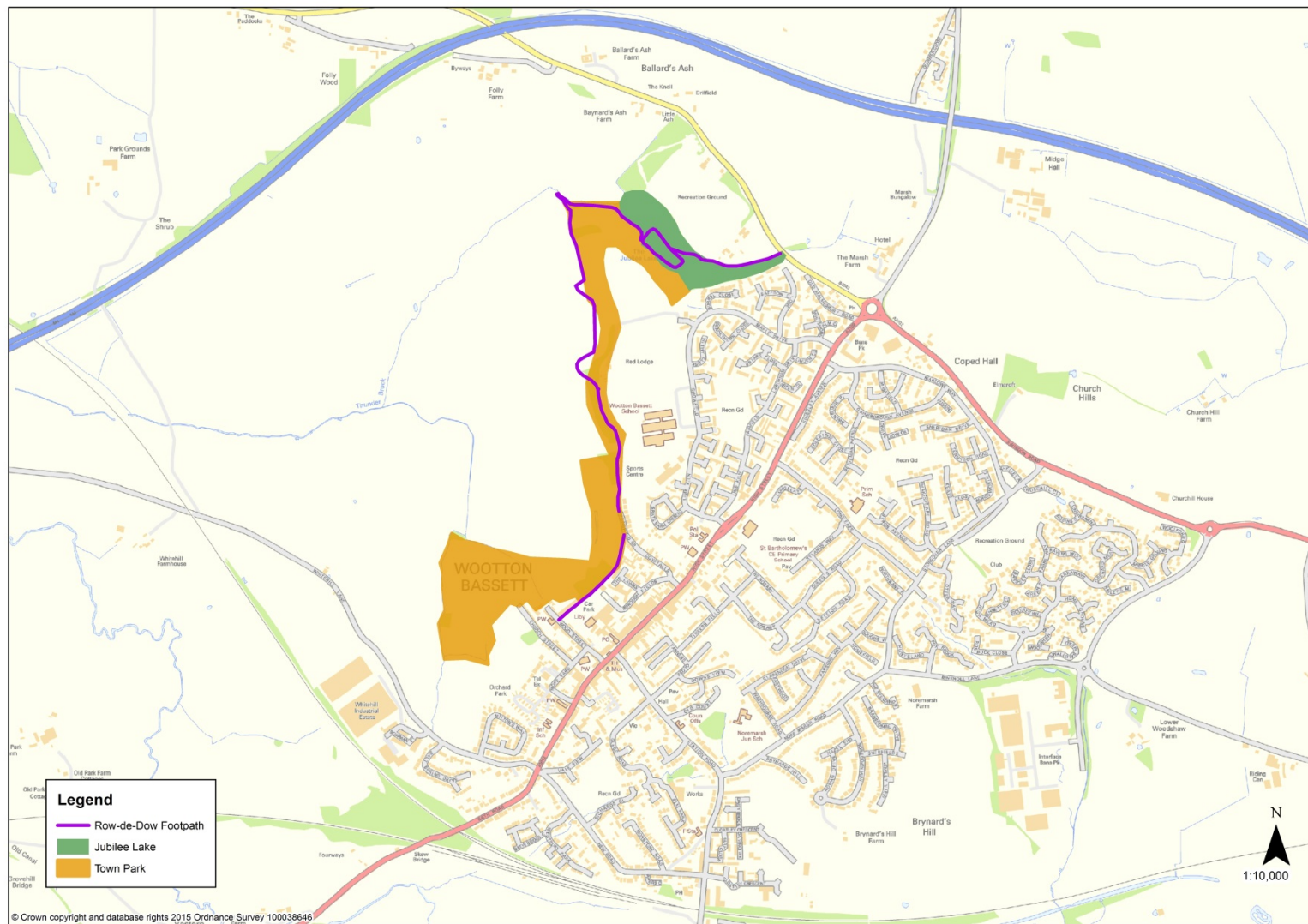
Policy 3: Town Park and Row-de-Dow

Subject to representing local character and safeguarding nature conservation interests, the provision of a Town Park and the improvement of public rights of way in the areas shown on Plan 5 below and at the adjacent Row-de-Dow footpath, will be supported.

Policy 4: Integrated community facilities

The provision of integrated community facilities including health, leisure, sport, social services and community meeting space will be supported provided they are within the built-up area of the town and are accessible for users from the Royal Wootton Bassett Academy.

Plan 5: Town Park and Row-de-Dow footpath



4 Development and Housing

4.1 Context

Royal Wootton Bassett has grown considerably in the last twenty years, providing additional housing and employment to ensure the continued vitality and viability of the town. In the Wiltshire Core Strategy period 2006- 2026, 1,070 dwellings were identified as needed in the Town. By 2014, all of these dwellings and more had been provided, leaving no remaining allocation for strategic sites through the adopted Core Strategy in this plan period (refer to p106 Wiltshire Core Strategy for further information).

In terms of housing need in this area, there are currently approximately 2,000 applicants on the housing register in Wiltshire and of these, approximately 100 households are seeking accommodation in the Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area. Affordability continues to be an issue for people wishing to make their first house purchase, and for those

wishing to move to larger or more appropriate accommodation.

The Aims, Objectives and Policies in this section meet Strategic Objectives:

[2.1.3 Provides well planned, good quality housing for all for every life stage, in line with sustainability principles and community views](#)

[2.1.4 Offers accessible, attractive green spaces for all to enjoy](#)

[2.1.5 Is attractive to investors and employers as a location for growth](#)

4.2 Development and Housing Aim

To provide for organic growth in the town, maintaining and enhancing Royal Wootton Bassett's market town character and identity, as well as preserving the rural gap between the Town and neighbouring Swindon.

4.3 Development and Housing Objectives

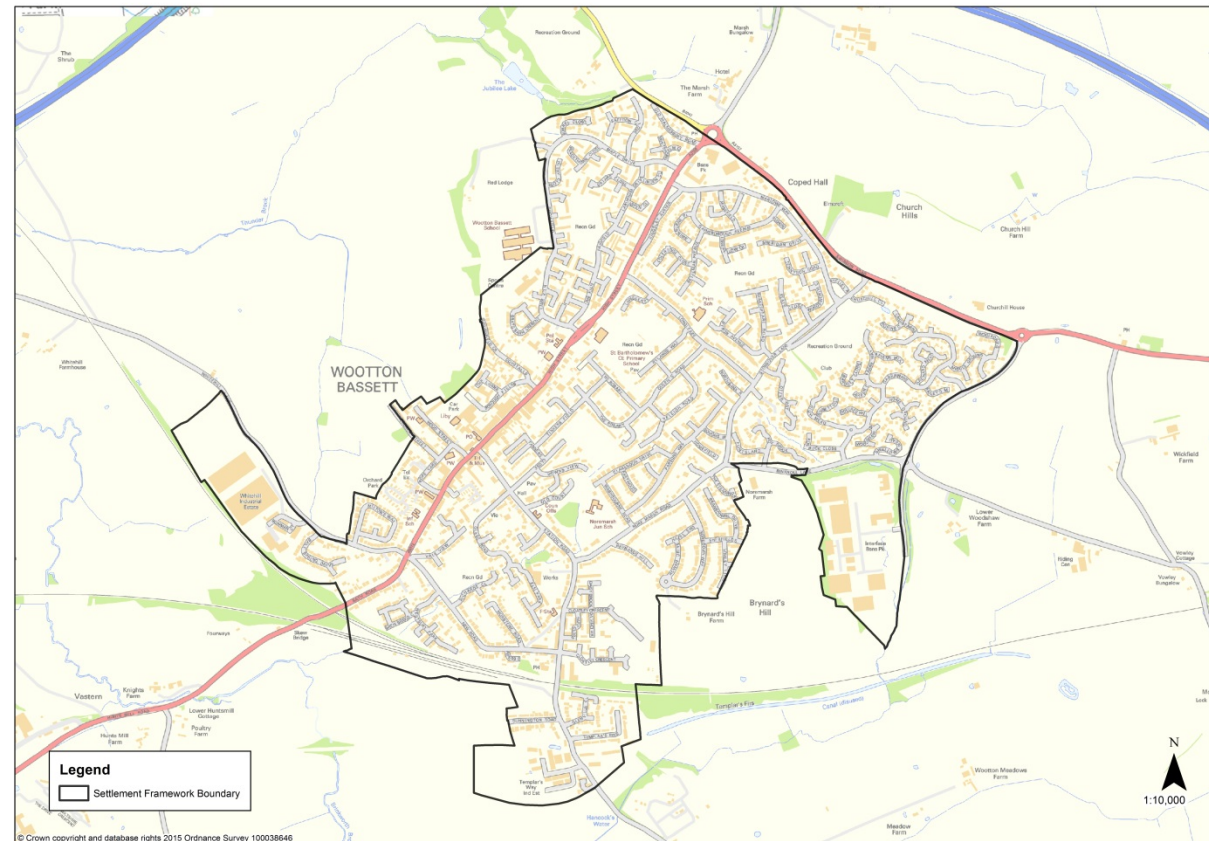
- To provide for housing and employment growth appropriate for the needs of the Town.
- To maintain the character of Royal Wootton Bassett and avoid coalescence with Swindon, focusing on high quality design reflecting the style, materials and scale of development found in the Town.
- To ensure that the growth in housing is matched by an increase in services and facilities such as school places, transport infrastructure and medical facilities (as noted in Chapter 1).

- To provide well integrated, infill and brownfield development which offers a mix of housing types, such as flats, small homes and larger family dwellings.
- To meet demand for housing for older residents in order that they can remain in Royal Wootton Bassett.
- To encourage visitors to come to Royal Wootton Bassett and to increase the length of stay and visitor spend in the Town.
- To provide a range of accessible employment opportunities and training to reduce the town's dependence on Swindon and the wider area.

Policy 5: Infill development

Proposals for the development of infill sites within the settlement boundary (as shown on Plan 6) and in close proximity to the services and facilities of the town will be supported.

Plan 6: Royal Wootton Bassett Settlement Boundary



It is important that sites are well related to town centre because such sites are inherently more sustainable in terms of reducing the need to travel, providing accessibility to jobs, shops, services and facilities which residents require. It is recognised that an ageing national and local population will place different demands on housing stock in the future. It is therefore important to “future proof” the town so that a variety of dwellings are made available which can provide for all sections of society, ensuring that individuals can retain family and community links and have access to suitable accommodation throughout all stages of life.

Local distinctiveness is highly important in Royal Wootton Bassett and all development, whether it is residential, employment, retail or leisure, will be expected to contribute to the character of the Town. Buildings within the town centre are from all periods of history, including the last sixty years. Whilst there are exceptions, the pattern in the High Street is of simple designs in brick under tiled roofs, the bricks frequently being used to create patterns in the building.

Although many of the buildings in the High Street have been constructed in the last 300

years, the street structure dates from the medieval period when prosperity from the wool trade gave rise to growth. The Town Council expects development within the town centre to respect the form, style and materials of the buildings and frontages found here and would like to see simple, non-illuminated signage.

The Town Council expects development beyond the town centre to be sensitive to its context and reinforce the market town character, layout and appearance, building on local distinctiveness. A way to achieve this is to use materials historically found in this area.

The Town Council would like to see development planned with interconnections and accessibility in mind, encouraging walking by linking footpaths and pedestrian access ways to ensure accessible places which are safe and inviting to walk at all times of the day and night.

Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council is in the process of developing a local Design Guide as a supplement to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Town Council would like this document to help support the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Policy 6: High quality mixed development

The redevelopment of brownfield sites for residential use will be supported, provided that such sites are not of high environmental value.

Policy 7: Design

Development must respect local character and conserve or enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.

It is important that Royal Wootton Bassett improves its self-containment by increasing *the amount and variety of employment opportunities* available for residents. This will help to make the town more sustainable and reduce the amount of out-commuting which currently takes place.

Policy 8: Employment land
Employment development within Royal Wootton Bassett (B1, B2, B8) that respects local character, residential amenity and highway safety, will be supported.

Royal Wootton Bassett is a popular destination for day-visitors exploring the market town. It is recognised that encouraging visitors to stay overnight in the town by making provision for accommodation and building the town’s reputation as a weekend destination helps to maximise the positive impact of visitors on the town. The provision of a theatre would help to encourage visitors to the town and increase its popularity.

Policy 9: Visitor accommodation and facilities
Within the built-up area, proposals for visitor accommodation and/or a new theatre will be supported, subject to there being no significant harm to residential amenity or highway safety.

There is significant pressure for large scale development in Royal Wootton Bassett, particularly to the north and east of the town. Whilst it is acknowledged that growth is important in retaining the vitality and viability of a small town, the location of new development must take into consideration the gap between Royal Wootton Bassett and Swindon. Community consultation identified the attractive built and natural environment, the market town character and the small-town friendly atmosphere as very important elements contributing to the high quality of life in Royal Wootton Bassett.

The 2004 Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment categorised the Royal Wootton Bassett area as “Swindon Fringe” and

identifies the following key characteristics of the area as:

- *“Elevated ground with rolling hills and a steep escarpment to the north and west.*
- *Significant areas of housing and other development in the town of Wootton Bassett, and in ribbon development between the villages.*
- *A mix of building ages and styles, from historic village centres of buildings with distinctive stone details including stone slates, to more recent brick and reconstituted stone houses – with modern building materials sometimes jarring against the muted colours of the local vernacular.*
- *Wide views from elevated positions on the scarp slope of the coral rag and from high points such as Brynard’s Hill, over floodplain and lowland vales, and also eastwards to development on the edge of Swindon.*
- *Degraded agricultural landscapes, including arable and by pasture some of which is for equestrian use, and small irregular fields of medieval origin, with gappy hedgerows, boundaries in poor condition and a lack of mature trees.*

- *Some unimproved meadows.*
- *Presence of power lines, service sector land uses such as garden centres and workshops, and communication corridors.*
- *Areas of woodland including ancient woodland.*
- *Features of historical interest including an iron age earthwork, Roman remains, and the disused canal.*
- *A comprehensive network of public footpaths.”*

The Landscape Character Assessment sets out key management guidelines to protect and enhance the landscape. These are as follows;

“The overall objectives for the area are to restrict new development to maintain separation between settlements and to restore the integrity of the rural landscape. There is a need to guide very limited development where it is considered appropriate, such as on existing brownfield sites but only where a landscape and visual benefit would result, and with associated landscape infrastructure. It would be unacceptable to have widespread change of use.

Existing detractive uses such as garden centres, storage or workshops should be screened where possible. This should include new planting of woodland blocks or belts. In the intervening rural landscape the restoration and enhancement of landscape elements such as hedgerows and boundaries should be carried out to reinforce the landscape pattern and reduce intervisibility.”

Policy 10: Landscape Setting seeks to reinforce the management objectives of the Landscape Character Assessment.

Policy 10: Landscape Setting

Development should safeguard the separate identity and locally distinctive character of Royal Wootton Bassett and its unique landscape setting.

5 Transport

5.1 Context

Royal Wootton Bassett is located in close proximity to junction 16 of the M4 and is well connected with Class A roads to other settlements, including Swindon. The Joint Strategic Assessment (2013) for Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area identifies the following key transport issues for the area:

- The condition of non-principal unclassified roads in the area is below the Wiltshire average.
- The area has a very high car ownership level with 51.5% commuting to work by car, compared to only 3.6% using public transport despite the close proximity to Swindon as the major employment centre
- The M4, along with an expanding Swindon, continues to influence patterns of travel in this area of Wiltshire, generating significant additional volumes

of traffic and congestion in Royal Wootton Bassett.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan community engagement/consultation identified the key issues of concern amongst Royal Wootton Bassett residents as:

- Road Safety: children walking to school, older people, crossings, heavy goods vehicles, safety near schools
- Traffic volumes: amount of traffic in the town centre in especially HGV traffic in the High Street.
- Public transport: inadequate frequency and

range of services to meet local needs

- Parking: parking charges, on street parking congestion
- Congestion: commuter traffic, issues with getting into Swindon, accessing the motorway

These aspects have come up at each phase of community engagement and are significant concerns to many. The Issues Report in Appendix 2 gives more information on detailed concerns raised by residents in relation to transport, some of which are acknowledged to be beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Development Plan to resolve.

The Aims, Objectives and Policies in this section meet Strategic Objective:

[2.1.6 Promotes sustainable transport choices encouraging walking and cycling both within and outside the town.](#)



5.2 Aim

To provide safe, sustainable and accessible transport choices for all those who work, visit or live in Royal Wootton Bassett.

5.3 Objectives

- To support the development of better public transport, both by road and rail
- To reduce traffic congestion
- To improve road safety and make better provision for walking and cycling
- To ensure that new development in Royal Wootton Bassett has a positive impact on traffic and transport in the town

5.4 Public Transport

There is overwhelming support for Royal Wootton Bassett to get its railway station back.

Community Action: Railway Station

The Town Council will actively seek opportunities to assist in bringing this project forward.

There is potential to open a station to the east of the town to make short commutes to Swindon or Chippenham/Bath/Bristol or, subject to Network Rail agreement, a full intercity service. Sites for a potential railway station have been evaluated through an independent feasibility study process, and this information is located at Appendix 11: Evidence Base in the suite of Neighbourhood Development Plan documents.

Bus facilities within the town have been reduced over recent years, and a number of community consultees raised concerns in this regard.

Policy 11: Railway station

The development of a railway station and supporting infrastructure to serve Royal Wootton Bassett will be supported.

It is recognised that at times new development can exacerbate traffic and transport problems if the potential impacts are not adequately assessed and mitigated.

Residents look for improvements in the public transport, opportunities for walking and cycling and a reduction in congestion, and are keen to see how new development can help address these issues.

Policy 12: Road safety, traffic and transport

Development should not harm highway safety and must ensure that residual cumulative impacts of development are not severe. The promotion of walking, cycling and public transport will be supported.

6 Conclusions

The Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Development Plan has been developed with cooperation and hard work from the community, Town Council, businesses, local employers, Wiltshire Council and landowners. It is important that it is a “living” document which is constantly used by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council and Wiltshire Council in making decisions which shape the future of the town, as it is derived entirely from community aspirations and set into a land use planning context.

The implementation of Neighbourhood Development Plan will be monitored via the Town Council planning committee. It will be reviewed as necessary, but at least on a 5 yearly basis to ensure it remains relevant and continues to inform planning decisions made by Wiltshire Council.



Appendix 1 - Issues Report

Based on references April 2014

Purpose and Background

The aim of this Issues Report is to bring together all the information gathered over the past 9 months of consultation and engagement, and to examine what it says about the aspirations of the people of Royal Wootton Bassett for the future of their town. Information and views have been sought by means of a facilitated community event, work with Royal Wootton Bassett Academy and an online survey advertised widely throughout the town. As a result it is hoped that people of all ages have been made aware of the Neighbourhood Plan and have been given the opportunity to make their voice heard in the process.

The community engagement event attracted 34 individuals, who spent a day working on how the town could be shaped by Neighbourhood Planning in the future.

The session at the Academy captured information and views from a wide range of students; collecting 134 responses; 74 from young people based in Royal Bassett. The follow up online survey was available between May and September and received 329 responses.

The information received has been collated into the following theme headings;

- Facilities, schools, shops, cafes/restaurants and pubs
- Design, Development and Housing
- Employment
- Open Space
- Getting Around
- Sense of Place

Under each topic heading, the report, below, summarises the comments and views received and also sets out the relevant policies, plans and evidence, to

guide the Neighbourhood Planning process in terms of the framework within which it will operate. Full data with all the comments received can be found upon request to the RWB Steering Group.

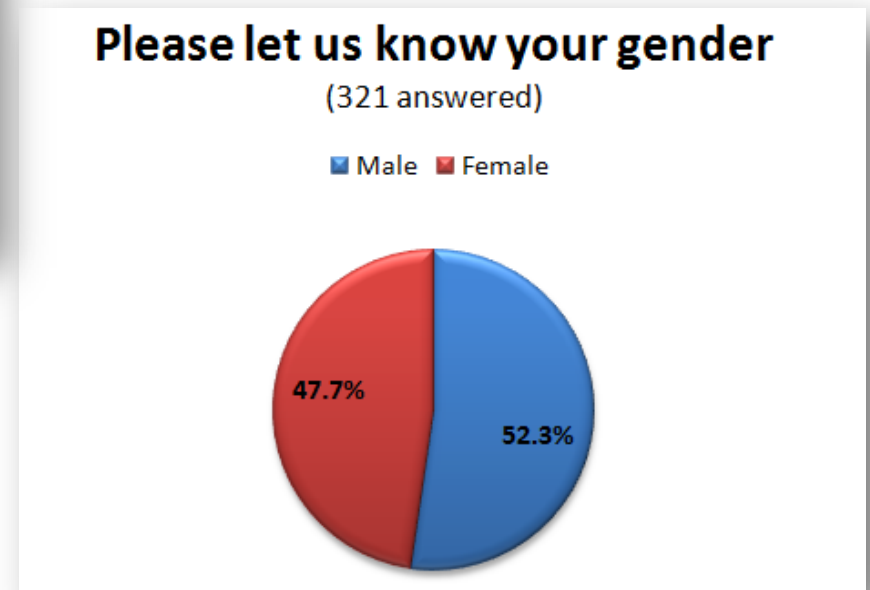
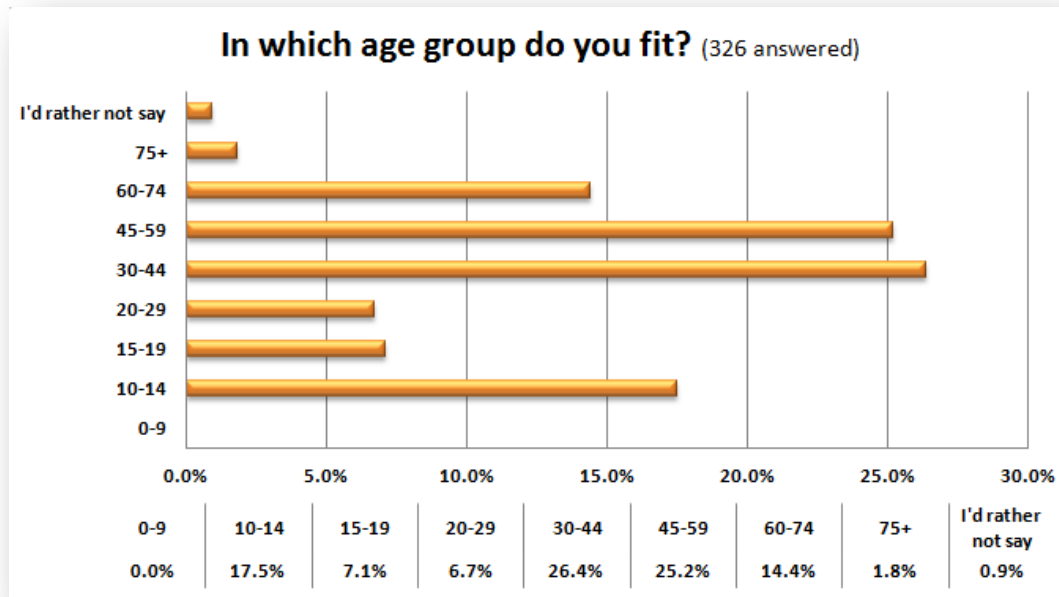
The plans, policies and evidence underpinning Neighbourhood Planning in Royal Wootton Bassett include;

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Neighbourhood Planning regulations
- Wiltshire Core Strategy
- Local Transport Plan
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
- Emerging Community Plan

The Issues Report, in the context of the surrounding policy framework, is the basis for developing options for testing and ultimately policies in the Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan.

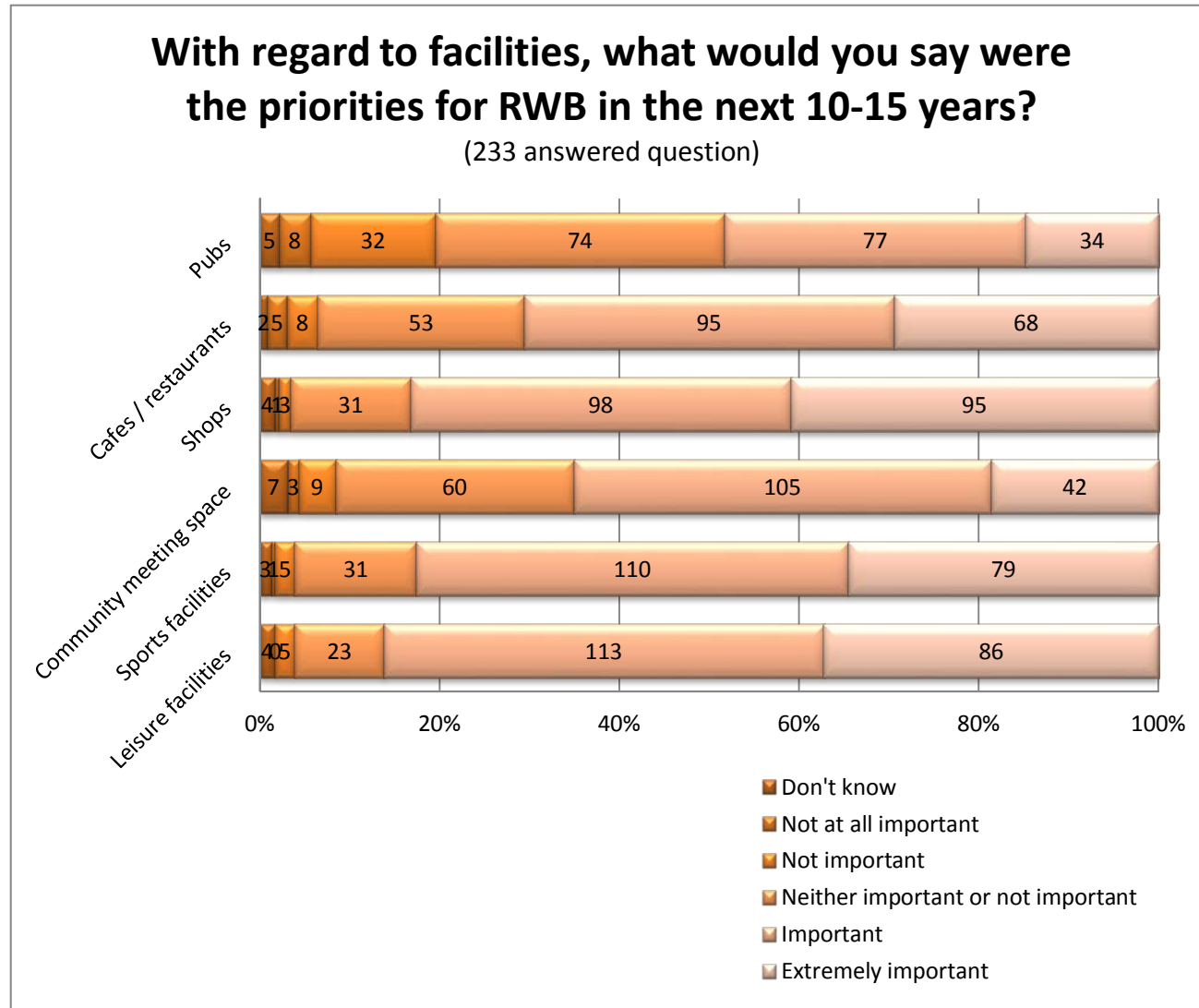
Online Survey summaries

Gender and ages of the online respondents broke down as follows



A word cloud is a visualization of the most frequently used words across a set of text

Issue 1: Facilities, schools, shops, cafes/restaurants and pubs



Key Findings

- Residents value their schools and would like to see them continue to improve.
- People of Royal Wootton Bassett want the town to be well connected with high speed broadband and accessible services and facilities
- Residents are concerned about the capacity of GP services, schools and other facilities to cope with the growing population. It was felt that population growth needed to be matched by a growth in facilities to serve the population.
- The town centre is well loved by the people of Royal Wootton Bassett who want to see an attractive street scene with thriving shops, pubs, restaurants, cafes and services which not only are used by the local people but also attract visitors to the town.
- A greater variety of shops and restaurants, fewer empty shops and plenty of locally run independent stores were highlighted as being desirable.
- Opportunities for entertainment and culture are important in Royal Wootton Bassett. The library is important, and residents are proud of the museum and the town's festivals. Residents would appreciate an accessible centre for arts/music/community events and performances, and a cinema was a popular wish amongst the younger people in particular.
- Parks and green spaces are valued by the people of Royal Wootton Bassett. Accessible, safe and well maintained playgrounds and parks are seen as important for young people, and there is a demand for a greater choice of activities for this age group, in particular a skate park.
- Sports and leisure facilities are very important to the people of the town. There is a desire for improvements to the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre, and anticipation at the development of the Campus. Residents value the outdoor formal and informal sports and leisure opportunities, for example rugby and football pitches and the swimming pool.

Plans and policies which relate to the issue of facilities

Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan consultation found that residents hoped to see a wide range of shops and services within the town centre and that there was a wish for increased provision for recreation, culture and leisure facilities in Royal Wootton Bassett. The consultation also noted concern amongst residents about the capacity of local services to cope with the population, in particular medical services.

The Core Strategy identifies Royal Wootton Bassett as having an important strategic, service providing role within the Cricklade and Royal Wootton Bassett Community Area. The supporting text to Core Policy 19 states,

“Main food shopping trips from Royal Wootton Bassett are currently lost to neighbouring towns, including Calne and so the development of additional convenience retail in the town may be appropriate if a suitable site is identified. This would improve the retention of convenience trade in the town and its overall vitality”

The Core Strategy anticipates that by 2026,

“The retail offer of Royal Wootton Bassett will have been enhanced and the town will enjoy a good supply of housing including affordable dwellings. The town will have an appropriate level of facilities for its size, with a hub for sports provision at Ballards Ash.”

Core Strategy Policy CP38 relates to the vitality and viability of town centres. The supporting text states, “The Core Strategy seeks to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres in Wiltshire through policies promoting the regeneration of central areas and delivery of new growth at settlements to support the vitality of centres.”

Core Strategy Policy CP 48: Supporting Rural Life supports community ownership and management of local shops, pubs and other services.

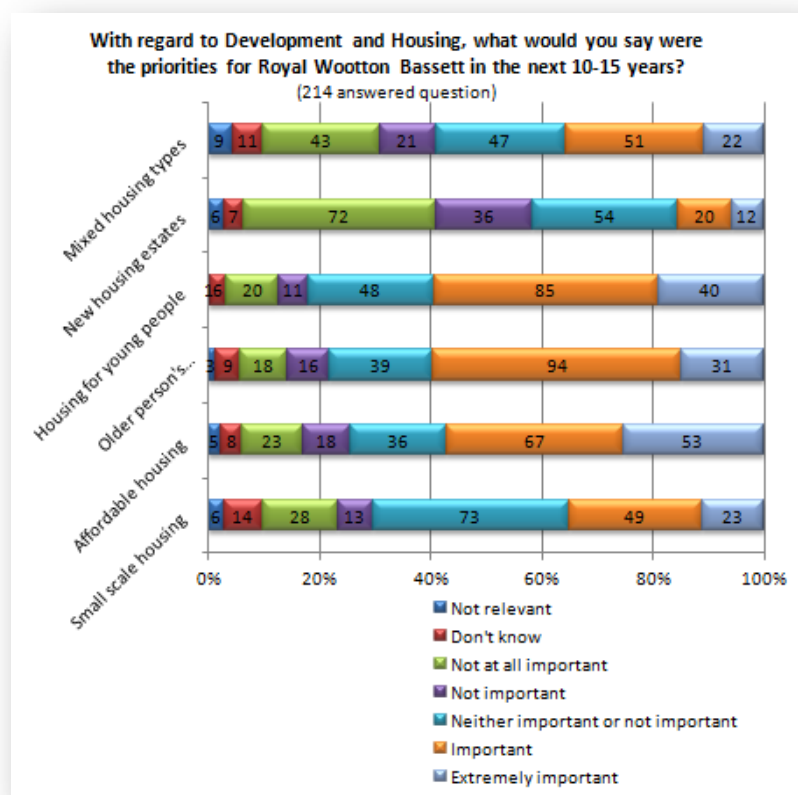
Core Strategy Policy CP49: Protection of Services and Community Facilities supports rural services by restricting the conversion of their premises to other non-community uses.

Core Strategy Policy 58 relates to the historic environment, and aims to “ensure that Wiltshire’s important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and built heritage significance are protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire’s environment and quality of life.”

Core strategy Core Policy 3 deals with planning contributions as a whole. It details education as essential infrastructure which will need to be delivered directly by the developer and / or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. The broad prioritisation of infrastructure provision is to ensure that development addresses essential requirements first and then place shaping items next. See Core Policy 3 for full list of infrastructure.

Royal Wootton Bassett Community Campus plans remain current and it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan does not undermine these evolving plans.

Issue 2: Design, development and housing



Key Findings

- Residents of Royal Wootton Bassett have concerns over the volume of new housing building, its design and whether house types being provided are appropriate for the needs of the town.
 - Royal Wootton Bassett should maintain its own character and avoid coalescence with Swindon.
 - Residents would like to see limited new development which reflects the character, appearance, materials and styles found in the town.
 - The character of Royal Wootton Bassett as a Wiltshire market town is very important to its inhabitants and there is concern that an increase in the size of the town could lead to a loss of character and local distinctiveness.
 - Residents are concerned that the growth in housing is matched by an increase in services and facilities such as school places, transport infrastructure and medical facilities.
 - A preference was expressed for well-integrated, infill and brownfield development which offers a mix of housing types, such as flats, small homes and larger family dwellings.

- There is some demand for housing for older residents in order that they can remain in Royal Wootton Bassett.
- There is a demand for less expensive, first time buyer housing to allow young people to get on the housing ladder.

Plans and policies which relate to the issues of development and housing

Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan consultation found that 96% of residents who responded sought to protect the green space between Royal Wootton Bassett and Swindon, and 81% of respondents believed there is sufficient housing in the town.

The **Core Strategy**: There are no Strategic Housing Allocations in Royal Wootton Bassett, and it is designated as a market town in the Core Strategy. However, the Core Strategy expects the town to provide 920 homes in the plan period (2006-2026), but these have already been completed or committed, according to Core Policy 19. The Neighbourhood Plan can therefore propose some additional development to serve the needs of the town, provided it does not conflict with the other policies of the Core Strategy.

Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy states

“Market Towns

Outside the Principal Settlements, Market Towns are defined as settlements that have the ability to support sustainable patterns of living in Wiltshire through their current levels of facilities, services and employment opportunities. Market Towns have the potential for significant development that will increase the jobs and homes in each town in order to help sustain and where necessary enhance their services and facilities and promote better levels of self-containment and viable sustainable communities.”

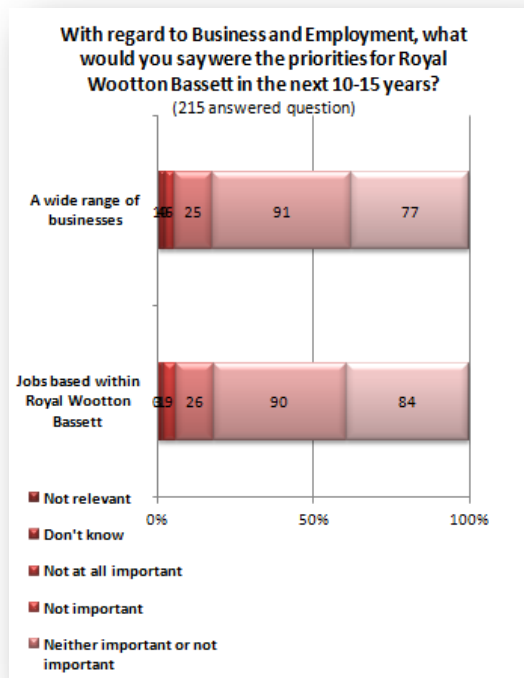
The Strategic Housing Land Availability (**SHLAA**) reveals 16 sites which the landowners have proposed for development. These are:

Site Reference/ Site Address	Developable Size (hectares)	Number of dwellings	Constraints	Ownership	Time period in which deliverable
499, Marsh Farm	6.56	292		Single owner	5 years
68, Transport Depot	0.87	26	Minerals safeguarding	Single owner	5 years
802, Lower Woodshaw Farm	1.76	200		Single owner	5 years

78, Rear of Public House off Station Road	0.3	9		Multiple/ unknown ownership	6-15 years
99, Rear of 1-10 Vale View	0.59	18		Multiple/ unknown	6-15 years
79, Rear of Iceland and Post Office	0.34	10	Minerals safeguarding	Multiple/ unknown	6-15 years
462, Land South of RWB, Part A	6.7	201	Minerals safeguarding, flood risk, HSE exclusion	Single ownership	5 years
80, Radio Station	0.23	7	Contains a listed building	Single ownership	6-15 years
463, Land South of RWB, Part B	12.85	386	SSSI, Flood Risk, Minerals Safeguarding	Single ownership	5 years
46, Land adjacent to TH White Car Sales, Coped Hall	0.36	11		Multiple/ unknown	6-15 years
464, Land South of RWB, Part C	0.94	28	Minerals safeguarding, flood risk	Single ownership	5 years
477, Land west of Maple Drive	6.03	181	Within/ adjacent to a County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve	Multiple/ unknown	6-15 years
478, Land north of Whitehill Lane	4.27	128	Minerals safeguarding	Multiple/ unknown	6-15 years
498, Templars Way	2.71	81	Minerals	Multiple /	6-15 years

Industrial Estate			safeguarding	unknown	
807, North west of Whitehill Lane Industrial Estate	3.08	92	Minerals safeguarding	Single ownership	5 years
2054, Land south west of Hook	7.31	490	County Wildlife Site	Single ownership	5 years

Issue 3 - Employment



Key Findings:

- There is a strong desire for a range of employment opportunities at all skill levels in Royal Wootton Bassett, and a wish to attract new businesses to both the town centre/retailing area and industrial estates. Since there has been an increase in the population of the town, residents hoped that businesses would also find it an attractive place to locate.
 - Residents recognised that integrating employment opportunities with public transport (in particular the potential railway station) would make the town more environmentally sustainable. They also noted the importance of safe cycle routes and easy parking.
 - Residents look for a range of accessible opportunities and training to reduce the town’s dependence on Swindon and the wider area to provide employment.
 - The town would like to gain more from the tourism sector, and therefore careful management of public spaces and features of conservation significance will be important
 - Royal Wootton Bassett is recognised as a good location for businesses due to its attractive character and close proximity to the M4 and the wider west region.

Plans and policies which relate to the issue of employment

Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan consultation found that residents believed the local economy is important and should continue to develop and grow.

Core Strategy: Core Policy 34: Additional Employment Land:

“Proposals for employment development (use classes B1, B2 or B8) will be supported within the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, in addition to the employment land allocated in the Core Strategy. These opportunities will need to be in the right location and support the strategy, role and function of the town, as identified in Core Policy 1 (settlement strategy) and in any future community-led plans, including neighbourhood plans, where applicable.”

Core Policy 35: Existing Employment Sites seeks to protect such sites from alternative development unless specific criteria are met.

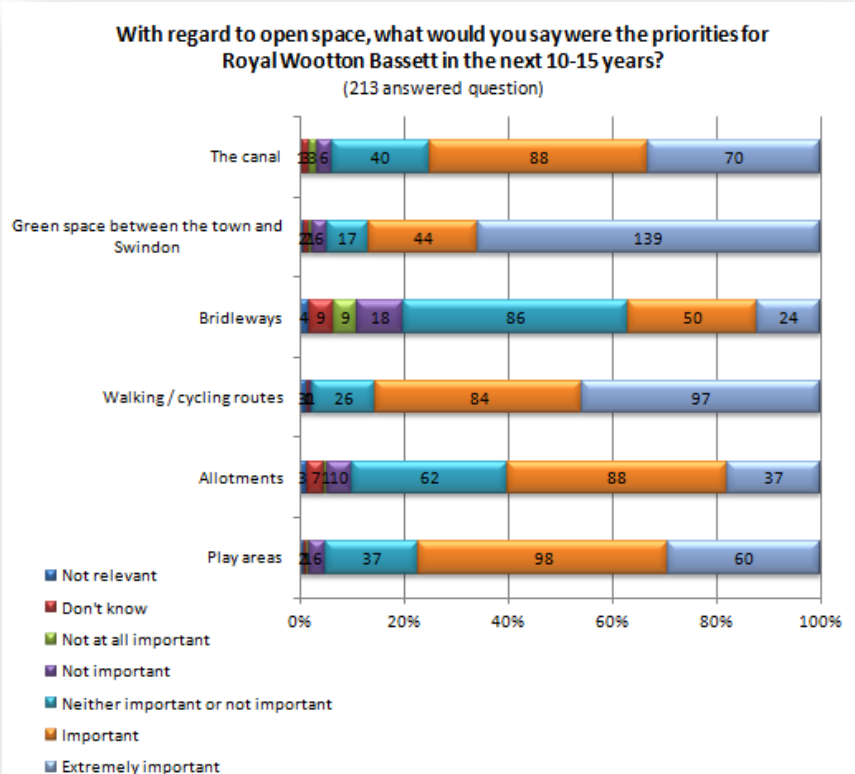
Core Policy 36: Economic Regeneration seeks to maximise the use of brownfield sites within Market Towns,

“Regeneration of brownfield sites will be supported in the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres where the proposed uses help to deliver the overall strategy for that settlement, as identified in Core Policy 1 (Settlement Strategy) and in any future community-led plans, including Neighbourhood Plans, and/or enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre by introducing a range of active uses that do not compete with the existing town centre.”

Core Policy 40: Hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, guest houses and conference facilities:

“Proposals for new hotels, bed and breakfasts and guesthouses within Local Service Centres, and Large and Small Villages will be supported where the proposals are of an appropriate scale and character within the context of the immediate surroundings and the settlement as a whole.”

Issue 4: Open Space



Key Findings

- The canal is a popular feature and many individuals commented they would like to see a continuous canal with a marina and towpath, which would benefit local people as well as attracting visitors.
- The green space between the town and Swindon is important to most residents to maintain the separation of the towns and retain the rural identity of Royal Wootton Bassett.
- Residents would like to see more green spaces, parks and allotments developed within the town, and those that already exist maintained to a high standard to ensure they remain safe and attractive.
- Accessible open space for those with physical disabilities was raised as a need.
- Residents feel that the development of a Country Park in or near the town would be desirable.

Plans and policies which relate to open space

As described above, Core Policy CP52 relates to Green Infrastructure, which includes parks, open spaces, recreation areas, paths and playgrounds. The policy supports the retention and improvement of such areas. Wiltshire Council is currently preparing a Green Infrastructure Strategy to support the protection and enhancement of these spaces.

North Wiltshire Local Plan Policy CF3 will continue to be saved after the adoption of the Core Strategy.

‘Proposals for new housing development will be required to make provision for open space on site, to provide 15m² for Local Parks and 3m² for play areas per person. The Council will accept in the appropriate circumstances, financial payments from developers for provision of open space according to the following order of preference:

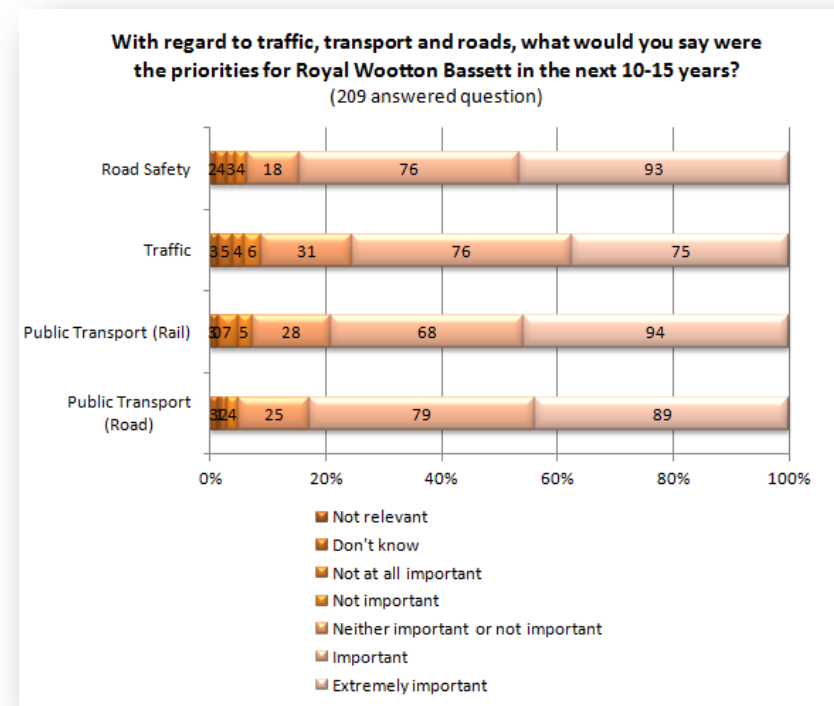
- i) Provision of open space elsewhere which is appropriately located in relation to the development;
- ii) Contributions towards the upgrading of existing nearby open spaces.

Development will be required to make contributions to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity and/or quality of open space and the future maintenance of open space provided to meet needs arising from the new development as set out in North Wiltshire's Open Spaces Study.’

Issue 5: Getting Around (Traffic/transport/roads/pavements/cycleways/parking)

Key Issues

- There is a strong desire amongst the residents of Royal Wootton Bassett for the reinstatement of the railway station to serve the town. It is hoped that this would allow residents to travel for work and pleasure more sustainably and attract visitors to the town.
- Integrated public transport/sustainable transport is important to many residents. Linking a new railway station with buses and offering safe cycle routes/cycle parking would be welcomed.
- A high quality, frequent bus service offering evening journeys was noted by many individuals as significant. There is concern about the cost of fares and the reduction in the frequency/destinations offered. Residents stated that a lack of travel choice affected their employment opportunities and increased car use and consequently congestion.
- Adequate parking was cited by many individuals as an important issue. Many residents would like to see more free car parking in the town, designated loading bays for deliveries to reduce congestion and sufficient off street parking to complement new housing development.
- Many residents mentioned the wish for a bypass and/or reduced traffic, in particular HGV through the town centre. Whilst some residents felt that pedestrianisation of the town centre was desirable, others were concerned with the loss of passing trade for town centre businesses.



- There is demand for more safe, designated pedestrian and cycle paths around Royal Wootton Bassett and to link the town to its neighbours in particular Swindon.
- Residents were concerned about road safety, especially for children and around schools. Suggestions for improving safety included reduced speed limits, traffic calming, more safe crossing points and better road safety education.
- Residents of Royal Wootton Bassett are concerned about traffic congestion both around the town and outside, particularly at peak times. Many felt that the transport infrastructure had not kept pace with the population growth with worsening congestion and poor quality road surfaces.

Plans and policies which relate to getting around

Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan consultation found that 64% of those who responded said they would like to use public transport more frequently, with the car being the predominant form of transport currently. 31% of those who responded to this consultation hoped to see a railway station developed in Royal Wootton Bassett.

Core Policy 66: Strategic Transport Network

“The development and/or improvement of the following railway stations will be promoted and encouraged.

- a. Corsham railway station.
- b. Melksham railway station.
- c. Royal Wootton Bassett railway station.”

Core Policy 65 Movement of Goods describes measures to ensure that HGVs are using appropriate routes which minimise community impacts.

Core Strategy Policies CP60: Sustainable Transport and CP61: Transport and Development set the broad context for traffic and road issues, aiming to reduce the need to travel, reduce dependence on the private car and make other transport options such as walking, cycling and public transport more viable.

The third **Wiltshire Local Transport Plan** was published in March 2011 and sets transport policy alongside the Core Strategy.

Core Strategy Policy CP52: Green Infrastructure (P196) is supportive of the retention and improvement of existing paths. Developer contributions can help to secure these improvements, and the creation of new paths.

Issue 6: Sense of Place

This issue covers village identity, sense of community, cultural issues, population make-up, design in the built environment and community safety. Although not all of these matters are directly connected to land use planning, they remain relevant in the process of Neighbourhood Planning in helping people shape the future of their community and therefore do relate to planning.

Key Findings

- Residents of Royal Wootton Bassett felt that community spirit, a caring, active culture and a thriving market town identity were important in making the town special.
- On the whole residents feel safe in Royal Wootton Bassett and appreciate the pleasant physical environment with trees, open spaces and peaceful places.
- Community events and military heritage make Royal Wootton Bassett special and unique and are cherished by residents.
- There is a strong sense of civic pride in the town which is reflected in the positive appearance of public spaces and well maintained buildings.

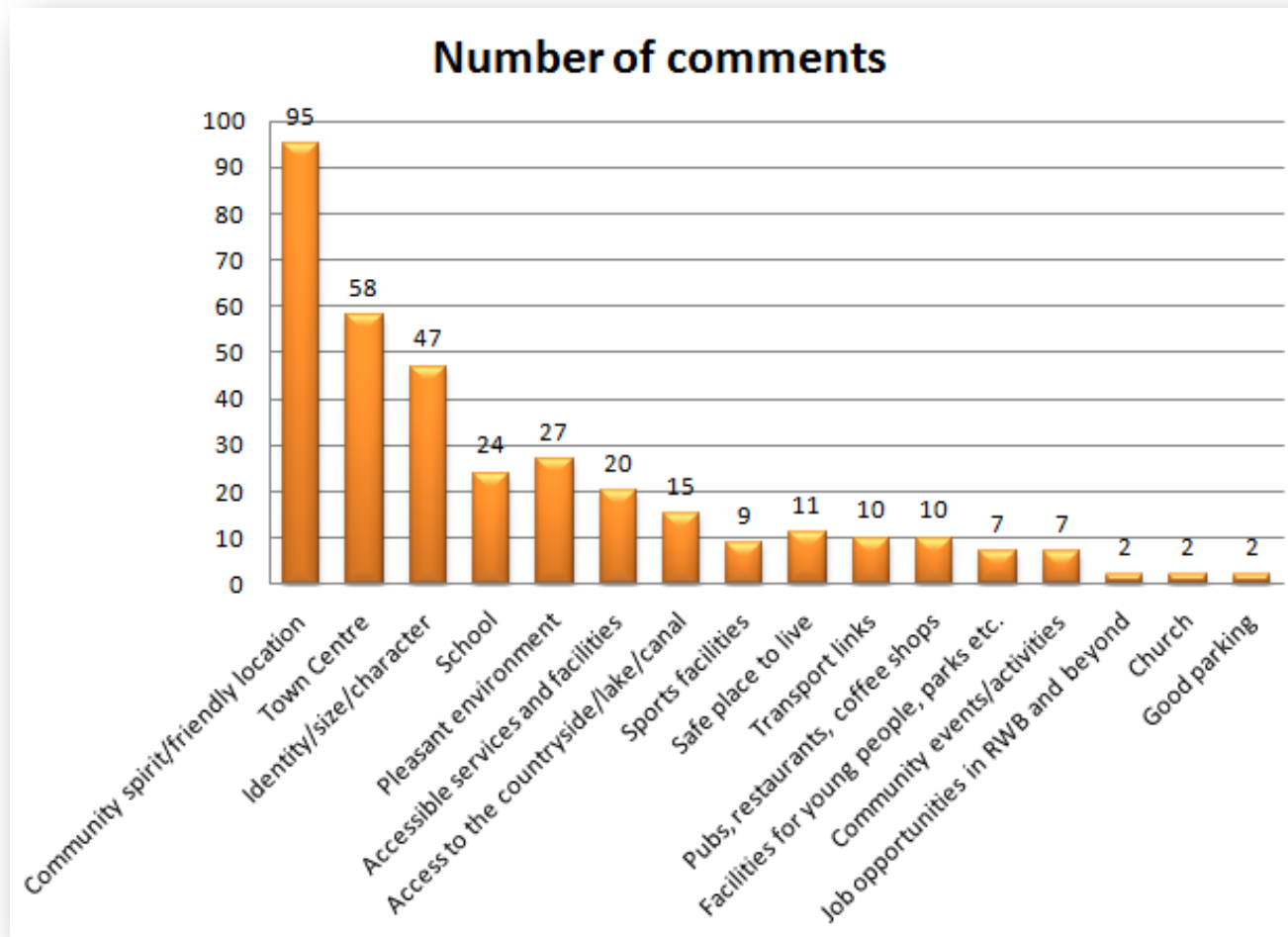
Plans and policies relating to sense of place

Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Community Led Plan consultation found that the majority of residents feel safe in the town.

The Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Strategy section of the **Core Strategy** states,

“the long established policy of protecting the distinct character and identity of the villages and settlements remains a priority for local communities. This applies particularly to the parts of the community area which adjoin the administrative area of Swindon Borough Council where there may be unplanned development pressure. The open countryside should be maintained to protect the character and identity of the area in accordance with Core Policy 51. The local community may also wish to consider this matter further in any future community-led neighbourhood planning work”

What do you like best about Royal Wootton Bassett?



How could Royal Wootton Bassett be improved?

1. Town Centre Improvements (a variety of shops, fewer charity shops, more clothing/comparison shops, more/improved market)
2. Concern over volume of new housing, design, greenfield site protection, a wish for growth to cease
3. Provide a railway station
4. For facilities and services to keep pace with the growth in population
5. Ease traffic congestion, prevent heavy traffic in town and reduce speeding
6. Increase in social/cultural/leisure facilities, eg cinema, theatre, parks, allotments, skate park
7. Increase in bars, coffee shops and restaurants
8. Increase in civic pride (less litter, graffiti, maintenance)
9. Parking improvements (more free parking, resident parking)
10. Greater opportunities for sports
11. Activities for young people and families
12. Provision of a bypass
13. Canal improvements (cleaner, joined up)
14. Countryside conservation, preservation of green space
15. Happy with how it is
16. Improved medical facilities
17. Increased provision of cycle ways
18. Public transport improvements and maintenance
19. Employment

