



London Colney Neighbourhood Plan

Questionnaire Response Summary

This document provides a summary of the London Colney Neighbourhood Plan consultation undertaken between February and March 2021. The findings of the questionnaire underline the key issues and opportunities to be explored in the Neighbourhood Plan. The key themes discussed in further detail below will help to shape the direction of the Neighbourhood Plan. Where appropriate, respondents' comments have been extracted to provide reasoning for the responses collected.

1. Background

Between 8th February and 31st March 2021 consultation on the London Colney Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken. The purpose of this was to ask the public what their views of London Colney are, including its perceived best and worst qualities, current and future issues, and how London Colney can adapt and change to meet the needs of the local community both now and longer term. A supplementary Facebook poll was undertaken to maximise the response rate and to ensure that the respondents represented a broad demographic.

The consultation was advertised on the London Colney Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Council website and through online communication and social media networks. Respondents' views were collected using an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was accessible via the London Colney Neighbourhood Plan website.

The questionnaire responses can be grouped into two sections. The first section asked respondents what their perceptions of London Colney are and how the Parish could be improved. These questions included a mixture of open and closed questions. This was followed by a section which required respondents to provide their personal details in addition to details relating to their associations with London Colney. The supplementary Facebook polls (posted on the London Colney Neighbourhood Plan Community Group page) asked a series of closed poll questions throughout the first week of March (1st - 7th March 2021). The poll questions focused on prominent local themes, such as transport and green infrastructure. The poll had a number of pre-set responses which were raised during the inception workshop meeting. Poll respondents were able to vote on these and add new responses as necessary.

In total, 164 people completed the survey. Of those who responded, 97.6% were residents of London Colney. Of the 158 respondents who responded to the question about gender, just 24% identified as male, with the remaining 76% of respondents identifying as female. In terms of age, 28.7% of respondents were over 60. Just 3% of respondents were aged under 30, with the remaining 68.3% of respondents aged 30-60. Efforts to balance this out have been made through the running of a poster competition for primary school age children in London Colney, raising awareness of the Plan amongst younger generations, their parents and guardians.



The following sections unpack the responses for each question, outlining the overarching result before addressing themes that emerged from the comments sections.

2. Survey Responses

Question 1

The survey posed the following question:

What is good about London Colney? (please tick all that apply)

Responses are summarised in the chart below.

1. What is good about London Colney? (tick all that apply)

Good Transport links, bus rout...	78
Shopping facilities	98
Motorway links	112
Surrounded by countryside	139
Good dog walks	79
The river and area around river	151
Pubs/cafes	85
Sense of community/friendly	87
Leisure facilities (sports and re...	43
Outside spaces, green spaces	126
Community facilities (doctors, ...	100
Village history and conservati...	80
Look and feel of village (layou...	51
Other	4

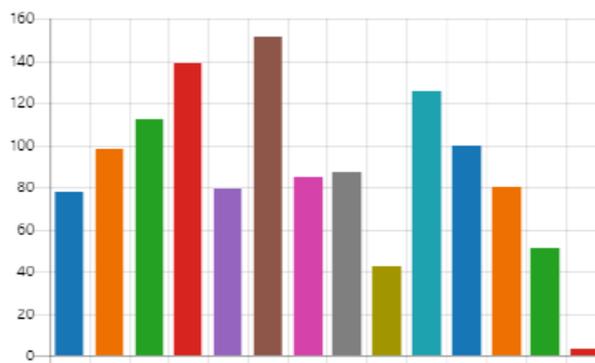


Figure 1: Breakdown of responses to question 1

Respondents were positive about the natural elements and surrounding countryside of London Colney, with 12.2% indicating that the River Colne and the area around the river represent what is good about London Colney, and a further 10.6% stating that the countryside surrounding London Colney is one of its best attributes. The natural environment was consistently perceived as good, as elements such as outside green spaces also garnered 10.2% of the overall responses. Of those who chose responses centred around the natural environment, one respondent noted that *“there are some beautiful walks that have been especially appreciated during lockdown”*. Another respondent added that *“the countryside walks and wildlife around the village are invaluable – the green space, water, and trees keeps the wildlife and help the air with all the road pollution surrounding the village”*.

Themes relating to transport were also popular amongst respondents, with 9.2% stating that motorway links are perceived positively within London Colney, and another 6.4% of



respondents identifying the existing transport links and bus routes as good. Some respondents also clarified that journeys into London were huge pull factors, as one respondent noted that *“I can get to London without a fuss but need plenty of time for travel and connections”*. Community services, spaces and facilities were also deemed highly important, as respondents stated that shopping facilities, community facilities and pubs/cafes were good (equating to 8%, 8.2% and 7% of respondents respectively).

Question 2

Respondents were asked:

What is bad about London Colney? (please tick all that apply)

Responses are summarised in the chart below.

3. What is bad about London Colney? (tick all that apply)

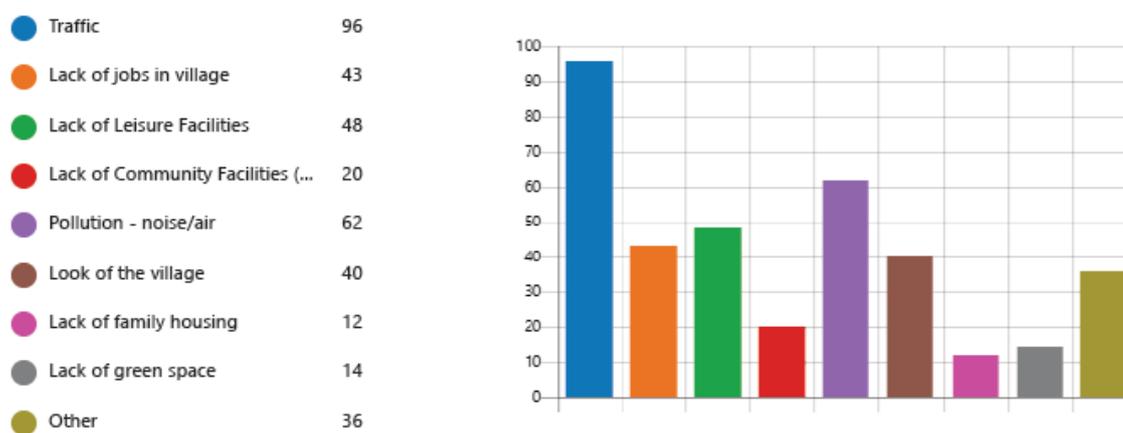


Figure 2: Breakdown of responses for question 2

25.9% of respondents stated that traffic was a key issue within London Colney, with one respondent adding that there are *“excessive amounts of cars, vans, lorries through the village and speeding along the High Street with multiple accidents along the old Parade length”*. In relation to this, a further 16.7% noted that air and noise pollution were poor within London Colney. Of note, one respondent claimed that *“the noise levels from the M25 and the A414 and A1082 really impact what would otherwise be a peaceful area to live.”*

Other respondents noted that there are a lack of leisure facilities and jobs within London Colney (12.9% and 11.6% respectively). Specifically, respondents were concerned with the lack of services and facilities for young people, as one respondent highlighted that *“youths in the area need somewhere to go like a youth centre or sheltered spot”*, with another adding that *“there is a lack of regular, organised youth facilities for Year 7+”*. Others noted that there are a *“lack of independent shops such as greengrocers and butchers etc”* and *“a lack of safe cycling lanes”*. Issues with the aesthetics of the village



were also raised, as multiple respondents noted that litter was widespread within London Colney, and another stated that *“the High Street is uninspiring”*.

Question 3

Respondents were asked:

What are London Colney’s qualities as a place to live and work in?

Responses are summarised in the chart below.

5. What are London Colney’s qualities as a place to live and work in?

Friendly	103
Peaceful	65
Access to countryside	137
Wildlife on doorstep	115
Services available for elderly p...	25
Views	45
Community attractions	15
Conservation area	58
Location	107
Community Spirit	53
Leisure Facilities (sports and re...	32
Community Facilities (GP, den...	68
Other	9

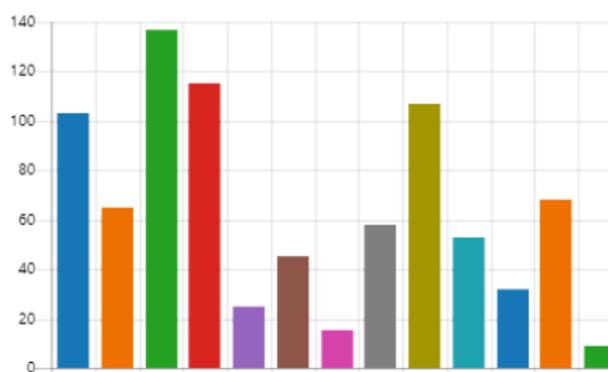


Figure 3: Breakdown of responses for question 3

Many respondents (30.3%) stated that elements of the natural environment are key qualities of London Colney. Access to the countryside (16.5%) and having wildlife on the doorstep (13.8%) were perceived as some of the key pull factors. Conservation of the natural environment was seen as a key priority moving forward, as one respondent stated that *“we just need to conserve our green spaces, if housing is needed, we need to be more innovative rather than taking away our green spaces”*. The location and friendly atmosphere were also seen as a key qualities (equating to 12.9% and 12.4% of the overall responses). Of note, one respondent affirmed that *“if I can take any positives from the Covid situation it’s that I have really got to know my neighbours well this last year”*. Interestingly, just 1.8% and 3.0% stated that community attractions and services for the elderly were key qualities as a place to live and work in London Colney.



Question 4

Respondents were asked:

What issues affect London Colney (now or in the future)? (please tick all that apply)

Responses are summarised in the chart below.

7. What issues affect London Colney (now or in the future)? (tick all that apply)

Houses/developments packed...	125
Transport not meeting needs ...	60
Loss of pubs	80
Lack of services - doctors	26
Lack of schools - secondary	74
Lack of schools - primary	19
Poor transport to schools	43
Lack of train station	86
Inadequate youth facilities	91
Loosing green village feel	94
Increased pollution	74
Flooding - loss of green space...	53
Loss of Countryside/greenbelt	92
Loss of green spaces	88
Increased heavy goods vehicles	92
Increased traffic	110
Traffic jams, preventing exiting...	95
Other	12

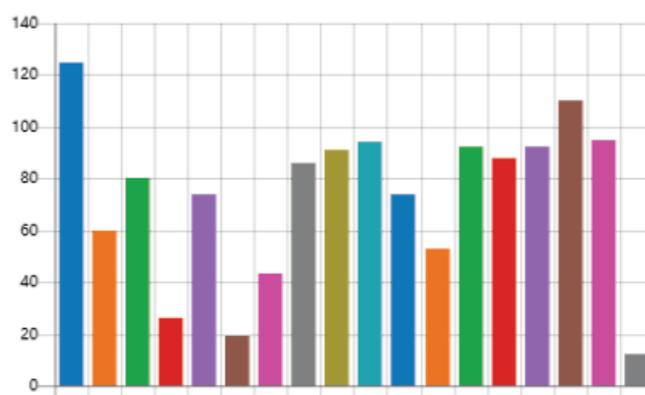


Figure 4: Breakdown of responses for question 4

In terms of existing and future issues, respondents highlighted that key areas for concern include high density developments and increases in traffic (equating to 9.5% and 8.4% of overall responses respectively). There was a general consensus that future housing developments were a threat to London Colney, as one respondent stated that *“we can’t handle anymore large developments, we want to stay as a village and not become a town”*. Another added that *“we have already taken our fair share [of housing]”*. Many were also concerned about developments just outside the Parish, as one respondent noted that the *“potential development of 6,000 homes by Hertsmere Borough Council is so close to London Colney”* and that *“the building of a 6,000-home housing project will affect the village greatly – traffic, parking, pollution, wildlife”*.



Other notable issues raised include traffic jams (7.2%), the increased number of heavy good vehicles (7.0%), the loss of countryside and green belt (7.0%), losing the green village feel (7.2%) and inadequate youth facilities (6.9%). In relation to the loss of countryside point, one comment read *“losing green space and village feel after this pandemic makes you realise how much we need the countryside and green space for our mental health and wellbeing”*. Linked to the theme of wellbeing, one respondent added *“traffic and traffic noise from dual carriageway and motorway are an issue and the obnoxious smell from the Agrivert recycling plant”*.

Question 5

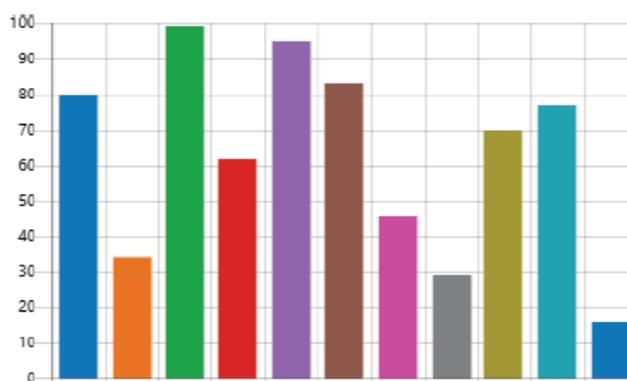
Respondents were asked:

What changes would you like to see in London Colney?

Responses are summarised in the chart below.

9. What changes would you like to see in London Colney?

Improved community facilities	80
More Schools	34
Trees planted	99
Better connections to hospital...	62
Off street parking provided fo...	95
More local/independent shops	83
Affordable Housing	46
Housing for old people - home	29
Better street lighting	70
Better cycle and pedestrian ro...	77
Other	16



Overall, respondents voted for a wide variety of improvements that they'd like to see in London Colney. Many respondents stated that they'd like to see tree planting initiatives implemented (14.3%) in addition to the provision of more off-street available for housing (13.7%). Inappropriate parking was a key theme within respondents' comments, with one respondent stating that there should be *“no parked cars on pavements”*, with another adding that there is *“inconsiderate parking around Tescos on the High Street”*. To partially address this issue, another respondent suggested that *“the wasted grass area at the top of the High Street should be turned in parking for the houses on the side so that everyone can park at their own houses and the people who take advantage don't affect the residents”*.

Other respondents took a more socially focused view, with many recognising the need to improve community facilities (11.6%), provide more local and independent shops



(12.0%) and provide better (and more direct) connections to hospitals (9.0%). With reference to improving community facilities, one respondent suggested that there should be *“full use of the community centre to provide a meet up point for an inclusive community celebrating the diversity of our nationalities and faiths, family friendly event and daily lunch clubs.”* Another respondent acknowledged that there should be *“more for the young and old”*.

Respondents also raised concern over the quality of the built environment and urban design of London Colney, as many stated that the existing street lighting is poor and should be addressed to ensure lights are on all night and are brighter. Others made reference to car traffic and pedestrian safety, with multiple respondents proposing that speed cameras along the High Street, 20 MPH speed limits and a pedestrian crossing along Kings Road should be implemented.



3. Facebook poll results

The following graphs outline the results of the Facebook polls held between the 1st March-7th March 2021. Overall, there were 461 responses to the Facebook polls, although it should be noted that respondents are able to respond to each daily poll, therefore the number of overall respondents taking part is likely to be lower.

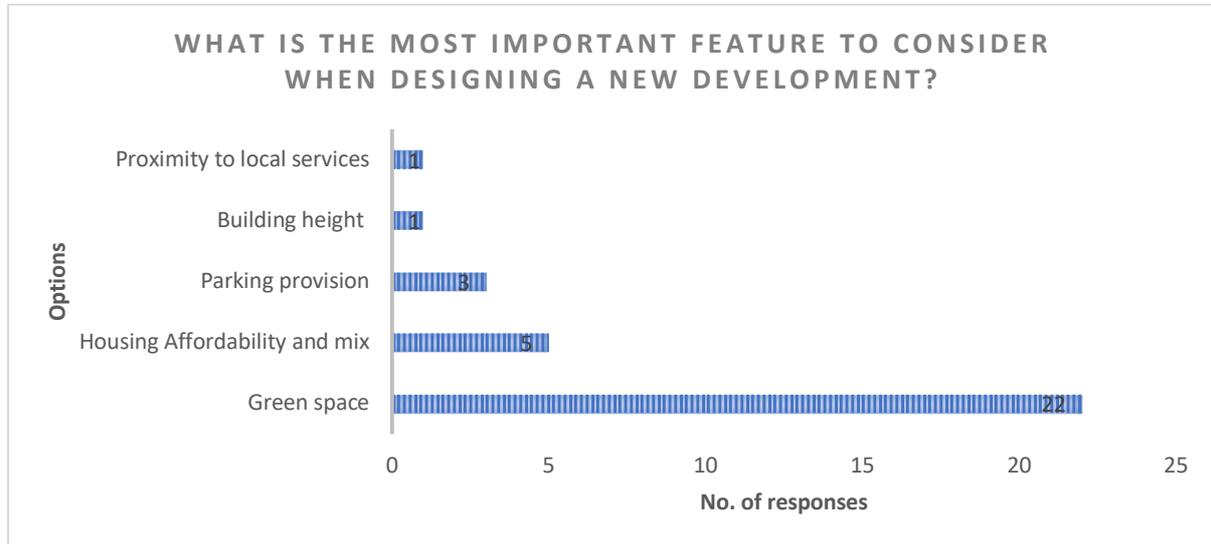


Figure 5: Facebook poll 1 results

The results reveal that respondents value new development schemes which incorporate green spaces. Affordability and mix are also key concerns relating to new housing and should therefore be a key priority moving forward.

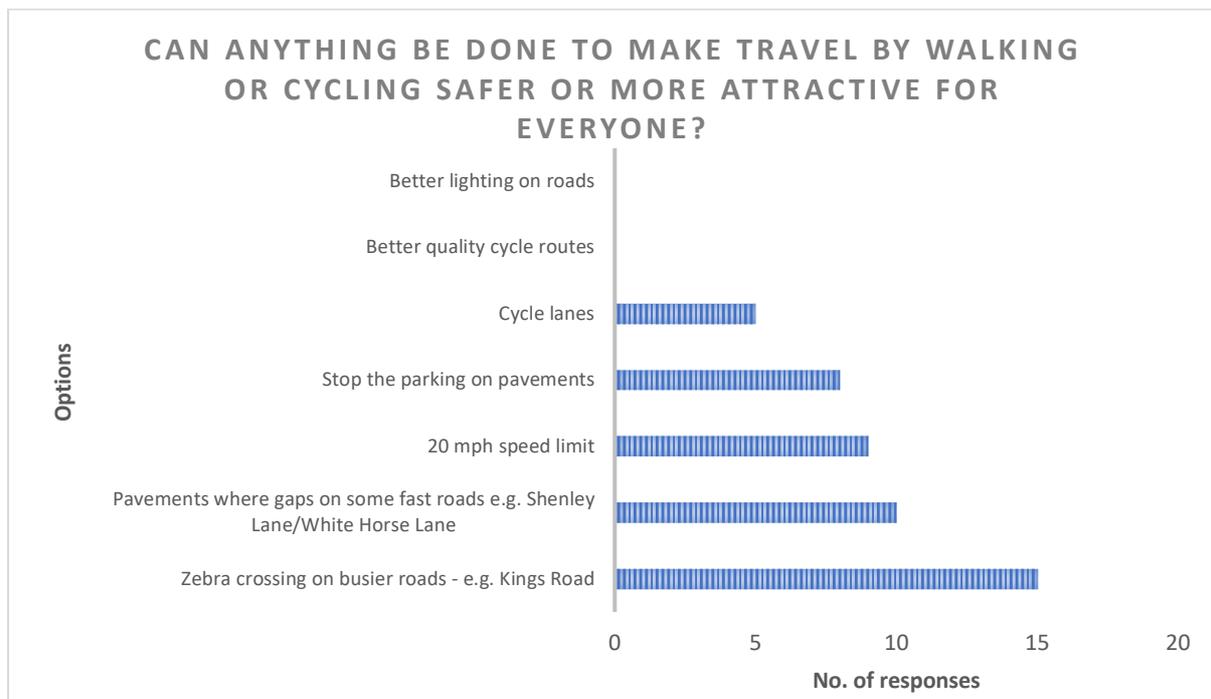


Figure 6: Facebook poll 2 results



Pedestrian movement was regarded as an important issue to address by many. Specifically, the provision of zebra crossings on busier roads (such as Kings Road) received 31.9% of the total response figure. Similarly, respondents prioritised the need for pavements where there are currently gaps on some of the fast roads (for example, Shenley Lane). Interestingly, none of the respondents voted for better road lighting or better-quality cycle routes.

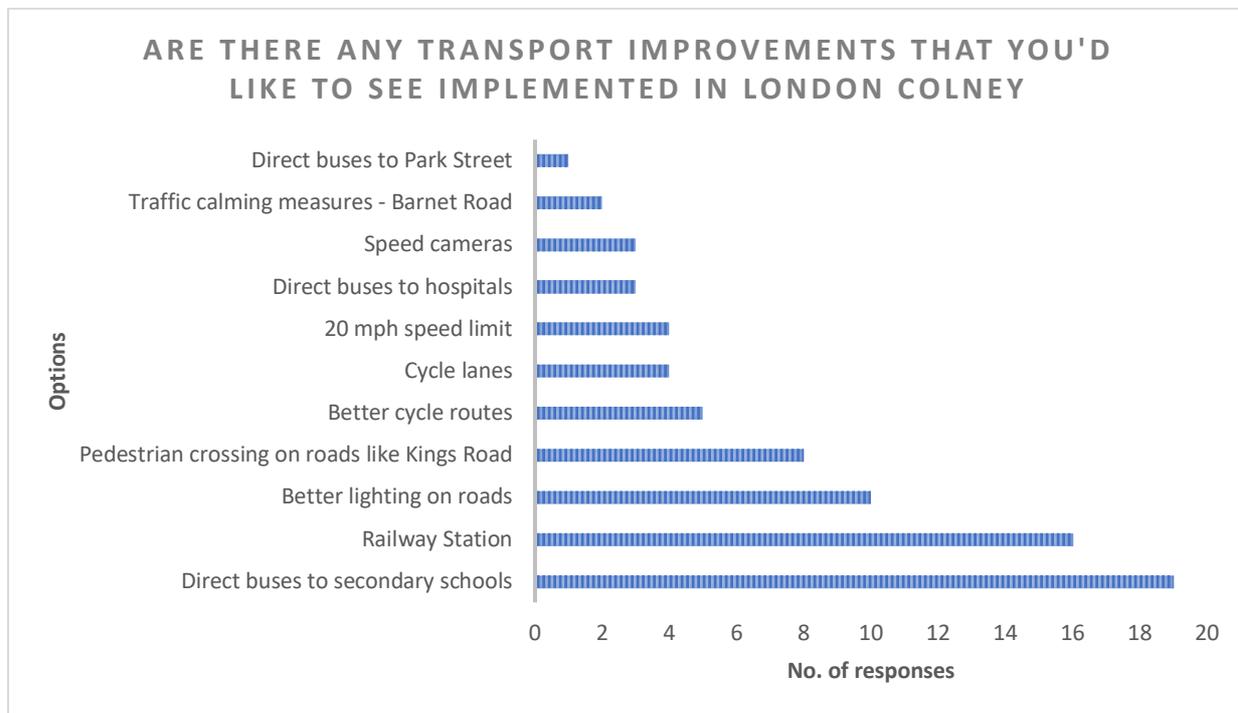


Figure 7: Facebook poll 3 results

Respondents voted for a range of improvements to existing transport infrastructure within London Colney. Popular responses included direct buses to secondary schools (25.3%) and the provision of a railway station (21.3%) - although it was also acknowledged that a train station would also bring a host of disbenefits and would likely not be feasible unless there was significant growth of London Colney (i.e., in order to create a critical mass of residents to ensure that this a viable option). As raised earlier within the consultation responses, 13.3% also stated that there is a need or better lighting on roads within London Colney. Improvements to existing cycle routes and the provision of new cycle lanes were also considered key priorities moving forward.

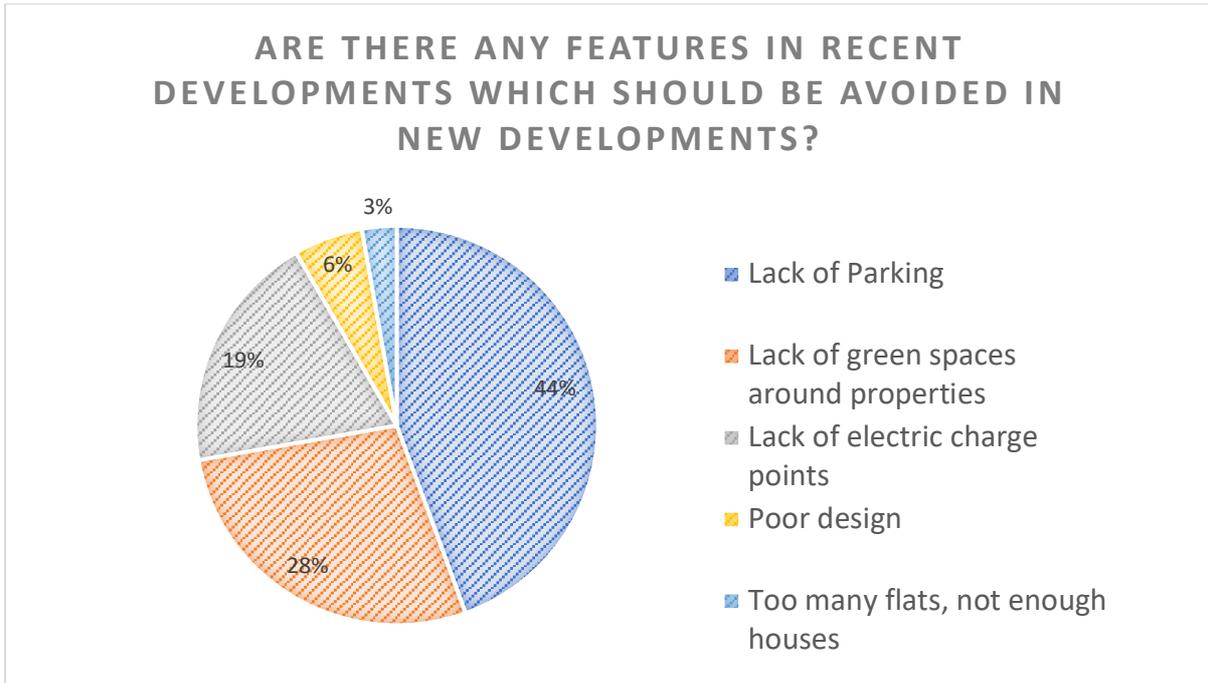


Figure 8: Facebook poll 4 results

The majority of respondents (44%) stated that a lack of parking should be addressed in future developments. A further 28% noted that recent developments had too little green spaces around them. Approximately a fifth of respondents also highlighted that recent developments did not incorporate enough electric charging points. Interestingly, just 3% of respondents felt that recent developments included too many flats (and not enough houses).

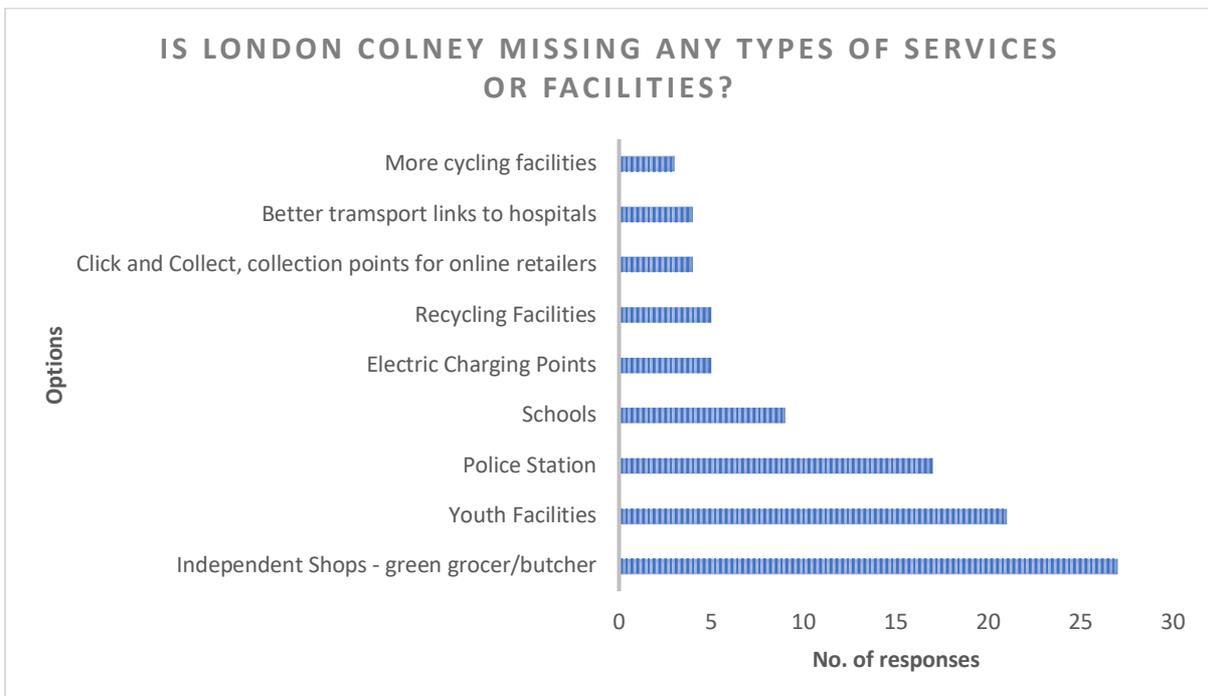


Figure 9: Facebook poll 5 results



In relation to London Colney’s existing local offering, many respondents (28.4%) stated that there is an underlying need for more independent shops (such as greengrocer/butcher), youth facilities (22.1%) and a police station (17.9%). These findings also reflect the concerns raised in the consultation survey in relation to need for facilities and activities for young people.

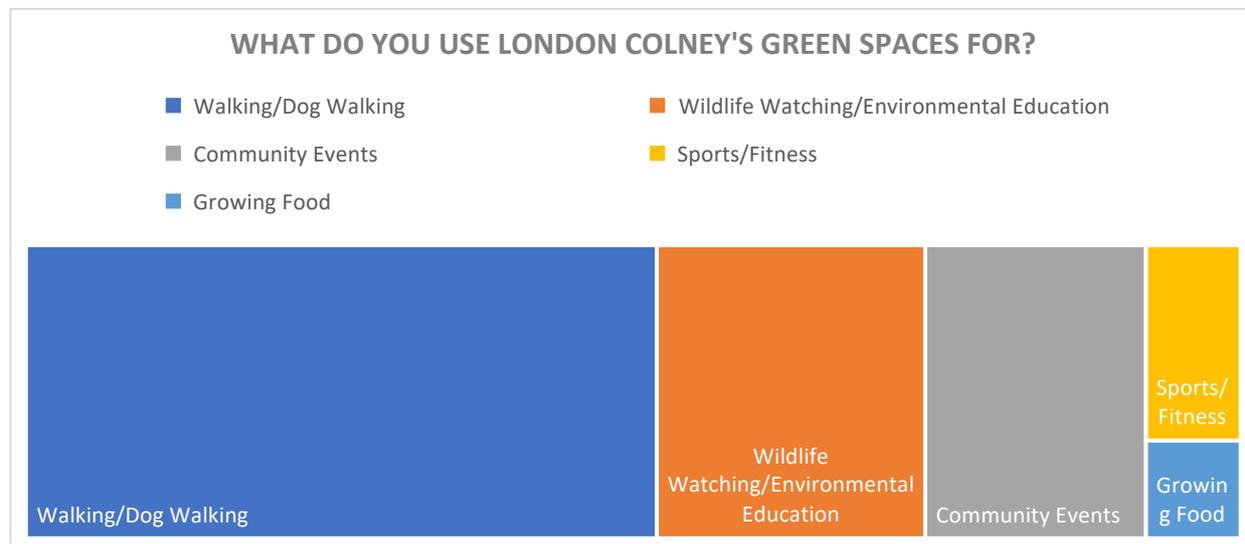


Figure 10: Facebook poll 6 results

Over half of respondents (51.9%) stated that they use London Colney’s green spaces for walking and dog walking, and a further 22.1% and 18.2% use the green spaces for wildlife watching/environmental education purposes and community events. A significantly lower proportion of respondents use London Colney’s green spaces for food growing and sport and fitness.

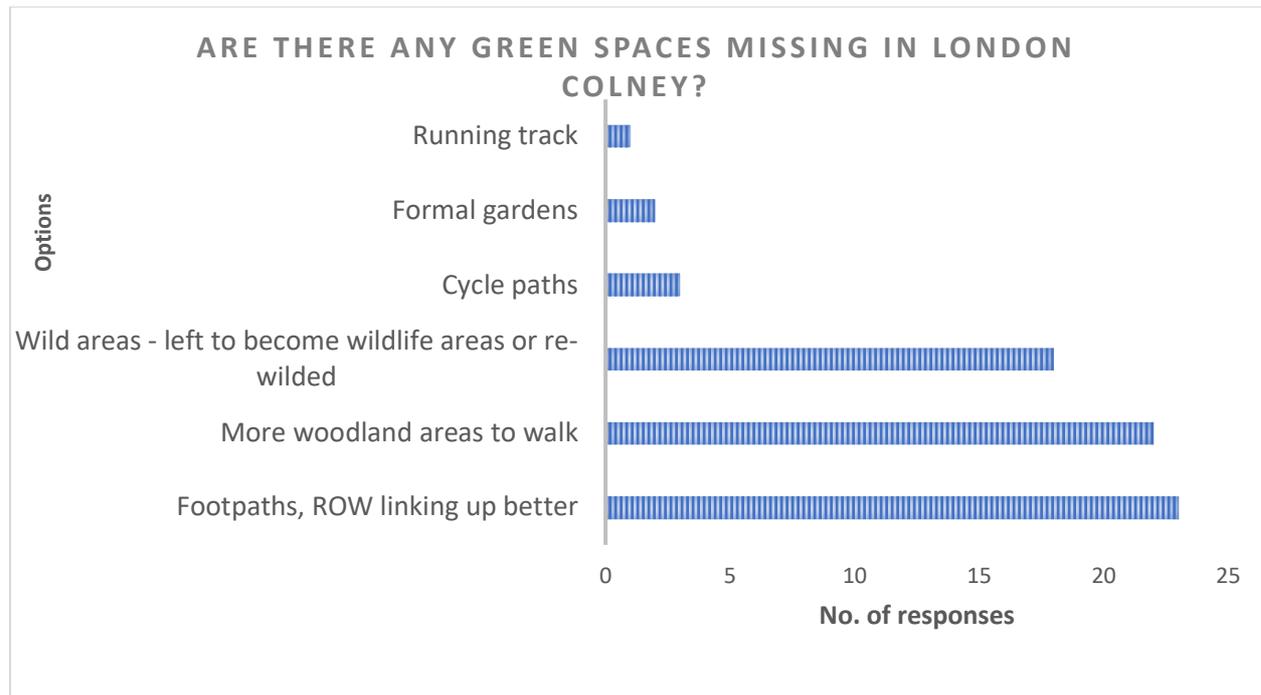


Figure 11: Facebook poll 7 results

Respondents highlighted that there are currently a lack of footpaths (and Rights of Way connections) (33.3%), walkable woodland areas (31.9%) and wild and/or re-wilded areas (26.1%) in London Colney. A lower proportion of respondents also suggested that London Colney is lacking cycle paths, formal gardens and running tracks.

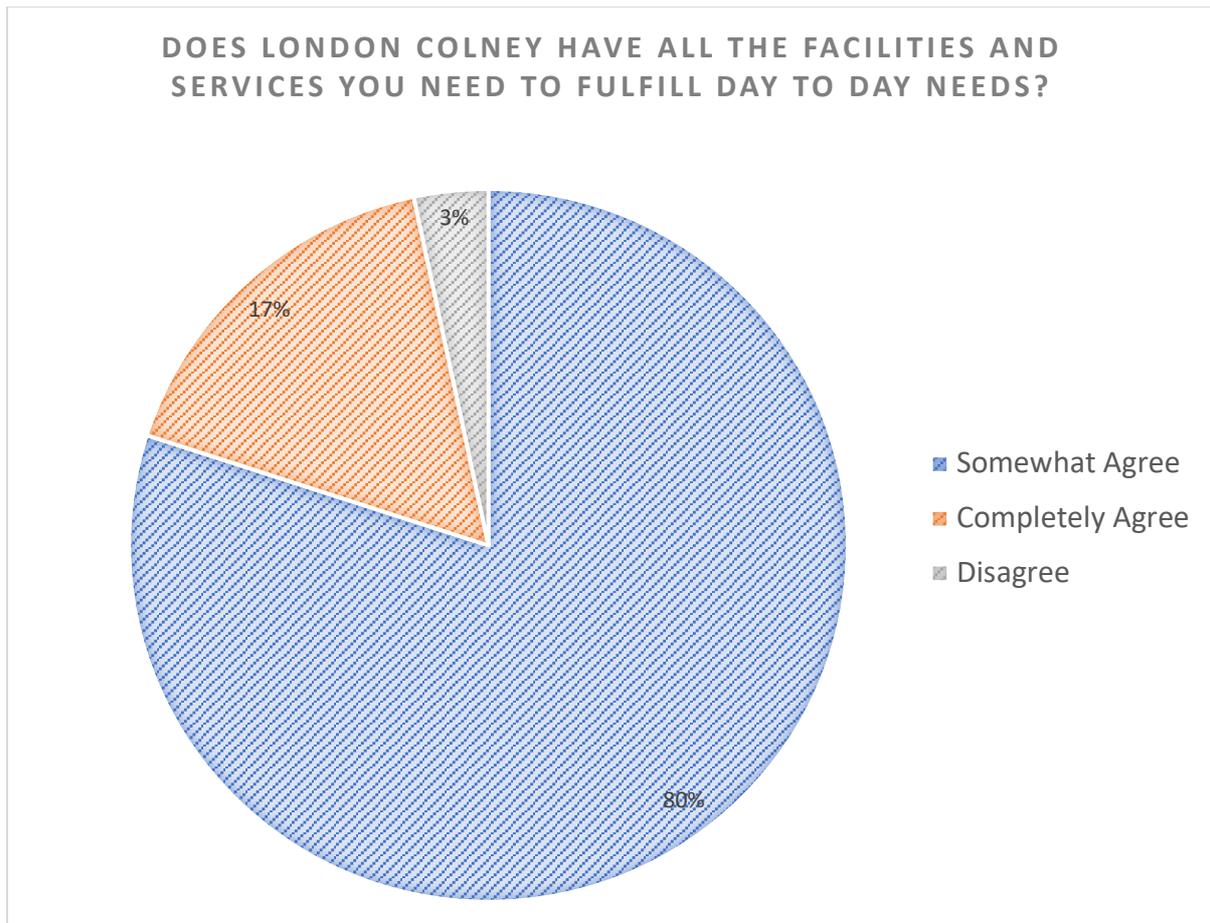


Figure 12: Facebook poll 8 results

Overall, just 17% of respondents felt that London Colney's existing facilities and services fulfil day-to-day needs, whereas the vast majority of respondents (80%) somewhat agree that London Colney fulfils all day-to-day needs.



4. Conclusion

Based on the concerns raised by the public in the consultation survey, it is clear that there are a number of broad topics which could form the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan.

As noted in the Chapters above, key topics to address within the Neighbourhood Plan may include:

Transport – ensuring that traffic calming measures are in place (by enforcing a speed limit and installing speed cameras); maintaining London Colney's good connections to the motorway and neighbouring towns; maintaining and improving existing bus routes; prioritising pedestrians (and their safety); addressing parking issues (such as preventing cars parking on pavements); re-instating and improving the existing footpath network; establishing whether there is demand for a new train station; and ensuring that there are designated cycle lanes.

Design – ensuring the right level of affordable housing is provided; securing an appropriate housing mix and tenure that responds to local need; and ensuring that new developments respect local character and provide sufficient provision of supporting infrastructure where it is most needed (including future needs such as electric car charging points).

Community – providing more facilities for young people and ensuring that community services and facilities meet the needs of the local community, particularly with regard to crime prevention, schools and the retail offering.

Economy – re-juvenating the High Street and encouraging new independent retailers to establish themselves within the local area.

Open Spaces - protecting local green spaces; implementing tree planting initiatives and addressing climate change impacts (including road pollution).

Heritage – protecting heritage assets; retaining village character.

Many of these ideas can be incorporated and addressed within the draft Plan.

Indeed, the plan-making process will also need to respond to issues relating to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 has changed the way we move, work, shop and socialise, and some of the emerging trends may persist beyond the pandemic. Indeed, many of the consultation respondents acknowledged the importance of London Colney's natural environment and local facilities during the Covid-19 lockdowns. The Neighbourhood Plan, through its policies, should respond to these trends in a sustainable manner, for example through promoting local community facilities; rejuvenating the High Street and providing better connectivity; however, the Neighbourhood Plan should acknowledge the implications of the pandemic and outline how it will help London Colney adapt to the future.



An initial draft vision and objectives is set out below. The vision and objectives are based on the findings of the Area Analysis, introductory workshop consultation and initial survey consultation (set out above) and are therefore considered to represent the views and needs of the local community.

Vision

By 2036, London Colney will have retained its identity as a vibrant village and will have become a 'Complete Community'. The village will include a diverse range of retail spaces, employment opportunities and community and leisure facilities which meet the day-to-day needs of the local community. An improved High Street will support a range of independent and national shops, bringing with it a unique identity as a well-established hub of activity.

Future growth will respond to local needs and will complement the existing local character and urban fabric. Retaining its historic status as a key transport node, accessibility and inclusivity will be at the heart of all future change, with all facilities, services and residential areas being easily reached on foot or bicycle.

Residents will benefit from London Colney's conserved and enhanced green spaces and surrounding countryside. The historic significance of the banks of the River Colne and Napsbury Park will be retained.

Objectives

Objective 1: To successfully integrate new growth with the existing built form and communities, providing housing choice and opportunities, whilst also delivering the necessary facilities and infrastructure in accessible locations.

Objective 2: To revitalise the High Street and primary shopping areas such that they become the hub of civic life and activity, providing a wide range of uses and facilities that cater to day-to-day needs for all ages, whilst also attracting inward investment into London Colney.

Objective 3: To make it safer and easy for people to move within London Colney and further afield, promoting active and sustainable travel measures.

Objective 4: To integrate new and surrounding green space into the village and safeguard existing green space to deliver multi-beneficial health and wellbeing outcomes for the local community.

Objective 5: To protect and enhance London Colney's unique local character and historic assets for the enjoyment and benefit of wildlife and future generations.