

FOCUS GROUP REPORTS

The following reports are included as provided by the focus groups. The only changes have been to formatting and typographical errors to conform to the main report.

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REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS GROUP

The aim of this section is to:

- identify environmental issues relevant to Grundisburgh and Culpho
- report on how the results of the questionnaire shed light on the parish's attitude to these issues
- comments on these findings
- propose actions
- propose a structure for the Environmental Focus Group after the Parish Plan has been completed to enable it to carry out whichever of the recommendations the Parish Council feels it should action

1 IMPORTANCE OF THE PARISH'S ENVIRONMENT

The environmental importance of the parish is reflected in two areas given special protection:

- the Conservation Area covering the centre of Grundisburgh village and down the river valley to the north and east. The special status of this area means that there are greater planning restrictions in the area, including the protection of trees, none of which should be felled without first consulting the Tree Officer at Suffolk Coastal District Council.
- The area outside the so-called village envelop in which the presumption is that no development will be permitted. This is to conserve the land for agriculture and nature.

The river that runs through the parish flows into the Deben, one of the five principal rivers in Suffolk. Planning, Agriculture and Development in all these river valleys now has to take account of the Water Framework Directive which aims to consider water catchment areas in a holistic way, recognising that all activities within them are interconnected. The Environment Agency has responsibility for implementing this legislation.

On a smaller scale, there are a number of laws concerned with protecting wildlife that can be relevant to the way in which development is undertaken. In general terms they require that an environmental impact assessment is carried out before trees are felled or bulldozers move in. Then, depending on the outcome of that assessment, the development may need to be amended to accommodate environmental considerations.

The Conservation Area, village envelop, Water Framework Directive and specific environmental laws relating to development are important to keep the parish as a rural community and to enhance its capability to preserve wildlife.

2 THE FINDINGS AND COMMENTS ON THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The results of the questionnaire shed light on the parish's view on a number of different environmental issues:

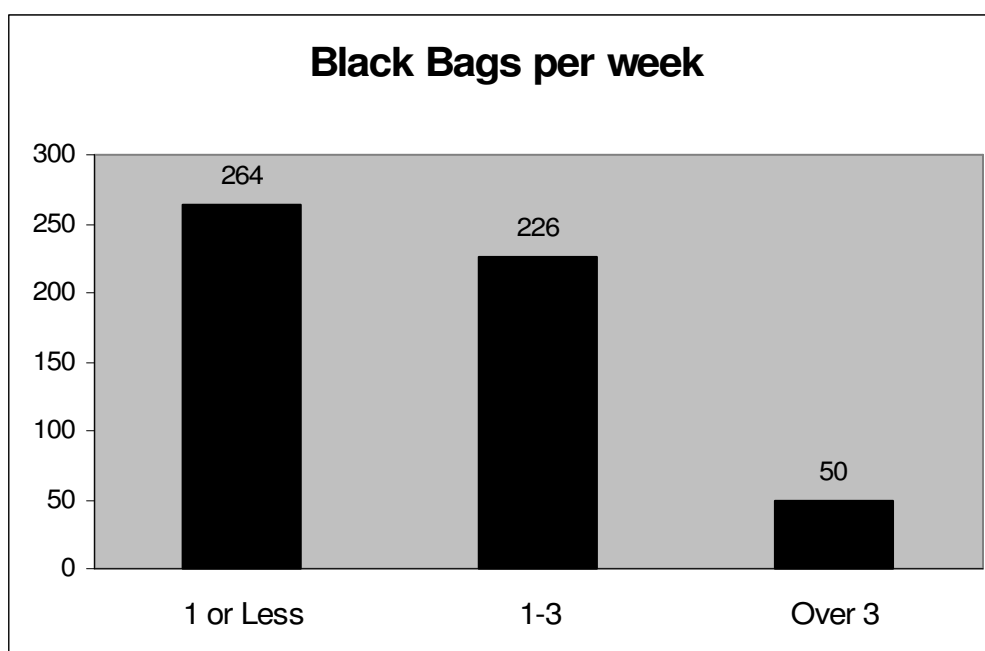
1. waste and recycling
2. hedges
3. street lighting
4. traffic calming
 - speeding
 - lorries
 - cycling

5. public transport
6. energy
7. mobile 'phones
8. water
9. planning & nature conservation

3 WASTE AND RECYCLING

3.1 Waste

The survey shows that, for the 540 households which gave information about rubbish, the parish is divided between those that generate less than 2 full bags per week (268) and those that generate 2 or more bags (272).



According to Suffolk Coastal District Council, the bin lorry collecting from most of Grundisburgh and on towards Hasketon (650 households) collects about 7.5 tonnes of waste each week. Assuming that 540 parish households produce 540/650 of that waste, then they produce approximately 6.2 tonnes in a week on average, giving a total of 322 tonnes per year. The 540 households that supplied information on their waste together contain 1318 people, so the average amount of waste each person puts out for the bin-lorry each year is roughly 250 kg.

At first glance this would appear to compare favourably with the:

- national average of 415 kg per person per year given by the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- district average of 308 kg per person per year given by Suffolk Coastal District Council

However these figures include street sweepings and waste taken to civic amenity sites such as that at Foxhall Road.

The survey showed that 326 households in the parish used the recycling facilities at Foxhall Road, but no data were collected to throw light on the amount of parish waste going to landfill via Foxhall Road or other sites.

It is probable that, were such material taken into account, the parish would produce about average waste for Suffolk Coastal District.

	Amount of household waste, including material separated for recycling	Amount of waste going to landfill	Percentage recycled or composted
Average national figure quoted by DEFRA	<i>500 kg* per person per year</i>	<i>308 kg* per person per year</i>	<i>National average 17%</i>
Average figure quoted by Suffolk Coastal District Council	<i>433 kg* per person per year</i>	<i>322 kg* per person per year</i>	<i>District average 28.77%</i>
Average amount collected in parish of Grundisburgh & Culpho		<i>250 kg per person per year</i>	
Amount measured by one household (3 persons) in the parish over 18 month period		<i>33 kg** per person per year</i>	<i>ca. 80%</i>

** these figures include street sweepings (litter and mud) and waste taken to civic amenity sites (e.g. Foxhall Road Household Waste and Recycling Centre)*

*** this figure includes waste taken to Foxhall Road*

However favourably the parish compares with elsewhere, there is still a need to reduce waste. Suffolk currently puts all of our waste into landfill within the county, but the capacity is limited. If, as predicted, local landfill is used up by 2014, the county will need to look at other options like incineration.

To postpone such development as long as possible we need to produce less waste and recycle more. One family in the village has been recording the waste it produces – 33 kg per person per year (nearly 1/10th of the national average). If we were all like that, the lifetime of our existing landfill would stretch way into the future.

3.2 Recycling

The questionnaire looked at the amount of waste produced and the amount recycled.

No. of bags	Using kerbside	Using 'bring' schemes in village	Said would use certain kerbside schemes
Less than 2 full bags left out	271*	85**	215***
2 or more bags left out	277	71	229

* Includes 8 homes which do not put out bags but do use kerb recycling.

** Includes 7 homes which did not say how many black bags and two that do not use black bags.

*** Includes 12 homes which did not say how many black bags and three that do not use black bags.

The results showed that it is predominantly the people who already recycle who are interested in the kerbside collections. It would take more than simply providing kerbside collections to change the habits of the non-recyclers.

This suggests that it would take more than simply providing kerbside collections to change the habits of the non-recyclers.

That does not mean that additional facilities should not be provided, but that there will need to be a two pronged approach: (1) seeing where/how extra facilities could be provided (2) identifying what would motivate people who don't recycle, to do so.

Action:

- identify and, where possible, introduce additional recycling facilities
- investigate how the charity collections could be co-ordinated
- collate information on the different initiatives and facilities that are available and circulate this information to every household in the parish: ideally with the assistance of the 'Grundisburgh and District News'.

4 HEDGES

Analysing the results of the comments about hedges resulted in two main concerns:

1. saving the existing hedges
2. managing of hedges where they caused an obstruction

The Focus Group discussed these during their meetings and it was decided to address both these issues in the following ways:

1. Saving the existing hedges:

A group of villagers had taken part in the Suffolk Hedgerow Survey which took place between 2003 and 2005. The findings of this survey indicated the most common species growing in the hedges, their location and where there were gaps in the area

2. Maintenance of hedges

Residents voiced their concern that certain hedges were badly maintained, causing either visual or physical obstruction

Action 1. *Arrange for articles to be published in the Grundisburgh and District News on*

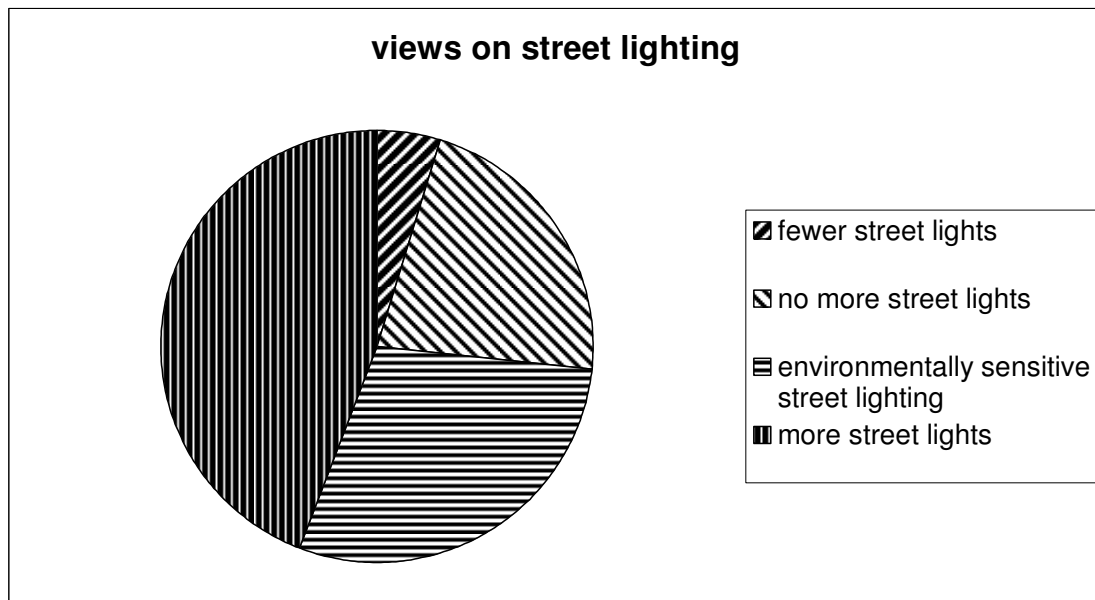
- *the importance of hedges*
- *how to maintain them in an environmentally friendly way*
- *how to report an obstructing hedge so that appropriate authorities can inspect it and take appropriate action*

Action 2. *The assistance of specialist organisations such as the Suffolk Wildlife Trust should be sought*

5 STREET LIGHTING

5.1 Street lighting and the Environment

The questionnaire asked people what they wanted in terms of street lighting and other amenities. The results showed that the village was evenly divided between those wanting more and those wanting less street lighting.



The Focus Group discussed the possibility that those wanting more do not so much want traditional street lighting i.e. high columns illuminating the whole of the highway, as low intensity pedestrian lighting along unlit footways. Locations where there was considered to be a particular hazard were:

- to the rear of the Parish rooms
- the bridge adjacent to Williams' Stores.

Street lighting is a priority in built up areas where personal safety is an issue, and where pedestrians and cyclists are at risk on heavily trafficked roads. Street lighting can be reassuring but in a rural situation such as Grundisburgh crime and traffic are extremely low and it is questionable whether the cost or visual and environmental detrimental effects of street lights could be justified.

Insects, especially moths, are out and feeding at night. Low intensity street lighting will disrupt their flight, a high level will repel them altogether. This means that plants that should be pollinated by them could remain unfertilised. The population of bats,

toads, shrews and other creatures that feed on insects will also be affected, and so we move up the food chain.

A survey carried out in a garden in Post Mill Orchard recorded 340 different kinds of moth - more than twice the number of species than the recorder had seen during twenty years at his previous home in West London. He believes the different light levels at night to be a major reason for the difference.

The importance of darkness to native wildlife is recognised in the Clean Neighbours and Environment Bill that has recently come before parliament. It intends to “extend the list of statutory nuisances to include light pollution and nuisance for insects”. In other words, we will have to balance carefully the legitimate desire of many residents for some lighting with the legally backed right of nocturnal life to have darkness.

Recognising this and mindful of energy costs, local authorities are moving towards less harmful lighting e.g. sodium lighting and providing lamps that shine downwards, reducing the upward light. However a glow from street lighting still enters the night sky. Even in the skies above Grundisburgh many objects that should be visible to the naked eye are obscured by light pollution- an example was the Comet Machholz in January 2005. This was clearly visible in rural Norfolk- but locally almost undetectable.

The Focus Group concluded that additional street lighting should not be provided within the village. Where new developments are constructed and the developer is obliged to provide street lighting, the alternative of providing low intensity pedestrian lighting should be formally considered.

Action 3. Research the availability of low level pedestrian lighting such as that used in many caravan parks

Action 4. Research the various types of street lighting that are low energy and designed to point downwards, rather than light up the night sky

6 VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall is a community amenity, for the use of people in the parish. As such it should be located where it is easily accessed and to minimise the number of people who will need to motor to it.

Although the group appreciates that good car parking would enhance its usefulness as an income generating facility, the group feels that it should primarily be for the local community and thus geared towards people who cycle or walk to it.

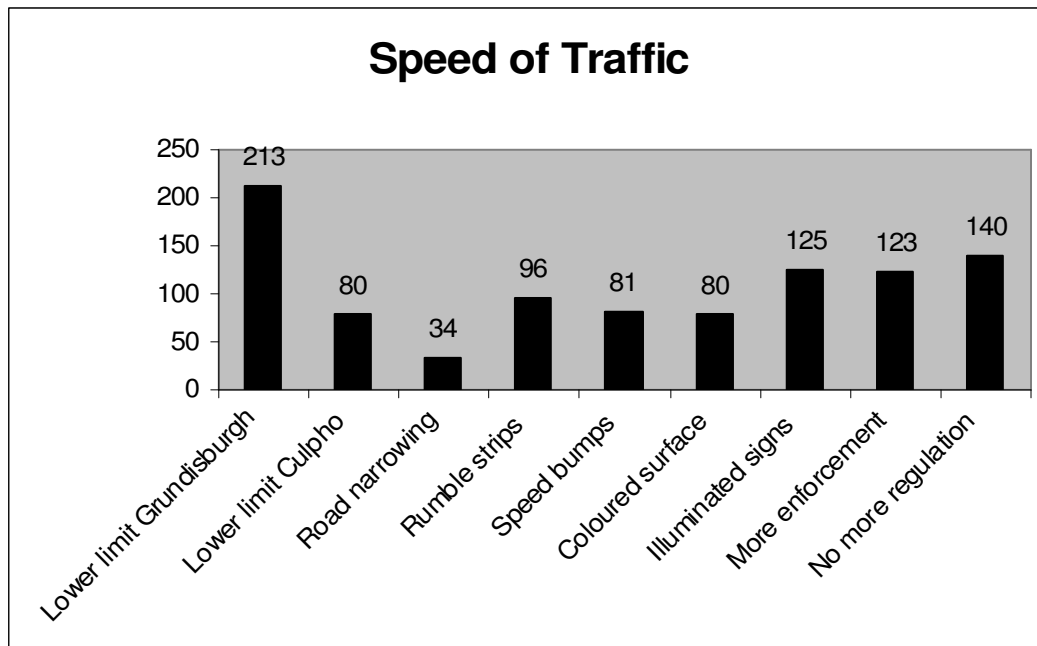
7 TRAFFIC CALMING

Concerns about traffic calming fell into three categories:

- speeding in the villages of Grundisburgh and Culpho
- lorries
- cycling

7.1 speeding

The village was asked to suggest what it thought were the best ways to curb speeding.



The above chart shows the parishes preferences on the different proposals to reduce speeding

The most popular choice was to reduce the speed limit in the centre of Grundisburgh (213) backed up with illuminated signs (125) and enforcement such as cameras (123).

This approach may well have some impact on speeding, but it begs two questions: how much will it cost? Will it curb the speeding issue over the long term? The focus groups feel that those who really want to speed are not put off by the prospect of fines but need a different incentive to slow down.

Richard Girling, Senior Feature Writer at the Sunday Times reported that “it is now widely accepted that ‘soft’ traffic controls often work better than hard architecture. Narrow roads with bends in them, for example, can do more to improve driver behaviour than wide straight ones”. Similarly, he goes on that “traffic slows down rather than accelerates when the central line is removed”. Ipswich is trying this approach at Handford Road where traffic accidents have gone down since the removal of all lines and signs at what had previously been an accident hot spot.

Grundisburgh seems to be both making it easier for motor vehicles to speed and wanting them to slow down.

Vehicles can speed more easily when roads are geared more for vehicles than people or cyclists. There are no signs or facilities for anything other than motor vehicles on, say, the Woodbridge Road so it is little wonder that we drive as if the vehicle were king. In Tuddenham, for example, the opposite approach has been taken. There is a pavement and then parked cars. Between them they reduce the road to a single lane: infuriating when people are in a hurry – but no-one speeds through that village.

In recent years, new off-road parking bays have been created in the gardens of houses on Rose Hill and elsewhere and the questionnaire showed that there was concern about parked cars. The view of the Environmental Focus Group is that, in the main, parked cars are valuable as a means of slowing traffic and that there should be a slowing of gardens being made over for off-road parking. The beauty of the village is in its cottage gardens and central green.

7.2 Lorries

There is widespread concern about the number of large vehicles, particularly articulated lorries, using the narrow lanes in and around the parish. They constitute safety hazards as well as causing noise, vibration, pollution and damage to verges, road surfaces and drains. Much of the problem stems from the haulage and storage depot at the former wartime Debach Airfield and the nearby duck farm, as well as from the increasing size of agricultural vehicles and machinery.

In 1997 the parish council convened a meeting with seven neighbouring parishes to make practical and positive representations to the Planning and Highway Authority. To support this, a number of traffic surveys were carried out to show that the number of lorries, as well as all traffic, was increasing. The result of this was that specific lorry routes were brought into effect in 1998 as part of the County Council Lorry Management Study – specifically introducing a one-way system with heavy goods vehicles (HGV) entering the area from the A12 near Bredfield and leaving on the Woodbridge Road to rejoin the A12 at the Wyevale roundabout.

In the survey, the village was asked to what it thought about this route. 430 households voted in favour of the one-way system, 59 voted against it, 77 were undecided.

Other one way routes have been introduced for HGVs, and further traffic surveys have been undertaken in the parish (in 2000 and 2004).

The seven parishes, which originally met in 1997 to form SORR (Save Our Rural Roads), have grown to 15 parishes. In 2001 the county council prepared a Local Area Action Plan covering this area and another one is in preparation at the moment. Generally, developments likely to use HGVs are not given planning permission unless they have almost direct access to a major road like the A12. A recent planning appeal on a proposed development in Grundisburgh was dismissed because it would have brought more HGVs into the area.

Action 5. The EFG supports the work that SORR and the Parish Council is doing and asks that they keep up the pressure to stop – and ultimately decrease - the growth of HGVs using the narrow roads in the parish.

7.3 Cycling

A number of the transport-related questions included questions about cycling. Whilst there is a healthy number of people (65) for whom cycling was declared as their major means of transport (with 86 people using their bicycle daily and 134 weekly) there was also a clear desire for improved facilities for cyclists and a strong indication that such facilities would encourage greater use; the most significant factors governing people's decision not to cycle more regularly were concerns about safety (388 people) and the length of the journey (346). Taking these factors into consideration, alongside evidence that the majority of journeys currently made are within the Parish (80%), there seems to be a good opportunity to encourage greater use of bicycles through improved facilities for cycling both within and beyond the Parish.

Of particular concern, is the very low number of children that cycle to school: 6 within the Parish and 0 outside of the Parish. The reality is that within a generation cycling to schools outside of the Parish – for example, Farlingaye or Woodbridge – which would at one time have been the primary mode of transport, has virtually

stopped, with children and parents favouring the school bus. With the incessant rise in obesity amongst children, the Government is currently campaigning to increase cycle use and Sustrans – a cycle-promoting charity, well known for its national network of cycle routes - is actively promoting safe routes to schools. It is likely that, as demonstrated so effectively at Kesgrave, a safe cycle route to school from Grundisburgh to Woodbridge would encourage more people, especially children to cycle to school, with all the benefits that would bring: reduced car use (especially school-run), reduced pollution, increased fitness, reduced obesity. Of note, the Chief Medical Officer recommends: ...at least 60 minutes of moderate physical activity each day for children and 30 minutes a day for adults at least 5 days a week.

In total 162 people indicated a desire to see more cycle paths, predominantly within the Parish and between Woodbridge and the village. However it should also be noted that other measures can also significantly increase cycle-user safety. In fact the Cyclist's Touring Club recommends the following hierarchy of considerations in order of preference:-

- a) Traffic reduction
- b) Traffic calming and restraint
- c) Junction treatment and traffic management
- d) Redistribution of space on the carriageway
- e) Cycle lanes and cycle tracks

Action 6. To develop a report detailing proposals to encourage greater cycling both within and outside of the Parish.

Action 7. To investigate opportunities to increase cycling proficiency training at Grundisburgh School.

8 OVERALL ACTION ON TRAFFIC CALMING, CYCLING AND LORRIES

The Environmental Focus Group felt that it needed to engage the parish in a different way of thinking about roads; changing the emphasis from the road being the preserve of the motor car to the thinking that they are routes along which pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists are equal partners with motor vehicles. This may seem idealistic, but decades ago it would have been unthinkable that town centres would be pedestrian only, yet today we recognise that amenity value increases as the dominance of motor transport is reduced.

In practical terms, this means:

Action 8. favouring bends and parked cars as ways of slowing down traffic

Action 9. encouraging the use of road markings or Cyclist Priority Routes, like those along Felixstowe Road near Tesco's (to mark out areas for pedestrians and cyclists.)

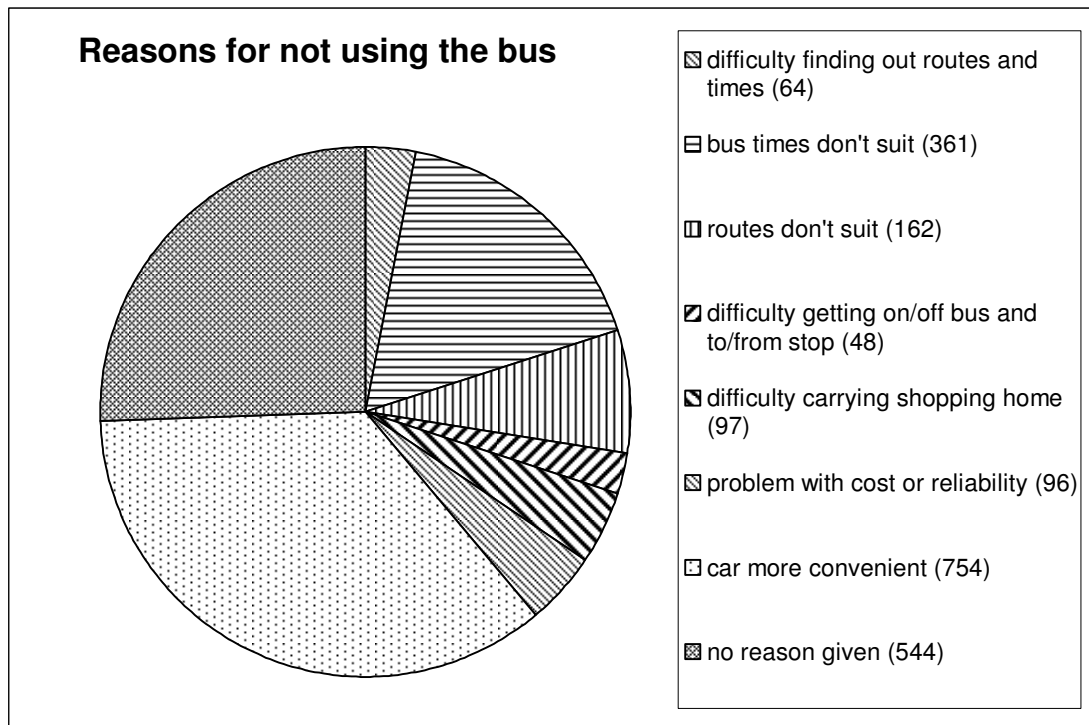
There was also the suggestion that greater use might be made of the project carried out at Grundisburgh School on traffic.

9 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Environmental Focus Group felt that many other groups would be looking at local bus services. It fully supports moves to increase the use of public transport over cars.

The results of the questionnaire showed that most people had no opinion on the bus service, suggesting that it is not widely used. Fewer than 40 said that they use it regularly during the week.

Asked why people don't use the bus, the vast majority said that the car was more convenient, yet there were other reasons.



The above diagram shows that the majority of people either offered no reason for not using the local bus service (544) or said that the car was more convenient (754).

162 people said that the routes didn't suit them. In answer to another question, 273 people said they would like a bus to Ipswich Station and 243 favoured a bus to Ipswich hospital.

Although it was not specifically highlighted in the questionnaire, it is known that a problem is the time of the last bus out of Ipswich. It is too early to be used by people who work 9-5 in town.

Actions

It is recognised that the parish council has already had many meetings about the bus service to/from the parish, but the environmental focus group suggests that the following actions could be taken:

Action 10. 64 households stated that they had difficulty finding out about routes and times. It is suggested that copies of the timetables posted at the bus stops on Grundisburgh Green are issued to each house in Grundisburgh and Culpho as an insert to the Grundisburgh and District News.

Action 11. Every opportunity is taken to represent the parish at meetings about local buses held at Suffolk County Council (contact Peter Lee)

10 SHOPPING

The Environmental Focus Group noted that 16-35% of parish residents used local shops – particularly the farm shop - for groceries (fresh fruit & vegetables, meat, fish).

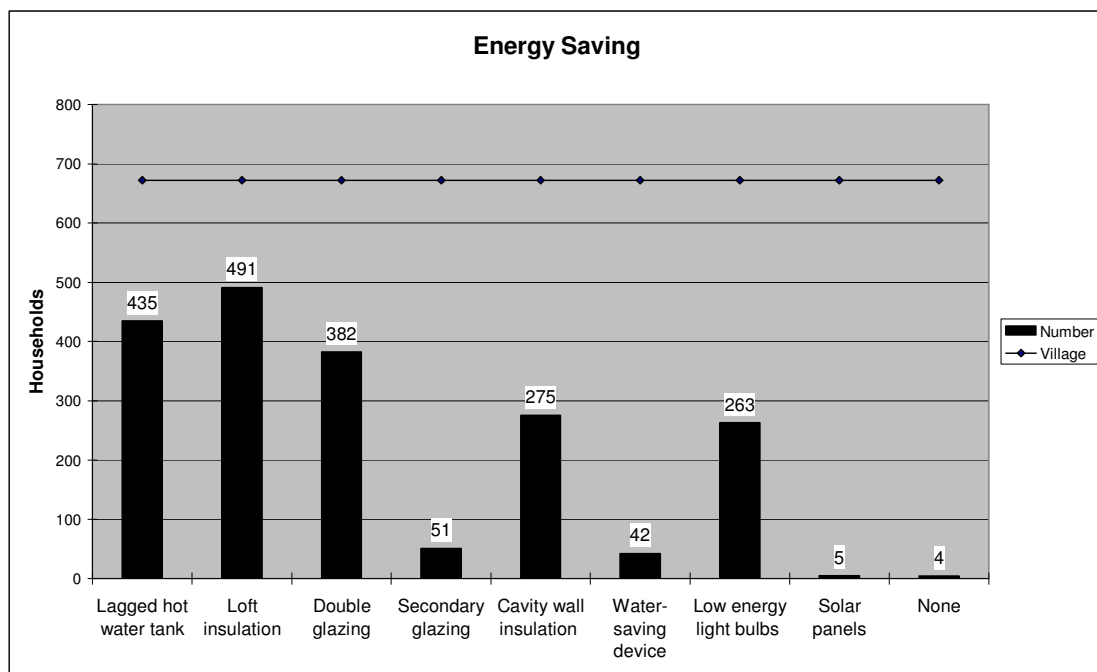
Local, of course, can have too meanings: that the shop is local or that the produce is local, minimising the numbers of miles travelled for the shopper to get to the shops and the number of miles for the produce to get to the shop. The farm shop is listed on a website called www.BigBarn.co.uk which was established to help people find outlets for local produce. It shows other places near the parish where local produce can be obtained.

The advantages of supporting local shops and buying local produce are that:

- transport costs are minimised
- by buying local produce, people put money back into the local economy and support local jobs. There is something nonsensical about importing, say, bacon while local pig farmers go out of business.
- freshness: the shorter the distance to travel, the more likely that the produce will be fresh
- reduced packaging: when distances are reduced, its usually possible to reduce the amount of packaging needed to protect the produce. This means that less waste is generated.

11 ENERGY

The results of the questionnaire suggest that there already is an awareness of energy efficiency in the parish with a reasonable number of houses reporting loft insulation (491), lagged hot water tanks (435) and that there is a disappointing uptake of low energy light bulbs with just 263 households saying that they use them.



6 households also reported having solar panels for hot water and one for electricity generation (if you'd be prepared to identify yourself, the environmental focus group would be delighted if you'd share your experiences with us)

Interestingly of the 455 households who answered the question on energy saving grants, only 154 said that they would like more information on them.

There is considerable help available for households to become more energy efficient and, in so doing, reduce their energy bills. The Environmental Focus Group has identified sources and means for getting this assistance to Grundisburgh and Culpho.

Action 12. encourage more households to use low energy light bulbs, ideally by offering one or two free bulbs to each household in the parish (This action is being put in place immediately with low energy light bulbs being distributed with this report)

Action 13. use the Grundisburgh and District News and other means to distribute information on domestic energy efficiency

12 MOBILE 'PHONES

It is extraordinary that exactly the same number of people (247) want better mobile 'phone coverage in the village as don't (247).

It is difficult to assess whether those who wanted better service are also prepared to have more and/or bigger masts. These would be needed to improve conventional mobile 'phone service as the parish is hilly so a number of houses will be shadowed by these hills from one or more masts. It is therefore recommended that people make some enquiries from their immediate neighbours about which services work for them as reception is bound to be quirky across the parish.

Another alternative is to have a dual broadband / mobile service in which the mobile 'phone calls are placed over the broadband system whilst in the house and through a conventional mobile network outside. This may be a better solution for parishioners than having more masts. BT offers such a service, called Fusion.

Action 14. provide information on the consequences (more masts) of asking for better mobile coverage

Action 15. provide information on alternatives

13 WATER

It is thought that the vast majority of households, if not all, have mains water (526 reported having it).

332 households in the village have water meters, showing that there is a relationship there between what they use and what they pay for. For that reason, many environmentalists are in favour of water meters for all.

42 households reported using water saving devices.

Mains water is supplied by Anglia Water from a borehole at Pettistree which extracts it from water-bearing limestone strata (hence the fact that it is so hard and furs up kettles and taps). It is known that many people have water softeners. As many of these use salt, they join dishwashers in discharging salt first to sewage treatment works, then to our water courses. The Environmental Focus Group would like to see if measures could be taken to reduce that salt output.

48 households reported having septic tanks suggesting that, as suspected, the majority of the parish is on mains sewerage. In Grundisburgh this is taken to a sewage treatment works north of Lower Road and, after treatment, the water is put into the river. This increases the amount of water in the river and is a reason why sewage is an important consideration in any future significant developments in the village. There will come a point when the river can take no more water. In wet weather, it already bursts its banks downstream of the sewage works.

A final point about water and development is the effect of run-off. When rain falls on fields or gardens, it soaks into the soil. If these are covered with buildings, it falls on roofs and hard surfaces and pours off much more quickly into our rivers. For example, run-off from the Alice Driver development is taken by pipe directly into the river.

So without careful planning, development can have the double effect of adding more treated sewage water and more run-off to a river already prone to flooding.

Action

It is recommended that a mechanism is set up to ensure that sewage and run-off are taken into consideration in any proposed significant developments.

It is also suggested that information be collated and published on:

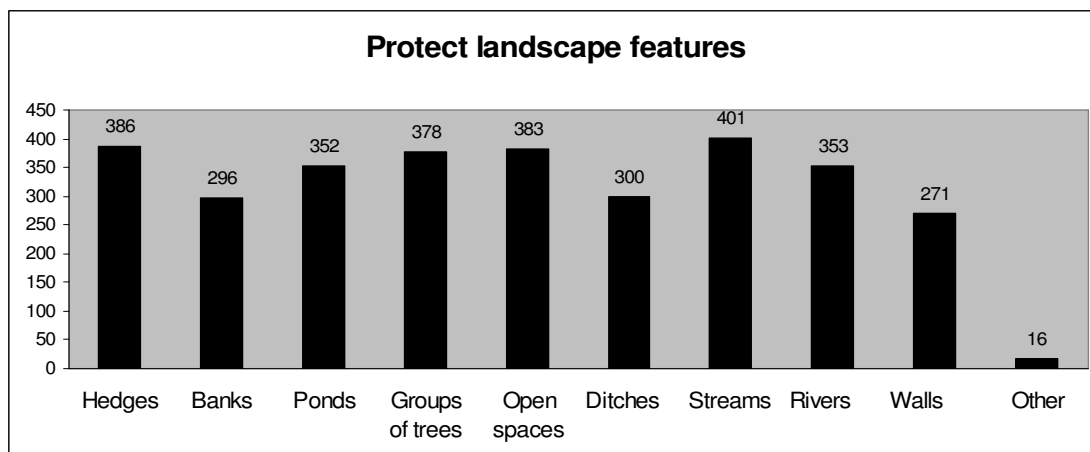
Action 16. It is also suggested that information be collated and published on water saving techniques

Action 17. It is also suggested that information be collated and published on low/no salt water softeners

14 PLANNING AND NATURE CONSERVATION

In 1992 there was a major international conference on the environment. It was held in Rio de Janeiro and called “The World Summit on Environment and Development” and was attended by close to 200 governments. Much of today’s policy on the environment stems from that Earth Summit, among it the notion that sustainable development should give equal weight to the economy, human need and the environment. Thirteen years on and we feel this in the increased number of laws to give us clean air and water and to protect our wildlife.

Results of the parish survey also showed that wildlife features were important to the residents of Grundisburgh and Culpho.



Interestingly more people were interested in conserving water features (streams, ponds etc) than in conserving trees. Nevertheless more than half the population expressed support for their conservation.

Action

It is proposed that developments in the parish be considered on their environmental criteria, as well as other considerations. Conversations with the chair of the Parish Council Planning Sub-Committee suggested that a mechanism could be put in place to copy key planning proposals to the Environmental Focus Group to add to the environmental issues already identified by the Planning Sub-Committee.

It is also proposed that a mechanism be developed to get people better informed about the environmental zoning in the parish, in particular, the boundaries and significance of the Conservation Zone.

15 MECHANISMS FOR ACTION

The Environmental Focus Group (EFG) is interested in continuing to meet after the parish plan report has been delivered to the parish council. It recognises that the recommendations are being made to the parish council and that it is up to the parish council to determine how they be actioned. However, the group is volunteering its services as it believes that it can implement many/all of the environmental proposals.

The EFG chair has met with various members of the parish council to discuss ways forward. The proposal is that:

- the environmental focus group (EFG) has a formal relationship with the Parish Council which involves:
 - copying its minutes to the Parish Clerk
 - reporting either direct to the Parish Council or via the Footpaths and Consideration sub-committee, whichever route the Parish Council feels more appropriate (If it reports to the Footpaths and Conservation sub-committee, it is suggested that a member of the EFG is co-opted onto that sub-committee)
- the EFG has a mechanism to encourage new members, recognising that there are a number of people in the village who have experience of the environment, in particular on projects in the parish
- the EFG elects its chair by secret ballot every January, starting in January 2006

REPORT FROM THE LOCAL BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP

As well as the flyer going to all households inviting parishioners to join the focus groups, as many local businesses as possible were written to in order to make them aware of the local business focus group. We have to be honest, the response was not overwhelming and the resulting focus group comprised of just three people. We must not however be negative about this as it is fair to assume that this lack of response indicates that there are not any major problems for local businesses in the parish.

Nevertheless, the Business Focus Group did agree that there should be a small section in the Parish Plan Questionnaire in order to help maintain and possibly improve what seems to be a good environment for local business and employment. The following is based on the Focus Group's analysis of the data resulting from the questionnaire.

1 EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

The provided statistics from the questionnaire compare with national statistics as follows:

The Office of National Statistics (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>) is quoting 25.1% unemployment in the 3 months to September 2005. The figures for Grundisburgh and Culpho indicate approximately 12.2% of those of working age are not employed, i.e. half the national average. Comparing the figures for those people "Economically Active", Grundisburgh and Culpho has approximately 3.1% unemployed compared to the national average of 4.7%.

2 PLACE OF WORK

There are a significant number of people now working from home. This probably correlates to the national reversal of the previous trend (1960s – 1980s) of a decline in home working. Combined with the number of people working in the parish, it seems that we are a hive of industry – albeit that much of it is not very visible. The Business Focus Group feels that the increase in people being in the parish during the working day is, overall, likely to be a good thing:

- less travel, which is good for the environment and means that people are not having to waste so much time on journeys;
- potentially more customers for other local businesses, particularly the shops, post office and pub
- more people being about during the day is likely to help security, i.e. deter some crime

We should not ignore the fact that in some instances, the increase in home-working may mean that more houses are being lit and heated during the working day.

In considering the needs of helping local business, the Focus Group considered that the following are important

- maintenance of good roads and utilities
- good telecommunications
- good local facilities – shops and notably the post office

With reference to local business and telecommunications, it was noted that ???

There are also a lot of people who commute to work outside of the parish – the majority work within the Suffolk area but unsurprisingly others travel long distances,

e.g. London. The Business Focus Group considered that transport issues would be addressed by those Focus Groups specifically looking at related issues.

Place of Work Action Points:

Action 18. Investigate methods of improving mobile phone services. Does this mean increased coverage or informing parishioners of those suppliers who do have good coverage?

3 BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Once again, it seems that relatively few people encounter barriers to work. The Focus Group felt that although there is not a parish wide problem, it is important that the community recognise that some people do encounter problems. The most significant problem is child care, both in terms of availability and cost. The Focus Group noted that childcare issues also seemed to be combined with problems of access to transport.

The Business Focus Group felt that the only appropriate action that could be taken at parish level is to highlight this fact both in this report and in the action plan.

Barriers to Employment Action Points:

Action 19. Highlight childcare issues being the most significant barrier to employment within the parish.

Action 20. Refer childcare related transport issue in review of transport issues.

4 TYPES OF BUSINESS

There is quite a variety of businesses in the parish and relatively few problems identified as hindering business development within the Parish. The Local Business Focus Group considered that the most obvious way of the Parish Plan helping local business would be to update and publish the Grundisburgh Guide which includes a parish business directory. This would help advertise local businesses to our community and thereby possibly increase their customer base. At this initial stage, it is envisaged that a hard-copy version of the guide will be sold in the village shops and post office. However the guide will also be made available on the X website. It was felt that whereas it is only really practicable to update the hard-copy version on an annual basis, the online guide could be updated on a more on-going basis.

Types of Business Action Points:

Action 21. Re-publish Grundisburgh Guide (both as hard-copy and on the web) with a local business directory. Aim to maintain regular updates.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS AND ACTIONS

Authors: John Doherty and Steve Sim

1 LEISURE FACILITIES

1.1 Village Hall

The Parish Council have been trying to acquire a new site for a village hall and were looking to this survey to show the level of demand for a new hall and to indicate which facilities it should provide.

Support for a new village hall was strong with 359 households in favour (63%), 156 against and 51 undeclared. It is perhaps not surprising that the existing facilities no longer meet the needs of the village considering the growth of the community since the village halls was built, and indeed since the last village appraisal in the 1980s.

Village Hall Location.

Suggestions for a suitable location for a new hall were provided by 235 respondents as listed below. The majority of the suggested locations (157 (67%)) were for within the vicinity of the existing village hall and playing fields, including 6 to extend or replace the existing pavilion. There were only 21 suggestions for the top of Stoney Road where the Parish Council had investigated a potential site recently.

New Village Hall - Suggested Locations

Opposite existing village hall	54
Playing Field	40
Chapel Field	36
Top of Stoney Road	21
Centre of village	20
Outskirts of village	8
Other	39

1.2 Village Hall Facilities.

There are plenty of suggestions on the type of facilities required and those who voted in favour of a new hall identified the facilities ranked below as their main priorities.

1.3 What facilities would you like provided in a new village hall?

Village Hall Facilities	Number
Large car park	304
Large main hall	294
More self contained rooms	165
Large stage	199
Better sound/lighting provision	194
Bar area	238
Facilities for sporting activities	209
Facilities for village societies	248
Facilities for social functions	263
Large kitchen/food preparation area	294
More storage space	154
Other	16

Action 22. A modern village hall will have a beneficial effect on all age groups and be able to support the many varied interests the twenty-first century will introduce. The existing one has served our, much expanded, rural community very well in the twentieth century. The Parish Council needs to plan its resources to address this issue and to dedicate a committee to keep the village communities advised of its progress in securing a new hall.

2 SPORTS

Question no.12.2 on new sports clubs also gave useful information into the facilities that would be welcomed in a new hall, or on the playing field. The strongest demand was for badminton with 180 people expressing an interest, which would place requirements on the dimensions of a new hall. Other sports with a strong demand eg snooker and pool, might best be provided in additional side rooms. There was a strong interest in yoga, which could be provided in the existing village hall.

There is good support for cricket, but the cricket strip at the playing field has been removed and the former Grundisburgh team is now merged with that from a nearby village.

Action 23. Approach the Playing Field Management Committee and members of the combined Grundisburgh/Coddenham Cricket club to see whether cricket can be re-established in the village.

2.1 Which new sports clubs/activities/facilities would you use in Grundisburgh and Culpho if they were provided?

Sports	Number
Hockey	27
Cricket	45
All weather pitch	90
Football	67
Badminton	180
Billiards	24
Darts	29
Judo	25
Pool table	99
Snooker	109
Volleyball	34
Yoga	151
Other	27
Total	907

3 CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

A number of new clubs and societies were suggested in response to question 12.3, including several which could be provided without the need for additional facilities, as shown below. The strongest demand is for a Rambling Club, but there is also strong interest in Art, young people's drama and the University of the Third Age (<http://www.u3a.org.uk/>), as shown below.

3.1 Which new clubs/activities would you attend in Grundisburgh and Culpho if they were provided?

Clubs	Number
Whist drive/bridge	47
U3A (University of Third Age)	64
Allotment Association	25
Rambling Club	118
Art Club	74
Choir	31
Music Society	57
Band	24
Young people's drama group	43
Creative arts	61
Other	14
Total	558

Action 24. Advise GADS (Grundisburgh Amateur Dramatic society) of the interest in a young people's drama group.

Action 25. Advise the existing walking group of the strong interest in rambling, with a view to either expanding or advertising the current activity, or facilitating the establishment of a new rambling club.

Action 26. Facilitate the creation of an Arts club (any volunteers on tear-off sheets?)

4 PLAYING FIELD FACILITIES

The survey indicates that there is good usage of the main facilities on the playing field, including the new children's play equipment.

4.1 Which of these facilities at the playing field do you use?

Playing field facilities	Number
The main ground	177
The tennis courts	127
The children's play area	222
The pavilion	109
Scout hut	71
Car boot sale	215
Total	921

Action 27. In response to the question on potential additional facilities, those for older children received the most mentions (21), including the comment "there isn't even a swing", but only a small number specifically requested a skate-board (7) or BMX (4) facility. The question on the children's play equipment also raised the issue of facilities for older children.

5 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Opinion on the new children's play area on the playing field was generally positive as shown below.

5.1 Are the new facilities provided in the children's play area?

New Children's Facilities	Number
Good	347
Reasonable	153
Poor	106
No opinion	295
Total	901

However, although there were many positive comments on their use by young children, 53 people expressed the need for play equipment for older children (mostly age 7-12, but there were some comments that the new swings were too small even for their 5 year olds).

Action 28. The playing field management committee and/or Parish Council should look into providing play facilities for children in the 5-12 age range.

5.2 Parish Rooms

The Parish Rooms were renovated following the previous village appraisal. Only 30% of households reported that they use the Parish Rooms in this current survey, but a strong majority of those (148 out of 170) find the building adequate for their needs. Most suggestions for potential improvements were for the kitchen area (7) and heating (3), with a small number of comments on improving access and the toilets. One suggestion is for an information panel giving a short history of the building, and this could be met by using the article on the Parish Rooms in the Local History Society magazine.

Action 29. Forward the list of suggested improvements to the Parish Room Trustees for their consideration.

6 TRANSPORT

Private Cars

The responses to the questions on transport confirm that most households rely on the car as their main form of transport, with a majority of households having more than one car. Almost 1000 respondents use the car as their major means of transport, with 103 using the bus and only 40 using the bike as their single major means. However, 179 respondents do use the bus for travel outside the village, and walking is popular within the village. 48 households have no car.

Community Transport

40 respondents say that they use the community transport scheme, but more than 500 were unaware of its existence.

Action 30. Contact organisers of the community transport scheme and recommend publicity to raise awareness. Depending on the response to the publicity, consider whether it could usefully be expanded.

Car Sharing

A strong majority of respondents (874) say they would not take part in a car-sharing scheme. However, there are 36 people already car-sharing for travel outside the parish, and 10 within, and 80 people saying they would be prepared to take part.

Action 31. The Parish Council should facilitate the establishment of a car-sharing scheme

6.1 Traffic

Action 32. The Parish Council should work with the Highways department to identify acceptable schemes for further speed reduction in the centre of the village.

(note: the Parish Council have already been discussing how to achieve this on the access road in front of the old school and church.)

Action 33. The Parish Council should inform the highways department of the danger spots highlighted in the survey with a view to negotiating safety improvements.

6.2 Services

Action 34. The Parish Council should facilitate the establishment of a good neighbour scheme. (re: Q50_)

Two actions proposed in response to the relatively low scores on satisfaction with the police service and coverage, the high concern over crime, and low awareness of the neighbourhood watch scheme

Action 35. The neighbourhood watch scheme should be publicised and advice sought from the police how it can be used to minimise crime and increase public confidence.

Action 36. The Parish Council should discuss the responses to police service and coverage, and the concerns over crime, with our community police officer to see how these issues can be addressed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOCUS GROUP

The group's original list of interests was restricted to the four categories itemised in our last communication of 11th May 2004. At that time we were guided to confine our attention to these main issues rather than a lengthy list of subjects, which for the most part, we understood would be covered by other focus groups. This report, therefore, is confined to those original matters, except that, the issues are now only three due to the fourth recommendation being excluded from the final questionnaire. Please note our order of priority is now governed by the level of importance indicated by the collective responses from the villagers for these three issues.

It should also be noted that none of the Local Government type issues shown in the Westerfield Report (page 36 - item 8.11) were considered by our group and were not included in the Grundisburgh and Culpho questionnaire.

1 VILLAGE HALL

References: Sections 75 to 77 of the Data Analysis Report. (Pages 31-32 of the Westerfield draft plan).

75. New Village Hall - Yes or No

Of 566 returns (100%)	Yes:	359 (63%)
	No:	156 (28%)
	Undeclared:	51 (9%)

With 63% of households indicating a new village hall is wanted it is clearly a significant majority in comparison to the number (28%+9%) stating they did not, or were undecided. Clearly the existing facilities do not meet the needs of Grundisburgh and Culpho, which is not surprising considering the growth of these communities since the existing village hall was built.

There are plenty of suggestions on the type of facilities required and where these premises should be placed. The responses have been clear in identifying where the existing facilities are either inadequate or require improvements. In order to gauge this, the 'yes' vote of 359 is examined alongside the overall responses, and listed below in order of importance.

1.1 76. Village Hall Facilities:

Yes vote
100%
=359

% of total
returns
=566

Larger car park	304	85%	54%
A larger main hall	294	82%	52%
Larger kitchen area	294	82%	52%
Facilities for social functions	263	73%	46%
Facilities for village societies	248	69%	44%
Bar area	238	66%	42%
Facilities for sporting activities	209	58%	37%
Larger stage	199	55%	35%
Improved sound/lighting systems	194	54%	34%
More self contained rooms	165	46%	29%
More storage space	154	42%	27%
Others	16	4%	3%

1.2 77. Village Hall Location:

It should be noted those 65% (235) who said 'yes' also provided ideas on a suitable location. Of these ideas 157 (67%) suggested locations generally in the vicinity of the existing Village Hall and Playing Fields.

Existing site:	15 = 6%}	
Opposite existing site:	56 = 24%}	
Playing field:	55 = 23%}	
Chapel field:	31 = 13%}	157 = 67%
Centre of village/allotment area:	26 = 11%	
Top of Stoney Road:	21 = 9 %	
Other locations (no significant grouping):	31 = 13	
Total	235 = 100%	

Action 37. A modern VH will have a beneficial effect on all age groups and be able to support the many varied interests the twenty-first century will introduce. The existing one has served our, much expanded, rural community very well in the twentieth century. The Parish Council needs to plan its resources to address this issue and to dedicate a committee to keep the village communities advised of its progress in securing a new VH.

2 HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

References: The "Planning" sections 40 to 42 of the Data Analysis Report. (Page 21 - section 8.3 "Housing" of the Westerfield draft plan).

2.1 Commercial Development

Overall there is no significant opinion in favour of commercial development. The preference is clearly to retain a rural village environment. If anything, small businesses have some support but clearly opinion is very much against having any small scale industrial workshops.

	In favour		Without opinion	Un-declared	Total
	Yes	No			
Tourism	86	214	126	140	566
	15%	38%	22%	25%	100%
Small Businesses	165	177	107	117	566
	29%	31%	19%	21%	100%
Light Industrial workshops	102	237	94	133	566
	18%	42%	17%	23%	100%
Totals	353	628	327	390	1698
	21%	37%	19%	23%	100%

2.2 41. Whether more Residential Property needed.

(Presently the size of properties in the villages are divided roughly between, 30% small, 41% medium and 29% large. Overall the division is 21% rented properties and 79% owner occupied).

(The questionnaires indicated a small number of villagers were seeking accommodation. Property sizes ranged in quantity as: 29 small, 9 medium and 1 large. Many indicated requirements for sons and daughters, a demand which may have been reduced, following the more recent extension to the Ablitts Meadow development since the questionnaires were completed.

Included among the small dwellings were a requirement for the elderly of 12 properties plus 1 residential).

Overall there is no significant desire for more development within these villages. However, selectively there are some types of dwelling more favoured than others and conversely some that are clearly not favoured at all.

The main support is for 2 bedroom properties and homes for the elderly. More properties of 4 (or more) bedrooms are not desired.

Of the 2 bedroom properties the preference between owner occupied and rented is about equal. For the elderly, however, the preference is two to one in favour of rented accommodation.

Overall, with the exception of executive type homes, rented property is preferred to owner occupier.

Type of Residence	Yes %	No %	% Undeclared	% Owner Occupied	% Rented
1 bedroom	23	25	52	46	54
2 bedroom	37	22	41	49	51
3 bedroom	22	26	52	47	53
4+ bedroom	5	33	62	55	45
Homes for disabled	23	20	57	34	66
Elderly	35	19	46	31	69
Residential care	25	22	53	22	78
Totals	24	24	52	42	58

2.3 42. Types of acceptable Housing Development

Areas for development indicate a preference for affordable housing, like Ablitts Meadow or conversion of redundant buildings. There is only marginal support for developments up to 4 dwellings and no real support for 5 or more dwellings or any desire for more estate like developments.

	% Grundisburgh	% Culpho	% Both
Single	14	19	16
2 to 4 dwellings	21	20	21
5 or more	5	3	4
Estate	1	2	1
Conversion of buildings	26	30	27
Affordable housing	32	26	31
Totals	100%	100%	100%

Action 38. These results should be conveyed to Suffolk Coastal District Council's Planning Committee to signify, in the opinion of the residents of Grundisburgh and Culpho, these villages have now received sufficient expansion and the existing boundaries should not be extended by further development unless it is for small plots of affordable homes under the same contractual basis as those which exist in Ablitts Meadow.

3 TRANSPORT

References: The Transport sections 19 to 32 of the Data Analysis Report. (Page 24 - section 8.6 Transport of the Westerfield draft plan).

3.1 19. Private use of cars and vans in Grundisburgh & Culpho.

Of the 566 questionnaires 536 (95%) households indicated they had the use of a car or van. Of these 91% had use of more than one vehicle. Private motor vehicles clearly dominate the mode of village transport as well as village life.

3.2 20. Vehicle use.

Purpose	Journeys	%
Leisure	782	31
Shopping	707	28
Transport to work	485	19
Business journeys	231	9
Transporting children to education	155	6
Other	109	4
Not applicable	59	3

Predominantly journeys are for leisure purposes or shopping (59%) with transport to work or business related journeys representing a further 28%. The remaining 13% are for children's education and other more general needs.

3.3 21. Method's of transport.

Overall, more than 80% of the journey's made involve motorised transport.

(Of this 72% are by privately owned cars or other forms of owned, motorised, transport. Furthermore less than 2% represents car sharing. Bus journey's account for only 6% of the total).

Walking and cycling accounts for the remaining 20%, a much higher percentage for journey's within the villages, where most of this mode of transport occurs. Therefore more awareness of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians within the villages should be emphasised, particularly to encourage more of this activity.

3.4 22. Major means of transport.

Similarly this is dominated by the motor car and the same ratio of percentages, as shown above, are reflected in the choice of transport used.

3.5 23. Community Transport.

Very little usage and responses indicate that a better understanding needs to be communicated if the interest is to be widened or maintained.

3.6 24. Car sharing scheme.

Not seen as a popular transport alternative with only 6% indicated being prepared to participate, and 63% who are not, with a further 31% as being undeclared of any interest. However of those prepared to share their cars the largest interest was for work and leisure purposes.

3.7 25. If you have bicycle how often do you cycle?

The responses indicate there are many cycles, most of which are seldom used.

Only 27% of cycle owners use their bicycles frequently with the majority of cycle owners indicating safety and duration (time and distance) for not using their bikes more often.

3.8 27 - 32. Bus services.

The majority of users are generally satisfied with the overall services. However this disguises specific issues which are indicated as in need of improvement. For example, whilst the fares are seen as reasonable, the reliability and location of bus stopping points in the villages are acceptable, the access to and from buses is considered poor, plus bus timetables need improving. The destination and starting points for all of the bus operators are stereotype with only the journey routes occasionally having slight variations. The services therefore mostly attract shoppers with some smaller use for social and leisure and much smaller use for education, work or medical. A majority of bus users prefer an hourly service in each direction, both by day and during the evenings. Although Westerfield provides access to the UK rail network, and is relatively close to our villages, it is not included in any of our bus operators routes. The village responses, however, do indicate a significant demand for bus services to incorporate Ipswich Station and Heath Road Hospital. Also, and to a lesser extent, Woodbridge Station; where bus connecting facilities are less encouraging than those provided for buses accessing Ipswich Station.

4 TRANSPORT SUMMARY.

Due to the domination of car ownership the volume of traffic through the village by privately owned motor vehicles is causing a variety of problems. This volume of motor traffic and the convenience of car ownership possibly discourages more pedestrian and cyclist activity and is, perhaps, part of the reason why the current bus services are under utilised.

Action 39. Residents of Grundisburgh and Culpho have indicated a wish to retain a village environment within these rural farming communities. The Parish Council must therefore encourage a sensible approach to any traffic controls, suggested by the District and County Councils, caused by the growing volume of motor vehicles. Locally we need to be closely involved in the bus route planning by Suffolk County Council and to assist by encouraging better use of public transport. Certainly direct bus connections to Ipswich Station and Hospital are desirable and should be progressed to a satisfactory conclusion. There is also a need to improve communication for the services provided by the bus companies. Greater use of the many unused bicycles in the villages needs to be encouraged.

Certainly a strong Parish Council continuing to interface with the higher political bodies, who control our use of transport, is the only way of ensuring the wishes of these communities are maintained in the best interests of both villages.

OVER-60S FOCUS GROUP

A major problem is that there is seen to be a lack of help, especially when temporary aid is needed because of illness or accident, and that people do not appear to be aware of the help available e.g. e.g. Help the Aged, Age Concern, Community Transport Service, Neighbourhood Watch.

Action 40. Article in Grundisburgh News, Posters.

Action 41. Campaign to recruit local people willing to provide help in cleaning, shopping, cooking, driving, personal care, under some supervisory umbrella given the current worries about positive vetting.

Action 42. A volunteer service to deliver prescriptions for the elderly/disabled is set up.

Action 43. An official Good Neighbour scheme needs to be set up.

There is a need for accommodation for the elderly (and handicapped?). People get very disoriented and lonely when moved to Woodbridge, Felixstowe, etc.

Action 44. Approach Social Services and private organisations to see if there is a possibility of building sheltered accommodation in Grundisburgh.

Older people find it difficult to get round some parts of Grundisburgh and Culpho; traffic speed, parking and footpaths all cause concern.

Action 45. More dropped kerbs to help wheelchair users (and pushchairs) and those with stiff knees!

Action 46. More footpaths, especially Woodbridge Road from Half Moon Lane to Lower Road, perhaps in the field. It would take up only a small slice of the field and provide safety from the traffic. Gaps could be cut in the hedge to provide crossing points.

Action 47. A lower speed limit in the centre of Grundisburgh and around the Culpho Church area.

Action 48. Possibly a one-way system round the grass in front of the Dog.

Action 49. Enforce no parking on kerbs. Possibly have parking on alternate sides of the road on alternate months to avoid the chicanes, particularly on Rose Hill/Ipswich Road, Post Mill Gardens, and Stoney Road.

The three shops in Grundisburgh are awkward to get round when using a stick and impossible in a wheelchair. Given the age and layout of the properties there is probably very little that can be done.

Action 50. The Chip and Pin machine in the Post Office could have a long lead to enable it to be taken down below the step.

