ALFRICK AND LULSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

After lots of counting the results of the survey have been analysed. Over one third of questionnaires were returned which is a good result when compared with similar surveys in the past. Overall, the results are not surprising but what they do support is our objective of ensuring the Parish of Alfrick and Lulsley remains a happy place to live and work and that our rural characteristic is maintained.

We could have asked a lot more questions particularly with regard to telecommunications but we felt it was important to keep the questionnaire reasonably concise to ensure that parishioners weren't too put off from completing it. Of course, if we have to deal with anything that may be considered contentious then the proper procedures will be followed and the research undertaken.

Now to the results of the survey.

01.	**The Parish Environment**

There was overwhelming support for support for questions 1 to 4:

1. The parish is fundamentally rural and this characteristic should be retained.
2. Woodland and other belts of trees and hedgerows should be conserved.
3. The natural character of the parish is defined by its dispersed development.
4. The spaces in between development define the character of the parish as much as the buildings.

In each case over 90% of replies either strongly agreed or agreed with these statements.

02.	**Development within the settlement boundary**

The results of this section were closer. 40% of respondents are opposed to any further development within the settlement boundary. By contrast 29% would support further development with the balance giving a neutral response.

03.	**Development outside the settlement boundary**

The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) outlines exceptions for developments outside the defined settlement boundary. The results of these are shown below but generally show that parishioners do not want to see new development outside the settlement boundary. They are, however, more inclined to support conversion of existing buildings, replacement dwellings and dwellings for rural workers than specialist accommodation or affordable developments.

Exception	**% replying strongly disagree or disagree**	**% replying agree or strongly agree**
Small affordable developments	57%	22%
Replacement of existing lawful dwelling	9%	68%
Dwellings for rural workers	30%	36%
Specialist accommodation	64%	14%
Conversion of existing rural buildings	21%	55%
Extensions to retail curtilage	31%	37%

04.	Housing needs in the parish

Before commenting on the results of this section it is worth mentioning the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR). The SWDPR was prepared jointly by the three South Worcestershire Councils (SWC) comprising Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon. The plan sets out the housing and employment supply requirements for South Worcestershire to 2041, the development strategy, the allocated sites for housing and employment opportunities, and planning policies for making decisions on planning applications.

Not surprisingly, the plan focuses on the main urban areas of South Worcestershire and identifies where the principal housing developments are going to be. These are known as the Strategic Housing Allocations (SHA). The Parish of Alfrick and Lulsley does not have any housing allocation under the SHA. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there cannot or will not be any development in the parish. Landowners and builders can still put forward development proposals in our parish. In the SWDPR these are known as windfall developments.

In common with previous surveys parishioners do not want to see any more housing development. Over 65% of respondents thought there was no need for any more housing. The figures for individual housing types are shown in the following table.

Housing Type	% replying strongly disagree or disagree	% replying agree or strongly agree
Affordable housing	55%	21%%
Social housing	67%	13%
Rental properties	63%	10%
Properties for older people	43%	24%
4- and 5-bedroom properties	84%	5%

05.	If additional housing was to be built what type of development would you prefer

Over 90% of those responding do not want to see either a large new estate or development on greenfield sites. 50% of parishioners would support development on a brownfield site (for reference the development at Clay Green Farm was classed as brownfield) against 34% disagreeing.

Conversion of existing buildings saw a majority of 59% in favour with 18% against. Garden infill developments and individually released lots saw a similar c30% in favour with 40% against.

06.	Transport and Highways

Over 50% believe that current traffic volumes in the parish are acceptable with only 15% taking the opposite view. However, 66% of residents believe that speeding is a problem with only 17% saying it is not but the figures for whether traffic calming measures are required are split roughly evenly. There is also a majority of 20% (44% v 24%) who believe that road maintenance is **not** satisfactory.

In terms of safety for walkers, cyclists and horse riders just under 60% said they felt safe on the parishes roads against just over 40% who were not.

07.	Telecommunications

The landline lives. Over 60% still have a landline. It is possible that this reflects the older demographic of the respondents (of which the writer of this is one and yes he does have a landline) but confidence in being able to contact emergency services in the event of a power cut was mixed with 53% believing it wouldn't be a problem with 47% concerned that it would be.

It is very clear that parishioners view having mobile reception both at home and elsewhere within the parish as very important and although 69% say they would support having a 25-metre mast in the parish to guarantee good reception in the parish although the figure falls to 48% if it was in line of sight from home.

Clearly this remains a very sticky topic. I think we will need to try and analyse which operators signals work best where, but we are investigating alternatives. Hopefully, new technology will come to the rescue.

08.	Importance of Parish Facilities

Firstly, an apology. A number of you commented that the Village Hall did not appear on the list of parish facilities. As the Parish Council representative on the VH committee and a user of the VH (mainly table tennis) I can assure parishioners that this was not deliberate. The VH appeared on all the draft questionnaires apart from the final one which went to the printers. For some reason as other items were added the VH dropped off. Poor proof reading on my part is the probable answer. As soon as the error was spotted I emailed the committee with an apology.

The Village Hall is possibly the most important facility in the parish. It is used by a whole host of groups including the Alfrick Players, the Thursday and Gardening Clubs, The WI, Keep Fit, Pilates and even hosts the Parish Council meetings.

The was a large majority that viewed the facilities as listed on the questionnaire as either important or, in most cases, very important. The closest result was for Malvern Dial-a-Ride where 42% thought it was important and 26% did not. The largest positives were for the Village Shop (95%), the Post Office (93%) and access to the footpath network (94%). The bus service, the playing field, the café, and the Knapp and Papermill all saw positive views of more than 80%.

We also now have the boules court which as a council we're pleased to see is being regularly used. A working party is currently looking at upgrading the surface which will mean the temporary cover can be removed. For those who might not know the boule court was funded by a charitable donation which could only be used for recreational purposes.

09.	Use of Parish Facilities

The results of which facilities parishioners use is very different from how their importance is viewed. This shows a very good community spirit – just because I don't use it doesn't mean it isn't important to the village – and it may also reflect the demographic influences especially with such facilities as the play area, playing field and tennis court.

The village shop, café and post office are all very widely used and the Alfrick Show remains extremely popular as this year's event once again showed.

The table below shows the results for some of the other facilities.

	IMPORTANCE 1 = NOT IMPORTANT 5 = VERY IMPORTANT					USAGE 1 = DON'T USE 5 = USE REGULARLY				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Bus Service	7%	5%	12%	15%	61%	54%	18%	14%	3%	11%
Church	14%	3%	19%	17%	47%	44%	22%	13%	3%	17%
Play Area	5%	3%	17%	14%	60%	49%	12%	17%	9%	13%
Playing Field	5%	0%	10%	17%	68%	30%	6%	22%	12%	30%
Public House	8%	3%	15%	13%	60%	30%	10%	21%	17%	22%
Tennis Court	7%	2%	26%	17%	48%	56%	19%	13%	2%	10%
Ravenshill**	9%	0%	23%	11%	57%	29%	9%	21%	13%	29%

** assuming it was open.

There is clearly some indication that parishioners would use the privately owned Ravenshill Nature Reserve if it was open. Unfortunately, this is unlikely in the near future. Ravenshill issued an update on 3rd October confirming that the reserve would remain closed as there are still safety concerns for the public resulting from the Ash Dieback infection. Please go to https://ravenshillwood.org.uk/ and click on *more details* for the full announcement.

10. Demographic

The age profile of those completing the questionnaires is shown in the table below. I doubt it contains many surprises.

18-30	30-40	41-50	51-60	61+
2%	2%	2%	17%	76%

We received 129 completed questionnaires by the closing date for responses.

The number of adults covered by the responses was 235.

Of the 235 adults 151 were either retired or partially retired – a figure of 64%.

Number of households responding with at least 1 retiree – 76%

Number of households responding where all adults are retired – 62%

Number of children under sixteen covered by the responses - 15

Number of households responding with children under sixteen – 12 (9%)

11. Motor Vehicles

It's clear, and not surprising from the figures in the demographic section above, that apart from social activity (which was assumed and therefore not included) that shopping and getting to and from work are what vehicles are mainly used for with little use for the school run. Taken together with the low number using the 423-bus service, which is only a daytime service to Worcester, it does show, unsurprisingly, that vehicle ownership and usage appear essential for parishioners.

What does this mean for new development in the parish? SWDPR06 states that development proposals, taking into account their nature and location, must demonstrate that the proposed design will minimise the need to travel by car, provide infrastructure for active travel, avoid unacceptable impact on highway safety and that the residual cumulative effects on the road network.

The SWDPR also confirms that issues of infrastructure, sustainability, services, climate change and pollution are important factors for planners to consider when deciding whether or not to approve developments. It states under 16 (XIV) n page 4 of the review *"to allocate most development in locations where there is good access to local services and where transport choice is maximised."*

11.	**Other issues**

A number of respondents made comments on a variety of issues about the village. These are the main ones.

(i)	**The Village Hall** This is run by a separate committee independently of the Parish Council. The Village Hall committee is responsible for day-to-day management, maintenance, the hiring of the hall and for organising social events. Anything to do with the VH should be addressed to them.
(ii)	**The Village Shop** This is also run by a separate committee independent of the Parish Council. Anything to do with the shop and café should be addressed to them.
(iii)	**The Jubilee Coppice (also known as the Spinney)** This is Parish Council owned land and we have a responsibility to maintain it. For those that may not be aware The Spinney was planted with trees in 1977 by the children of the Alfrick School to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The public are allowed access to The Spinney and a sign opposite the road into the Village Hall and Community Shop shows where its entrance is. The Parish Council have recently put a bench in there so people can enjoy it's lovely quiet surroundings.
(iv)	**Highways** The Parish Council has no budget for highway spending. Anything to do with highways is the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council (WCC). We, of course, make representation to WCC as well as our County and District councillors if we believe something highway related needs attention. The flooding at Alfrick Court is such an example. After many months of lobbying we finally got WCC to clear out and install new drainage which we are hoping will solve the flooding issue.
(v)	**Bus Service to Malvern** There is a bus service to Malvern but you will need a smart phone. Malvern Dial-a-Ride is part of the Worcestershire on Demand Service (WoD). WoD allows passengers to book onto the service from an app. Passengers can request transport for a specific time or to arrive at their destination at a specific time and this will give a selection of boarding times available. Transport will collect the passenger from a designated pick-up point and will drop off at the required location. Unlike fixed route bus services, the service is flexible depending on the destinations and collection points. You will need to go onto the Worcestershire County Council website, search for Worcestershire on Demand and download the app. The WoD service is split into areas. Alfrick is in the North Malvern Zone. The service can take you as far as the Malvern Retail Park or the Malvern Link Station or to Martley in the other direction. The service operates Monday to Saturday 7.00am to 7.00pm.

(vi)	**A Public House in Alfrick** The Swan pub closed for good in 1997. The only Public House in the parish is now the **Fox and Hounds at Lulsley.** Unless a brewer, pub operator or private individual comes forward with a plan there will be no Public House in Alfrick. There are a number of community pubs across England but they normally result from the community taking over an existing pub which is usually closing.
(vii)	**If housing is to go ahead it should be in the style of local architecture** This is in-line with the Parish Council's long held view. SWDPR28 does state that if housing development is to go ahead (i) Siting and Layout should reflect the given characteristic of the site (ii) relationship to surroundings and other developments. Development proposals must complement the local character of the area (v) the scale height and massing of development must be appropriate to the setting of the site and the surrounding landscape.
(viii)	**Affordable Housing** There are regulations governing the provision of Affordable Housing in the SWDPR. On greenfield sites 40% of units should be affordable. On Brownfield sites the figure is 30%. On rural exception sites the figure is 100%. See SWDPR19 and SWDPR20(B) which is available as follows: https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/
(ix)	**Exercise Machines** A number of responses were received asking for outdoor exercise machines. It is certainly something the PC can look into especially if we get further funding for recreational purposes. The writer recently visited the Kyndfolk café which is built on the site of the old Severn Trent works by Gheluvelt Park in Worcester. The surrounding area has a number of outdoor exercise machines which could form the blueprint for a development in the parish.
(x)	**Turning the Tennis Court into a Multi-Use facility** This was considered at the time plans for the tennis court were being put forward. However, it met with significant opposition, particularly from local residents, as a result of the potential for late night noise, late night traffic etc and so proved to be a non-starter. Unfortunately, it is simply in the wrong place for a multi-use facility.

If you would like a copy of the detailed analysis of the results please email me at the address shown below.

Stephen Glazzard
sglazzardalpc@gmail.com