RESULTS OF ECNP COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE OCTOBER 2015

One hundred and two completed questionnaires were processed. Some were a combined effort of a household and represented several people’s views. In some cases two individuals within a household completed one questionnaire each. 52% of respondents were in the 60plus age group, 29% 40-60, 16% 20-40 and 5% 0-20.

**1. Question 1** asked people to rate the current provision of various aspects related to living in East Coker Parish.

The 1st was housing:

98 out of 102 people answered this question.

The 2nd was Jobs:

88 out of 102 people answered this question.

The 3rd was leisure opportunities:

100 out of 102 answered this question.

The 4th was shopping opportunities:

97 out of 102 answered this question.

People were also invited to add any further comments. There were 30 such comments including 4 from 1 person.

**Shopping** attracted 16 comments.

9 regretted loss of village shop/Post Office including 2 who pointed out their increased car usage and 1 who worried about the increased isolation. 2 shopped in Yeovil, 1 liked the Farm Shop but went to Halstock for everyday groceries and 1 supported White Posts. 1 raised the possibility of a community shop whilst another thought any shop would struggle to compete with nearby big stores. 2 felt situation ok for a village as they could still buy food necessities in village.

**Housing** attracted 7 comments.

5 felt there was a need for cheap housing for young/local/old people. 1 thought current housing suited a rural parish and would only support small infill development. 1 commented that the only housing development is focused on making the rich richer.

**Leisure** received 2 comments. 1 thought facilities were more than adequate for the size of parish whilst 1 thought there should be more for teenagers/young people.

**Jobs**. 1 comment pointing out that people don’t expect to work in a rural parish but EC does provide opportunities for small business and working from home.

**Miscellaneous**. There were 3 ‘don’t knows’. In addition 1 person thought the village should be allowed to grow organically and didn’t want ‘perceived’ needs imposed on us whilst 1 person commented on the friendly church.

**2. Question 2** asked which of the following local facilities do you use? Please tick as many as apply.

There were 213 ticks from 102 questionnaires.

People were also invited to state what additional facilities they would you like to see.

44 written comments were made. Some people made more than 1 comment.

19 people wanted a shop/post office or community shop (1).

8 wanted a good pub

8 wanted improved facilities for young people/teenagers eg youth club, bike track, improved play area

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| 4 wanted tennis courts |  |
| 1 wanted to share facilities with other villages in Church Benefice |
| 1 wanted return of the mobile library |
| 1 wanted safe parking for the school |
| 1 wanted more for retired |  |
| 1 wanted a local history group |  |
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**3. Question 3** asked people whether they just lived or lived and worked in the Parish. It also asked whether people used the Parish’s leisure facilities and whether they were active in local community groups. All 102 responders replied to this section. 99% lived in the Parish and 14% of these lived and worked in the Parish. 56% of the 102 used Parish leisure facilities whereas 47% were active in local community groups.

**4. Question 4** asked for people’s opinion on the strength of community in the Parish.

100 out of 102 people commented and 0 thought it weak. One person thought it was diminishing and a few thought it varied between age groups.

**5. Question 5** asked people to comment on the general quality of the environment in the Parish.

All 102 responders commented and none thought it very poor.

**6. Question 6**

Is there anything you think is particularly good or bad about the physical environment in the Parish and which aspects do you think need improving. What projects or actions would you like to see taken forward in the future and referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan?

This is a very wide ranging question that generated a huge volume of replies covering such a wide variety of topics that it is impossible to produce a concise summary. A list of the replies is attached.

**7. Question 7** asked people how they got about for work, leisure or shopping.

Graph shows % of replies by each means of transport.

There were 159 replies to this question from 102 questionnaires.

The second part of the question was regarding car use. However, it was evident from the range of comments that the question was ambiguous. It is therefore not possible to analyse the results.

**8. Question 8** asked those who took children to school what options they would support to ease congestion.

Another set of free text replies, some coming from people who clearly did not take children to school but wished to express an opinion. 31/102 responses. 1 was factual – take to school in Yeovil. 9 wanted more use of village hall car park with footpath through to school. 1 wanted a school car park, 1 recommended parking at the rec, 2 favoured cycling and requested a cycle lane, 3 favoured walking including a walking bus, 2 wanted a bus and 1 thought No Action as congestion makes the route safer. Various other suggestions were made including double yellow lines, one way system at peak times, more car sharing, staggered finishing times, traffic calming, smaller coaches and driving lessons for 4WD drivers. Various comments about current parking were made including stop all day parking, stop parking between Mill Close and The Triangle and encourage sensible parking in general. Finally 1 person wanted to build a new school behind the Red House as the old one costs too much to maintain because it is old.

**9. Question 9** asked what people thought of the job opportunities within the Parish

All 102 forms gave answers with no one thinking they were excellent.

This differs from Question1 part 2 in which 3 people thought the current provision of jobs was excellent. Of these 3 people 1 now thought job opportunities were poor, 1 thought they were good and 1 failed to answer the question.

Part 2 asked if people would like to see more business space developed and jobs created within the parish.

Only 52% people replied to this question with 55% of these thinking space and jobs should be created and 45% disagreeing.

Various comments were made from 26 responders. 2 were not sure, 3 thought it depended on type. 3 commented Yeovil was very close and 1 thought Keyford would provide more than enough. 9 were in favour of small scale/affordable units in keeping with village surroundings and not at expense of the environment. 1 thought it was not a priority, EC is a village and should remain as such. 1 thought we had to balance creation of jobs with maintaining village atmosphere and 1 wanted existing premises tidied up first. 1 reminded us that EC is a high end residential/dormitory area but another thought it would be good for those who like to work around their children. 1 wanted a shop and 1 suggested a community shop.

**10. Question 10** asked whether people worked from home.

Confusion over 'no'. Some stated retired whilst others over 60 so ?retired but answered 'no'. This makes 'no' unreliable. 2 did not answer question.

Those who worked from home were asked the nature of their business. 21 people gave a variety of replies including finance, hairdressing, florist, caring, various consultancies, plumber, gardener, builder, communications, publican, sales, dressmaking, author, examiner and voluntary work for the Benefice.

People were also asked whether they were satisfied with broadband and mobile phone coverage. This question caused a rather confused response as some people were happy with one but not the other.

A total of 94 replies were received with 45% of these satisfied and 55% dissatisfied. Several people commented that they had noticed a big improvement after they upgraded to the fibre optic link. Many others complained about the lack of speed for broadband and poor coverage for mobile phones.

 **Question 11** asked whether people would support the development of small scale affordable housing schemes in the villages.

There were 98 out of 102 replies.

35 people offered a written opinion which was mainly that there had to be a proven need in which case a small scale development of smaller, cheaper properties in keeping with the village within the existing built up area (not agricultural land) could be allowed.

**12. Question 12** asked what people thought should be the main priority of the Neighbourhood plan.

The majority (29) thought the priority should be to preserve East Coker as a village, retain the rural character and maintain the social cohesion. Yeovil must not be allowed to swallow us up. Preservation of the environment and heritage is important but appropriate development should be allowed so that the village does not stagnate.

This was reinforced by a further 14 who thought it was important to provide affordable housing for young families.

5 were concerned about traffic issues including school parking and transport.

1 thought that the village shop should be the priority.

The final 6 were keen that the views and needs of the entire neighbourhood, not just the few, are understood and aimed for.