

Fen Drayton Residents' Survey

By Sue Ellington - District Councillor for Swavesey, Fen Drayton and Lolworth.

This survey was conducted between March and August 2021. It sort to identify the key issues which concern residents of Fen Drayton in the hope that action can be taken by the relevant Authorities to reduce or solve them. Over 90% of the residents received a questionnaire which they could complete and leave to be collected or use a free post envelope to return.

I am very grateful for the 125 questionnaires which were returned. But this exercise was by far the most beneficial in the opportunities it provided for me to talk to residents and learn their concerns first hand. This is why it took such a long time to complete.

I propose to prepare this report factually with some comment at the end of each section. I will use percentages rather than numbers as completion of every section varied. It will be given to the Parish Council and Cllr. Mandy Smith as your County Councillor. It will also be available to any resident who would like a copy.

Supporting communities	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
- Affordable Housing -	40%	40%	20%
- Supporting Local Business-	67%	28%	5%
- Protecting the environment	91%	7%	1%
- Improving local facilities	45%	40%	15%

An Affordable housing project is being pursued by a Housing Association and this is in the hands of the council and planners. It is pleasing to see support for local business and protecting the environment. There is less enthusiasm for improving local facilities which may reflect the resent investment by the Parish Council in the Recreation and children's play area. Although some residents said they would like to see the pavilion replaced.

District Council

79% of responses indicated that they had had no cause to contact the district council but the 21% who had contacted them mainly in relation to Refuse, Planning and Council Tax. Many who had not contacted the council did not score the level of service provided so it has proved quite an ambiguous response. However it is pleasing to note that only 8 responses were below a score of 5. The main problem area being planning which is currently suffering from a serious shortage of staff and the effects of the pandemic.

Tackling Crime

Only 30% of respondents had witnessed a crime.

There was an overwhelming positive response to how safe people feel in Fen Drayton 90% recorded a score of 8-10. The rest were all between 5-7 except one person who was very anxious about dog theft.

The specific questions about which crimes cause most concern were very interesting. Burglary & Robbery, Rural Crime and Road Safety were the three areas which everybody ticked at least one . This may reflect the recent theft and crime in Fen Drayton as well as the increase in traffic due to the A14 work and subsequent changes in traffic movement. It is very pleasing to report that nobody was worried about knife crime, and very few about anti-social behaviour or Domestic violence.

Local Priorities

This final section on future concerns also focused on three main areas. Roads and Potholes, Protecting green spaces from development, and Flooding. 55% of respondents were concerned about the state of roads which may reflect the recent road repairs being done in Fen Drayton but the Residents of Vermuyden Way expressed their concerns when visited. Clearly the lakes and open spaces in the village are greatly valued by the residents but the Christmas 2020 flooding has raised concerns with many people.

The need for homes which people could afford to buy or rent was ticked by 25% - this was also expressed on the doorstep in that young people were having to leave the village and it was changing the demography. Only 10% were concerned about lack of shops, and 5% about leisure, libraries and cultural activities.

18% wanted to keep council tax low and a small number wanted to reduce bureaucracy. 15% felt that elderly services were a priority but only 2 responses were concerned about school places. Parking. Recycling. congestion and Air quality were all very low on the list.

General comments

Many people added comments at the bottom of the forms.

In relation to the Flooding

The Brook and why it has stopped flowing.
Dogs being sick due to the raw sewage in the flooding
flooding prevention - several comments
nightly sewage lorries

Fly tipping

near the nature reserve and verges

Drugs

in the car park near the guided bus

Birdscarer

frightening dogs

Roads

to introduce speeding reduction measures - Cootes Lane
traffic island in Vermuyden Way -speeding and very poor surface
resurfacing needed and potholes repaired. Poor repair system to be upgraded
large lorries don't need to go through village.
lorries using private roads for sleeping
school buses ? Do they all need to go through village

Housing

empty housing

Bins

should be replaced not scattered

Dogs

increase in dog mess

Guided Bus

better access

Create more footpaths and rights of way

General Comment

Thank you to everyone who has taken part. I intend to create an action plan to deal the District Council issues including housing, planning and bins . I will share concerns raised regarding road and potholes with Cllr. Mandy Smith. And work with Parish, county and Anglia Water to reduce flooding .