

Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Revision Group Summary from Community Consultation – Summer 2021

**DRAFT REPORT first issued 19th November 2021.
Updated 20th January 2023, ENV3 and ENV4 added on page 13**

The group recognises that the National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2021) advocates early engagement as this 'has a significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties', and 'enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.'

The Process:

A series of posters were displayed around the village and two newsletters delivered door to door explaining the purpose of the consultation exercise. A new website <http://lavenhamnp2.onesuffolk.net> has been created that is publicly accessible explaining the remit of the group, the process and the findings. In July 2021 the community were invited to fill out an extensive questionnaire that consulted on the 2016 Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan, with a month allowed for completion. Every household was provided with an illustrated guide to the questionnaire that could be completed on line or by hand if requested. 246 Lavenham residents completed the questionnaire (approximately 20% of the population). A tailored version was sent to over 150 Lavenham Businesses of which 16 responded, their comments are included in the Comments from Questionnaire document. In addition a short e-mail was sent to local planners which garnered 2 responses, these are include in Appendix 1.

In assessing the results the group has been through the numerical data and the 988 written comments from the residents questionnaire in order to generate a set of key themes and issues. In light of the climate crisis the group extracted a separate report that records residents' concerns and provides a clear mandate for the revised plan to offer a clear vision.

Key information on the respondents:

Just over one fifth of the responders (n=52, 21%) have lived in the village for up to 5 years, almost another fifth (n=44, 18%) for 6-10 years . Just over one fifth of households (n=53, 22%) have one permanent occupant, almost three fifths (n=158, 65%) have two occupants and 14% (n=34) have 3 or more occupants. The age profile of the respondent's was two thirds 66+ years old (n=149, 62%). None were aged under 29 years, one in ten (n= 24, 10%) were 30-49 years, more than one quarter (n=67, 28%) were 50-65 years old. 10 respondents did not declare their age.

Key Messages from Lavenham residents on the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan.

"Enough is enough. Please do not ruin this wonderful village with any more development."

'How do you define Lavenham's unique character? The character is changing all the time.'

"Lavenham is no longer a village, more of a busy town"

"Climate change is real and we need to prepare for disruptive events (weather/flooding/food/migration etc)"

"The 2016 Neighbourhood plan has been invaluable. The revised plan should strengthen design and enhance the heritage aspects."

"It's difficult to please everyone however residents like to live here because it is a thriving village and we must not forget that."

"The people who first had the idea for a Neighbourhood should be applauded as you only have to look as far as Long Melford to see what can happen without it as the developments there show."

Numerical Data:

The Neighbourhood Plan, 2016 overall approach: Has it been good for Lavenham?

- Has the plan been good for Lavenham? (Yes say 77%)
- The priority of sustainable development been good (Yes say 78%)
- The priority of preserving the village's unique character (Yes say 95%)

SUMMARY OF THEMATIC ISSUES ARISING:

"It's difficult to please everyone however residents like to live here because it is a thriving village and we must not forget that. Residents need the shops who need the tourists so a way must be found to accommodate all of this."

1. **Developer-led Housing:** The overwhelming sentiment from this survey is that there has been more than enough development in and around the village, and that it is mostly poor quality. *"The Plans great weakness is that it does not set a housing target. Its set of principles allows developers a tick box exercise to push an indefinite number of 24 unit developments without regard for the cumulative impact they have."*
2. **Affordable Housing:** Many respondents expressed concern over the under provision of affordable housing. There are various interpretations of what constitutes affordable housing and how 'local needs' are assessed. *"Lavenham is being ruined by so called affordable housing"*

Editors Note: While not part of the LNP it would be useful to be able to explain this to the community.

3. **Traffic and parking:** Most respondents have a serious concern over traffic and parking provision the village. While there are clearly issues around heavy traffic and Water Street, there are associated issues around visitor and employee parking as well as the impact of tourism.
4. **Efficacy of the plan:** Many have pointed out that the plan has not delivered what it purported to, which is understood as a development control mechanism and as a means to ensure quality.
5. **Architectural style / character:** There is a healthy divergence of opinion from championing modern design to prescribing Tudor design. *"All new buildings should be built in traditional style"*
"Let us build houses of quality but modern design. Don't attempt olde-worldy imitation"
"I don't think we should be scared of innovative and modern designs as long as the quality is good."
6. **Tourism:** There is a tension between recognising the benefits that tourism brings and the issues that occur with traffic and increased footfall. *"It seems tourists attract greater priority than residents"*
7. **Second Homes:** There was criticism of second home ownership and the effect it has on the community. Some feel it means there are no affordable homes for sale. *"There are also too few houses to rent because of second homes and holiday lets"*
8. **Sustainability:** Many comments relate to different aspects of sustainability. However they tend to focus on 'stick-on' technology such as solar panels. There is a great deal more that can be done to improve the built environment and reduce CO2 emissions. *"We lack attractive, high spec houses built to C21st ecological standards"*
"New houses need to be highly insulated. Up to date heating systems that will endure climate change. Most houses around are cold in winter and hot in summer."

*“Other aspects of the village should also be more widely used and supported such as “Lavenham Woodland Project and greening the environment”
we should not just conserve the exiting landscape and ecology but should be proactive in policies to enhance and improve”
“In agreeing that sustainable development is extremely important is not the same as agreeing that growth is necessary. A sustainable future may not involve growth at all, but instead a better balancing of existing resources and the environment”*

9. **Demographics:** There is a clear tension between those who support more housing for the elderly and those who believe this is at the expense of providing family houses. Some feel it is fine that the village has an older demographic, while others think not enough is being done to attract young families.
10. **Professionalism:** There is speculation around who designs the housing schemes.
*“Please can designers and architects consider the unique medieval nature of the village.”
“There needs to be a more professional approach to planning and traffic management.”*

Editor Note: It is interesting to note that those which have received mainly positive comments were designed by an architect while those that are seen as generic were not.

11. **New School:** Many respondents favour a new school and have expressed an opinion on turning the school into retirement homes.

Editors Note: However there are many intertwined threads in the argument, and given no one under 30 replied to the questionnaire there are some voices missing. There is no evidence to suggest that residents are aware of the equation required to trigger such a project (i.e. building 500 homes – *my understanding*).

12. **Doctors Surgery:** Respondents are dismayed by the service offered by the surgery and one resident noted: *“The surgery is a vital resource for many and I would strongly support it being designated as an Asset of Community Value.”*
13. **Covid:** While there were few questions relating to Covid, it has clearly had a major impact not just on Lavenham, but globally. Respondents used the opportunity to offer some reflections.
*“The pandemic has shown that we need to do everything we can to protect the paths and green spaces we have, especially for local use”
“Do not know what we would have done with them (local retailers) during the Pandemic”
“We should respond positively to changes to the world of work induced by Covid19, by encouraging the development of premises for rent by small businesses/start-ups.”
“Lavenham remains highly reliant on tourism but the pandemic shows that this can be switched off - we should try and diversify the type of businesses in the village and look for government and local council funding to support this.”*
14. **Retail:** While there are opinions expressed around the retail mix, this is not something the Neighbourhood Plan can control.

Additional observations:

- **Politics:** Is it significant that there was an absence around the wider political context that informs planning, local government, spending and policy?
 - *“I think the main issues are not about the Plan itself but how some of its policies are interpreted and implemented.”*
- **Who are the ‘We’:** A large number of the responses used the words ‘we think’ or ‘we want’. While a number of these will simply be the plural, it also points to the question of ownership; who owns the village? There are complex issues here around whose voices are being heard and who has the power to act.

Section 1 / Are the 2016 Objectives and Aspirations still appropriate to Lavenham?:

- Overwhelming consensus that there should be no more new development
- Strong commendation for the Halt and Peek Close
- Strong condemnation for Osier View, Bury Road houses and Indigo Fields that are seen as generic, featureless and poor design, with no real connection to the village
- Great concern over infrastructure which residents feel have been overwhelmed and not upgraded to take account for all the new homes
- Concern over local houses for local people at affordable prices
- Suggestions that the 24 housing cap is reduced to 10
- Consensus that development must not happen on green field sites
- Heavy traffic is a major issue and some have suggested A1141 should be downgraded to B road

“The new housing completed to date tends to be generic at best and dilutes and undermines rather than reinforces Lavenham’s unique character.”

“Tourism is ruining the unique character of the village.”

“The design of the new housing developments is very poor. They do not enhance the village. They are completely bland and unattractive. Let’s have developments with more flair and contemporary design.”

Numerical Data:

Q1. Do the objectives and aspirations from the 2016 Plan continue to apply?

One – Affordable housing

Three quarters (n=185, 75%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. One quarter (n=61, 25%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. Some 6 respondents (2%) did not answer the question.

Two – Small mixed developments

Almost three quarters (n=171, 70%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. Almost one third (n=74, 30%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. Some 6 respondents (3%) did not answer the question.

Three – New developments

Just over half (n=128, 53%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. Just under half (n=74, 47%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. Some 12 respondents (5%) did not answer the question.

Four – Lavenham’s economy

Almost six in seven (n=210, 87%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. Almost one in seven (n=34, 14%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. Some 10 respondents (4%) did not answer the question.

Five – Employment

Almost four in five (n=190, 79%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. Just over one in five (n=52, 22%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. Some 11 respondents (4%) did not answer the question.

Q2. Do you agree that recent housing schemes have contributed to Lavenham’s unique character?

One quarter (n=66, 26%) of respondents either agree or strongly agreed with this statement. Three quarters (n=188, 74%) of respondents either disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. All respondents answered the question.

Section 2 / Housing

- Concerned about recent housing developments (Yes say 84%)
- Clear sense that Lavenham has met its targets for building new homes.
- Detailed comments around infrastructure including the surgery, school, dentists, parking, library, car charging points and cycle paths.
- Housing for the elderly and for locals should be a priority for most people.

“Peek Close is a great model of housing delivered through the community. The village should resist mass market developers”

“The number of developments seem never ending, yet the facilities and services to the village remain the same. I struggle to understand why a village with historic significance is growing at such a rate.”

“Lavenham has met its targets for housing now is the time for reflection not more building”

Numerical Data:

Q4. Did residents agree that our 2016 neighbourhood Plan’s Housing Policies are still appropriate?

Housing policy H1. Small developments

More than three quarters of respondents (n=177, 73%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the NP1 policy on small housing development. Just over one quarter of respondents (n=65, 27%) either strongly disagreed or disagree with this NP1 policy.

Editors Note: The group felt that this statistic could be misleading as it refers to the past policy.

Housing policy H2. Meeting local housing needs

More than four fifths of respondents (n=189, 78%) agreed with the NP1 policy on meeting local housing needs. Just over one in five respondents (n=52, 22%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the NP1 policy.

Housing policy H3, 4 &5. Affordable housing.

Almost four fifths of respondents (n=180, 74%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this NP1 policy on affordable housing. Just over one quarter of respondents (n=64, 27%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this NP1 policy.

Q5. Do you agree or disagree that we should be concerned about the amount of recent housing development in Lavenham?

Four out of five respondents either strongly agreed or agreed (n=211, 84%) that they were concerned about the amount of recent housing development in Lavenham.

Lavenham respondents who either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this view (n=41, 26%) represented just over one in five of views expressed.

- Small developments (Yes say 73%)
- Meeting local housing needs (Yes say 78%)
- Affordable housing (Yes say 74%)

Section 3 / Design Policies

- Strong sense that the policies are supported but have not successfully shaped the development of the village (size/style/density/location)
- Some support for small infill development over larger schemes
- Some suggested the need for a Design Guide to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan
- Concerns over the ‘gateways’ into the village are being spoiled
- Divergence between what is believed to be in keeping and appropriate
- A number of respondents pointed to the unique landscape and setting of the village that must be preserved

"I do not believe that the design policy has been upheld by District Council."

"The design quality controls have to date failed to deliver the quality they espouse. The policies / controls need to be more rigorous."

"Many of the developments do not enhance Lavenham's distinctive character, they could have been put up anywhere."

"The Lavenham Design Statement needs a radical revision. A stronger policy on ensuring new builds comply with local vernacular materials and design elements."

Numerical Data:

Q7. Do you agree with the NP1 2016 Design policies are still appropriate?

More than 9:10 of respondents either strongly supported or supported the design policies set out in the 2016 NP1. Less than 1:10 of respondents (n=20, 8%) either strongly disagreed or disagree with the NP1 design policies.

Section 4 / Heritage

- Compile a list of non-designated assets (Yes say 88%)
- Development of heritage educational facilities (Yes say 91%)
- Limit access to heavy goods vehicles to Lavenham (Yes say 92%)
- Many residents expressed their concerns over the traffic on Water Street and the High Street. However others note that deliveries to shops and business' as well as agricultural vehicles need to be accommodated.

"Heavy goods vehicles still remain a big problem. Water Street is still accessed by large articulated lorries, even though signs say this is not accessible for them. Gridlock is still often an occurrence because of this."

"Strongly feel traffic plans, cycling routes and street furniture should enhance heritage"

"It's so important to keep history and heritage of the village"

"Bear in mind that properties and businesses might need deliveries and collections"

"Babergh heritage team appear out of date with current thinking and need to address climate change"

"Strongly feel traffic plans, cycling routes and street furniture should enhance heritage"

"Heritage is important but we don't want to live in a museum. The village must continue to thrive economically and culturally within its heritage setting"

"Tourists are vital for Lavenham so preservation and education go hand in hand."

Numerical Data:

Q9. Are these Heritage Projects still appropriate?

Project 14. Compile a list of non-designated assets?

Some 7:8 of all respondents (n=214, 88%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the policy, with 1:8 of the 242 respondents (n=31, 12%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed.

Project 8. Development of heritage educational facilities?

From the sample, 9:10 (n=218, 91%) of the 240 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the NP1 policy on establishing an educational facility. Just under 1:10 of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with this policy.

Project 1. Limit access to heavy goods vehicles in Lavenham?

Some 11:12 of local residents who replied (n=233, 92%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the NP1 policy proposal and 1:12 respondents (n=19, 8%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal of the 252 people who completed the questionnaire.

Section 5A / Community Facilities Policies

- A range of suggestions including a new community garden, allotments, a swimming pool, a picnic site for visitors, a museum, a post office...
- Strong support for a new school in a new location is balanced by some who feel having the school in the heart of the village gives a sense of vitality
- Residents want to ensure the surgery is retained in the village as well as the pharmacy and essential retail. Reminder that patients include young people, the elderly and disabled.
- A few people commented on how important the bus service is connecting Lavenham to other villages, towns and infrastructure.

"I believe the loss of the school in the heart of the village would be a great loss - it is one of the main things that makes the heart of the village feel authentic and alive and a real community."

"Relocation of the school is unlikely to be sanctioned without extensive further housing development to the village"

"Turning the school to a care home is a terrible idea. It would be sad to see the school moved"

"Lavenham should have a fully-functioning GP surgery. The current situation is unacceptable."

Numerical Data:

- Existing facilities and services (Yes say 97%)
- Public Allotments (Yes say 67%)
- Health care facilities (Yes say 98%)
- Retirement and care home needs (Yes say 98%)
- Existing primary school (Yes say 76%)

Q11. (Section 5A of the Guide) Rating NP1 policies.

Policy C1 – Existing facilities and services.

Of the 249 people who responded, 19:20 (n=241, 97%) said that this policy was either very important or important. Of those who responded less than 1:20 rated this policy as either not important or slightly important (n=8, 3%).

Policy C4. Public Allotments

Almost 7:10 people said that public allotments were either very important or important, (n=168, 67%). Just over 1:10 of respondents (n=28, 11%) said that this was not important. Just over 2:10 said that it was slightly important (n=57, 23%). In all 251 people answered this question.

Policy C5. Health care facilities.

Of the 252 people who answered the question, more than 9:10 (n=248, 98%) said that health facilities were either very important or important in Lavenham. Some 3:100 said that this issue was slightly important (n=3, 2%). Only 2:100 respondents said that health facilities were not important in Lavenham, (n=2, 2%).

Policy C5. Retirement and care home needs.

Some 162 of all 250 respondents, (n=162, 64%) said that this issue was either very important or important. One quarter of respondents rated health facilities as slightly important (n=63, 25%) and just over 1:10 respondents (n=27, 11%) said that that this was not important in Lavenham.

Policy C6. Existing primary school

More than three quarters of respondents rated the school as either very important or important (n=192, 76%); %). Some 1:8 people said that it was slightly important (n=29, 12%) and a similar number, 1:8 of people who completed the questionnaire, said that the school was not rated as valuable to them (n=30, 12%).

Section 5B / Policies for Infrastructure

- Residents supported the importance of open spaces, wildlife and the protection of rights of way. Some commented on the poor maintenance of existing footpaths and were concerned over building on green field sites
- Many were keen to ensure that the provision of high speed broadband is implemented
- Residents used this opportunity to express their support for keeping the school in the centre of the village. However others noted that as there was no concrete proposal it was not possible to offer an informed opinion:
- Some called for the planting of more trees and benches as well as better sign posting for the footpaths.

“All the recent developments are on green field land that supported a lot of wildlife. Lavenham is doing its best to increase habitat loss.”

“Our open spaces are not being safeguarded at all. No additional green space has been provided as a result of any new development in Lavenham. We have lost green areas, trees and hedgerows.”

“Not enough info on precise locations of possible relocation of school”

“Important to keep primary school in centre of the village to attract young families”

Numerical Data:

Q13. Are the infrastructure policies of NP1 Of 2016 still appropriate?

Policy C7. Electronic communication

In all, 19:20 (n=245, 94%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the NP1 statement.

Of the 249 people who answered this question, almost 1:20 (n=14, 6%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this policy.

Policy C3. Footpaths and Bridleways

In all 98:100 respondents (n=245, 98%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the policy. Some 250 people answered this question and 2:100 (n=5, 2%) either disagreed strongly or disagreed with the policy.

Policy C2. Open spaces should be safeguarded.

Of those who responded, 97:100 (n=245, 97%) strongly agreeing or agreeing with the policy. Some 3:100 respondents (n=7, 3%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with safeguarding open spaces in Lavenham.

Policy C2. Relocation of the Primary School.

More than two thirds of respondents (n=173, 69%) strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal to relocate the school in the village. Almost one third of respondents, (n=78, 31%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal.

Section 5C / Community Facilities and Infrastructure Projects

- The issue of traffic, parking and speed limits was raised by many residents as a nuisance, a safety concern and damaging to listed buildings. Many felt there should be parking permits and a 20mph speed limit.
- Comment that coaches should not be using bus stops
- Comments around the future provision on electric car charging with many questioning how it can be provided to those with on-street parking.

- Suggestion that the proposed Gas Work car park is for residents only as well as new garages for residents. Also could there be a Park and Ride scheme?

“The immediate issue regarding parking is for residents, not tourists.”

“Reducing speed in village is an excellent idea but needs enforcing. Parking continues to be a problem. Visitors need to have better signposting to use public car parks, not residential areas.”

“Please consider reserved disabled parking in the market square for residents and visitors to access the shops there.”

“Residents should have parking permits for the high street and surrounding roads”

“Electric charging will place a great strain on the existing electricity supply and will require a significant infrastructure investment. On-street charging, especially within the conservation area will pose difficulties.”

Numerical Data:

- Defined views (Yes say 94%)
- Solar panels, satellite dishes and ariels (Yes say 84%)
- Is the impact of climate change a concern in Lavenham? (Yes say 87%)
- Is surface water flooding a concern in Lavenham? (Yes say 92%)

Q15. Community facilities and Infrastructure - (Section 5C of the Questionnaire Guide).

Project P10: Adequately signpost, regularly inspect and maintain Lavenham’s network of statutory footpaths.

In all 99:100 either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the NP1 proposal and 1:100 respondents of the 251 who answered the question, (n=3, 1%) disagree with this proposal.

Project 2. Extend or re-design existing car parks to accommodate more vehicles.

Some nine out of ten respondents (n=229, 91%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this project from NP1. Just under one tenth of respondents (n=23, 9%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal.

Project 3. Create a reserved parking area for employees of Lavenham businesses.

Just over two thirds of respondents (n=164, 66%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this NP1 project. Just over one third of respondents (n=85, 34%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal.

Project 4. Support proposals for coaches to use existing bus stops and park outside the village.

Some 6:7 respondents (n=214, 86%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this NP1 project. Just 1:7 of respondents (n=35, 14%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal.

Project 5. Support additional car parking proposals, but not on sites that could be used for affordable housing or to relocate the primary school.

Some 14:15 (n=213, 85%) either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the proposal.

1:15 respondents (n=38, 15%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this project proposal.

Project 7. Continuing support from Lavenham parish Council for maintenance and development of open spaces, public toilets, street cleaning and other services.

In all 19:20 (n=231, 92%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this Parish Council activity. Just over 1:20 (n=14, 6%) of people either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this proposal.

Project 6. Resist any proposals that remove restrictions that inhibit speeding along the main village roads

With 11:12 of those who answered the question (n=231, 92%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the policy, the data shows that 1:12 (n=20, 8%) of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this policy

Q16. 20mph speed limit in Lavenham's core area?

Almost 8:10 of the 248 respondents (n=193, 78%) said 'Yes' to this question in favour of considering a 20mph speed limit in Lavenham's core area. By contrast, almost 2:10 of respondents said 'No' to such a proposal. Some 10 respondents (n=10, 4%) declared that they 'Did Not Know'.

Are the Environmental Projects of 2016 still appropriate?

- Hedgerows and woodland quality maintenance (Yes say 98%)
- River Brett (Yes say 98%)

Do you agree with the employ and economic policies of the 2016 Plan?

- Small businesses (Yes say 95%)
- Tourist visitor season (Yes say 88%)

Q17. Use of public transport and private vehicles.

Buses

Over 8:10 respondents (n=213, 87%) said that buses were either the least used or used sometimes. For almost 2:10 people (n=33, 13%) buses were either the 'most used or 'often used' by these respondents.

Taxis and minicabs

For more than 19:20 people taxis and minibuses were either the least used or used sometimes (n=219, 94%). By contrast for just over 1:20 either often used or most often used taxis and minibuses (n=15, 6%).

Private vehicles either as the driver or as a passenger.

For just over 1:20 people this was either the least used or used sometimes option (n=16, 6%). By contrast for 19:20 (n=239, 94%) of people this form of transport was the one that they either used often or most often.

Motor Bike

For almost all of the 212 people who answered this question, (n=209, 99%), this form of transport was either the least used or used sometimes. For a very small minority of people this was used often or most often (n=3, 1%).

Bicycle

For more than 8:10 people bicycles were either the least used or used sometimes form of transport (n=189, 87%) with nearly 2:10 people used bicycles most often (n=28, 13%).

Walking

For just over one quarter of respondents (n=65, 26% walking is either the least used or sometimes used form of transport. However, for almost three quarters of Lavenham respondents, walking was either often used or most use form. (n=183, 74%).

Q18. Drivers access to private vehicles.

Of those who responded 9:10 (n=226, 90%) had either frequent or continuous access to a vehicle. For the remaining 1:10, either had occasional access or did not drive (n=25, 10%).

Q19. Parking in Lavenham.

Over 6:10(n=165, 65%) of respondents had a single car and parked it regularly or sometimes in Lavenham. For those with two cars almost 3:10 (n=70, 28%) also parked in Lavenham. For the small number of people with three or more cars (n=10, 4%) they also parked in Lavenham either regularly or sometimes.

Q20. If you own a car in Lavenham, what fuel do you use?

	Car 1	Car 2	Car 3	Car 4

Petrol	143	66%	51	64%	9	82%	3	75%
Diesel	55	25%	23	29%	1	9%	-	-
Electric/Hybrid	20	9%	6	3%	1	9%	1	25%
Total =	(n=217)	100%	(n=80)		(n=11)	100%	(n=4)	100%

Q21. If you own or were to own an electric or hybrid car, would you be able to park off street with access to an electrical supply in Lavenham?

Of the 247 people who answered this question, more than a third answered 'No' (n=92, 37%). For less than 1:20 (N=7, 3%) the answer was 'occasionally' to access to an electrical supply and for almost two thirds of respondents (n=148, 60%) they would be able to charge their vehicle regularly from home.

Section 6 / Shopping

- Many residents were very supportive of the local shops and services and the evidence suggested that many respondents use the facilities. People are grateful there are few chain stores, however some feel the retail offer is aimed at tourists and expensive.
- Some residents are worried about the potential change to the retail core with the new planning laws
- Suggestions for new retail offers include: a greengrocer, weekly market, estate agent, hardware shop, newsagents, Chinese restaurant, clothing shop...

"It is a joy to live somewhere where shopping and eating out is such a pleasant experience"

"The majority of the shops in Lavenham are for visitors."

"Lavenham food stores are too expensive for anything other than minor items."

Numerical Data:

Q23. Covid-19 impact on shopping.

What proportion of your individual spending has been in the village compared with outside Lavenham?

For a small number of respondents none of their shopping was either within Lavenham or elsewhere (n=11, 4%) of the 254 who answered the question. The remainder divides into two groups. For more than four fifths the total responders (n=163, 85%) shopping has been largely confined to Lavenham and for just over one fifth (n=81, 32%) between half and all of their shopping has taken place in the village.

Cards, Gifts and books

Just under 2:10 (n=45,18%) bought none of these items. Some 3:10 (82, 33%) bought less than half such items in Lavenham, whereas a further 1:4 (n=56, 23%) bought these goods in Lavenham. Some 2:10 of respondents (n=45, 18%) bought more than half their cards etc in Lavenham and a small group of 1:12 (n=20, 8%) bought all such articles in the village. Essentially two out of three people surveyed bought these items in Lavenham.

Clothes

Nearly three quarters of the sample of 244 responders did not buy any clothing in Lavenham during the pandemic (n=177, 73%) and much of the remaining quarter (n=56, 23%) bought up to half their clothing purchases in Lavenham. A small number ((11, 4%) bought more than half their clothes purchases in the village.

Post Office

Nearly 1:5 of responders (n=43, 17%) did not buy from the village post office during the pandemic. A larger group of more than 1:3 in the sample used the post office (n=92, 37%) with the largest group (n=115, 46%) used the post office for between half to all of their post office needs.

Health and Beauty

Of the 243 people who responded almost half bought none of these items in Lavenham (n=110, 45%). In addition, more than a quarter bought up to half of these products in Lavenham (n=72, 29%). The remainder, almost a quarter of the sample (n=61, 24%) bought between half and all of these goods in the village.

Galleries

Almost three quarters of the sample reported buying no such goods in Lavenham during the pandemic (n=168, 71%). Almost a further quarter (n=54, 23%) bought up to half such items in Lavenham. Finally, a smaller group (n=15, 6%) bought between half and all of such purchases in the village.

Q24. To what extent have you changed your pattern of spending because of Covid-19 pandemic?

Some 1:5 (n=27, 11%) reported no change at all. However, 3:5 (n=154, 61%) said they had changed somewhat. Finally, more than one quarter reported that their spending had changed either mostly or completely (n=72, 26%).

Q25. In an average week how many home deliveries do you receive using online shopping?

None		1 delivery		2 deliveries		3 deliveries		4+ deliveries	
58	24%	83	34%	47	20%	30	12%	25	10%

Q26. Compared with before the pandemic, have your online deliveries changed?

A small number of responders reported that they received less than before (n=9, 4%) with more than one third saying that it was about the same as before (n=89, 37%). For almost half the sample (n=103, 43%) they were using online deliveries more than before and for a little less than 1:20 (n=41, 17%) it was a lot more. So, in all nearly two thirds of the responders (144, 60%) increased their use of online services during the pandemic.

Q27. When the pandemic is over, how much do you expect the average number of home deliveries to change again?

Of the 248 people who answered this question more than one third (n=80, 33%) said it would decrease and two thirds reported that there would be no change (n=161, 65%). A small group expected such shopping to increase a little (n=5, 3%).

Section 7 / Environment

- Residents are aware of how important the environment is to the well-being of residents and the natural world.
“Some expressed concern over flooding
- People asked why few of the new developments had solar panels and other environmental features, though some do not like the look of solar panels.
- Maintenance is important both for the river and the verges. There is a sense that this has not been happening.
- One comment requested that ‘*the Parish Council should be encouraged to have greater interaction with the Environment Agency*’
- One resident pointed out there was an issue with pollution and run-off from the fields
- Some made suggestions about developing a closer relationship with the local farmers to deal with environmental issues
- One suggestion was for more recycling opportunities in the main car park
- People generally supported solar panels, though not all.
- Residents used this section to comment on the recent plans around a new parking arrangement in the Market Place with many noting they felt it should not be changed.

"All decisions must be agreed with Market Place residents and businesses and not decided by the Parish Councillors as happened earlier in the year!"

"Climate change is now an emergency, and the district and county councils need to be delivering policy (and resources) that recognise this and allow the parish to work with them."

"Landscape policy needs to be stronger, need to protect the Brett Valley Special Landscape Area - should be a defined 'valued landscape' as per NPPF."

"Discourage any development that encroaches onto fields and tears down hedgerows"

"Flooding is now a real issue. Further developments will only create a bigger problem due to increased 'run off'."

"The NP needs to engage the Environmental Agency to develop a water management plan for the village."

"In view of climate change and storms damage seen this year, Lavenham should prioritise plans for a potential flood. Most properties in Lavenham have little or no foundations - ditches and culverts should be regularly drained as part of an overall flood plan."

"We have to face reality. Solar panels should be allowed in the conservation area if there is no other way for the community to generate some energy"

"All new developments should be required to have solar panels."

"I do not support any Solar Panels erected in the conservation area"

Numerical Data:

Q29. Do you agree with the 2016 policies are still appropriate?

Policy EV1. Defined Views

Some 9:10 (n=234, 94%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the environmental policies on defined views of 2016 were still appropriate. Less than 1:10 either strongly disagreed or disagree (n=14, 5%) of the 246 respondents.

Policy EV2. Solar panels, satellite dishes and ariels.

More than 4:5 of the respondents (n=206, 84%) either strongly agreed or agreed with the 2016 NP1 policy. Just under 1:5 of respondents (n=41, 16%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed.

Policy ENV 3, Enhancing the Market Place amenity value.

There were 246 responses to the questionnaire on this issue which is 99% of the total sample. Of these, 190 respondents, 77%, said they either agreed or strongly agree with the policy. Some 56 respondents, 23%, said they either disagreed or strongly disagree with the policy on enhancing the Market Place amenity value.

Policy ENV 4, Renewable energy

There were 244 responses to the questionnaire on this issue which is 98% of the total sample. Of these, 224 respondents, 92%, said they either agreed or strongly agree with the policy. Some 20 respondents, 8%, said they either disagreed or strongly disagree with the policy on renewable energy.

Q30. Should we be concerned about the impact of climate change in Lavenham?

More than 7:8 of the respondents (n=218, 87%) said that they either strongly agree or agreed that we should be concerned with the impact of climate change in Lavenham.

However, 1:8 of the responders (n=32, 12%) stated that they either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement about being concerned with the impact of climate change in Lavenham.

Q31. Do you agree or disagree that we should be concerned about surface water flooding in Lavenham?

Some 11:12 (n=228, 92%) either strongly agreed or agreed that this was a matter for concern. Less than 1:12 (n=19, 7%) of responders either strongly disagreed or disagreed that we should be so concerned. The total number of responders to this question was 247.

Q32. Are the 2016 plans for environmental projects still appropriate to ensure that quality management is maintained?

Project P11. Hedgerows and woodland quality maintenance

In all those who either strongly agreed or agreed with this project made up 19:20 (n=242, 98%) of respondents. Those who strongly disagree or disagree accounted for 1:20 of responders (n= 6, 2%).

Project P12. River Brett engagement with the Environment Agency to encourage regular maintenance and conservation.

Some 98:100 strongly agreed or agreed with the NP1 policy on the River Brett policy and 2:100 responders (n=4, 2%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this policy.

Section 8 / Employment and our local economy

- Many people pointed to the connection between tourism and traffic problems
- Some respondents suggested initiatives such as a year round programme of events for visitors and “*more small scale industries encouraged to Lavenham.*”
- Residents feel that there is a problem with employees parking on the streets
- A number of replies applauded the range of events put on but felt there should be more support from local government.
- Many folk pointed out that tourism was important to the village but that the poor development was threatening the very reason why people came to visit

“Tourists are important but not to the detriment of local community first”

“I should like to see small offices and studios available, with appropriate reductions in rent.”

“Important to support small businesses and encourage new businesses to thrive in the village”

“Growth is to be encouraged however we must not forget that we are the best preserved medieval village in the country and that must be protected at all costs”

Numerical Data:

Q34. Do you agree with the 2016 plans on employment and the economy policies in the following areas?

Policy E2. Small businesses.

Some 19:20 of other respondents (n=231, 95%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the NP1 policies in this area. However, 1:20 of the 247 respondents who replied, either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the published policies (n=12, 5%).

Project P9. Tourism visitor season.

In all 7:8 respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the policies (n=219, 88%). Some 1:8 of respondents (n=28, 12%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the NP1 policies on this issue.

Section 9 / Our Neighbourhood Plan’s Overall Approach

- Replies pointed out that the plan has not always been successful though there is broad support
- Residents re-iterated the view that there has already been too much new housing and that it is of poor quality often because it is developer-led.

"Why have a plan if the council override it? Our village our future. The plan should be binding"

"Well done. I know places that don't have NPs have struggled in the face of relentless largely unchecked development"

"It would be interesting to know if it has been effective? There have been a lot of poor developments over the past 5-10 years and more in the pipeline. Why?"

"The NDP has been focussed on housing development to the detriment of appropriate design, infrastructure pressures, loss of green space and views and lack of consideration for existing residents."

"Once all brown field sites are built upon, developments on arable farmland no longer fall into the 'sustainable' bracket."

"The NP needs to take local people with it through continuous consultation and champion people and organisations who want to improve the village not just make money from it."

"I think the main issues are not about the Plan itself but how some of its policies are interpreted and implemented."

Numerical Data:

Q36. Taking all policies and projects together, do you agree that the plan has been good for Lavenham?

Some 3:4 of respondents (n=189, 77%) said that they either strongly agreed or agreed that the plan had been good for Lavenham. Just under 1:4 of respondents (n=55, 23%) stated that they either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the Neighbourhood Plan being good for the village.

Q37. Thinking about each of the two key issues identified in our 2016 Plan, sustainable development and preserving Lavenham's unique qualities, tell us whether they remain key issues.

Key issue 1: Sustainable development.

In all 4:5 of respondents (n=193, 78%) said that they either strongly agreed or agreed that the two issues remain key to the Neighbourhood Plan review.

Just over 1:5 of respondents (n=55, 22%) either strongly disagreed or disagreed with these issues remain key to the Plan.

Key issue 2: Preserving Lavenham's unique qualities.

Of the 249 people who answered this question, some 19:20 respondents (n=236, 95%) stated that they either strongly agreed or agreed with preserving Lavenham's unique qualities as a key issue for the Neighbourhood plan. However, 1:20 (n=13, 5%) stated that they either strongly disagreed or disagreed with this being a key issue in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Last pages: Keeping in touch - Technology

Mobile phones – Almost all of 246 people who answered this question reported that they had a mobile phone (n=235, 96%).

Internet – Some 9:10 respondents had access to the internet (n= 219, 90%) with less than 1:12 reporting that they did not have access (n=16, 7%), there were 7 unclear answers.

Laptops or desktops – more than 9:10 of respondents have access to some of these devices (n=224, 94%) with 1:10 not having so (n=12, 5%). There were 3 unclear answers.

Broadband - 2:100 people did not have access to broadband (n=5, 2%). Almost half (n=106, 43% had regular/fast broadband, whereas over one third had superfast broadband (n=89, 36%). Less than 1:20 had access to ultrafast broadband (n=11, 4%) and one in seven did not know what speed broadband they were using (n=36, 15%).

Q48. What is the best way to keep you informed on the Neighbourhood plan?

The NP website best for (n=45, 40%)

The NP website 2nd best = (n=56, 56%

Email = best (n=169, 68%)

Email 2nd best (n=56, 33%%)

Letter drop = best (n=111, 64%)

Letter drop 2nd best (n=67, 38%).

Q41. What best describes your home?

More than four out of five residents who responded (n=224, 91%) are owner occupiers with 1:12 (n=19, 8%) being rented.

Q42. Home ownership?

For more than four out of five respondents (n=218, 89%) Lavenham is their main or only home. For the remaining respondents (n=27, 8%) they either do not own a home in Lavenham or have not answered the question.

Q44. Work status?

Respondents were asked to self-describe their work status. Almost one quarter of the respondents (n=56, 23%) work either fulltime for 30 hours per week or parttime for less than 30 hours per week. One in ten people were self-employed (n=24, 10%). Some 1:12 (n=17, 8%) were either unwaged or 'other'. The largest single group of people, making up almost the sample, were retired (n=155, 64%).

Comments from Business Questionnaire are included in the Questionnaire Comments document.

Appendix 1 – Response from Planners

Q1: Do you have any comments on the overall approach we have taken in the adopted Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP). We will be reviewing this as part of our revised Neighbourhood Plan and we value your views on how it could be improved?

No, other than to say it is well considered and sensible. I note the observation that small developments integrated into the village are welcome, rather than larger, unconnected blocks of housing. I agree with this.

Policy H1 is a useful policy, especially in terms of the reference to “existing pattern.” Reference to important views is also of great assistance. However, the LNP does lack allocations.

Q2: Overall, has the LNP been an effective tool in influencing planning outcomes?

As far as I am concerned, yes.

Yes, overall

Q3: Have the policies relating to new homes and housing development been effective in securing high quality outcomes?

As far as I am concerned, yes.

Yes, and also successful in preventing poor development. In addition, there have been examples of securing public art.

Q4: Please tell us your views on planning policies in the LNP which work well and whether any of the planning policies do not work well from a practitioner’s perspective.

Very thorough, and certainly much more so than existing BMSDC policies. However, sites such as the Lavenham Press are industrial in nature and should, in my view, be replaced, when the opportunity arises, with a similarly industrial aesthetic, but employing local materials and details – in an attempt to combine the past use of the site with the geology and traditions of the built forms we see today.

H1, ENV1 works well in being able to refuse applications.

H2 – This needs to be updated with a new Housing Needs Survey (HNS). There is concern that the current HNS may not still be valid?

Q5: Do development management officers at Babergh and Mid Suffolk use the LNP planning policies alongside the Local Plan policies when determining planning decisions in the LNP area? Please let us know any specific issues we ought to be aware of with respect to this.

I don’t have an answer for this question.

Yes

Q6: Do you think the parish councillors at Lavenham Parish Council are using the LNP policies as intended when assessing development proposals in the plan area?

Yes.

In our experience, they do not always quote policies

Q7: Please provide any specific advice to improve any of the planning policies in the LNP

As referenced in response to Q4, sites other than those which accommodate post medieval housing should be reflected when new development is proposed on those sites. This helps describe or narrate the evolution of the settlement, which is after all, a town like any other, with industry, retail premises and

schools etc. It's a case of horses for courses, rather than an approach which sees vernacular (and, dare I say it, pastiche) developments erected in an attempt to amplify some of the most attractive elements of the town.

Site allocations (forward looking) would assist.

Q8: We are considering commissioning a Village Design Guide and are interested to understand if this would be considered a useful document to sit alongside the LNP?

Yes, I'd say so. I have been involved in several of these in other capacities and would definitely recommend them.

Yes this would be useful. Other parishes have used AECOM see: [HOME United Kingdom \(aecom.com\)](https://www.aecom.com)

Q9: Finally, please confirm what role you undertake for example, development management, planning policy, other? If there is anything else you feel would help us please add it in to your response.

Heritage

Development Management

END