

The Village Plan 2015



Introduction

This report is the result of an initiative by the Parish Council to create a Village Plan for Quendon & Rickling, and was produced by the Quendon & Rickling Village Plan Steering Group. This group is comprised of volunteers from the parish who saw the benefit of taking stock of what residents consider to be good about life in the community, and identifying services and facilities that they feel could be improved. It was also an opportunity to gather residents' views on how they would like to see the village develop over the coming years and for these ideas to form the basis of an Action Plan.

In April 2012, each household in the parish received a Community Life Questionnaire. Each person over 11 years of age had the opportunity to make their views heard and, where appropriate, parents were asked to complete the questionnaire on behalf of the younger members of the family.

The results were then collated and analysed by working groups, each focusing on individual sections of the questionnaire and making recommendations for further consideration. This information will then be used as the basis for an 'Action Plan', a document that prioritises actions identified by the community and ones that it is hoped are achievable over the coming years. A summary of the responses is posted on the Quendon & Rickling website.

A separate questionnaire was delivered to the 43 known businesses in the village. It is difficult to make a representative analysis from the 14 questionnaires that were completed and returned, but the comments and statistics have been collated and the results published on page 28 of this document.

**Quendon & Rickling Village Plan Steering Group
May 2015**

2015 Footnote:

All percentages used in this document are based upon the numbers answering each question. Updates are given throughout the document to show where issues raised in the Village Plan have contributed to current projects.

Acknowledgements

The Quendon & Rickling Steering Group acknowledges the support received from the Rural Community Council of Essex for this project, and the funding received from Essex County Council. We also acknowledge those members of the village who formed working groups who then analysed data and formulated the recommendations. Our appreciation also extends to the residents of Quendon & Rickling who took the time to complete the questionnaire.



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A Brief History of Quendon and Rickling

A walk around the villages of Quendon and Rickling will show just how closely we are all linked to the past. Fine examples of historic buildings, some dating back to the 13th century, stand testament to the skills of craftsmen who used local materials in the construction process, working with timber from local woodland, flint from surrounding fields and bricks from the local kiln; by this means, we can observe a particular connection between the fabric of the villages and the land on which they are built. So, where did it all begin?

There is evidence of early settlements throughout the local area, some of which date back to the Stone Age. Amongst many artifacts on display in Saffron Walden Museum is a Neolithic axe-head found in Quendon. Other links to an ancient past are Roman remains, including vases containing burnt human bones, which were found in Rickling Green in the 1850s. However, one of the earliest written records of the villages is in the Domesday Book of 1086 where the names Kuenadanam and Richelinga can be found. Kuenadanam is believed to mean 'the Queen's Valley', and Richelinga 'the people of Riccula'.

We have 56 listed buildings in the village, some built on the sites of much earlier dwellings. Parts of Rickling Hall date back to the 14th and 15th centuries and appear to have been built in the bailey of a previous castle. After the Norman Conquest, the Manor of Quendon was given to Eudo Dapifer, and in the 13th century, it was used by the Bohun family as a hunting lodge. It was not until the 1550s, when Thomas Newman became the owner that work began on the current Hall. Quendon Court is another fine property; built in the mid 1700s, it is the third on this site, replacing a 15th century building called White House, which in turn replaced a mediaeval dwelling named Batilles.

The Church of All Saints, Rickling, dates back to the 13th century and probably stands on a pre-Conquest site. Later 14th century additions include the first two stages of the west tower, the third stage dating back to the 16th century. The Church of St Simon & St Jude, Quendon, is also a 13th century building. It was altered in the 16th century and further restoration and building work was carried out in 1861. The tower was hit by a lightning strike in 1941 and was later pulled down. It was replaced by the current tower and three bells in 1963. Details of other listed buildings in the village can be found on the British Listed Buildings website¹.



Quendon Church, 1909.

The two parishes remained separate until 1949 when the Civil Parish of Quendon and Rickling was established. It was not until 2012, however, that the Church of England parishes were united as the Parish of Quendon and Rickling. Much of early Rickling would have been located nearer to the parish church at Church End. Outbreaks of plague and the destruction of timber-framed buildings by fires are two theories for the move nearer to the Green. A third suggests

¹ <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/essex/quendon+and+rickling>

that a shift in trade from an old drover's route to London, to the newer London to Newmarket turnpike road was a further reason for the gradual relocation of the village.

The 1841 Census shows both villages to be well established, with a combined population of 655. The workforce included tradesmen, with carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, thatchers and a brickmaker being some of the trades listed. Innkeepers, shopkeepers, millers and a butcher, as well as shoemakers and a tailor are also recorded, but the most common employment by far was in agriculture. Seventy-two labourers and two shepherds worked on the land with five horse-keepers and four carters working for both farmers and residents alike.

The 1870s saw the beginning of the decline in agriculture. The village population had increased to 708, with new trades and professions appearing on the census, but farming was still the main employment, with 129 men listed as agricultural labourers. By 1901, a population of 527 reflected the general move away from the land to the towns and cities. The agricultural workforce now totalled just 37, with 5 stock-keepers and a cowman listed. By the beginning of the 20th century, the village had witnessed some radical changes in society. Records show the population as 534 in 1931, rising slightly to 557 in 1951. Although still a rural community, the majority of the workforce no longer worked on the land.



Junction of what is now, Rickling Green Road and Cambridge Road.

For centuries, the London to Newmarket turnpike road provided excellent links to London and local towns, and brought trade to local businesses. The opening of the Bishop's Stortford to Newport section of The Great Northern Railway's line in January 1845 offered even greater opportunities for residents and local businesses. However, as the population became more mobile, the volume of traffic along the turnpike road increased. During the 19th century,

bicycles and steam-powered road locomotives would have joined coaches and carts using local roads. By the early 20th century, Rickling and Quendon had two garages servicing the needs of motorcars and lorries; one stood to the side of the Coach and Horses Inn and the other on the site now occupied by Hallfields. This had a café and large car park to the rear; an earlier transport café was sited at Ellis's Corner². During the 1960s and 70s, the volume of traffic using the A11 increased dramatically, and the opening of the M11 in November 1979 greatly reduced the traffic congestion along this route.

Policing traffic is a perennial problem and archives show that charges of riding without reins, being drunk in charge of a horse and cart, and 'furiously riding a bicycle' were just a few offences committed in the village during the 19th century. In 1902, Capt. Osbourne was charged with exceeding the 12 mph limit along the Cambridge Road. Both Quendon and Rickling had village constables as early as the 1650s, but it was not until the 1856 Police Act and the start of a national police force that Newport Station policed the villages.

² Ellis's café stood at the junction of the B1383 and Belcham's Lane, and is now known as Broomwood Cottage.

There are also records of burglaries and theft in the village. In 1651, Elizabeth Winstanley's drapery shop was broken into and '29yds of greene say' and £4 in cash taken. Poaching and snaring rabbits were common offences that at times received harsh penalties. In 1838, two local men were found guilty of being 'armed at night in the pursuit of game', and also of assaulting the gamekeeper. William Wootten was imprisoned for twelve months, whilst Thomas Bentiman received seven years transportation.³ Two of the most infamous local crimes, however, were widely reported by many regional newspapers.

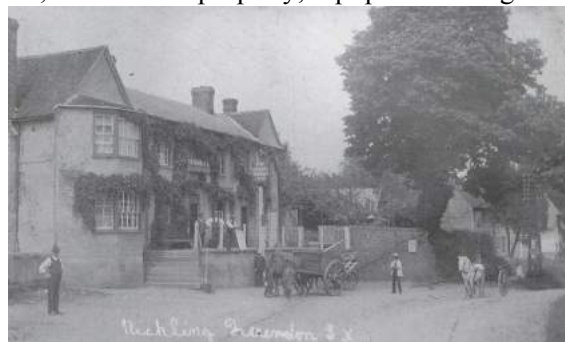
In December 1823, James Mumford was murdered on his way from Quendon Street to his home, Widdington Hall. Having arrived from London by coach, he was followed and attacked by a disgruntled ex-employee. John Pallett was later convicted of the murder and given the death sentence.⁴ The 'Moat House Mystery' also excited national interest. In 1899, Miss Camille Holland, a resident at the farm, disappeared. Four years later, the owner of the farm, Mr. Samuel Herbert Dougal, was arrested for forging her signature and was charged and found guilty of her murder.⁵



Mumford Stores, 1920s.

In 'Rickling Ramblings', John Fordham recalls village life in the 1930s and 40s. Mumford Stores was the main grocers and had been a mainstay of the village since 1830. It closed in 1978 and the premises were taken over by Quendon Pottery. This is now a private residence. The village also had a Post Office⁶ and two sweetshops; milk was delivered by Mr. Walters from his dairy at Bradbury Hall. The place for bicycle repairs and accessories was Mr. Nelson Gray's garage on The Green, from where he also ran the local taxi service. John also mentions the three village pubs, which 'formed a very important part of village life'.

Dating back to the late 16th century and early 18th century respectively, the Coach and Horses and the King's Head were not just local hostleries; auctions of property, equipment and goods were held there, as were inquests and public meetings. Both properties are now privately owned. The Cricketers Arms is a Victorian addition to the village and quickly became popular with residents. On applying to renew his license in 1881, the magistrates called Mr. Harris's attention to the fact that his inn 'had been complained of as demoralizing to the neighbourhood'. The license was renewed, but with a 'severe reprimand'.⁷



Coach and Horses, c. 1905

³ *Essex Standard*, 16 March 1838.

⁴ *Morning Chronicle*, London, 10 December 1823.

⁵ *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 26 June 1903.

⁶ A local Penny Post service was available in the village as early as 1813. In 1838, local residents joined a national movement and petitioned Parliament for a 'cheap and uniform postage'. Telegraphic communication arrived in Quendon in 1890.

⁷ *Cambridge Independent Press*, 10 September 1881.

Utility services arrived in the village in the second half of the 19th century. In August 1867, the newly completed Newport Gas Company made arrangements with Captain Byng of Quendon Hall ‘to carry their mains to the Hall to light the mansion’.⁸ In 1876, a notice appeared in the *Cambridge Independent Press*. The ‘Saffron Walden Rural Sanitary Authority’ invited tenders for the construction of ‘Sewers and Outfall Works’ in Quendon and Rickling. However, it was not until the 1930s that mains water arrived in the village. Until then, residents without their own wells relied upon public wells for their water supply. Before his death in 1806, a local benefactor, Thomas Forster, ‘caused a well to be sunk for the use of neighbouring cottagers’, and this was sited to the west of the Parish Rooms. The cost of maintaining these wells was paid from a special fund; set up by the Lord of the Manor, this was funded by the rent received from Well Cottage.

The nearest Doctor’s surgery was in Newport and until a District Nurse moved into Cherry Tree Cottage in 1910, the villagers treated their own minor ailments. Before the NHS, villagers had to belong to the Nurses’ Association, which cost a penny per week per head, or sixpence for the whole family to receive treatment at Saffron Walden General Hospital. In 1925, Mr. and Mrs. Baer of Rickling House funded repairs to the Parish Room and Dr. Salaman from Newport held three surgeries there each week; a monthly baby clinic was also available. The Parish Room was used for surgeries until the 1990s and is now business premises.

Quendon windmill would have been a prominent local landmark. First mentioned in 1678, the original Post Windmill was blown down in 1795 and replaced by a Tower Windmill in 1805. This in turn was demolished c1900.



Old Post Office, c.1906.

The Old Post Office is a familiar building in the village and was once a fee-paying school for day pupils. Children from poorer families could attend the National School, which was established in Rickling in 1831. In 1837, a pamphlet was published by the Central Society of Education and looked at ‘the progress of education under the fostering care of charitable committees...’ The author considered this system to be a

‘pauperising system’ stating that ‘working classes should not be dependent for elementary instruction upon charity’. Rickling National School, Essex, was cited as an example.⁹ In 1873, a new school building was constructed and at the start of the 20th century, Rickling School became part of the state education system. It is now a popular and flourishing school with 102 pupils.

⁸ *Herts Guardian, Agricultural Journal & General Advisor*, 6 August 1867.

⁹ *Morning Chronicle, London*, 2 November 1837.

Another familiar building is the Village Hall, which began life as a Reading and Coffee Room. A 'Grand Bazaar' was held in the grounds of Quendon Hall to raise funds for its construction.¹⁰ Later that year a 'Fancy Bazaar' was held to raise funds for the building of the Parish Room. The curate of Rickling believed this 'would be a boon to inhabitants' and could also be used for religious and other purposes.¹¹



The Pump at the beginning of the 20th century.

Known to many as The Fountain, 'a handsome wellhouse and cattle trough' was given to the Parishes of Quendon and Rickling in 1888, in memory of the late Mrs. Cranmer Byng. Her husband gave the wellhouse and her brother gave the cattle trough. The granite drinking fountain was fitted later and was for the use of the villagers.¹²

The Green is another landmark and has been used by villagers for generations. It has been used for grazing stock, as a meeting place, and somewhere for sports and entertainment, and in June 1838, 'Farmers, tradesmen and others...gave dinner to the poor in the two parishes...' to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Victoria. 'Four hundred and twelve sat around the great Elm Tree in the middle of Rickling Green and were regaled with plenty of beer, beef and plum-pudding'.¹³ The Green is still used today for village celebrations; in 1995, the 50th Anniversary of VE Day was celebrated there, and in 2012, Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee was also marked.

And cricket has been played on The Green for 173 years. In August 1842, a London newspaper, *The Era*, published a brief report about a cricket match played between teams from Audley End and Rickling Green. The village also made the national newspapers in 1882 when 'Extraordinary Scoring' during a match between the Orleans Club and Rickling Green 'finally closed for the wonderful total of 920'. Unfortunately, Rickling Green scored just 94. The Parish once boasted three cricket teams; Quendon Hall had its own team and Rickling had two teams, The Rickling Green Club and The Rickling Ramblers. We now have just one club, The Rickling Ramblers, and cricket can still be enjoyed on The Green throughout the summer months.

In the early 20th century, a variety of clubs could be found in the village. A Mothers' Union, Women's Institute, Men's Society and Scouts held regular meetings, with a Horticulture Society and Flower Club catering for gardening enthusiasts. In the early 1900s a Coal Club and Shoe Club were set up, a weekly membership acting as a savings scheme for people. Sports clubs were also popular. In 1883, the village had an Archery and Tennis club, and the Tennis Club was



Boy Scouts and Scout Master in Rickling, 1915.

¹⁰ *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 30 June 1882.

¹¹ *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 6 October 1882.

¹² *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 6 July 1888.

¹³ From 'Looking Back to 1838', *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 3 January 1902.

still active in the 1950s. The Bowling Club opened in 1937, and was constructed on land donated by Sir William Foot-Mitchell. Over the years, the village Football Club has had various homes and is now known as the Saffron Walden Town Reserves. Perhaps the most unusual club, however, was the Sparrow Club. Set up in 1891 after farmers complained of a plague of sparrows, the club was later renamed the Rat and Sparrow Club and had the task of destroying a regulated quota of animals, with members being fined ‘for not killing the number they are bound by the rules to destroy’.¹⁴

Although a rural community, Quendon and Rickling were not isolated from national events. As with all communities in this country, the World Wars affected every family in the village. The Rolls of Honour for both wars hang in the Village Hall listing the names of those who served in each conflict. In 1939, the nature of warfare had changed. Surrounded by airfields, the villagers witnessed many squadrons of allied aircraft taking to the skies, and also enemy aircraft on their way to attack military bases and cities. Different faces appeared in the village. John Fordham recalls the army commandeering Maces Place and billeting troops there. Military vehicles were parked on the Green. Army units created a camp in Quendon Hall Park and Orchard House was used as a rest centre for American airmen. Evacuees arrived from London and attended Rickling School. This was a great deal of change for a small community to adapt to, but then the whole country was in a state of constant change at this time.

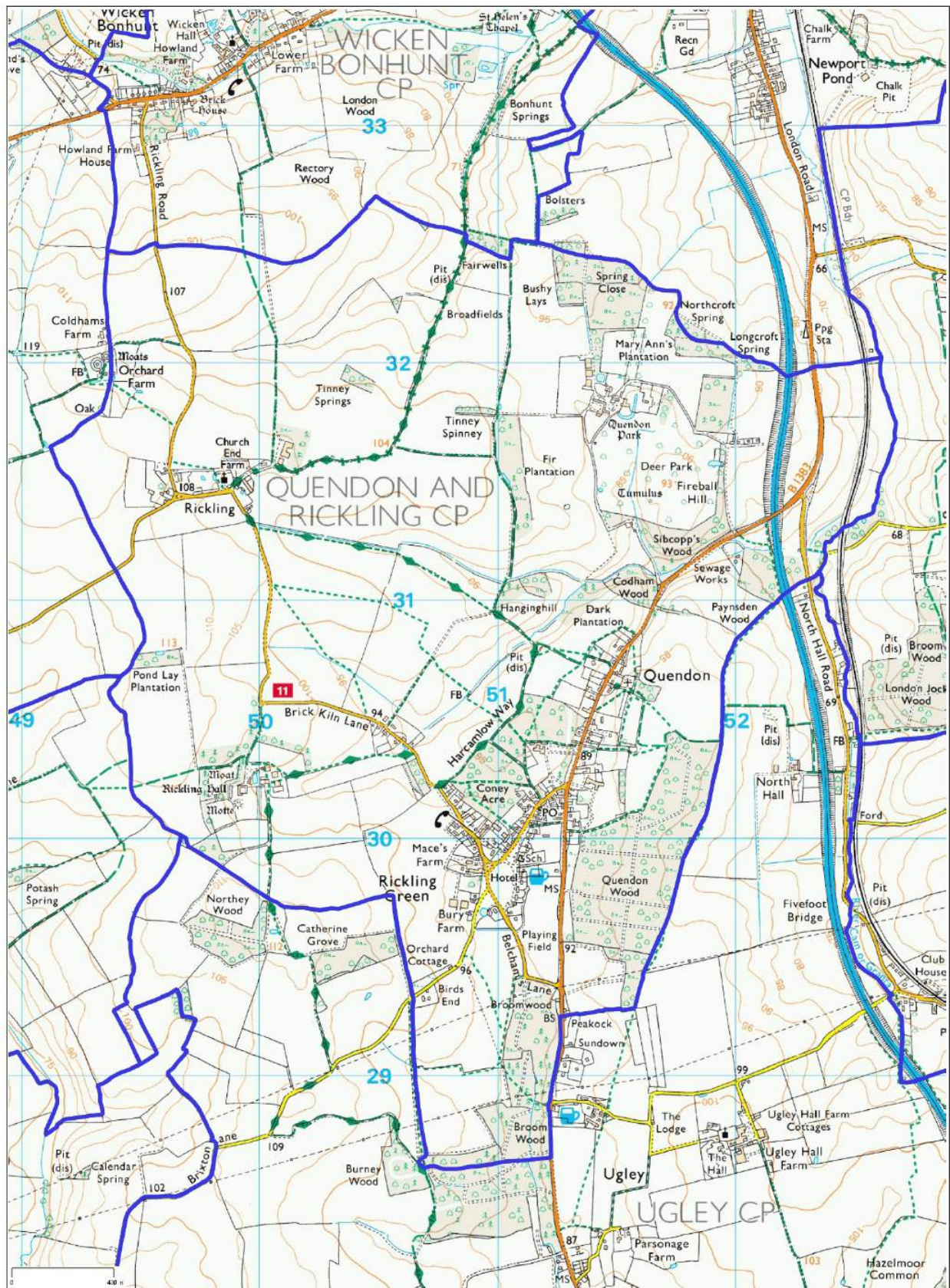
In 2011, the population of Quendon and Rickling was recorded as 587, which shows a gradual increase of just 60 since the 1901 Census. However, the lives of the residents have changed in many ways. New skills in technology, trade and commerce are listed under ‘Occupation’, and very few of the residents now work in the village. Although surrounded by farmland, modern farming techniques and practices negate the need for a large local workforce. We have lost most of the trades and services enjoyed by past residents, but hopefully we have not lost their spirit and sense of community. Our village has evolved over centuries and will continue to do so. The Village Plan is our opportunity to contribute to its future.



Harvesting in the 21st century

¹⁴ *Essex Newsman*, 5 December 1891, and *Evening Telegraph*, Angus, Scotland, 14 March 1892.

The Parish of Quendon and Rickling, 2015



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Demographics

Age Range of respondents		
Age*	Male	Female
Under 11	24	20
11 – 17	14	11
18 – 21	4	11
22 – 40	28	30
41 – 64	73	81
65 – 80	37	47
Over 80	8	14
*5 people chose not to answer this section		

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to develop a profile of the village and its inhabitants. Of the 275 questionnaires delivered, 177 were completed and returned, which represented 64% of the community and was considered a reasonable sample for analysis.

Of the 407 people who answered the questionnaire, 190 were male and 214 female; 3 people chose not to answer this question. From this sample it would appear that the village has a predominantly older population with 260 people over the age of forty. A quarter of respondents were recorded as retired. The largest group of young people in the village is the Under 11's, with 44 children in that category; of these, 18 are recorded as being of pre-school age.

This sample also provided a snapshot of the current workforce in the parish, the majority of whom commute to their place of work, most to within 20 miles of their home. It is also worth noting that 34% of this workforce is self-employed.

Length of Family Residency Q & R	
Under a year	10
1 – 5 years	32
6 – 10 years	25
11 – 25 years	39
26 – 50 years	30
51 – 75 years	6
76 – 100 years	7
Over 100 years	5

Two questions in this section asked about the length of time families have lived in Quendon & Rickling and their reasons for moving here. Of the 153 people answering this question, 42% have lived here for less than ten years. A number of families have been resident for much longer, generations from five families having lived in Quendon & Rickling for more than one hundred years. The main reason given for choosing to live in the village was the rural location: 'a lovely

location' and 'nice area' being amongst the comments made. Schooling and good transport links were more reasons given for moving here; being nearer to friends and family influenced some families.

Occupation or Lifestyle			
Pre-school	18	Semi-retired	1
In Education	69	Retired	102
Unemployed	5	Voluntary Worker	7
Employee	114	Unwaged partner	6
Self-employed	58	Long-term Sickness	2
In a Government Training Scheme	0	Disabled	11
		A Carer	8

location: 'a lovely

Reasons for living in Quendon & Rickling			
Born here	40	Schools	64
Housing	81	Village life	159
Relatives here	38	Moved with parents	91
Work	53	Ease of commuting	48

The following sections of the questionnaire provide a more in-depth analysis of life within the community, and demonstrate what a diverse group of people live in Quendon & Rickling, and will enable interested parties to plan more effectively for the future of the village.

The Environment

This section looks at the appearance, maintenance and future development of the local environment. The results show that although some people are happy with the appearance of the village, many think it could be improved. Better maintenance of verges and hedgerows would not only tidy up the village, but would also improve accessibility for pedestrians. There was an interest in maintaining some of the verges and hedgerows for wildlife. 55% of respondents would like to see litter cleared more frequently; more litterbins and dog waste bins were other suggested improvements. 56% of respondents supported better maintenance of the footpaths and byways that surround the village, which would also improve access for the public.

An interest was also shown in future environmental projects; ideas such as the restoration and development of local ponds, a woodland trail and bulb planting were well supported. Better allotment facilities also attracted some interest and in Question 10, people were asked if they would be willing to help with these initiatives. The results show that there is both an interest in, and a will to engage with the local environment and this enthusiasm should be encouraged and used for the benefit of the village as a whole.



Dell Pond, Rickling Green, 2015.

Householders were also asked if they were unduly affected by various sources of noise and light pollution. Local traffic noise seems to affect the greatest number of people, with the noise from aircraft and motorway traffic creating a disturbance for many. Neighbourhood lighting affected a few households and garden bonfires were also mentioned, but on the whole, it would appear that most people are mindful of their neighbours. A further nuisance for 38% of respondents is off-road vehicles using footpaths, bridleways and byways. These tracks often cross privately owned land and little can be done to deter offenders without the co-operation of the landowner. However, it is important that any actions that endanger others should be reported to the police.



2015 Updates

- A dog-waste bin has been re-sited at the Woodlands entrance to the woods.
- There are currently no bye-laws regarding bonfires. Anybody considering lighting a bonfire should consult the UDC website or refer to their leaflet on bonfires and environmentally friendly methods of disposing of garden and household waste.
- The Parish Council has a collection of litter grabbers, gloves and bags for use around the village. Please contact the Parish Clerk.
- Contact details for those interested in an allotment plot are listed in *The Link*. Although not under its control, the Parish Council continues to keep the situation under review.

Recommendations

- *Place notices reminding owners to clear up after their dogs at each entrance to the woods and on footpaths around the village.*
- *Site a further dog waste bin at the Brick Kiln Lane entrance to the woods.*
- *Establish a volunteer environmental group to work in conjunction with landowners and other agencies to maintain areas of woodland, hedgerows, verges and ponds for both wildlife and the enjoyment of the community.*
- *Set up a regular 'Village Footpath Walk' to inspect each public footpath at least once a year and report any problems noted to the appropriate agencies.*
- *64 people would be prepared to help with litter picking. Set up regular working parties throughout the village.*



Transport and Road Safety

The questions in this section sought residents' views on transport and road safety within the village and provided a snapshot of the types of transport used and for what purpose. The main means of transport for 91% of the respondents is by private car.

Q13 What is your main means of transport?	
Car or Van	321
Motorcycle	5
Bicycle	22
Walking	89
Bus or Coach	44
Taxi	14
Train	33

Public Transport

Few people use the bus service on a regular basis and their journeys tend to be for shopping and leisure. The majority of comments related to the quality of service from the operators, namely, its reliability, frequency and safety, and 54 people would use the 301 service more often if the route came through Rickling Green.

2015 Update

- ECC has recently launched 'Getting Around in Essex', a consultation process that will review the county's bus service. The PC will submit all comments they receive from residents concerning the local bus services to ECC.

Recommendations

- *The issues raised could be collated and passed on to the relevant operator, any changes relying on their support and good will.*
- *Using The Link to highlight any problems and gain feedback, which could then be pursued if there was a sufficient strength of feeling.*

Stansted Airport

This section also looked into the role the airport plays in the life of the village as both a transport hub and employer. Although the airport has a high profile in the area, it employs very few residents and plays a small role as a transport hub for commuters. Most journeys made from the airport are for leisure, a few people travelling several times each year, but less frequently for the majority of travellers.



Parking along Rickling Green Road

Road Safety and Parking

The subject of traffic and road safety received a lot of comment throughout the questionnaire. Of the 356 respondents to Question 14, 76% were concerned about the speed of traffic and 51% about the volume of traffic using our roads; many of the respondents would support more traffic calming measures throughout the village. The main areas of concern were the junction of Belcham's Lane with the B1383, Cambridge Road and Rickling Green Road.

Belcham's Lane - junction with the B1383

- Restricted vision due to angle of approach in both directions, compounded by poorly maintained verges during the summer.
- Road width on exiting the village results in vehicles being positioned in the middle of the T junction, thereby restricting traffic turning from the B1383, often leaving vehicles dangerously exposed to collision.
- Excessive and variable speeds as drivers leave the village along Belcham's Lane. The 30mph limit changes to an unrestricted 60mph. 150 metres later this changes again to 50mph at the junction with the B1383. Here, drivers are confronted with traffic exiting the B1383 at excessive speed into a blind and narrow turning.



Junction of Belcham's Lane with the B1383.

Recommendations

- *Extend the 30mph limit along the length of Belcham's Lane to its junction with B1383.*
- *More regular clearance of the verges.*
- *Review this junction with the appropriate authorities and determine the status of the informal tarmacadam area currently used for turning and parking.*

Cambridge Road

Although a 30mph speed limit has been imposed, a survey in March 2014 suggests this is often ignored. The lack of suitable off road parking is also a concern. In some areas cars are able to park on the footpath, often leaving little room for pedestrians. Parking in the road itself creates problems for some residents on entering or leaving their properties and also restricts the flow of traffic. This may add to local traffic noise as vehicles slow down and then accelerate away.

Rickling Green Road

This is a main thoroughfare connecting the eastern part of the village to the Cambridge Road and is also used by through-traffic to Clavering, Berden and Wicken Bonhunt. There are houses and side roads along its length, plus access to the school and the Cricketers Arms. The main concerns are speeding and parking in the road and, to a lesser extent, parking on The Green. The speed limit is currently 30mph, which at quiet times of the day and in clear conditions is probably acceptable. This is not, however, the case during peak times, i.e. at the beginning and end of the school day and early in the mornings, at evenings and weekends when there are often a significant number of cars parked along the road. The main hot spots are: -

- ***Junction with the B1383.*** Traffic turning from the Cambridge Road meets opposite direction traffic on the wrong side of the road passing parked cars. Vehicles are often parked too close to this junction, thereby contravening Highway Code Article 243.
- ***Parking on Rickling Green Road.*** Vehicles are often parked the entire length of the road and, at busy times, there are few gaps for drivers to pull into should they meet opposite direction traffic. Vehicles parked facing oncoming traffic or at an angle to the road are also

hazards as their reflective rear lights are not visible at night. Refer to Highway Code Article 248¹⁵.

- ***Junction of Rickling Green Road and the school/public house.*** Most hazardous at the start and finish of the school day when a number of cars are parked along the road. Vehicles are often parked on The Green, which in wet conditions erodes the verges and grass.



Pavement obstructed along Cambridge Road, Quendon.

2015 Updates

- A further speed reactive illuminative sign has been installed at the north end of the B1383.
- Bollards have been erected on the verge of the Green bordering Rickling Green Road.
- The PC has applied to Highways Department under the Local Highways Plan to address parking difficulties within the village.

Recommendations

- *Publicise these problems to both residents and other road users.*
- *Investigate means of enforcing the speed limits throughout the village.*
- *Parking. Notify all road users of hazards caused by parked cars. Continue to liaise with School Head and Pub Manager to establish ways of addressing the concerns of villagers.*
- *Install posts around The Green.*
- *Double yellow lines at the junction of Rickling Green Road and B1383.*

Pavements

Both this and The Environment section raised the issue of the condition and maintenance of pavements around the village. It is generally felt that they are in a fair state of repair within the core of the village, but this rapidly deteriorates as you travel towards Newport and Stansted. Encroachment of vegetation at ground level from poorly maintained hedgerows and verges restricts access for pedestrians, often making passage more or less impossible.



Pavement along B1383

Recommendations

- *Encourage householders to look after their boundary hedges and verges and cut back all vegetation that encroaches upon public rights of way and restricts passage for pedestrians.*
- *Contact 'Highways' to maintain areas that fall within their responsibility.*
- *Encourage people not to park on footpaths.*
- *Set up a working party to start clearing the worst parts.*
- *Create a dual purpose cycle way and pavement along the length of the B1383.*

¹⁵ Details of current regulations can be found in The Highway Code or on the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/waiting-and-parking>

Local Services

The first part of this section looks at the main service providers to the parish and goes on to investigate communications within the village itself and also those of outside agencies. It concludes with a survey on views concerning street lighting, which highlighted strong differences of opinion in the optimum amount of lighting needed.

Service Providers

The services received from the utility companies – gas, electricity and water – were recorded as being predominantly good to satisfactory. However, concern was expressed about the main drainage system along the B1383, with flooding and the smell of sewage being particular problems. There was also general satisfaction with the refuse collection, roadside care and verge cutting, but 126 people found road repairs to be poor. Once away from the Cambridge Road, potholes and surface damage were mentioned in the comments sections, particularly around Coney Acre.

The Dial-a-Ride service offered by UDC was found to be mainly satisfactory, but some concerns about the lack of hospital transport were expressed. When asked, most people were happy with the available Health and Social Service facilities in the area and those people who had used the Emergency Services found them to be good to satisfactory.

Recommendations

- *The PC should continue monitoring the state of the drainage and report incidents to Anglian Water. They should also establish lines of communication with their agents to ensure minimum disturbance to the local community when maintenance is carried out.*
- *An initiative to establish a network of local volunteers to supplement these services.*
- *Monitor the quality of Emergency Services at this time of financial cutbacks.*

Crime

On the whole, our parish falls below the national average for criminal activity, but there does appear to be an increasing number of thefts from gardens and garden sheds. Whilst a number of residents were unaware of the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme, 82% of respondents do read *The Observer*, its quarterly newsletter. However, the fact that some households are not receiving this publication has been highlighted.

Recommendations

- *The appointment of a new Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator.*
- *Promote a greater awareness of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and determine ways of encouraging a wider readership of The Observer.*
- *Encourage more engagement with the Local Constabulary representative to enable a better understanding of local policing.*

Communication

The changeover to 'digital' is now complete, but television reception remains unsatisfactory for some people. A fast, reliable Internet service is also a problem for a good proportion of the village and many factors from the age of the equipment to the distance from the exchange dictate the speed and quality of this service.

Q24 asked people to rate the standard of service received over the past two years from the following: -			
	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Telephone – landline	187	132	6
Internet service	41	103	144
Mobile telephone	11	41	260
Television reception	85	132	103
Postal delivery	273	53	3

The Essex Superfast Broadband project aims to achieve 87% fibre optic coverage in the county by 2016, financial considerations restricting a 100% coverage. Mobile phone reception is also very poor around the village. Residents use various providers for all these services and so the level of service will vary. From the responses received to the questionnaire, it is difficult to clarify exactly where the problems lie and a more in-depth survey will be needed to pinpoint the precise problems affecting the various services.

2015 Updates

- The Bowling Club has appointed an agent to liaise with service providers who may wish to use its grounds to improve mobile phone reception in the village.
- We are currently awaiting the outcome of the *Superfast Essex* Phase 2 project when it is hoped that the Newport exchange will be included, thereby benefitting Q & R.

Recommendations

- *More work is needed to identify which TV service people are using to be able to form a clear action plan.*
- *Further discussion and lobbying Essex Superfast Broadband to ensure we are included in the 87%. Likewise with other service providers regarding upgrades to their equipment and services.*

Good communication is the lifeblood of any village. Creating strong, positive connections empowers people and strengthens the community spirit. Responses to the questionnaire suggest that communications could be improved within the village, thereby creating a more inclusive environment. Some residents have expressed a need to feel included and to participate more in any decisions made regarding the community. With increasing numbers of families commuting in and out of the village daily, contact between people is decreasing and the community spirit of the village is being eroded.

Q25 asked people to rate the quality of the following: -			
	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
The Link	260	48	3
Village Notice Boards	100	136	31
Village Website	86	99	27

Recommendations

- *More needs to be done to encourage people to use the existing information platforms in the village, i.e. The Link, the village website and the three notice boards. It has been suggested that a supplement for younger residents could be added to The Link to attract a wider readership.*
- *As the demographics of the village change, explore the use of social media and mobile devices to keep in touch with residents.*
- *It is crucial to get more residents actively involved in generating and improving communications networks within the village.*
- *Consider using Google Groups forum, as used by a neighbouring village, to air residents' views on topics of local interest.*

2015 Update

- A Quendon & Rickling Facebook group is currently being considered as a further means of communication within the village.



Street Lighting

A large majority of respondents are opposed to more lighting and feel that existing lighting should be better controlled with, for instance, motion detectors to prevent light pollution. The comments made suggest that areas such as Cambridge Road, especially in the vicinity of the Fountain and footpaths, and Coney Acre are areas where pedestrians use the pavements at night or where our more elderly residents live and would benefit from more lighting for both safety and security reasons.

2015 Update

- In response to the questionnaire, an investigation has been proposed by the Parish Council to assess the need and costs of improvement to the village lighting, (low level and controlled etc.), and to put forward options for consideration and funding.



Local Government and Planning

This section sought householders' views on local government and the local planning process with specific reference to this village. Question 34 looked at energy usage and efficiency within the village.

Local Government

When asked if residents felt that local government was aware of local concerns, 60% of respondents gave a positive answer. To improve this situation further, some people suggested regular meetings with local representatives and updates on local issues.

- ❖ Parish Council meetings are held in the Village Hall each month. Representatives from both Essex County Council and Uttlesford District Council also regularly attend these meetings.
- ❖ The dates for each meeting are published in *The Link*, posted on the village website and displayed on all three notice boards in the village. Residents are both encouraged and welcome to attend and there is an opportunity to speak to all the representatives after each meeting. Despite this publicity, however, only two or three members of the village are generally present. The Parish Council is composed of volunteers elected by the community and, together with the Parish Clerk, may be contacted at any time to discuss local issues. Anybody wishing to serve the community may put their name forward as a councillor.
- ❖ Residents may submit their email address to the Parish Clerk for inclusion in the direct circulation of parish information.

Recommendations

- *Devote a page in The Link for important contact numbers, e.g. Parish Council, Neighbourhood Watch, emergency numbers for utility services, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Dial-A-Ride etc.*
- *A note in The Link and on the village website explaining the role of local government.*

Planning

278 residents answered question 29, of which 56% felt that there is sufficient publicity given to planning applications in Quendon & Rickling. Further questions went on to determine the number and type of development that people would like to see in the village. Question 33 asked where new developments should be sited. Of the 170 respondents to this question, 99% would like them to be within the village boundaries. 95% also considered infill plots as suitable sites for development.



Two developments along the Cambridge Road, 2015



Q30 and Q31 asked how many new houses should be built over the next 5 years and how many of those should be affordable homes.

	New Homes	Affordable
None	39	23%
1-10	62	45%
11-20	60	18%
21-30	65	8%
31-50	28	4%
51-100	12	! %
Over 100	5	None

Q32 asked what type of housing people would like to see in Q & R.

	Yes	No
Social housing	59	9
Sheltered housing	75	6
Affordable homes to rent	152	8
1-2 bedroom apartments	69	10
2-3 bedroom houses	203	6
4-5 bedroom houses	61	6
6 or more bedroom houses	14	9

Energy

Just under half of respondents were unaware of the help that is available to manage energy bills and 70% of households have not switched providers to take advantage of better rates. The government definition of 'fuel poverty' is when a household spends more than 10% of its income to maintain a reasonable heating and power regime in the home. A fifth of households answering this question are in this category. A similar number have as yet not insulated their homes.

2015 Update

- In the winter of 2013/2014 the Citizens Advice Bureau carried out a house-to-house survey in some areas of Quendon and Rickling as part of the *Keeping Warm in Uttlesford* campaign.

Recreation, Leisure and The Community

Questions in this section sought views on recreation and leisure facilities within the village and various aspects of community life. The main points to emerge are that existing facilities in the village are limited, but appreciated by some, and many people travel to clubs and leisure activities in nearby towns and villages. There was no clear age-related pattern in the responses to questions in this section, with each age group being well represented.

Clubs and Activities

When asked what facilities residents use in the village, 67% of respondents said the Village Hall, but this was not on a regular basis for the majority of this number. This result is borne out by the support given to existing clubs. The Village Golf Society, Keep Fit, and Playgroup received the most support in the village, whereas only two or three people appeared to attend other clubs that are available. One of the few meeting places left in the village is The Cricketers Arms. 65% of people answering this question use the pub occasionally, a further 16% on a more frequent basis. From the comments received, it appears that some people find the pub too expensive and there were requests for a 'real' village pub.

The results from questions 42 and 43 are worthy of further analysis. A number of comments were made to several questions saying that more activities and facilities are needed in the village.

Q43 asked what clubs and interest groups residents would attend if available in Q & R.			
Pilates	7	Choir	3
Music/Singing	6	Youth group	2
Gardening	5	Cookery	2
Dance classes	5	Photography	2
Sports	5	Zumba	2
Book group	4	Bridge	2
Yoga	4	Running club	2
Keep Fit	4	Astronomy	2
Walking groups	4	Theatre trips	2
Crafts	4	History group	2
Tennis	3	Social events	2
Social club	3		

Q42 Would you like to see the following in Q & R?	
Music events	149
Drama and plays	99
A sports day	91
Organised trips and events	97

From the disparity in the numbers answering questions 42 and 43 it is apparent that more people would like to see organised events and social gatherings in the village than those who wish to attend clubs and interest groups. However, it is often these smaller groups and clubs, where people have a shared interest, that give regular contact with other like-minded people, in turn building a network of friends and acquaintances throughout the village.

Recommendation

- *Encourage local clubs and groups to make better use of The Link and Village website. Include details of activities in neighbouring villages.*

2015 Updates

- Rickling Runners has been formed and meets weekly on Thursdays on The Green.
- The Village Hall committee now makes regular updates of information concerning local clubs and activities in *The Link*.
- The Parish Council has Welcome Packs for people moving to the village. It is helpful if residents could let the Parish Clerk know when new neighbours arrive in the village.

The Role of the Church and Local Schools in the Community



All Saints Church, Rickling, 2015

As long standing institutions within our community, the questions in this section sought residents' views on the Church and local schools. 73% of respondents value the part the Church plays in village life, a further 64% being aware of the role of the Friends of Rickling & Quendon Churches. Rickling School is also a valued part of our community with 97% of the respondents confirming this.

64% of respondents felt that nursery provision was inadequate in the village, although some nursery places are available in surrounding towns and villages. We do have a successful Bumps, Babies, Toddlers and Parents Group in Armadillos and they meet in the Village Hall every Tuesday morning during term time. It is difficult to envisage a village nursery being

Q38 asked for the number of children in each household who attended the following: -	
Playgroup	17
Nursery School	8
Primary School	29
Secondary School	20
Special Needs School	0

Q37 asked the following questions: -	Yes	No
Do you value the part Played by Rickling School in our community?	255	8
Are nursery facilities within the village adequate for the under 5's	49	87
Would you like to see a playground in the village?	176	76

established at the moment when local demand is set against suitable accommodation and set-up costs. However, any new housing developments in the area will put pressure on existing facilities and may be the catalyst for the establishment of a children's nursery in the village.

The provision of a playground received significant support throughout the questionnaire.

2015 Update

- An area has been identified for use as a playground under the Community Infrastructure Levy imposed on the developers of the proposed Foxley House site. The area allocated suggests that it will only be suitable for younger children.



Recommendation

- Discussion is needed to determine the type of equipment needed.

The Quality of Life in the Community

Views on the quality of life within the village are generally positive. It is encouraging that many people feel there is a sense of community and that neighbours are supportive. And yet, some people still feel isolated, which should be of great concern to the rest of the community. There is a strong view that more community activities are needed and this is an area that needs to be addressed.

Q44 asked whether people felt any of the following applied to their situation.	Yes	No
There is a sense of community within the village	175	16
My neighbours are helpful and supportive	240	9
I tend to feel isolated	19	32
Contact with neighbours is difficult in the winter months	34	26
Quendon & Rickling are separate communities	68	19
There is a need for more community activities	121	12



The Village Hall, 2015.

2015 Update

- A monthly community coffee morning is now held in the Village Hall and has proved to be successful in bringing people together. They are organised by local groups and residents, and are very much a community effort. They have also raised money for local charities.

Recommendation

- *The Parish Council and Parochial Church Council should be asked to consider ways in which they can work closer together to address community issues as they arise.*

Suggested Facilities for the Future

Question 45 asked what additional measures might help the elderly and disabled living in the village; the most favoured additional facilities being a shop/post office, a neighbourhood-visiting scheme, a community centre and an improved bus service. Now a private residence, the local shop was a welcome meeting point and is much missed by many. Strict rules on the location of new sub post offices and changes in the way we all carry out our weekly shop make it unlikely that a new shop would prove successful. Little interest was shown in setting up an oil bulk-buying scheme, but 92 people showed some interest in establishing a community-shopping scheme. The priority is to ensure that existing bus services are maintained to help those without their own transport access local towns and villages.

Recommendation

- *Consult Essex County Council and local bus operators to establish whether there are plans to improve the frequency and timing of local services.*
- *Make further investigations into a community-shopping scheme where smaller orders are combined and delivered to a central location in the village for onward distribution.*

Question 46 asked what facilities for younger people residents would like to see in the village. 101 people answered this question and 40% of those suggested a playground. A youth club was another popular facility with 30% suggesting this, and 16% suggested sporting activities. The need for a playground and social activities for our younger residents is also reflected in the answers to question 48 and comments made in the Young Person's Questionnaire.

Q47 How would you be prepared to fund improvements in Q & R?	Yes	No
Participate in fundraising	148	10
Contribute directly to a project fund	81	16
Pay more Council Tax for projects	16	30

A number of residents have indicated that they are willing to participate in fundraising events for improvements within the village. This is encouraging and will hopefully extend to the planning and organisation of such events.

The final question in this section asked what three changes people would most like to see in the village. 197 people responded and the following table shows the most popular improvements suggested. The full list is available in the Village Plan section of the Village Website.

Q48 Some changes that residents would like to see in Q & R.			
Playground/park	37	Improve junction at Ellis Corner	4
Shop/Post Office	34	Improve internet connection	4
Speed restrictions/traffic calming	25	More affordable housing	4
Better village pub	9	Fill potholes	3
More playgroup/nursery facilities	8	Improve the footpath to Newport	3
More clubs	7	Youth Club	3
Limited residential development	7	Improve mobile signal	2
Parking restrictions	7	Coffee mornings	2
More dog waste bins	6	Clear ditches	2
Improve Village Hall	5	Improve street lighting	2
Improve bus services	5	More bus shelters	2
Community centre	5		

Recommendation

- *The Parish will need to take a decision on which of these should be pursued and notice should be taken of the weight of responses elsewhere in the questionnaire.*

Young People's Section

This section was for the younger members of the parish and asked those aged from 11 to 17 years about their views on life in Quendon & Rickling. From the data gathered, 25 young people fit this criteria and of those, 22 answered questions in this section.

Age and gender of young people.		
Age	Female	Male
11yrs	2	4
12yrs	1	2
13yrs	2	1
14yrs	0	2
15yrs	1	2
16yrs	2	0
17yrs	1	2

It was found that the majority of young people felt that Quendon & Rickling is a good place to grow up. However, some found that there is little to do here and would like to see more activities organised for the young. Questions 53 and 54 asked for likes and dislikes relating to the parish. The rural setting, the Green, the woodlands and surrounding countryside appealed to many, and comments were made about friendly neighbours and the homely, rural feel to the village. Other comments were made about the lack of a playground or shop and that there is little opportunity to meet others of a similar age.

Only one young person felt that the transport links were good. Many found the public transport service to be poor and, as expected, the primary means of transport out of the village for the majority of young people is by private car. Road safety was also an issue, the Cambridge Road considered dangerous by 25% or respondents. Speeding and parked cars were cited as particular problems, in some cases preventing young people from walking or cycling to visit friends.

Q56 asked how young people travel in and out of the villages.	
Walk	5
Cycle	5
School bus	5
Local bus service	6
Car	18
Taxi	1

Q57 Where do you get information about clubs, events etc.?	
Village website	1
Village notice boards	3
<i>The Link</i> magazine	4
Local newspapers	5
School or college	13
Twitter or Facebook	0
Other sources: - Parents, local publications, Internet and Google, and from other people.	

Questions 54 and 55 asked what activities young people took part in and where these were based. From the 14 who answered this question it would seem that Saffron Walden and Newport are where the majority of activities take place, although some young people travel as far as Cambridge and Ware for more specialist events. Fifty-nine activities were listed and ranged from the more popular football, hockey, netball, basketball, gymnastics and swimming, to roller blading, kayaking, horse riding and R/C model car racing. A further 11 answered Q58, which asked what activities for young people they would like to see in the village. The answers were wide-ranging and supported by a very small number, but the general theme was for some form of group activity. A youth

club, sports club, playground and wildlife-watch were some of the more popular suggestions put forward; skate ramps, tennis courts and better transport services were other suggestions.

Recommendations

- *Any further development in the village should include an area for older children and incorporate nets for basketball and football, and ramps for skateboarders and bikers.*
- *Set up a club or youth group where young people can meet and plan events and activities.*
- *Organise more family orientated social activities, which in turn create a network of acquaintances and friends throughout the village.*
- *Organise a 'taster session' where youth groups and sports clubs give demonstrations, or provide information, about what they have to offer in the area.*
- *Set up a village website, Twitter or Facebook page for the younger members of the community, or have a Young Person's section in The Link. An adult should monitor this, but the input should be from the young people themselves.*



Business and Trade

Following the delivery of the Community Life Questionnaire to residents, a Business and Trade Questionnaire was sent to all known businesses in the village. The main aim was to identify the range of businesses and to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of conducting a business in Quendon & Rickling. The 14 responses to the 43 questionnaires delivered are not enough to provide a representative sample from the local business community, but will act as a starting point for any further discussions on business related matters within the village.

The businesses identified were quite diverse and ranged from those operating in the service industry to retail and leisure providers, computing and graphic designers, the building trade and the school. Few had dedicated business premises, the majority either conducting business from a private address or as home workers; many of these were either self-employed or under contract. Six of the businesses employed staff and from a combined total of 47 people, eight of these employees were village residents.

The main advantage given for locating a business here was the excellent transport links, namely access to the M11 and other main routes, and to local rail networks, providing links to Cambridge, London, the Midlands and East Anglia. Proximity to Stansted Airport was also seen as an advantage. The rural location of the village was cited as a further benefit; the Cricketers Arms was mentioned by one respondent as a convenient place to meet clients.

Of particular concern are the disadvantages given for operating a business here. All respondents said that the mobile phone service did not meet their business needs, with only five classing the Internet speeds as “adequate”. This is clearly a hindrance to businesses and restricts them from operating effectively in the modern world.

Crime is not generally considered to be a problem in the village, but some dedicated business premises have been targets for break-ins and theft. There was a mixed response to the actions of the local police force from those businesses affected by crime. One respondent felt that the lack of a shop, petrol station or leisure activities to be another disadvantage to local business.

Only one business was looking for alternative accommodation outside the village as they had outgrown their current premises. Eleven thought the village would benefit from additional dedicated business space either within or close to the village.

Recommendation

- *The findings should not be treated in isolation, but should be considered along with comments from the Community Life Questionnaire.*
- *Create a forum for businesses within the village.*





Quendon & Rickling Village Plan 2015