

# Thixendale

## Parish Plan 2009





Cover photograph courtesy of Steve Lyus  
Thanks to everyone who has contributed photographs.  
Cartoons drawn by Julian Swift.

## **FOREWORD**

The purpose of a Parish Plan is to draw to the attention of the relevant bodies-they call them “Partners” an amusing and polite little expression! - the concerns of the Parish. Contrary to popular belief and the evidence of our own eyes, they really DO want to know what bothers us – so we are assured that this document WILL be read and not just consigned to “Infinitely Pending” file!

This Parish Plan is the end of a process which began with an Open Day organized by Yorkshire Rural Community Council (YRCC)-the open day begat the Questionnaire which was delivered to every household in the parish and the results of that were eventually rationalized as the Parish Plan and its associated Action Plan.

We would like to acknowledge the not inconsiderable amount of help, advice and support we received from Maggie Farey and Amy Thomas of YRCC who have been tirelessly enthusiastic, resourceful and industrious on our behalf.

This Parish Plan is based entirely on the views of the residents of the Parish of Thixendale as expressed through the questionnaire and hopefully the Action Plan is the logical extension of this.

Thank you to all those who completed and returned a questionnaire. We hope EVERYONE will read and enjoy this Declaration of Intent from the Parish of Thixendale!

### **Parish Plan Steering Group**

Mrs M. Anstey  
Mrs L. Boyes  
Mr K. Bristow  
Mrs P. Foster  
Mrs L. Geenty  
Mr D. Sharpe  
Mr J. Swift

## HISTORY

Thixendale literally nestles in one of the dry valleys which characterise chalklands. The name is a corruption of Sixtendale from the Scandinavian “Sigsten’s valley” - which explains where the search for the sixteen dales comes from - you can stop now! There is evidence of settlement in this area as far back as 10,000 BC – this may not have been all year round but the forests were cleared from the dalesides and then the tops by 3500 BC which suggests an intent to settle. Certainly by the Iron Age earthworks were being thrown up which would imply there was something to defend.

The road and track network we know today was established by Roman times although little is known about the Thixendale of this era and there was certainly a Roman village at Raisthorpe. Settlements had coalesced into recognizable villages by Norman times with the ridge and furrow system of cultivation and Thixendale Parish became the largest of five townships under the auspices of Wharram Percy.

As with most Wolds townships in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries the Church -specifically St. Mary’s Abbey at York and Kirkham Abbey - acquired two thirds of the land in and around the village by bequest and so on and proceeded to turn it over to sheep-grazing. The consolidation of these sheepwalks as they were known inevitably led to depopulation and ultimate abandonment of the other townships of Wharram Percy, Towthorpe, Burdale and Raisthorpe - a fate which would undoubtedly befallen Thixendale but for the timely demise of one William Vessey who was in the process of buying up all the neighbouring holdings. The 1670 Hearth Tax listed 18 houses in Thixendale.

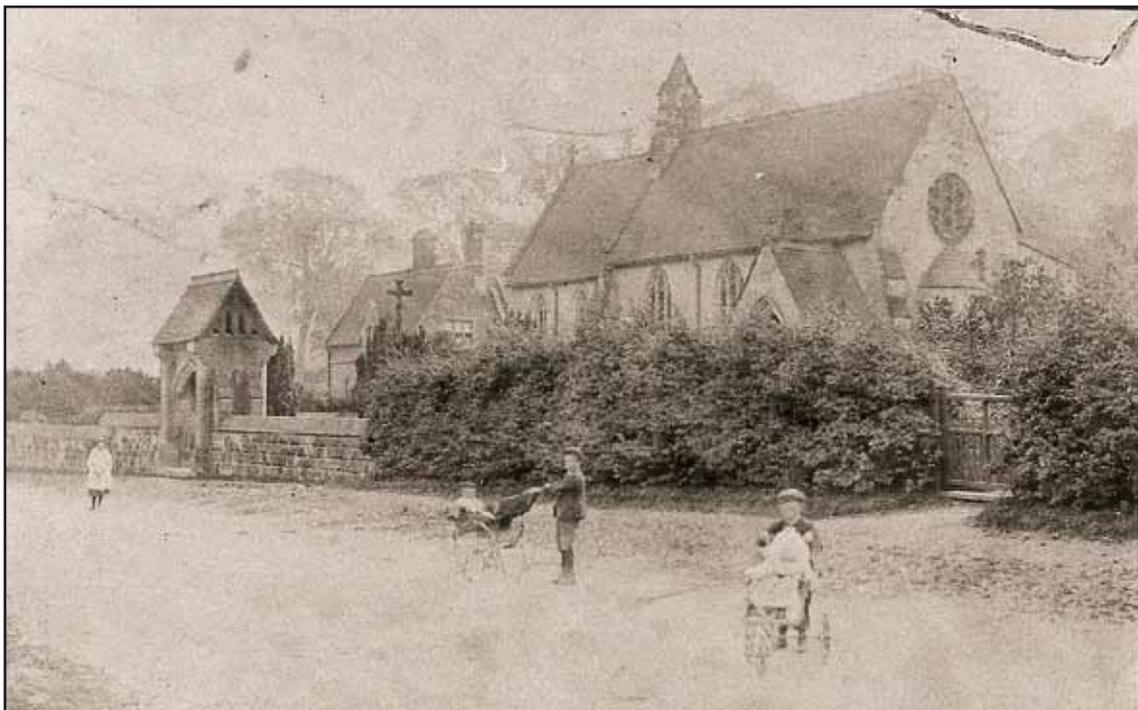
With the Dissolution of The Monasteries the Crown acquired all the land and proceeded to sell it off to speculators who broke it up into smaller parcels to sell on and so we come to second wave of consolidation.

As far as Thixendale is concerned the Sykes family of Sledmere bought up these parcels and started to rectify the bad land management which had followed dissolution. Fields were enclosed and laid out more or less as we see them today with new brick-built farmhouses erected in their midst. High Barns were erected and they were basically manure factories where intensively reared cattle were wintered and the resultant manure was used to fertilise the thin chalk soils. Two other features appeared in the landscape at this time –the chalk pit and the dew pond. The chalk pits were partly for building materials but were also used as lime pits where chalk was burned in situ to provide a top dressing for crops. The dew ponds were artificially created at the corner of a field to provide drinking water for stock grazing on stubbles or turnip tops. They fell out of use as farming methods changed but the witness is still there in the landscape and the chalk pits are now used as landfill sites.

The architecture of the village is largely due to the Sykes family who built Diamond Cottages, the vicarage, the Church and the School which replaces the old one at The Warrens. St. Mary’s Church was built in 1870 - prior to that parishioners walked to Wharram Percy

for births, marriages and burials and the Coffin Walk still exists from Thixendale across Raisthorpe and along Deepdale to Wharram. Sledmere Estate sold the village off in two lots-the first in 1919 and the remainder in 1941. The terrace of eight cottages which ran down from the pub was demolished in the 1950s-at one stage there were 40 people living in them! - and the land was left derelict until the 1970s. The village shop and the Post Office have been at various places in the village, there was a petrol pump which finally dried up in 2004, a tailor's shop in the arch beside the pub and regular visits from butchers, bakers, grocers and even a fish and chip van! The school, which had been used for evacuees from Hull during the War, finally closed in 1964 and the few children in the village went to Fridaythorpe until that closed. At its height the school would have had 40-50 pupils of various ages but the decline in population after the War and the difficulty of getting teachers to come to Thixendale both contributed to its inevitable end.

The decline continued into the 1970s with several properties becoming holiday homes..... and then somebody built an ornamental pond-that did the trick! Children appeared in the street again and the village hasn't looked back. This period also marked the started of the great fundraising era. In 1968 the village purchased the School to use as a Village Hall and in 1970 leased it to the YHA for 6 months every summer. The FIRST television system was installed in the late 1970s - it was impossible to see anything at teatime when evening meals were being cooked! The Church roof contracted a plague of holes - well 100 years for one roof is not bad going - the village was the recipient of a Village Ventures Award for a Community Project for that little exercise. Since then a SECOND television system has been installed and become obsolete, the YHA has withdrawn and the village hall has had to be completely overhauled when it was discovered it was of architectural significance.



Thixendale Church - late 1890's

# INTRODUCTION

The composition of the questionnaire arose partly from concerns expressed at the Open Day and partly from the subsequent discussion. Although the open day did not have a high attendance the concerns expressed there were fairly consistently reflected in the results from the questionnaire-it would appear that we all feel the same about where we live even if we don't all shout about it!

There were 5 major areas of concern which we will deal with individually:-

1. **Traffic and Road Safety**
2. **Communications**
3. **Village Amenities**
4. **Environmental Issues**
5. **Cycling and Walking**

... and a number of other issues which we will look at as a whole.

The raw data we have placed in an appendix at the back for those who are interested-we have tried to keep the body of the work short and to the point.

It is intended to place the Action Plan on the Parish Council agenda so that it can call this steering group together from time to time to monitor the progress and success of the plan and to recommend any action necessary to keep things moving in the right direction. We hope this will reassure people that this is not merely an exercise in futility... Ryedale we WILL be watching you!



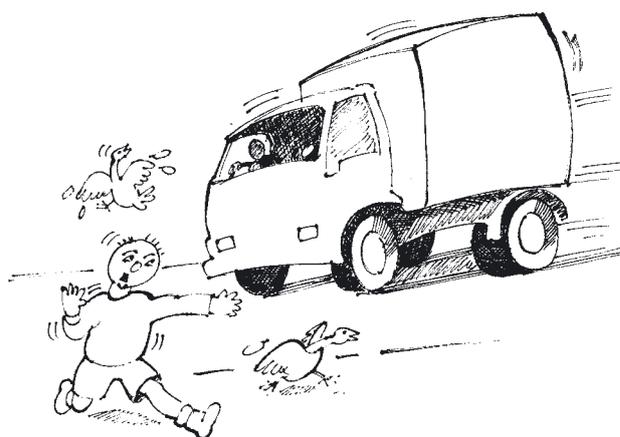
# Priority 1

## TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY

### We asked...

You were asked whether you were concerned or not about a range of issues and your responses are set out below:

	Yes	No
Speeding Traffic	28	15
Heavy Goods vehicles	18	15
Potential Traffic accidents	17	15
On street parking	17	19
Parking on pavements	16	17
Lack of dedicated parking	15	19
Cyclists safety	8	18
Pedestrian Safety	15	16
Inconsiderate drivers	27	16
Noise from traffic	2	25
Traffic fumes	2	24
Traffic congestion	2	25



NB: 6 respondents did not answer any part of this question.

The two major concerns were:

- speeding traffic
- inconsiderate drivers

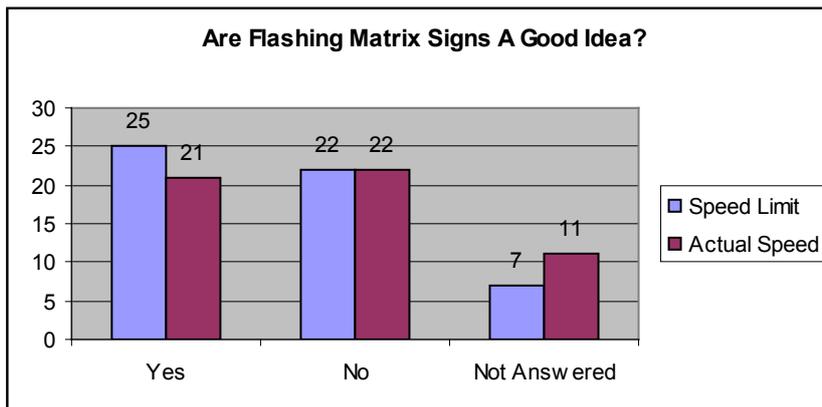
Comments concerning the above table of responses specified the following:

- speeding, including tractors was especially noticeable in the summer and specific stretches identified as – within the village , crossroads by Chapel Farm (children play here), Raisthorpe to Fotherdale (often used by walkers with dogs), on entering and leaving the village e.g. after Manor Farm
- HGVs were numerous and dangerous where lack of footpaths caused difficulties for walkers. The lack of signage at Fridaythorpe results in long vehicles using the road via Gritts Farm where, on entry to the village they cause roadside damage and flooding; reversing at this 180 degree bend is also a major hazard; HGVs also cause pot holes
- On street parking including pavements and verges, particularly by visitors in spring, summer and autumn makes access to private driveways impossible, dangerous for pedestrians especially those pushing prams, hinders other vehicles particularly farm machinery, damages bulbs and plants

- Dedicated parking would ease much of the above and the flat area at the foot of Beamer Hill was suggested
- Many cyclist pass through, often 4 abreast; the speed bump near the Village Hall entrance has no signage and is dangerous as are the innumerable pot holes in surrounding roads

**We then asked...**

You were asked whether flashing matrix signs at the entrance to the village showing the speed limit, or in the village showing actual speed, are a good idea?

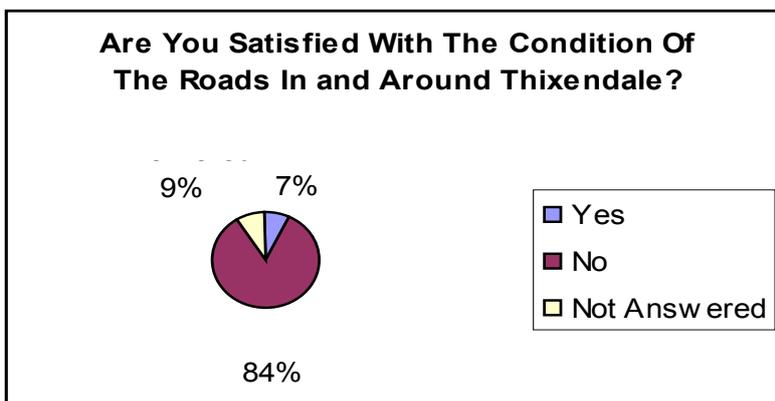


Only two comments recorded:

- not necessary in Thixendale
- no, but speed signs would be good

**We asked...**

Whether you were satisfied with the condition of the roads in and around Thixendale?



This question prompted the greatest response in the whole questionnaire and comments regarding where and why are summarised as follows:

- Seven responses stated all roads were in need of repairs
- Fotherdale (14), Waterdale (11), Huggate Hill (6) and Martinholme hill (2) were specified as bumpy, rutted, broken at verges, loose debris including flints, inadequate drainage, innumerable potholes some of which are very deep.
- Patching has been stop gap and not thorough (there are patches on patches)
- Standing water with additional hazards when frosty and icy
- All the above pose hazards for motorists and cyclists
- Road conditions in East Yorkshire are much better

### Conclusion

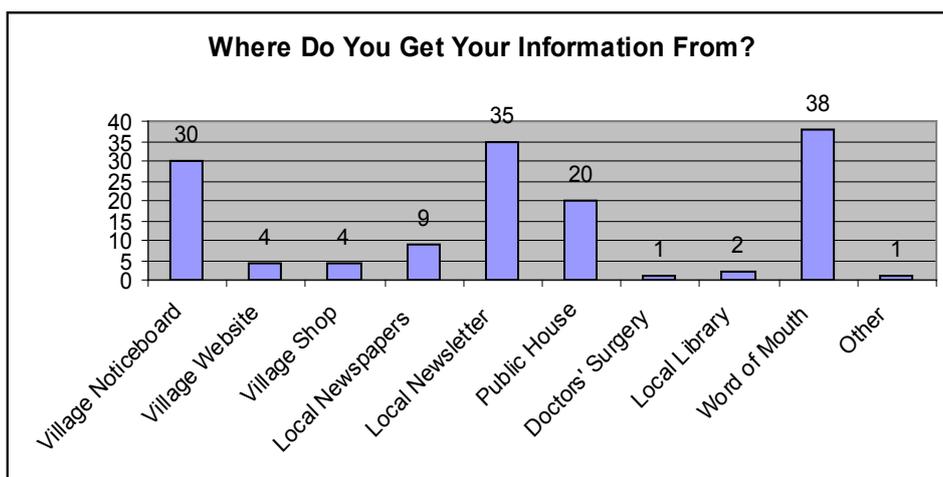
Several issues require urgent attention; the most important relates to the state of the roads in and around the village where deep potholes, rutted surfaces and standing water pose serious hazards for all road users. Additionally we require improved signage related to speed, hazards and routes for HGVs. The huge number of visitors requires the development of dedicated parking areas.

## Priority Two

### COMMUNICATION

#### We asked....

Where do you get your information about local events and services?

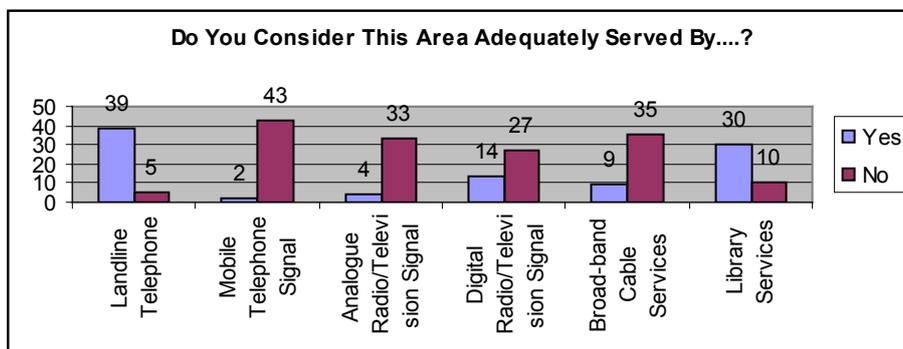


The most common ways of getting information were word of mouth, the local newsletter and the village notice board.

No Comments were received

## We then asked...

Do you consider this area adequately served by.....?



With no mobile telephone signal and no analogue television signal, residents obviously do not feel adequately served by these services. Comments on radio/television and telephones were limited. One resident commented that *“The lack of mobile connection is a particular concern – as is the dependence on Sky TV”* whilst another resident commented that *“It is a joy that mobiles don’t work here”*. Another resident commented that *“We have a very poor service and have chosen not to go satellite, so now no TV”*.

The majority of the comments concerned the poor broadband service. Typical comments were *“Broadband is desperately inadequate both in terms of access and speed”* and *“Access to broadband is a major issue for some businesses and individuals”*.

## Conclusion

Villagers keep in touch with local events through word of mouth, the village noticeboard and particularly the local newsletter, which is produced through the initiative of one resident. The majority of residents receive their television through Sky satellite services.

The major issue for a large number of residents is the poor broadband service or their complete inability to get it at all. This is impinging on residents’ ability to communicate in this modern age as well as causing problems for local businesses.



## Priority Three

### Village Amenities — Petrol, GP, Shop, Post Office, Leisure, Work.

#### We asked.....?

How far do you have to travel to access the following?

Distance	Post Office	Shop	Petrol	G.P.	Leisure	Work
0-5 miles	26	18	28	4	6	10
6-10 miles	17	19	9	35	10	3
11-20 miles	8	12	12	8	24	13
Over 20 miles	1	1	2	0	6	6

NB: 3 respondents did not answer any part of this question.

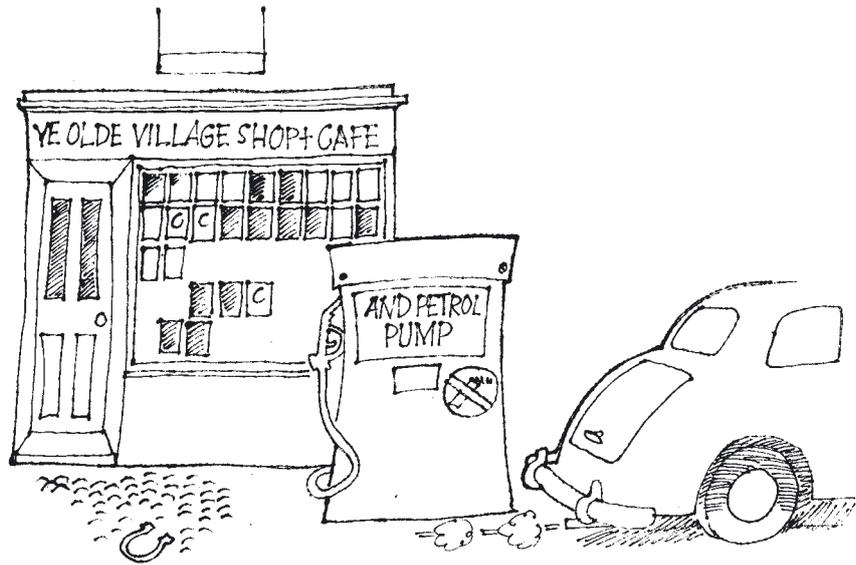
#### Then we asked....?

Is it your lifestyle/work which allows you to access these services?

Yes	No	N/A
36	6	12

Where do you work?

Home	9
Working	22
Not working	2
Self Employed	9
Retired	14
Further Education	0



NB: 1 respondent did not answer this question

Approx 80% of the respondents tend to use the local facilities with 20% travelling approx 20 miles. 50% travel to work whilst the remainder work from home or are retired. 80% have local jobs.

## Village Shop and Post Office

### We asked....?

Would you support a village shop?

Would a Community owned shop be of benefit to Thixendale and/or feasible?



90% would like to see these facilities with 50% agreeing to a community owned shop.

### Comments

*“Think a shop would be of benefit but not feasible. It would be unlikely to get support. Most people do a big supermarket shop. We do link up with others for a regular delivery of SUMA wholefoods plus eco products which Kate organises – buying in bulk”*

*“Although there is a village pub, somewhere where walkers and cyclists could pause for tea/coffee/simple food and other conveniences before noon and after 3pm during the week would add to the attraction of the village and might even create part time employment for one or two people”*

*“I would be interested in contributing to a village shop”*

*“The PO opening times are no use to those working – it needs to be open at weekends. Also we miss not having a place to go and see others – the village shop was a meeting place”*

*“PO with opening times in evenings and weekends”*

*“When shop was here only a handful of people used it”*

*“As I do a weekly shop at a supermarket I would rarely use a local shop.*

*It would be complicated”*

### Conclusion

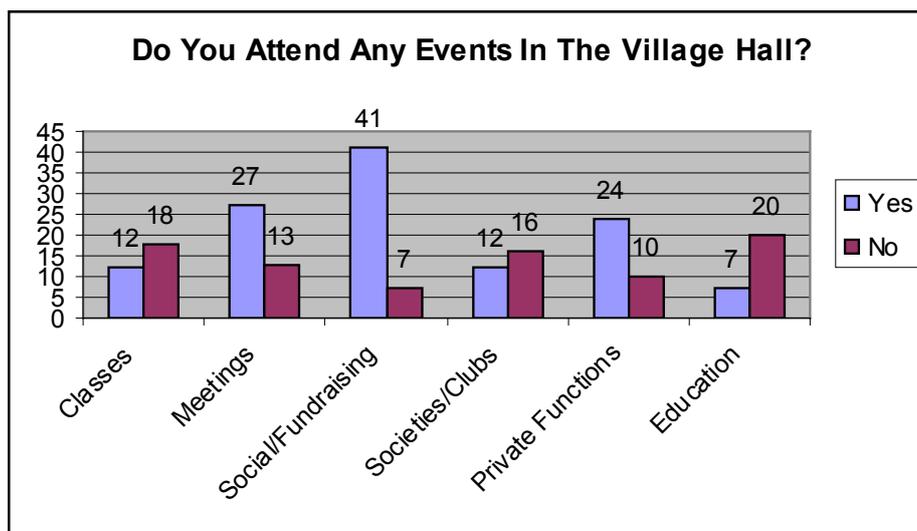
Many see the shop as a focal point. Would use it as a top up source with main shopping done at supermarket. Perhaps Post Office and shop would be used more if open at times to suit working people. Many support a community owned shop but feel it may be difficult to staff and run with the hours it would be required to be open eg: weekends and evenings. It would be essential if affordable housing came into the equation.

## Village Hall



### We asked....?

Do you attend any events in Thixendale Village Hall and are there any additional activities/ events in the village hall that you would attend?



## Comments

*“Tea dance, exercise and fitness”*

*“Singing group, painting, computer, dancing”*

*“Music, film club”*

*“It would be nice to have dancing classes eg: line dancing or Scottish country dancing but it would have to be in the evenings or at weekends as I’m working”*

*“Possibly night classes depending on times and subject”*

## Conclusion

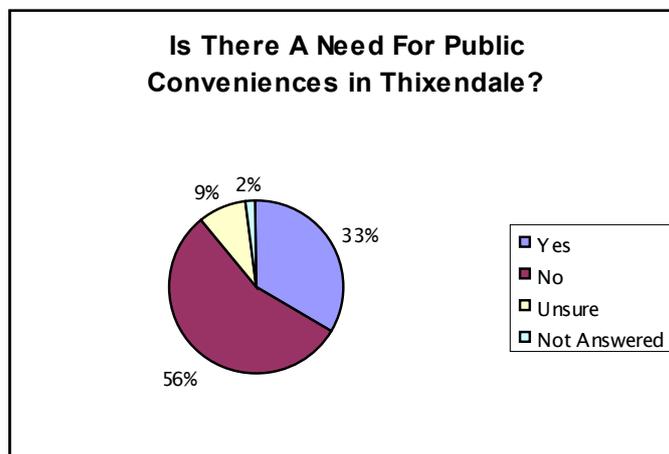
The programme of activities in the Village hall could be expanded to include dancing and evening classes, music and art. The timing of the classes is a factor regarding attendance.



## Public Toilets

### We asked....?

Do you feel there is a need for public conveniences in Thixendale?



### Comments

*“Suggest a village street pay and display parking scheme to fund maintenance and cleaning”*

*“Use the village Hall – already there”*

*“Definitely not”*

*“Better to use village hall when open”*

### Conclusion

Although it was felt by some to be a good idea, the majority were not in favour. The cost of cleaning and upkeep, and site of, were seen as a problem but the adoption of street parking charges could offset this problem.

## Transport

95% have use of a car while 2% have difficulty in travelling to essential services. The number aware of local transport was 50/50, with 3% indicating they would, or are using it.

### Comments

--None--

### Conclusion

The majority of travellers have access to a car. The local funded bus service pre-book facility is used on a regular basis but the majority of the public do not realise when and how it can be used.

## Play Area

### We asked....?

At the drop-in sessions considerable support was expressed for the creation of safe Play Areas for children within the parish. If you agree that there should be a Play Area, what do you feel is required (please tick all that apply)

	Yes	No
A grassed area with seating only	12	7
The above with swings, slides etc for younger children	27	6
Climbing frames, zip wire etc, activities for older children	17	11
Football posts, basketball/netball hoops	17	9
Fitness Trail for all ages	24	7

Thirteen returned questionnaires did not answer any part of this question

### We then asked....?

What additional facilities could be included please specify.

Can you suggest a possible site? Please specify

### Comments

*"Only if a suitable site can be found where resulting noise is not a problem.*

*If made of wood and not garish plastic stuff"*

*"How many deserted play areas are there around the country? Perhaps a social/activity club would be more attractive to older children?"*

*"All houses have a reasonable size garden which is safe"*

*"Buy Beamer Hill for the village. Have an area with swings and seats on the levelled area at the end of pub row and create a walk/fitness trail through the full length of Beamer"*

*"Grassed area opposite pub/Round the Bend/village street for playground – easily supervised. Back of Village Hall for smaller kids. Small area of cricket field. Needs to be within sight of adults"*

*"Cricket Field or in the middle of the village next to the council bungalows"*

*"Cricket Field area, and any other appropriate area. All facilities do not have to be on the same site. Some areas are more amenable to certain activities than other areas"*

*"I think a site is the biggest problem as there is very little space and no common land"*

### Conclusion

Some felt most gardens had plenty of play space. The area for a play space was difficult to locate although the cricket field was very popular. If an area was found elsewhere it should be designed in sympathy with the local environment.

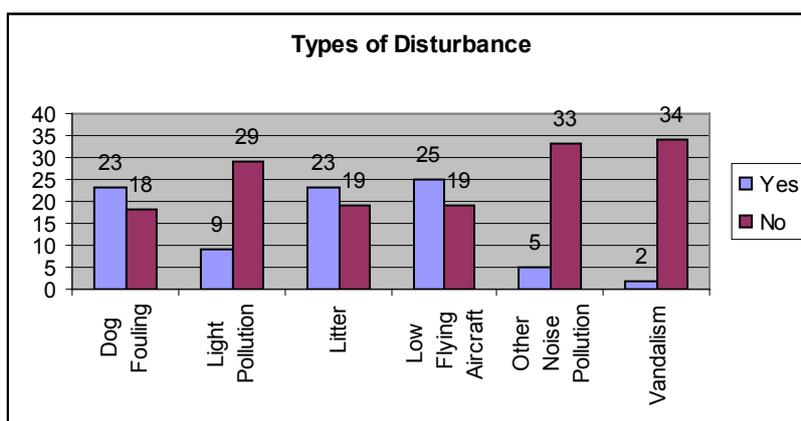
## Priority Four

### The Environment

We asked six questions covering topics from types of disturbances, to recycling and the possibility of a village caretaker.

#### We asked....?

Are you concerned by any of the following types of disturbance?



#### Comments

##### Dog fouling:-

*"This matter has been dealt with, at the moment appears to be working."*

*"Dog fouling is less of a problem than it used to be but still occurs."*

*"Dog fouling on the pavements."*

*"Dog fouling on Main Street."*

*"Dog fouling- improved since bins."*

##### Light pollution:-

*"Huge security lights on all night."*

*"Over powerful security lighting on houses."*

*"Over sensitive movement detectors for lighting set off by wind, cats etc."*

##### Litter:-

*"We frequently pick up rubbish (thrown from vehicles) from the verges & dropped by walkers in the dales."*

*"Litter in general is a major bug bear, particularly the roads leading out of the village."*

##### Low flying aircraft:-

*"The jets fly very low and are very noisy - scares the children."*

*"Too many and too low flying aircraft especially at night – wakes and scares the children."*

*"Recently there have been a lot of low flying helicopters which upsets the animals."*

**Other noise pollution:-**

*“Sometimes inconsiderate tourists, walkers etc are very loud.”*

*“Sometimes overuse of power gardening equipment in summer.”*

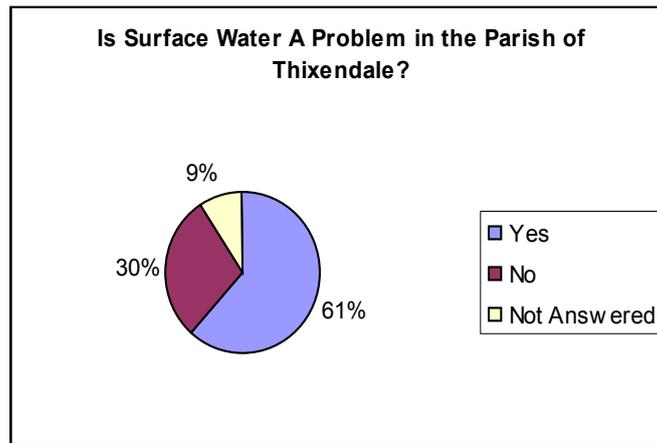
*“Crow bangers – springtime/early morning in the fields.”*

**Vandalism:-**

No comment made.

**We asked....?**

Do you think surface water on roads/footpaths is a problem in your parish?



**Comments**

*“Surface water where?”*

*“Fridaythorpe road ends.”*

*“Fotherdale.”*

*“Burdale Road.”*

*“Gritts.”*

*“Various parts of the village street hold surplus water.”*

*“Outside Sunnyridge/Tatton House.”*

*“Area at foot of Beamer Hill.”*

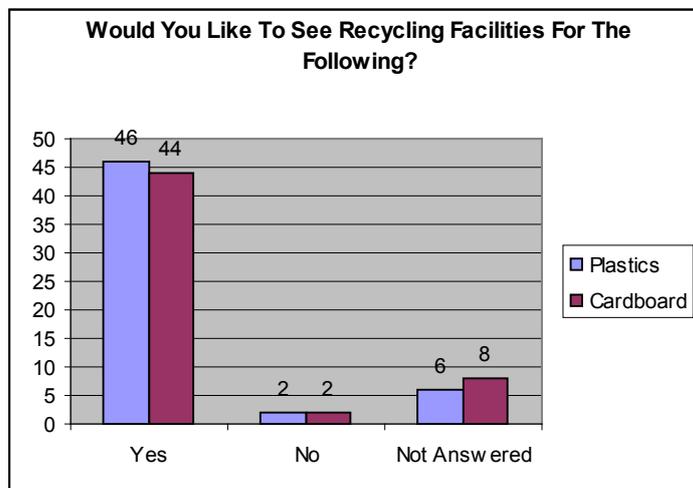
*“On Main Street and way to cricket field.”*

*“On all roads coming to village.”*



### We then asked....

Would you like to see recycling facilities for any of the following in the parishes?



### Comments

*“Plastics & cardboard should be collected through kerbside collection.”*

*“It would be preferable if recycling of plastics & cardboard could be kerb-side collection as for newspapers and glass.”*

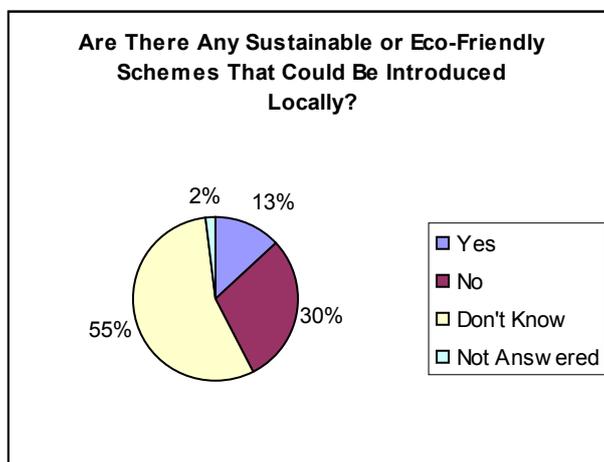
*“Plastic recycling would be very welcome. We currently collect it and take it else where to be recycled.”*

*“There is a great need ecologically to recycle plastic and cardboard than there is garden waste.”*

*“Very good recycling facilities in Malton and Driffield.”*

### We then asked.....?

Are there any sustainable or eco-friendly schemes such as community composting that could be introduced locally?



## Comments

*"Eco-friendly schemes."*

*"Don't know."*

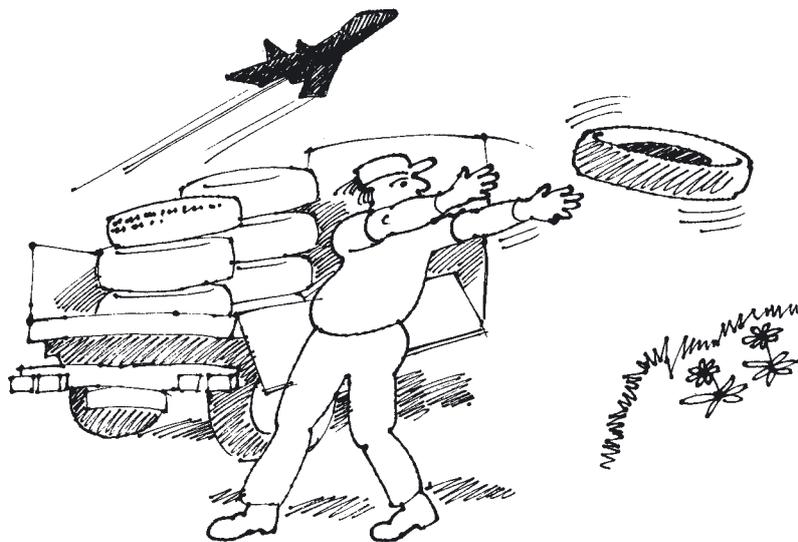
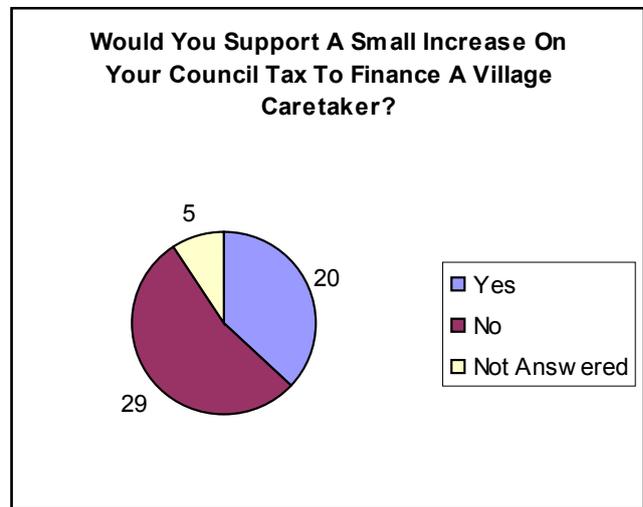
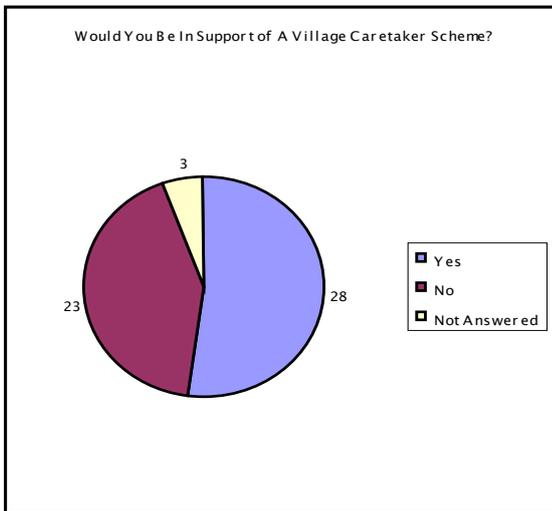
*"Wind generator for electricity."*

*"How about a local sewage treatment plant."*

*"Garden waste if a suitable site was available."*

A number of villages have recently employed their own part-time 'village caretaker' their duties include grass cutting, tidying up litter, maintaining paths and general maintenance etc.

- Would you be in support of a village caretaker to cover Thixendale?
- If such a person was appointed would you support a small increase on your local council tax to finance this post?



## Comments

*"This is a council responsibility, isn't this why we pay our council tax?"*

*"Who would pay this caretaker? People should pick up their own litter & keep things tidy."*

*"No- because we pay taxes already, plus each household keeps their own front of house very much in order."*

*"No – definitely not."*

*"Yes as long as the money was specific to the village."*

## Conclusions

When asked about the provision for the recycling of plastics and cardboard, the responses demonstrated overwhelming support for the provision of facilities with nearly 85% of respondents being in favour. This was by far the highest level of support for any of the environmental issues.

Responses about types of disturbances indicated that people were concerned about low flying aircraft, dog fouling and litter. However, the level of concern was at most 57% regarding low flying aircraft.

61% of respondents felt surface water was a problem.

Responses of residents when asked about a village caretaker suggested that a small majority were in favour of the proposal (54%) but that only 40% would be willing to see an increase in council tax to pay for such a scheme.

Do you know that there are three dog fouling bins in Thixendale?

Do you know where they are?

The Parish Council can now impose a £1000 on the spot fine for dog fouling and litter dropping!

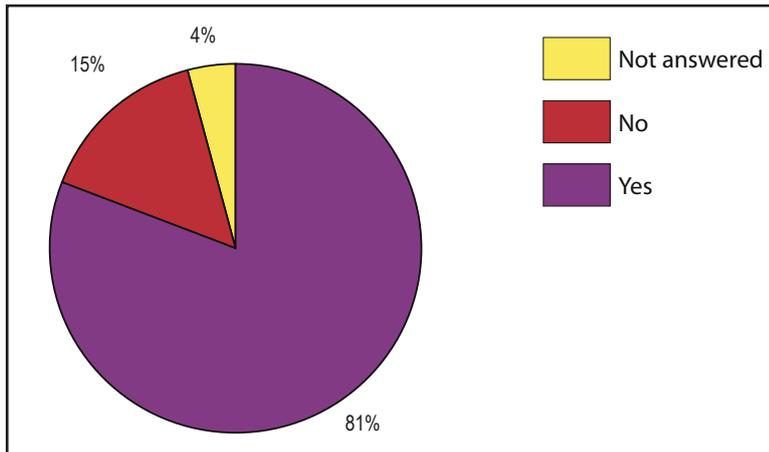


## Priority Five

### CYCLING & WALKING

**We asked.....?**

Do you cycle within the Parish?

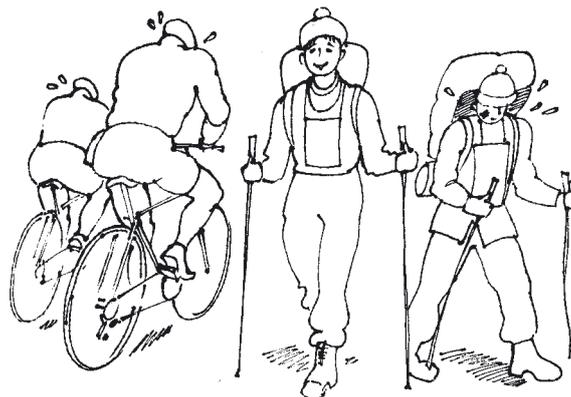


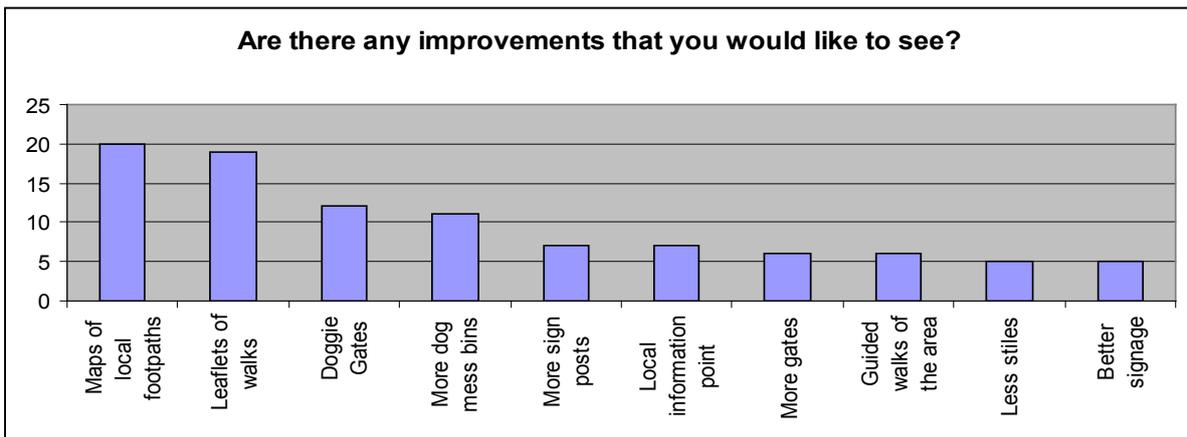
If yes, do you.....?

	Cycle	Walk
to school bus	0	1
to work	0	0
for leisure	10	22

**We then asked, the following questions?**

	Yes	No	N/A
Do you use the existing footpaths between the villages?	33	18	3
Are you happy with the condition of these footpaths within the Parish?	32	3	19
Do you experience any difficulties when using these footpaths?	7	31	16





### Comments

*“No difficulties – use the Wolds Way between Thixendale to Fridaythorpe, & Thixendale towards Wharram Percy returning through Raisthorpe Cricket Field.”*

*“There aren’t any from the old Post Office to Manor Farm.”*

*“The A-frame stile over an electric fence on the Wolds Way above & west of Thixendale, is rotten and in danger of collapse. This has been reported to NYCC Footpaths Officer.”*

*“Dog cannot use stiles.”*

### Conclusion

Over 80% of the respondents to the questionnaire cycle or walk within the Parish of Thixendale. The vast majority are happy with the condition of the footpaths, and only a few experience any difficulties when using them. Concerns were generally regarding the use of stiles & gates, especially when walking with dogs, and in a few cases the lack of appropriate signage.



## General Summary of Additional Topics

### HOUSING

We asked the following questions?

- Would any member of your household directly benefit from the availability of local affordable housing, now or within the next five years?
- Would you be in favour of a small development of affordable homes for local people within your parish if there was a proven need?
- Would you be interested in the Local Authority undertaking a housing needs survey in your parish?

9% of respondents indicated there would be a need for local affordable housing, however 87% did not envisage a need in the next five years. 4% declined to answer the question.

If there was a proven need the majority of respondents (58%) would support a small housing development, however opinion was divided over the need for a survey, 48% in favour and 52% against

### Comments

*"There's not really any room in the village of Thixendale."*

*"To build affordable housing you need to ensure affordable transport, local employment and more local facilities/infrastructure."*

*"I would need to know how we could be certain that any affordable homes would remain available for LOCAL people after the first residents. Would these homes be for rent?"*

*"Depend where they are built"*

*"Too many new houses going up."*

*"Too many houses are too big for local people."*

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

#### We asked.....

If you have had cause to use the emergency services do you consider service cover locally to be.....?

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor
Police	2	10	7	3
Ambulance	6	11	5	7
Fire & Rescue Service	3	10	5	5

Generally the provision of emergency service cover in Thixendale parish is not perceived as a major problem, but some negative comments were received. It should be noted that 24 respondents did not answer any part of this question.

### Comments

*“Two hours waiting for an ambulance, on two separate occasions.”*

*“On the two occasions the ambulance has been called it has been far too long a wait.”*

## CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD

### We asked.....

Is the Parish Church important to you?

Baptisms	21
Christian festivals	27
Community focal point	24
Contributor to village life	29
Funerals	33
Heritage Site	26
Historic Importance	32
Sunday worship	26
Weddings	28

NB: 9 respondents did not answer any part of this question.

The responses to the importance of the church can be separated into four groups: rites of passage, worship, heritage and community.

1. Rites of passage: Baptisms, weddings, funerals. People clearly value the role that the church fulfils on these particular occasions.
2. Sunday worship and Christian festivals. A surprisingly high number (26) felt that the church is important for Sunday worship whereas the average number attending Sunday services is only seven. Less surprising is the figure for festivals such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas (27) as this number correlates with the average numbers attending these special services.
3. Heritage significance. The church is seen as a building of historic importance and as a heritage asset for the community.

Comments: *“It is part of the heritage of the area and should be preserved.”*

*“The Son et Lumière project is a very interesting and innovative and exciting development.”*

*“...one of the Sykes churches and is of exceptional quality and historic significance.”*

4. Community focus. The church is positioned in the centre of the village and provides a physical and social focal point for the community. Activities organised by the church contribute to village life.

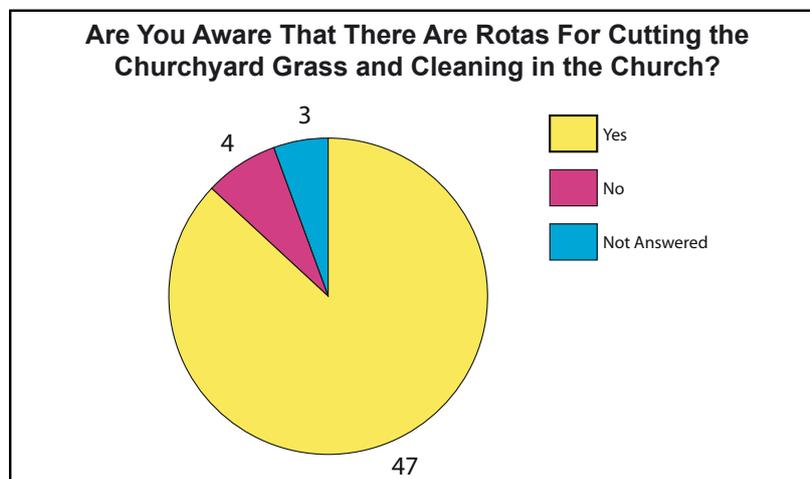
Comments: *“It’s an integral part of the village.”*

*“To be financially feasible, the church needs to be multifunctional.”*



**We then asked.....**

Are you aware that there are rotas for cutting the churchyard grass and cleaning the church?



Nearly all of the respondents (47) are aware of the rotas for cutting the churchyard grass and cleaning the church. Comments show that the efforts of the volunteers on these rotas are noticed and really appreciated.

### **Comments**

*“The church and churchyard are very well maintained thanks to volunteers.”*

*“Our churchyard is a credit to those who care for it and cut the grass.”*

*“Always looks clean, grass always cut.”*

*“The grass cutting works well due to the efforts of organisers.”*

One respondent has suggested that the back of the churchyard is left uncut as a wildflower meadow and nature area.

### **Conclusion**

The comment *‘the church is integral to the village’* neatly sums up the views of the residents who answered this question. The physical location of the church is certainly central to the village and the fact that the building and grounds look well maintained is appreciated. The role of volunteers is significant in relation to this and there are almost forty volunteers helping on the cleaning and grass cutting rotas. These activities are well publicised and only four respondents were not aware of the rotas.

In regard to spiritual matters people want the church to be there for significant occasions, festivals and Sunday worship. The fund raising activities for the church are seen as contributing to the social and community life of the village. There is interest in the historical importance of its being a Sykes Church and recognition of the need to look after and preserve this heritage.

All of the comments about the church and churchyard were positive with interesting suggestions about multifunctional use of the building and improving wildlife habitats in the grounds. Nine respondents did not answer any part of question 26.



## Thixendale Children's Questionnaire

Nine children responded to the questionnaire, five boys and four girls. Six of the children are of primary school age, two are teenagers and one pre-school age.

**Q3 What activities do you do outside the village?**

Activities undertaken outside the village are sports related, or scouts, cubs, brownies and rainbows.

**Q4 What activities do you do in the village?**

Activities that children do in the village are playing with friends, bike riding and walking. Attending activities organised by the church and village also feature in the children's responses.

**Q5 What would you like to do in the village – indoors or outdoors?**

Children would like a play park with some organised sports activities such as rugby, football, tennis and cricket outside and table-tennis and basketball inside. They would like opportunities for art and craft and drama. A weekly youth club was suggested and daytime holiday activities. Occasional discos and parties would be appreciated.

**Q6 If you do not take part in any activities, why not?**

The timing of activities had prevented two children from attending.

**Q7 What would you use the village hall for?**

Children suggested that the village hall could be used for a youth club and indoor sports activities. Discos and parties could be held there. Art and craft sessions and a film club were also identified as possibilities. One child expressed a willingness to help at the Village Hall cafe. Play sessions for younger children could be organised.

**Q8 Would you like a meeting just for you to talk about things?**

This question is ambiguous as it could be referring to a one off meeting or a regular meeting like a club to discuss things. Three children said they would like a meeting, one didn't know and five said no.

**Q9 What do you like best about living in your village?**

The children see lots of positive things about living in Thixendale with peace, quiet, wildlife and freedom featuring in their responses. They like the fact that there is no street lighting. Having friends nearby is important to them.

**Q10 Is there anything you don't like?**

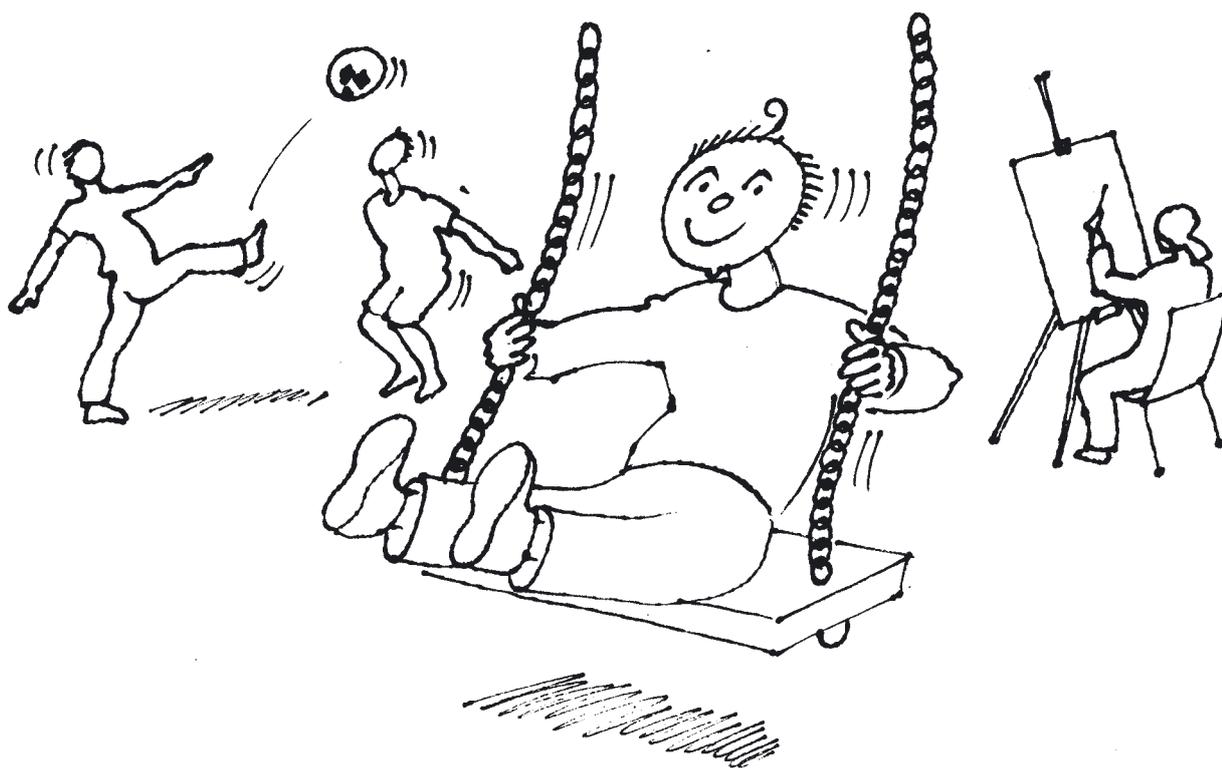
The lack of a play area or having somewhere flat to play is seen as the main disadvantage of living in Thixendale. Children not being allowed in the pub featured in three responses. Some of the children are concerned about cars driving fast through the village and too many cars parking on the street.

## Conclusion

Responses to the children's questionnaire show that children in Thixendale are active and sociable. They mix with adults at village events and would like to be able to join parents at the pub. They value their friends in the village and would like a special place to play with a flat area such as a play park with some sports facilities. Many of them go outside the village for activities and clubs.

The children appreciate the country environment. Some of their concerns about speeding traffic and parked cars reflect their parents' worries about road safety.

The issues raised by the children will be addressed in the relevant sections of the action plan eg. play area.



## Parish Plan Likes and Dislikes

### We asked....

What do you like most about living in Thixendale?

As one would expect there are many different individual reasons for enjoying living here in Thixendale but certain key ideas appear again and again in the responses. People like the relative peace and quiet of the tranquil rural location. They appreciate the beautiful environment with its scenery, flowers, wildlife and walks and the absence of street lights. It feels safe and secluded but not too isolated and the village has not been spoiled by overdevelopment. People like the fact that it is a small village with a strong sense of identity and community spirit. There is a lot going on with many opportunities for social interaction linked to the pub, village hall and church. The children are described as polite, neighbours pleasant and helpful and by far the most frequently mentioned characteristic of Thixendale that people most like is its friendliness.

### Dislikes

Things that people dislike about living in Thixendale correlate very closely with the key issues that have emerged in the analysis of the other questions. There were many comments on the state of the roads i.e. badly maintained and dirty, and inconsiderate drivers who speed through the village. Dog fouling was mentioned and there was a comment on untidiness. The lack of amenities such as mains drainage, public transport and shop are identified and although people appreciate having access to the Post Office one day a week they regret that all the hours are on the same day. Sunday papers are missed and people feel disadvantaged by the poor broadband connection. The thing that one person disliked most of all was *“having to travel out of the village into the ‘madness’ of the real world.”* And some people said there was nothing to dislike at all!

The final question gave people the chance to include anything else that they wanted to say about the village. There were a few suggestions about improving amenities and transport and pooling resources but the most significant sentiment was that we must preserve and look after all the things that we love and value about living here and not do anything that would *“...spoil the very essence of Thixendale.”*

### What is there to do in Thixendale?

Thixendale is fortunate that it has two beautiful and architecturally significant buildings, the church and the old school, now a village hall, both of which are available for community use. These Grade 2 listed buildings were erected in the 1870s under the patronage of Sir Tatton Sykes of Sledmere and designed by George Edmund Street a renowned Victorian architect.

There is a strong sense of community in the village which has partially evolved through working together to meet the responsibilities of caring for our built heritage. Major projects in the past were raising the money to buy the Village Hall when the school first closed,

and reroofing the main part of the church. It could be considered ironic that the necessity of fundraising to maintain the village hall and church has provided the focus for much of the social activity in recent times. Fund raising events need the support of the local community as well as from further afield and provide a natural opportunity for people to become involved: for newcomers to the village it is a good way to get to know people and become integrated into the community.

The successful lottery bid for the restoration of the village hall (which was the school and then a Youth Hostel) demonstrated what can be achieved and inspired further efforts. Subsequently the village has benefited considerably from grants from various funding bodies for a wide range of projects including a sports pavilion for the cricket club, a textile banner, and the Village Hall Internet Link. A 'Your Heritage' grant to the High Wolds Heritage Project has enabled that group to raise the profile of Wolds Heritage in general and to install the Son et Lumière in St Mary's Church which helps visitors learn about and appreciate the heritage. Another grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled the PCC to have the historic organ in the church restored.



## **Social, leisure, community and educational activities.**

Thixendale has been described as a 'village of volunteers' and there are certainly many opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the life of the community, which they do. A quick count of names on the various rotas gives a total of seventy volunteers, some of them wearing several different hats! But what an indication of community spirit this number is.

Volunteering opportunities:

- Churchyard and village hall grass cutting
- Church Cleaning
- Baking for Village Hall Sunday Teas
- Serving Village Hall Sunday Teas
- Cricket Club Teas
- Assisting with the publication of the village newsletter 'Thixendale Matters'

The following organisations welcome helpers at any time and encourage members of the community to put themselves forward for election onto committees: The Parish Council, The Village Hall Trust, The Parochial Church Council, and the Cricket Club.

The Village Hall hosts social, educational and fund raising activities and can be hired for private parties. Events have included wine tastings, pudding parties, quiz nights, lectures and music nights.

Regular clubs and interest groups at the hall include yoga, French classes and The High Wolds Heritage Group. The Sunday café in the village hall is run by volunteers and is an important source of income for maintaining and improving the building. It is very popular with visitors and locals who call in for a chat or to use the village internet link.

The church has services on the second and fourth Sunday of each month and holds occasional services for all the churches in the Waggoners' Benefice. Special services are arranged for Christian festivals. The Benefice employs a part time Children's Worker who co-ordinates children's activity days, sometimes held in the village hall in the school holidays. Other sessions, generally in blocks of four weeks, offer children in the village a chance to do art and craft, drama or special projects such as making a video.

The Cross Keys serves lunches and evening meals. It has dominoes and quiz teams.

The area is popular with walkers and visitors can find accommodation at the Cross Keys, Manor Farm B&B and other holiday lets.



Thixendale has had a cricket club for many years and does well to keep going, although it does depend on players from outside the community. The club now has an attractive pavilion and organises events for juniors who hopefully will continue to play cricket as adult members.

## Action Plan Commencing Summer 2009

	Action	Who Is Responsible
<b>Traffic and Road Safety</b>	Request urgent and ongoing action from appropriate councils (signage and road condition).	Parish Council
	Prepare questionnaire for visitors about amenities, including parking, in Thixendale.	Parish Plan Group
	Identify and explore potential sites to develop dedicated parking areas.	Parish Plan Group
<b>Communication</b>	Act as a pressure group on BT, OFCOM and other agencies involved.	Parish Plan Group
<b>Village Amenities</b>	Continue to explore feasibility of village shop.	Parish Plan Group
	To pass to the Village Hall Committee suggestions for future events and request wider publicity of future events.	Village Hall Committee
	Explore options and feasibility of public toilets in Thixendale.	Parish Plan Group Village Hall Committee
	Better publicity for local community transport options.	Parish Plan Group
	Investigate the feasibility of sites for play and recreation facilities.	Parish Plan Group Parish Council Cricket Club
<b>Environment</b>	Parish Council to purchase/investigate additional dog fouling signage to encourage dog owners to use existing bins.	Parish Council
	Encourage RDC to extend existing kerbside collections to specifically include cardboard and plastics.	Parish Plan Group
	Encourage lobbying by individuals to recycling authorities.	Parish Plan Group
	Report surface water problems to NYCC Highways.	Parish Council
	Monitor and investigate pilot Village Caretaker scheme by RDC.	Parish Plan group
<b>Cycling and Walking</b>	Report any defects on footpaths and stiles and urge necessary repairs.	All users Parish Plan Group
	Urge County Council to install doggie gates.	Parish Plan Group Parish Council
	Investigate possible funding resources for the publication of local walks booklet.	Parish Plan Group
	Improve the way marking of paths.	All users Parish Plan Group Parish Council

	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
	PC and NYCC Highways	Ongoing
	Appropriate Private Landowners Village Hall PC RDC	Within 3 months
		Within 12 months
	NYCC NYnet Responsible Government Ministers (Paul Murphy – Minister for Digital Inclusion)	Ongoing
	ViRSA (Village Retail Shops Association)	Ongoing
		Immediate
	Tourist Board/Partnership Ramblers Association RDC	Within 12 months.
	Ryecat Community Transport	Immediate
	RDC Local landowners Community volunteers	Within 3 months
	RDC	Within 3 months
	RDC	Within 3 months
	Individuals	Within 6 months
	Highways PC	Ongoing
	RDC	Ongoing
	NYCC Countryside Service	Ongoing. Contact Parish Plan Group c/o Village Hall.
	NYCC Countryside Service	Ongoing.
	NYCC Countryside Service Ryedale Voluntary Action Ramblers Association	Within 6 months
	NYCC Countryside Service Ramblers Association	Within 6 months

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

### LOCAL TRANSPORT

1. Do you have the use of a motor vehicle? Please tick one box

Always	46
Sometimes	4
Never	3
N/A	1

2. Do you have any difficulties in getting to shops, GP, work, leisure etc

Yes	No	N/A
6	46	2

3. Are you aware of these types of local transport services? Would you use any of these services, if they were available in this area? (See Glossary at the end for more information)

Would Use?

	Aware	Unaware	Yes	No
Wheels 2 Work	15	30	1	31
Community Transport (Wolds Ring & Ride)	22	22	9	28
RYECAT Car Scheme	12	33	6	29

### CYCLING AND WALKING

Yes	No	N/A
44	8	2

4. Do you cycle or walk within the parish?

If 'yes', do you.....?

	Cycle	Walk
to school bus	0	2
to work	0	1
for leisure	21	39

5. Do you use the existing footpaths between the villages?

Yes	No	N/A
33	18	3

6. Are you happy with the condition of these footpaths within the parish?

Yes	No	N/A
32	3	19

7. Do you experience any difficulties when using these footpaths?

Yes	No	N/A
7	31	16

8. Are there any improvements that you would like to see?

Please tick all that apply

	Tick
Less stiles	5
More gates	6
Doggie gates (see Glossary)	12
Better signage	5
More signposts	7
Maps of local footpaths	20
Leaflets of walks	19
Guided walks of the area	6
Local information point	7
More dog-mess bins	11

### TRAFFIC & ROAD SAFETY

9. Are any of the following of concern to you?

	Yes	No
Speeding Traffic	28	15
Heavy Goods vehicles	18	15
Potential Traffic accidents	17	15
On street parking	17	19
Parking on pavements	16	17
Lack of dedicated parking	15	19
Cyclists safety	8	18
Pedestrian Safety	15	16
Inconsiderate drivers	27	16
Noise from traffic	2	25
Traffic fumes	2	24
Traffic congestion	2	25

Not answered any part of this question 6

10. Do you think flashing matrix signs at the entrances to the village showing the speed limit, or in the village showing actual speed, are a good idea?

	Yes	No	N/A
Speed limit	25	22	7
Actual speed	21	22	11

11. Are you satisfied with the condition of the roads in & around Thixendale?

Yes	No	N/A
4	45	5

## HOUSING

12. Would any member of your household directly benefit from the availability of local affordable housing, now or within the next 5 years?

Yes	No	N/A
5	47	2

13. Would you be in favour of a small development of affordable homes for local people within your parish if there was a proven need?

Yes	No	N/A
27	19	8

14. Would you be interested in the local authority undertaking a housing needs survey in your parish?

Yes	No	N/A
22	24	8

## VILLAGE AMENITIES

- 15a. How far do you have to travel to access the following?

Distance	Post Office	Shop	Petrol	G.P.	Leisure	Work
0-5 miles	26	18	28	4	6	10
6-10 miles	17	19	9	35	10	3
11-20 miles	8	12	12	8	24	13
Over 20 miles	1	1	2	0	6	6

Not answered any part of this question 3

- 15b. Is it your lifestyle/work which allows you to access these services?

Yes	No	N/A
36	6	12

- 15c. Where do you work? Please Tick

Home	9
Working	22
Not working	2
Self Employed	9
Retired	14
Further Education	0

Not answered any part of this question 1

16. Would you support a village shop?

Yes	No	N/A
39	10	5

17. Do you feel that a community owned shop would be feasible in Thixendale & be of benefit to the community?

Yes	No	N/A	Unsure
26	15	12	1

18. Do you attend any events in Thixendale Village Hall? Please tick

	Yes	No
Classes	12	18
Meetings	27	13
Social/Fundraising	41	7
Societies/Clubs	12	16
Private Functions	24	10
Education	7	20

20. At the drop-in sessions considerable support was expressed for the creation of safe Play Areas for children within the parish. If you agree that there should be a Play Area,, what do you feel is required (please tick all that apply)

	Yes	No
A grassed area with seating only	12	7
The above with swings, slides etc for younger children	27	6
Climbing frames, zip wire etc, activities for older children	17	11
Football posts, basketball/netball hoops	17	9
Fitness Trail for all ages	24	7

Not answered any part of this question 13

22. Do you feel there is a need for public conveniences in Thixendale?

Yes	No	N/A	Unsure
18	30	5	1

## COMMUNICATION

23. Where do you get your information about local events and services?

Village Notice Board	30
Village Website	4
Village shop	4
Local Newspapers	9
Local newsletter	35
Public house	20
Doctors' surgery	1
Local library	2
Word of mouth	38
Other: Council publications	

24. Do you consider this area adequately served by.....?

	Yes	No
Land-line telephone	39	5
Mobile telephone signal	2	43
Analogue radio/television signal	4	33
Digital radio/television signal	14	27
Broad-band cable services	9	35
Library services	30	10

## CHURCH & CHURCHYARD

25. Is the Parish Church important to you for? Please tick all that apply

Baptisms	21
Christian festivals	27
Community focal point	24
Contributor to village life	29
Funerals	33
Heritage Site	26
Historic Importance	32
Sunday worship	26
Weddings	28

Not answered any part of this question 9

27. Are the aware that there are rotas for cutting the Churchyard grass and cleaning the Church?

Yes	No	N/A
47	4	3

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

28. If you have had cause to use the emergency services, do you consider service coverage locally to be?

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor
Police	2	10	7	3
Ambulance	6	11	5	7
Fire & Rescue Service	3	10	5	5

Not answered any part of this question 24

## ENVIRONMENT

29. Are you concerned by any of the following types of disturbance?

	Yes	No
Dog fouling	23	18
Light pollution	9	29
Litter	23	19
Low flying aircraft	25	19
Other Noise pollution	5	33
Vandalism	2	34

Other please specify

Not answered any part of this question 4

30. Do you think surface water on roads/footpaths is a problem in your parish?

Yes	No	N/A
33	16	5

31. Would you like to see recycling facilities for any of the following in the parishes?

	Yes	No	N/A
Plastics	46	2	6
Cardboard	44	2	8

32. Are there any sustainable or eco-friendly schemes such as community composting that could be introduced locally?

Yes	No	N/A	Don't know
7	16	30	1

33. A number of villages have recently employed their own part-time 'village caretaker' their duties include grass cutting, tidying up litter, maintaining paths and general maintenance etc. Would you be in support of a village caretaker to cover Thixendale?

Yes	No	N/A
28	23	3

34. If such a person was appointed would you support a small increase on your local council tax to finance this post?

Yes	No	N/A
20	29	5





