

BILLINGHAY Parish Plan



2009—2015





To get involved in Billinghay Action Group and help implement the outcomes of this plan please contact **Wendy Liles** on **01526 861385**. Additional copies of this Parish Plan can be obtained from the Parish website at: <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/billinghay> or from the Parish Office.



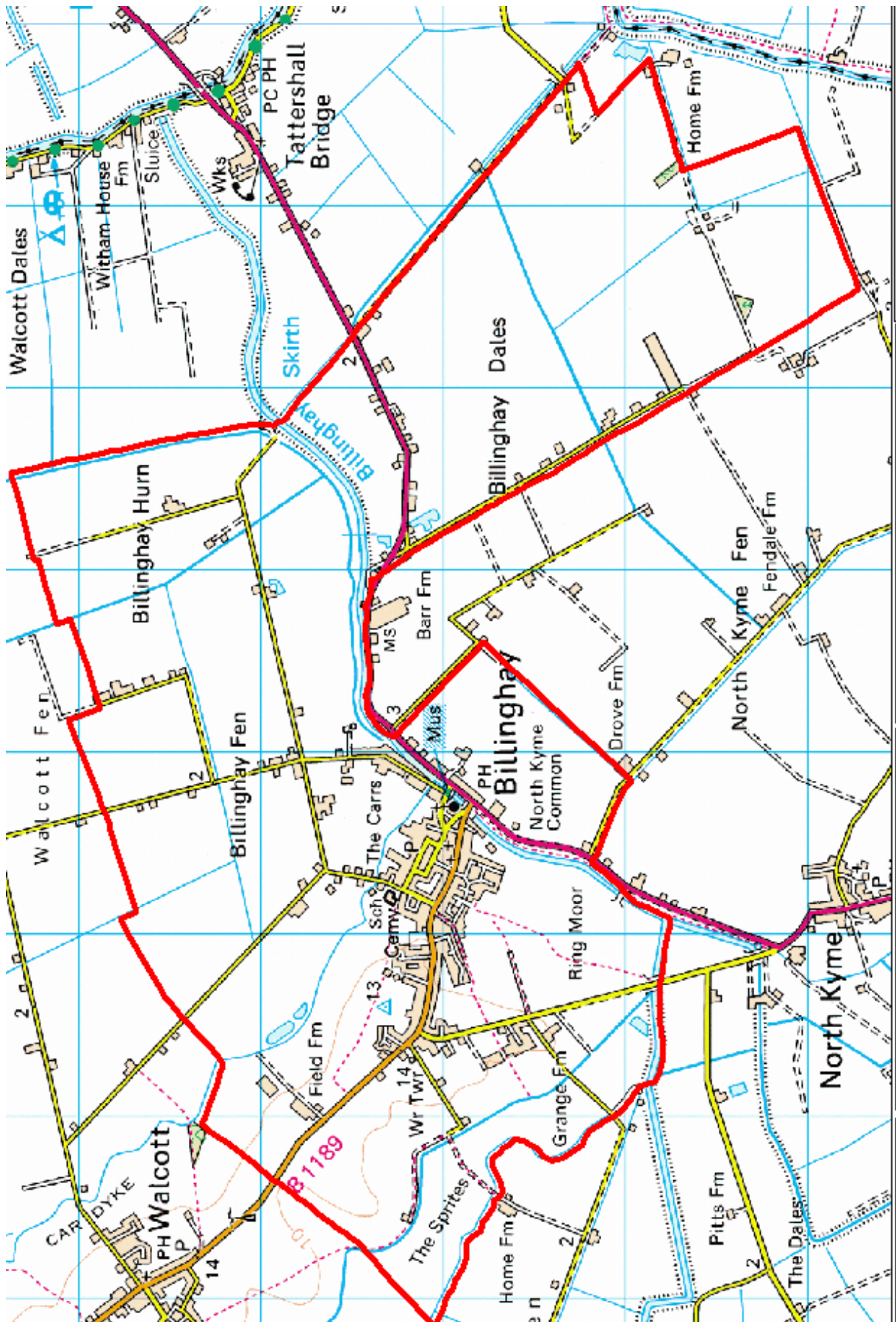
Contents

	Introduction	6
	Consultation Process & Key Dates	7
	Billingham: A Brief History	8
	Billingham Today	9
	Community Facilities	11
	Children & Young People	14
	Education & Employment	16
	Environment	19
	Health	22
	Housing & Conservation	25
	Safety & Security	28
	Sports & Social Facilities	31
	Transport	34
	Next Steps & Acknowledgements	36
	Bibliography & Data Sources	37

Aerial Photograph



Map of Billingham



Introduction

In the year 2000, the Government published a Rural White Paper encouraging local communities to help plan for the future development of their settlements at a more localised level. Parish Plans have been developed over the past few years to bring together information, opinions and a community wish list of how an individual settlement should develop and improve to suit the needs of the ever changing community population.

The Billingham Parish Plan takes into account both the past development of the parish as well as the present situation, in an attempt to guide the future development of the village. The Plan also identifies what residents think about the village and how they would like the village to change in the future in terms of its economic, environmental and social characteristics. This document therefore sets out the vision for the Parish of Billingham in future years.



Why write a Parish Plan?

Billingham Parish Council identified that they needed a structured plan to guide the changes to the parish in future years. To enable this, the Parish Council set up the Billingham Action Group, a separate steering committee responsible for the publication and implementation of the Parish Plan. Throughout the production of the plan, consultation has been carried out with the residents of Billingham households and their views about the village are contained within the plan. This interaction with the local community was important in identifying what residents feel are the positive attributes of the village, the perceived shortcomings and what could be done to benefit the community.

The Parish Plan therefore reflects real local opinions and thus is important data which can inform the Parish Council on planning for the future. The Parish Plan will also inform other policies produced by both North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council, which will impact on any changes to the village in the next twenty years.

Who funded the production of the Parish Plan?

The majority of the cost of the Parish Plan was time given by the volunteers of Billingham Action Group. The financial cost for the publication of the questionnaire and the Parish Plan was given by Community Lincs in grant form.

Consultation Process & Dates

Consultation Process and Important Dates	Date Carried Out
Billinghay Action Group formed	Autumn 2006
Format for the questionnaire was agreed and five key subjects selected for consultation on	21 st June 2007
Printing quotes for questionnaires received	19 th July 2007
Questionnaires printed and delivered to households Response Rate = 32.4%	16 th August 2007
All organisations in the Parish approached by letter asking for input into Parish Plan process	August 2007
Analysis of information from consultation and collation of data	Summer 2007
Charts and other information created and displayed for the community to view	Summer 2007
A second household survey carried out covering additional subject matters Response Rate = 48.7%	April 2009
A young person's questionnaire given to the secondary school and youth groups to distribute Number completed = 65	April 2009
A children's questionnaire given to primary school and children's groups to distribute Number completed = 113	April 2009
Analysis of information from consultation and production of plan and action plan	May – June 2009
Updates to the community via the Billinghay Times Newsletter	Throughout
Updates to the Parish Council given at every meeting by Secretary	Throughout
Adopted by Billinghay Parish Council	November 2009

Billingham: A brief history

Archaeological finds including Beaker ware pottery and bronze swords have been found in the parish, which identifies Billingham as an area inhabited by people in the early Bronze age between 2400 to 1800 BC. There are significant Roman features including the Carr Dyke, a Roman watercourse which runs to the north of the village.

The first record of Billingham was written in the Domesday Book in 1086. At this time Billingham was under the ownership of the Archbishop of York and contained 16 acres of meadow and three fisheries. Billingham is said to mean the island of the Billas people and was originally a gravel island surrounded by fen land which was often flooded throughout winter time.

St Michael & All Angels Church dates from medieval times between 1066 and 1500 AD. It is also thought that the Billingham Skirth is in fact a medieval watercourse, which at certain points utilised the historic Carr Dyke.



The Old Vicarage Cottage is the oldest building following the church and dates from the 17th century. It is made from traditional materials including mud and stud and thatch for the roof. These were typical for Lincolnshire at the time. This particular building is being conserved well and is used as the Parish Office. It has recently had extensive works done to maintain the roof.



In the latter half of the 18th century the fens were drained allowing the people of Billingham to move away from the tradition of fishing into agriculture. In 1864 the village was struck by 'The Great Fire' which destroyed the area around High Street, King Street, Victoria Street and West Street.

Following this in 1877 were the floods which saw 3000 acres of land under water. The first school opened in 1884 and cost £1000 to build. The 19th century brought with it the Billingham Feast, a time for the villagers to get together with friends, eat Chine, play on fairground games such as the coconut shies and buy treats from the gingerbread stalls. While on a smaller scale today, the Feast still continues to be held each October.



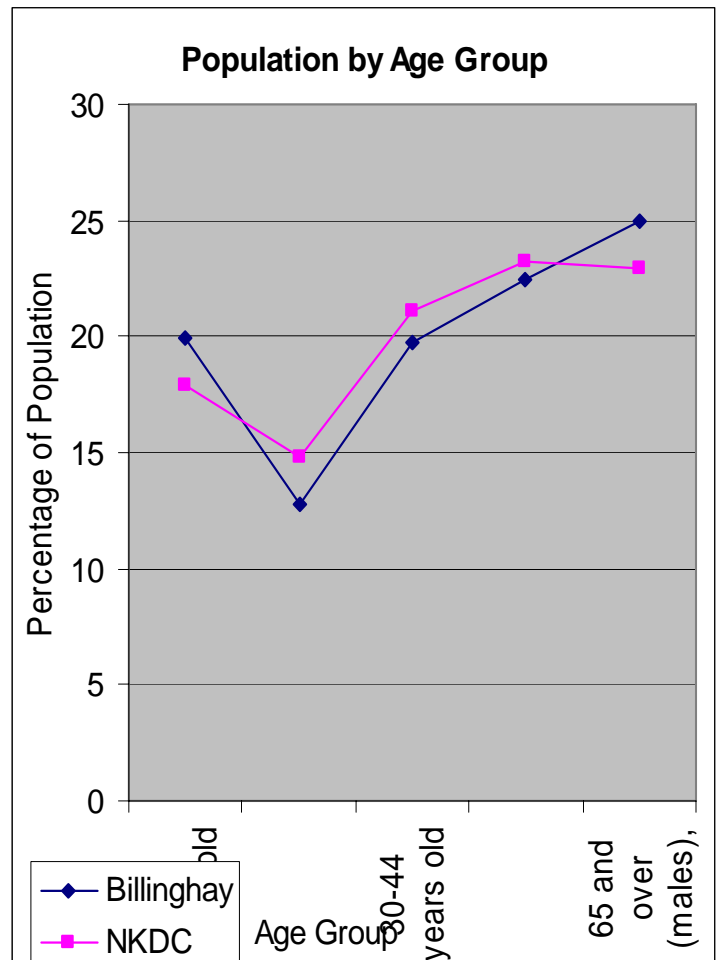
Billingham Today

The parish of Bilingham lies alongside the River Skirth, 4 miles from the historic Tattershall Castle, 9 miles from the market town of Sleaford and 17 miles from the city of Lincoln. The River Skirth runs to the east of the village eventually joining the River Witham which navigates through the town of Boston and out to the North Sea. The Roman Carr Dyke also runs through the village. The entrance into the village from Tattershall Road, is most identifiable, due to the need to cross the River Skirth, via either the Old Bridge leading to Bridge Street or the New Bridge which connects with Church Street.

Billingham is located on a narrow ridge of land with the highest point of the village being identified by the water tower off Sprites Lane which is approximately 13m above sea level. This can be compared with the surrounding fenland to the south, east and west which measures about 1-2m above sea level.

There is a current estimated population of 2570 with a steady increase from 2180 in 2001.

Population – June 2007 (Estimate ONS)	Billingham	NKDC
All Persons	2570	104800
Males	47.3%	49%
Females	52.7%	51%



According to the 2007 population estimates from the Office of National Statistics, 20% of residents in the parish are between 0 and 15 years old, which is slightly higher than the comparative average for North Kesteven district. The biggest age group living in the parish are males who are 65 and over and females who are 60 and over, who account for 25% of the resident population. This again is slightly higher than the district average. There is a slightly higher percentage of females in the parish than males.





Billingham now has approximately 1008 homes housing an estimated 2570 people in the parish. A number of farms, homes and small residential developments lay in outlying areas but the hub of the parish is the village centre leading off the High Street, Victoria Street, Walcott Road and Tattershall Road. There is a Market Place located in this central area and although it hasn't seen markets for some time there is a growing interest in the hosting of a regular Farmers Market.

In the past few years, several community art projects have been carried out throughout the village including the mosaic on the High Street/ Fitzwilliam Place corner which tells the story of how Billingham has developed since its beginning. There are also several zoetropes placed around the central area of the village depicting humorous historical characters.



A wide range of sporting activities are available in the village including a skate park, playing field, play area, tennis courts, bowling green, and during the summer, the open air swimming pool is open. Many different age groups play for the Billingham football teams and there is also an active tennis club.

Several interest groups, for example the history group and the twinning society are active in the Parish. There is a doctors surgery and dispensary which serves both the village and the surrounding areas. There is currently a primary school, secondary school, nursery, playschool and children's centre; however the secondary school is due to close in the near future.



Billingham residents are kept up to date with Parish Council news and events via the Billingham Times newsletter and on the website at

<http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Billinghay>

Posters advertising village events and other information are displayed on the notice board in the Market Place and in some local shops and services.

Information and help for residents is also provided at the Parish Office and also at the Citizens Advice Bureau held in the Children's Centre.

Community Facilities



Discussions with village organisations and the response to the survey showed a wide range of satisfaction with the facilities currently available within the village. These compare quite favourably with those provided by villages with a similar population.

The two main issues flagged up were the lack of varied retail provision and the limited facilities providing refreshments. These types of enterprise can only be satisfied by commercial investment. The promotion and support of any new businesses filling this need will therefore be required.

The new Children’s Centre has helped to establish wider service provision, and does not just support the younger generations. A Citizen’s Advice Bureau service has been established within the centre, providing a valuable resource for the village.

The provision of a Farmer’s Market was identified as something that would benefit the village considerably, with 69% of residents agreeing that it should be investigated as a potential option.

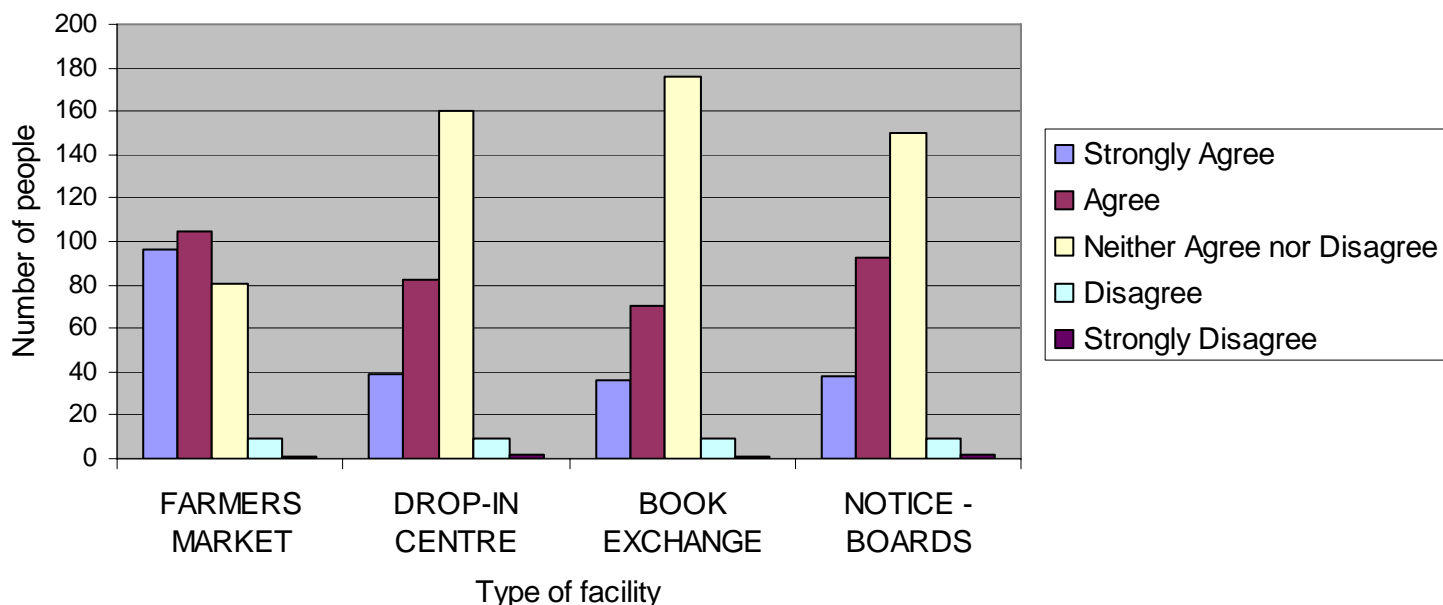
Highly supported through the survey, was the provision of a Drop-In Centre for all ages. There are different services within the village providing this sort of facility for varying groups.



Community Facility Audit

Post Office	2 convenience stores	Pubs
Church and chapels	Mobile library	Secondary School (subject to closure)
Primary School	Nursery	Children’s Centre
Playschool	Bank (Part-time)	Medical Practice with dispensary
Village Hall	Playing Field	Bowling Green
Tennis Court	Swimming Pool	Garages (one with petrol pumps)
Parish Office	Two take aways	Community Hall

Levels of support for new community facilities



The village currently benefits from a mobile library service on a Thursday, however the level of service provision is being reviewed in the forthcoming year. It is therefore felt that while promoting and supporting the County Council library service a Book Exchange service should also be put in place. This has already been set up in the Parish Office, with all donations going to local charities.

Communication with the village was highlighted as a requirement through the survey, and it was identified that while there was a notice board in the Market Place, this was not easily accessible to the Walcott Road/Field Road estate areas of the village. The provision of notice boards for those areas is therefore a priority.

The village church, St Michael & All Angels, already stages a Christmas Market on an annual basis, however it was felt that more could be done to celebrate Christmas. One particular piece of infrastructure that was identified as having the potential to aid this, was a power supply in the Market Place. These works have already been completed, and Christmas 2008 saw the first illuminated Christmas Tree for the village.





The Key Issues

- The need to promote and enhance existing facilities to maintain the current level of provision
- Lack of a single Drop-in Centre facility for all age groups
- Lack of varied retail facilities
- Lack of easily accessible notice boards for a large area of the village

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
Enhancement of current retail opportunities within the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the possibilities of a farmers market and craft market • Discuss potential options for improvement with existing retail operators • Investigate the possibility of having a 24 hour cash machine available within the village • Widen the scope of the existing Christmas market and celebrations 	Parish Council BAGS NKDC Operators	Medium Term Short term (completed) Medium term Long term and ongoing
Enhance and promote the existing community facilities within the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support the mobile library service in order to retain it in the future • Provision of a charity book exchange scheme to supplement the library service • Install an electricity supply in the Market Place to allow for events and celebrations such as a village Christmas tree 	Parish Council BAGS LCC EON	Medium term and ongoing Short term (Completed) Short term (Completed)
Effective communication with parishioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the potential for additional notice boards to cover the Walcott Road/Field Road Estate areas of the village. 	Parish Council NKDC BAGS	Medium term (two boards have been purchased)

Children & Young People

In addition to the research already detailed in this plan, it was considered essential that the children and youth of the village were given the opportunity to express their views. Although a few had already responded via the household questionnaires, two more specifically aimed questionnaires were given to children and Youths via the schools and clubs. The responses to these were many and varied and revealed some interesting factors. Both Groups expressed the wish for more retail outlets in the village strengthening the adult view that the Council should assist any new enterprises as much as possible.



Children

113 boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 11 completed the Infant questionnaire. Their replies indicated that there is already a comprehensive range of activities for children in the village. Many more were identified with wide ranging support for athletics and gymnastics. There was also significant support for an actual Children's Swimming Club.

The personal likes and dislikes of this group were also wide ranging. Over 70% approved of the Playing Field/Park whilst the Swimming Pool and School were also well liked. The dislikes were also varied but the only significant one (mentioned by over 20%) was a perceived problem with teenagers' vandalism and anti-social behaviour.



There were again a wide range of things in the village that the infants thought needed changing or improving and most of these had already been identified. The main concern was the Playing Field/Park and Equipment needed to be kept safe, clean and tidy.

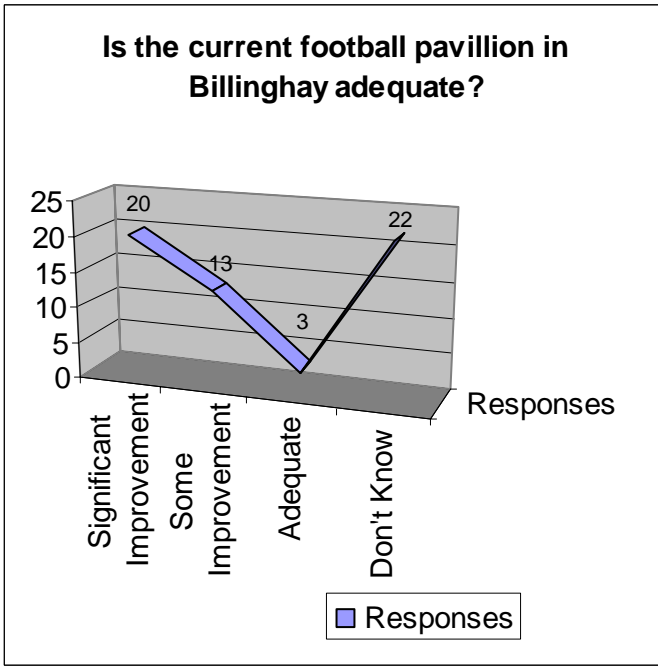
The Playing Field/Park and Equipment were widely used with particular mention being made of the zip wire and swings. A wide range of further equipment and improvements were revealed with the main items being:

- Improve the zip wire
- Extend/Improve the Skate Park
- Provide a Climbing Frame

On the downside there was concern about:

- Vandalism
- Litter and Dog mess
- Long grass and Nettles





Young People

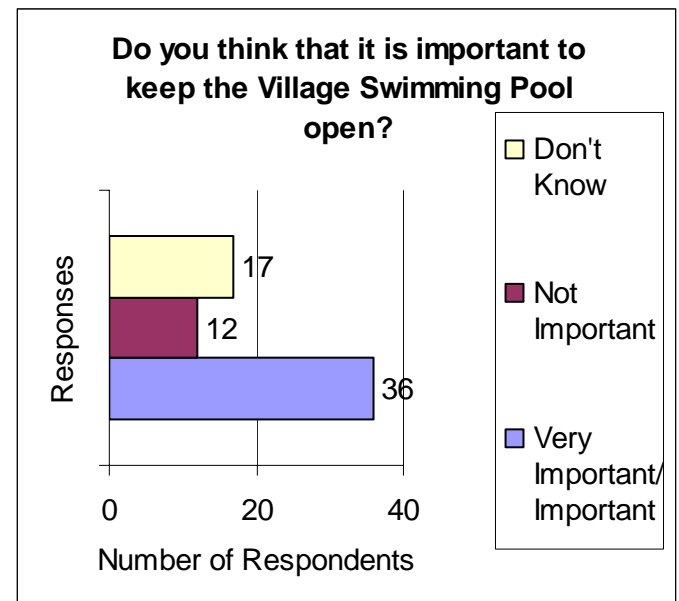
65 questionnaires were returned by youths aged between 12 and 16. Their main activity was meeting friends and chilling out, highlighting the need for meeting places and activities for this age group. The spare time activity mainly (but not entirely) for the boys was football and Billingham fortunately already has facilities and clubs for this activity.

Specific facilities were mentioned in the questionnaire and 75% of those with a positive response expressed the view that the Swimming Pool must be kept open. Similarly 90% felt that the football pavillion needed improvement.



In view of this, it is not surprising that the Playing Field/Park and Swimming Pool featured highly in what this group liked about the village. Less satisfactory was that over 70% had to travel over three miles to take part in activities. The dislikes of the group mirrored those of adults with particular mention of Litter/Dog Fouling and Vandalism/Anti-social behaviour. A high number felt that there was a need for more activities to be made available (such as the recently opened Youth Group) and this was the main factor in their suggestions to improve the village. Apart from this, there were a significant number who felt it would be good to have the Swimming Pool open for longer hours and more often.

Both sets of responses have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this Plan.



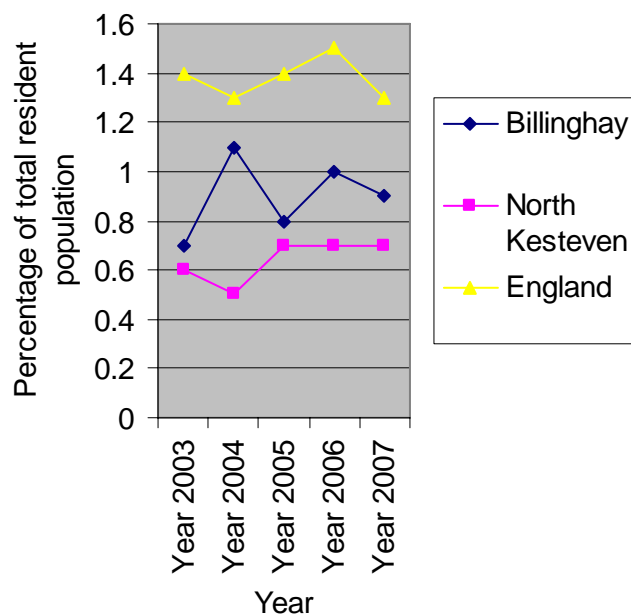
Education & Employment

There are many established small businesses within the parish and there are two specific employment areas located on Mill Lane and West Street. Council tax records in 2007 identified 111 businesses registered in Billingham.

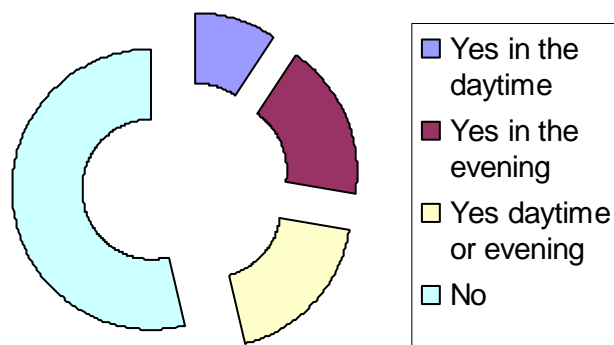
Statistical information produced by the Office for National Statistics shows that 0.9% of the resident population of Billingham claim Jobseekers Allowance and are therefore unemployed but actively seeking employment. As shown in the graph below this rate while higher than the district average for North Kesteven, is lower than the national average.

An important route into employment is education and vocational training courses. The survey results also highlighted the need to improve adult educational opportunities within the village and in surrounding areas. This would provide an important resource for those wanting to learn new skills, not only to aid access to employment but also as a recreational and social activity.

Percentage of people living in Billingham who claim Jobseekers Allowance



Interest in educational or vocational classes if they were held in an existing community building



From the questionnaire it was identified that 46% of respondents would be interested in attending educational or vocational classes at an existing community facility, with interest in both daytime and evening time slots. There are college facilities in Sleaford and other surrounding settlements such as Horncastle. The opportunities which are already available, while they may not be accessible to all (due to lack of transport provision) are an important starting point and a valuable resource. It is important therefore that people within the Parish are made aware of what is already available. Investigations into the availability and the demand for more local courses can then be carried out.

Top 15 classes that residents would like to see introduced into the village:

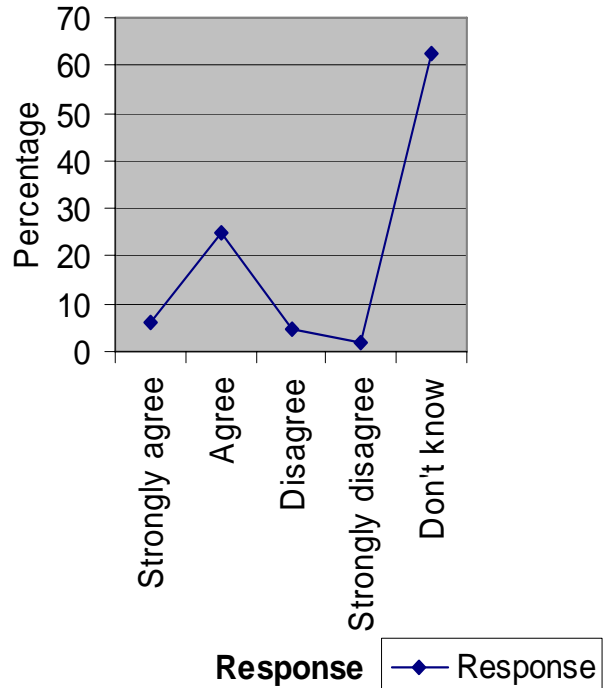
1. Computer
2. Keep fit
3. Art
4. Flower arranging
5. Sports
6. Handicrafts
7. Languages
8. Dancing
9. Tai Chi
10. Yoga
11. Photography
12. Pottery
13. Gardening
14. Martial Arts
15. Sewing & Knitting

Sadly, news was received from the Local Education Authority in summer 2008 stating that the Lafford High School is no longer viable and is to be closed. This is a significant loss following the provision of 46 years of secondary education in the village. While this decision can not be changed it has struck a chord with residents. It has highlighted the need to promote and maintain other important services and facilities, in order to enhance the vitality of the village.

Billingham has a primary school located on Fen Road, which currently has 170 children on roll. The primary school provides education for children between the ages of 3 and 11. The school also provides a breakfast club between 8 and 9am where children can go not only for breakfast but also for games and craft activities.

While the majority of respondents stated they did not know about the transport provision to and from schools for the children of the village, of those that did know about it, 82% responded positively about the current situation.

The Travel to and from Schools is adequate for children living in Billingham



The Children's Centre established in 2008 has delivered additional services and facilities in order to support the younger generations of the village and their parents and guardians. Several activities and information are provided for families from the centre. This facility is also where the Citizen's Advice Bureau is provided.



The Key Issues:

- Loss of Lafford High School
- The need to support and promote existing facilities and services
- Lack of adult education opportunities
- Lack of awareness of established adult education opportunities in surrounding areas
- The need to support any new facilities, services and businesses

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
Promotion of adult education within the village and surrounding areas in order to aid access to employment and provide recreational and social activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate opportunities for courses within the village • Collate information on courses held in the surrounding areas and promote these in the newsletter, on the website and in local outlets. 	Local colleges LCC Parish Council	Medium Term
Effective promotion of the Primary School, Children's Centre, nursery and playschool to ensure continued viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Local Education Authority • Discuss with the operators any issues they have that the implementation group could assist with in the future 	Local Education Authority Operators BAGS	Long Term
Support local businesses and realise the employment they bring to the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise a list of businesses to all residents and make available on the website and in local outlets 	BAGS	Short Term
Promotion of transport accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the visions laid out in the transport section in order to allow residents to reach places of employment by public transport 	See Transport section	See Transport section

Environment

The Parish of Billingham has a significant level of open views across open countryside. The flatness of the land means that on clear days it is easy to spot surrounding church spires and specifically, Tattershall Castle, 4 miles to the north east of Billingham. A lot of the surrounding land is agricultural in use and is therefore a very valuable asset to the village, supporting the local economy.

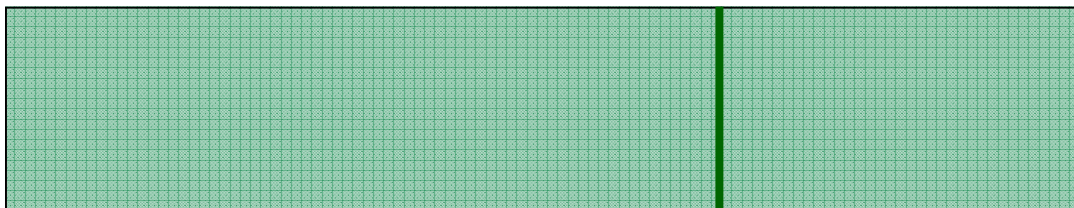
One particular issue raised by many respondents was that of dog mess both within the village and on surrounding public footpaths. Whilst 41% of respondents said there should be more dog bins (with the most popular sites being Sprites Lane, the Market Place and the Field Road Estate), the general feeling was that dog owners are not very good at using the existing facilities. The promotion of the use of existing dog bins and enforcement of penalties therefore needs to be investigated.



The Parish Council already employ someone to keep the village free from litter which is carried out to an extremely good level. However it is particularly the playing field which cannot be covered by this existing service which seems to be a problem. Although 44% of respondents said they would welcome extra litter bins (especially on the Field Road Estate, Fen Road and Mill Lane) it is still up to residents to use the facilities provided, therefore it is considered that a starting point would be to promote this throughout the village.

Billingham scores in the top third of the country for its Living Environment score which is based on indicators such as the quality of housing, the air quality and the number of road traffic accidents in the area.

Living Environment Deprivation Domain 2007



Most Deprived
Rank 1

Billingham
Rank 21056

Least Deprived
Rank 32482

There are several public footpaths through the open countryside surrounding the village and it is thought that these could be made better use of by residents for getting out in to the local area and also keeping fit. 66% of respondents thought that the paths were well maintained and easily accessible but others stated that they did not know the location of the local footpath network.

Billinghay has a nature conservation area on Tattershall Road that was set up some years ago. It has been made apparent by the respondents to the survey that there is little knowledge of this area, in the village.

The awareness of both the footpaths and the nature conservation area is not of a sufficient level and therefore this needs to be improved upon. It is considered that the provision of better signposting and a greater availability of maps and information needs to be investigated to resolve this situation and promote the use of the natural environment of Billinghay.

Some respondents reported obstructions on paths, for example unsuitable stiles and growing crops with no path left through the field. Therefore the maintenance of the footpaths and other areas such as the river bank which is also used by walkers is an issue which needs to be investigated and addressed.

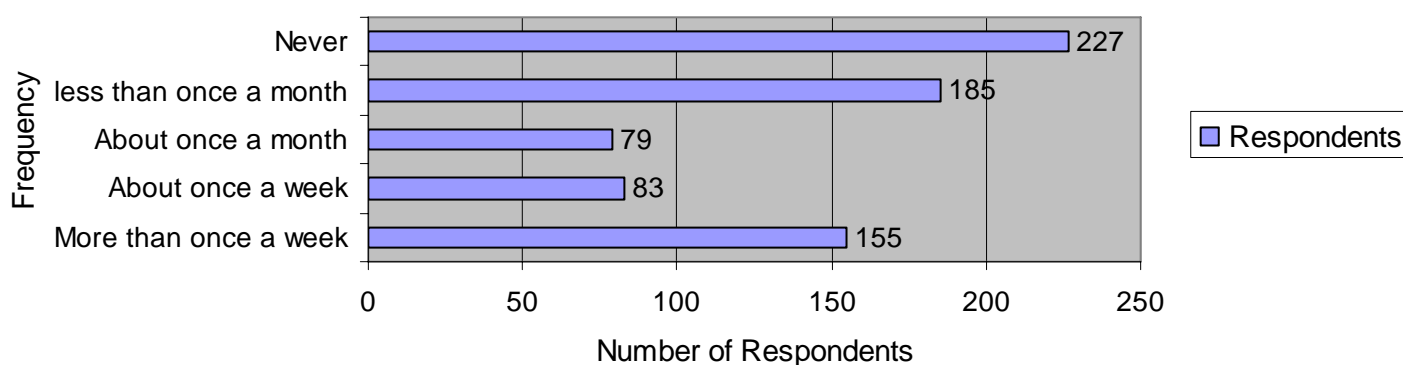


Making more of the approaches into the village was also suggested through the survey as something that would enhance the local environment. Keeping these areas clean and tidy, planting flowers, and/or using feature signs and sculptures were the most popular ideas suggested.

Top 10 ideas for improving the environment of Billinghay:

1. Planting flowers
2. Feature signs/Sculptures
3. General tidy up
4. Tidy up the Skirth bank
5. Maintain existing and plant more trees
6. Improve the appearance of the bridges
7. Improve or demolish derelict buildings
8. Grass verges cut more often
9. Provide sign at Mill Lane entrance
10. More lighting and landscaping

How Often Do You Use the Public Footpaths Around Billinghay?



Although many people are already taking steps as individuals to create a sustainable environment, 50% of respondents felt that we should actively encourage and promote sustainability in the village. There were many suggestions made but the most popular were for more planting on various sites, encouraging the use of solar and wind power, seeking better public transport and encouraging better use of the recycling facilities at the village hall by better signage. Another idea presented was the need to promote the use of environmentally friendly power sources in public buildings such as council maintained properties, the village hall and the swimming pool.



The Key Issues

- **Dog fouling**
- **Litter**
- **Awareness of footpaths, nature conservation area and access to the countryside**
- **Maintenance of footpaths, playing field and river banks**
- **Sustainability**

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
To make sure the Parish is clean and visually pleasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of existing litter bins • Stricter enforcement of dog fouling penalties • Promote better maintenance of footpaths and river bank • Promote the use of public footpaths by providing information on routes • Report any dangerous or overhanging trees to the Council or owners • Enhance the approaches into the village 	Parish Council Dog Wardens LCC BAGS NKDC	Short, Medium and Long Term and ongoing
To improve environmental sustainability in the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate ways to improve recycling • Encourage and promote the use of environmentally sustainable power sources in public and private buildings 	Parish Council BAGS NKDC	Medium and Long Term

Health

Overall, the indicators of health for people living in North Kesteven are better than average when compared with England and the East Midlands.

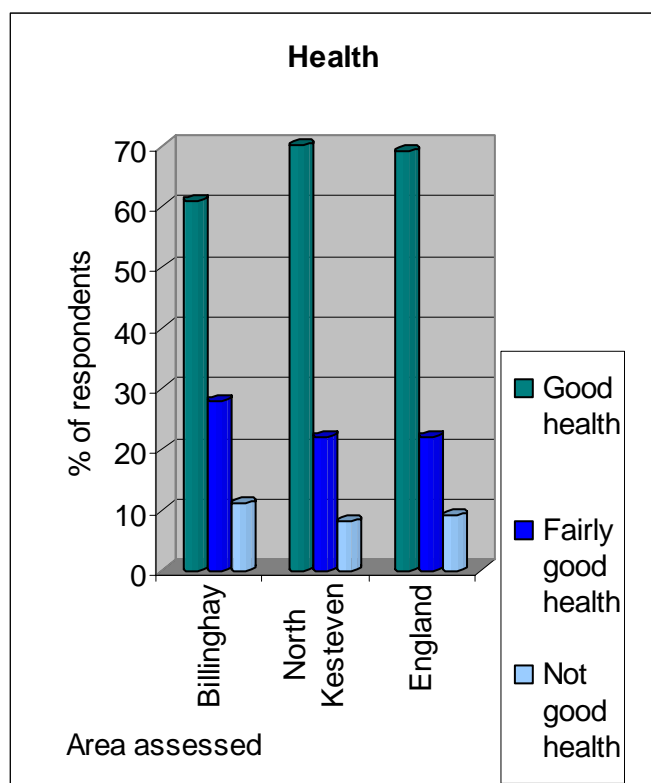
It is estimated that during a 12 month period in 2008/9, 73.8% of respondents had used the GP's surgery at Billingham, with 58.3% needing to use the dispensary.

Health statistics at Parish Level are restricted and therefore there is limited data to work from in terms of establishing the health problems in the local area.

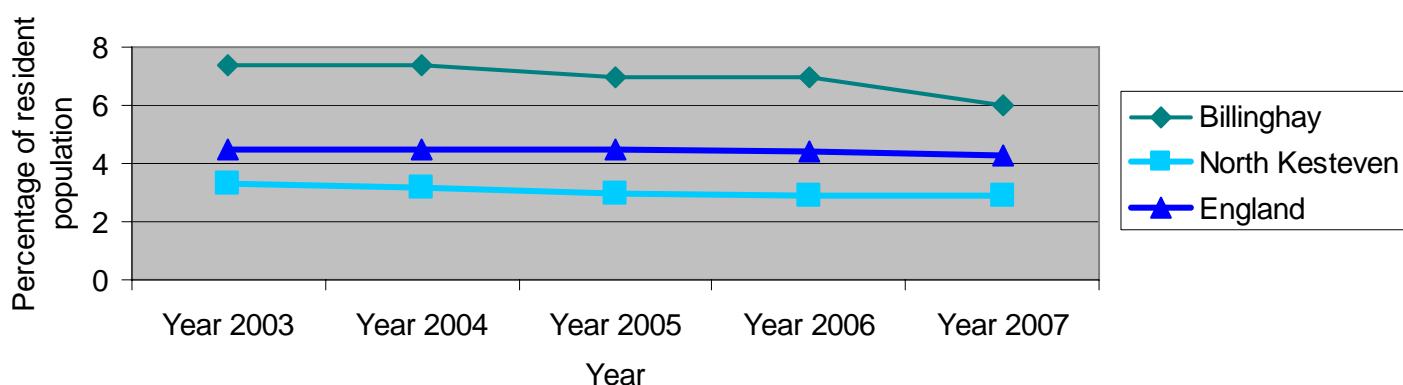


In the Census 2001 results, the number of people stating they were in good health in Billingham was lower than both the district and national averages, however the number feeling that they were in fairly good health was higher than the comparatives. This statistic is backed up by the percentage of the resident population of Billingham who claim incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance, which was 6% in 2007. 46% of those claiming are aged between 25 and 49, followed by 35% aged between 50 and 59.

This identifies the need for significantly more work to be done by the responsible organisations to establish the needs within the Parish and put in place a strategy to bridge gaps in service provision.



Percentage of resident population claiming incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance



Statistics also showed that visiting mobile screening units would be appropriate; 65.4% said they would support a mammogram unit. This could also encompass environmental issues as it is a 44 mile round trip to the Boston unit, and women traditionally travel independently due to the type and timing of appointments. 10.5% of those questioned had used the service in the previous 12 months.

A dentist was a strong contender on the wish list for increased village services with 31.5% as was the need for the mobile blood service, an optician and a chiropodist.



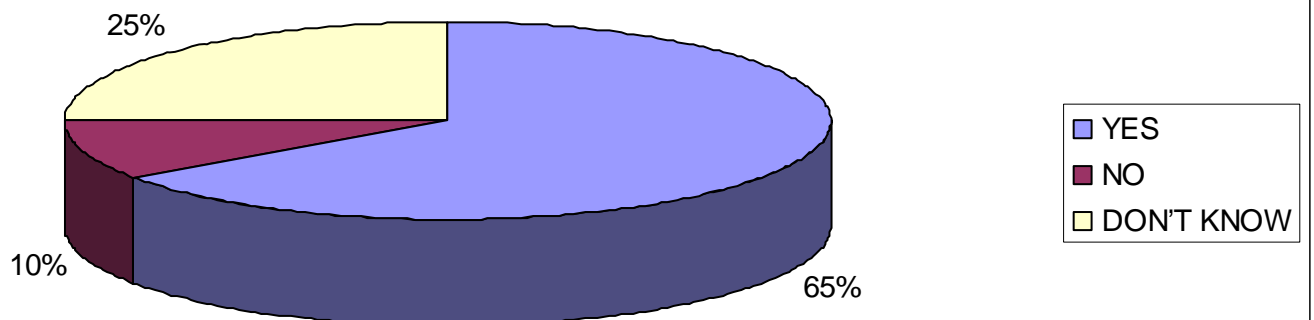
Billingham Medical Practice located on the High Street provides a significant percentage of the health services within the Parish. This service is monitored by the NHS via patient feedback, and was considered very highly by those using its services in the 2007/8 period. It is a very important facility within the village, which also serves the wider area and needs to be maintained. The Medical Practice also provides a vital dispensary service enabling residents to collect prescriptions within the village.

When residents were asked their views on the current services, the majority were very complimentary of the current facilities. Suggestions were made on how to improve it, with increased opening hours later in the day and on Saturday mornings being considered important. The need for more parking and a covered area to store prams and buggies were also identified as a potential issue.

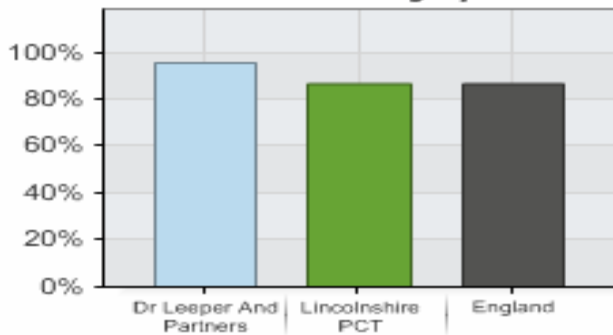
Top 8 Health Services and Facilities that residents would like to see in Billingham:

1. Dentist
2. Optician
3. Chiropodist
4. Chemist
5. Blood Donor Van
6. Physiotherapist
7. Vets
8. Health Spa

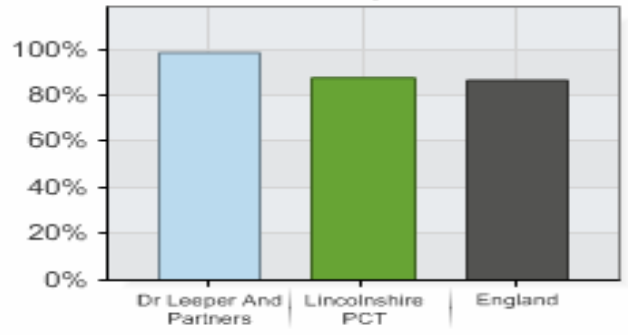
If a mammogram or other screening services were available in the village, would you use them?



In general, are you satisfied with how easy it is to get through to someone on the phone at your doctor's surgery?



Were you able to get the appointment on the same day or on the next 2 days the surgery was open?



The Key Health Issues:

- The need for an accessible local mammogram unit
- Awareness of current health facilities
- The need for responsible organisations to do further research into the health issues within the Parish
- The levels of service provision required need to be identified
- The need for a dentist, preferably NHS



Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
Promote and support current health facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise services in village newsletter and on website • Discuss with current service providers, any issues they have that the implementation group could assist with in the future 	Parish Council BAGS	Short Term and ongoing
Providing more wide ranging health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with responsible organisations the wishes of residents for more services as identified and address accessibility issues 	Responsible organisations NHS BAGS	Medium/ Long Term
Investigate the potential for a local mammogram unit and other screening services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research current provision and investigate more local opportunities 	BAGS NHS	Medium Term

Housing & Conservation

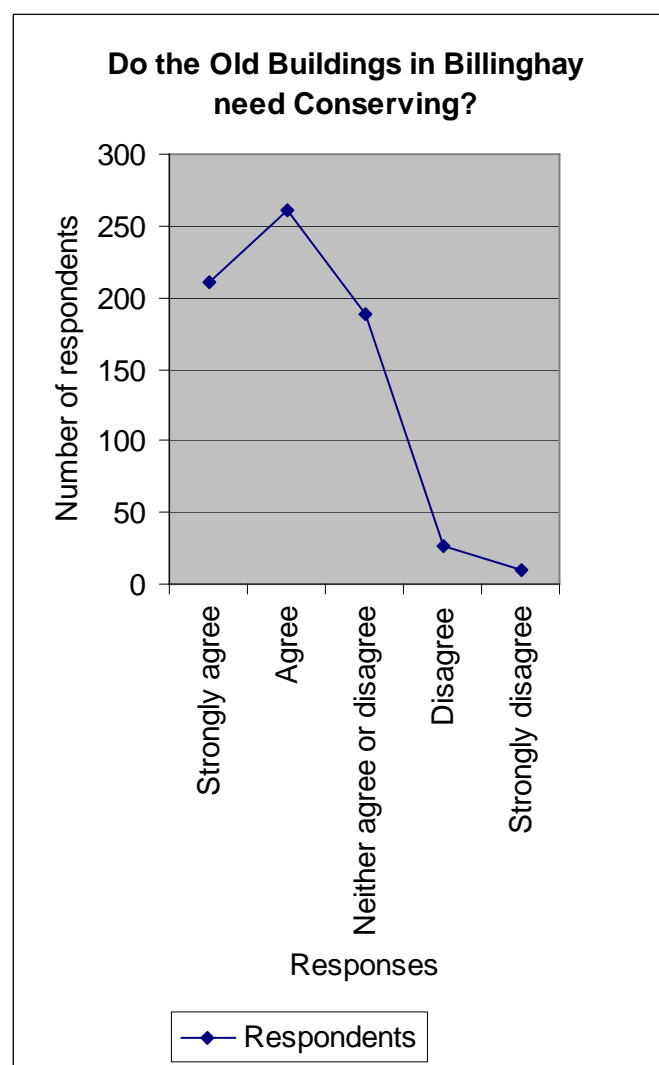
There is a variety of types of housing within Billingham ranging from old traditional style buildings around the Market Place to brand new modern estate housing to the west of the village off Field Road.

The conservation area in Billingham was designated in 1991 and covers 3.4 hectares of the eastern area of the village around Church Street, Bridge Street, Church Lane, Victoria Street and Market Place. In this area the most common materials used for housing is red/brown brick with slate and pantile roofs. There are a number of traditional shop fronts which provide significant character in this part of the village.

Within this central area there are buildings dating from over the past 350 years. Apart from the church which dates from the 12th century the oldest remaining building is the Old Vicarage Cottage which is now utilised as the Parish Office, which dates from about 1650.



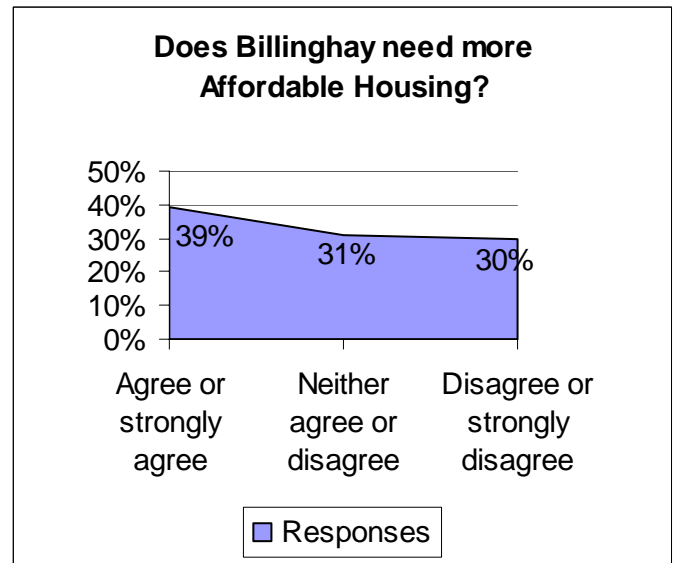
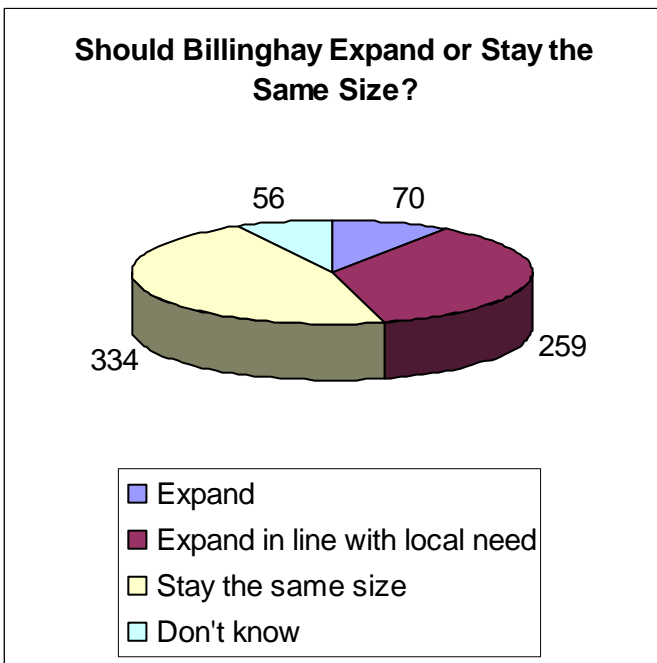
Several respondents to the survey recognised that it was important to keep the village clean and free from vandalism to make sure it is at its best at all times. The respondents to the survey also identified that the more traditional and historic buildings are an important asset for the village with 68% of the total respondents stating that they either strongly agree or agree that the old buildings in the village should be conserved in future years.



Billingham as a settlement is identified as a service centre and therefore is considered to be second choice for housing development in the parts of the District outside of Sleaford and North Hykeham. The number of dwellings in the village in February 2007 (Council Tax records) was 1008. This is an increase of 72 dwellings since the Census in 2001.

A Housing Needs Survey was carried out by the District Council in 2007 which identified that 267 people were on the housing register awaiting properties in Billingham. 31 of these people were already living in the village. The Housing Needs Survey also identified the split of accommodation needed with 54% of people on the Housing Register requiring 1 bedroom properties in Billingham. This identified the variety of houses needed within the Parish to meet the current demand.

Through the survey villagers were asked if they thought the village should expand, expand in line with local need or stay the same size. The majority of respondents stated the village should stay the same size and the main reasoning behind this was the fact that the village is lacking a variety of services that a larger settlement would need. While this was the majority view with a 46% response rate, it was closely followed by the opinion that the village should expand in line with local need which made up 36% of responses. The reasoning behind this particular response was the need to maintain existing infrastructure and services and to encourage investment in the village in terms of services, facilities and businesses.



In addition to a question about expansion, the survey asked about the resident's views on the need for affordable housing. Again mixed views were reported with 39% stating there is a need for more affordable housing, 30% identifying that there is no need for affordable housing and the remaining 31% neither agreeing or disagreeing with the provision of affordable housing.

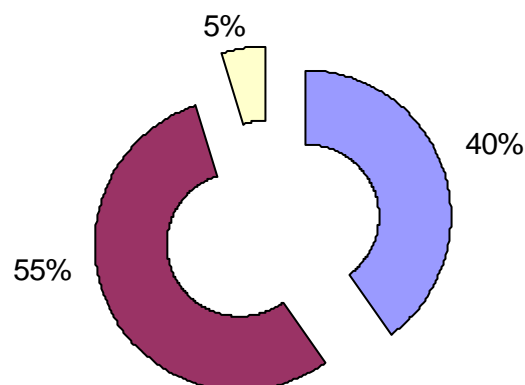


In view of the above average number of older people living in the village, residents of Billingham were also asked their views on the supply of houses for the older generations and whether further accommodation was required for those of a retiring age or older. 32% agreed that there is currently a problem finding suitable housing for the older residents of the village, while 45% neither agreed or disagreed and the remaining 23% disagreed that more specialised housing was required.

Recently, the drainage system has been raised as an issue, therefore a question was asked in the survey to see if there is a specific issue with drainage in certain parts of the village. 40% of the respondents stated that there was an issue with the current drainage system, with the place most highlighted as being problematic being Walcott Road. 55% identified that they neither agreed or disagreed with the need for an improved drainage system, with only 5% disagreeing with this statement altogether.



Does the drainage system in Billingham need improving?



■ Agree ■ Neither agree or disagree ■ Disagree

The Key Issues:

- Local need housing
- Cleanliness of village
- The need to maintain, conserve and enhance older buildings
- Drainage system

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
To meet local housing needs based on evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create effective working relationship with NKDC planning department in order to establish the local need for housing and to look at ways of addressing the issues for all. 	Parish Council NKDC	Long Term
To respect the character of the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage developers to respect the character of the village • Continue with the cleaning of the village • Support those conserving and enhancing the older buildings in the village 	Parish Council NKDC	Short term and ongoing
To improve the current drainage system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the current drainage issues in the village and try to resolve what can be done to improve the current situation 	Parish Council NKDC Anglian Water Drainage Board	Medium Term

Safety & Security



Billingham is considered by most, to be a safe village to live in with 90% of respondents stating they feel safe in Billingham. The village has its own retained fire station located on Mill Lane, providing a valuable emergency response service.

There is currently a community police officer, PC Daniels who serves Billingham and the surrounding parishes. PC Daniels is also supported by Police Community Support Officers. However, 456 respondents to the questionnaire felt that the police coverage was unsatisfactory with 226 respondents citing the lack of police presence as a concern, especially at night. 65% of respondents stated that they did not know how to contact the Police Community Support Officer for Billingham.

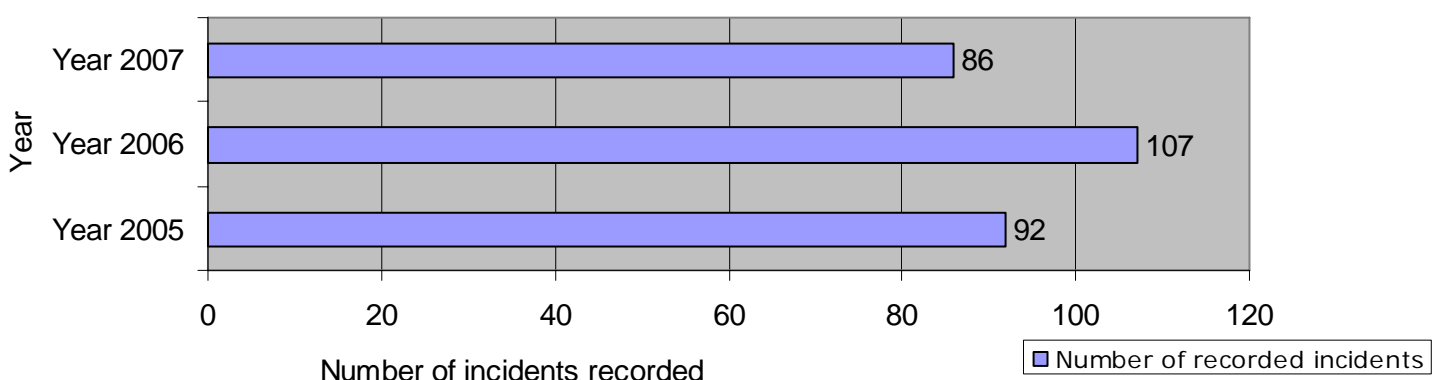
The survey flagged up two main issues with regard to safety and security, namely speeding and anti-social behaviour.

The issue of speeding is key, especially along Walcott Road and High Street which is the main route through the village for both residents and those using it as a commuting route. Research into the possibility of gaining a speeding device has been carried out and a group of parishes including Billingham have invested in a speed indicator device. This will need to be reviewed in the future to ascertain whether the device is working effectively.

Inconsiderate parking around the Market Place and the School have been raised as being an important issue. This is considered to have significant impacts on the safety of both road users and pedestrians. This issue has been heightened since the Post Office has relocated to the Co-op, combining two busy services within one unit. As it was felt this was a serious problem, discussions with Highways have already been carried out and double yellow lines have been put in place. Again it is important that this situation is reviewed to check the effectiveness of this strategy.



Number of criminal incidents in Billingham reported to Lincolnshire Police



Particular concerns raised in the survey related to anti-social behaviour rather than crime itself. Anti-social behaviour includes noise pollution, litter and rubbish and persistent nuisance behaviour. Further investigations into how to tackle this issue must be carried out.

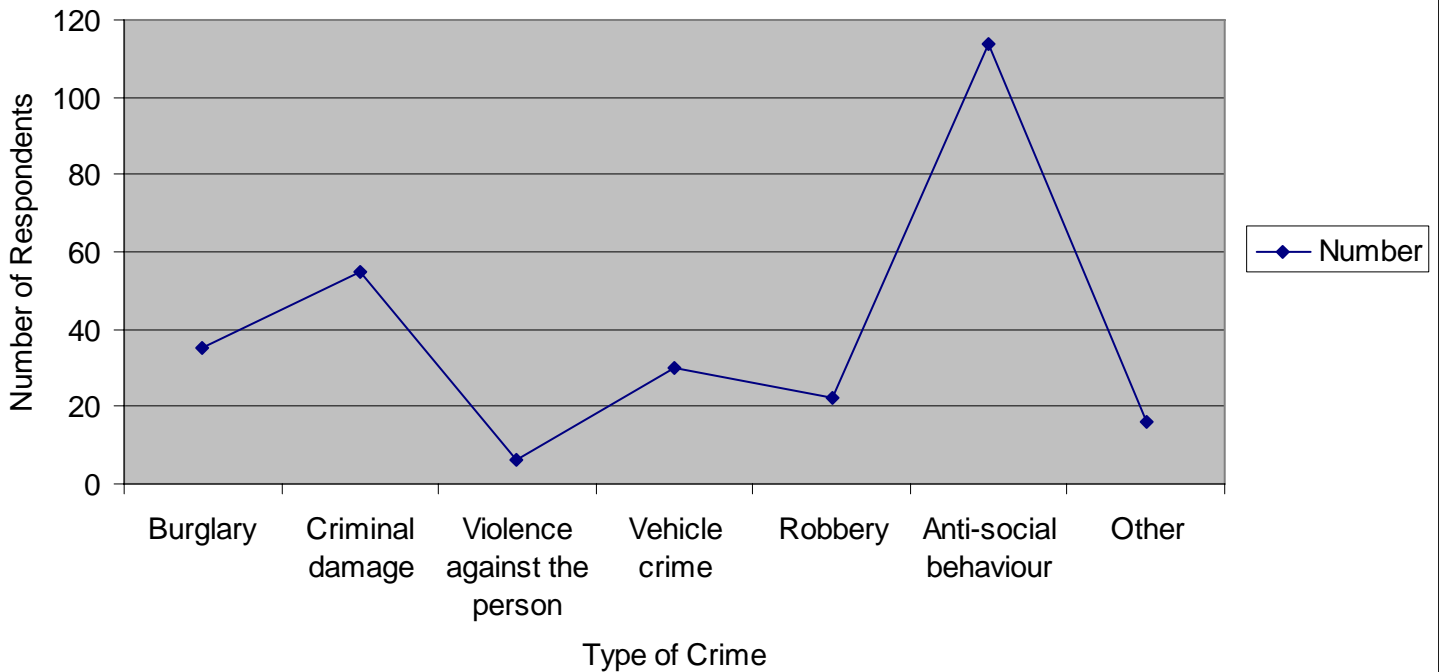
28% of those who stated in the survey that they had been a victim of crime in the past two years did not report the incident to the police. The main reason for not reporting crimes was because when previous crimes had been reported the respondents felt that nothing had been done about it.

Following consultation with the police it was found that they would like all incidents to be reported, no matter how small, so they are fully aware of what is happening in the village. The contact details for the police therefore need to be regularly publicised locally. An effective working relationship between the Parish Council and other village groups is also necessary for this system to work.



The questionnaire responses identified the need for an emergency plan for the village. Since the survey was carried out this has been investigated and completed. The Billingham Emergency Plan contains important information to be used during any serious incident affecting the community. It provides an up to date list of information and resources potentially available by the local community for use by residents and emergency services, in tackling serious situations. The Emergency Plan can be viewed on the Parish website at <http://parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Billinghay>

Have you been a victim of crime in the past two years, if so which type of crime?





The Key Issues:

- Lack of police presence, especially at night
- Speeding within the village and surrounding roads
- Parking around Market place and School
- Communication between residents and police and vice versa
- Anti-social behaviour including vandalism and hooliganism
- Lack of an Emergency Plan

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
The promotion of reporting anti-social behaviour to the police and improve communication with the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly provide contact details for the police and police community support officers in the newsletter, on the website and in local outlets • Look into the promotion of the neighbourhood watch scheme • Continue effective communication between the Parish Council and the Police 	Parish Council Police	Short Term and Ongoing Medium Term Short Term and ongoing
Discuss options for improving the parking situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult LCC on ways to resolve parking issues • Review the situation regularly to make sure action has had desired outcome 	LCC Highways Parish Council Police	Short Term (completed) Medium Term
Develop a way forward to make roads safer by tackling speeding issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the potential for a speeding device • Discuss situation with partners and surrounding parishes with similar issues 	Parish Council Surrounding Parishes Police NKDC	Short Term (Completed)
An effective emergency plan in place for the village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and commission an emergency plan for the village 	BAGS	Short Term (Completed)

Sports & Social Facilities

The parish has a wide range of facilities which are used for both sports and social activities. The questionnaire identified that 66% of respondents felt that the current facilities were adequate. The survey results however did flag up a lack of awareness of the many clubs and activities that are already in operation in the village. This has therefore identified the need for better communication to increase awareness about what is going on in the village.

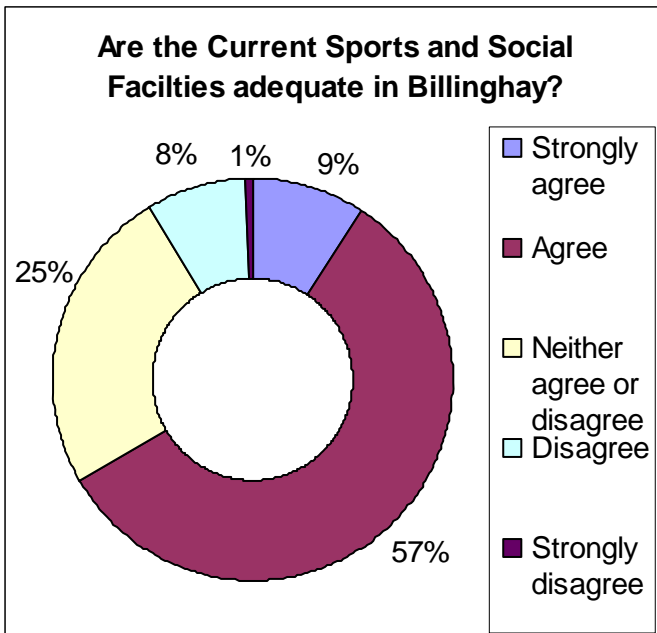
Several respondents to the survey identified activities or hobby groups which are currently not available in the village including a cricket team, a gymnasium, athletics and running clubs, badminton, squash, archery, canoeing, sports for women such as netball and sports and social facilities specifically for the younger generations of the parish.



There are several meeting places that are available in the village already, however it is important that these options are investigated to establish whether there are any gaps in provision for any specific age groups.

The playing field is well used by the village football clubs and there is relatively new play equipment, as well as a mini skate park.

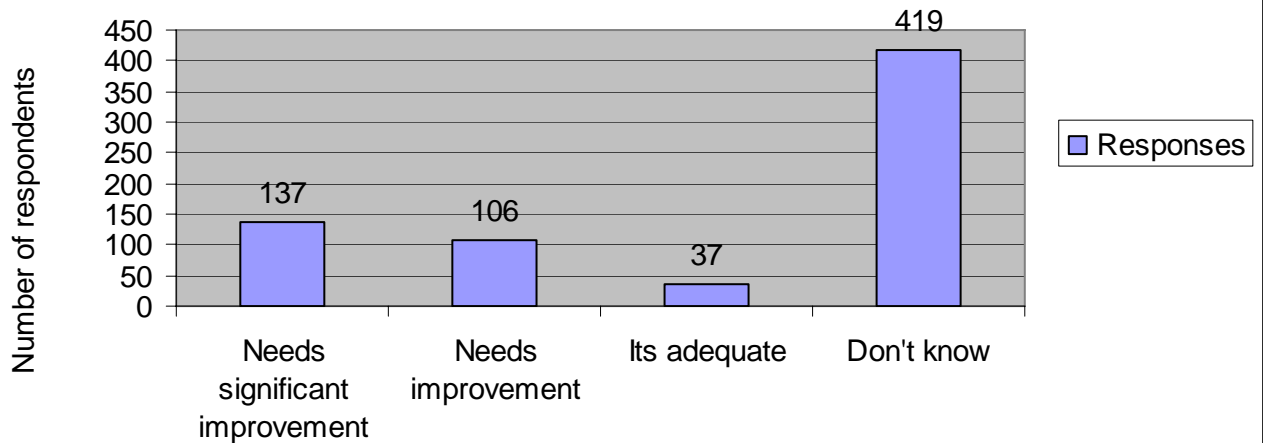
It is acknowledged that the most important resource is volunteers willing to run groups and activities. Work will be carried out to set up a support system for both existing voluntary groups and anyone interested in setting one up, to provide as much help as possible. This will help to maintain the current activities and also help to enhance opportunities in the future.



Facilities Audit

Village Hall	Church and Chapels	Tennis Court
Community Rooms	Public footpaths	Children's Centre
Playing Field	Swimming pool	Primary School
Play area	Bowling green	Pubs
Skate park		

Is the current football pavillion adequate?

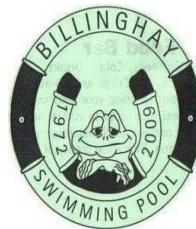


One facility which serves the football teams of the village is the football pavillion. The survey resulted in 87% of the 280 people who knew about the football pavillion considering that it either needed improvements or significant improvements. The two most common comments regarding the football pavillion was that it either needed rebuilding or it needed renovating and modernising.

Another facility that was flagged up by respondents that is currently lacking in the village is an all weather sports pitch which would enable other sports to be played within the village.

One specific facility in the village which is uncommon of other villages of the same size is the outdoor swimming pool open in the summer months. The swimming pool was built by the villagers of Billingham 37 years ago and is now run by volunteers.

A resounding 87% of respondents to the survey identified that it was very important to keep this facility up and running. It is therefore considered important to support this facility within the village and in surrounding areas.





The Key Issues:

- Lack of awareness and promotion of current facilities and activities
- Lack of appropriate meeting places
- Lack of volunteers to run groups, sports and activities
- Lack of support for volunteers
- Lack of public events within the village
- The need to upgrade and maintain important facilities

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
Improve Parish awareness of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise a list of facilities and activities already available in the parish or close by • Support and promote existing facilities and groups 	Parish Council Responsible organisations	Short term
Investigation of current social meeting places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey current social meeting places and groups in order to identify any gaps in provision • Open discussion with relevant authorities about village needs 	BAGS Parish Council Relevant authorities	Medium term
Regularly publicise the need for volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the village newsletter, website and local outlets to promote the need for volunteers to run activities and social events • Produce a leaflet identifying how to volunteer and provide support for groups by helping with research into funding, insurance and other responsibilities 	Parish Council BAGS	Medium term and ongoing
Increase in the amount of village events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look into the possibility of setting up a social events committee by advertising for volunteers 	Parish Council BAGS	Medium term
Improve the football pavilion facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the possibility of grant funding and fundraising opportunities to improve the current football pavilion 	BAGS	Long Term

Transport



Public transport to and from Billingham consists of one main service. The 632/5S service operates between Metheringham and Sleaford and stops in Billingham ten times on an average day. 68% of respondents thought that the public transport situation could be improved.

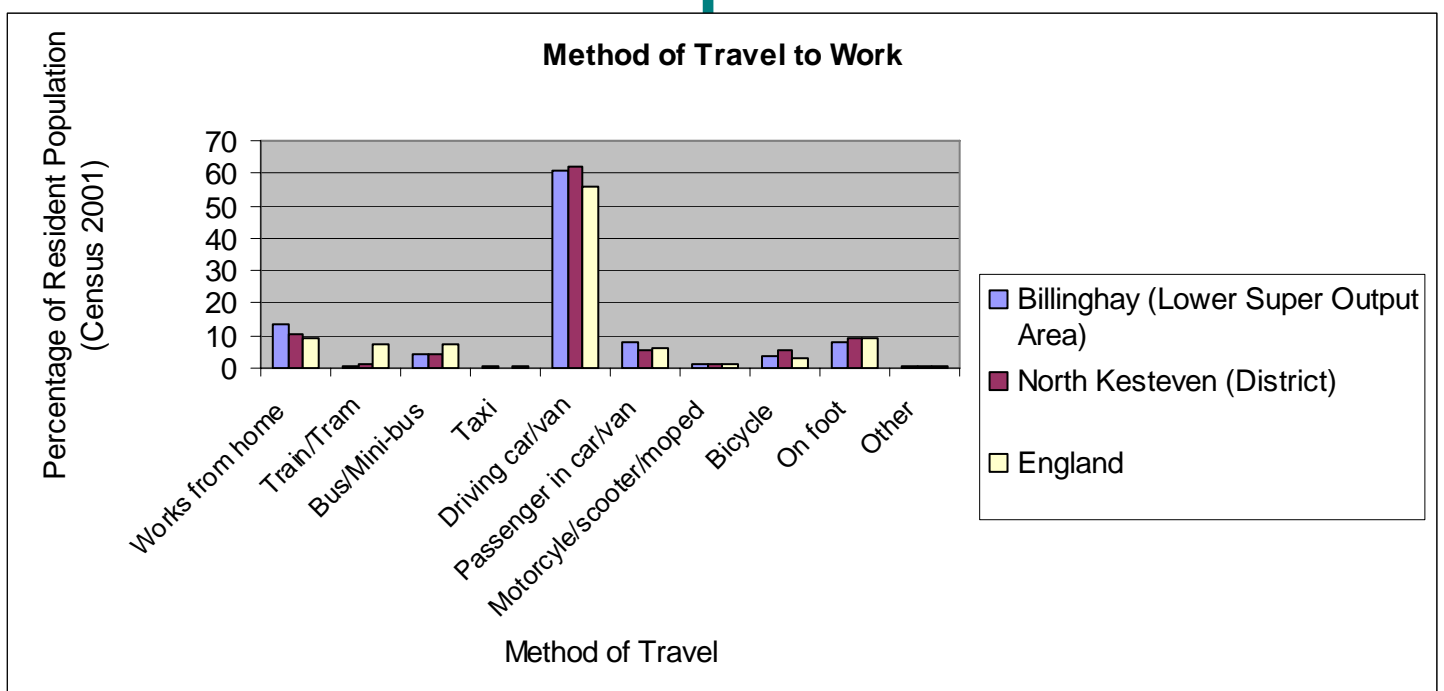
The thoughts of the parishioners in response to the questionnaire was that the bus service provision could be increased in frequency, operating over a longer time span each day. It was also stated that better access to the larger service centres of Boston and Lincoln by public transport would benefit the village. This viewpoint can be backed up by the 2001 census results which shows that the population of Billingham and North Kesteven at the district level is heavily reliant on the private vehicle.

The Lincolnshire County Council Call Connect bus service is in operation which allows residents to call and book a pick up time on a mini-bus from home to the nearest main bus route and again for the return journey. The provision of this service however is not widely known throughout the Parish.

It is important therefore that the current public transport services are publicised in the newsletter, at local outlets and on the website in order for residents to know what is currently available. This is also the case for publicising the bus passes and travel tokens which are provided at the Parish Office for the over 60 age group.

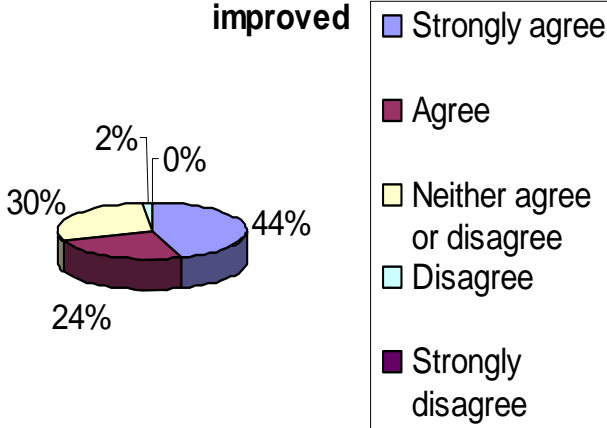
There is a voluntary car scheme up and running. 15% of respondents to the questionnaire strongly agreed and 19% agreed that this service could be improved. The promotion of this service is important to help maintain and enhance the service.

Other transport issues highlighted by the questionnaire responses included speeding and parking, which have been addressed under the safety and security section of this plan.

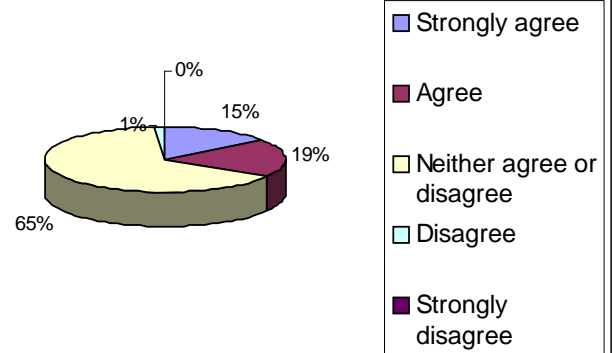




Percentage of respondents stating their opinion on whether public transport in Billingham could be improved



Percentage of respondents stating their opinion on whether voluntary transport in Billingham could be improved



The Key Issues:

- Lack of regular public transport over a reasonable time span each day
- Limited voluntary transport provision
- Lack of awareness of service provision currently available
- Lack of clearly identifiable bus stops

Vision	Actions	Partners	Timescale
Regular public transport provision and access to Lincoln and Boston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with LCC to make operators aware of residents views 	LCC Operators BAGS	Long Term
Promotion of existing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the current services, timetables and bus passes and tokens in the newsletter, on the website and in local outlets 	LCC Operators Parish Council	Short Term (completed and ongoing)
Effective identification of bus stops with bus timetable information provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report details of bus stops needing maintenance or clearer identification • Make sure timetables are displayed at bus stops and in local outlets 	LCC BAGS Local Outlets	Short Term and as and when required
Enhancement of current voluntary community transport service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the service in the newsletter, on the website and in local outlets. • Regularly publicise the need for additional drivers when needed 	Operators Parish Council Local Outlets	Medium Term—Ongoing

Next Steps & Acknowledgements

The Parish Plan process has brought together statistical information and the thoughts and views of the residents of Billingham and the surrounding areas. It has provided important baseline information, revealed gaps in current provision, pulled out positive attributes of the village, and identified the weaknesses.

The Parish Plan sets out long, medium and short term aims that have been identified as things to work on and achieve to improve on what we already have in the parish of Billingham. These are all identified at the end of each section throughout the plan.

The plan, just that at present; a plan written down on paper. What is needed now is to get people within the village on board, in order to achieve the objectives set out. Whether this means contacting and lobbying the relevant organisations, or setting up groups to complete specific tasks, there are many routes to explore.



The Billingham Action Group Implementation Team are now in a position to go on and implement certain aspects of the plan, however this again takes up volunteers time and resources. Certain elements of the plan, such as the parking issues around the Market Place and School have been taken in hand and completed. Reviewing this situation however, will be a longer term task.



An annual statement will be completed to review what has been achieved and whether the elements of the plan need to be revisited in order to make realistic and necessary improvements to it.

Information and updates on the Parish Plan and the resulting actions will be publicised in the Billingham Times Newsletter and on the Parish website.

Statement by Billingham Parish Council:

The Parish Council wishes to thank everyone who has participated in this project, including all those who took the time to complete and return the questionnaires. In particular, the Parish Council wishes to thank the Parish Plan Steering Group (Billinghay Action Group) guided by Ian King (Chairman), Tina Nicholas (Treasurer), Wendy Liles (Secretary), Lou Hird, Judy Humphertson, Angela Waitland, Juneta Wilson, Carol Willingham, Sue Baker, Cath Wood, Guy Forman, Gemma Dring and Hazel Blades.



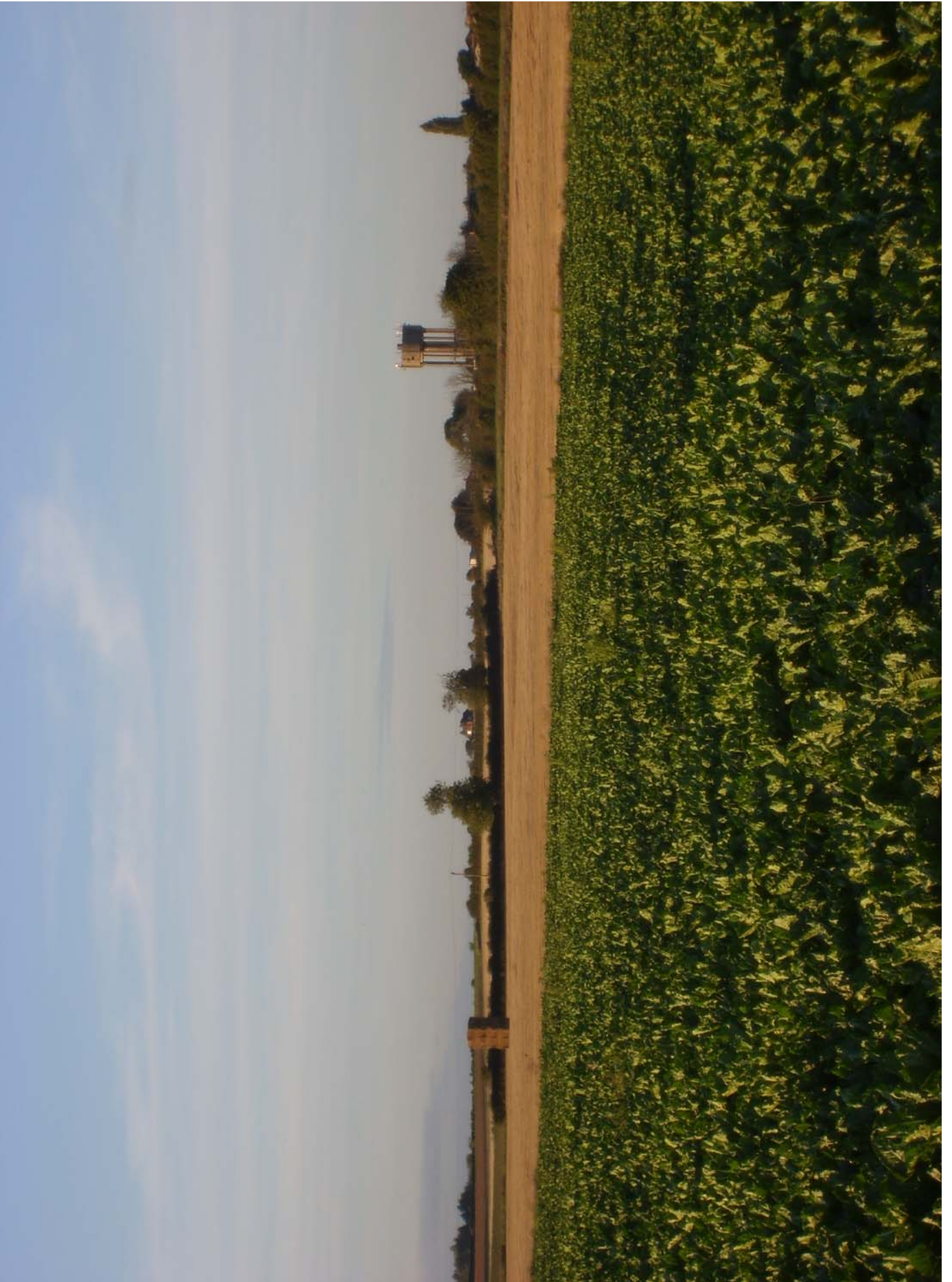
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- Census Data 2001, Office for National Statistics on www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/
- www.google.co.uk/maps
- Photography by BAGS group members



Data Sources

Data	Page	Data Source
Resident population estimate 2007	9	Office for National Statistics
Resident population estimate by age group 2007	9	Office for National Statistics
Population estimate by gender 2007	9	Office for National Statistics
Number of dwellings 2007	10	Council Tax Records
Levels of support for new community facilities	12	Parish Plan Survey 2006
Young peoples views on facilities	15	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Number of businesses 2007	16	Council Tax Records
Number of claimants of jobseekers allowance 2003 – 2007	16	Office for National Statistics
Views on educational and vocational classes	16 & 17	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Number of pupils on roll at Billingham Primary School 2007	17	Ofsted
Views on school transport provision	17	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Living Environment Deprivation Domain 2007	19	Office for National Statistics
Views on current dog bin provision and public footpaths	20	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Views on the environment & sustainability	20 & 21	Parish Plan Survey 2009
State of Health 2001	22	Office for National Statistics
Claimants of incapacity benefit and disablement allowance 2003-2007	22	Office for National Statistics
Views on current health services	22	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Views on mammogram and other mobile screening units	23	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Health services residents would like available in the village	23	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Satisfaction with doctors information 2007/08	24	http://www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories
Views on the conservation of old buildings	25	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Affordable Housing needs and number of bedrooms required 2006	26	NKDC, Local Affordable Housing Need Survey Analysis Report May-June 2007, NKDC, Sleaford
Views on village expansion, the need for affordable housing and drainage	26	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Number of criminal incidents in Billingham reported to Lincolnshire Police 2005-2007	28	Lincolnshire Police – Freedom of Information Request
Views on feeling safe, police provision and the types of crimes suffered from in the past 2 years	28 & 29	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Views on adequacy of sports and social facilities 2006	31	Parish Plan Survey 2006
Views on the football pavilion	32	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Views on the swimming pool	32	Parish Plan Survey 2009
Public Transport Provision 2009	34	www.traveline.org.uk
Method of Travel to work 2001	34	Office for National Statistics
Views on public and community transport 2006	35	Parish Plan Survey 2006





October 2009