

Abbotswood Community Plan



Action Plan December 2014



Welcome to the Abbotswood Area Community Plan December 2014

The plan reflects the priorities as expressed by local residents and its look ahead at what can be done to address the issues raised and sustain and improve the area for all users.

In the following pages are the Key Findings from the questionnaire, which was delivered to around 2000 homes, businesses and interested groups in April 2014. The questionnaire itself was prepared by a group of local residents including Abbotswood Action Group and Jacobs Well Community Groups after an initial consultation with residents and was tailored to the topics raised by them.

The responses received have been analysed by an independent agency (Gloucestershire Rural Community Council) and a full copy is available for any residents that would like to see one. It was then used to produce the Action Plan on pages 8 to 12.

Why have a Community Plan

The purpose of the Plan is to make Abbotswood a better place to live, play and work. The Plan provides a mechanism for finding out the community's needs and desires for the future and presenting them in a way that is easily accessible. It gives local people a greater influence over the future of Abbotswood.

The key benefit of having a Community Plan is that it provides clear and robust evidence of the needs and priorities of the community to local authorities, external agencies and other organisations, whose decisions have an impact on the area.

The evidence gathered through the process of preparing the Community Plan can therefore be used to:

- inform how South Gloucestershire Council, other statutory agencies and community groups plan their services and activities locally;
- encourage community involvement and partnership working by highlighting projects that need help from local people as well as external agencies to get things done; and
- support applications for external funding for projects, as some grants are only available if there is supporting evidence from a Community Plan.



What happens next

Once the Plan has been launched and reviewed by the Community copies will be presented to Yate Town Council, Dodington Parish Council and South Gloucestershire Council for their support. However nothing can be achieved without the help of enthusiastic volunteers from the community.

Everyone who has volunteered to take part in any of the Events was personally invited to the launch meeting in November 2014 where organisers could tell them more about how to get involved.

Abbotswood Action Group will continue to take the findings forward with the appropriate Agencies and volunteers and everyone is encouraged to take part.

What you can do

If you would like more information, or feel passionate about something or want to lend a hand in putting the plan into action, then:

Contact Mary Wright by email on
abbotswoodaction@gmail.com
Drop Mary a line at -
93 Chargrove, Yate, BS37 4LQ

Contact Jacobs Well on-
ruthward.jacobswell@gmail.com

Key Findings from the Questionnaire

The Shopping Centre

This area was of importance to a lot of the respondents to the questionnaire and consultation.

The main areas of concern were giving the buildings a facelift with improved lighting to encourage more people to use them as well as to improve the feeling of security and safety.

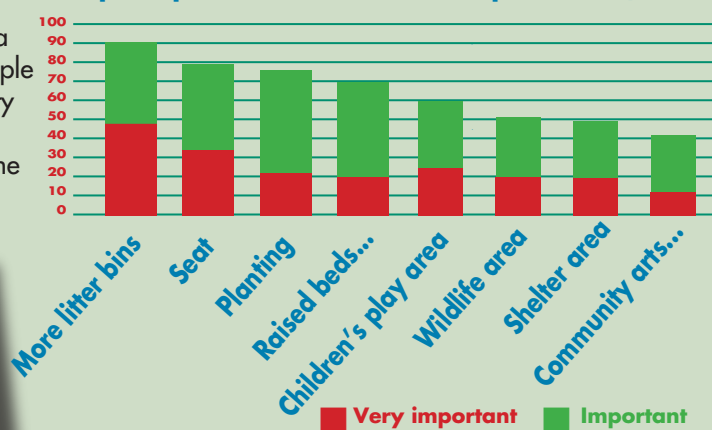
The problem with litter was raised and enhancing the green areas with more planting, seats and children's play area was also mentioned.



Widening the range of shops available was something a lot of people would like to see with most people citing the Post Office and McColl's as being the most important facilities to them.

Quote "The overall appearance of Abbotswood is very run down and depressing if it was updated I think it would make a big difference to the community and to the business there."

How important are these ideas to improve the open space in front of the shops? (% of replies)



Events

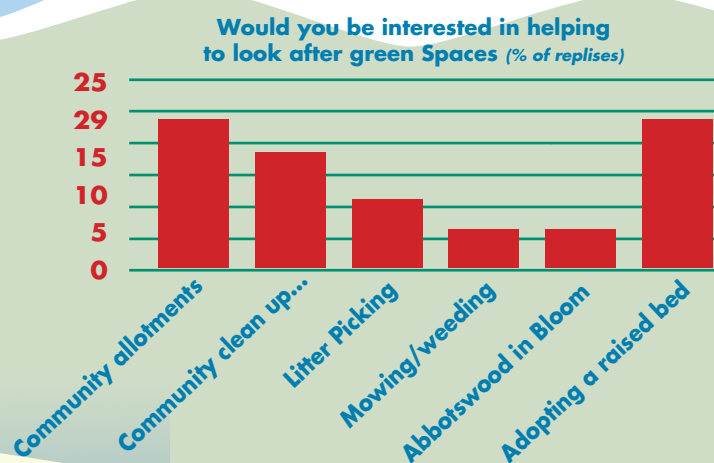
The idea of more community events was supported with volunteers coming forward to help with such things as litter picks, Apple Day and Christmas Lights.



Key Findings from the Questionnaire Continued

Green Spaces

The idea of more community allotments was supported by residents as was the idea of entering Abbotswood into the In Bloom competition again next year.



Community Facilities

St Nicholas Family Centre

St Nicholas Family centre was attended by a number of respondents, most people saying they attend either Sunday Services or other church associated groups. If the age range of people responding is taken into account then a high proportion of the young people attend the Youth centre or Mother and Toddler Groups. Of those people that did attend the centre the majority felt the facilities were adequate with a small number feeling they could be improved. Quote "Please bring back the coffee morning"



Key Findings from the Questionnaire Continued

Communication

Finding out what's going on in Abbotswood. Although there are electronic methods available the majority of people who answered this question still used hard copy information sources such as the local papers or posters in local shops. Quote "Leaflet drops in the area reflected the same feelings as those of the older residents. Or a newsletter perhaps monthly or quarterly posted through your door if you are local."

Shire Way Community Centre

The majority of people that completed this section used either the hall, attending a group or association, or the Midway Social Club. When responding to the question whether people would use playing fields or hard courts if they were provided most people felt they were not required.

Children and Young People

When first investigated the response to these questions appeared poor but when taken in conjunction with the number of households who had children or young people of the requisite age the numbers were much higher. Of these responders it was felt the preschool age group was well catered for but more could be done for school age children, this may be due to lack of appreciation of what is available at St Nicholas Youth Centre. When the young people themselves were consulted as to their views on issues in the area they reflected the same feelings as those of the older residents.



Safety and Security

Safety and Security

The number of households that felt ASB was a problem was quite high at 45%, the majority of these experiencing nuisance behaviour. The majority had not reported the ASB to any agency. Of those who did they reported it mainly to Avon and Somerset Constabulary. These results have been passed to the appropriate Agencies who are formulating appropriate action plans.

"I have lived in this area for 35 years. When I was younger my Mum used to send us down to Abbotswood to the butchers and video shop, I wouldn't dream of letting my kids do that due to what the area is like now which is sad."

70% of households had not had any other reason to call the police in the last three years but a large proportion did feel that the police presence was inadequate and were not aware of the weekly police surgeries at St Nicholas Family centre.

"The police offer a drop in at the church on a morning, this should be made more accessible and knowledgeable to everyone."

Traffic and Transport

Speeding

The top location as to where households felt that speeding traffic was a problem were Rodford Way and Shire Way and that a change of speed limit or road narrowing schemes were the best methods to tackle this.

Cycling

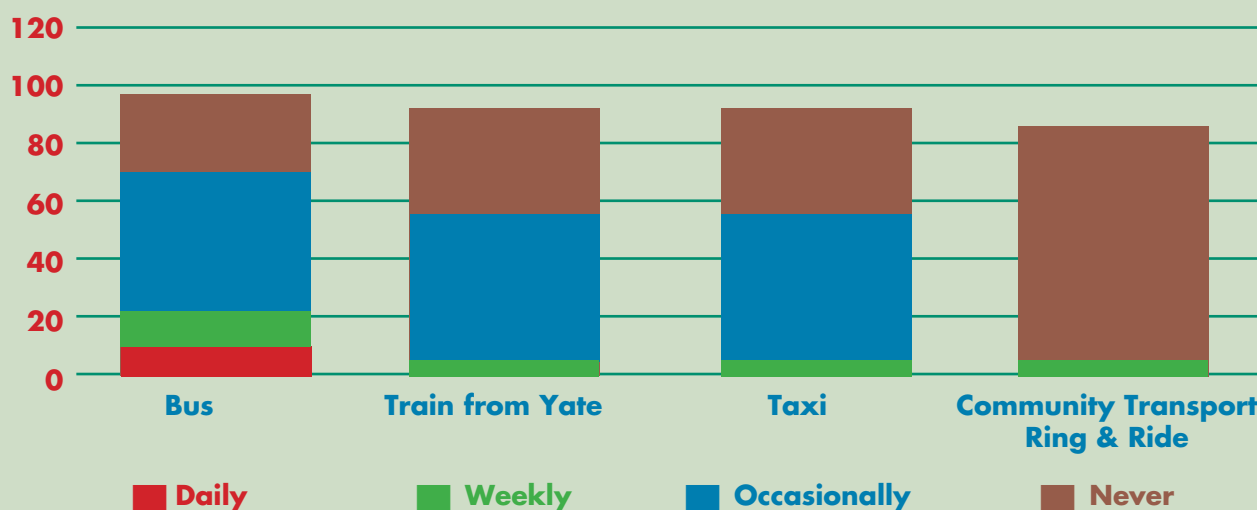
The majority of people did not cycle to work or for recreation but if safer cycles routes were available 50% of households said they would cycle more.

Public Transport

The majority of households only used public transport occasionally, with a large number being unaware of the Community Transport Schemes, but despite this it was felt that the current public transport services did meet their needs.

It was felt that improvements to direct services to Southmead Hospital, Cossham Hospital and Cribbs Causeway were most needed.

How often do you use public transport (% of replies)



Environment

Environment

The maintenance and upkeep of the area including pavements and Public Rights of Way was felt to be either poor or adequate by a large majority with the households. Dog Fouling was cited by those who responded as being an issue in the vicinity.

A number of people felt they would like to be involved in the organised litter picks that happen around the shops but the area ought to be enlarged to include the surrounding paths and underpass.

General Information

The following is a breakdown of the age range of people who completed the questionnaire-

22-40 years old 30%

41-59 years old 45%

60+ years young 40%

Of these respondents **47%** are not looking to move away from the area.

Acknowledgements

Thanks for the support, advice and guidance to South Gloucestershire Council, Yate Town Council and Dodington Parish Council. We are grateful to St Nicholas Centre, shops and businesses for their help with publicising the plan and the collection of the questionnaires, not forgetting the residents and Police Cadets for delivering 2000 questionnaires to local households.

And of course thanks to the residents of the Abbotswood area for all their input.



The Community Plan Team:

Rev Iain MacFarlane,
Mary Wright,
Caroline Jacques,
Ruth Ward,
Pauline Sealy,
Paul Hulbert, and
Christina Stokes.

| Sub Headings | Objectives | Action | Who | Priority |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Shops | Maintain and enhance mix of shops in Abbotswood | Set up Business Forum to promote local services to residents | Business/SGC Business Support | Long Term |
| | Start a local market | Investigate funding and draw up Action Plan | Jacobs Well | Long Term |
| Improving the lighting | Ensure safety and security at night | Install motion activated security lighting on all alleyways and stairwells | Shop owners/ Abbotswood Action Group | Medium |
| Modernisation/ Facelift of front of building | Make the area more attractive and increase usage | Investigate alternatives available | Freeholders/ Businesses/ Abbotswood Action Group and St Nicholas Centre | High |
| Improve feeling of safety | Residents feel happier to use the area and regain it as a community space | Investigate appropriate methods with Crime Prevention Officers | Police/Residents | Medium |
| Tidy up garages at the rear | Improve environment | Contact Freeholders of the garages and ask them to maintain their property | Abbotswood Action Group | Medium |
| Litter | To reduce littering in the environment | Ensure more bins are installed (by doctors surgery) and emptied more often | Abbotswood Action Group/local business/ local schools. Volunteers to empty bins one day a week from a specific bin. | Medium |
| | | Continue to do twice yearly community litter picks | Abbotswood Action Group/ Jacobs Well/ local volunteers | Medium |

| Sub Heading | Objectives | Action | Who | Priority |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Green Space | | Identify confirmed interested groups/people for raised beds. Design a plan for the green space area. Identify funding sources Fit and provide raised beds | Community volunteers Jacobs Well Local businesses (for materials) Local schools/groups | Long Term To be planned over the winter for a spring start |
| Small play area for under 5's | To provide a safe recreational space for young families | Permission in writing from land owner. Identify local people interested in planning this project. | Abbotswood Action Group Jacobs Well Volunteers identified by the action point. | Long Term Project |
| Community Allotments | To provide Allotment space for the community | Invite interested parties to have a bed in the current community allotment. | Jacobs Well St. Nicholas Church | High |
| | | Explore opportunities for allotments in the Abbotswood area. | Jacobs Well/ Yate Town Council and local volunteers | Long term |
| | | To request for new housing developments to include | Abbotswood Action Group/SGC/ Yate Town Council/ Dodington Parish Council | Long term |

| Sub Heading | Objectives | Action | Who | Priority |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | communal beds/ greens and allotment areas. | | |
| Mowing | To provide a community lawnmower | Find a suitable safe space for a lawn mower to be stored Purchase lawn mower Invite interested volunteers to be part of a rota to maintain the green space. Investigate insurance | Abbotswood Action Group Jacobs Well Local volunteers | Completed High |
| St Nicholas Centre | Ensure provision of services and activities meets local needs | Promote current programmes and events, do more investigation into what is required in the future | St Nicholas Family Centre | Medium |
| Shireway Community Centre | Pass information to Shireway for future planning | None | Shireway Community Centre | None |
| Communication | Promote Events and initiatives in the area | Send regular updates to the local free newspaper, Yate Gazette local websites such as My Yate | Everyone | Long Term |
| | Install new notice board | Investigate availability and funding | Abbotswood Action Group | Medium |

| Sub Heading | Objectives | Action | Who | Priority |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Local newsletter | Investigate funding and support | Local Schools/ Businesses/ Jacobs Well | Long Term |
| Provision for young people aged 5 - 18 | Promote activities that are available and provide appropriate provision in the future | Wider promotion of what is already happening and survey young people regarding future provision | St Nicholas Youth Centre | Long Term |
| Anti-Social Behaviour | To ensure that any Anti-Social Behaviour in the Abbotswood area receives the correct response | Get people to report ASB to the appropriate authorities Form working group of local agencies to investigate why people feel intimidated when using the centre | Police/SGC/Residents PCC Independent Victim Support /Police/SGC/ Abbotswood Action | High - Underway |
| Policing | Raise awareness of police presence in the area and Beat Surgery held at St Nicholas. Reduce fear of crime | Police to start awareness campaign Start more NHW | Police Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator Avon and Somerset Constabulary | High - Underway |
| Speeding | Reduce speeding on Rodford Way and Shire Way Investigate speed reduction | Start Community Speed Watch SGC Highways to review | South Glos Community Speed Watch Network/SGC/ Police/ Residents SGC/ Yate Town Council | Medium - Underway |

| Sub Heading | Objectives | Action | Who | Priority |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Speeding | Reduce speeding on Rodford Way and Shire Way Investigate speed reduction scheme/ change of speed limit | Start Community Speed Watch SGC Highways to review | South Glos Community Speed Watch Network/ SGC/Police/Residents Yate Town Council | Medium Underway |
| Cycling | Promote benefits of cycling | Work with Sustrans and Local Sustainable Transport Fund on actions as part of the extension of the bike path | Sustrans/SGC/ Jacobs Well | Medium |
| Public Transport | Get more people to use Community Transport | Promote Green Community Transport | Green Community Transport/ Yate Town Council/Age UK/SGC | Medium |
| | Direct bus service to Southmead from Yate | Already achieved but needs promotion | SGC Councillors/ First Bus | Complete |
| | More direct services from Abbotswood area | Send concerns and suggestions to First Bus, Councillors and SGC | Abbotswood Action/SGC/ Councillors/ First Bus | Long Term |
| Upkeep of pavements | Ensure pavements are safe, easy to use and litter free | Report any problems, form Friends Groups to maintain small green spaces. | Residents/ SGC/ Yate Town Council/ Dodington Parish Council | Medium |