

OLNEY TOWN COUNCIL  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN  
COMMUNITY SURVEY

JULY 2015

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# GENERAL PARISH SURVEY, OLNEY, JUNE 2015

## 1. Introduction

This survey was developed and undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee working in conjunction with Olney Town Council. The survey results will be fed into the work that the volunteer steering group is undertaking to investigate the key topics for the first draft of our Neighbourhood Plan.

The survey report is just one part of the evidence we are collecting and will tell us what the weight of opinion is on the topics covered. It will also provide us with information about what other issues Olney residents think are important and should be looked at as a part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

All of the evidence, our studies and research will contribute to the drafting of those policies that will eventually be included in the Neighbourhood Plan as submitted for approval.

Neighbourhood Plans represent a planning mechanism which provides communities with the opportunity to shape the future of their locality. A Neighbourhood Plan must take account of both current development needs and those which are likely to develop in the future. These needs and aspirations will be developed into a planning document which will outline what needs to be developed (housing, facilities and services), where they need to be developed and what form they should take.

To do this, it must consider a wide range of issues, such as; wildlife, environmental protection, shops, housing and services and assess how these issues can be balanced against the development needs of the community. A fundamental part of the process is ensuring that the community play a full and detailed part in determining both what is important currently, what will be important moving forwards and in what form any changes need to be delivered.

The results of this survey will be used to inform this process.

### **Milton Keynes Council emerging Plan:MK**

Plan:MK, when adopted, will replace the remaining saved policies in the Milton Keynes Local Plan (adopted December 2005) and the Milton Keynes Core Strategy (adopted July 2013), and become part of the Development Plan to be used in the determination of planning applications within the Borough.

In this survey;

**Section 1** outlines the methods used to distribute, collect and analyse the questionnaire. It also provides information on the response rate, which can be used as a general measure of how reflective the survey is of the wider population.

**Section 2** outlines the key themes and messages observable in the survey responses.

**Section 3** provides a summary of the key findings.

A separate document provides details of the responses provided to the open-ended questions which were included within the survey. These allowed respondents to explain their answers, provide examples or to identify other subjects not provided for within the list as outlined.

## **Section 1 - Survey Methodology**

In November 2014 survey forms from Olney Neighbourhood Plan steering group were delivered to every household in the Parish. They were returned by Freepost, completed online or dropped off at the Town Council offices, with a deadline return date of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

The survey contained 8 headings;

- Housing and commercial development
- Employment
- General questions, town centre and parking
- Getting about
- Health and education
- People
- Other issues
- Personal information – due to the Data Protection Act 1998 this information was not supplied to Community Impact Bucks and remains with Olney Town Council

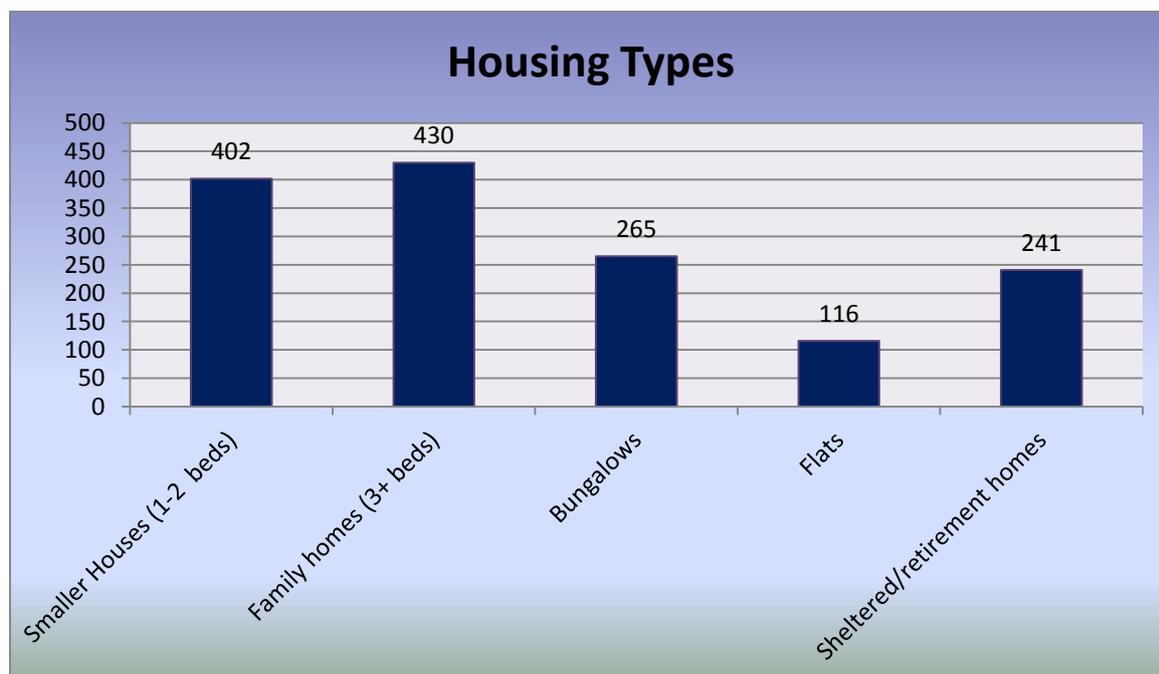
A full list of all comments received has been provided separately.

## **Section 2 - Survey Response**

Of the 2715 questionnaires distributed, 640 (23.57%) completed or partially completed forms were returned. It should be noted that not everyone who replied to the survey answered all questions. The response rate to the Olney survey is slightly below the national average response rate to housing surveys which is around 25%.

## HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Q1 – What type of housing do you think Olney needs? (Please tick all that apply)**



In March 2015 an in-depth housing survey was conducted in the parish where the most popular choices, almost equally supported were;

- Smaller homes for elderly downsizers, for sale on the open market
- Sheltered homes
- Affordable homes for local people

As can be seen from the chart above, respondents to the November survey supported a general mix of homes for the parish, in particular, affordable and starter homes, homes for the aging population, this survey also showed strong support for family homes.

\*Housing developments in Milton Keynes tend to deliver a mix of house sizes, in accordance with the current Local Plan policy. However, the specific mix is normally largely dictated by the developer depending on the nature of the site and the type of house they believe they can sell. In recent years the following mix of homes has been completed:

### Percentage Mix of housing completions by size since 2000/01 (% per year)

House Size	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5+bed
Year					
2000/01	8	21	32	25	14
2001/02	2	20	33	33	12
2002/03	2	22	37	34	7
2003/04	9	30	27	27	8
2004/05	11	30	31	21	8
2005/06	8	39	27	20	7
2006/07	12	44	19	20	5
2007/08	30	42	13	13	3
2008/09	22	46	14	14	4
2009/10	15	43	16	20	5
2010/11	7	36	23	26	8
2011/12	19	42	16	19	5
2012/13	12	35	29	21	4
2013/14	9	34	29	25	3

On average since 2000/01 it can be seen that there has been a spread of different house sizes completed each year. The mix has varied year on year, which will have been driven by market demand and the type of development being built (e.g. the higher percentage of one bed flats in 2007/8 reflects the completion of a number of small flats in Central Milton Keynes). However, compared to the level of overall housing need identified in the SHMA if the average mix of development were to continue in the future there would be significantly more 4 and 5 bedroom properties completed than it is assessed there is a need for.

The NPPF sets out (paragraph 50) that Local Planning Authorities can set policies on the mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community, and this is something that MKC will consider, to ensure an appropriate mix of housing is provided in the future.

Whilst a clear need for smaller properties can be evidenced, there have also been calls for more, large, executive housing to be provided to tie in with economic development aspirations. Delivering this form of housing whilst providing a mix is a challenge that Plan:MK will have to try and overcome. Evidence will be needed to justify any approach taken forward.

\*Source **Milton Keynes Council** | Plan:MK - Growth in Housing Topic Paper 2014

A selection of comments on housing development are reproduced below, a full list of all comments is available separately.

- *There is a need for a full spectrum of housing development. It is important that Olney strives to be a balanced community. We should not become the 'Bournemouth' of Milton Keynes. It is essential that transport, retail, health and other services keep pace to maintain the quality of life in the town. Expansion will ensure that local businesses thrive and thereby add to the overall amenities available.*
- *Healthy communities need a good mix of housing to enable families, individuals, couples and other sharers to be as much part of local life as they wish. Starter homes are vital, but so are 'mover-on' homes for growing households which include not just children but other adult, perhaps dependant, relatives or friends."*
- *We need more homes for first time buyers at affordable prices, so young people don't have to move out of Olney.*
- *Younger people need starter home that are affordable. Older couples need family homes when they have children. Elderly people want to stay in Olney but need bungalows or sheltered/ retirement.*

**Q2 – (1) There is a requirement that all housing developments include at least 30% affordable housing. Should that percentage stay the same or be increased?**

**Policy H4  
Milton Keynes Council Core Strategy adopted 2013**

An affordable housing target will be set in the Plan:MK. In the interim, the amount of affordable housing sought on qualifying sites, as set out in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2013 (or successor document), will continue to be determined in accordance with the saved adopted Local Plan Policy H4 target of 30% on all sites of 15 or more units.

**461** respondents thought the amount should stay the same. **174** felt the number should be increased.

## **Q2 - (2) Should some of the affordable housing be reserved for local people?**

**532** respondents said that they thought the homes should be reserved for local people. **65** thought not.

Many respondents questioned what the definition of affordable was. The widely accepted test of affordability is that housing costs should take up no more than a third of your income.

There was substantial support for an increase in the quota of affordable homes on developments on the proviso that any homes were allocated or sold first to people with a local connection to the parish that were unable to afford the high market prices for both rental and open market sales. Below is an extract from the Olney Housing Survey in March 2015 that clarifies the position for the parish on affordable housing for local people.

### **Extract from the March 2015 housing needs survey**

IMPORTANT NOTE Affordable homes built in Olney as part of a larger open market development would not be protected from the 'Right to Acquire' or 'Right to Buy'; this means that in time these homes could be purchased outright and sold on the open market. In the smaller rural communities one approach to delivering and protecting affordable homes is through the use of the 'rural exception' planning policy. (Policy H6 Milton Keynes Council Supplementary Planning Document March 2013). This policy allows for the building of affordable homes for people with a strong local connection and protects them, ensuring that any homes provided remain in perpetuity for the use of parishioners by applying restrictive planning conditions. However Olney town is not eligible to apply this policy because it is only allowed to be used in the smaller rural parishes listed in Statutory Instrument 1997 No 625.

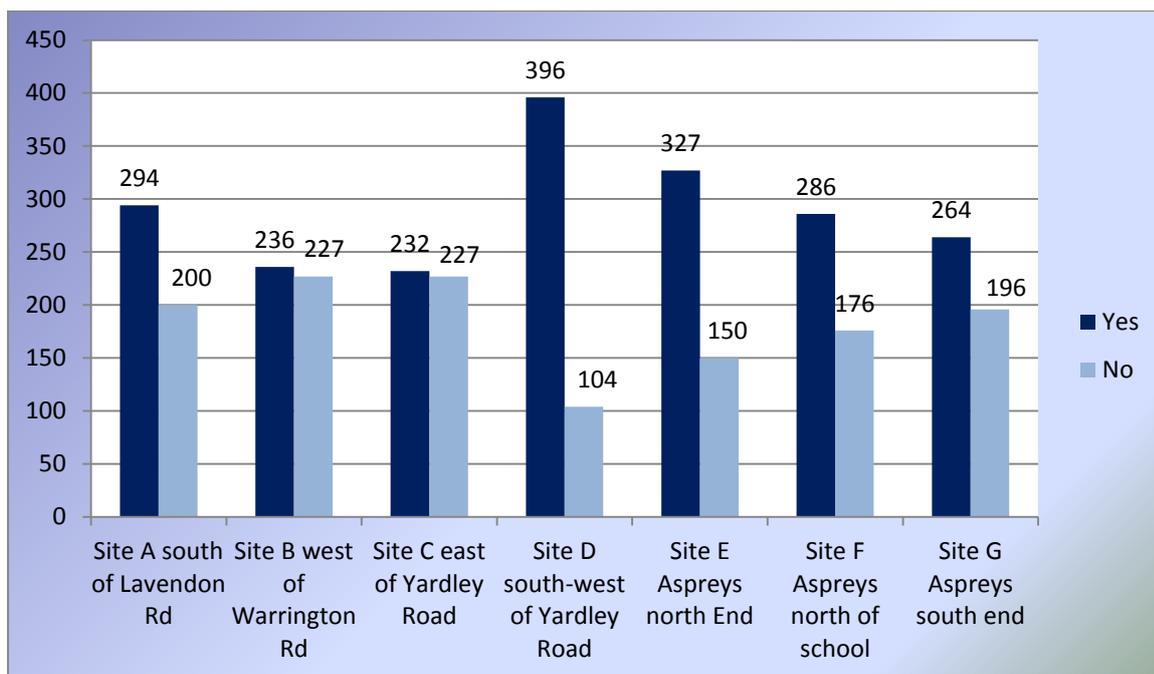
A solution for Olney town might be for them to consider building any affordable homes, specifically for local people by including a Community Right to Build Order (CRTBO) alongside their Neighbourhood Development Plan and using this to provide protection from the homes being lost on to the open market. Any development stays within the community to be used for the community's benefit, for example, to maintain affordable housing stock or to provide and maintain local facilities such as playgrounds and village halls. Community right to build orders are subject to a limited number of exclusions, such as proposals needing to fall below certain thresholds so that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required. Proposals are subject to testing by an independent person and a community referendum.

Otherwise MK housing options policy applies to all affordable housing.

### Q3 – Where do you think the new housing should be located?

The survey form included a map (reproduced below) of the parish with potential sites marked A to G, giving the maximum capacity of each. Views regarding support for these sites were solicited from residents.



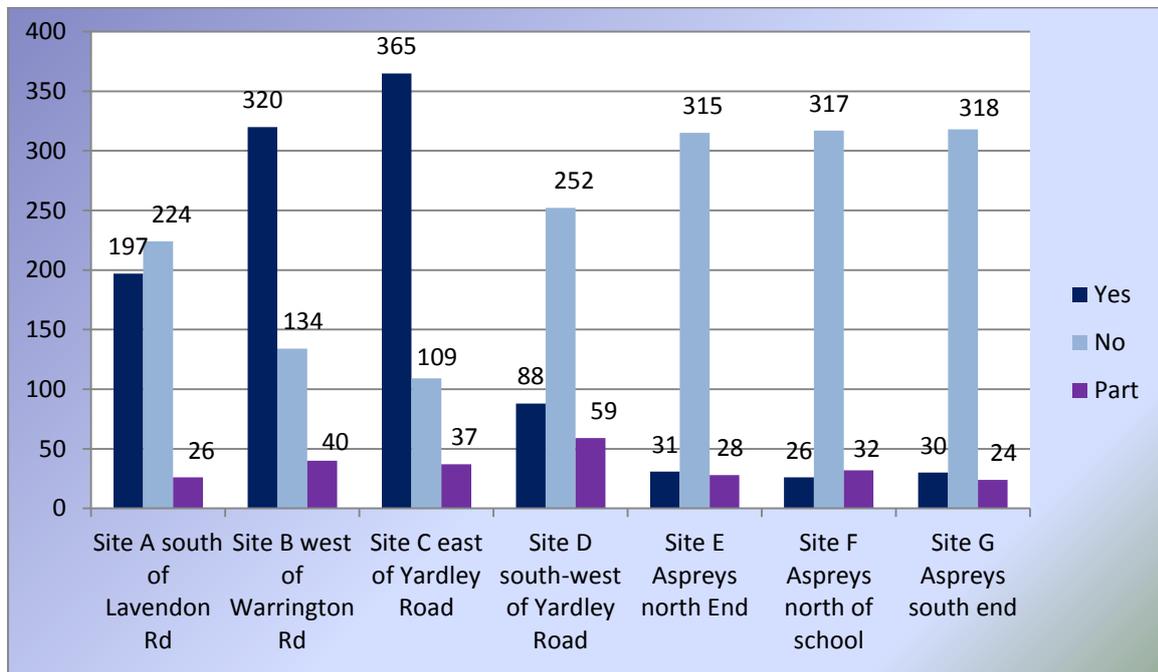


The chart above shows the total level of community support for housing development for each site. The chart below indicates the amount of 'yes' responses where there was general support as above but where the response indicated not using the full capacity of the site and limiting building. Figures in red show where the answer has exceeded maximum site capability.

	>20	21 – 30	31 – 40	41 – 50	51 - 80	81 – 100	101 - 120	120 - 150	151 - 200	200- 270
<b>SITE A Capacity 60</b>	7	18	11	<b>19</b>		<b>2</b>				
<b>SITE B Capacity 117</b>	1	2	4	4	14	<b>18</b>	1	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>SITE C Capacity 59</b>	3	6	6	<b>18</b>	4	<b>5</b>				<b>1</b>
<b>SITE D Capacity 270</b>	1	1	4	1	9	<b>38</b>	29	23	26	8
<b>SITE E Capacity 201</b>	3		2	12	14	<b>46</b>	5	22	16	
<b>SITE F Capacity 252</b>	2		2	12	12	<b>31</b>	5	26	14	2
<b>SITE G Capacity 252</b>	3		3	8	10	<b>26</b>	5	19	10	2

There were 213 individual comments on the subject of housing development. In order to keep the report concise they have been provided in full separately.

**Q4 - Which sites do you consider suitable for other development such as industrial, commercial and retail? If you think that part of a site could be used please indicate.**

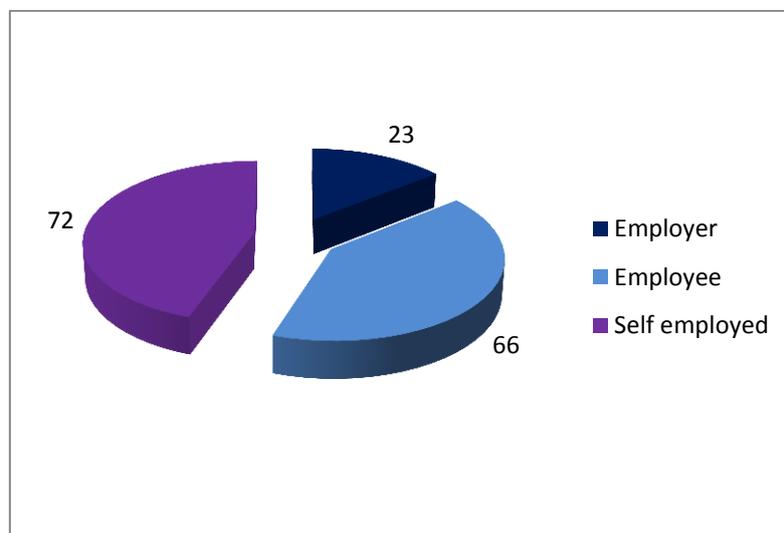


There were two hundred and twelve subjective comments in relation to commercial development. They have been transposed onto a separate spreadsheet and provided as a supplement to the main report.

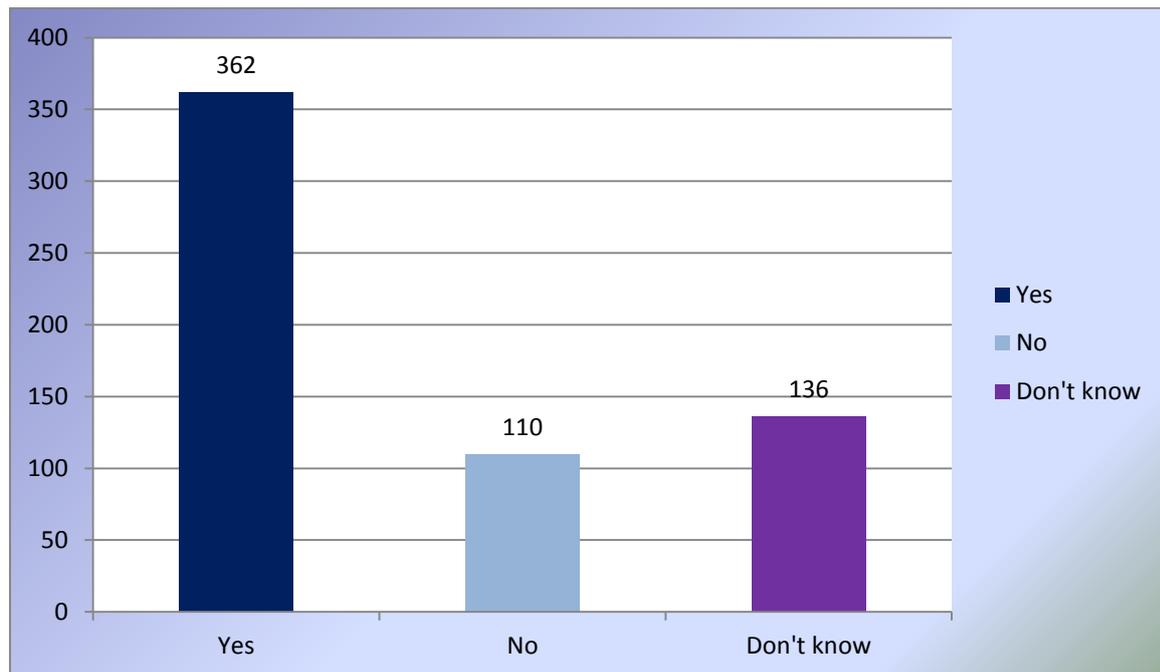
## EMPLOYMENT

**Q5 – Do you work in Olney?**

593 people responded to this question. 165 respondents work in Olney. Their status is broken down in the chart below;



**Q6 - Do you think that more opportunities are needed for people to work locally?**



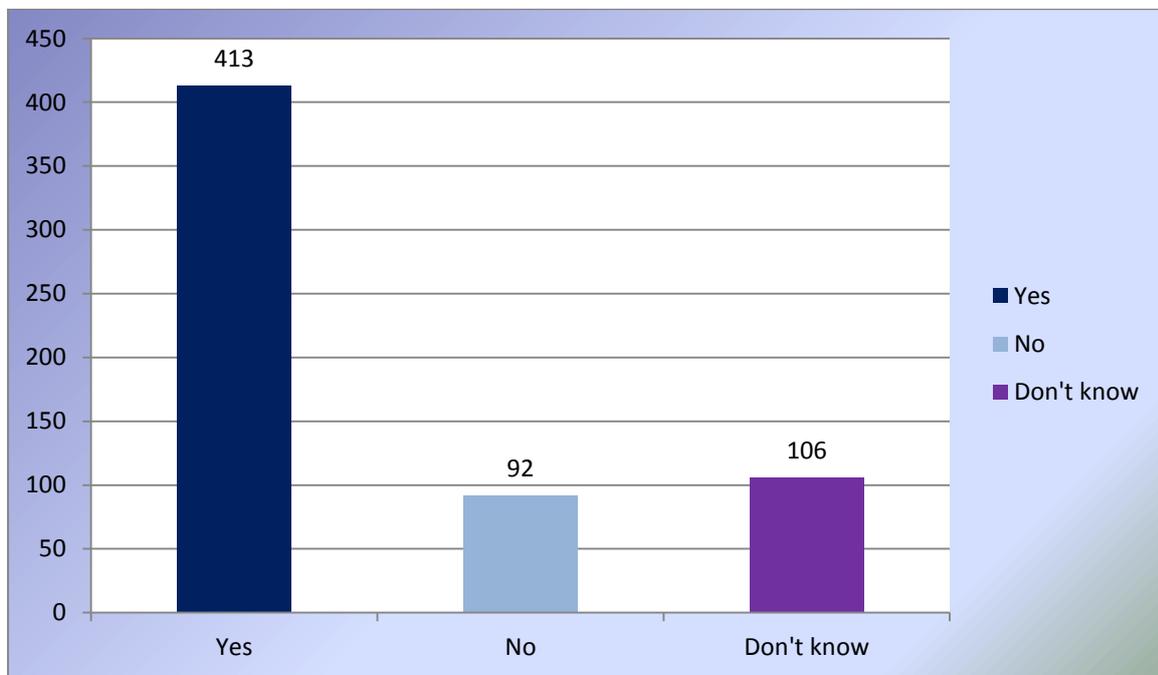
Comments on the subject of what type of employment development there might be;

- *To replace the opportunities lost in recent years, e.g. the tannery, Brocks, Stanley Woods.*
- *Cottage industry. Crafts, arts restoration*
- *Light industry, offices, hospitality*
- *Light industrial, light manufacturing, More apprenticeships for young people*
- *Suitable for younger people to start – apprenticeships; professional and skilled. Not just shop work.*
- *We have a small industrial estate, much of which seems to employ skilled tradesmen but I suggest the best solution may be in the service sector. We do not have a hotel for instance.*
- *Engineering, electrical and other trades where school leavers can acquire skill qualifications.*
- *Smaller scale office, light industrial and high-tech properties that have flexible use classes to accommodate a range of potential employers. Intensification of the*

*existing employment sites should be encouraged and loss of employment land to residential uses discouraged.*

- *I think there is potential for light industrial business, small-scale manufacturing/food production (especially if linked to local produce and farming), and more micro-businesses. I also think there is a possibility for eco-businesses such as clean energy.*
- *A variety to suit all.*
- *People live in Olney to be away from work settings. People come here to live not to work other than the Market Place establishments.*

**Q7 - Do you think we should plan for additional local employment as Olney grows?**



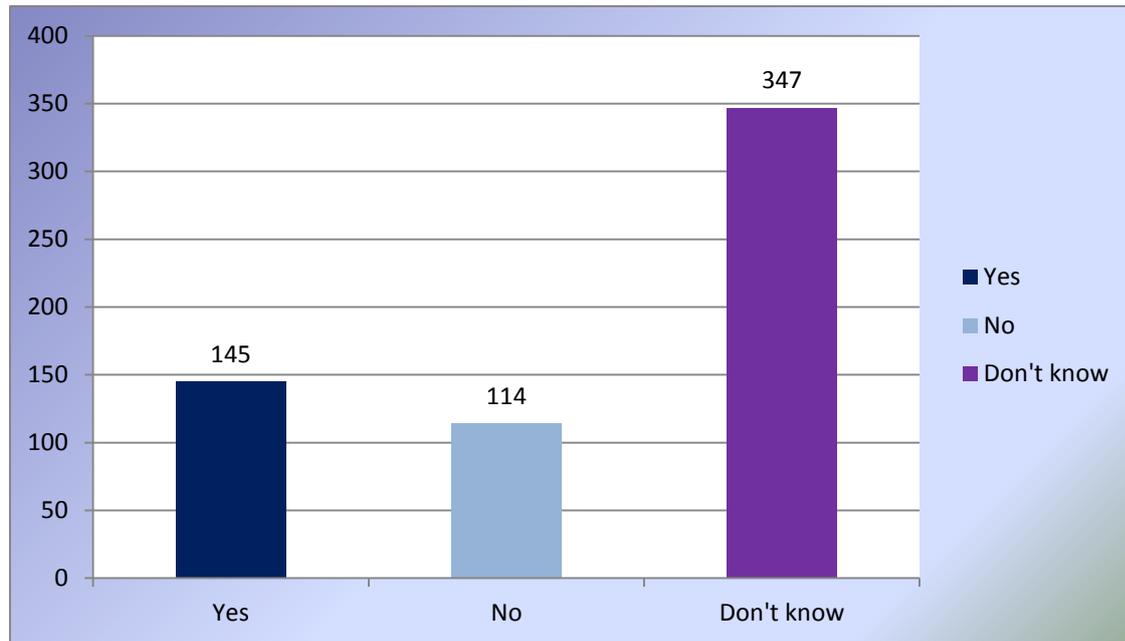
If yes, please explain why and specify what type of employment you would most like to see?

A brief selection of comments is listed below;

- *We are historic market town, let's keep that in mind and not become a dormitory town - thriving, local businesses please.*
- *More small cottage industries.*
- *Suitable for younger people to start - apprenticeships, professional and skilled. Not just shop work.*

- *We need doctors, bigger schools and a shop and a pub on Asprey's that would need staff.*
- *A variety of employment. A hotel would be useful addition for Olney. We fare badly compared to Stony Stratford.*
- *Not everyone can drive buses not always convenient. Office, retail, light industry*
- *More office based would be good - how to persuade companies such as insurance to be based here is the challenge.*
- *To provide for local people to work near home. Hi tech, Hi value, Research.*
- *Employment for local young people with an opportunity to be trained*
- *To cut down on commuting and to create jobs in fields that help support the growing community; leisure, health, education etc.*
- *In order to maintain an economically viable community with potential to be more self-sufficient.*
- *Service/retail/industrial/office*
- *Smaller scale office, light industrial and high-tech properties that have flexible use classes to accommodate a range of potential employers. Intensification of the existing employment sites should be encouraged and loss of employment land to residential uses discouraged.*
- *Local employment will ensure that Olney doesn't become a dormitory town, and it will provide employment for parents of young children for whom a commute to MK or Northampton is difficult. Also it is ecologically sounder and means that there is less impact on the environment.*

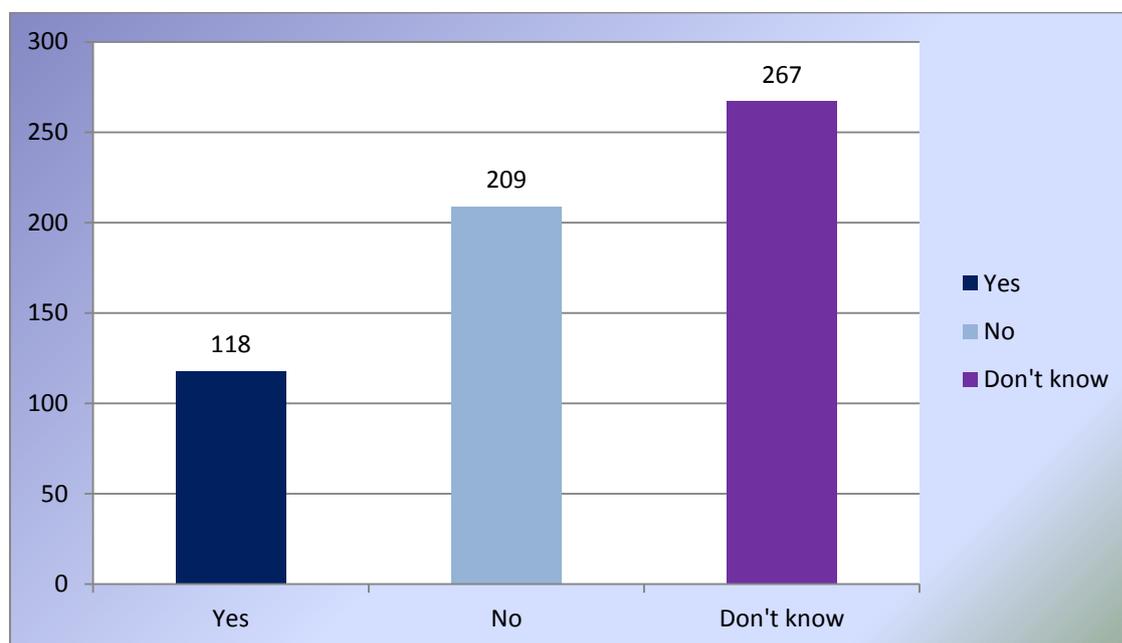
**Q8 Is there enough commercial and industrial property available locally to meet the current needs of local employers?**



**Comments;**

- *Any employment plan is dependent on there being in place and infrastructure facility which re-routes traffic away from the town centre. Until this is in place there is no case for such a plan.*
- *Much of the available property is based on old houses which is not adequate for modern offices. My business has had to move out of town. (But plans to move back).*
- *Although unsure, I am aware that some of commercial rental prices are very high, which doesn't encourage sustainable business growth perhaps?*
- *It is concerning to see empty retail properties on the High Street and Market Place. Is it an effect of rents being too high - would hate Olney to become a ghost town of charity shops.*
- *Plenty of empty buildings of quick turnaround of businesses due to high rates. Bring rent/rates down to encourage business to stay in town.*
- *Yes to meet current needs. But maybe future needs with additional housing may change that demand.*
- *I think Olney is a SMALL market town. I am concerned that more commercial/industrial property will make the town too big.*

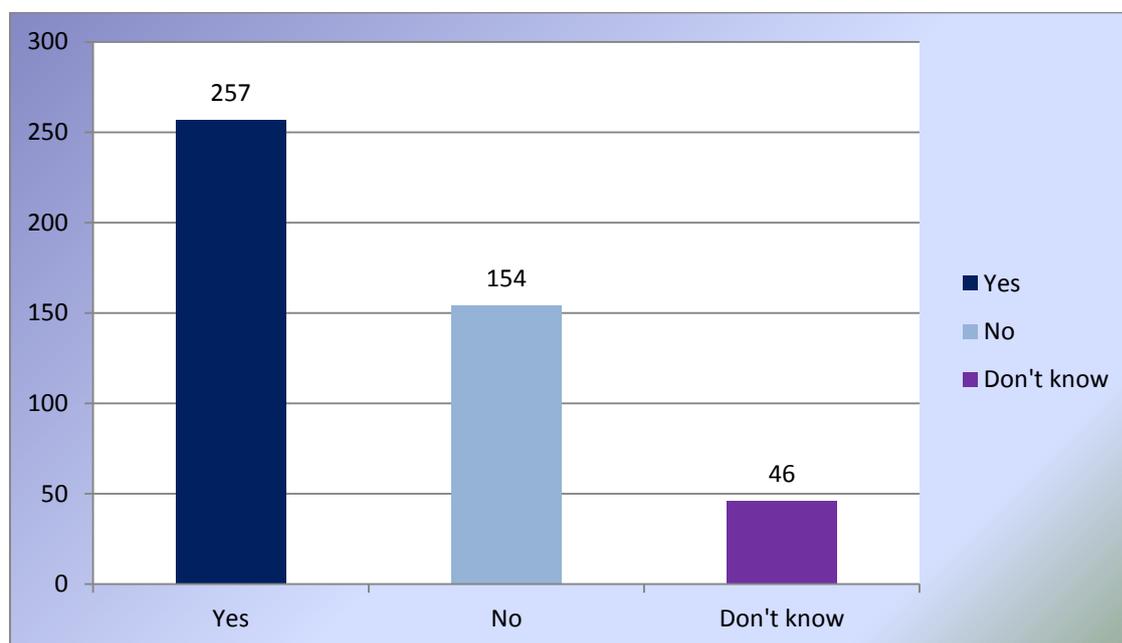
**Q9 Do you think there is enough suitable accommodation for new start-up businesses?**



- *Start-up businesses need small cheap premises that are flexible in space and lease arrangements so they can grow.*
- *Start-up businesses are not good for landlords as they frequently go bust. The local authorities should remove this accommodation.*
- *Some sort of start-up accommodation, low rent/low rates accommodation would be of use.*
- *First create the space and the demand will follow.*
- *Development of a small business hub.*
- *There are not enough small offices, most landlords wish to let out a whole building. We could benefit from something similar to INcuba.com (in Dunstable) a learning and business innovation centre. This would attract some diverse businesses from in and outside Olney. With a thriving range of business networking e.g. '4N' and Olney Chamber of Trade many people would I believe be interested.*
- *Space for micro-businesses and start-ups should be expanded.*

It is recognised that there is growth in the self-employed and micro-business sectors within the modern economy. The ability to run start-up businesses with just a computer and access to superfast broadband creates new opportunities for small-scale growth in commercial activities in rural areas such as Olney.

### Q10 - Would you like to be able to work in Olney?



Approximately one quarter of people who answered this were already retired or already worked from home, comments included;

- *Absolutely - would love to practise what I preach! Truly sustainable development!*
- *My work is high tech software - office space needed.*
- *I would however suspect that in my profession (Software) as with many others, the higher paid work is in London and M3/M4 corridor. Working locally would be great but probably unrealistic. Therefore I'd like to see more flexible work opportunities for parents.*
- *As a nurse this is not ever going to be possible. Due to my speciality.*
- *I'd love to see a scheme where start-ups could use a communal office space in Olney for low price and be able to collaborate/innovate, without the high costs of setting up their own offices.*
- *In a family of 4, 2 of us work in the surrounding villages and that is great. The other 2 have to travel to MK and London and the travelling is often stressful. If there was suitable employment locally it would be great.*
- *Current job is London based but working globally - if change career then would be good to work in Olney*
- *The nature of my work would make this an unlikely scenario*

**Table from Plan:MK Commercial Premises**

Use Class	NEWPORT PAGNELL	OLNEY	WOBURN SANDS	HANSLOPE	BOW BRICKHILL	SHERINGTON
A1 Shops	92	82	35	4	0	1
A2 Professional and financial services	19	12	4	0	0	0
A3 and A4 Restaurants, cafes and pubs	28	16	7	3	1	1
A5 Hot food takeaways	4	5	0	1	0	0
C1 Hotels or B&Bs	2	3	0	0	0	0
D1 Non-residential institutions and D2 assembly and leisure	51	34	8 (D1 only)	13	8	5
Total	196	152	54	21	9	7

**Para 58**

**Milton Keynes Council emerging Plan:MK**

Most of the land earmarked for employment use is located in Newport Pagnell, **Olney** and Woburn Sands. In 2014 Milton Keynes Council commissioned an Employment Land Study (ELS) which will review the previous (2007) Borough-wide employment land assessment to look at the ongoing sustainability of existing allocations and predict the future demand for employment land in the Borough.

The 2007 ELS specifically considered Newport Pagnell and Olney alongside other older town centres within the city. The Study considered that it would be reasonable to expect these centres to continue to grow, and points to evidence of some strong growth in **Olney** particularly.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

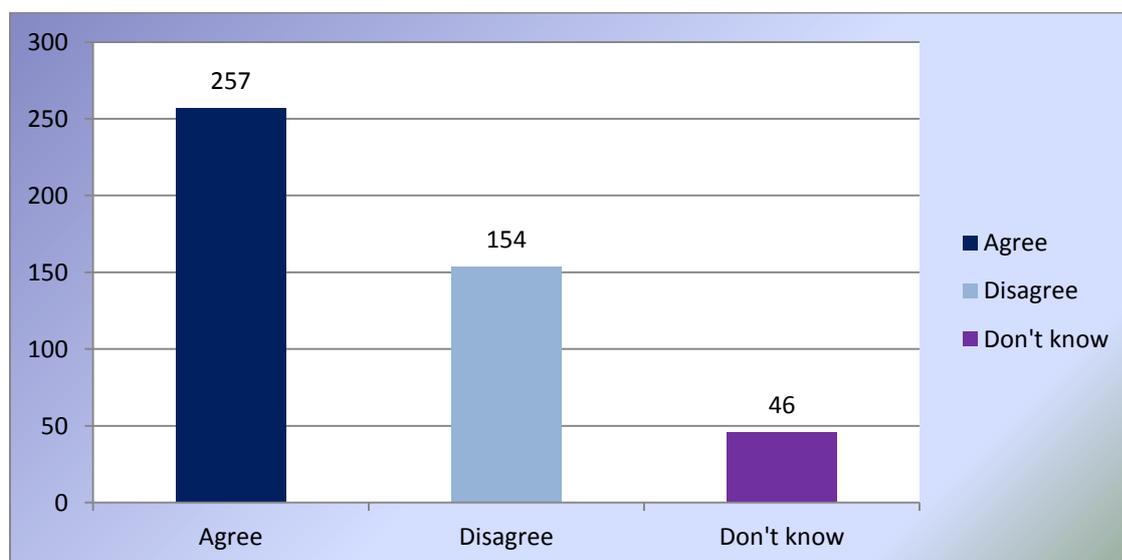
### Town Centre

#### Q11 Should there be control over shop signage?

Four hundred and fifty eight respondents though there should be control over shop signage. One hundred and forty eight thought it wasn't necessary.

- *Avoid anything to garish I guess. Though we want variety and something to attract passers-by. Tricky one!*
- *New signage should blend with the look and feel of the town.*
- *But less of a priority than getting retailers into empty shops.*
- *Shops need to be able to keep their individuality but I think we need to keep a traditional 'country' look.*
- *McColl's newsagent signs are garish and too big. Large plate glass window frontages*
- *I like the variety of colour that less control allows*
- *Guidelines rather than strict restrictions*
- *As a designer the existing shop facias should be sympathetic to the town's architecture.*
- *Yes but sensible about it please and allow some individuality.*

#### Q12 It is the policy of Milton Keynes Council (Milton Keynes Local Plan 2001-2011 Adopted December 2005 POLICY TC2) to remove through HGV Traffic, do you?



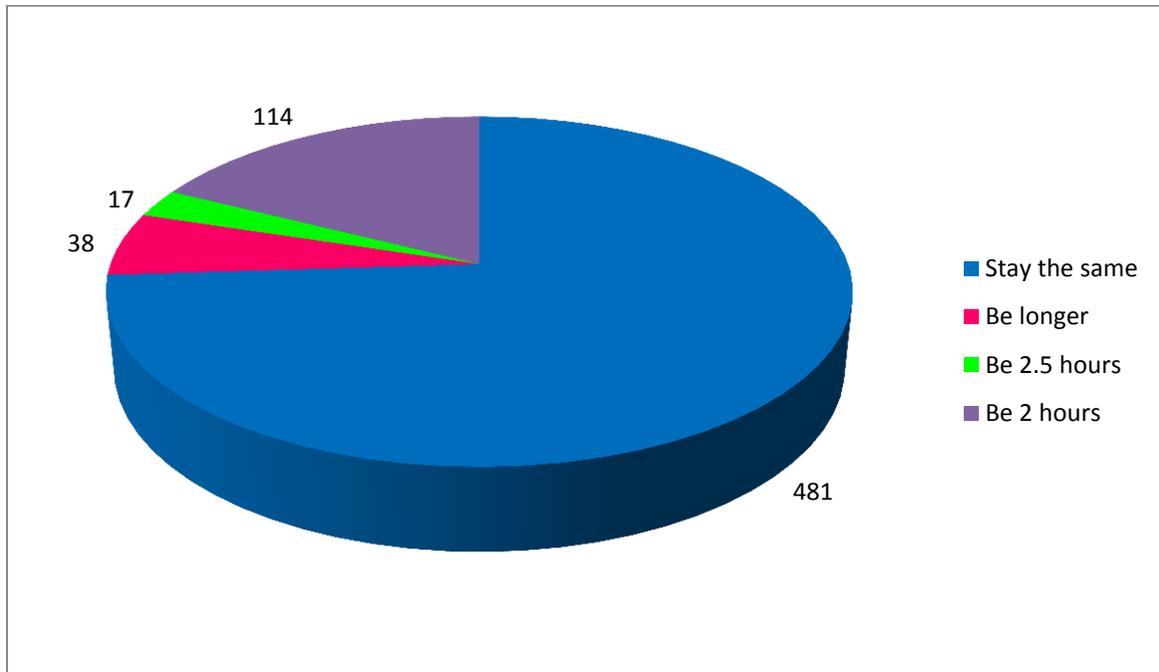
- *Heavy traffic through the town is damaging and dangerous*
- *In the absence of a viable, cost effective bypass. Olney cannot sustain the current HGV let alone an increase.*
- *A bypass is extremely unlikely, short of de-trunking the A509 or reinstating a proper rail network you have no means to do anything.*
- *Agree, only if it's not at the cost of having to have a bypass. Not in favour of a bypass.*
- *Nowhere for it to go!*
- *Be interesting to hear how this could be achieved*
- *In principle yes but would trade suffer for local businesses from no passing HGV?*
- *Reducing traffic (not just HGV) would help with pollution levels but I see no point of having this policy without it being backed up by a clear plan with set dates on when this will be achieved and how. The bypass has been talked about for years. There is no funding capability so this is just talk & little or no substance.*
- *Not at the expense of passing trade*
- *But if it is via bypass everyone will use it and Olney die as a retail/market town*
- *Implement HGV ban on A509 through Olney except for access.*
- *I can't see where they would remove it to!*

A Transport Vision and Strategy for Milton Keynes.  
LTP3 - 2011 to 2031.

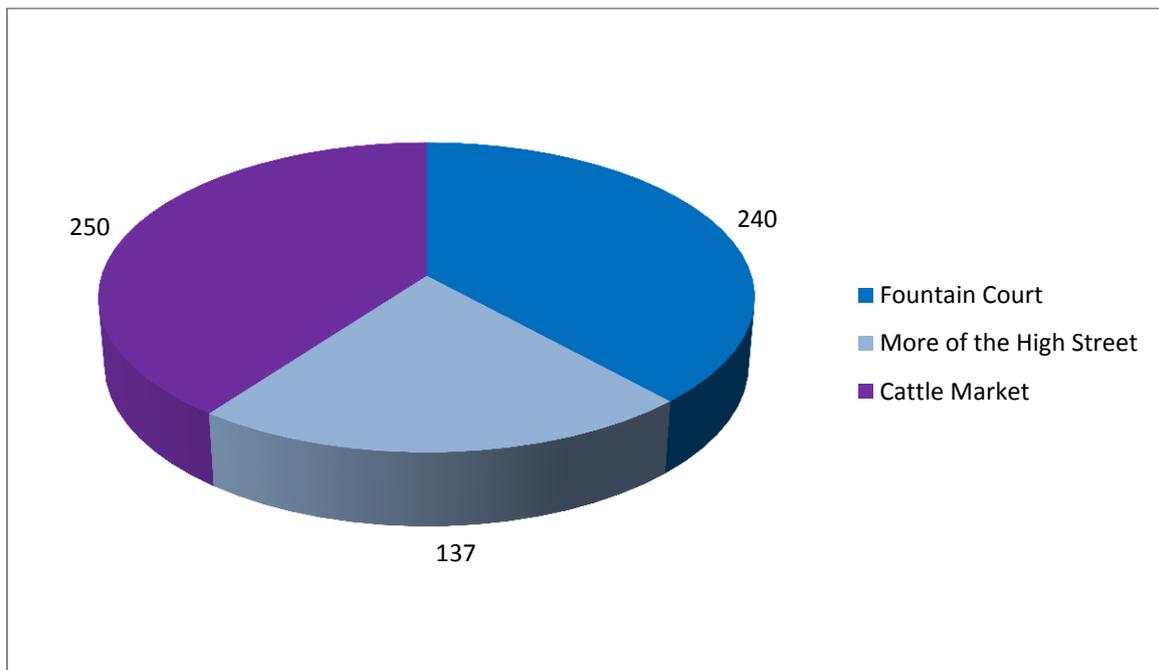
"Of particular note is Olney, which has poor air quality, partially caused by goods vehicles. A bypass is supported by the council, and will be subject to further feasibility testing and community engagement on all options considered. Before then, the council will work closely with the Highway Agency to find ways to route heavy vehicles away from Olney and other rural communities onto alternative routes which are designed to carry HGVs."

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/transport-strategy>

**Q13 - In the Market Place should the 3 hour parking restriction;**



**Q14 – Should a parking time restriction be applied to;**



**Q15 There are no questions about a bypass as there is no present likelihood of it being built. None of the possible development sites affect any of the possible routes, but we welcome your comments.**

- *Showing one protected route is misleading either show them all or none. REMOVE from all consultation material*
- *If HGV traffic is banned, Olney wouldn't need a bypass.*
- *The bypass issue has to be brought back into the planning process as soon as possible to enable removal of HGV traffic and reductions in other through traffic*
- *Whilst Olney needs better transport links, and the A509 through Olney is a bottleneck, much of that traffic is from Wellingborough to Milton Keynes, a route that should use the A45 and the M1 for large vehicles and long-distance traffic! I'm also concerned that a by-pass would destroy town centre businesses.*
- *I don't agree with a bypass, the countryside is what makes the area special. The traffic through Olney has not worsened in the last ten years and I feel the local economy would be hurt by a bypass*
- *This MUST be included in the Plan even if it is not possible before 2031. Traffic in the High Street is now well past acceptable and will grow with expansion to the north of the town and within the town.*
- *To build a bypass would kill off all the local trade and ruin Olney. (Look at Brackley High Street to see what a bypass does).*
- *Not sure I am in favour of a bypass - you have to consider the traffic that comes through Olney and then come here to support local shops. You would need to look at the impact this would have, I believe.*
- *Tricky - think on balance a bypass would harm Olney but can see why High Street residents want it.*
- *If the town population is to increase a bypass is increasingly more relevant. While this will divert traffic, the town will become more self-sufficient due to numbers but more likely to stay as a destination shopping / local tourist hub due to it being easier to get in and out.*
- *This MUST be included in the Plan even if it is not possible before 2031. Traffic in the High Street is now well past acceptable and will grow with expansion to the north of the town and within the town.*

## GETTING ABOUT

### Q16 Do you think there should be more signage for people?

- *There were **131** responses in favour of more signage and **440** against, a selection from comments below;*
- *Signage needs to be reduced there is far too much already. Signs should be designed to fit character of town.*
- *No - except make more obvious the 'entry' and 'exit' points/signs re Market Place parking.*
- *Signage needs to be reduced there is far too much already. Signs should be designed to fit character of town.*
- *Generally is too much signage, however if the free parking at the rec. was signed perhaps more people would use it, especially if the short cut through to the High Street was pointed out.*
- *This is difficult as my perspective is that of a local who knows where everything is.*
- *Probably best to ask visitors to the town*

### Q17 How can we make the town more bicycle friendly?

- *Start by fixing the potholes - I'm a keen cyclist and often have to swerve around potholes which is dangerous in traffic.*
- *Repair damaged road surfaces promptly. By restricting through HGVs in High Street.*
- *Keep the roads in good repair it. Mend potholes.*
- *Make more safe bicycle parking available in the town. Too much traffic for bicycle friendliness.*
- *Secure bike storage. Encourage green travel businesses.*
- *More cycle lanes and clearer marking for existing ones.*
- *More racks to park bikes. Join National Cycle Route to encourage visitors?*
- *Mend pot holes, provide racks and CCTV*

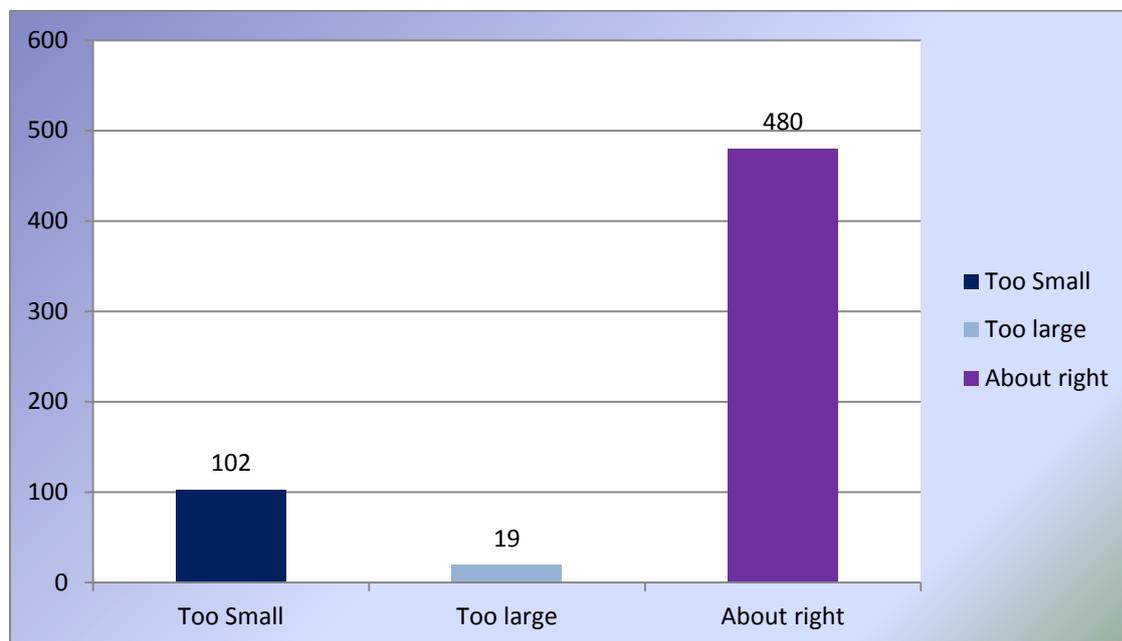
**Q18 Have you any ideas and views on any issues or improvements relating to using the town with buggies, wheelchairs, walking frames, guide dogs, long canes and mobility vehicles**

- *You must consult with these user groups as a first step. As a business psychologist with expertise in industrial design, I would be happy to get involved if, for example, you elect to run some focus groups with users.*
- *We need places for older/more infirm people to sit for short rests.*
- *Mobility vehicle users should have to pass a test before being let loose on the town.*
- *Have dropped kerbs where needed.*
- *Mobility vehicles on pavements travel very fast and should be restricted. High Street pavements are wide - could there be a 'lane' for them?*
- *Yes - I use a buggy around the town and there is suitable accessibility.*
- *Very buggy friendly currently.*
- *The paths are wide enough; we just need to ensure they are obstacle-free. Maybe put speed limits on mobility vehicles.*
- *The chemist is the worst one to get into with a buggy.*
- *Mobility vehicle users are on the increase and can be dangerous to pedestrians. It is an issue that needs action.*
- *Mobility vehicle users should undertake a compulsory course in using their vehicles and showing consideration and courtesy to other pedestrians. They are a menace!*
- *Car parking on High Street (near St John's Ambulance hall) is not good. People park on the pavement and it is very difficult to pass, impossible at times if you have a pushchair.*

There were many comments about mobility scooters, improved pavements, dropped curbs and parking on pavements.

## OPEN SPACES

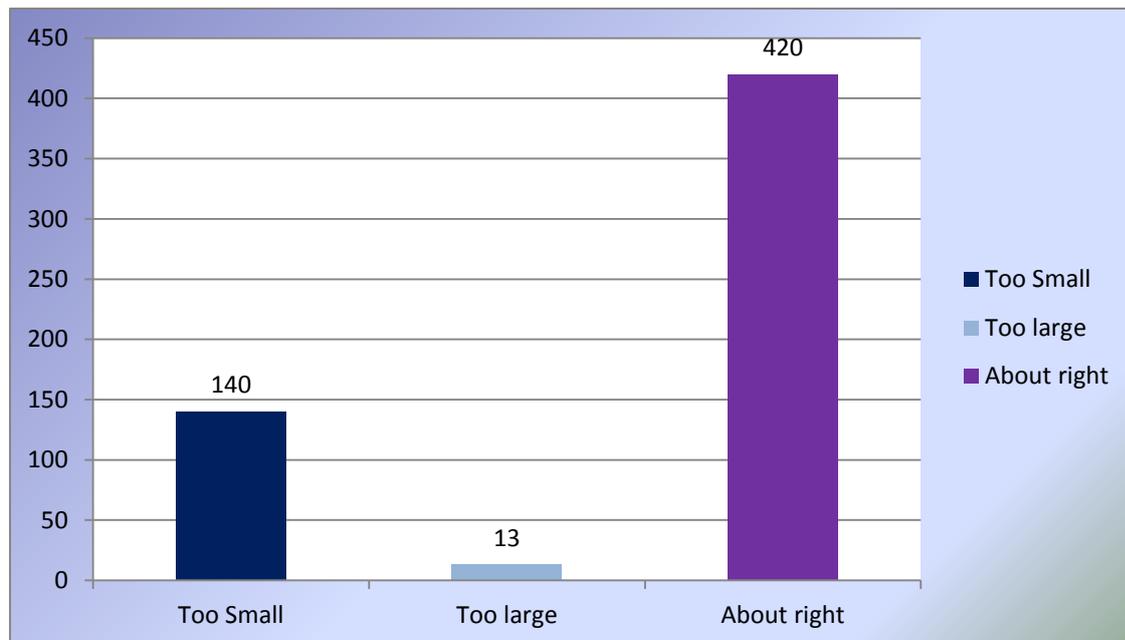
Q19 Do you believe that the land set aside for playing fields is;



- *It's about right, although North side of Olney is lacking recreation areas.*
- *At present I think we are quite well provided for, it may be that more land may be required following development.*
- *Need more all-weather facilities.*
- *If we have more houses then more families will want playing fields.*
- *The facilities available are brilliant*
- *Additional provision should be made to manage and balance the additional housing growth*
- *Olney has a wealth of sporting facilities which would be the envy of many a town*
- *The excellent sports and recreational facilities we have are in regular use and I am informed that some clubs, at times, cannot take all the youngsters applying to koi. I would suggest that some of the land available on site D, E, F, and G be allocated for sports and associated recreational use.*
- *Children's parks should be extended and improved. Johnson fields could accommodate a larger children's park. The park at the rec and Dagnall road really need improving!*

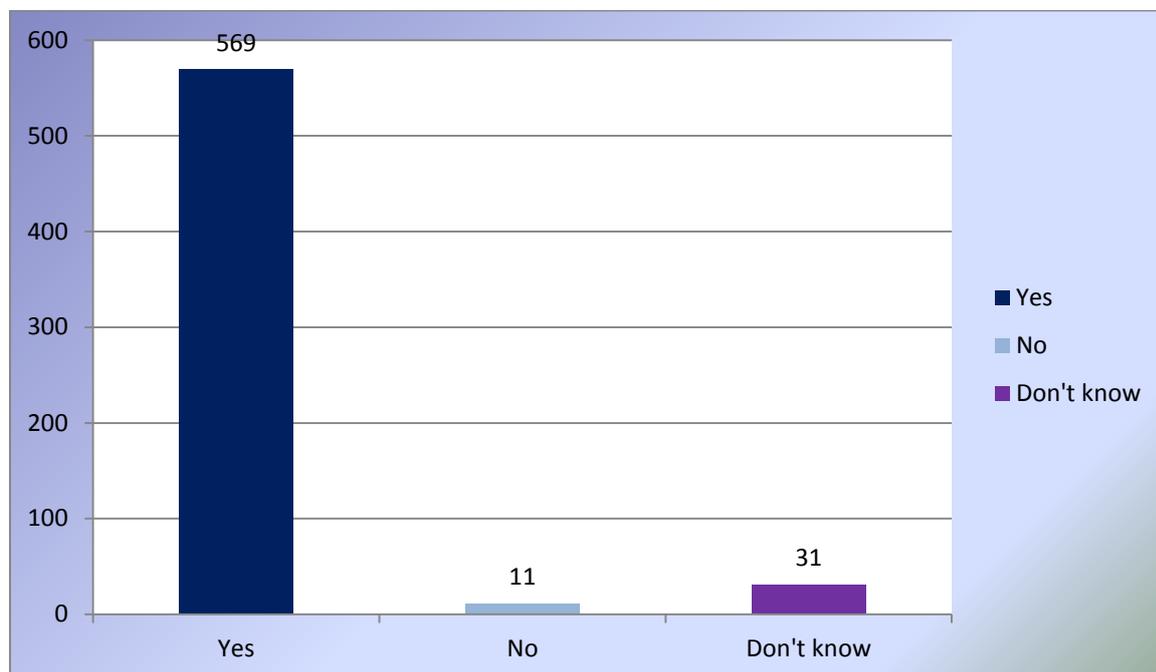
- *It is an amazing facility which is central to much success and community spirit within the town. It is often admired by visitors. If the town is expanding there is even more need for it.*
- *It looks a lot, but go down on a Saturday/Sunday and see how many children are using it!*

**Q20 do you believe the area set aside for allotments is;**



- *It might be good to see some smaller areas of small sized allotments at the north and NW end of town.*
- *.... but it might be good to offer this type of land near new houses.*
- *With an increased interest in self-sufficiency organic growth of fruit/veg more allotment space is needed.*
- *At present we do have vacant plots but it may be that more are required in future. we did have many more plots, around the town and not just the one site which is a disincentive if you are not near the site*
- *5 of the 6 allotments sites available in 1945 have been closed.*
- *Encourage youngsters to get involved, give allotment users a stall at the Farmers Market to encourage year round use.*

**Q21 - The Ouse Valley around Olney should be protected. Do you agree?**



- *Protected from what exactly?*
- *Make use of old railway embankment, with new pedestrian bridge over river at old railway crossing; make this a design competition, with a modern, exciting engineering solution.*
- *The land between the recreation ground and the mill should be adopted and upgraded for public use, e.g. new footpaths adjacent to the river and renewal bridges to allow disabled access and other recreational activities in the area of what is known as 'the planks'!*
- *Very much so. It's an area of significant historical importance where Amazing Grace was written. Building on it is destroying our heritage.*
- *Critically important that future generations get to enjoy what we have. It should be protected from any development much of which is just born out of convenience or greed. Protect Olney and the surrounding countryside and it will always be a place people want to live.*
- *Strongly. This is/was a small market town with historic significance. it is being spoiled by excess building plans and losing its identity as well as not having the infrastructure to support it.*
- *But only if you accept that there will never be an Olney bypass.*

## HEALTH AND EDUCATION

We are conscious of the possible need to provide additional capacity in these areas, as and when the envisioned development takes place. As such no specific questions are included as much will depend upon policies emanating from Milton Keynes Council and other relevant bodies.

### **Q22 Do you have any concerns about the current provision of medical facilities in the town?**

- *Services will be stretched if there is to be a large influx of residents. This should be addressed now rather than once the building programme is underway.*
- *Will not be adequate when extra housing is built.*
- *I think we are fortunate to have such a good surgery but difficult to get appointments if more patients added to their lists.*
- *I get the feeling the doctors' surgery is at capacity but this is unqualified.*
- *Given the new housing another GP surgery would be needed. Are there enough NHS dentists?*
- *Lack of NHS Dentist Insufficient doctors for growing population*
- *We must have a minor injury not 24hr. This also helps people who have had operations or other problems i.e. the removal of stitches. This takes people way from already overworked MKG/Bedford/Northampton hospitals.*
- *I agree with our MP that this investment comes as a pre-requisite to expansion.*
- *The facilities are very good and the service provided by the professionals is excellent BUT constant funding cuts and increased numbers must have an adverse effect.*
- *They are excellent*
- *We are happy with the current provision, although we acknowledge the possibility of additional future requirements depending on % growth.*

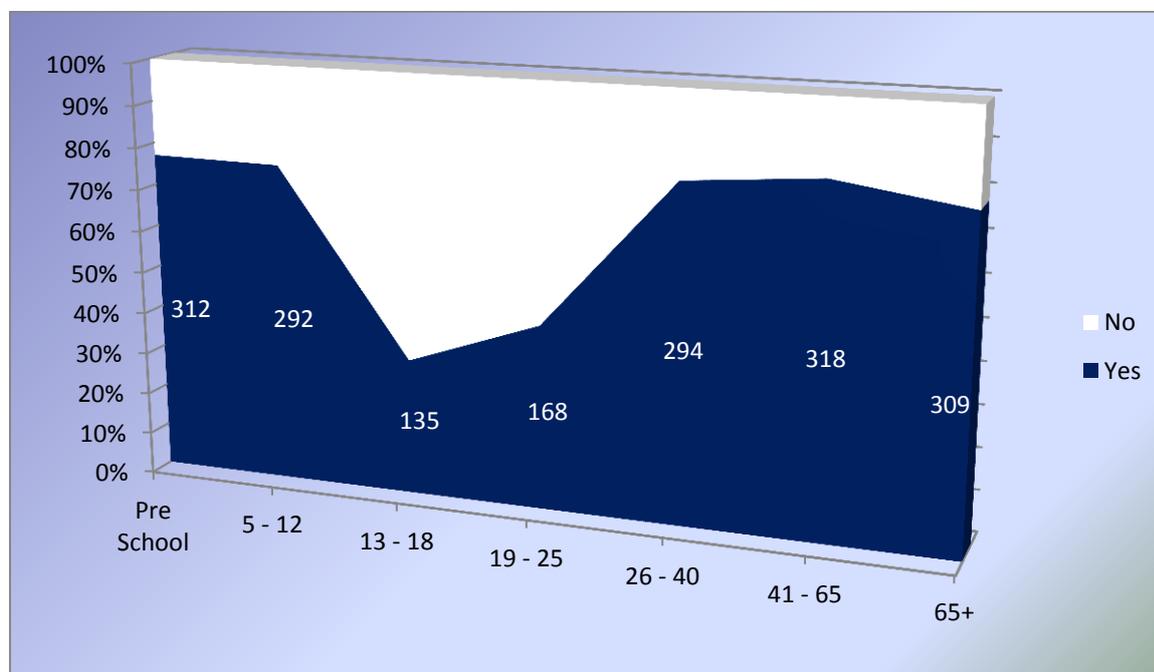
### **Q23 Do you have any concerns about current education facilities in the town?**

- *Primary school is full to capacity and the secondary school will need a sixth form.*
- *Would like to see more facilities for 55+ age bracket.*
- *Local children may not be able to go to local school if the schools do not expand with new housing.*

- *Again if the town were to increase in size with the % of children in the town rising there will not be sufficient space especially in the primary school age group. Ousedale has space to expand but there would probably need to be a new primary school.*
- *Feel that Ousedale site could be expanded to include a 6th form. Many students each year continue on to A level education. A swimming pool/ leisure facilities that all the community could use would be an excellent addition.*
- *The schools are superb but with more houses bring more facilities it's unlikely the schools will be able to cope with extra influx. I went to 1st and middle school in Olney in late 80's/ early 90's when the population was a lot less but the size of the school remains the same*
- *Secondary school - need larger canteen, indoor space for bad weather at break/lunch outdoor shaded area, allocated coach parking bays.*
- *Yes: The Ousedale Comprehensive School should have been bigger - more pupils will be coming - more subjects should be offered on the timetable and room should have been included for evening/weekend Adult Education classes.*
- *I believe the Ousedale Campus should become a self-contained school and include a sixth form. This was rejected when the campus was built but enough land was available to build the additional building should a sixth form be approved in the future. With the increase in population planned, I believe the sixth form should be built.*
- *Poor adult educational provision*
- *Currently, the schools can cope with demand but it will need to be carefully monitored and planned for in line with growth of the town because I'd hate to see local children being turned away through lack of available capacity. The Infant Academy is already full and I'm not sure how much space there is in the Middle and Secondary schools. Further housing development may require an additional primary school (do we want all of our children to be taught in full classes?)*

## PEOPLE

Q24 Do you think there are sufficient facilities for the following age groups



The chart shows that residents believe there is a lack of appropriate facilities for the age groups 13 to 25 years.

- *The young could use some more vibrant entertainment fixtures. At the other end of the age range, some meeting clubs for socialising and keep fit classes and walking groups etc. would be nice.*
- *13-18 is a tough age group to facilitate. But there will never be enough or the right thing for them*
- *I am very concerned about the age range where young people are liable to take a wrong turn and ruin otherwise promising lives.*
- *I am in 65+ age group and I think we have good provision for social activities.*
- *More should be done to try to move teenagers from Market Square as they sometimes cause problems with local people and their businesses*
- *Adults- willing to train or instruct - mentor gardening - house maintenance (mixed ages group) computing. Interact with different age groups.*
- *Not enough for 41-65 unless they are sporty. Could do with a "Man Lab" or "Men in sheds" type place for middle-aged / older technically minded men*

## OTHER ISSUES

The 5 most cited comments under this heading concerned issues about public transport, parking, traffic volume, a bypass and provision of a swimming pool.

- *There are no buses from Olney to MK on Sundays and in the evenings. It's a problem for lots of people working out of Olney.*
- *Consideration must be given to improved public transport to surrounding villages and towns.*
- *An approach to traffic management & enforcement throughout the town (possibly a one-way system around the Square making it easier to turn left & right out of the Square and stopping people blocking the High Street while they wait to turn right in to the Square) Public transport which is currently very lacking, particularly for people young & old that would like to spend an evening in Milton Keynes*
- *The lack of parking. This is the biggest single issues affecting Olney at present. If you wish to develop a plan that includes the availability of more work in Olney then this will, hopefully, attract people from Clifton Reynes, Emberton, and Sherrington etc. all of whom will come by car. With the proposed housing developments on the edge of town this will increase the traffic trying to come to the shopping area situated around the market square unless you allow shopping development at the North end of town to serve that area.*
- *Please consider that if there are more houses and people there will be much more traffic - it is already a nightmare to park or to enter the town in the evening with the hold ups. The bypass however, should not be on the East side where the river lies.*
- *A swimming pool be built within the Ousedale School campus.*
- *Park and Ride essential! More recycling, swimming pool, ladies gym, aerobic. Community partnership orchard, meadow and nature trail with emphasis on education wildlife.*
- *It would be excellent if Olney could have a public swimming pool as it would be used by many people. Also indoor sports hall for badminton etc.*
- *I have mentioned a swimming pool several times herein. At least one of the arguments for not building one should now have been reduced since Middleton Pool in Newport Pagnell is now effectively being run by a private concern so the loss of custom due to people swimming in Olney should not have such a detrimental effect on Newport Pagnell Town Council. This will also create more employment opportunities in Olney and will improve general health and fitness in the town. This should form part of the improvement in services required in Olney now and to support the planned expansion.*

## **Section 3 – Summary**

### **HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

There was general support in favour of building more homes in the parish. Many respondents were in favour of providing smaller affordable homes for young people and key workers and advocated housing of mixed size and tenure to meet local needs, including sheltered and retirement homes.

The majority of people responding thought the affordable quota of 30% affordable housing on qualifying sites was about right but wanted some of these homes reserved for local people.

Site D had the highest level of support for where new homes should be built with Sites E, A and F also showing considerable support.

### **LOCAL ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT**

There was strong support for the provision of employment development in the future, with respondents supporting light industrial units, high-tech, flexible and affordable offices for start-up businesses. The high cost of rent for retail and office premises was frequently mentioned.

Sites C and B were well-supported for commercial development, followed by Site A.

### **TRANSPORT AND PARKING**

There were mixed responses about the provision of a possible bypass. Almost equally divided by those who thought a bypass would benefit the settlement and those who thought that it may be detrimental to the viability of the town centre.

In general respondents were happy with the current parking restrictions.

### **GETTING ABOUT**

The responses to signage indicated that in general people thought there was too much and it should be reduced. Comments about making the town more cycle friendly centred on fixing the potholes and providing more secure cycle racks. Many respondents to the question regarding improvements relating to using the town with buggies, wheelchairs and mobility scooters cited that they were concerned about the dangers to pedestrians from the drivers of mobility vehicles.

### **OPEN SPACES**

Both provisions for playing fields and allotments were considered by the majority to be currently about right but in the event of more housing developments, then these must be extended to provide the same facilities for the new homes.

### **HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

Similar to the responses for Open Spaces, respondents supported extended health and education facilities to be provided when the town expands. Many people felt that Ousedale School needs a 6<sup>th</sup> form.

### **PEOPLE**

Generally people felt that there was currently good provision of facilities for all age groups, however many felt that there should be better amenities provided for the age groups between 13 and 25.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **Contacts and signposting**

#### **Plan:MK**

Plan:MK will be the new Local Plan for Milton Keynes Borough. When adopted, Plan:MK will replace the existing Core Strategy (adopted in July 2013) and the remaining saved policies in the Milton Keynes Local Plan (adopted December 2005). It will set out a development strategy for Milton Keynes up to at least 2031, with a range of detailed policies to guide development over this period.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/plan-mk>

#### **Community Right to Build**

The Community Right to Build allows local communities to propose small-scale, site-specific, community-led developments. It came into force on 6 April 2012. This can be included within a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-localism/2010-to-2015-government-policy-localism>

#### **Age Concern Fact Sheet**

Housing Options. [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk) this website includes information on:

- Help available for people to stay in their home
- Homeshare scheme
- Rented housing from the council or housing association
- Private rented
- Sheltered housing
- Moving in with relatives

#### **Self-Build**

[www.selfbuildportal.org.uk](http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk)

A comprehensive website showcasing some of the most creative self builds found in the UK and around the world. Each example leads you, step-by-step, through a self-build project - from the early stages of planning and financing to the lessons learned. Seasoned self-builders detail exactly how they made things work and what to bear in mind.