

## Asfordby Neighbourhood Plan Consultation with Young People in Asfordby July-August 2013



2 of the participants at Klondyke Park with Helen and Laura from the Leicestershire County Council Youth Team.

### Introduction

Asfordby Parish Council appointed Helen Metcalfe to talk to young people in the village during July and August 2013 about the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The brief was to find out what young people thought about living in Asfordby (what they liked and didn't like) and to discuss some of the ideas that had been emerged during work in 2012.

The Leicestershire County Council Youth Team were very supportive of the work being under taken and 2 of the team, Laura and Helen (pictured above) kindly agreed to assist Helen on 2 walkabout sessions on 30<sup>th</sup> July and 20<sup>th</sup> August 2013. The findings in this report

are based on discussions with 16 young people (aged between 9 and 18) who were out in Asfordby on these 2 afternoons. For a list of the participants (names, ages and street where they live) see Appendix 1.



### **Format for the Consultation**

In June 2012 the Parish Council had worked with Helen to agree a set of policy statements (see stakeholder report from 29.5.12). These formed the basis of a questionnaire that Helen went through with the young people. At the May 2012 meeting members of the Neighbourhood Plan steering group had used a map to show areas that they thought could possibly be developed for housing (red spots) and also identified those areas that should be protected (green spots). This map was also used as a focus for the discussion with the young people.

A copy of the questionnaire is shown at Appendix 2. The questions were used as a hook for discussion and most of the time spent with the young people focused on:

1. What they liked and what they didn't like about Asfordby?
2. Why Asfordby was doing a Neighbourhood Plan?
3. Where did they think housing should go?
4. Whether they agreed or disagreed with the red and green spots on the map?
5. What would they do to improve Asfordby?
6. What else they wanted to tell the parish council about living in Asfordby?



## Consultation Findings - What the young people of Asfordby said

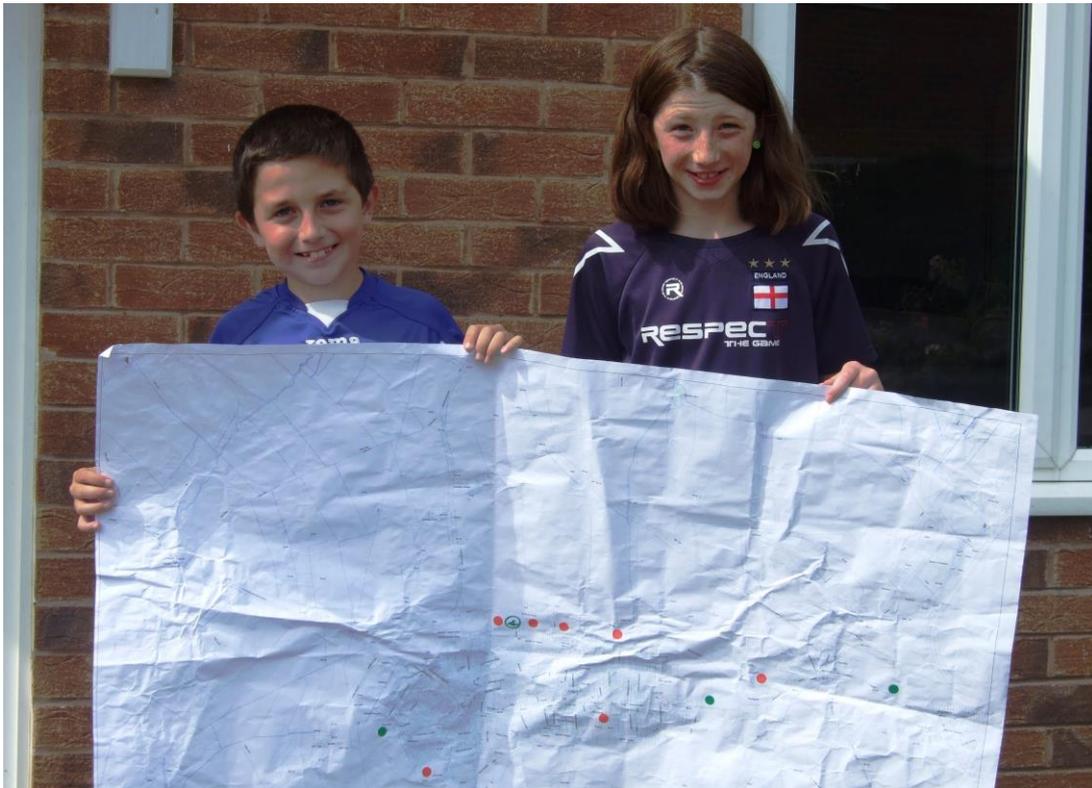
### What do you like about living in Asfordby?

- Walking in the woods, the rural life: keeping horses (Jessica 18)
- That you can go down to the park without crossing busy roads, don't need an adult to take you (Matthew 10)
- All the parks (Valley, Klondyke, Parish), football fields, shops, Co-op and post office (Hannah 10)
- Asfordby is a nice village, you feel safe, all the parks (Millie 12)
- Klondyke Park, Asfordby is convenient with shops you can walk to (Purdi 11 and Tianey 12)
- Klondyke Park because of zip wire and spiders web (Purdi and Tianey) and good trees to climb (several younger people commented on this but did not complete questionnaire and give names as they were busy climbing the trees!)
- All the open spaces around Asfordby (Ryan, 12, Toby 11, Jack 9)
- Quiet, peaceful with some facilities (Darren 15)
- Peaceful but moving to Melton for a bigger house (Charlie 15)
- Quiet and feel safe (Becky 15)

### What do you dislike about living in Asfordby?

- Stretch of Asfordby Road near roundabout with no street lighting scary at night (Jessica and Becky)
- Speed traffic goes around roundabout on to bypass road, very dangerous for pedestrians can the traffic be slowed down (Jessica)

- Not enough to do ( this related to limited facilities on the Parish Park and that there was nowhere to go inside in the winter and was a comment made by all the participants age 12 and up)
- Parish Park not enough for older kids to do, need to replace half pipe with better scooter/skateboard facilities (Becky, Ellie 15, Ryan, Toby, Jack, Purdi, Tianey)
- Drugs and drink (Darren 15)
- There used to be a park at the back of Charnwood Avenue but nothing on it now (Ryan)
- Limited public transport after 8pm and on Sunday means going out to socialise is difficult and you can feel isolated (Jessica)



2 participants with the Asfordby map

### **What do you think would make Asfordby a better place to live?**

Klondyke Park: This Park was valued because of the equipment on it and the landscaping. Mature trees provide shelter and things to climb but it was still felt that it needed a proper shelter with music like the one at the Parish (until it was broken).

Parish Park: This Park was seen as boring. It needs grown up swings and facilities for scooters and skateboards –the young people involved in this consultation were split over whether they wanted a skateboard park or scooter park so ramps that are suitable for both will be necessary. The shelter needs repairing and some of the older girls said they would

like some benches perhaps near flowers and trees as they felt there was nowhere for just girls to go.

A number suggested a hard paved basketball court or multi use games area (MUGGA) and/or a spider's web climbing frame as another type of facility that would be good on the Parish Park. A local lady who was grandma to children playing at Klondyke Park said 'please give the teenagers something to do at the Parish Park.'

Several of the older participants wanted to know what was happening with the money they raised for a new half pipe and one of the actions (either within the Neighbourhood Plan or sooner) should be to provide some improved facilities on the Parish Park for older children.

### **Housing and growth**

All the young people who participated in the discussion were asked to look at the map of Asfordby with the red spots on (where houses could possibly go) and green spots (areas that should be protected). No one had strongly negative opinions about where the housing growth might be and that there should be more houses. All participants accepted the need for more housing and several made the point that Asfordby was such a nice place more people should be able to live here.

One lady on Klondyke Park looking after younger children was a governor at Captains Close. She did express concern about the capacity of the local primary schools as Captains Close was struggling to accommodate the existing intake this year. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan must consider the impact on local schools and ensure policies are in place to address this issue.

The 5 young people who lived in Asfordby Valley were asked to comment in particular on the red spot put on the field behind the houses on Main Street and to the right of the roundabout. This did not necessarily reflect the views of the whole Neighbourhood Plan group at the time but the young people questioned were not particularly concerned about this idea so long as other areas around the Valley (the fields to north and the east) were protected.

Jessica (18) is about to go to university. She would like to live in Asfordby when she finished her studies but realises that with limited housing choice and high prices she is likely to end up in Melton where starter homes are cheaper. Matthew and Hannah living in Asfordby Valley realised that more houses would mean more children their age to play with at the park which was a good thing as they can feel a bit isolated living in Asfordby Valley especially in the holidays.

Charlie who lives on North Street is also moving to Melton in September to a bigger house as her family could not find one suitable in Asfordby.

Several other participants also made this point that Melton was cheaper so even if they wanted to stay in Asfordby they wouldn't be able to afford it. If housing is promoted through the Neighbourhood Plan then smaller, starter homes must be part of the range of housing types on offer to enable young people to stay in the village if they wish.

## **Employment**

Most of the participants did not really know whether they would stay in Asfordby when they left school but the older ones felt that limited local job opportunities and the cost of housing would mean they would probably have to move away.

## **Summary**

On the whole young people like living in Asfordby. Despite their reservations about getting involved in this consultation once the map of Asfordby was produced everyone gave at least 20 mins of their time to answer the questions. Young people do value the peace and quiet in the village but some of the older ones feel let down by the limited facilities at the Parish Park especially since the half pipe has been taken away and not replaced. They raised money to make improvements at the Park and are waiting impatiently for something better to appear.

The age group consulted during these 2 sessions (9-18) means that likes and dislikes will differ to an extent (some of the older ones thought Asfordby was boring but the younger ones liked the freedom to roam the open spaces around the village) which is why the ages of the young people have been shown next to their comments. The younger ones were also just happy that they could get to a park independently, whilst the older ones want more park facilities.

The Youth Team who assisted during the sessions took the opportunity to ask about whether the young people would like a youth club in Asfordby again. The response was positive and this idea is being explored under a separate process.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Teenagers are not always an easy group to consult with. They don't always know what they want but can be negative about what is on offer. However with the help of the Youth Team workers all the young people approached on these 2 afternoons did get involved and gave thoughtful responses. No attempt was made to knock on doors so those who participated happened to be outside hanging out at the various parks or near the local shops.

The involvement of the youth team is seen as an effective way to quickly build up a rapport with these young people and it is suggested that they remain involved especially if investment from Neighbourhood Plan policies will enable investment in the Parish Park.

Helen Metcalfe  
September 2013

## Appendix 1

### Participants

Name	Age	Street
Charlie	15	North Street
Ellie	15	Regency Road
Chantelle	15	Main Street
Jack	9	Ullswater Road
Paige	10	Woodhouse Road
Becky	15	Regency Road
Ryan	12	Regency Road
Toby	11	Regency Road
Tianey	12	Riverside Walk
Purdi	11	Riverside Walk
Jessica	18	North Street View
Hannah	10	North View Close
Matthew	10	North Street View
Millie	12	Klondyke
Darren	15	Flint Drive
Naomi	15	Saxelby Road

## Appendix 2

Asfordby Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Asfordby. This will decide where development goes and can also include proposals to improve the area. This is your chance to tell them how you want Asfordby improving over the next 15 years.

Name

Age

M/F

Address (street only)

What do you like about living in Asfordby?	What do you dislike about living in Asfordby?

**Do you agree or disagree with the following?**

1. Local facilities like shops, schools, parks and community halls are important and need maintaining in Asfordby.
  - a) Which of these do you use?
2. Asfordby needs to allow some housing development to keep local services, like schools, pubs, shops and doctors going in the future.
3. Housing could be acceptable on the north of the village next to the by-pass.
4. The open fields between Asfordby Village, the Valley and Asfordby Hill need protecting to stop the settlements merging.
5. Land should be allocated for housing around Asfordby Hill to expand its population to support the school and other services (e.g. community buildings, a shop).
6. The redevelopment of Asfordby Storage Depot for housing would be OK.
7. New housing should link with existing areas via footpath and road networks.
8. Development should be built to high energy efficiency standards.
9. Asfordby needs to plan for more businesses so that there are more jobs for local people.
  - a) What job do you think you will do when you leave school?
  - b) Over the next 15 years would you like to stay in Asfordby to live and work? Please explain your answers.
10. What else do you want to tell Asfordby Parish Council about?

