

## **Bruisyard Parish Plan**

### **2005**

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## **1. Letter from the Chairman of the Parish Council**

Dear Residents of Bruisyard,

On behalf of your Parish Council I am pleased to submit to you the results of the 'Parish Plan' questionnaire that you completed last year.

The 'Parish Plan' was instigated because when we started to explore the possibilities of obtaining funding grants for projects such as Play Equipment, Village Hall, etc we found that all of the sources need us to "prove a need". The obvious way to do this was to ask you what you want for your village.

A steering committee was set up under the chairmanship of David Smith, and has worked hard to glean the information on our behalf, we thank them for all the time they have contributed to produce the final plan.

The Parish Council will implement the recommendations as required, and we now have valuable information about your views on planning the future of Bruisyard which we will take into consideration when discussing planning applications submitted to us for comments by the district planning authority.

Should you have any comments, criticisms or problems, please discuss them with any of your parish councillors who will bring them to the attention of the full council.

Peter Robinson,  
(Chairman Bruisyard Parish Council)

## **2. Bruisyard and its history**

### **A VILLAGE REMEMBERED**

Bruisyard, a place where Romans brewed their beer,  
But now, a sleepy Suffolk village, with pheasants, cattle, and deer,

The church's Saxon tower, a lookout for invaders up the river Alde,  
Now, the river's just a stream, but the congregation still flock to the fold,

A favourite place, our village pub "The Butchers Arms",  
Sold "Bullards" beer, to the men from the local farms,

Our Village Hall "The Iron Room" where all the villagers met,  
For Socials, Whist Drives, Parties, and Dances we'll never forget,

The village Blacksmith was "Peckham Clow,  
He'd shoe a horse, forge in iron, and even mend a plough,

For sixpence, seated on his anvil he would cut your hair,  
He is reputed to have pulled teeth, but I don't recall a dentist's chair!

Bruisyard Hall has seen some changes, Convent, and Monastery, to Country House,  
The “Poor Nuns Of St Clare were founded here, now it’s owned by Mr Rous,

Our shop was here in Tudor times selling lace, flour, spice and tea,  
In later years it sold groceries, lamp oil, coal and sweets, but gossip here was free,

Old characters have died and gone, their offspring no longer here, but that’s no surprise,  
Their cottages have all been bought up, and modernised,  
Then sold on for massive sums ,  
Out of the reach of, young, local, dads and mums,

Now, in this age of dormitory villages, the population’s changed, but is it for the better?  
No pub, no shop, no village hall, the blacksmith long since gone, but, we still have our postbox, at least we can send a letter.

Peter Robinson

### **3. Background to the Parish Plan and the methodology**

The Government wants local communities to take more control of their lives, to say what they want in their own neighbourhoods and to engage with other organisations, as needed, to get it done. Parish Councils are at the core of this initiative and their action in preparing a Parish Plan gives everyone in the village the opportunity to say what improvements they would like to see and how their community should develop in the future.

In July 2004, Bruisyard Parish Council held a meeting in the Vestry at St. Peter’s Church to which all residents were invited. At this meeting it was unanimously agreed that Bruisyard should prepare a Parish Plan. Several volunteers representing a broad section of the community in the village offered their time to assist in this task and a Steering Committee was formed in early August. The Steering Committee then worked on preparing a questionnaire which included the key issues raised at the July meeting and from further discussions held with many residents. The questionnaires were delivered to all households in the village in early November. All residents of 16 years old and above were invited to complete the questionnaire, and parents were also asked to include the views of their children for those questions which were of particular interest to them. The questionnaires were collected in early December and the data was then analysed in detail by the Steering Committee. The response rate was excellent – 126 questionnaires were completed and returned, which together with their children made a total of 155 residents whose views had been consulted on the broad range of issues addressed in the questionnaire. This represented nearly 90% of the total population in Bruisyard giving an accurate reflection of how we view our village and its development.

The Steering Committee then prepared a draft of the Parish Plan which was presented to the Parish Council on 18 April 2005 for comment and approval. The Plan was then formally issued and presented at the Parish Meeting on 24 May 2005 to which all residents were invited to attend.

#### **4. Survey Results**

The results of the questionnaires and the proposed actions are summarised below. A list of these actions is given in **Appendix A** showing the lead organisation, appropriate partners and resources needed for each action. A list of useful contacts is given in **Appendix B**.

##### **4.1 Schools**

Bruisyard is currently in the Saxmundham catchment area for local authority schools. Primary school education is provided at Saxmundham Primary School for children between the ages of 5 to 9 years. Secondary school education is provided at Saxmundham Middle School for children between the ages of 9 to 13 years and then at Leiston Community High School from 13 to 18 years of age.

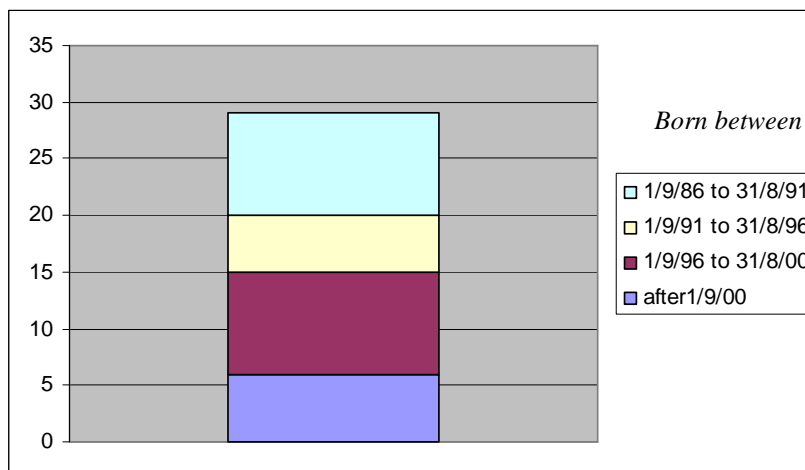
In December 2004, there were 23 children living in Bruisyard who were of school age (ie. between 5 and 18 years) and 6 children who were pre-school. Only 5 children attended schools within the catchment area whereas 11 children attended schools within the adjacent catchment area of Framlingham. The remaining 7 children attended private schools. This curious situation is compounded by the fact that schools within the Framlingham catchment area are closer to Bruisyard than those within the Saxmundham catchment area and that the neighbouring villages of Cransford and Badingham are both assigned to the Framlingham catchment area.

The questionnaire results indicated that this anomaly needs to be addressed and that Suffolk County Council should review the catchment area to better serve the needs of the children living in Bruisyard.

Suffolk County Council publishes a booklet called 'Schools in Suffolk', which gives important information for parents and carers about the admissions system, updated each year. The Education Department can be contacted on phone number: 01502 405255.

**Action:** Parish Council to raise the issue of the catchment area with Suffolk County Council Education Department with the objective of changing the catchment area from Saxmundham to Framlingham.

*Number of children living in Bruisyard in Dec 04*



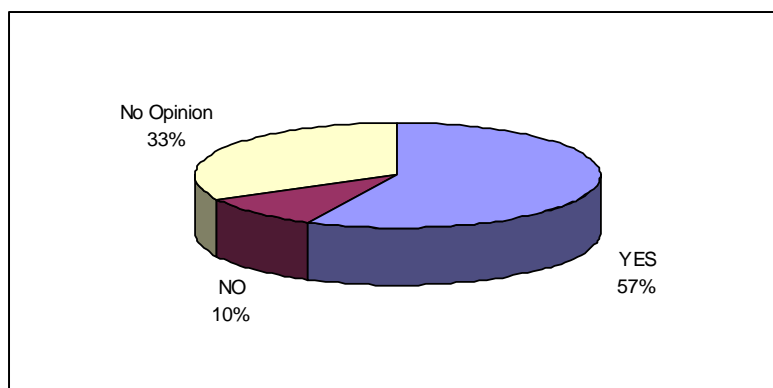
### 4.2 Play Facilities

The play equipment currently available in Bruisyard includes the basketball area and football pitch in the Parish Park, and the children’s swings at the rear of the housing estate on Rendham Road. The swings are sited on land leased by the Parish Council from Suffolk Coastal District Council.

A substantial majority have asked for the swings to be moved to the Parish Park. Of the many suggestions put forward for additional play equipment, a slide, perhaps incorporating a climbing frame, was the most popular item. Several people also raised concerns about the potential danger to children using the Park due to the proximity of the river and suggested that the play area should be surrounded by a fence for safety with a notice reminding parents that parental supervision is required at all times for children playing in the Park.

**Action:** Parish Council to arrange for the swings to be moved to the Parish Park, and the purchase of a suitable slide and climbing frame unit to be arranged if funds are available. The Parish Council should also arrange for the play area to be fenced together with notice signs reminding parents of the need for parental supervision at all times.

*‘Would you support the swings being moved from their present site to the Parish Park?’*



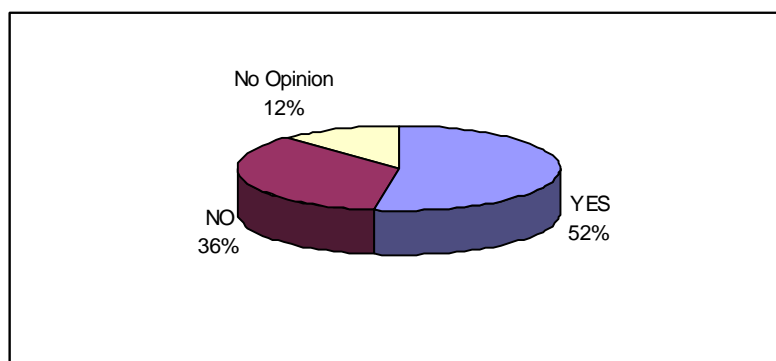
### 4.3 Social Amenities

Bruisyard is fortunate in having the beautiful Parish Church of St Peter's which is very much admired as a tranquil retreat by both villagers and its many visitors. The Parish Church is an historic religious building and unsuitable for use as a multi-purpose Village or Community Hall. Bruisyard Parochial Church Council are hoping to make the Vestry available as a small parish meeting room, however its use would be limited to meetings only and would not accommodate large village functions or social gatherings. At the present time, there are no other communal buildings in Bruisyard that can be used as a focus for village activities. Many years ago, the village did have a very successful village hall which was known as 'the Iron Room'. This was sited on land close to Bruisyard Hall but was demolished in the mid 1960s as the building had become structurally unsound. Since the demolition of the Iron Room, Bruisyard has been without a village hall.

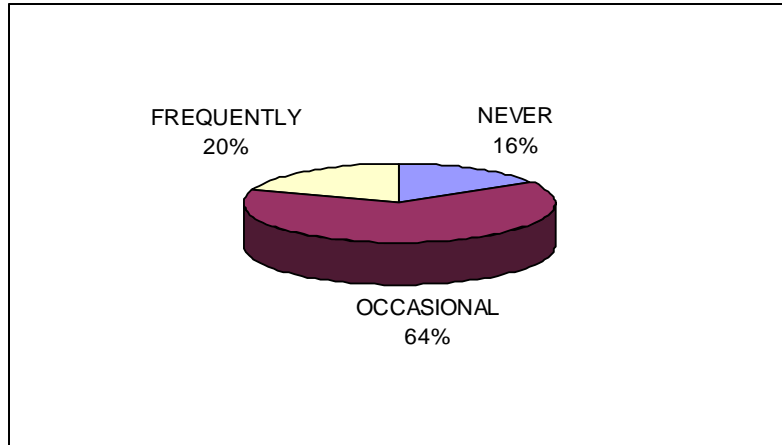
On the question of whether or not Bruisyard now needed a village hall the majority of people expressed a wish to see one established, but there was also quite a strong 'No' vote. On the question of how frequently the hall would be used, 64% felt they would use the hall occasionally, 20% frequently and 16% would never use the hall. Initial estimates by the Parish Council are that about £12,000 will be needed to be raised to build a hall and 63% said they would be willing to support the fund raising. The analysis of the responses indicated that many of the people who were against the building of a village hall were concerned about the ongoing maintenance costs and had doubts as to whether the hall could be financially sustainable.

**Action:** Bruisyard Parish Council to appoint a Councillor to initiate and lead a Village Hall Committee formed from volunteers representing a cross-section of the village. The Committee should prepare a full cost analysis of building a village hall and the ongoing running costs, and investigate the potential grants available. The Committee should report back to the Parish Council with recommendations and, if positive, the Parish Council should hold a Village meeting to seek broad approval before progressing the plan.

*'Do you think there is a need for a Village Hall in Bruisyard?'*



*‘How often do you think that you or members of your household would use a Village Hall in Bruisyard?’*



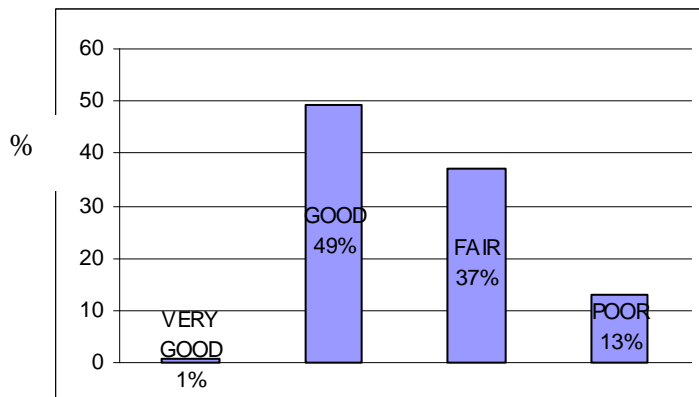
Many responses to the questionnaire raised the need for greater social interaction within the village and highlighted the types of activities that could be associated with a Village Hall. These included; village fetes, social clubs, a part-time Post Office and local shop, family celebrations, table-top/book sales, internet access and IT courses, etc. It was however mentioned by many that a number of local villages are constantly seeking funding and volunteers to help with the running of their village halls and is therefore an area of concern. The Village Hall Committee will no doubt investigate these points, amongst others. It should also be noted that the ‘Rendham Community Shop’ Committee has made extensive enquiries into the running of a local ‘5 Villages’ Enterprise, and careful consideration needs to be given to whether this will satisfy the need for a local shop.

**4.4 Council Services**

Council services are provided by the following bodies;

**Suffolk County Council’s ( SCC )** responsibilities include the provision of social care services, schools / education, libraries, environment and transport. These services account for about 78% of our Council Tax. The response to the question on SCC services in the questionnaire was as follows;

*‘How would you rate the services provided by Suffolk County Council?’*

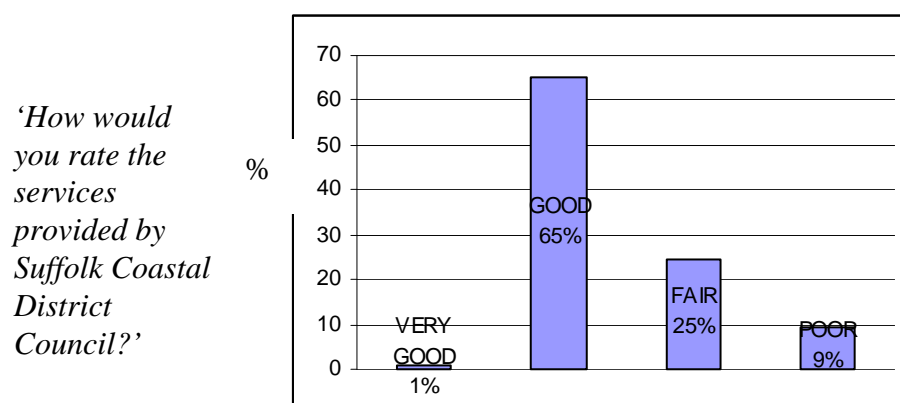


Improvements in the following services were mentioned in many of the responses;

- better road sweeping and gritting, and improved road maintenance.

- improved bus services.
- mobile library to stop at Church end of village in addition to Rendham Road.

**Suffolk Coastal District Council's ( SCDC )** responsibilities include refuse collection, leisure facilities, housing, planning permission, building control and environmental health. These services account for about 10% of our Council Tax. The response to the question on SCDC services in the questionnaire was as follows;



The refuse collection service was praised in many of the responses. The following improvements were suggested;

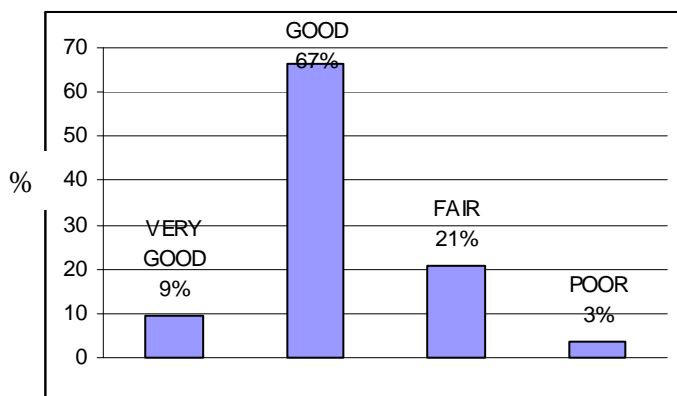
- local recycling facilities needed for plastic and glass. Alternatively, a doorstep collection service on a bi-weekly basis, similar to the current paper recycling service.
- planning needs to be quicker and more responsive to local needs.
- existing leisure facilities at Woodbridge and Felixstowe are not easily accessible. Leisure facilities at either Framlingham or Saxmundham should be established.

**Action:** Parish Plan Steering Committee to send letters to the Chief Executive Officers at Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council to brief them on the survey results and raise the areas suggested for improvements.

**Bruisyard Parish Council (BPC)** is responsible for the provision and maintenance of village amenities such as the Parish Park, play areas and village sign. The Parish Council is also responsible for liability insurance, raising issues with the appropriate authorities for action (such as roads, bridges, footpaths, rivers, etc), commenting on planning applications, and dealing with any matters of concern relating to the appearance and well being of the village. About 1% of Council Tax is used to pay for these services. The survey result is as follows;



*'How would you rate the services provided by Bruisyard Parish Council?'*



Responses to the survey were mainly concerned with;

- maintenance of hedges and ditches and the resulting impact on road users and drainage problems. The ditches around the Parish Park were noted as a particular issue to be addressed.
- improving village amenities and stimulating greater social interaction.
- more information needed on services available and associated contact details.
- ensuring the river authorities carry out their regular dredging programmes to minimise potential flood risks in the village.

**Action:** Parish Council to review the key actions raised by the survey and ensure that corrective actions are implemented.

#### 4.5 Police Services

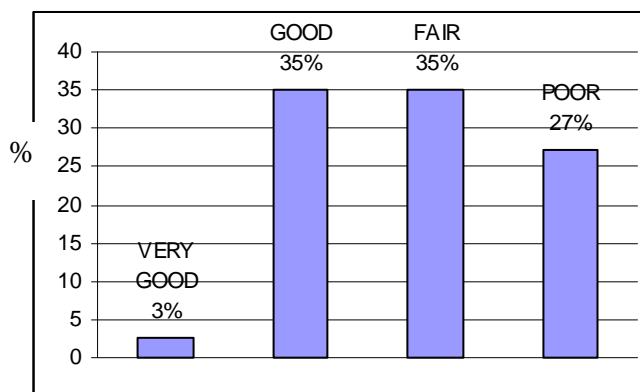
**Suffolk Police Authority** receives about 10% of Council Tax payments.

The Community Policeman for Bruisyard is P.C. Kevin Miller who can be contacted on phone number: **01728 723666**. When unavailable, the call is diverted to Police HQ and either dealt with there or forwarded to P.C. Miller if he is on duty. P.C. Miller is based at the police station in Framlingham which is open between **9.00AM – 1.00PM** on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday. A surgery session is also held on Thursdays from **1.00PM to 8.00PM**.

A Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is also operational in Bruisyard. The local coordinator is David Barham who can be contacted on phone number: 01728 638243

The results of the survey are as follows;

*'How would you rate the police coverage of Bruisyard?'*



The survey results showed that many were concerned with the poor police presence in the village. Other concerns raised included;

- difficulty in contacting the police at both Framlingham and Saxmundham. No local police station manned 24 hours a day.
- excessive driving speeds, particularly on Low Road.
- fear of burglaries and police not responding quickly enough in an emergency.

**Action:** Parish Council to raise these results with P.C. Kevin Miller and ask him to formulate a plan of action in response to residents concerns.

#### 4.6 Health Services

The nearest GP Health Centres, Dental Surgeries, Opticians and Pharmacies are listed in Appendix B. The nearest Accident & Emergency Hospital is Ipswich Hospital, Heath Road, Ipswich (Phone: 01473 712233) which is about 20 miles from Bruisyard.

The responses to the questionnaire showed that most people were able to visit both their G.P. and dentist without too many problems, although increasingly, finding a dentist who will provide treatment under the National Health scheme is becoming a problem - this is both at local and national level.

- 87% have no problems in visiting the doctor's surgery whilst 6% found this a problem.
- 87% have no problems in collecting prescriptions whereas 3% had problems.
- 26% had problems in finding an NHS dentist.

**Action:** Parish Council to write a letter to the Primary Care Trust voicing the concern expressed by villagers about the lack of NHS dental services available in this area.

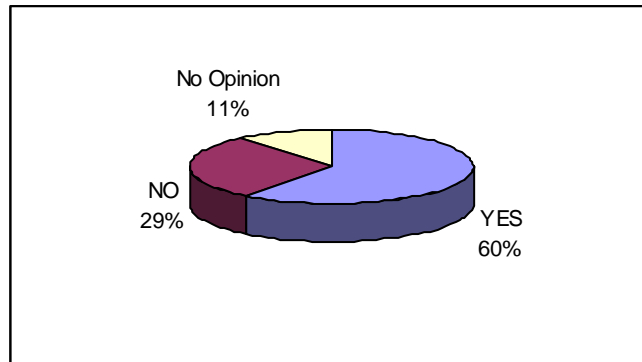
#### 4.7 Affordable Housing

There are currently 76 residential properties in Bruisyard. Of these, 57 are privately owned whilst the remaining are tenanted.

Land currently owned by Suffolk Coastal District Council could be made available for a small number of affordable houses at the rear of the existing housing estate on Rendham Road, as well as at the side of Vicarage Cottages on Church Road. This could be undertaken in partnership with a Housing Association, under a covenant to ensure that the properties remain affordable and available to local residents.

The questionnaire results indicated positive support for affordable housing at the Rendham Road site. The Church Road site received only limited support.

*‘Do you support the development of a small number of affordable houses?’*



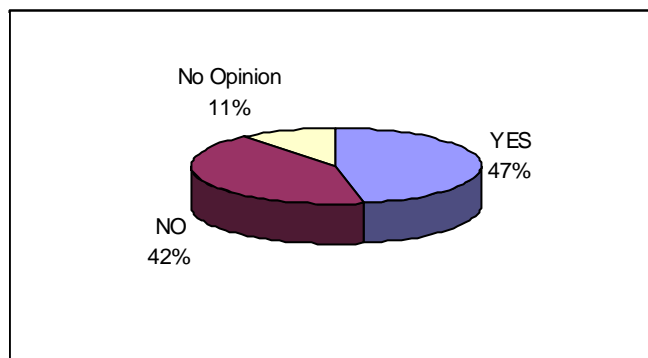
Those in favour of affordable housing being made available in the village outnumbered those against by a ratio exceeding 2:1, on the condition that a local need can be clearly demonstrated. Interest in occupying these affordable houses within the next 5 year period was expressed by 8 households.

**Action:** Parish Council to appoint a Councillor to act as a liaison officer for affordable housing. An article should be included in the Parish Newsletter requesting anyone interested to contact the Councillor to discuss their requirements. The Councillor would then liaise with Suffolk Coastal and an appropriate Housing Association to see if a suitable project can be initiated.

#### 4.8 Residential Development

There are currently 76 residential properties in Bruisyard. Some limited infill housing development may be possible within the existing village boundaries if Local Planning Authority consent can be obtained. The questionnaire addressed whether there was support for further housing development and the type of housing, design and location.

*‘In principle, would you support a proposal for small-scale infill housing developments within the village?’*



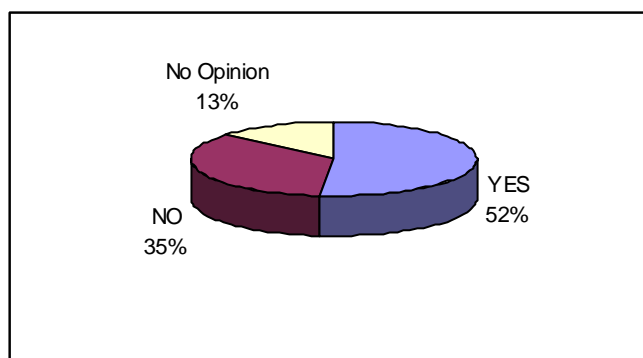
The support for further residential development was evenly split with those undecided holding the balance. The comments provided a consistent view that most people would only consider allowing development within the existing village boundaries and that if anything is built, it needs to be in keeping with the village, and of traditional ‘Suffolk’ village appearance. Many responses mentioned that the rural character of the village must be retained and protected. Any infill development should be carefully controlled to avoid crowding and that any application must be reviewed on an individual basis.

**Action:** The questionnaire responses give great clarity about what people do and don’t want. This guidance should be followed by the Parish Council when commenting on all future Planning Applications. The Parish Council should also relay this guidance to the Planning Department for inclusion into future planning policy documents.

#### 4.9 Commercial Development

The existing commercial site in Bruisyard is at Bridge Works. This site, which is currently occupied by Paragon Parts, has sufficient space for occupation by several businesses. The questionnaire addressed whether there was support for further commercial development in Bruisyard and if this should be based on new build or the re-use of existing buildings.

*‘Would you support the development of commercial premises in Bruisyard which may offer local employment opportunities?’*



On balance, the majority supported commercial development in principle, if this resulted in job opportunities being generated within the village. Of those supporting development, 60% recommended that it should be based on the redevelopment of existing buildings /barns.

#### 4.10 Other Improvements

One comment repeated in various ways throughout the survey was that many people are happy with Bruisyard the way it is - a relatively quiet, rural village, without too much hustle and bustle, its own character, and they would like it to stay that way.

A point also brought to the fore, even by those in support of both limited residential and commercial development, is that at the moment, people are already unhappy about the condition of hedges and ditches, and drainage from fields and roads. Increased

road usage and more cars squeezing into existing parking areas may well exacerbate these problems.

Many felt that Bruisyard is lacking a social centre, and that village life is the poorer for it. The suggestions for tackling this issue ranged from the building of a village hall for clubs, etc., a village shop & Post Office, a Pub.....to more seats and tables in the park.

Many of the other suggested improvements related to the river - quite apart from flooding control, the banks behind the Parish Park need to be made safer, especially if children are more likely to play there on new equipment.

### **5. Village Review of the Action Plan**

Progress on each of the Action Points will be reported on a regular basis in the Parish Newsletter. An annual review of the Plan and the progress made will be included in the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting which is held each May.

### **6. Links to district- wide plans**

The Parish Plan will be sent to Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council for incorporating into their County and District plans respectively. The Plan will also be sent to Suffolk Police Authority and our local District Councillor, County Councillor and MP for their reference.