



Verwood & Three Legged Cross TOWN PLAN

We have finished the draft Town Plan for Verwood and Three Legged Cross based on the residents' survey run in 2011/12. The plan reflects our view as residents about how we wish the area to be in the future and a description of what we need to do to get there. We have also shared the survey response data with the District Council, so that it knew our views when drafting the core of the District Strategy for the next 15 years. We received 1122 completed surveys, giving a response rate of about 20%. The profile of respondents was broadly in line with that of residents in Verwood and Three Legged Cross. This leaflet summarises our views and tells you the next steps.

Environment, Community & Safety

The rural setting of Verwood and Three Legged Cross was by far the most important reason for people choosing to live here. Our larger open green spaces were used by over 80% of respondents, with Moors Valley being the most popular.

The importance of the sense of community is evident and contributes to the high degree of safety enjoyed by residents. However two thirds of respondents feel that they are unable to influence decisions that affect the community and wish to have more involvement in local decision making.

Litter is seen as a major problem as are fly tipping, dog fouling, and overhanging vegetation. With regards to anti-social behaviour vandalism, street drinking, shouting and swearing are a concern to many.

Children & Young People

Family life is an important feature of the population of Verwood and Three Legged Cross. Almost a third of respondents had children up to the age of 19 or looked after them on a regular basis. There was a broad range of children's ages with most in the 5-12 age group.

Most children of appropriate school age went to nursery, infant or middle schools in Verwood, or attended the upper school in Wimborne. The Nurseries, Pre-schools, First and Middle Schools were rated well. However, the Upper School provision was generally poorly rated. It is not clear whether it is the actual school that is deemed to be poor or just that the provision is in a neighbouring town and involves a significant daily commute. Two thirds of those with children said that an Upper School should be built in Verwood, this dropped to about half of the population as a whole.

Only a small number used breakfast clubs, after school care and holiday care and the level of satisfaction for childcare was mixed.

Older People

Older people make more use of churches and hospitals and were generally more satisfied with services compared to respondents as a whole.

Surprisingly, a low percentage see themselves as carers. Just under a quarter of older people admit that they or a member of their household have a disability or long term illness which affects their daily life. Two thirds of older people say they do not need any external support. Of those that get external support, the majority rate it as good.

Most are positive about access to local shops and are satisfied with local facilities, although there are concerns over pavements and car parking. Local recreational facilities are used extensively by older people.

Health & Wellbeing

There are high levels of satisfaction with the chemists and doctors, but less so with the dentists. A quarter of respondents who use the hospitals were dissatisfied with the provision. The higher the use, the higher the levels of dissatisfaction appears to be across all forms of healthcare provision. Many residents are dissatisfied with the out of hours service. It is unclear whether respondents are dissatisfied with the actual healthcare service provision or are concerned about the distance to or accessibility of the service.

Leisure facilities are well used in Verwood and Three Legged Cross with Moors Valley and Potterne Park being the most popular, followed by the Library and the Hub. Residents also extensively use some facilities outside the area. Just under half of all residents use a swimming pool outside the area at least once a month. Two-thirds of respondents indicated their primary choice for an additional facility in the town is a swimming pool; a greater proportion than those that currently use one.

Traffic, Transport & Accessibility

Residents are very car dependent, with almost all respondents owning a car. This was felt to be necessary due to many required services being outside the town.

Residents were asked to rank their top five priorities for local traffic and transport. The top three related to the roads and were road repairs, control of speeding and improved traffic flow.

Respondents were almost unanimous in wanting enforcement of the law on use of mobile phones when driving and respecting speed limits. The majority wanted speed limits reduced where there are no pavements and were concerned that there are too many HGVs driving through Verwood and Three Legged Cross. Generally, most residents thought that the roads in the area are safe.

Most residents are happy that parking in the town centre meets their needs. The vast majority would like on street parking to be controlled near schools.

More than half of respondents consider that public transport fails to meet their needs, with the greatest dissatisfaction felt by younger residents. A quarter of respondents admitted that nothing would encourage them to use public transport more, but a proportion thought more frequent, more direct and evening and weekend bus services would encourage them.

With regards to disabled access, people with disabilities have a less favourable view towards access than the wider population. The main concerns for this group are safe access to pavements, adequate facilities for the disabled and difficulty in finding a disabled parking space.



Built Environment

An overwhelming majority of respondents wanted any new buildings to reflect local character and thought that more should be done to protect our heritage. Most were opposed to using any Green Belt land for new housing. Despite almost all being satisfied with their own housing, there are some concerns that current housing does not meet the needs of the community. Generally there was no consensus over future housing provision. A large number of respondents want no further housing development in Verwood whatsoever. However, smaller homes for young people would be acceptable to some if they were located within the present urban area.

Commerce & Employment

The majority of people shop locally for grocery, greengrocery, meat and fish. The local supermarket is the most popular choice. Poole and Bournemouth are the preferred areas for other items. People's preference is to do their shopping in local shops. Less than half of respondents feel that the current shopping centres meet their needs.

A large majority of all respondents felt that there were neither enough job opportunities nor suitable jobs for themselves in Verwood and Three Legged Cross. Whilst there are a significant number of jobs in the town, a large proportion of these workers commute from surrounding areas. In return there are even more residents commuting out to other surrounding areas.

What next?

We have given Verwood Town Council and East Dorset District Council copies of the draft plan for their comments. When we have received and addressed any comments they make, we will publish the full plan (which includes an action plan) and make it available to all residents and other stakeholders. We hope that the Town Plan will be carried forward by a new partnership of local residents and community groups. With the support of the Town, District and County councils and other public sector bodies they will be able to drive forward actions from our plan to work towards our vision for the future of Verwood and Three Legged Cross. If you are interested in getting involved please contact us via the Town Council or the website.



Ideas from Children and Young People to improve Verwood and Three Legged Cross

- "Provide more interesting after school clubs"
- "More parks please"
- "Stuff we can do for free to have fun"
- "More advertised place for people to take their kids when they have to work"
- "Fun place for disabled men and women to just relax and do what they want"
- "More Sports Activities"
- "A swimming pool"
- "Soft Play site"
- "More facilities for disabled people of 0-18 years"
- "Bigger Slide"
- "Make youth club bigger"
- "A play area where a kid can do whatever they want"
- "A 3 screen cinema"
- "Get old people and young people together and get along"