



# Our Future, Our Home

## Chiddingstone Parish Neighbourhood Plan Survey

October 2025





# Chiddingstone Parish Survey Results

October 2025

## Introduction

This survey was initiated by Chiddingstone Parish Council to gather feedback from the community on a variety of local topics to inform the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, intended to reflect aspirations to protect and evolve the parish over the next 20 years.

Following the designation of the Chiddingstone Parish Neighbourhood Area under Regulation 7(1), the survey commenced on 1st September 2025 and closed to responses on 20th October 2025.

The following should be noted:

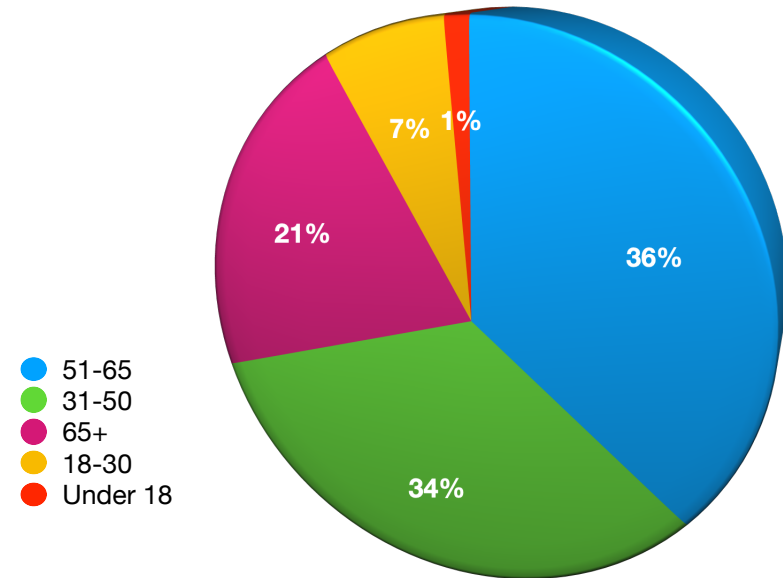
- The survey was made available online and advertised on social media and in the local Chiddingstone magazine
- Paper surveys were also made available in local outlets and support offered to assist its completion; all responses received were online
- In total, **373 responses** were received in the general survey
- According to the 2021 Census, the population of Chiddingstone Parish was 1,246 so 373 responses would equate to a **response rate of 30% of individuals**; assuming an average household size of roughly 2.4 people, or 520 households, which would equate to a **response rate of 72% of households**
- The survey included optional survey questions for farmers operating within Chiddingstone which received 46 responses and which is attached as Appendix 1
- The survey also included optional survey questions for businesses owned and operating from within Chiddingstone which received 23 responses and which is attached as Appendix 2
- In addition, a separate survey was conducted for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 students of Chiddingstone School which received 24 responses and which is attached as Appendix 3
- All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number
- All data was collected anonymously

**“This is my happy place and what I’ve worked so hard to achieve, living somewhere peaceful and truly special”**

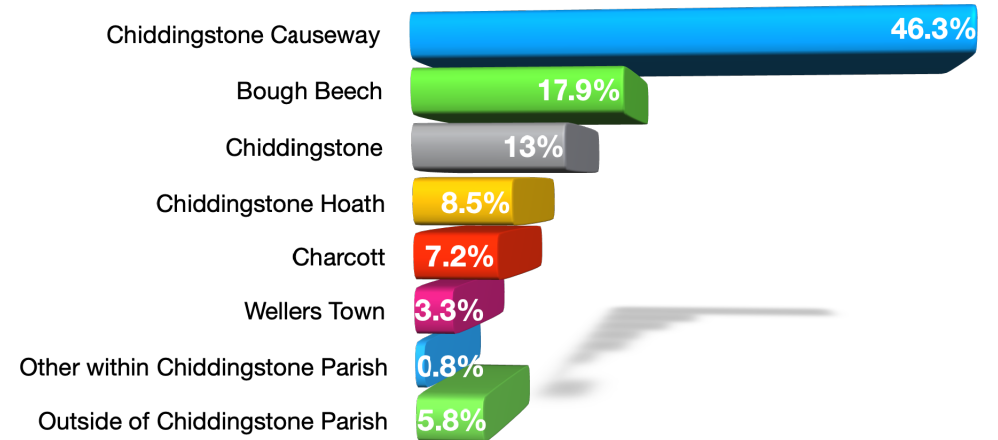
**Parish resident comment taken from the survey**

# General Survey

## 1. What age group are you?

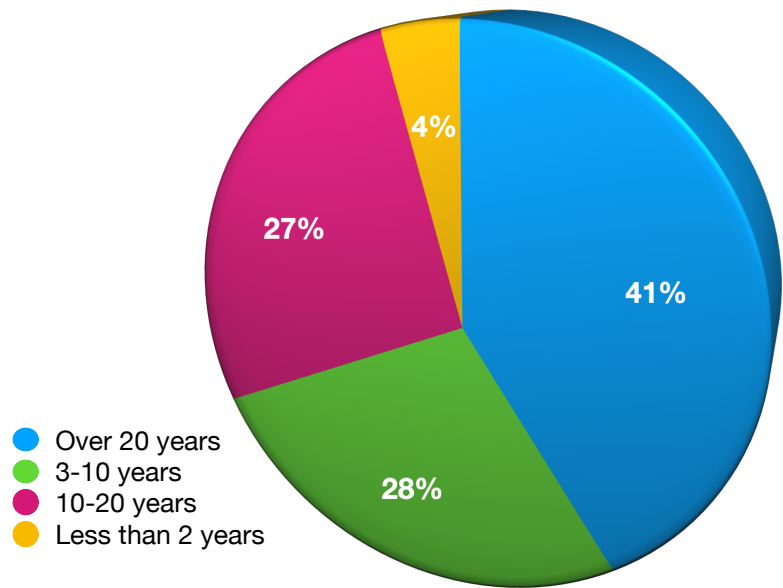


## 2. Which area of Chiddingstone Parish do you identify as living in?

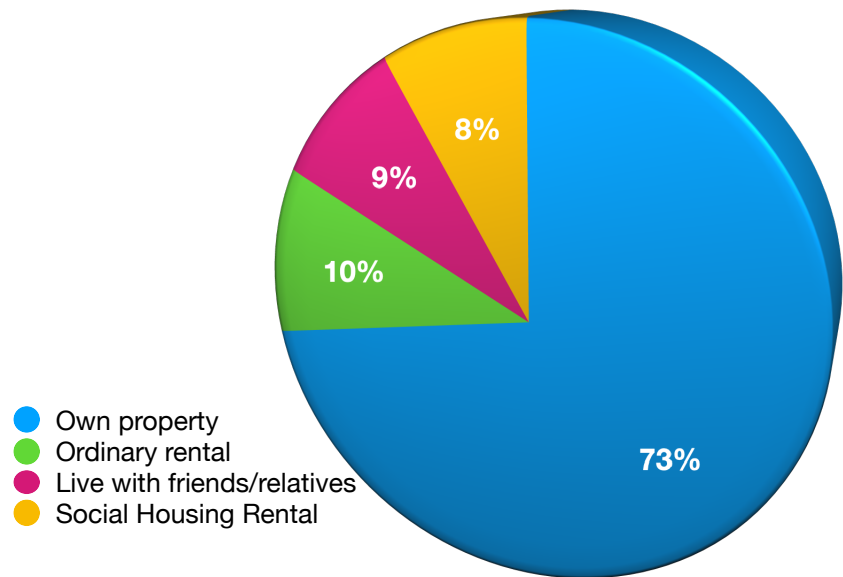




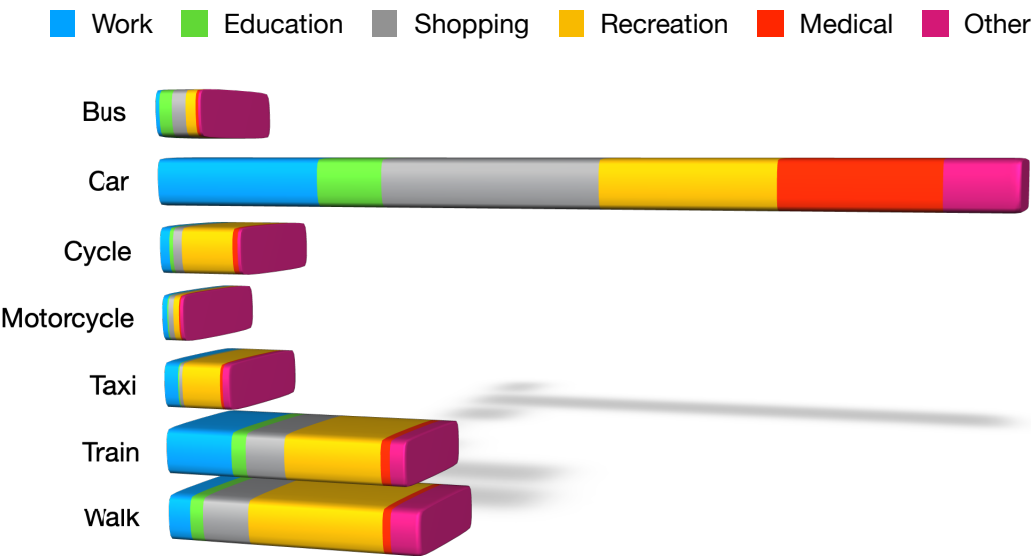
3. How long have you lived in Chiddingstone parish?



4. Do you own, rent or live with friends or relatives?



5. Which of the following forms of transport do you regularly use in or from within Chiddingstone parish and why?



The following reflects the individual count for each category:

Transport	Work	Education	Shopping	Recreation	Medical	Other
Bus	6	20	22	16	4	4
Car	250	97	312	239	210	95
Cycle	15	6	14	81	8	5
Motorcycle	8	2	8	9	2	5
Taxi	22	2	5	61	4	11
Train	105	23	61	149	14	23
Walk	35	21	73	210	12	44



## 6. Are there any areas in Chiddingstone parish where you believe there are parking issues currently or are likely to be in the future?

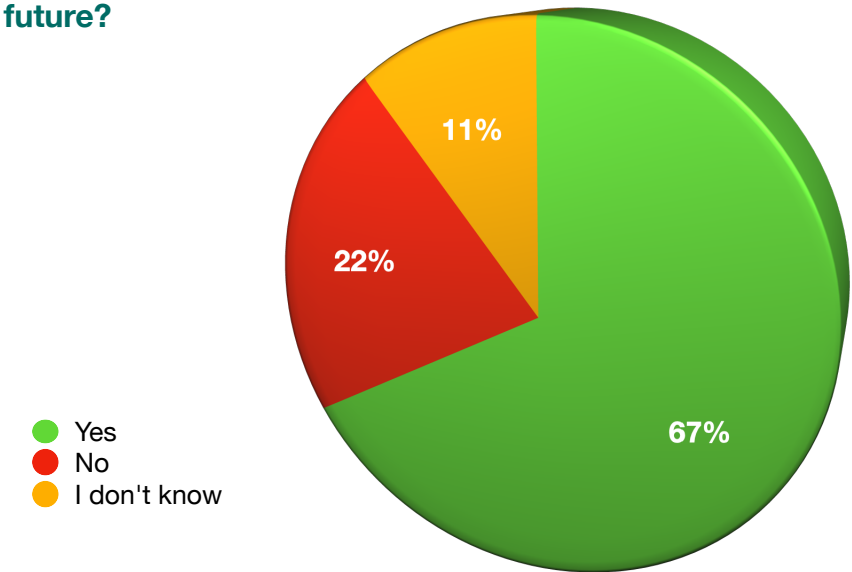
Rather than present multi-choice options which may have unduly influenced respondents, we chose to frame this as a free format open question to ensure all relevant concerns were captured. The following should be noted:

- 308 out of 373 responded to this question which equates to **82%**
- 99 mentions of **Chiddingstone Causeway** which equates to **26.5%**
- 108 references to **Chiddingstone Village** and 40 references to the **High Street** which related to the same location totalling 148 which equates to **40%**
- 9 references to **Bough Beech** which equates to **2.4%**
- 17 references to **Richards Close** which equates to **4.6%**
- 6 references to **Dukes Meadow** which equates to **1.6%**
- 6 references to **The Greyhound Public House** which equates to **1.6%**
- 20 references to **Penshurst Railway Station** which equates **5.3%**
- 26 references to **Village Hall** which equates to **7%** (note: this could refer to either the Village Hall in the High Street or the Causeway)
- 8 references to **Charcott** which equates to **2.1%**

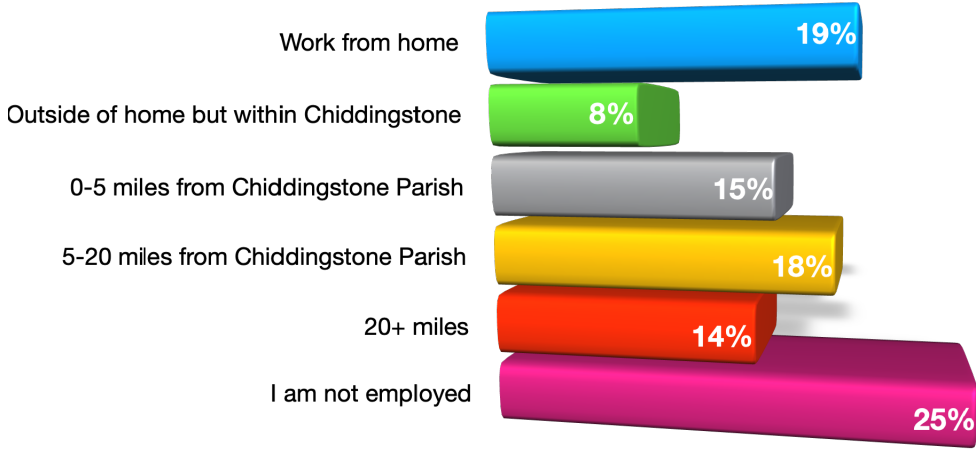
A selection of comments includes the following:

- *"The castle used to offer adequate space but new parking controls incentivise people to park in the village which can cause congestion and hazards"*
- *"If they implement a direct train from Penshurst to Gatwick there would need to be a parking solution provided. It is too short a journey for a taxi to be willing to offer a drop off service from Chiddingstone to Penshurst station"*
- *"In the village. Particularly from the pub down to The Old Rectory. It is frequently double parked blocking access. Local transport incl farmer/tractors cannot get through, hindering their work. Emergency services cannot pass either"*
- *"In Chiddingstone village - very full of cars now that the castle charges a fee for parking. Particularly dangerous at the corner by the pub"*
- *"Centre of Chiddingstone village particularly since the castle have started charging for parking"*
- *"Chiddingstone village around school times, and on the corner by the Castle Inn during busy pub times"*
- *"Lots of houses do not have driveways, or drives are historically built for one car. The average person in modern society has more than one car meaning there are more cars parked on the road, making it difficult for pedestrians or prams to pass"*
- *"All along the main thoroughfare from The Jug to past the shop. It is a problem now so will be worse in the future"*
- *"No parking at the Chiddingstone Causeway Store, leading to a bit of a hazard on the main road"*
- *"The village, people park on the corner, often pub customers and down both sides of the road, making it impossible for emergency vehicles to get through"*
- *"When the Village Hall or the Pub run out of spaces, people often park in Red Leaf Close, which causes a serious problem"*
- *"Railway station in the future if more houses built"*
- *"Penshurst station inadequate parking. No realistic drop off/collection, dangerous at peak times when children are being dropped off/picked up from trains"*
- *"Dangerous parking outside the Little Brown Jug at peak times. Charcott has little parking available for residents as well as those visiting the Greyhound pub"*
- *"Currently an overflow of 'Little Brown Jug' customers using the B027, an already busy through road! This would be exacerbated by a significant increase in population!"*

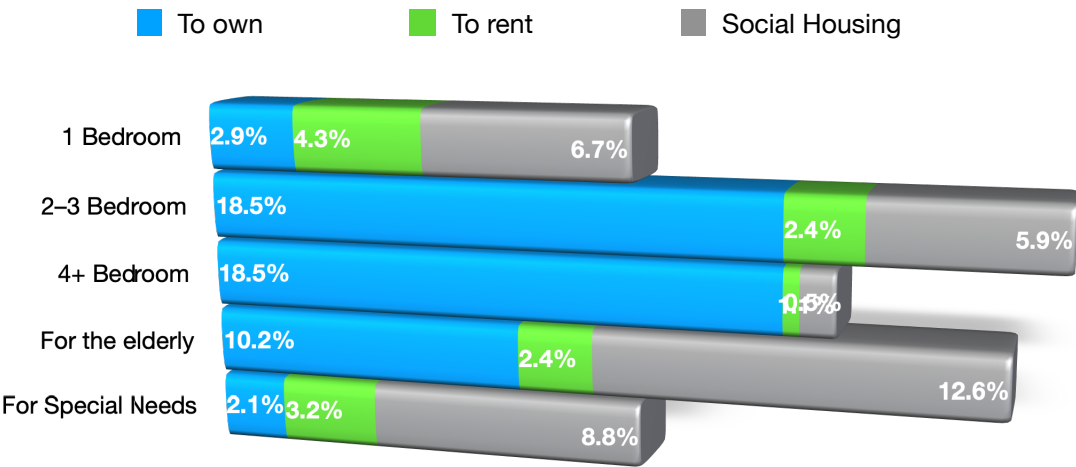
7. Do you believe a direct train connection from Penshurst station to Gatwick would be valuable for Chiddingstone parish in the future?



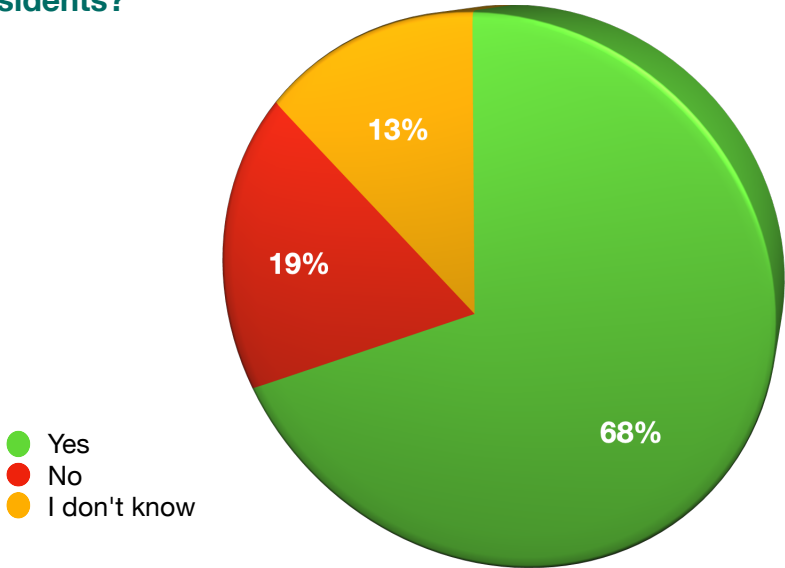
8. How close to Chiddingstone parish is your most common place of work?



9. What sort of homes do you think Chiddingstone parish needs over the next 20 years?

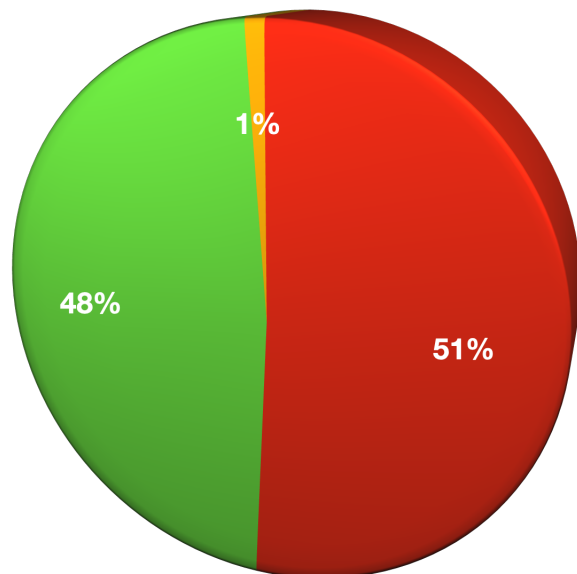


10. Would you support a small development of single storey accessible housing on the edge of one of our villages for older, local residents?



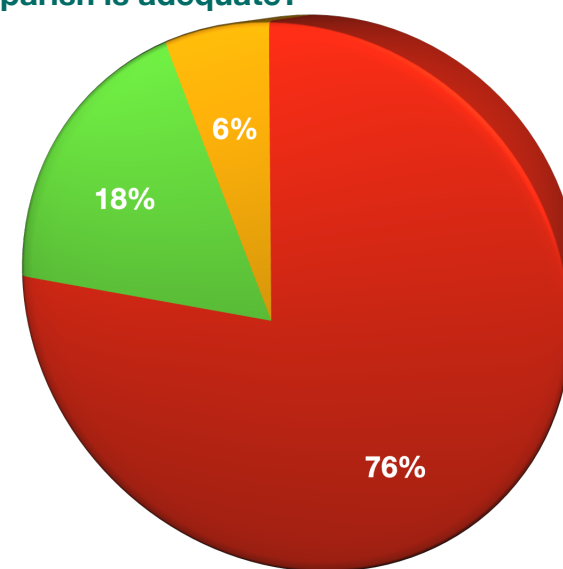


**11. Do you believe that broadband in your household or premises is adequate?**



- No
- Yes
- I don't know

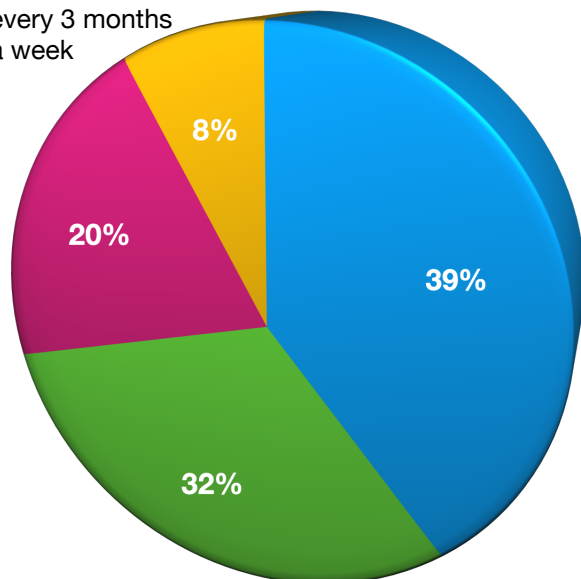
**12. Do you believe that mobile reception throughout Chiddingstone parish is adequate?**



- No
- Yes
- I don't know

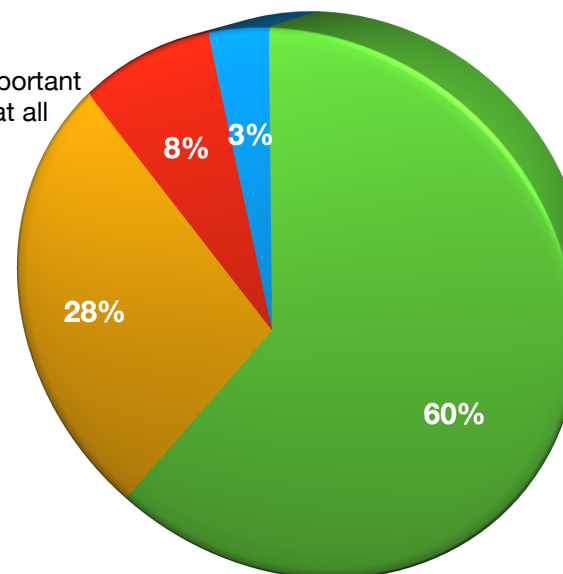
**13. How often do you eat or drink out in Chiddingstone parish?**

- At least once a month
- At least once every 3 months
- At least once a week
- Never



**14. How important do you believe a Dark Skies policy to minimise light pollution in Chiddingstone will be over the next 20 years?**

- Very important
- Reasonably important
- Not important at all
- I don't know



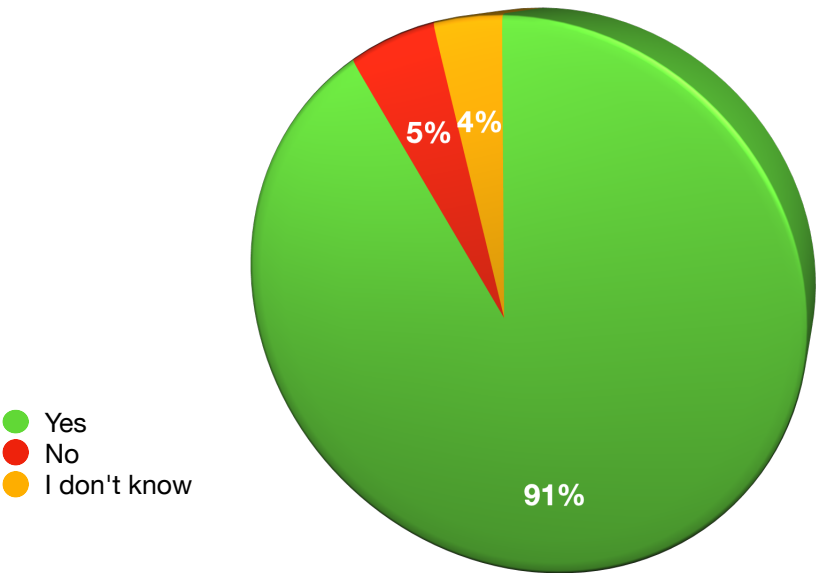
15. Do you work on a farm within Chiddingstone parish?

23 respondents (which equates to 6.2%) were directed to additional questions which are attached as Appendix 1

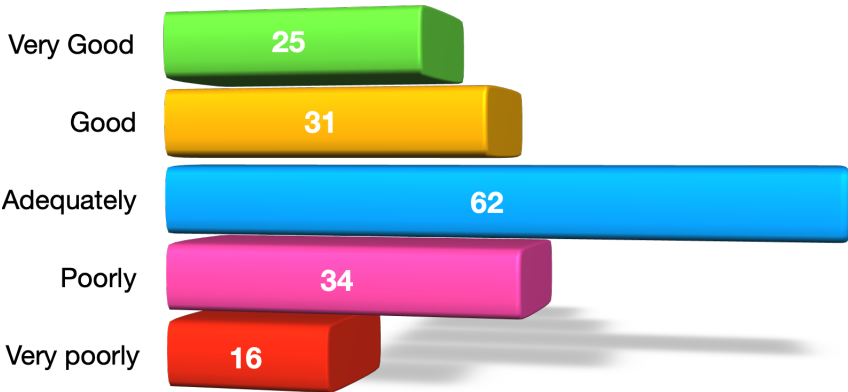
16. Do you own a local business (other than farming) which operates in Chiddingstone parish?

46 respondents (which equates to 12.3%) were directed to additional questions which are attached as Appendix 2

17. Do you feel safe and secure in Chiddingstone parish?

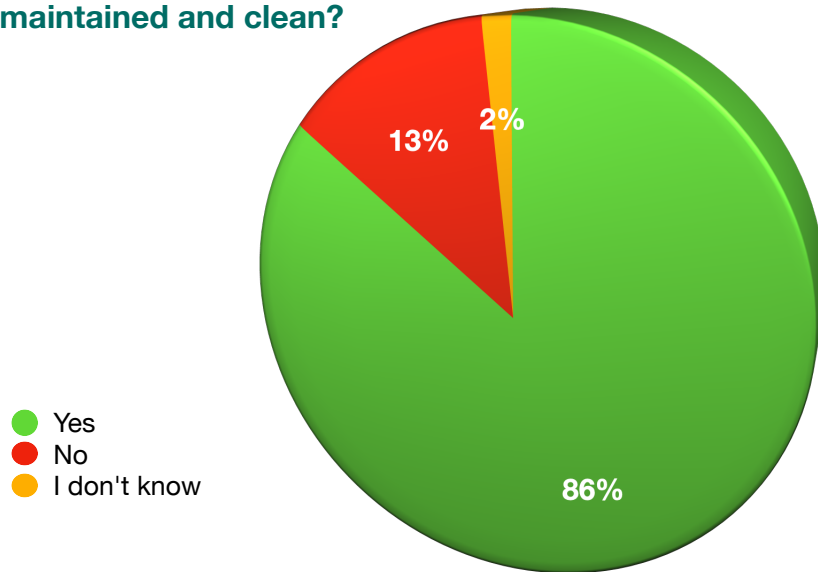


18. If you have had to rely on the police for an incident which occurred in Chiddingstone parish, how was it handled?

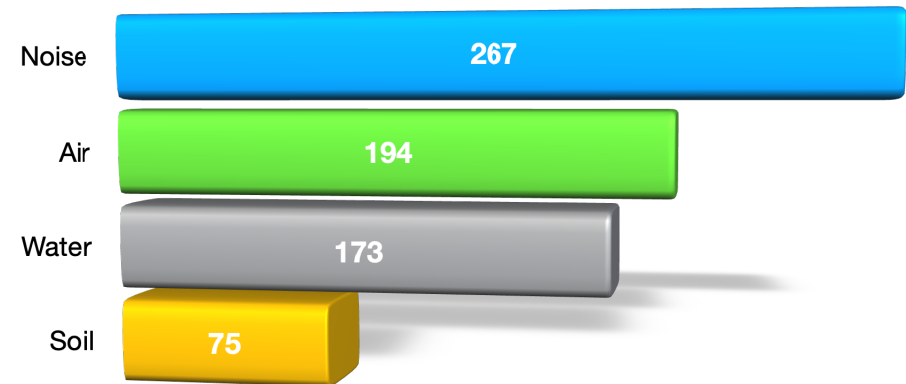




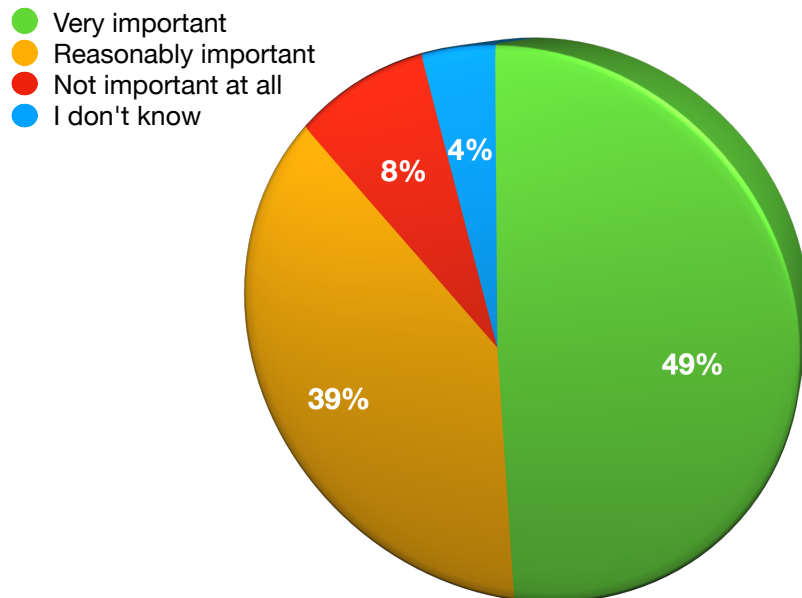
19. Do you think Chiddingstone parish is generally well-maintained and clean?



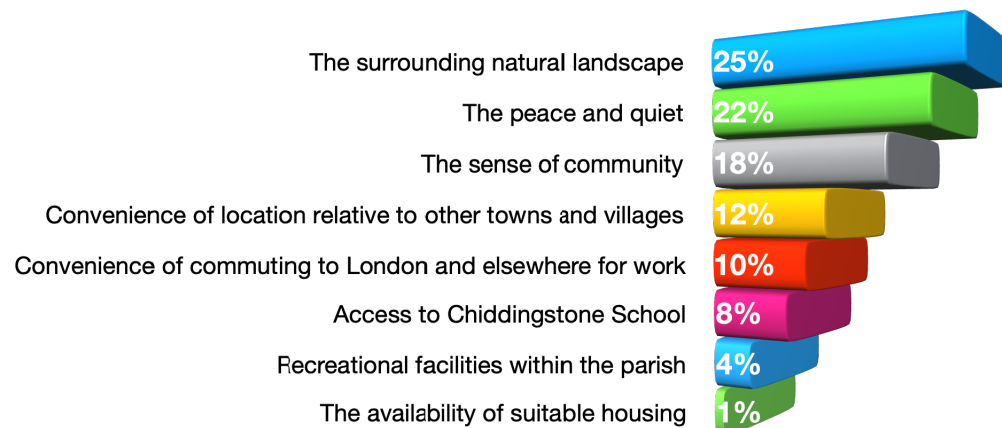
20. What sources of pollution in Chiddingstone parish are you concerned about?



21. How important to you is the likely impact of climate change on Chiddingstone parish in the next 20 years?



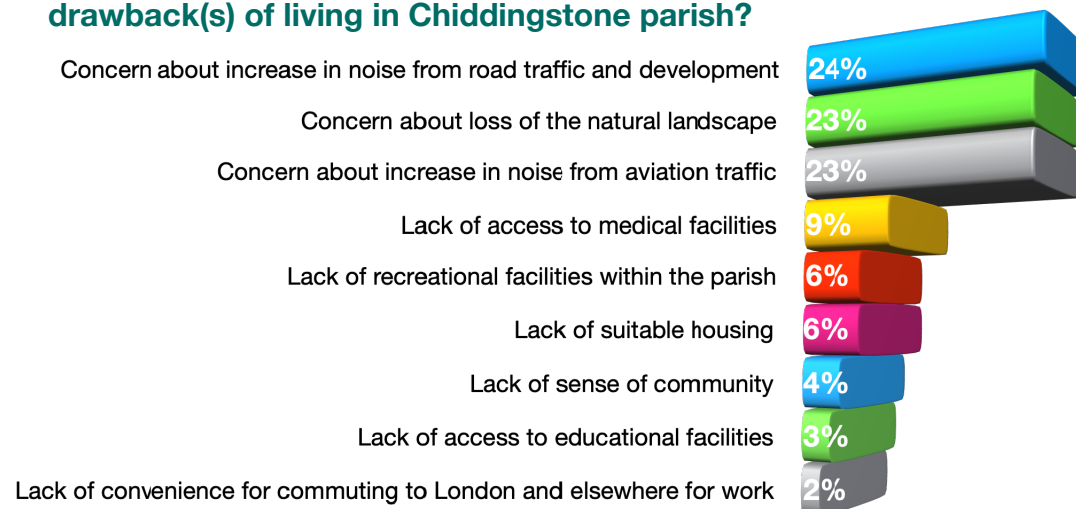
## 22. Which of the following do you consider to be the main benefit(s) of living in Chiddingstone parish?



Other comments volunteered in the survey included:

- *"The wealth of historic buildings is a unique and valuable aspect of the parish"*
- *"Access to Tonbridge for secondary school"*
- *"Pubs and walks"*
- *"Local shops"*
- *"Convenient to visit family within 10miles"*
- *"I need to feel safe in my parental home as well as the peace and quiet for my mental health recovery"*
- *"Access to other excellent primary schools such as Leigh"*
- *"Convenience of travelling to/from London for culture"*
- *"Feeling safe. Low levels of anti-social behaviour due to minimal social housing"*
- *"Being able to look out over the view of the farmers field from my bungalow"*
- *"Our family has lived here for generations. We were only able to move back to the area due to a social housing swap. We are unable to afford to rent or buy in this area but both work within the parish"*
- *"Surrounded by amazing views and outstanding natural beauty. This is my happy place and what I've worked so hard to achieve – living somewhere peaceful and truly special. I love looking out of my windows at the beautiful scenery and enjoying the tranquillity of such a small village"*
- *"The Church"*

## 23. Which of the following do you consider to be the main drawback(s) of living in Chiddingstone parish?



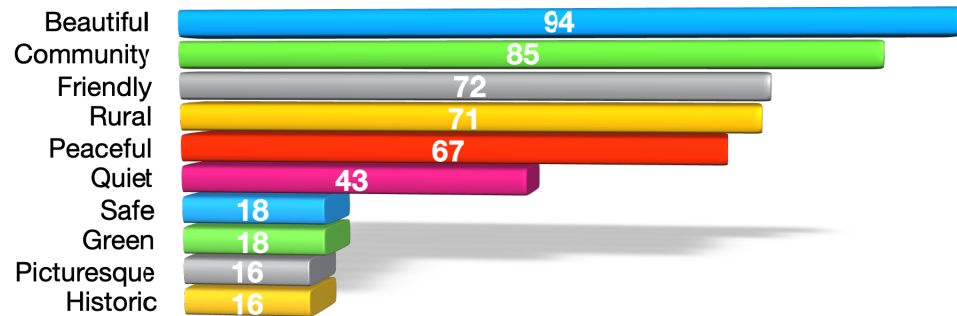
Other comments volunteered in the survey included:

- *"Trend towards agricultural hubs with increased two way heavy traffic"*
- *"Potholes and frequent mains water leaks/bursts"*
- *"Concerned about the impact of rumoured traveller communities setting up without planning consideration in nearby Hever"*
- *"Speeding through is a major issue. 30mph limit but a lot go through at national limit"*
- *"Lack of road safety and dangerous fast farm traffic"*
- *"Regular use of the public roads at weekends by cycling club"*
- *"Speed of cars down Camp Hill"*
- *"Noise from trains"*
- *"Lack of starter homes"*
- *"Lack of safe pavements around Chiddingstone Causeway"*
- *"The village being considered for development - particularly social housing"*
- *"Flooded roads"*
- *"Public transport is restricting and many changes are needed to get to local towns"*



## 23. What three words would you best use to describe Chiddingstone Parish?

The following reflects the 10 most commonly used words provided in responses:



## Analysis of additional comments

In response to the invitation to “*Please feel free to add any other comments*”, comments have been categorised as follows:

Category	Main Concern	Frequency (approx.)
Opposition to large-scale housing	Overdevelopment threat	Very high
Rural/environmental preservation	Green belt & wildlife	Very high
Infrastructure & services	Lack of capacity	High
Small/local housing support	Controlled growth	Moderate
Environmental & flooding	Sustainability	Moderate
Community & identity	Village spirit	Moderate
Connectivity & broadband	Poor service	Low–moderate
Traffic & transport	Speeding, congestion	Low–moderate

## Analysis of additional comments (continued)

Representative quotes for each categorisation theme are as follows:

### Opposition to Large-Scale Housing Development

- *"The proposed housing in Chiddingstone Causeway is an abomination. It will destroy the character of not only that village but the entire area"*
- *"To build up to 300 houses on the land behind The Little Brown Jug would be detrimental to the whole village"*
- *"I'm extremely concerned about the plan for large scale development in Chiddingstone Causeway. This would totally swamp the existing village, affect the community spirit and destroy beautiful countryside"*

### Preservation of Rural Character and Environment

- *"Once we let the countryside go it's gone forever"*
- *"Important to protect countryside and associated wildlife"*
- *"Chiddingstone Causeway is one of the most beautiful and unspoilt parts of the country... Large-scale development on green belt land would permanently damage what makes this place special"*

### Infrastructure and Services

- *"Before building any housing in or around Chiddingstone we should put in place better infrastructure — roads, drainage, schools, shops, recreational facilities, etc"*
- *"Chiddingstone Causeway/parish does not have the necessary amenities to support large-scale housing developments as proposed"*
- *"There is no school in the Causeway, no doctor surgery, poor and inadequate bus service, and only an hourly train"*

### Desire for Small, Local, and Affordable Housing

- *"Please keep any new housing developments small, so as not to ruin our villages. New housing should be primarily for local people"*
- *"I would be in favour of four to six houses for the elderly being built on the brown field site that is the old council yard, but no more larger housing developments in the parish"*
- *"Increased provision of housing, social and freehold, for those with a link to Chiddingstone"*

### Environmental and Climate Concerns

- *"Proposed housing plans would have serious flooding implications to Red Leaf Close area which already floods and would only make it far worse"*
- *"Increased aviation noise is a major concern"*
- *"We live in a wonderful part of the South East, don't ruin it by the short-sightedness of local and national government"*

### Community and Local Identity

- *"I love the sense of belonging to this community where people pull together to help each other through good and bad situations"*
- *"The parish council needs to stick up for the residents of Chiddingstone Causeway who have already had lots of new houses"*
- *"This is the best parish with the finest people"*

### Connectivity and Broadband

- *"Broadband coverage inadequate"*
- *"Get broadband and mobile improved"*
- *"Nothing except improving broadband as can be slow"*

### Traffic, Transport, and Noise

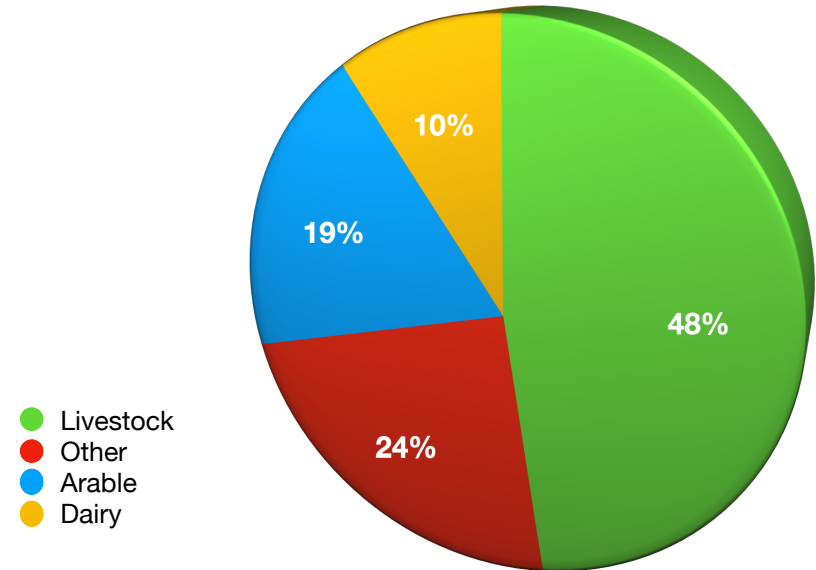
- *"Slower and less traffic – we do not have a pedestrian path"*
- *"Concern over traffic levels in the Causeway... further traffic calming measures should be considered"*
- *"Airspace modernisation will deliver lowered, concentrated flightpaths directly over the village and destroy its tranquillity"*



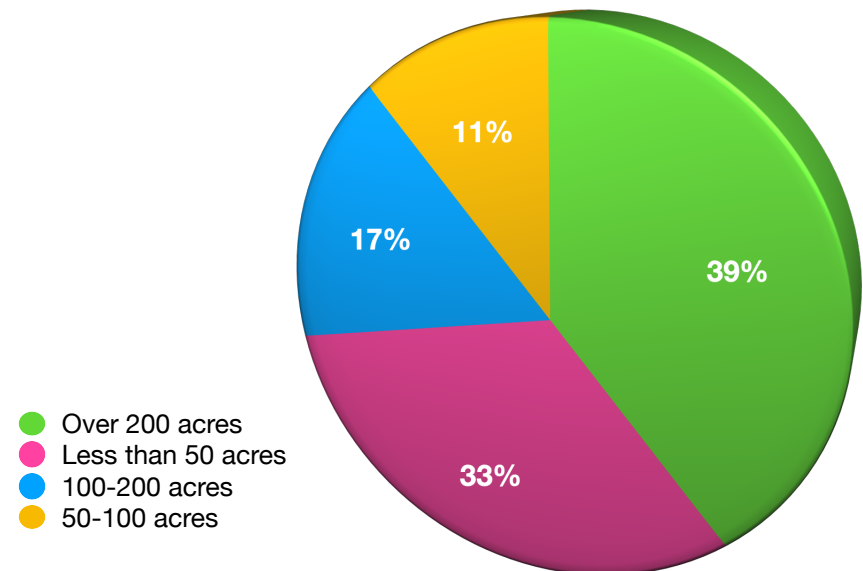
# Appendix 1

## Farming Survey

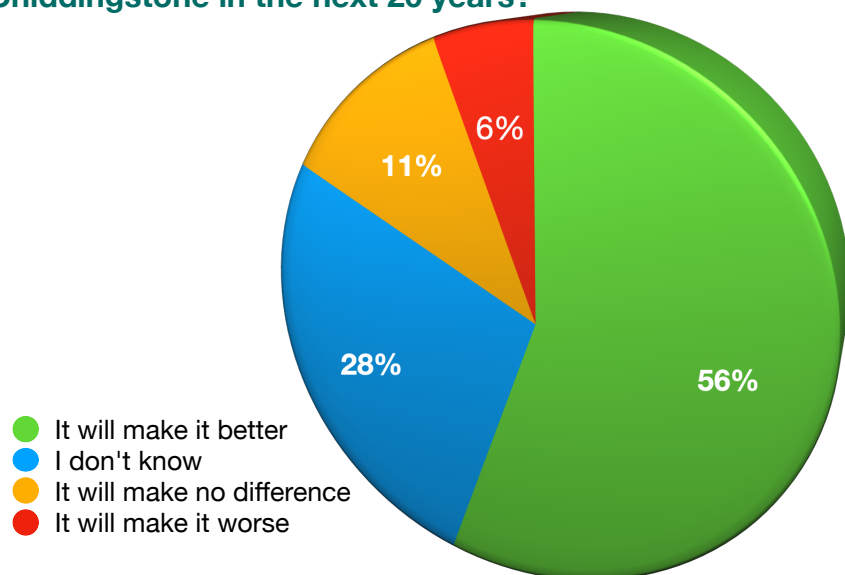
F1. What type of farming do you engage in?



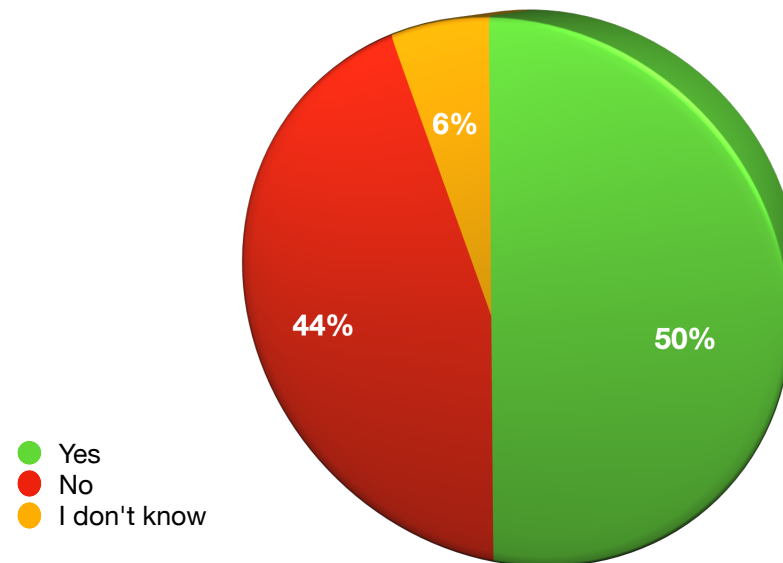
F2. What is the size of the farm?



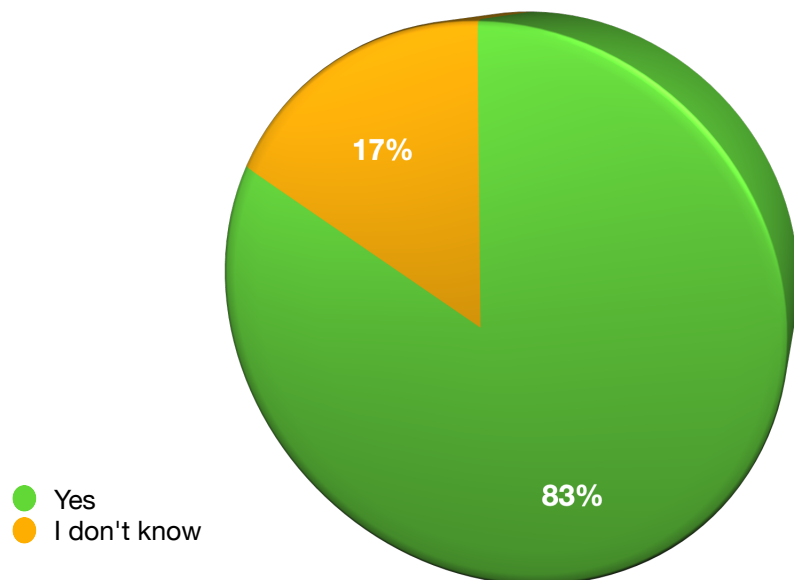
**F3. How do you think technology will change farming in Chiddingstone in the next 20 years?**



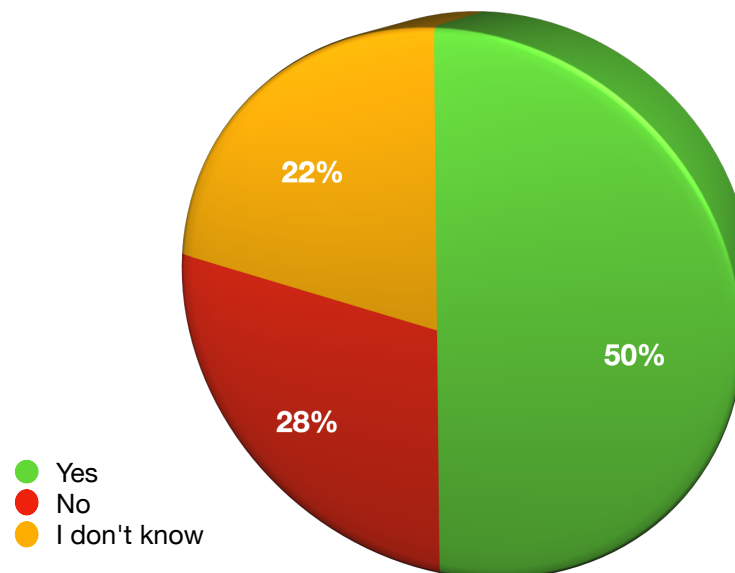
**F4. Do you experience water shortages?**



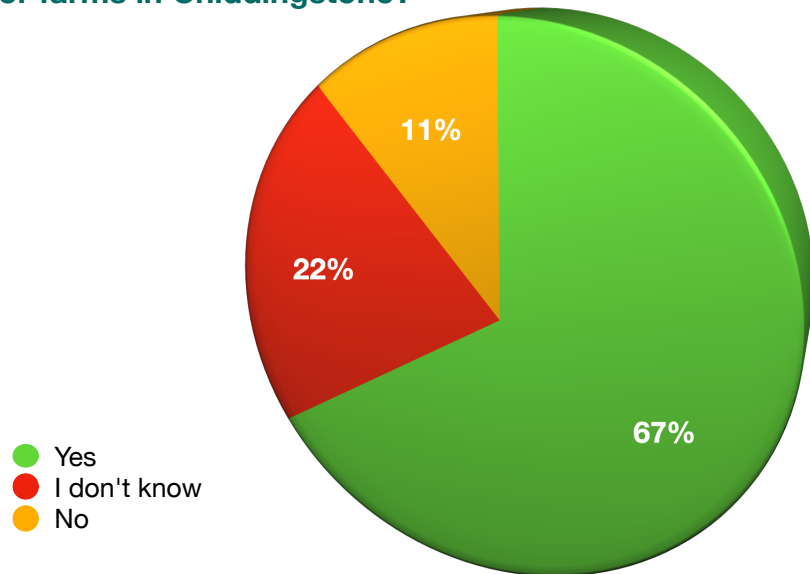
**F5. Would you encourage others to pursue farming in Chiddingstone?**



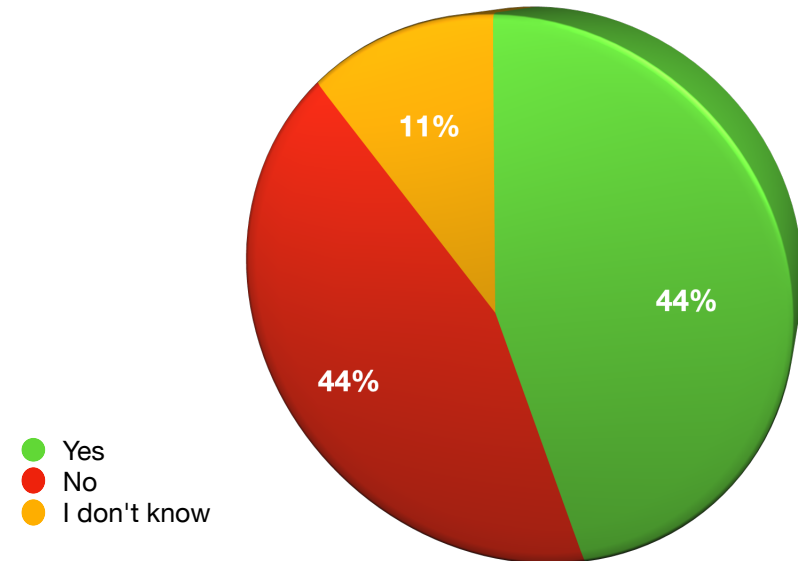
**F6. Do you farm within a National Landscape area?**



**F7. Do you think being within a National Landscape is a good thing for farms in Chiddingstone?**



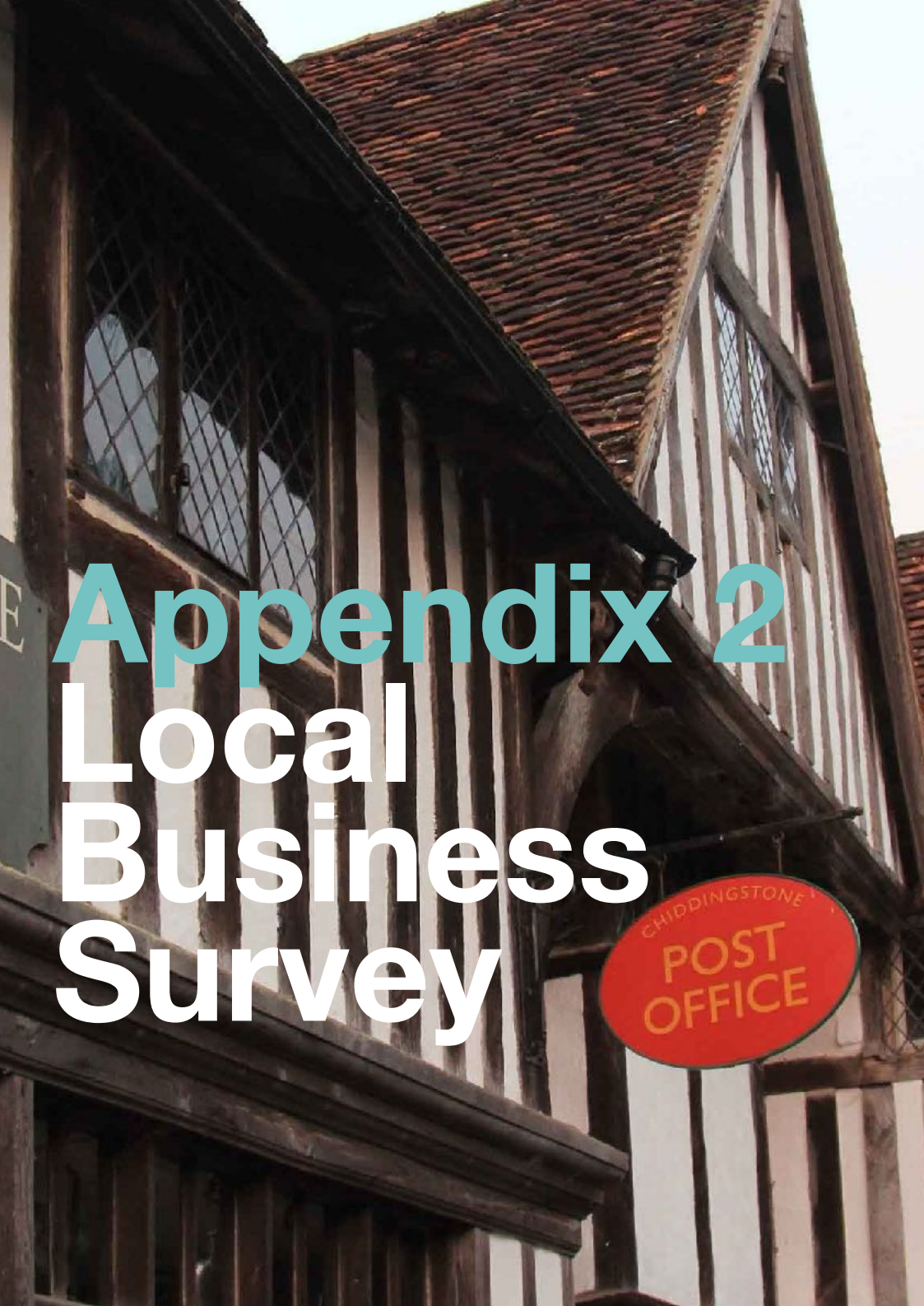
**F8. Are you in a Countryside Stewardship Scheme?**



**F9. What would you like to see happen to better support your farm in Chiddingstone parish in the next 20 years?**

- "Better protection for farm land from development"
- "Better grants and financial support"
- "Better prices"
- "No development"
- "A food security plan for the area; to join up farms across the catchment to manage the land sensitively and in harmony with nature and to provide food for the local area"
- "Affordable housing for (farm) workers"
- "Further development of local hub"
- "Speed restrictions"
- "Governments to make growing food locally mandatory"
- "For local youngsters to be able to afford to live in the area and pursue a sustainable farming lifestyle"
- "Get broadband and mobile improved"
- "Road signage to slow traffic and raise awareness of other agricultural road users"
- "Farmers market or network"
- "Greater importance on food security on a national scale as well as better policing for thefts and vandalism/fly tipping"
- "Less weekend cyclists – carting stock on a Sunday is almost impossible"





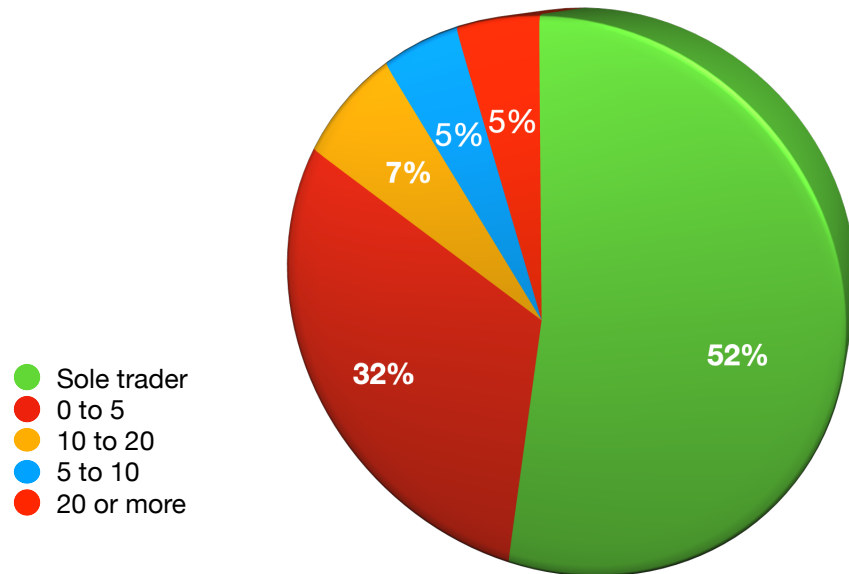
# Appendix 2

## Local Business Survey

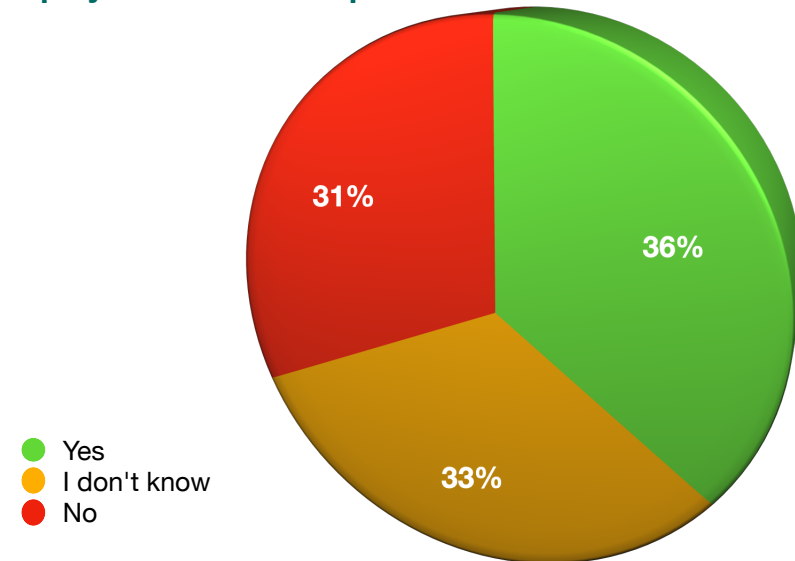
**B1. If you own a business that operates from your home in Chiddingstone parish, what type of business is it?**



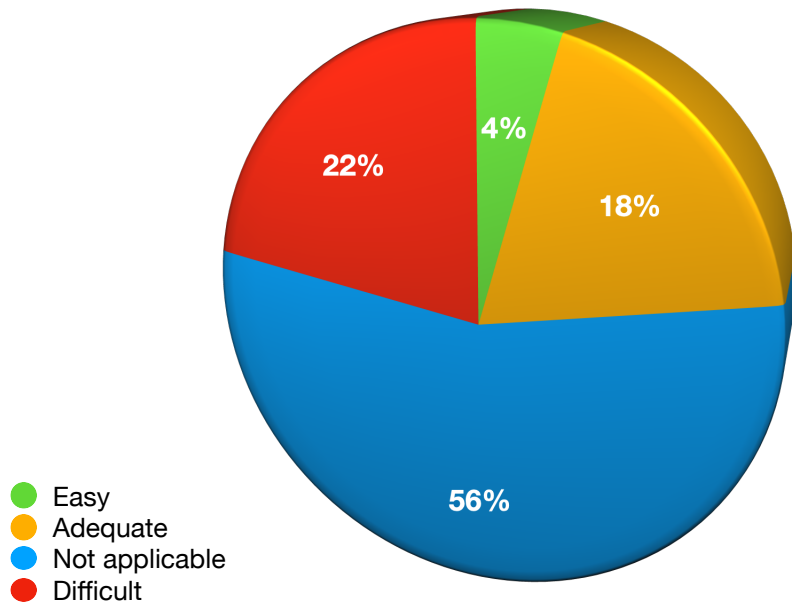
**B2. How many people do you employ?**



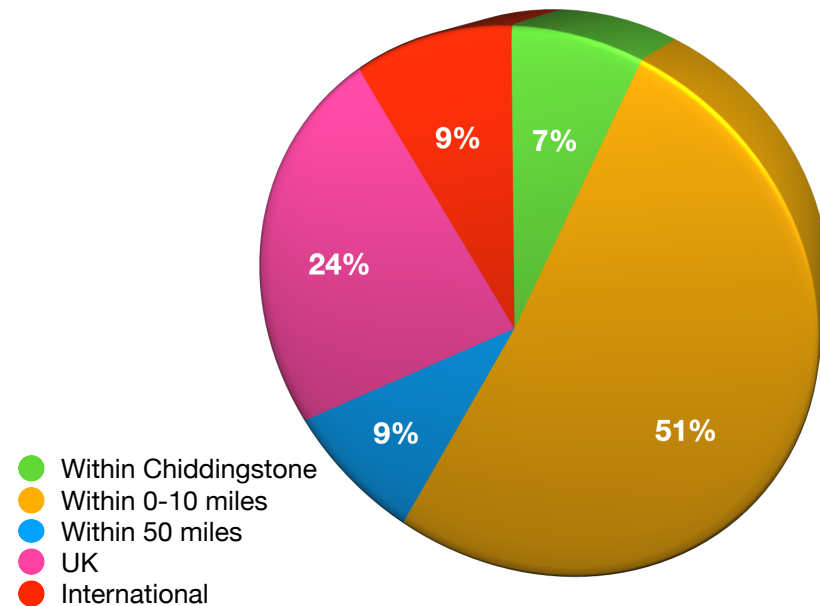
**B3. Do you feel that there are sufficient opportunities for local employment within the parish?**



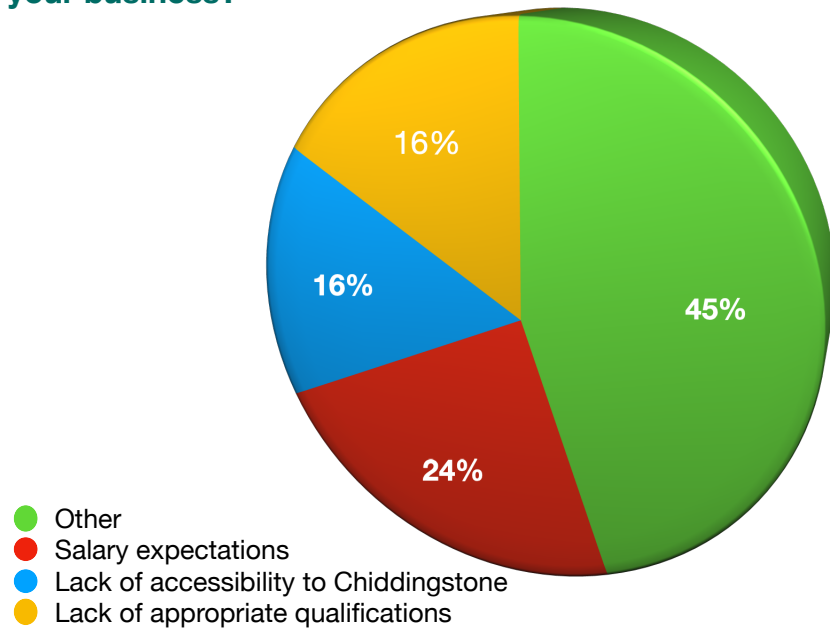
**B4. How do you find employing suitable staff in your business?**



**B5. Where are your main customers typically?**



**B6. What is your biggest challenge in recruiting suitable staff in your business?**



**B7. What would you like to see happen within Chiddingstone parish to better support your business over the next 20 years?**

Responses included the following:

- *"Build a better business community"*
- *"More apprenticeships"*
- *"Community support from local people coming to buy"*
- *"Broadband connection, road improvements, flood control"*
- *"More homes will mean more customers for our business"*
- *"Nothing except improving broadband as can be slow"*
- *"Broadband and improved transportation"*
- *"Fibre internet, padel courts, hot desking at pub"*
- *"Speed limits, street lighting, small business support"*
- *"Better public transport links"*
- *"Training opportunities for the young"*
- *"Invest in infrastructure"*



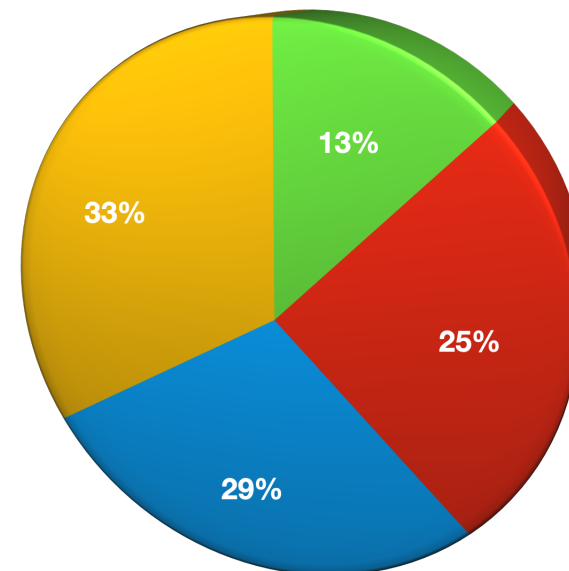
# Appendix 3

## KS1 & KS2

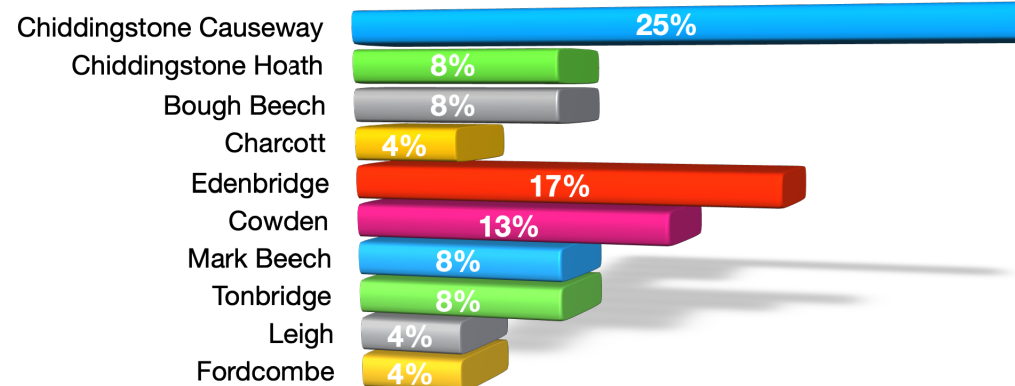
### School Survey

#### S1. What age group are you?

- 4-5
- 6-7
- 8-9
- 10-11

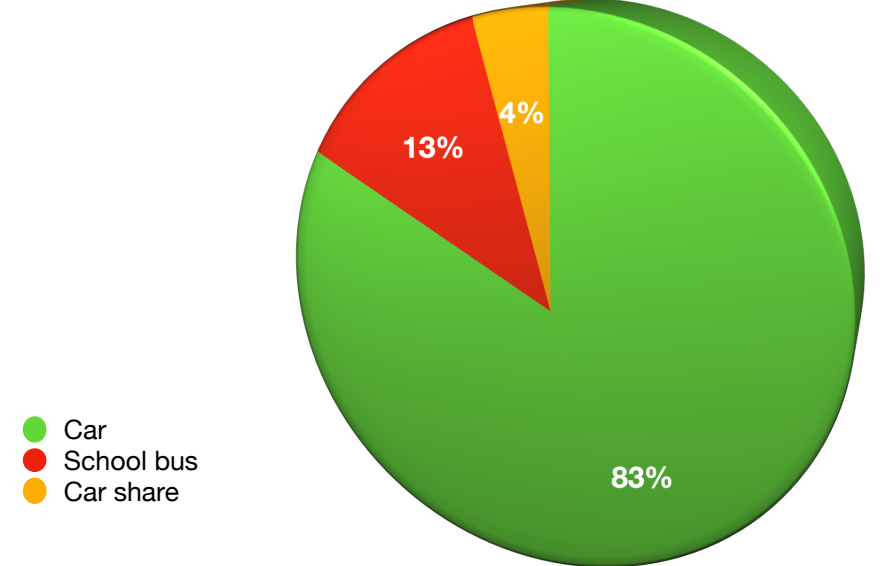


#### S2. Where do you live?

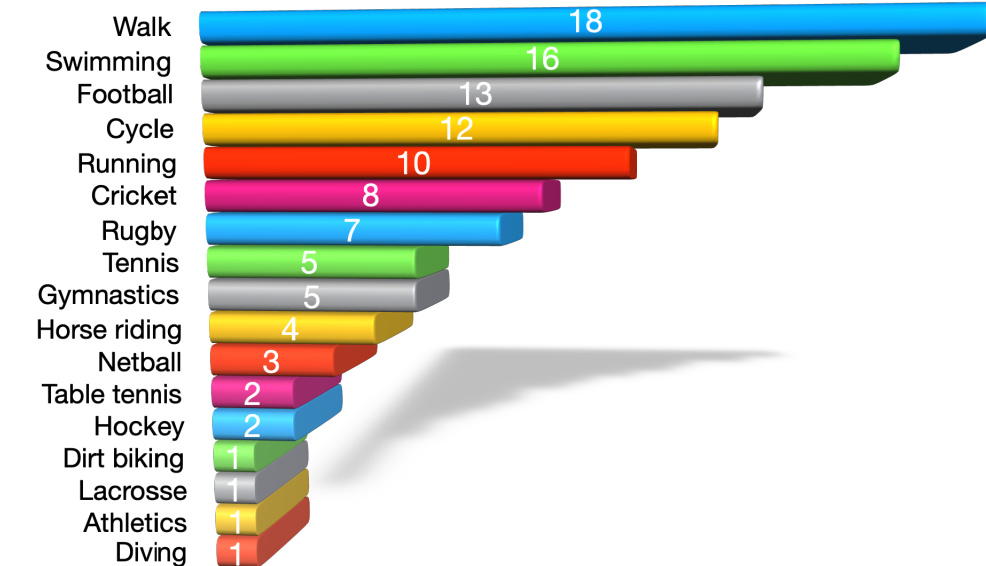




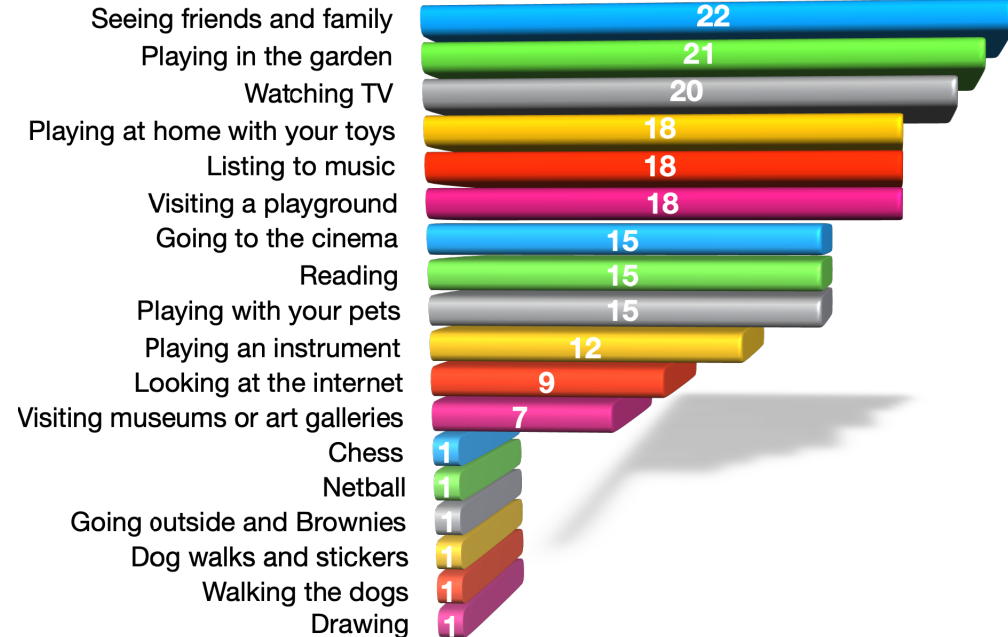
**S3. Which of the following do you mostly travel by to get to Chiddingstone School?**



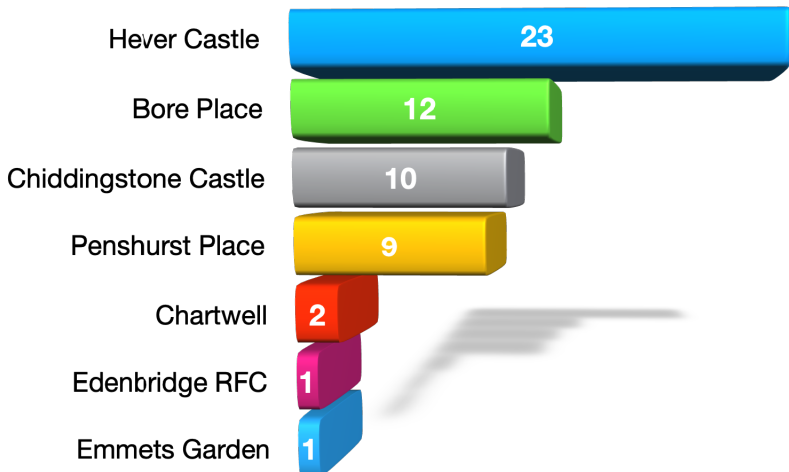
**S4. Which of the following types of exercise do you do regularly?**



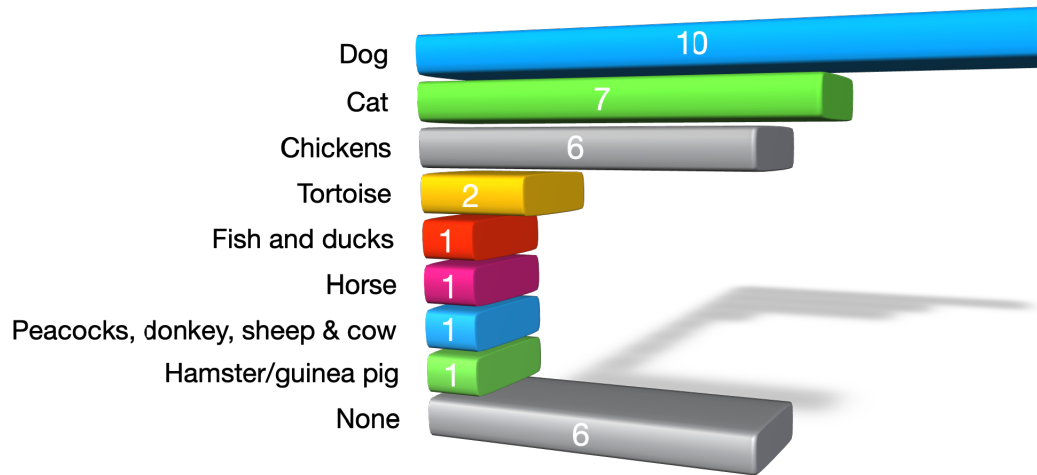
**S5. What other activities do you enjoy?**



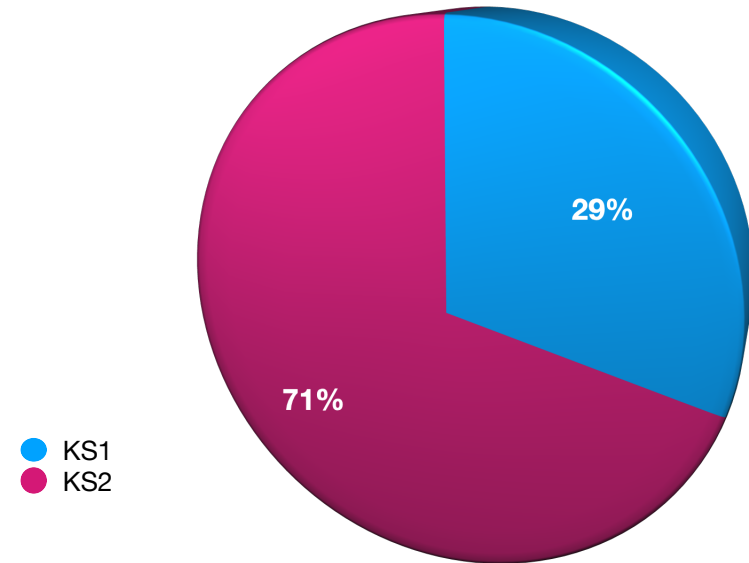
**S6. Do you enjoy visiting the following local sites?**



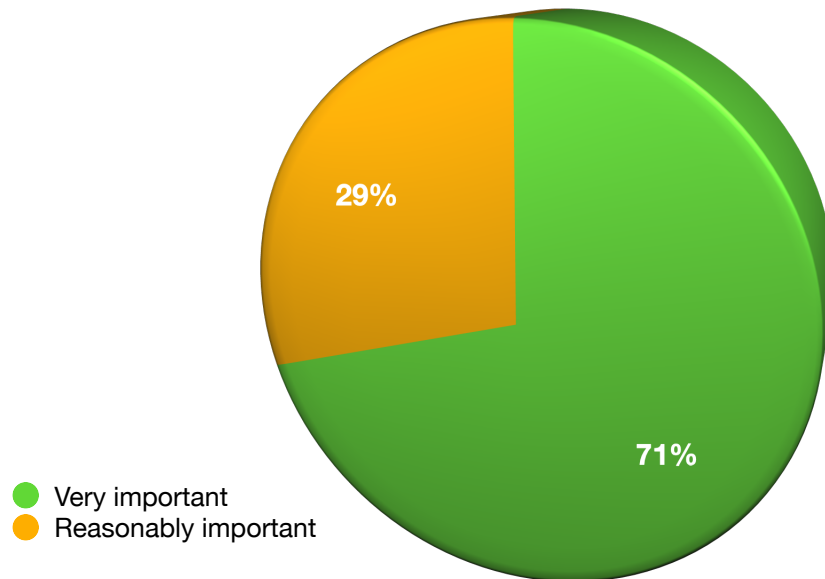
### S7. Do you have any pets?



### S8. Are you in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2?

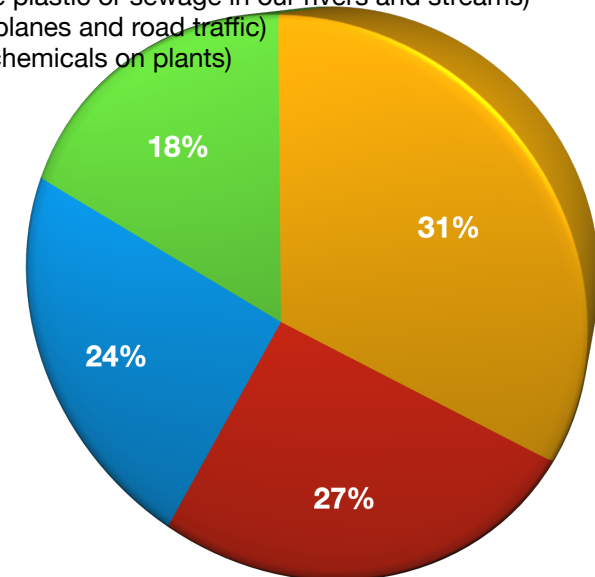


### S9. How important do you think the impact of climate change is likely to be in Chiddingstone over the next 20 years??

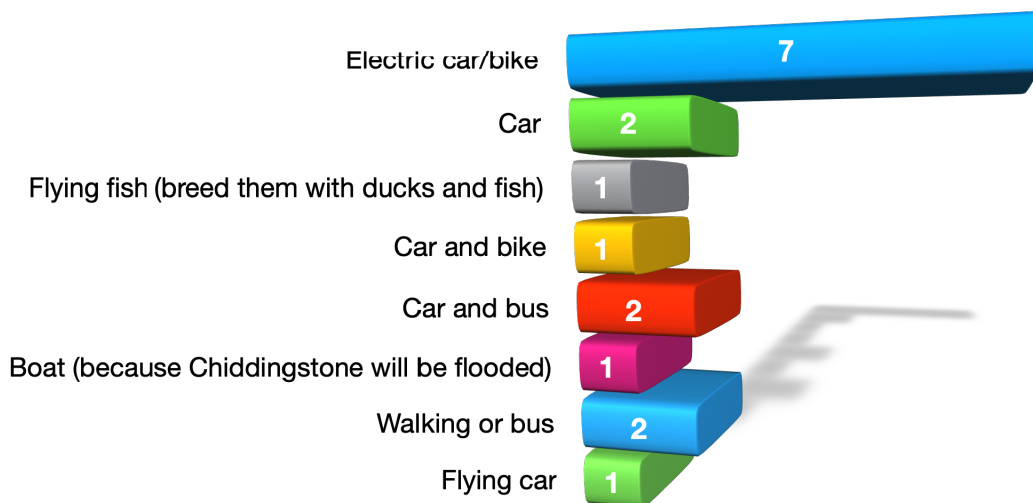


### S10. What types pollution in Chiddingstone are you concerned about?

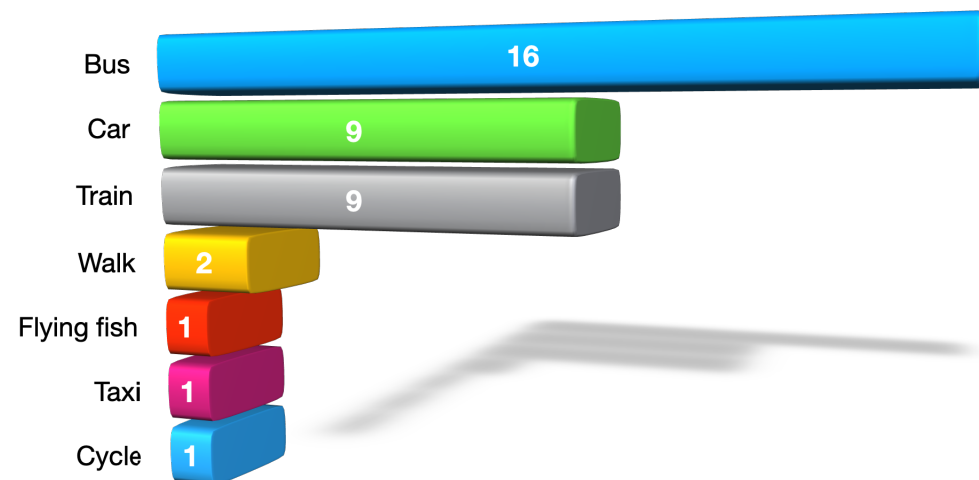
- Air (e.g. smoke and exhaust fumes)
- Water (e.g. like plastic or sewage in our rivers and streams)
- Noise (e.g. airplanes and road traffic)
- Soil (e.g. like chemicals on plants)



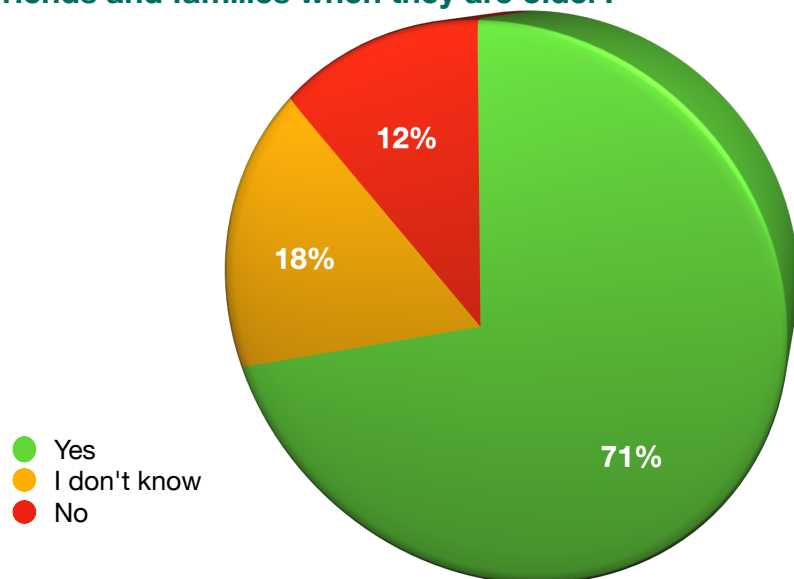
**S11. How do you think people in Chiddingstone will travel in 20 years time?**



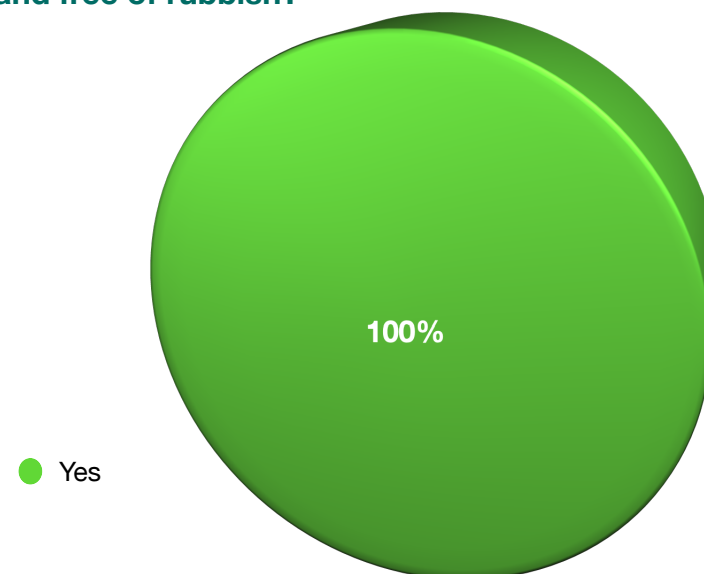
**S12. When you go to Secondary School, how do you think you will get there?**



**S13. Do you think it is important that people can afford to live in the area where they grew up or work, or to be close to their friends and families when they are older?**



**S14. Do you think it is important that the areas where we live are clean and free of rubbish?**



**S15. What three words would you use to best describe Chiddingstone parish?**

- *"Beautiful quiet amazing"*
- *"Beautiful old lovely"*
- *"Tudorish"*
- *"Attractive"*
- *"Old"*
- *"Lovely"*
- *"Safe"*
- *"Small"*
- *"Friends"*
- *"Happy"*
- *"Quiet"*
- *"Peaceful"*
- *"Pretty"*
- *"Historic"*
- *"A good community"*
- *"Beautiful"*
- *"Green and pretty"*
- *"Overdeveloped"*
- *"Kind reasonable and smart"*
- *"Friendly"*
- *"Nice school"*
- *"An amazing school"*
- *"Kind respectful safe"*
- *"Safe clean local"*
- *"Green quiet country"*
- *"Not grey"*
- *"Green"*
- *"Declining"*
- *"Urbanisation"*
- *"Old and natural"*

**S16. If you could think of just one thing that would make Chiddingstone an even better place to live in the next 20 years, what would it be?**

- *"Less traffic"*
- *"Riding stables"*
- *"Stop people developing houses"*
- *"More footpaths for safer walks with the dogs"*
- *"A playground on the green"*
- *"Less pollution in the air and fields around us"*
- *"Less shop bought things and less rubbish and things that we don't need less of all of that"*
- *"No more houses"*
- *"Ball sports facilities"*
- *"Running track and rugby pitch"*
- *"I would say less traffic to get to school"*
- *"A golf course and buses and a big car park with a play park with swings and stuff"*
- *"A village swimming pool"*
- *"Less smoke from cars to stop pollution"*
- *"But no new developments or housing estates would be the worst"*
- *"Its good to have more modern houses and extensions but around it is getting overdeveloped"*
- *"The Hoath and Causeway specifically as the village is nice and old fashioned especially near the main village"*
- *"Eco friendly water fountains"*