



Pluckley Village Appraisal for the Millennium

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Cover picture by Amy Oliver, aged 7 years

Contents

Introduction	3
Pluckley: The village and its origins	4
People, Housing	6
Public Services	9
Transport	19
Traffic Problems	20
Environment	21
Religion	24
Sport & Leisure / Clubs & Societies	25
Conclusions	32
Appendix A	34
Appendix B – Individual Question Counts	37

Introduction

In 1998, a public meeting was held in the village hall to find out what interest there was within the village to do something in time for the millennium. The idea of a village appraisal was raised along with other ideas: a village sign, a street party, and planting trees.

The Women's Institute had produced a magnificent scrapbook of village life in 1965, but apart from a history of the village written by Jackie Grebby in 1991 and the publicity from 'The Darling Buds of May', Pluckley had not been in print in recent years.

An appraisal committee was formed and, after several meetings, a questionnaire was agreed. A band of helpers distributed them to every household in the village and collected them. 68% of the village replied. My grateful thanks go to all those who completed this task.

An extra group of people who possessed computers were drafted in to enter the questionnaires onto their machines – aided and abetted by Jackie Grebby.

Every club, organisation, and business was approached and asked for a little bit of history: what they do at present and what of their future.

From then on, the meetings were spent analysing results, writing reports, putting everything together, and grand discussions. Despite the amount of time involved everyone tried to attend all the meetings. Jackie Grebby and I even went up in a light aircraft in an effort to get some aerial photographs of the village. All I managed to do was to get the camera stuck and go a lovely shade of green! The next week I tried a balloon flight which was much more peaceful.

At last, along with a little bit of history and here and now of our village and the report on our questionnaire findings, we present you with one of our Millennium projects: The Pluckley Village Appraisal

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Janet Gwillim, Co-ordinator

Pluckley Village Millennium Committee

Michael Barton
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Jessamy Blanford
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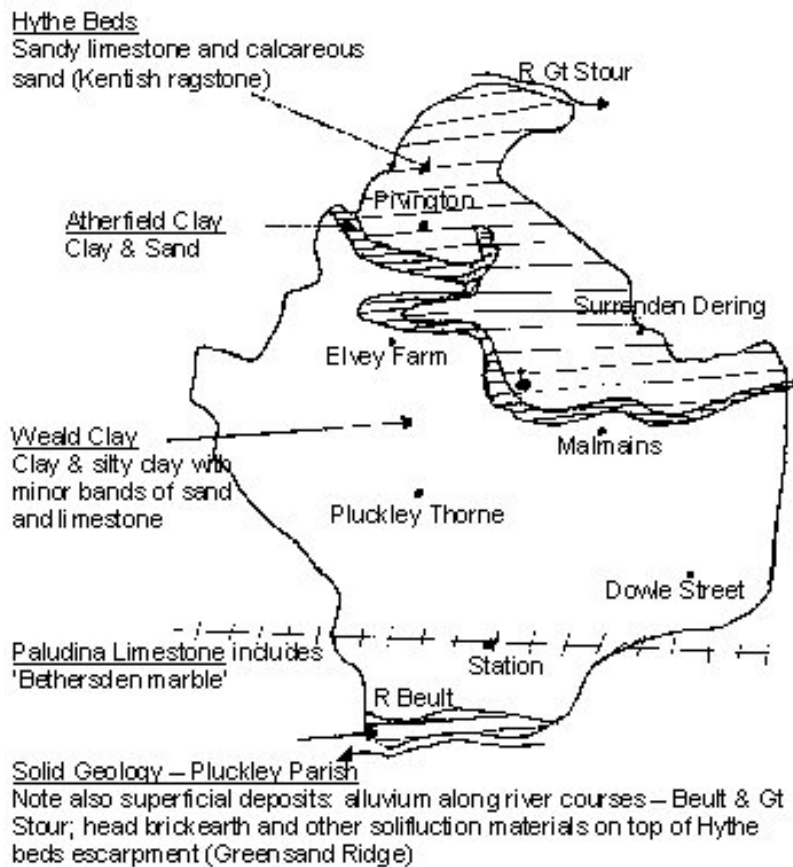
Kate Buss
Ann Murray

Eileen English
Ray Reese

Also, the helpers who delivered the questionnaires and entered data on their computers; too numerous to mention by name.

Note: To ease the flow of reading, all printed statistical percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number

Pluckley: The village and its origins



The parish of Pluckley covers 3,093 acres. To the south stretches what remains of the ancient Jutish forest, the 'Andredsweald.' There are 419 households on the 1999 electoral roll and approximately 1,000 people living in Pluckley (720 on the electoral roll and the remainder are under 18-years old.) Each household received a questionnaire and 285 were returned: a total of 681 people of all ages. So the response to the survey was 285/419 – 68%, which is very good for a village survey.

Geology

The Greensand Ridge separating the higher, drier north from the lower, wetter south of the parish makes the main geological divide. The Hythe Beds rise to over 100 metres above sea level and include ragstone; a deeply fissured, chalky sandstone mixed with hassock and clays. This mix forms lighter, generally well-drained, but still mixed soils.

Overlying the Hythe beds are some recent superficial deposits such as head brickearth. The less steep slope of the 'greensand' drops northwards towards the valley of the Great Stour.

Southwards, the lower part of the Hythe beds gives way to Atherfield and Weald clays, forming a heavier and damper soil: some of the clays are highly suited to brick making.

South of the railway, Paludina limestone comes close to the surface: some of this includes fossils, which have led to the popular name 'Bethersden marble'.

History

Pluckley's claim to fame has most recently been through the successful television series *The Darling Buds of May*, the first series being screened in 1991, and it is this, rather than the reputation as, according to *The Guinness Book of Records*, the most haunted village in England that is cherished by most of the residents.

Earliest records show that Pluckley was probably known as *Pluccan lëah* from the old English 'Plucca's clearing.' In 1086 the village was called *Pluchelei* [Domesday] and during the 1100's it was spelt *Plucelea* and *Plukele*.

Early records show that a Roman road led through the village (under what is now the Thorne Estate, towards the Pinnock and on through Frith Wood) while the site of a Roman villa has been found nearby at Little Chart.

The Domesday Book tells us that the Archbishop of Canterbury owned Pluckley. In turn, Archbishop Lanfranc gave the village to the management of a Saxon knight, John Folet. No church is recorded in the Domesday Book, but there was certainly a priest in the village. It is interesting to note that, at this time, Pluckley was a larger community than Ashford whose recorded value was £5, while Pluckley's was £15. With 16 villagers, 7 smallholders and 8 slaves managing 12.5 acres of meadow and caring for 140 pigs it was a thriving community.

Later the main livelihood of the area, especially from the 13th century onwards, was weaving. This was done in the home from local wool and may explain the unusually high ceilings in some of the older properties in the area. It survived until the collapse of the wool trade nationally.

Over the years, the village gradually expanded down the hill slowly encroaching on the forest until, in the 14th century, the Black Death decimated the population. At this time it is likely that Pluckley's survivors moved back up the hill believing it to be a healthier position. (A document of 1572 states that Pluckley Rectory was 'in a low, unhealthy place, a great distance from the church.')

In 1450, groups from Pluckley joined the abortive revolt by Jack Cade. Records show that nearly 50 pardons were afterwards issued to inhabitants: a surprisingly high figure for a village. A century later blood was spilt, this time in the church, during the Wyatt rebellions. It was at this time that the parish church of St Mary at Pevington was destroyed. Pevington parish was later divided between Egerton, Little Chart, and Pluckley – with Pluckley being granted the greater area.

The Dering family from their early beginnings in the reign of Henry II, grew in importance, inheriting the manor of Surrenden to the east of the village and it Surrenden Dering. The first baronet is famous for creating a huge library of books, charters, maps and manuscripts; part of this collection can be found in the Centre for Kentish Studies at County Hall. It is this first baronet who is generally believed to have escaped from the Roundheads through a narrow, curved-topped window at the manor – a popular myth that led to the addition of 'Dering windows' to most, if not all, of the houses owned by the Dering family during the romantic Victorian era.

The third baronet, Sir Edward Dering, was commissioned by William and Mary to raise a new regiment and in 1689 the 24th Foot was born. Holding the record of the most VCs gained in a single 12-hour battle (Rorke's Drift of 1879: the subject of the film 'Zulu'), its name was changed in 1881 to the South Wales Borderers. Now part of the Royal Regiment of Wales, its roots were acknowledged at a 300th anniversary

ceremony in the village in 1989. This event is recorded in the church on a plaque of Welsh slate.

In 1843 the railway transformed the lower part of the village with larger residences for gentlemen who came down by train for the shooting in the Forest and Dering Wood, a stationmaster's house and a row of terraced properties. Within 30 years the brickworks was opened and more housing built for the workers. Because it was more or less a separate community, a church (St Mary's) was also built.

At one time trade in and through the village meant that there was a need for two forges. One was situated at The Blacksmith's Arms, and the other beside Forge Cottage – this latter was a larger business with two furnaces and probably served the village and local gentry, while the other gradually developed into the hostelry known to day as the Blacksmith's Arms.

When the Dering estate was sold in 1928, many tenants purchased their homes. The auction catalogue shows that tradesmen in the village included a wheelwright and coffin maker, saddler, shoemaker, provisions store, post office and general store, butcher, baker, sweet shop, newsagent, furniture warehouse, and windmill (destroyed by fire in 1939). The manor house of Surrenden Dering became a boys' school.

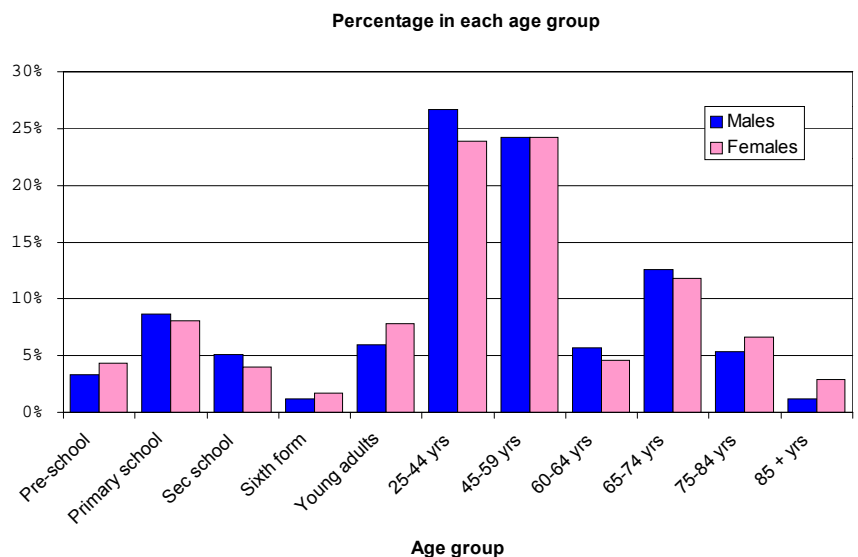
Great excitement was seen in the village in 1926 when an Armstrong-Whitworth Argosy airliner made an emergency landing in a field between Pluckley and Egerton, once used as an airfield in the First World War.

During the last war, flying bombs causing much damage and earning the village the nickname of 'bomb alley'. The Royal Observer Corps had an active section and a lookout post with a bombproof shelter (still in existence) was constructed at Prebbles Hill. The army built three anti-tank 'pill boxes': two at the Forge Hill/Egerton Road junction, and the other in the wall just below the Black Horse garden. This, and one of the others, can still be found if one looks carefully around the village. The third has been demolished.

People, Housing

Distribution of the population, by age in 1999

The graph shows the number in each of the age categories. Briefly: 20% are over 65 years, 49% are between 25 to 59, 13% are 16 to 24, and 12% are 10 and under. As expected, there are slightly more women (51%) than men (49%). This difference increases in the more elderly age brackets.



The survey was compared with that of the 1991 census. This comparison showed that the distribution of ages was very similar, indicating that the replies to the appraisal were not biased by an over, or under, response by any one age group.

The two most reported reasons for coming to live in Pluckley were love of village life and love of country life. Family and social reasons were also given – born in the village, came with the family, married, set up house, relatives were near, or retired to the village. The other important reasons were availability of housing and work in the area. So, the image of a quiet countryside, knowing others in the village, looking out at fewer houses, or walking in the country must still be important.

When the age of the villagers is correlated with the length of time they have lived in the village several salient facts emerge: only 7% over the age of 25 have been here the whole of their life; of those between the ages 25 – 44 years, 43% have moved in within the last 5 years; of those between the ages 45 – 59 years, 25% have moved in within the last 5 years; and of those over the age of 65 years, 8% have moved here within the last 5 years, 33% have lived here for 6 – 25 years, and 58% have lived here 26 years or more.

It has been said that between borough council elections (over a 4 year period) a quarter of the electoral roll changes. The appraisal supports this fact. One can understand the 25 – 44 age group basing their moves on availability of work, housing, and village surroundings. It also allies with the type of houses built in Pluckley over the last 10 years. With the exception of Westfields, all have been large, expensive family houses.

Housing in Pluckley

Pluckley has about 440 homes, although the February 1999 electoral register shows 419 households: some houses were not occupied in October 1998 when this register was compiled and some have been built since. Of the total, about 40% are detached homes, 25% semi-detached, 13% terraced, 20% bungalows and 2% are flats.

Thirteen of the bungalows were specially designed for elderly people. The council owns 43 properties while housing associations hold 27 – these are either outright or in shared equity. Seven homes now owned by the council pre-date the building of council housing.

Architecture

Before 1928 Pluckley belonged almost entirely to the Surrenden Dering Estate. Most village houses built before this date were of local clay brick, peg tiles and ragstone built in the traditional Kent style. Original timber-built properties owned by the estate have been faced with ragstone, or brick and hung tiles, and the windows changed to the familiar Dering style.

There are approximately 60 listed buildings in the village, including the church and some farm buildings. Three are Grade II* listed and were probably late medieval Wealden hall houses. Seventeen are 17th century or earlier. There is only one thatched house.

Over the years, the estate introduced many features; these include the Dering windows, Kent peg tile roofs, Kentish ragstone, and Pluckley bricks. About a quarter of the listed houses have the footings or first storey of Kentish ragstone and some have Dutch gables.

Following the Second World War council housing was urgently needed so brick and Airey houses were constructed. Further brick-built housing at Westfields replaced those in Shiplands while eight remain in Station Road. Two have been clad with brick and half are privately owned.

There are approximately 20 timber Colt houses supplied by the Bethersden factory – four of which have been destroyed by fire in the last 25 years.

Planning permission in the village has ranged from private extensions, conversion of redundant farm buildings, one-off housing and small-scale developments of two or three houses on suitable sites.

Residents' views on housing

There are divided opinions on housing issues. Some fear the loss of village character: they see this as being brought about by the infilling of gardens and small open areas. Newer houses are seen as too big and too expensive for local people to buy. 36% of all respondents would like to stop new home building, 65% want Pluckley to stay as it is now. Less than half thought that there had been too much building in the last 10 years and a similar number were dissatisfied with the appearance of these houses. On the other hand, slightly more considered either the number or appearance of homes built in the last 10 years to have been about right.

Only 24 people felt that too little had been built in the last ten years: ten of these were in the 24-44 age group and could represent people who might wish to purchase in the village but are unable to do so. There were 19 households where people would like alternative housing. Of these 7 required other housing for the whole family, 10 for children and 2 for parents. Of the 19, 11 live in owner occupied houses, 4 in local authority or housing association rented homes, and 3 rented privately.

About 10% of answers identified a need for specially adapted homes for people with disabilities. In this group there were a noticeable number of over 60s, some of whom requested a nursing home. Only one household was recorded as having been specially adapted for disability. Another perceived deficiency was the number of homes for single people – mentioned by 75 individuals, including several over 60s.

Among those who were prepared to accept new housing, the preference was for Dering windows, brick of local colour and tile roofs. The preferred types of homes were cottages (27%), bungalows (20%) and semi-detached (22%). The preferred usage was for restricted sale to local people (27%) and rented homes in small groups (50%). 172 respondents identified a need for homes for young people and 162 asked for small family homes. Only 39 people wanted large family homes. 12 people requested executive homes.

Concerns were voiced regarding the dissemination of information on planning applications for new buildings. Insufficient publicity was identified by 55% of appraisal replies. A considerable number of these read the *Parish Magazine*, so it would be useful to ask that planning application details be included in future.

Public Services

Crime & policing

Two-thirds of all people were concerned about theft, especially in the 25 to 65 age groups. Interestingly, the over 85s were the least concerned. Almost half of the worried people live in the village centre, Westfields, Thorne, and Fir Toll. Residents near the station seem to feel safest!

Nearly half of the respondents identified vandalism as a concern. All age groups seemed to share this concern in almost equal proportions. Most worried were those living in the village centre and Westfields. Of those who put forward an opinion, 45% felt the standard of the police service was reasonable, while 39% considered the service poor.

A similar number of responses requested a greater police presence, suggesting perhaps that people feel in need of reassurance. A concern that there is not enough for young people to do in the village may also reflect this. One third of people felt that Pluckley needed street lighting. Most of these live in the village centre, Westfields, the Thorne, and Fir Toll. In outlying areas and around the station, people were less concerned. Only about a quarter of the over 60s asked for street lighting, and the youngest – probably understandably – were even less concerned. Fear of mugging, drunkenness, etc. accounted for 18% of responses. 19% declared themselves unconcerned.

Other emergency services

About 85% of those with an opinion on use of the ambulance emergency service were satisfied; 68% felt the hospital transport service was reasonable to good. The fire service provision recorded a similar level of satisfaction to that of the ambulance service – perhaps they turn up together!

Neighbourhood Watch

Since the conception of the village appraisal, a neighbourhood watch programme has been set up. Two co-ordinators manage approximately 12 link-people, who in turn have their own groups. Signs, funded by the parish council, have been put up. Information is passed to co-ordinators by a computerised messaging service and a modem link to the county police 'COLIN' program.

Ashford Horse Watch

Ashford Horse Watch has co-ordinators within Pluckley and is part of a developing network in Kent and surrounding counties. The immediate goal is to have at least one member in every parish within the Weald police area. Details of missing horses and tack are received on a national basis. Information is passed in a similar way to that used by Neighbourhood Watch as well as circulating photographs of stolen horses. Membership is £2 a year. Co-ordinators are reluctant to advertise their telephone numbers to the local community.

Pluckley Parish Council

The parish council was set up in 1894 under the Parish Councils Act that allowed parishes to elect a council to be responsible for the running of the affairs of that Parish under the jurisdiction of the local borough council, which at that time was

West Ashford Rural District Council. Parish councils were allowed to cover their operating costs by raising a precept on the local council.

Broadly speaking, the task of the parish council has remained unchanged over the years: namely to represent the interests of the village and its residents to both the local council (now Ashford Borough Council) and the county council and to assist in the provision of facilities such as the village hall, recreation ground, etc.

The first meeting of Pluckley Parish Council was held on 4 December 1894 in the village schoolroom. The sole purpose of this meeting was to elect a council of seven members. Nine parishioners had submitted their names for selection and seven councillors were appointed without a vote being called.

The first meeting proper of the parish council was held on 13 December 1894. This meeting largely concerned itself with distribution arrangements for the 'Hills and Other Unknown Charity.' This charity is recorded by Edward Hasted in 1798 as 'William Hills, by his last will in 1589, gave towards the maintenance of three old persons whose labour is almost spent and have no weekly pay, certain lands in the parish to annual produce of which is £8. The persons unknown more than 100 years since gave towards the repair of the church, land called Parishfield in the parish of the annual produce of £1.' These two parcels of land have been amalgamated into one charity and currently yield £397 per year. Three trustees administer this sum and the annual income is distributed each 21 December to nominated persons, living on that day, within the village.

At the meeting on 17 April 1895, a Mr William Langley was elected Overseer and Clerk at a salary of £22.10s.0d per annum.

With very few exceptions, the parish council has continued to meet on a monthly basis up to the present time. The amount of precept made on the borough has ranged from £5 in 1900 to a maximum of £5,500 in the years 1997 – 98: it is currently £3,500.

When asked how well residents considered the council's approach to publicising its decisions and activities; over half felt it was either very or reasonably well, 23% felt communication was bad, and the remaining 27% had no opinion.

Half of those who replied know what the parish council is doing (except when it comes to planning applications). However, only 29% say they have ever attended a parish council meeting. Surprisingly, 51% replied that they did not know how the parish council spent money raised via the council tax – so there is a communication blockage that needs to be resolved.

Just over half replying felt parish council representatives were aware of local concerns and 38% believe the borough councillor is well aware. However, only 20% consider the Kent County Council representative was in touch with local affairs.

Village Amenities

Parish council minutes record the efforts made by the council to obtain a recreation ground. An application in 1898 to use the current site was rejected by the Dering Estate. However, in 1900 it is recorded that a lease had been signed and the grazing rights subsequently let for the sum of £7.10.0 per annum. A minute in March 1915 states that Sir Edward Dering had confirmed the tenancy.

In 1928 the parish council purchased the recreation ground from the Dering Estate for £250. The ground has a children's play area with swings, slide and climbing frame, two tennis courts (one marked out for netball), a cricket pitch, and a school football pitch. The play area was refurbished recently from funds raised in the community. Of those who had an opinion, 86% felt these new facilities were either good or reasonable.

The present village hall was opened in 1960 after 12 years of fund-raising that included dances, whist drives and a summer sports day and village fete. The cost of building the hall was £6,000: twice that of the original estimate. With the late Jim Winder as chairman, and Bill Meakin as secretary, £2,000 was raised, while grants and loans were received from the late 'Slotty' Dawes and the Ministry of Education (through the KCC's social services department). Building started in March 1959 behind the old hall, a plain wooden building that was afterwards dismantled and sold. The area released provided car parking.

Within the past year the parish council, with a donation from the Village Hall Management Committee, has resurfaced the car park at a cost of approximately £4,000 – a sum approved by residents at the annual parish meeting in May 1999.

While the parish council owns the village hall, it is run by the Village Hall Management Committee (a registered charity) who pays a minimal rent. Members of the committee include a representative from every affiliated village club. A condition of affiliation means that these representatives must attend the quarterly meetings in order that their organisations may benefit from reductions in hire charges. An executive committee has been set up to administer everyday problems.

Regular meetings held in the hall include the Senior Citizens Club, the playgroup, parish council meetings, antiques and collectors' fairs and flower shows.

Results from the appraisal questionnaire show that half the residents know what is on offer at the village hall, but only about one in ten use it on a regular basis and 30% never go inside its doors.

About half would not be prepared to pay higher council tax to support it. This means that fund-raising, just for its upkeep, has to be on a regular basis.

Improvements to the hall would mean more intensive fund-raising. Recent events include an annual firework display and hog roast in November.

A mobile library van from Ashford calls every Thursday in the Street, near the Black Horse, and on alternate Thursdays at Pluckley Thorne and the Station Approach. A public lending library in the school opens Tuesday and Friday afternoons between 3:30 and 4:30, during term time only. This is staffed by trained volunteers. The mobile library is used by 42 of those residents who replied, while the school library has less use, only 22 people saying they patronised this facility.

There are three public telephones situated at the Station, Thorne, and the village square. There is also a pay phone in the village hall.

Five post boxes can be found within the village: in the railway station and the post office walls, and freestanding ones at Sheerland, the Thorne, and Fir Toll. There are two collections a day on weekdays, one on Saturdays, and another on Sundays.

The four bus shelters are the property of the parish council who maintain them. These are near the station approach, at the Thorne, at Shiplands and in Egerton Road.

There is a doctors' surgery at Charing three miles from the centre of Pluckley. (Until the late sixties, they held a surgery in the village.) There are four doctors, three male and one female, and a dispensary and chemist shop within the surgery. No bus goes directly to Charing and people rely on the services of Grapevine if they have no transport. District nurses visit patients in their own homes and practice nurses see patients in the surgery.

Attached to the surgery, two midwives work within a midwifery group practice. Home and hospital deliveries are undertaken in addition to antenatal and postnatal care.

A health visitor and her assistant promote health care for babies from ten days old until five years old. Clinics are held at Charing Surgery. Many other medical and social professionals attached to the surgery organise care for all ages.

Grapevine started in 1978 as a voluntary help service to aid people in the village who needed a contact point in an emergency. A loyal group of members provided help over a number of years. There is a list of volunteers who may be contacted if there is a genuine need for transport to and from the Charing surgery and the William Harvey hospital. The list is available in the post office at Pluckley. Medications are transported from the surgery to the post office on Thursdays for collection.

Local events, news and publicity

The parish magazine proved a clear winner for picking up news about local events, with almost 75% looking at this publication. The post office, village square notice board, and the local newspaper also feature as useful sources of information, shown by 30 – 40% of replies.

The parish magazine is published monthly by the joint benefice of Pluckley and Egerton. By the end of 1999 the print run had reached 600 copies per month. The production of the magazine is on a voluntary basis, with the exception of printing costs: editor, advertising manager, collating and stapling teams, and distributors all give their time freely. The majority of magazines are delivered and the residue is sold in both Pluckley and Egerton village stores. It has been estimated that approximately 1,500 people have access to each issue. Cover price is, at present, 40p with an annual subscription of £4. Cost of production is subsidised by advertising and from local donations.

Education

Pre School and Under 5's Workshop.

Pluckley playgroup was founded in 1972 and ran for three mornings a week in the village hall. The cost at the time was £2.80 per half term. Over the years the playgroup has undergone major changes and is now known as the Pre School and Under 5's Workshop. There are currently two sessions a week in the village hall and two in the primary school. Visitors' morning is Wednesday when children under 2½ years can visit with an adult. There is one adult to six children and the cost is £4 for each session.

Primary School

Records indicate that there was a school established in Pluckley in the mid 18th century. Opinions vary as to its location. Some say it was in an unheated room in the Rectory, others in the house adjoining what is now the butcher's shop – maybe at various times it was both.

The school was established in its present location in 1850 when Sir Edward Dering gave a parcel of land 'containing one rood and thirty-eight perches' to the rector and churchwardens to enable the building of a school within the terms of an education act of 1840 to 'provide for the education of adults and children of the labouring, manufacturing and other poorer classes.'

The school badge, a modified fleur de lis, is taken from the crest of John Folet, a Saxon knight who, on being given the village in return for military aid, added 'de Pluckley' to his family name.

There has always been an element of Church control of the school, although this has greatly diminished over the years to the present time where the school has only two governors appointed by the Church; the remainder being appointed by the county council, the parish council, the parents and the staff.

At the time of its establishment there were 53 children on the school roll. School records start in 1883 when head teachers were required to keep a diary of events. From this we learn that children paid a weekly fee of three pence and that there were 95 children on the roll. At the start of World War I there were 200 children enrolled. This number varied widely on a day-to-day basis as children were employed on such tasks as haymaking, hop-stringing and fruit picking. The school closed from August to October for hop picking.

The log contains some interesting snippets: in June 1891, the then headmaster was castigated by the school board for administering over-zealous corporal punishment and forbidden under any circumstances to so punish the girls. In 1927 the RAOB (The Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes) arranged for each child to be presented with an orange and sweets.

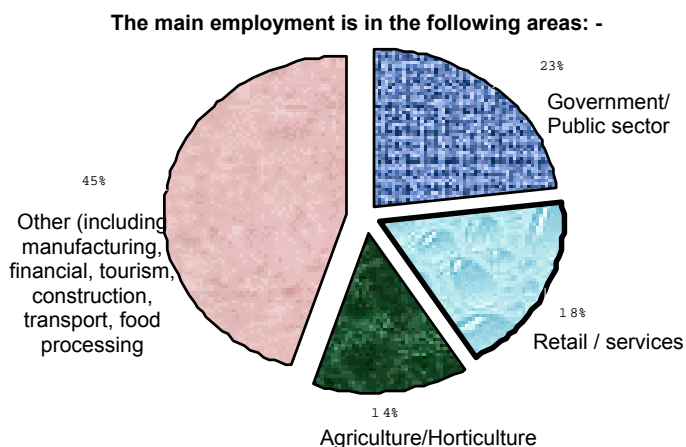
The roll dwindled after the Second World War to 51. It has gradually increased since and today it stands at 113. These children are accommodated in four classes: reception, infants, lower junior, and upper junior. Ambitious plans are afoot for the modernisation and enlargement of the school buildings. These are currently on hold due to a shortage of funds, although some £70,000 has already been raised towards the cost by parents and friends.

In 1998 Ofsted produced a favourable report on the school.

French Club

A French club was started in 1997 for four to eleven year olds and meets each Friday in the village hall between 4 and 6pm. Split into two sessions, the cost is currently £3.95 per session.

Employment



The survey shows 52% of respondents are in employment, 3% are disabled, and 10% are in education or training, leaving 33% retired or unwaged husbands/wives. The unemployed (2%) are evenly spread over the normal working age range. This is equivalent to Ashford's unemployment figures although lower than the national average.

Of those who responded, there are seven people whose Pluckley situated business employs more than 25 people. The largest numbers of businesses (but not necessarily the largest employers) are in: -

Building	26%
Agriculture/Horticulture	17%
Financial/Professional Services	16%

Of the 42 employers who replied 21 showed Pluckley as their main place of work. The largest numbers of these were in agriculture/horticulture, five in tourism, and four retailers.

Just a quarter of the workforce who live in Pluckley actually work in the village: 18% of these live near enough to walk to work, a further 7% bicycle to work. A few people are picked up by minibus to work in the orchards. As Pluckley is a long, spread-out village 40% still use a car.

A further 26% work within 5 miles of the village or in Ashford. Another 14% work in Maidstone, Canterbury or in towns and villages up to 20 miles away. 9% travel over 20 miles to work, while 5% travel all over Kent or the SE of England. 1% even work abroad.

15% of workers are London commuters who either drive to Pluckley station for the Charing Cross train or to Charing for the Victoria line. Surprisingly, a third of the London travellers choose to drive all the way. A few people travel to Ashford, Maidstone, or Folkestone by motorbike or train. Everyone else relies on the car. The bus services are discussed later, but for some jobs it is impossible to consider them as a method of getting to work.

Manufacturing and Service Industry

The last 30 years have seen a significant change in industrial and service business in the parish.

The main employer in the 1960s was The Pluckley Brick and Tile Company, where 50 people worked producing the well-known Pluckley engineering bricks. The business is now closed, but the one remaining kiln and landmark chimney can be seen near the railway station.

At that time the former flax factory and mill situated about 1½ miles from the village centre at Pivington Mill had limited use mainly related to agricultural storage, maintenance of heavy earth moving machinery, and grain drying/cleaning units, together with the embryo Chart Engineering Company.

There are now 17 active business enterprises at Pivington Mill: 5 being connected with manufacturing, and 12 in the service industry including warehousing. The range of activity is very diverse and includes specialist engineering, furniture manufacture, food and catering supply, distribution, clothes hire for amateur dramatics/parties, and coach hire from the firm.

The total workforce at Pivington Mill is about 120, with the recently redeveloped large paper storage warehouse in line to provide further employment. The number of those who returned the survey showing Pluckley as their main place of work indicates a significant number of personnel at Pivington Mill are not local residents.

Out of the 335 who expressed a view, 32% indicated they would support development of small-scale industrial workshops and 41% supported small business development in Pluckley. This contrasts with those expressing concern about local traffic hazards, with heavy lorry traffic being seen as a major problem by 50% replying: this highlights the related traffic growth as a drawback to commercial and industrial activity in rural locations.

Service industry elsewhere in the village includes F V Weeks Corner Garage on the Smarden road, and Station Garage. Weeks' business has served the community for a long period, starting in 1920 as ploughing contractors, while the Station Garage was founded in 1901 – at that time selling petrol in cans.

Messrs Fordham who run a haulage, storage and distribution firm, also operate the coal and fuel merchants located at the railway station yard.

All these firms provide family and local employment.

Pubs and Hotels

The four public houses in the village cater for a range of tastes, although 25% of respondents say they never visit a pub in Pluckley. All have restaurant facilities and serve real ales.

Elvey Farm Country Hotel, a traditional open hall house built in 1430, offers bed, breakfast, and evening meals for residents. As a farm it still manages 75 acres of cereal crops and sheep. The present family purchased the property in 1961 and over the years developed a bed and breakfast business, finally becoming the present country hotel in the early 1980s when it was granted a residential licence to sell wines and spirits.

The Black Horse, built in 1450, opened as a public house in 1474, although at one time it was situated in another building adjacent to the church. Occupying a favourable spot in the village square, it recently found fame after featuring in *The Darling Buds of May* and also attracts visiting ghost hunters. It has undergone extensive refurbishment during autumn 1999.

The Blacksmith's Arms, situated at Pluckley Thorne, opened in 1627. It has since been known as *The Spectre* and *The Ghosts* before spending four years as *The Blacksmiths Tea-rooms*. Having retained its liquor licence, it re-opened as a pub in October 1998.

The Dering Arms, a hunting lodge for the Dering family in the 1840's, is still connected by underground passages to other parts of the Dering estate. Having opened as an inn around the turn of the century, it is popular with commuters due to its closeness to the railway station.

The Rose and Crown at Mundy Bois, a public house since 1780, has belonged to its current owners since 1991. The restaurant built around 20 years ago enjoys marvellous views of the church on the hill. The pub stands 1½ miles out of the village.

Shops

In 1965 there were six shops in the village, all run by husband and wife teams. Four have gone – reflecting the nation-wide demise in rural retail facilities.

In 1996/8 it looked as though the grocer's might have to close as David and Margaret Heasman wished to retire from a business that had been run by the family for almost 70 years. A large number of people from Pluckley and surrounding villages demonstrated how important the shop was to them by considering buying and running the shop themselves. Many meetings were held, advice sought, examples from other villages studied, and pledges of financial help made. Fortunately Robin and Caroline Smith came to the rescue. While the shop operates under a new name, 'Heasman' still appears in small print in the now historic notice above the shop door.

The butcher's continues to sport the name of 'Homewood', but George and Ros have also retired. One of George's staff, Gary Boodle and wife Jackie, are continuing the tradition of family teamwork.

A specialist silversmith, Padgham and Putland, is a newer arrival with a purpose-built workshop and small retail outlet on Forge Hill.

Almost all villagers use the post office and shop at some time; two-thirds regularly for postal services, licences, bills and last minute items. Support for the suggestion that vehicle road tax licences should be sold there reached 98%. One-third uses the butcher's relatively regularly, but nearly a quarter doesn't shop there at all.

Replies indicated reasons for shopping in Pluckley were: good value and service; saving time and transport costs; and the social contact. Three-quarters of those over 25 like to support village shops, but only a quarter under 25 do. Does this reflect the hectic lifestyle of younger people? Is it a portent for the future and perhaps one reason why so many rural shops are closing?

Farming

The Pluckley countryside continues to be dominated by agricultural land, primarily arable and fruit. Few can miss the dazzling sight of oilseed rape in flower during the spring and the sea-blue of linseed later on in the season.

The farming community of Pluckley has changed considerably over the last 35 years. In 1965 there were 21 farms within the parish. Of those 21, only eight remain today, with five of them still farmed by the same families. The industry has, over this time, changed immeasurably. With one exception (Elvey Farm, now principally a country house hotel) these farms have expanded and are fully mechanised.

Sheerland Farm – Highwood

The Highwood business, set up in Pluckley in 1929, was originally 318 acres. The family employed 17 men to work on the farm that grew hops, cherries, plums and arable crops, and reared sheep and cattle. At peak times of the year the workforce rose to over 40, mostly local villagers.

The farm has expanded and is predominantly apples, pears, and some arable land. Much of the old orchards have been replaced with new plantings and there is a new irrigation system. To date the acreage is approximately 460 acres and there are 23 employees, rising to about 70 in peak season.

Pivington Farm – Mure

The Mure family moved to Pluckley in 1950 and the farm has remained relatively unchanged in terms of production up to the present day. Fruit, arable, and sheep are farmed, let out by Mr Mure. The house and farm remain in the family, although Mr Mure himself is retired.

Coopers Farm – Campbell

Located at the bottom of Pluckley, this farm started out in 1945 with 19 acres. It has increased steadily over the years to 156 acres. Initially the farm had dairy cattle, sheep, and pigs along with arable land. Flax grown on the farm was processed in Pivington, whilst meat and other produce were sold at the local shops.

Three full-time people worked on the farm and extra labour was taken on at harvest. Today the farm is solely dairy with 100 to 120 cows and one full-time employee in addition to the farmer and his partner. Improvement of the dairy unit and other buildings are the plans for the future, when the next generation may continue in the family business.

Brockton Farm – La Trobe

In 1954, Mr La Trobe purchased Pivington Mill and used the site for the repair and storage of heavy road machinery. He also ran a second-hand machinery business. He converted the old flax drier into a grass drier and then into grain silos to dry, clean, and store some 3000 tonnes of grain for the local farmers. This business was sold seven or eight years ago. Currently, Mr La Trobe farms again at Charing Heath and rents out part of his land at Brockton Farm whilst continuing to live there. He employs one local man from Headcorn who has worked with him for 42 years.

Rushbrook Farm – Gwillim

The Gwillim family moved to Pluckley in 1949 from another farm. In the early days, the farm produced hay from the grassland, fattened sheep and reared pigs. Arable land was used for producing barley to feed the pigs, and growing potatoes. These were harvested in autumn – employing many local women from the village. Surplus barley was sold for malting, and surplus potatoes sold and loaded into trucks at Pluckley railway sidings.

Since the family moved here the farm has undergone considerable growth, and since 1965 the land farmed has more than doubled to approximately 1400 acres. In the late 1950's the family started a commercial storage business for local farmers, which it still runs today. Arable crops are grown; some for malting, bread making and animal feed, and oils for commercial and industrial use. The farm is now run as two separate holdings.

Stanford Bridge Farm – Heathcote

Mr Heathcote purchased 127 acres at Stanford Bridge Farm in late 1996. The previous owner had obtained planning permission for an 18-hole golf course and clubhouse. It was Mr Heathcote's intention to restore the ground to agriculture. The original farmhouse had been sold off and he was given planning permission to build a traditional style farmhouse. This has since been completed. The farm buildings have been renovated and modified to accommodate a 45-head suckler beef herd. All the offspring are either finished or the heifers are returned to the breeding herd. The cattle have access to the farmland around the buildings, which currently consists of 51 acres of grassland, 42 acres of arable and 31 acres of woodland. Four local people are employed full time.

Mr Heathcote plans to construct a new beef building to finish cattle at 24 months old. He also has an agricultural contracting business, currently employing 23 people, that he intends moving to Pluckley.

Lower Thorne Farm – Harrison

Lower Thorne Farm with just under 100 acres was purchased in 1996 by the present owners who sought planning permission to replace the existing farmhouse that was beyond repair following the 1976 drought. This has now been completed.

The farm buildings have been renovated and water laid to all the fields. It is a family farm and completely organic, with homegrown beef and lamb being supplied to London shops. The cattle are shown throughout the country and have received prizes including the native breed champion at the Kent County Show 1998.

Plans for the future include selling to the farmers' market and direct sales to the public. It is intended to seek planning permission for the dairy to be converted into an organic farm shop.

Transport

285 households in Pluckley provided information on roadworthy vehicles. Within this group there were 399 cars, 38 vans and 20 motorbikes: 16% of households do not own a car or a van. If we dare extrapolate to the 419 total village households, then there are about 700 cars in the village. At present a planning guide is that new houses should normally have a parking space for each bedroom!

At least 46 households do not own a car. 7% often find it difficult to get to other places and a further 33% find it occasionally difficult. Although the public bus service runs at times suitable for residents to get to work in Ashford, only 2% use the service.

Special buses go to schools at Lenham, Tenterden, and Ashford. Students going to other schools use the public bus, train, or go by car. Most children are taken to and from Pluckley School by car.

The KCC supported bus service has a route from Ashford to Pluckley, Smarden, and Biddenden. The journey time is about 20min from Pluckley to Ashford and about 30min to

Biddenden. This service allows you to go to school in Ashford, to have a 9 to 5 job in the town centre, or a shopping expedition of two to four hours. You can visit Biddenden, leaving in the morning, for three to four hours. There is one bus on Saturday mornings allowing about two hours in Ashford. There are no evening buses.

On weekdays a post bus leaves the post office in Pluckley at approximately 10:30am, taking half an hour to Ashford via Egerton, Charing Heath, and Charing. The return bus allows two hours in Ashford town centre. This service allows about a two-hour visit to Egerton. There is a bus to Ashford on Saturdays, but there is no return bus.

On Fridays there is a free Tesco bus from the Blacksmith's Arms to the Park Farm store. It leaves at 10:20am, takes 20mins, and allows just over an hour's shopping.

There is no possibility of using any bus service if you have a job in other villages.

Sample fares for public transport

	Ashford return	London return	London cheap day return	London annual season ticket
Bus	£2.65			
Post bus	£2.80			
Train	£2.40	£24.00	£12.00	£2,440.00

Bus service Stagecoach - KCC			
	To Ashford From Pluckley	Time in Ashford	To Pluckley From Ashford
			9:00
Weekdays	8:09	all day	
	10:04	2-7 hours	
			12:45
	14:04	2-4 hours	
			16:10
	17:20	no return	
			17:45
Saturdays	10:04	2 hours	
			12:45

Pluckley railway station is about 1½-miles from The Street. The station is on the mainline from Dover and Ashford to London, Charing Cross. Regular trains runs during the rush hour and there is

an hourly service at other times. There are evening trains.

A yearly bus pass for senior citizens and the disabled costing £15 gives half price concessions. Station parking is £2 a day, and a railcard cheap-day return to London is £7.90.

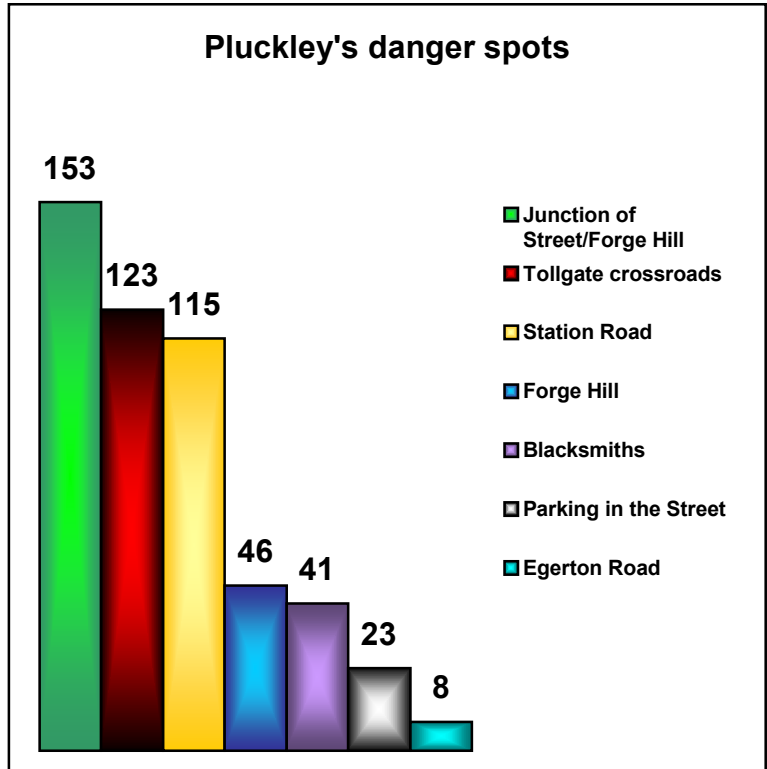
Traffic Problems

469 people, 90% of those answering the survey, described one or more danger spots, one person summing it up as 'Danger spots on all roads.'

The respondents consider that the four main causes of traffic problems were:

Traffic	speed	58%
Lorry	traffic	47%
Lack	of parking	39%
General	congestion	27%

The three most suggested cures were:
 extension of the speed limit
 traffic calming
 more road warning signs
 A related problem was the traffic noise resulting from traffic speed and the poor state of the roads.



Parking presents continued difficulty to many residents living in all the three major divisions of the village, with 111 finding some aspect of parking difficult. One-third reported they had nowhere to park, 70% reported that cars blocked their entrance, and another third found that tourist traffic blocked the road. Congestion, aggravated by parking, is a significant problem for many residents in the centre of the village – particularly during the school term.

Parking problems are also to be found in the station area. There is official parking so that the commuters, both from Pluckley and surrounding villages, can park – but they also park in the road to the station, in the Dering Arms car park, and, inconsiderately, in front of house entrances.

Environment

Recycling

This issue received the third highest response. 90% of people were willing to separate recyclable items if there were a separate collection. Almost all of those over 85 would do so – but only half of those aged 11 to 25 were interested in recycling. Perhaps this is because younger people are not great producers of waste – or someone else looks after the rubbish in their home, or perhaps recent educational and media efforts to highlight the waste of the world's resources have been a failure.

Only 15 people said they definitely would not support a waste collection separated by individual households – 12 of these were men.

The most popular item for recycling was glass. Are Pluckley people fond of their wine? Newspapers followed closely, and then cans and clothing. Just over half would use a skip for garden waste – could the other half be experts in home composting? Overall, doorstep collection was more popular than using recycling bins.

Nuisances

30% complained of noise pollution. Highest on this list (with two-thirds of all answers) was traffic noise. Next came one third worried about motorbike scrambling.

Bonfires cause aggravation to about a quarter of respondents, while light pollution came much lower in the priority list, however, 13% were bothered by it.

Airwaves

26% reported TV interference, while problems with radio reception were experienced by 14%. While a third of those answering had no opinion of mobile telephone reception difficulties, of the remainder, 42% had problems.

Tidiness

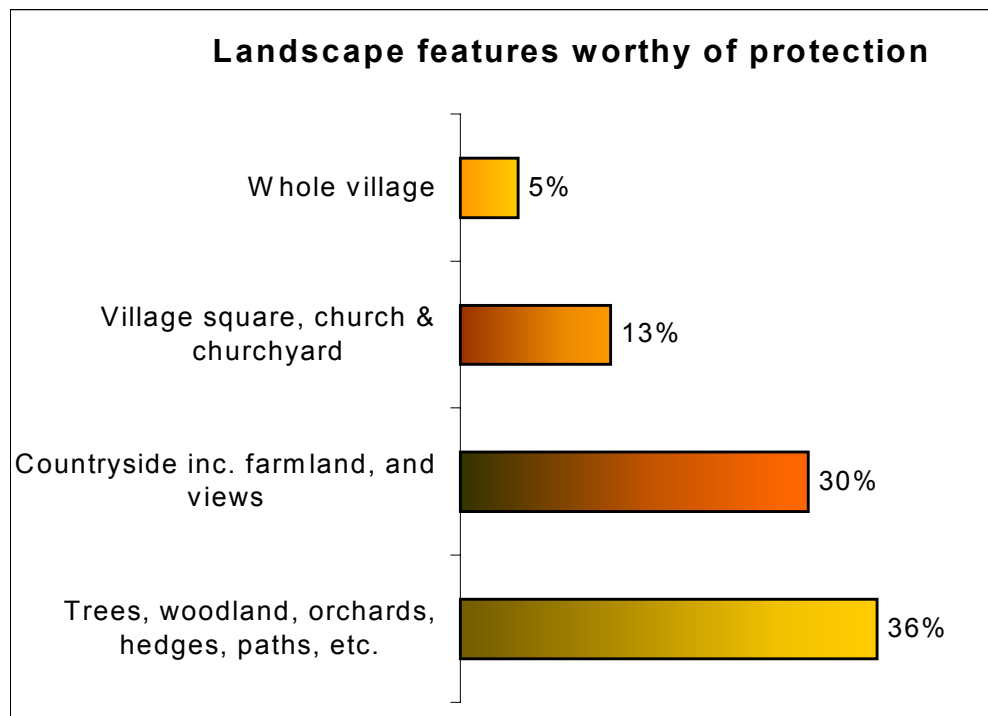
Litter-free roads with undamaged verges emerge as the two most desirable priorities. The treatment of verges created a divergence of opinion: just about half wanted tidy, mown verges, while about one third wanted them to be allowed to grow for wildlife. Perhaps a survey of verges is needed to identify which ones to mow and which ones to leave.

Village/landscape features

There were 491 replies giving a wide range of opinion, with the emphasis on conserving a number of key features that lend much to the character of the village.

In all, 66 different features were chosen as meriting protection:

the most popular identified for protection by 10 or more respondents (84% of the replies) are shown in the diagram.



Wildlife and woodland

The seasons in Pluckley all bring different birds and mammals to the village.

In spring the nightingales congregate in the Forest and Dering Wood on their arrival from Africa and are singing by day to attract their mates.

The brown hare can be spotted, often in small groups. Badgers are well represented; new setts are opened up each year. Garden ponds provide a good breeding ground for frogs and toads, and where a few, protected, great crested newts may be found.

In summer the grass snakes do well, laying their eggs in compost heaps. Two species of bird are visitors, the falcon and the nightjar. There are three types of owl: the tawny owl, little owl, and the ghostly barn owl.

The dormouse and yellow-necked mouse can be found in the autumn, storing food for the winter to come. Some are fond of entering houses. The yellow-necked mouse is only found in scattered parts of the south of England.

Winter brings the lapwings and the golden plovers. Many other birds also form up into flocks to protect the inexperienced youngsters from the sparrow-hawk. When birds of prey do well in an area it means that some kind of successful ecological balance has been struck.

Pluckley, largely situated on a hill, is not renowned for its woods most of the medieval woodland having been cleared for agricultural purposes. Parts of two larger woods do fall within the parish boundary, the Forest and Dering Wood. The Forest, believed to contain the site of the 14th century manor Evering Acre, is now in multiple ownership, whilst the Woodland Trust owns the larger part of Dering Wood. Other

woods within the parish of mixed deciduous trees are: Little Pipers Wood, Garden Wood, Kiln Plat Wood, Knights Wood, Benacre Wood, Frith Wood and Thorne Roughetts.

Apart from this woodland, Pluckley has several individual and groups of trees that are important and add character to the village. Within the conservation areas there are a number of trees, particularly around the recreation ground, the oaks along the Egerton Road and the Scots pines that stand out like sentinels along the skyline. The trees within the conservation areas are given a certain measure of protection since they cannot be lopped or felled without specific planning consent from Ashford Borough Council.

In addition, there are 13 tree preservation orders (TPO) in existence. TPO's are generally applied only when there is a perceived threat to individual or groups of trees and, in Pluckley, these have nearly all been applied when building development has been proposed, or agricultural activities seem to threaten. Some of these TPO's date back to 1975 when building took place at Fir Toll. There are others covering trees in Lambden Road, Chambers Green Road, The Forest, Station Road, Egerton Road and Mundy Bois Road.

Trees have a finite life (like the rest of us). In woodland regeneration takes place naturally, but it is important to think about succession planting for individual trees – particularly eye-catching species such as the Scots pines, which originally appeared in the south after the last ice age, and which are such a feature of Pluckley's landscape.

On 6 November 1999 a tree planting day was held when a number of memorial trees were planted around the village. Other memorial trees in the village include the two planted on the recreation ground: one in 1935 to celebrate the 25th jubilee of King George V and the other in 1977 to celebrate the silver jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. A tree, a prize for winning the 'Best Kept Village' competition during the 1980s was unfortunately stolen.

Weald of Kent Preservation Society

The society was formed in 1960 to protect and enhance the Wealden towns, villages and countryside and to educate and inform public opinion. WKPS scrutineers regularly review local planning applications and some social events and public meetings are held in the village. The society is currently sponsoring Pluckley's millennium map.

Footpaths

Every footpath in the parish has been walked and a detailed report can be seen in Appendix A.

Most villagers know where the local footpaths are and think they are well enough signposted, but only about one third seem to use them. One in five would be prepared to help maintain them, while one third definitely would not assist with maintenance.

The main difficulties that the respondents report are crops across the path, bushes and nettles in some areas, muddy patches and puddles. One footpath runs alongside a farm that owns very large barking guard dogs and the fence beside the

path is not very high! Another goes through someone's back garden and eventually through a farmyard with a notice that warns about loose dogs.

On most of the footpaths across arable fields emerging crops are sprayed with herbicide to the regulation one metre width as soon as ground and growth conditions permit. Walking across newly ploughed or sown fields, or a wet standing crop of rape or cereal, is not much fun. However, that is the necessary result of today's farming methods.

Two long distance footpaths: the 'Greensand Way' from Surrey to Ham Street, and the 'Stour Valley Walk' from Lenham to Sandwich Bay, pass through the parish. One of the loveliest walks in Kent is to start at the Black Horse in Pluckley and walk the Greensand Way westwards to Egerton looking at the view over the Weald. Then up through Egerton, connect with the Stour Valley walk, and walk back eastwards looking towards the Downs and the flying-bombed ruin of St Mary's church, then on to Little Chart and its new church before turning back again to walk through the orchards to the Black Horse – or cream teas in the Pluckley churchyard in the summer months!

Religion

There were 94 people (18%) who answered that they are active members of church or chapel.

While Britain has now many members of others faiths, it is interesting that no one who answered the questionnaire is an active member of a synagogue or mosque. 79% of people said they were not members of any church.

Even so, St Nicholas' Church, which is 900 years old, is still important to the village: 75% thought it important as an historic building; half thought it important for weddings and funerals; and a quarter said it is important for baptisms and Sunday worship. The parish of Pluckley is now combined with Egerton and the priest, Michael Higgs, lives in Egerton.

The Burrows and Pile Trust was started in 1958, with a legacy of £100 from Mr Burrows and a further £18 as a gift from Mr Pile. In 1947 Mr Halford Dawes gave £1,000. In both trusts, the capital must be kept intact. The income is used in the general fund to run the church. At the beginning of 1999 the capital total of both trusts was £22,600 and the income in 1998 was £750.

The cost of running the church in 1999 was £22,000. The parish share, which is sent to the diocese of Canterbury, was £12,700. The total sum is covered by planned giving, collections from the congregation, income tax refunds, fees from weddings and funerals, and fund raising activities.

This fund-raising has become part of Pluckley life. Antique fairs are held very successfully in May and November in the village hall. There are cream teas in the churchyard every Sunday afternoon from the end of May to the end of August (a cream tea costs £2.50), and two produce stalls are held in the village square in May and October.

Besides running the church, an additional collection for a specific charity is made each month. In 1999 these raised about £1,200.

There are two 1662 services each month, a family service once a month and a Eucharist on three Sundays in the month. Rite A is used in the Eucharistic services. Revised services will be introduced in 2000.

About 16 people regularly attend the 1662 services and from 25 to 40 people attend the midmorning services. Much larger congregations come for Christingle, Christmas, Easter, Rogation, and Remembrance Day.

While children have always been welcome at all services – especially the monthly family service and the special services, such as the annual Christingle and pet services – for many years there was no direct provision for children from St Nicholas' Church. A monthly Sunday school was started this year for children of all ages. It is held on the first Sunday of every month. Children, most with their parents, attend the first part of the usual Holy Communion service before going to the school hall. They return in time to join the rest of the church congregation for the blessing and stay for the last part of the service.

For those belonging to other faiths, the nearest Roman Catholic church is in Ashford and the nearest Methodist church is in Charing. There is a Free Church in Egerton.

The Friends of St Nicholas' Church

'The Friends' was formed in 1990 to raise money for the sole purpose of repair, restoration and refurbishment of the beautiful medieval church.

It enables agnostics, atheists, Roman Catholics, and those of other faiths to give money to this good cause with the guarantee that every single penny will be spent on the fabric of the church. The active members consist of people in each of these categories as well as Anglicans.

In addition to donations and covenants from members, regular fund raising events are held, drawing on a wide variety of people in the village who give their time and money in support of these events. Recent examples are a Silent Auction, A Night at the Races, the Three Churches Sponsored Walk, and an annual Harvest Supper.

A total of around £46,000 has been raised, of which over £24,000 so far has been spent on vital repairs. The next project to be undertaken will be the repair of the churchyard walls.

Sport & Leisure / Clubs & Societies

Part of the survey covered sport and leisure activities and swimming came top of the list 19 more would like to swim if there was somewhere local on offer. There is no public swimming pool in the village. The nearest is the newly opened 20-metre pool at the Green Healthclub in Charing. There are quite a few private pools. The second most popular pastime was walking, with a further six saying they would like to walk if this activity was offered!

Gardening was third, cycling fourth, followed closely by golf and then working out at the gym. Seven others said they would use a gym if this were available locally. The tenth most popular activity enjoyed is keep-fit. More would do this if it were offered locally. Both the Stour Centre in Ashford and the Tenterden Leisure Centre have gym facilities, as does the Green Healthclub.

Tennis followed, and five more said they would like to play if it were on offer. With two tennis courts situated on the recreation ground, tennis is available for everyone who wishes to play.

Reading was the next pursuit, followed closely by horse riding/hunting. Running, sailing shooting, fishing, cricket, squash, motor sport, and music were all close with each activity enjoyed by 8 to 12 participants.

There were also a great number of activities that individuals enjoy either in their own homes or by travelling away. These included windsurfing, kickboxing, scuba diving, roller-blading, canoeing, tap dancing, bird watching, and Weight Watchers.

There was only one person answering the questionnaire who put down sex as a leisure activity. Considering there were a number of babies born in the village during the year, we must have a lot of gooseberry bushes!

Sports Association

The Pluckley Sports Association was formed in 1976 to promote existing sports clubs and assist the formation of others. Its role is to co-ordinate the various activities on the recreation ground, improve facilities, raise funds, organise the village sports and receive subscriptions from the represented clubs.

Although dormant over the past few years, the sports association is still in existence and can be revived at any time. There is a small amount of funds.

Surrenden Tennis Club

Tennis was originally played in 1943/44 at Barhatch on Forge Hill (now demolished for new housing) then at Homewood's on a grass court. In 1966 a hard court was built on the recreation ground. Following the amalgamation of Little Chart and Pluckley tennis clubs in the late 1970's, the club became known as the Surrenden Tennis Club. A second court was built in 1980 with funds raised within the village and grants. The club holds evenings and tournaments for junior and senior members, and usually has a team in the summer and winter leagues. Currently annual family membership is £45; single adult, £30; student/non-working, £16; and junior, £10. Hire of the courts is free for members, but non-members are charged £3 per hour (adults) and £1.50 per hour (juniors).

Black Horse Gun Club

The Black Horse Gun Club started in 1984 to promote safe sport within the community and was founded by village policeman, David Adley. The club meets on alternate Sundays between 10am and 1pm, in the quarry at Swan Lane. Membership is £15 per year and £5 per session for a 60-bird clay. New members with a gun licence are welcome.

Cricket Club

Currently Pluckley Cricket Club consists of about 25 members who play two matches each weekend. The club runs Saturday and Sunday teams; one or two people play in both teams. The club is currently in division five of the Kent Village League and twelve league games are played on Sundays. The remaining games are 'friendlies.' About 24 games a year are played in Pluckley. During the winter the club practises at the indoor nets at Canterbury.

Members are drawn from Little Chart, Charing, Hothfield, and Ashford with about five from Pluckley.

The club ground is on the Pluckley Recreation Ground for which the club pays a rent of £100 per annum to the parish council; this sum includes £50 towards the cost of water.

Members pay £20 each year and £3.50 each time they play. The pavilion is in a poor state of repair and lacks toilet facilities. The club has carried out some maintenance itself, but requires additional funds in order to give the building a major facelift.

Football Club

David Luckhurst restarted Pluckley Football Club in 1990 with a group of friends from the village and, within a year, was accepted into Division 4 of the Ashford Sunday League.

In the first year with a membership of 18 players, but nowhere in Pluckley to play, the team used Smarden's ground. Eventually the Campbell family of Coopers Farm offered a field, after which the team moved to a field belonging to Redland Bricks.

Although £700 was spent on having the pitch completely resurfaced thanks to Geoff Gwillim and rabbit fenced, there were still drainage difficulties and the fence suffered from continual vandalism. Since 1995 the club has played on the Red Heathens Football Club ground at Charing Heath.

In the club's first season they won the Division 4 championship. A Division 3 win, runner-up in Division 2 and winning Division 1 followed this. The club's greatest achievement was in reaching the final of the Kent Sunday Cup in 1996: the first Ashford team to do so since 1963.

Since 1995 Smurfit Recycling have sponsored Pluckley Football Club with training tops and a wastepaper skip – the proceeds from which have kept the club.

The future ambition of the club – playing in the village on a permanent ground – will enable the members to start running a youth side and getting more local youngsters involved in the game of football.

Pluckley Redland Fishing Club

The fishing club was formed in July 1981 by employees of Redland Bricks at Pluckley Brickworks and is now run for ex-employees of Redland and invited guests.

Initially there were two ponds, large enough to be called lakes, on the site of the old Pluckley Brick and Tile Company. The main area of water to the north of the old kiln and drying sheds is still in existence and, at the time of the formation of the fishing club, there were only two species of fish in evidence: rudd and tench.

There was some debate at the time about roach being in the lake, although none had been seen, and it was decided there may be rudd-roach hybrids – and some of you thought fishing was boring!

The other lake was to the west of the main works. This water supported two main species, rudd and tench, and the unusual and rare golden tench. Sadly, these are even more rare now. The lake was drained and filled in some years ago to become a rubbish tip and Cleanaway site.

Pluckley Ride

South Eastern Toll Rides' 'Pluckley Ride' opened in October 1991 to provide off-road riding for local members and day visitors. It is a voluntary organisation and in 1993 received charitable status.

In 1991 fifteen miles of riding tracks were opened linking a bridleway and two byways; £1,000 was raised to install gates and bridges; 11 landowners and farmers were involved in providing tracks through arable land and orchards; and 20 riders became members.

Two thirds of the riders' annual membership fee, of between £30 and £120, goes into the Farmer's Fund and a third goes towards the running costs of South Eastern Toll Rides. Payment per mile (one acre) to farmers in 1992 was £40.

Due to the increasing amount and speed of traffic on local roads and to the pleasure riders have from riding in the countryside, the 'Pluckley Ride' has flourished and expanded. In 1999, 20 landowners and farmers had the toll ride on their land encompassing 25 miles of tracks with a link into the toll ride at Bethersden. There are now approximately 100 members and the farmers' payment last year was £230 per mile.

The 'Pluckley Ride' held its eighth Sponsored Fun Ride in August 1999 when 175 riders took part and raised £3,000 for charity.

The goodwill and co-operation of the farmers and landowners is outstanding and the public relations between horse riders and farmers benefit both.

Senior Citizens Club

The club started in 1950 as The Derby and Joan Club. To help boost funds one member made and donated penny buns. Rummage sales were held and tickets sold for the Derby, Grand National, and football.

At first the club was mainly a social afternoon, with the men playing cards or dominoes, the women chatting and organising help with village events. Mr and Mrs Dawes held garden teas and fetes during the summer months in their garden at Malmains.

Nowadays the club meets monthly in the village hall with Carr's Coaches providing transport from various pick-up points. At each meeting there is a raffle, bring and buy, books and jigsaw exchange, and a 100-club draw. There is often a speaker, bingo, or a quiz. Once a year an open day is held when members from other clubs come along and enjoy a musical hour. A summer bazaar and various outings to places of interest are arranged, along with a Christmas dinner held at Elvey Farm Country Hotel.

Gardening Society

Pluckley Gardening Society was restarted in 1951. Early summer shows were held in the school hall, while spring and autumn shows were held Friday evenings in the Dering Arms. After the village hall was re-built in 1960 the venue for all shows was moved there.

In the early days funds were low and jumble sales, coffee mornings, and even dances were held to raise funds. One of the more popular features of the jumble sales was a plant stall, and this has evolved over the years into the present sale of

plants held every May in the school garden. Profit from this sale subsidises the annual outing, the shows, and occasional flower festivals.

Every few years the society holds a garden safari specifically to raise funds for a particular village charity. The last, in 1998, raised approximately £1,700; some of which will be put towards providing additional seating on the recreation ground and a donation towards the village sign.

Other special events include flower festivals: the last was held in 1993 to celebrate the 900th anniversary of St Nicholas' Church, another is planned to celebrate the millennium.

Dance Club

The Pluckley Branch of the Premier School of Dancing started in 1995 in the village hall as an adult rock 'n' roll club and then became a children's class from 5 – 10 years with disco, rock 'n' roll and party dancing.

The club now takes children from four years to eighteen years of age and includes line dancing. Separate classes for beginners, seniors, and team dancers are held on Thursday evenings in the village hall.

Charing and District Local History Society

When the group was formed in 1956 the representative for Pluckley was Revd G Luckett. The society is affiliated to the Kent History Federation and the Kent Archaeological Society. Membership is composed of people from Charing, Pluckley, Egerton, Bethersden, and other surrounding communities.

Activities include a monthly lecture season during the winter and excursions during the summer. Meetings are held in Charing Parish Hall on the second Thursday of each month, from September to April.

Special study groups include palaeography, photography, oral history, and the census group. Activities include transcribing of old documents, maintaining a large collection of photographic records, and voice and film recordings of local memories. These collections share a room in the Charing's church tower with the church records.

Pluckley Players

The Pluckley Amateur Dramatic Club performed three one-act plays at Surrenden Manor in April 1948 and was formally constituted in April 1949. For the next few years it produced a series of annual performances in the old village hall of one- or three-act plays.

The club flourished through the 1960's with annual performances in the new village hall and social evenings or visits to London or other theatres. In 1969 it changed its name to 'The Pluckley Players' and in 1971 produced a 8mm cine-film called 'The Pluckley Ghosts', which was so widely shown that the print was worn out.

The group closed in 1979 when the assets, including £172 and the scenery and props, were donated to the village hall on condition that the management 'shall sympathetically consider any requirement for support for a group wishing to re-form a drama club in the future.'

Pluckley Panto

The origins of Pluckley Panto lie somewhere in 1984 following the Ghost Fayre organised by Anne Johnson to raise funds for the village hall, when a group was formed to produce a pantomime.

Under the direction of Judy Pool the first production, *Over the Rainbow*, a very local version of *The Wizard of Oz*, was put together entirely on a shoestring (with no costs wherever possible – most things begged, borrowed or stolen) for the express purpose of fund-raising for the hall. Every performance was sold out and audiences even trudged their way through several inches of snow to be there on the Saturday. The much-needed funds for the hall were raised and in January 1986 Pluckley Panto Unlimited was born.

Since then, under various scriptwriters and directors, a pantomime has been produced every year, performed over two weekends, at the end of January and the beginning of February. Sometimes the money raised has been split between different local charities, but in the main funds go to the hall. Several of the original members are still involved and newcomers are always welcome.

Royal British Legion

The Pluckley branch was started in 1921, but did not become active until 1929 when it was resurrected. The standard bears the date 1929. There are about sixty members and they meet two to three times a year. Each year on Armistice Day a service is held at Little Chart and Pluckley churches, with the laying of the wreath at Pluckley. The oldest member is Mr Bertram Pile, born 8 May 1901.

Conservatives

There has been a branch of the party in Pluckley since the early twenties. A Conservative candidate has been returned to Parliament from the Ashford Constituency throughout the whole of this period, except when a Liberal candidate was elected between the years 1929 to 1931.

Pluckley consistently elected a Conservative as its representative on Ashford Borough Council until 1987.

The branch has four members on the executive committee of the Ashford Constituency that meets at regular intervals, usually with the local MP present, for determining constituency policy on local and national matters.

The branch has a number of fund-raising events during the year, the major one of which is a summer supper party at a local venue. Other events include a ploughman's lunch and plant sale, a book and jigsaw sale, and the organisation of a car treasure hunt in collaboration with the Village Hall Management Committee.

Labour Party

A Labour group was started in the village in the 1950's with over 100 members. They had a good social organisation with concerts, dances, and a 'League of Youth' for teenagers – some of whom came from neighbouring villages. Most of the original members are now dead, but one founder member still lives in the village.

Liberal Democrats

Pluckley with Little Chart Liberal Democratic Group began in 1981. In 1988 Liberals and Social Democrats merged into the Liberal Democrats.

The group's first borough councillor for Pluckley ward was elected in 1987 with a small majority. She continues in post at the time of writing.

The group is made up from paid-up members of the national party plus local supporters. Activities include circulation of *Focus* newsletter approximately four times a year to all households and occasional village meetings/social gatherings.

Achievements to date have involved many local campaigns, including a bus shelter in Egerton Road, speed limit, and local needs housing.

RNLI

The Ashford branch of the RNLI consists of a small committee and is a fund raising group. This is achieved by house-to-house collections, street collections and collections at premises such as supermarkets, garden centres etc. Funds are raised at village hall events and include the sale of RNLI souvenirs.

Other Organisations

Before the last war there was a wide variety of clubs and societies. These included the Little Chart, Pluckley and District Benefit Society; the Girls Friendly Society (who used to meet in a hut situated at Lambden Cottage); the Rat and Sparrow Club; the Pluckley, Little Chart and Egerton Cottage Nursing Association; Pluckley Quoits Team; Pluckley Goal Running Club; and the Ex-Servicemen's Club. Over the years a number of clubs for the younger members of the community have appeared and, in some instances, faded away. A Pluckley Youth Club has been initiated several times, but the last closed several years ago. A branch of the Women's Institute thrived from 1919 until 1992. It was briefly resurrected between 1995 and 1998.

A village Brownie pack was started in 1970 and flourished until 1992. On leaving Brownies most girls went to the Guide group in Bethersden until this closed in 1998. Both Guide Companies and Brownie Packs can be found in Charing and Headcorn. Beaver, Cub and Scout Troops are in Bethersden and Headcorn, and Beaver and Cub packs in Charing. There is also an active Venture Scout movement in the area.

Other youth movements locally include branches of the Air Training Corps at Headcorn Airfield and a Cadet Army Corps in Headcorn.

Conclusions

Some interesting and important facts have emerged from the results of the appraisal. It shows that 65% of residents would like Pluckley to stay as it is. Most people positively valued a sense of place and local identity. The most content seem to be the over 60s, with about a quarter believing the provision for them to be good or reasonable.

Among the concerns affecting village life is the problem of road traffic hazards. Many 'danger spots' were identified, confirming the need to achieve better control of traffic speed and of the continuing growth of heavy commercial vehicles.

The appraisal results also show better communication is needed in parish and borough council decisions that affect the community.

A low level of support was given for further general new housing in the village. Where support was shown it was mostly for small family homes, accommodation for young people, and houses to rent.

Some of the subjects that came to the fore have already been taken in hand – in some instances they were already in the planning stages before the questionnaire replies were in: fuller reports of parish council work appear in the parish magazine; recycling bins for glass and cans have been installed at the village hall; and the village hall car park has been refurbished.

As a result of the appraisal we suggest the following ideas be adopted:

Action Plan for the next five years

- ❖ A village design statement to be produced.
- ❖ Continue to press the highway authorities to improve road safety measures in the village: to include lowering and extending the speed limit.
- ❖ A twice-yearly parish council report to all households to replace the present annual one together with annual details of parish council income and expenditure. Increased use of the parish council notice board with a wider range of information.
- ❖ Pressure to be put on the Post Office to allow Vehicle Road Fund Licences to be sold in the village post office.
- ❖ Ashford Borough Council to be urged to do everything possible to prevent the decline of the village shops – in particular to extend rate relief to all village shops.
- ❖ Surveys to consider the need for street lighting, its cost and locations; another to ascertain which road side verges should be either protected or trimmed; to consider alternative and viable public transport for those without some personal means of transport; and a review of recreational facilities within the village, for all ages.
- ❖ Encourage elected representatives of Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council to provide more information about their activities – especially those affecting the village.
- ❖ Car parking, especially in the station area, to be urgently reviewed and enforced.
- ❖ Improvement of television and mobile telephone reception.

Appendix A

Pluckley's footpaths

Path No	To / From	Length	Type	Condition	Stiles/ Gates	Condition	Waymarkng	Usage	Remarks
AW147	Meadowcroft / Frith Farm	500m	Headland	Not Left. Some undergrowth	1 stile	Ok	Signposts no other	Little	
AW148	Pinnock / parish boundary	500m	Field / Enclosed	Ok	3 stiles	Ok	signpost & Stone some other	Med	Dogs a problem on enclosed path
AW142	Thorne/Honey Farm	950m	Track x Field / Meadow	x Field not reinstated	3 stiles	one broken	signposts and WM	Med	
AW143	Links AW163 and AW142	350m	Headland	Not Left. Some undergrowth	–	–	none	Med	
AW163	Forge Hill / Elvey Farm	1150m	x Field / Headland	Fair	7 gates	2 not easy	Good	Heavy	Greensand Way
AW140 (S)	Elvey / AW141	450m	x Field / Headland	Not reinstated	1 stile	Ok	some	Little	North Greensand Way
AW140 (N)	Elvey / Greenhill Road	450m	x Field / Headland	Fair	3 stiles	Ok	Good	Heavy	
AW 83 (S)	AW141 / Greenhill	500m	x Fields	Not reinstated through crops	4 stiles	Ok	Good	Little	North Greensand Way
AW 83 (N)	AW141 / AW312	450m	Headland	Ok	3 stiles	Ok	Good	Heavy	
AW321	Elvey / Prebbles Hill	950m	Byway Enclosed	Good to poor	–	–	Signposts	Med	
AW322	AW321 / Egerton Road	100m	x Field	Ok	2 stiles	1 needs step	Sign stone, no WM	Little	
AW24	Pivington Mill / Tram Hatch	750m	Headland	Ok	1 stile, 1 gate		signpost, some WM	Part med part heavy	South Stour Valley Path
AW85	AW24 / parish boundary	200m	Headland	Ok	–	–	no WM	Heavy	
AW164	Pivington Lane / parish boundary	450m	Byway	Ok	–	–	Signposts at road	Med	

AW26	Tram Hatch / Pivington Lane	450m	Headland / parish boundary	part not reinstated	2 stiles, 1 gate	–	signpost at lane, no WM	Heavy	
AW242	Pivington Lane / parish boundary	400m	Byway	Ok	–	–	Signpost at lane	Heavy	
AW107	Pivington Farm / parish boundary	750m	Track / x field	Ok	1 stile	Broken	Stone at road, way marked	Med	
AW109	Prebbles Hill / Jennings Farm (2 parts)	950m	x fields, orchards & wood	Line of path not clear through orchard	3 stiles, 1 gate	1 stile broken	No signposts, stones only	Med	Stone at Prebbles Hill in wrong place. One stone at Jennings broken, also stile
AW162	Egerton Road / AW163	300m	Bridleway	Fair	3 gates		Signpost WM	Med	Toll ride
AW163	AW162 / The Street	250m	Enclosed path	Gets overgrown	–	–	Signpost at road	Heavy	
AW146	Swan Lane / AW114	250m	Orchard	Diverted, good	–	–	Signpost & WM	Little	Recently diverted
AW114	Forge Hill / parish boundary	1200m	Mainly orchard	Good	3 stiles	Ok	Signposts & WM	Heavy	Greensand Way
AW146	Millpond Hill / AW146A	700m	Field & track	Good	3 stiles	Ok	Signpost at road, no WM	Med	
AW146A	AW146 Sheerland AW114	450m	Track	Good	–	Ok	None	Med	Not waymarked from junction with AW114
AW115 (3 parts)	A146 Rooting St / parish boundary	750m	Field & orchard	Part good, part poor	2 gates, 1 stile		Little	Med	Path through orchard not reinstated
AW159	Station Road / Malmains Road	200m	X field	Not reinstated	–	–	None	Little	
AW157	Malmains Road / Station Road	250m	X field, x meadow, drive		2 stiles	Difficult	1 signpost, none	Little	
AW156	Rushbrook Farm / Malmains Road	300m	X field	Not reinstated	–	–	1 signpost	Little	
AW152	Station Road / Chambers Green Farm	300m	X field		–	–	Signposts	Little	
AW153	Rushbrook Road / Stone Abbage	200m	X field				Signpost & WM	Med	

AW151	Pluckley Station / Dowle Street	1200m	X fields & meadow		3 stiles	1 broken	1 signpost, 1 stone, no WM		
AW154	Stone Abbage / The Forest	1050m	X field & woodland		2 stiles	Ok			
AW155	Gore Court / Malmain Road	300m	Track				None	Little	
AW155A	Dowle Street / Gore Court	200m	X fields	Not reinstated			Stone at road only	Little	
AW149	Forge Hill / Chambers Green	1300m	4 grass fields	1 field not reinstated	8 stiles	3 poor	signposts at roads, WM	Med	Greensand Way link path. Some stiles are in poor condition and are very overgrown
AW150	Lambden Road / Turner Farm	1200m	Meadows	Ok	4 stiles, 3 gates	1 barbed fence	Stone only Lambden Rd	Little	No signs at Turner Farm, also warning about loose dogs
AW150A	The Forest / Ragstones	1350m	Fields & meadows	2 fields not reinstated	5 stiles		Signposts at roads & WM	Med	Diverted path round Brockton Farm
AW205	Ragstones / parish boundary	350m	X field	Not reinstated	2 stiles	1 poor	Well waymarked	Little	Diverted path round Brockton Farm
AW116	Rooting / Saracens	1250m	Bridleway track	Ok	1 gate	Ok	Stone only WM	Med	
n.b.	Small parts of 150 & 150A are cul-de-sacs. The two paths used to join. Re-instatement of paths always depends on the season.								

Appendix B – Individual Question Counts – totals

Household section – total number of households replying: 285

Question Number: 1

How many people including children normally live in your household? Total: 682

Question Number: 2

Please enter the number of people in your household in each age group:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
0-4	11	15
5-10	29	28
11-15	17	14
16-17	4	6
18-24	20	27
25-44	89	83
45-59	81	84
60-64	19	16
65-74	42	41
75-84	18	23
85+	4	10

Question Number: 3

Where does your household live?

Village Centre & Westfields	97 (34.0%)
Thorne & Fir Toll	78 (27.4%)
Station	49 (17.2%)
Other	60 (21.1%)

Question Number: 4

Is this dwelling:

Private rented	24 (8.4%)
Local authority rented	27 (9.5%)
Housing Association rented	18 (6.3%)
Owner occupied	196 (68%)
Shared ownership (part owned/part rented)	9 (3.2%)
Other	1 (0.4%)
Provided as part of employment (e.g. MOD)	3 (1.1%)

Question Number: 5

What type of dwelling is this?

Detached house	106 (37%)
Semi-detached house	66 (23.2%)
Terraced house	37 (13.0%)
Detached Bungalow	46 (16.1%)
Semi-detached Bungalow	12 (4.2%)
Flat/maisonette	5 (1.8%%)
Specially adapted housing	1 (0.4%%)
Mobile home/caravan	1 (0.4%%)
Other	5 (1.8%%)

Question Number: 6

Is any individual in your household, or your whole household, currently in need of alternative accommodation?

Yes 19 (6.7%)
No 251 (88%)

Question Number: 7

If 'yes' who is looking for alternative accommodation?

Whole family 7 (2.5%)
Daughter 5 (1.8%)
Son 5 (1.8%)
Parents 2 (0.7%)

Question Number: 8

Enter the number of children under 16 in your household who attend the following:

Play group 5
Nursery school 4
Primary school 56
Secondary school 28
School for those with special needs 1
Other 6

Question Number: 9

Enter the number of children in your household who have a special educational need:

..... 6

Question Number: 10

Please enter the number of people in your household over 16 who attend the following:

Sixth form college 9
University 19
Training courses 19

Question Number: 11

If any of your children under 16 are unable to take part in after school activities, please give the reasons why:

Lack of transport home 6 (2.1%)
Distance between home/school 4 (1.4%)
Expense 2 (0.7%)
Special needs not catered for 0 (0.0%)

Question Number: 12

How many roadworthy vehicles does your household keep?

Cars 399
Vans 38
Motor bikes 20
Specially adapted vehicles 1
Lorries 3
Bicycles 97

Personal Section

Question Number: 13

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 574

Sex

Male 281 (49%)
Female 293 (51%)

Question Number: 14

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 575

What age group do you belong to?

11-15 31 (5.4%)
16-17 10 (1.7%)
18-24 40 (7.0%)
25-44 164 (28%)
45-59 160 (27%)
60-64 35 (6.1%)
65-74 85 (14.8%)
75-84 36 (6.3%)
85+ 14 (2.4%)

Question Number: 15

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 565

How long have you lived in Pluckley?

Less than a year 31 (5.5%)
1-5 years 109 (19%)
6-15 years 172 (30%)
16-25 years 74 (13.1%)
26-50 years 98 (17.3%)
51 + years 27 (4.8%)
Whole life 54 (9.6%)

Question Number: 16

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 558

How did you come to live in Pluckley?

Born here 74 (13.3%)
Work in area 75 (13.4%)
Relatives live nearby 47 (8.4%)
Love of village life 107 (19%)
Love of country life 172 (30%)
Availability of housing 96 (17.2%)
Retired here 37 (6.6%)
Marriage 53 (9.5%)
Setting up home 54 (9.7%)
Came with family 114 (20%)
Other 35 (6.3%)

Question Number: 17

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 562

Are you at present:

An employee	191 (34%)
Unemployed	13 (2.3%)
Self-employed - employing other people	44 (7.8%)
Self employed - not employing anyone	56 (10.0%)
In a government training scheme	2 (0.4%)
In full-time education	51 (9.1%)
Unwaged housewife/husband	49 (8.7%)
Retired	142 (25%)
Permanently sick/disabled	14 (2.5%)

Question Number: 18

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 229

If you are in waged employment, what is the business of your major employer?

Agriculture/Horticulture	32 (14.0%)
Manufacturing engineering	21 (9.2%)
Manufacturing other	17 (7.4%)
Retail/Service industry	41 (17.9%)
Financial Services	20 (8.7%)
Tourism e.g. hotels/catering/B&B	7 (3.1%)
Local Government/Public Sector	52 (22.7%)
Construction	14 (6.1%)
Transport/Communications	16 (7.0%)
Food Processing	9 (3.9%)

Question Number: 19

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 303

Where is your main place of work?

Pluckley	77 (25.4%)
Ashford	47 (15.5%)
Maidstone	19 (6.3%)
Canterbury	7 (2.3%)
London	45 (14.9%)
Villages within 5 miles	34 (11.2%)
Other (please indicate)	74 (24.4%)

Question Number: 20

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 418

What is, or would be, your main means of transport to work, training or study?

Car/Van	269 (64%)
Public Bus	8 (1.9%)
Private Bus	14 (3.3%)
Taxi	0 (0.0%)
Bicycle	8 (1.9%)
Motor-cycle/Scooter/Moped	7 (1.7%)
Train	47 (11.2%)
Walking	17 (4.1%)
Other	2 (0.5%)
Not applicable	46 (11.0%)

Question Number: 21

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 107

If you run a business, how many people do you employ?

0	46 (43.0)
1-3	33 (30.8)
4-5	7 (6.5%)
6-10	11 (10.3)
11-25	3 (2.8%)
26-99	5 (4.7%)
100-199	1 (0.9%)
200+	1 (0.9%)

Question Number: 22

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 109

If you run a business, into which category does it fall?

Agriculture/Horticulture	18 (16.5%)
Building	28 (25.7%)
Food Processing	1 (0.9%)
Retail	6 (5.5%)
Finance/Professional Services	17 (15.6%)
Information Technology/Computers	2 (1.8%)
Manufacturing	7 (6.4%)
Transport	5 (4.6%)
Tourism e.g. hotels catering B & B	6 (5.5%)
Other Service e.g. hairdressing	19 (17.4%)

Question Number: 23

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 506

Do you experience transport difficulties in getting out of Pluckley to other places?

Often	36 (7.1%)
Occasionally	168 (33%)
Never	302 (59%)

Question Number: 24

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 111

Do you experience the following parking problems at your home?

Nowhere to park	37 (33.3%)
Cars blocking your entrance	37 (33.3%)

Question Number: 25

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 519

Do you think there are any major 'danger-spots' on the roads in Pluckley?

Yes	469 (90%)
No	28 (5.4%)
No opinion	22 (4.2%)

Question Number: 27

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 501

Would you support the following speed control measures in Pluckley?

Extension of the speed limit	317 (63%)
Traffic calming	197 (39%)
Children at play signs	133 (26%)
More road warning signs	190 (37%)
None of the above	48 (9.6%)
Other (please indicate)	44 (8.8%)

Question Number: 28

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 499

Do you think that the traffic problems in Pluckley are related to any of the following?

General congestion	136 (27%)
Lack of parking	195 (39%)
Lorry traffic	236 (47%)
Pedestrian/vehicle conflict	80 (16.0%)
Traffic speed	291 (58%)
Need for wider footpaths	120 (24%)
Need for pedestrianisation	49 (9.8%)
Need for traffic regulation	113 (22%)
Need for more public transport	125 (25%)

Question Number: 29

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 521

What do you think about the number of houses that have been built in Pluckley over the last 10 years?

About right	167 (32%)
Too much new housing	149 (28%)
Too little housing	24 (4.6%)
Too expensive	139 (26%)
Too big	111 (21%)
Too small	13 (2.5%)
No opinion	103 (19%)

Question Number: 30

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 486

What kind of accommodation do you think Pluckley needs?

Homes for young people	172 (35%)
Large family homes	39 (8.0%)
Small family homes	163 (33%)
Executive homes	12 (2.5%)
Homes for people with disabilities	63 (13%)
Homes for single people	76 (15.6%)
No further homes are needed ..	185 (38%)
Other	29 (6.0%)

Question Number: 31

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 469

What type/s of home/s is/are needed in Pluckley?

Detached houses	58 (12.4%)
Semi-detached houses	107 (22%)
Terraced houses	60 (12.8%)
Cottages	128 (27%)
Bungalows	97 (20.7%)
Flats and maisonettes	14 (3.0%)
Bed sits	7 (1.5%)
Mobile Homes	1 (0.2%)
Specially adapted homes	29 (6.2%)
Nursing Home	22 (4.7%)
There is no need for any of them	171 (36%)
Other	18 (3.8%)

Question Number: 32

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 432

Is there need for more accommodation of the following types in Pluckley?

Private rented	43 (10.0%)
Local authority/housing assoc rented	98 (22.7%)
Owner occupied	65 (15.0%)
Shared ownership (Part owned/rented	51 (11.8%)
Sheltered housing	48 (11.1%)
Restricted sale to local people	116 (26%)
Low cost sale	75 (17.4%)
There is no need for any of these	153 (35%)
Other	12 (2.8%)

Question Number: 33

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 549

Are you registered as disabled?

Yes	27 (4.9%)
No	522 (95%)

Question Number: 34

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

What are your views on the standard of the following services in Pluckley:

	1	2	3	4	5
Fire	85	87	10	22	301
Police	46	128	113	33	185
Ambulance (Emergency)	80	89	31	27	283
Hospital (Transport)	38	58	44	40	318
Police (Emergency)	28	78	67	30	297
Police (Bobby)	33	58	131	48	237

Question Number: 35

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 524

Which, if any, of the following crimes and anti-social behaviour concern you in Pluckley:

Theft	366 (69%)
Mugging	23 (4.4%)
Vandalism	229 (43%)
Drunkness	46 (8.8%)
Other	27 (5.2%)
Not concerned	102 (19%)

Question Number: 36

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 510

Do you think that any of the following measures are needed?

A greater police presence	253 (49%)
Better consultation between police and	165 (32%)
A neighbourhood watch	224 (43%)
Improved street lighting	167 (32%)
More drug/drink education/prevention	55 (10.8%)
More activities for young people	252 (49%)
CCTV	62 (12.2%)
Other	13 (2.5%)

Question Number: 37

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 537

Would you be prepared to keep certain items separate from your refuse for recycling if a separate collection was made?

Yes 483 (89%)
No 15 (2.8%)
No opinion 39 (7.3%)

Question Number: 38

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 488

Would you use the following?

Bottle bank 422 (86%)
Public bulk rubbish tips 258 (52%)
Skip for garden waste 275 (56%)
Newspaper bank 376 (77%)
Clothing bank 297 (60%)
Can bank 347 (71%)

Question Number: 39

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

How often do you use the following shops and services:

1 daily, 2 weekly, 3 monthly, 4 less frequently, 5 never
..... 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5
Homewood's Butcher 22 121 82..... 130 132
Heasman's Shop 124..... 247..... 53..... 63 27
Mobile Library 1 14 9 18 423
Library in School 0 7 3..... 12..... 430
Post Office 30..... 238 111..... 87 50

Question Number: 40

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 516

If you shop in Pluckley is it because:

The local shops give good value/service 197 (38%)
You like to support local shops 385 (74%)
You like the social contact 168 (32%)
It saves time 232 (45%)
It saves transport costs 178 (34%)
You don't have transport to go 296 (57%)
Other 20 (3.9%)
Never shop in Pluckley 22 (4.3%)

Question Number: 41

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 462

When you shop out of Pluckley, is it because?

Goods are cheaper there 269 (58%)
You have more choice there 345 (74%)
It is convenient to your place of work 69 (14.9%)
Nearer local school/nursery 20 (4.3%)
Easy to park 129 (27%)
Other 58 (12.6%)

Question Number: 42

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 535

Do you use the free buses to supermarkets?

Yes 31 (5.8%)
No 504 (94%)

Question Number: 43

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 484

If you use the local Post Office, please say what for:

Postal services	439 (90%)
Pensions/Allowances	133 (27%)
Giro bank/savings certificates etc.....	113 (23%)
TV Licence/other bills	217 (44%)
Information leaflets	67 (13.8%)
Other services.....	71 (14.7%)

Question Number: 44

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 486

Would you like Pluckley Post Office to sell Vehicle Tax (Road Fund Licence)?

Yes	474 (97%)
No	12 (2.5%)

Question Number: 45

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

Are you aware of what is on offer at the following places?

.....	Yes	No	Not Interested
The Pluckley Village Hall	317	154	35
The Leisure Centre at Ashford	246	153	91
The Leisure Centre at Tenterden	196	175	113
Adult Educ at Ashford/Tenterden	193	160	133

Question Number: 48

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 232

If you do not take part in any sports/leisure activities, is it because:

Do not want to	151 (65%)
Unsuitable opening hours	18 (7.8%)
Access problems (physical)	16 (6.9%)
No transport	24 (10.3%)
Too expensive	35 (15.1%)
Poor publicity	31 (13.4%)

Question Number: 49

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 494

Are the facilities provided in the children's playground:

Good	66 (13.4%)
Reasonable	150 (30%)
Poor	35 (7.1%)
No opinion	243 (49%)

Question Number: 50

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

What are your views on local social facilities for:

1 good, 2 reasonable, 3 poor, 4 no opinion

.....	1	2	3	4
Children up to 16	13	45	187	201
Young people 17-25	3	37	193	204
People 26-60	16	97	128	199
People over 60	40	107	54	250

Question Number: 51

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

How many times a month do you use Pluckley's ...

1 more than 10, 2 between 6 and 10, 3 between 1 and 5, 4 less frequently, 5 never

	1	2	3	4	5
Village Hall	4	6	46	272	180
Public Houses.....	28	40	89	208	149

Question Number: 52

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 493

Where do you usually get information about events taking place in Pluckley?

Notice Board	157 (31%)
Parish Magazine	351 (71%)
Free paper	71 (14.4%)
Local paper	201 (40%)
Post Office	149 (30%)
Library	3 (0.6%)
Other	76 (15.4%)

Question Number: 53

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

Do you have any reception difficulties with the following?

	Yes	No	No opinion
Radio	81	351	33
TV.	153	307	20
Mobile Telephone	92	132	195

Question Number: 54

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 541

Have you ever attended a meeting of the Pluckley Parish Council?

Yes	154 (28%)
No	387 (71%)

Question Number: 55

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 516

How well does the local council publicise its 27 (5.2%)

Reasonably well	233 (45%)
Badly	117 (22%)
No opinion	139 (26%)

Question Number: 56

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 528

Pluckley Parish Council is empowered to raise money through the council tax. Are you satisfied with the way this money is spent?

Very satisfied	19 (3.6%)
Quite satisfied	139 (26%)
Quite dissatisfied	19 (3.6%)
Very dissatisfied	10 (1.9%)
Don't know how it is spent	271 (51%)
No opinion	70 (13.3%)

Question Number: 57

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 527

Would you be prepared to pay a slightly higher council tax to meet some of the needs of Pluckley Village Hall?

Yes 183 (34%)
No 248 (47%)
No opinion 96 (18.2%)

Question Number: 58

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

Do you feel your elected representatives in local government are sufficiently aware of local concerns and feelings?

1 fully aware, 2 quite aware, 3 not aware, 4 no opinion

	1	2	3	4
Pluckley Parish Council	139	175	61	125
Ashford Borough Council	58	169	127	136
Kent County Council	21	95	185	181

Question Number: 59

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 524

Do you think sufficient publicity is given to planning applications that affect Pluckley?

Yes 119 (22%)
No 290 (55%)
No opinion 115 (21%)

Question Number: 60

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 512

What is your opinion of the appearance of new buildings in Pluckley?

Totally satisfied 25 (4.9%)
Quite satisfied 206 (40%)
Quite dissatisfied 102 (19%)
Totally dissatisfied 61 (11.9%)
No opinion 118 (23%)

Question Number: 61

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 335

Which types of development would you support in Pluckley?

Small scale industrial workshops 109 (32%)
Sheltered workshops 84 (25.1%)
Light industrial 53 (15.8%)
Small business development ... 137 (40%)
Small groups of houses 170 (50%)
Large estates 4 (1.2%)
Tourism development/attractions 59 (17.6%)

Question Number: 62

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 506

Are you an active member of:

Local church 87 (17.2%)
Chapel..... 7 (1.4%)
House church 1 (0.2%)
Synagogue 0 (0.0%)
Other..... 12 (2.4%)
None 399 (78%)

Question Number: 63

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 478

Is the St Nicholas' Church important to you?

For Sunday worship	117 (24%)
For baptisms	128 (26%)
Weddings and funerals	232 (48%)
As a focal point for the community	249 (52%)
As an historic building	358 (74%)
Every place should have one ..	142 (29%)
Other	23 (4.8%)

Question Number: 65

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 474

Which elements of the countryside around Pluckley do you value?

A sense of place	197 (41%)
Local identity.....	276 (58%)
Tranquillity	320 (67%)
Openness	318 (67%)

Question Number: 66

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 405

Does Pluckley suffer from any of the following types of disturbance?

Bonfires	109 (26%)
Traffic noise	261 (64%)
Farm animals in gardens/on roads	23 (5.7%)
Hunting	19 (4.7%)
Low-flying aircraft	145 (35%)
Motorcycle scrambling	22 (5.4%)
Cycle scrambling	7 (1.7%)
Noise pollution	120 (29%)
Light pollution	54 (13.3%)

Question Number: 67

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

In relation to local footpaths and bridleways, can you answer the following questions?

	Yes	No	No opinion
Do you know where the local paths are?	348	108	30
Can you use them without difficulty?	218	116	116
Are they well signposted?	251	107	110
Would you be willing to maintain them?	137	217	97

Question Number: 68

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 331

If you experienced difficulties when using local footpaths and bridleways, which if any, of the following difficulties did you find?

Farm animals	33 (10.0%)
High stiles	46 (13.9%)
Locked gates	29 (8.8%)
Barbed wire	52 (15.7%)
Mud/water	76 (23.0%)
Crops across path	131 (39%)
Other users	4 (1.2%)
Bushes/nettles	108 (32%)
No signposts	74 (22.4%)
Other	27 (8.2%)
No difficulty experienced	103 (31%)

Question Number: 69

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 595

What do you think could be done with the local roads, lanes and paths to make the countryside more attractive?

1 very important, 2 important, 3 worth doing, 4 not necessary, 5 don't know

	1	2	3	4	5
Remove litter	266	93	41	9	29
Keep roadside verges mown and tidy	145	108	58	42	67
Let roadside verges grow for wildlife	82	58	60	86	81
Stop vehicle damage to road verges	196	106	42	27	46
Signpost paths and bridleways	97	94	88	43	63
Repair gates stiles and bridges	77	109	96	31	64
Close some footpaths and bridleways	13	15	10	208	111
Open more footpaths and bridleways	52	39	66	115	107
Remove unnecessary sign posts	46	45	77	101	90
Make paths accessible to those with disabilities	106	81	83	44	85
Reduce traffic	203	72	52	42	47

Question Number: 70

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO QUESTION: 503

How would you like Pluckley to develop?

As a working community	238 (47%)
As a retirement community	23 (4.6%)
As a commuter community	19 (3.8%)
As a tourist centre	25 (5.0%)
To stay as it is	328 (65%)
None of these	8 (1.6%)

Comment Questions

Results of these and other matters that respondents felt were important to the village, but had not been covered by the questionnaire can be found in the general text. Anyone wishing to view the full, unabridged list of comments should contact the parish clerk. Copies have also been placed with the Centre for Kentish Studies, County Hall, Maidstone.

- 26 Where do you consider the danger-spots to be?
- 46 What sport/leisure activities do you participate in?
- 47 What sport/leisure activities would you like to take part in if they were offered?
- 64 What landscape features around Pluckley need to be protected?
- 71 How should Pluckley celebrate the millennium?

**A copy of the Village Appraisal can be purchased from
Pluckley Parish Council c/o Giles Farm, Pluckley, Ashford, Kent TN27 0SY for £3.50 including
postage within the UK.**

Please e-mail vap@pluckley.net for overseas rates.