

Eynsham Parish Plan 2007-08

58 YOUNG PEOPLE

58.1 The Facts

- 58.1.1 Eynsham has a wide range of structured activities for young people, with over 20 clubs and uniformed organisations (e.g. scouts, army cadets). There is, however, no Guide group; and the overwhelming majority of existing activities run in term-time only.
- 58.1.2 Provision of unstructured activities, such as advice and drop in sessions, is far more limited. The Youth Centre is the only provider, with a confidential term-time health service offering advice on issues such as healthy eating, family planning, stress and bullying.
- 58.1.3 Generic youth provision at the Youth Centre is currently available only on Monday and Tuesday, from 7.15 to 9.30pm. This is open to 13-19 year olds within a catchment area similar to the local secondary school. There is no access for 11-13 year olds.
- 58.1.4 A considerable amount of investment has been made in the Youth Centre in recent years for refurbishment, internet access and high quality sound equipment and resources funded by LEADER+. Only a minority of Eynsham's young people access this high quality facility at present.

58.2 Young people: The Opinions

- 58.2.1 Only 65 (8%) of survey respondents were in the age group 11-24. Questions about issues that concern young people have largely been answered by older respondents, which may mean that the survey does not reflect the full range of younger people's views about how Eynsham could develop.
- 58.2.2 Closed question responses about young people's issues concentrated on provision of services within the village. 438 (58%) respondents to Question 12 thought the children's playgrounds were either good or reasonable. However, 485 (65%) respondents to Question 20 thought there should be more activities for young people and 309 (41%) expressed a need for an after-school club.
- 58.2.3 In answer to the open question on what they disliked about Eynsham, a number of people indicated that they feel threatened by groups of young people "hanging around" (see Community Safety section 51.2). A number of responses also indicated some people associate young people with noise, drinking and graffiti. Overall, a significant number of responses indicated people believed young people could pose a problem to the peacefulness of the village. Some saw more provision of activities and greater police presence could improve Eynsham.



Illustration 1: Refurbishment in progress at Witney Road play area, July 2007

58.3 Young people: The Vision

- 58.3.1 There is frequent discussion in Eynsham about the perceived threat of young people to property. Some villagers' views of young people are based on a minority, who are more visible on the streets, and who are seen to be linked to vandalism and graffiti. In some cases the threat is more apparent than real. What evidence there is suggests that only a very small number of visible young people are involved in damage to the village fabric.
- 58.3.2 While the Youth Centre gives access to high quality services for young people, the current restricted provision reflects the level of staffing resources; and this is not predicted to change in the short to medium term. Potential models of restructuring may provide a greater flexibility of service. (Further information is available from the Youth Support Service, CYPF, Oxfordshire County Council.)
- 58.3.3 Bartholomew School has identified the need for a collaborative approach to “behaviour management” and is aiming to work with students, School Council, staff, parents and the wider community. The tools include “a new uniform ... and changes to the exeat system” along with “extra monitoring of the village at lunchtimes by school staff.” It is also calling for feedback:

“Anything you can tell us in these areas will help, and we will continue to strive to make you proud of your school, the school that should be a central part of the community.”¹

- 58.3.4 One way forward in working with Eynsham's young people would be to introduce outreach workers who could work directly with young people on Eynsham's streets.
- 58.3.5 Another potential method is the development of community projects where residents from a range of backgrounds and ages can mix together to achieve a purposeful goal, as instanced in the churches' annual community action event, The Noise.



Illustration 2: Community Action – picking litter

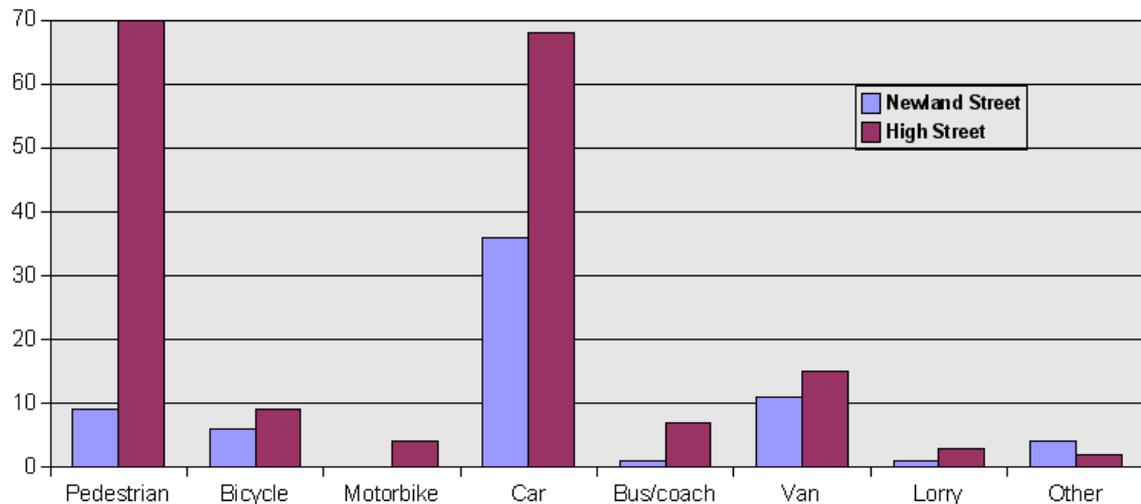


Illustration 3: and garden clearing with Eynsham Noise, May 2007

- 58.3.6 Eynsham Primary School has taken a similar approach, frequently engaging young people in real issues, as seen in the Environment section 53.1.7 above.

1 Bartholomew School report to Annual Parish Meeting, April 2007

58.3.7 Years 3 and 4 looked at traffic around the village as part of their local geography studies in summer 2007 – with some interesting results. The work included two half-hour traffic surveys, in Newland Street and the High Street, held around mid-morning on 11 June.



“From our survey we found out that the High Street was far more busier than Newland Street. There were lots more pedestrians on the High Street than on Newland Street. We think it's because the High Street is the main road in the village ...

We saw tens and tens of cars going past on the High Street. Sometimes ... there are dangers of crashes, like a lorry reversing, and blocking two roads then all the cars will have to wait. I think, so the road would be better to drive down, put some traffic lights or widen up the roads and paths so people can walk down the road safely. Or maybe even put a one-way road down it.”

58.3.8 A set of posters followed, underlining the message that walking is good for you (and neatly linked with Walk to School Week). Some of the work will be on view at the Village Open Day on 22 September.

Key messages include:

- i. Leaving the car at home helps you stay fit and healthy.
- ii. You won't get stiff if you ride a bike or walk.
- iii. People who walk or cycle to school are more alert than those who go by car.
- iv. Walking costs nothing and it's not as far as you think.
- v. Don't use the weather as an excuse, because even in the UK it rains hard on only 8 working days a year.
- vi. You can always take an umbrella or just wear a rain coat and get your boots on.

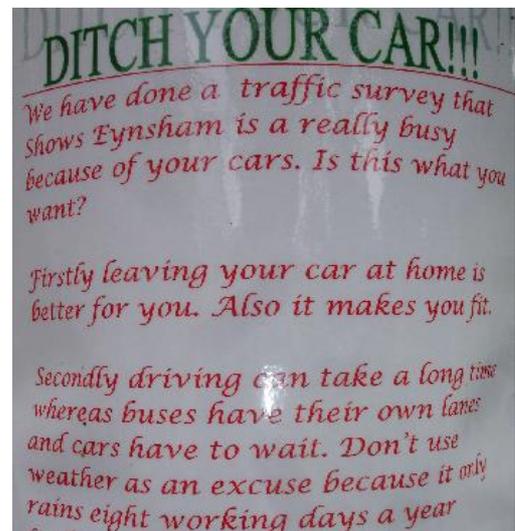


Illustration 4: posters circled
Eynsham Primary School, May 2007

- vii. Driving can take longer. Buses have their own lane so don't get stuck in traffic. Bikes don't get stuck in traffic anyway.
- viii. Finally, buses cause less pollution. So go on your bus or bike and save the planet!

58.3.9 The young people also considered traffic at the Toll Bridge – past, present and future – and again produced some refreshing suggestions:

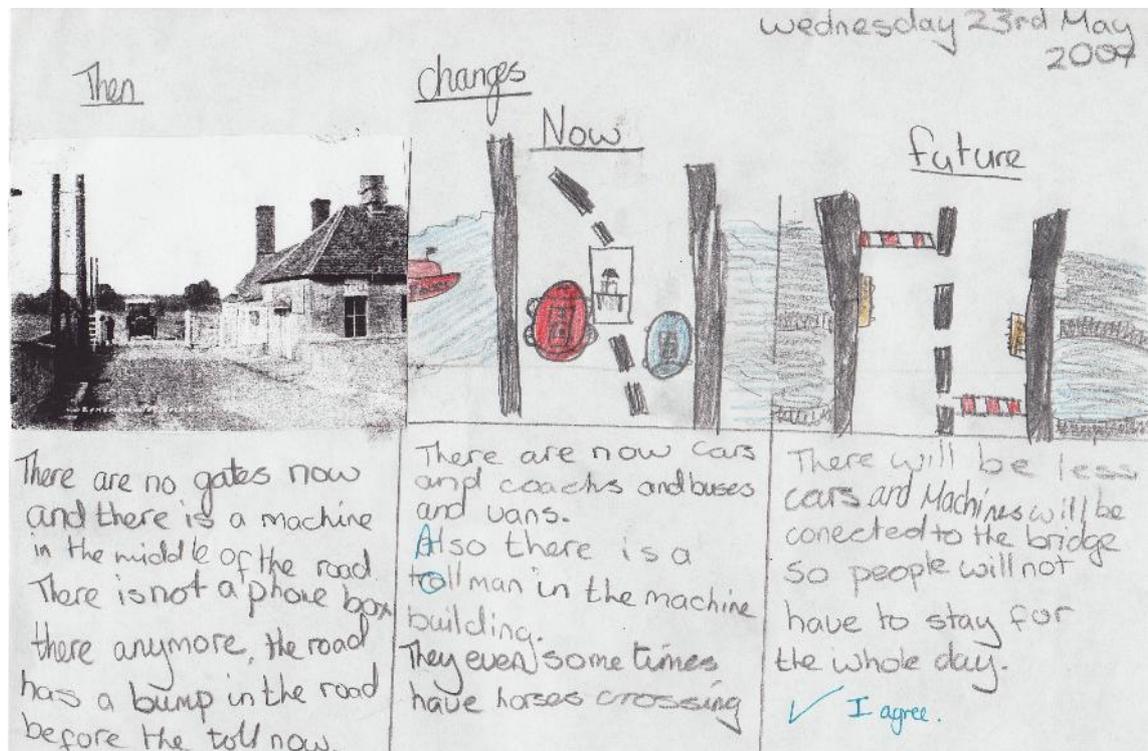


Illustration 5: The Toll Bridge - past, present and future

“There are no gates now and there is a machine in the middle of the road ... the road has a bump in the road before the toll now. There are now cars and coaches and buses and vans. Also there is a tollman in the machine building ... There will be less cars and machines will be connected to the bridge so people will not have to stay for the whole day.

Now the toll bridge is a bit different because it's got a little cubicle with a hatch. When people go on the toll bridge they have to open there window and pay five p. There could be just a normall bridge and you didn't have to pay five p. And there was a special path and parking place where you can look at the lake.”

58.3.10 These are ideas worth taking up by the community here and now. Eynsham should not have to wait for this generation to grow up.