



Views of residents on “Healthcare”

Feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire provided the views of residents on many aspects of village life. In this month’s article we have summarised the key messages that were received on healthcare. The intention is to use this feedback, along with input from other subject areas, in preparing the policies and proposals that will eventually form the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan. This should be considered as “work in progress” and subject to further review by residents and the Parish Council prior to acceptance.

84% of respondents agreed that the existing medical practice needs to be expanded, citing long waits for appointments and an absence of adequate car parking as key concerns. A similar number felt that if the practice needed to be relocated, it should remain near the centre of Wellesbourne with the range of services extended to include X-ray diagnostics, a minor injuries unit and more support for mental health illness.

About half the respondents indicated a preference for a wider range of healthcare facilities to be provided locally, with access to physiotherapy, chiropody and an opticians being the most significant. The dental practice was regarded as providing a very good service with the only concern relating to the ability to park within the area. Some people were unaware that we already have a Chiropody practice in Wellesbourne (adjacent to the vets) although this does not take NHS clients.

There was also a lot of feedback about the need to improve facilities for people with disabilities. Shops and public places should be more accessible to wheelchair bound people and more dropped kerbs are required around the village plus there was a strong wish for disabled parking spaces to be provided near the shops.

As the questionnaire was released at the same time that the proposal was announced to build a new medical centre within Wellesbourne, there was no opportunity to invite feedback in a structured manner on this issue. However, 185 “free format” responses were received, many expressing opposition to the siting of the new practice on Dog Close and recommending consideration of options such as alternative locations (i.e., Equidebt House), building an outreach centre in the Dovehouse area, or expanding the existing facilities with longer open hours in the week and at weekends to overcome the long waiting times. These points were taken into consideration during an open forum meeting held on 14th April at which the Parish Council decided, taking all factors into consideration, to give support to the proposal to build the new medical centre in an area covering approximately half of Dog Close. This proposal has now been approved for development.

We would hope to have the first draft report of the Neighbourhood Plan policies and proposals ready for review by residents in November where you will be invited to give us your opinion on what is being recommended.