

Neighbourhood Plan Consultation – Residents’ Survey October 2019

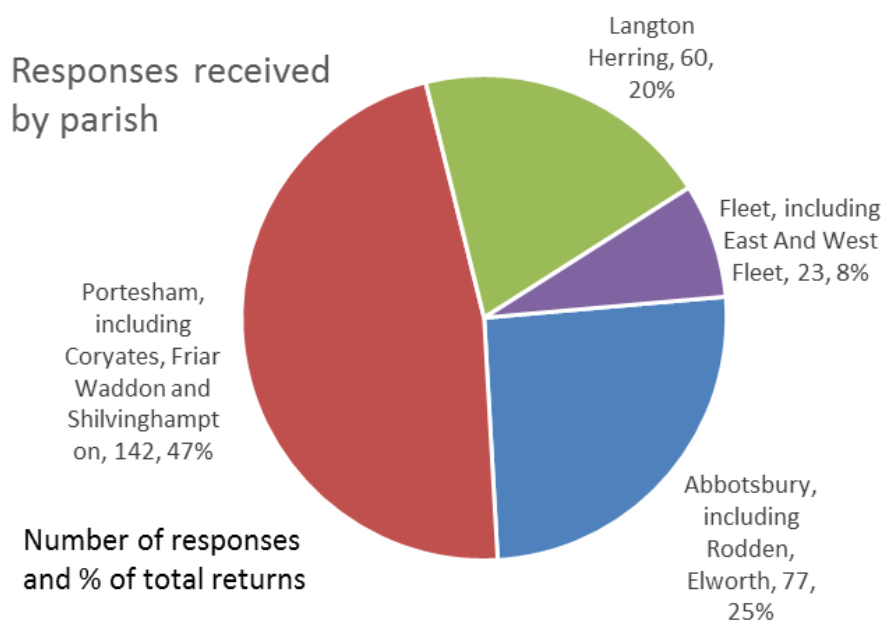
Headline results

- The data collected provides a comprehensive input on current housing and possible future needs.
- Over 80% of respondents agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan should attempt to influence the location and appearance of any future development.
- The views of people in the younger age groups are not adequately represented in the survey and more needs to be done to seek their input.
- Some of the top concerns of any future development were the prospect of increased traffic, loss of village identity and adverse impact on views and outlook.
- The main need was for 2/3 bedroom homes, eco-friendly and in keeping with the surroundings.
- No support for development outside existing village boundaries.

How the consultation was run and who responded

This was the first survey in a series of surveys to be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (NPSG). We wanted to encourage a response from not only all households, including second homes, but also from more than one person in each household where applicable. Printed copies were distributed to all households during the first half of October 2019, with a closing date of the 18th November 2019. All households across the Parish were encouraged to complete the survey online where possible, using SurveyMonkey. Approximately 40% of the responses were done online. Once the survey was closed, the paper returns were also uploaded to SurveyMonkey, so that a full analysis could be carried out by making use of the tools provided.

We received a very good response rate to our survey – so **thank you** to all those involved. Some 301 completed questionnaire forms were returned, and we estimate that this came from about 230 households (as the survey was open for anyone in the household to respond, so some households would have returned 2 or more responses). This means that about 21% of the population responded to the consultation (and about 36% of all households), providing a good sample size of opinions and evidence case for our plan.



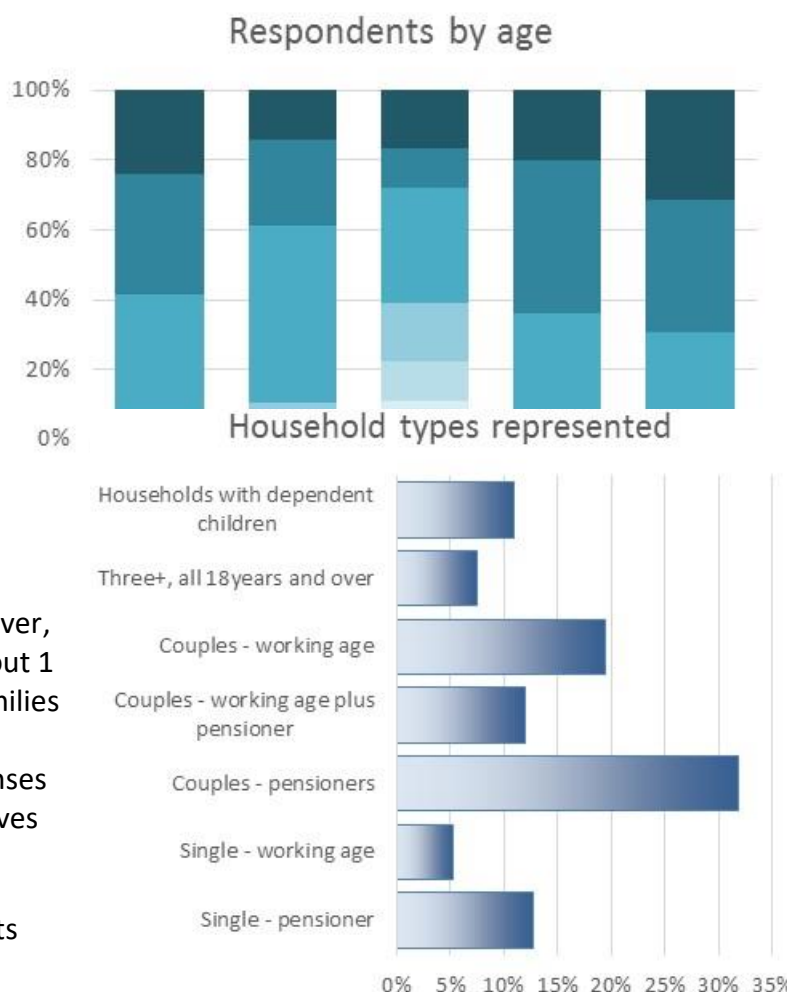
The smaller parishes of Langton Herring and Fleet were particularly well represented in the survey returns, with comparatively fewer responses from Abbotsbury parish. As people told us which area they lived in, we have used this information to check whether there are any real differences of opinion depending on where the respondents live.

Of the survey responses received, the majority (58%) were from those aged 66 and over, and about a quarter (24%) were from adults aged 76 and over. There were very few returns (just 2.4%) from children and adults aged between 11 and 30, with no responses at all in these age ranges from Langton Herring and Portsham parishes. Yet the 2011 Census suggests that we should have got about 17% of our responses from this sector of the population. So we do need to think about how we can get younger people more involved in preparing our Neighbourhood Plan. But on the positive side, nearly half of those responding (43%) had lived in the parish for at least 20 years or more, so many of our respondents have a very good understanding of the area.

We also analysed the data to identify response by household types. Nearly half (45%) of the responses were from people in pensioner-only households (ie one or two people both aged 65 or over, with more couples responding). About 1 in 10 responses (11%) were from families with dependent children (ie up to 18 years of age), and slightly less responses from families with either older relatives or young adults (19 to 30) at home.

Just over a third (37%) of respondents were in work, with a much higher number (58%) retired. Both Langton Herring and Portsham had comparatively higher levels of retired people (of those that responded to the survey) – reflecting the age profiles of those responding, but perhaps also picking up on the slightly older age profile of Portsham residents (as recorded in the 2011 Census).

We have used this data to check whether there are any real differences of opinion depending on the type of household represented, ie households with children, working adults, and pensioner only households. Other households or individual types were generally not sufficiently represented to generate a robust sample size.

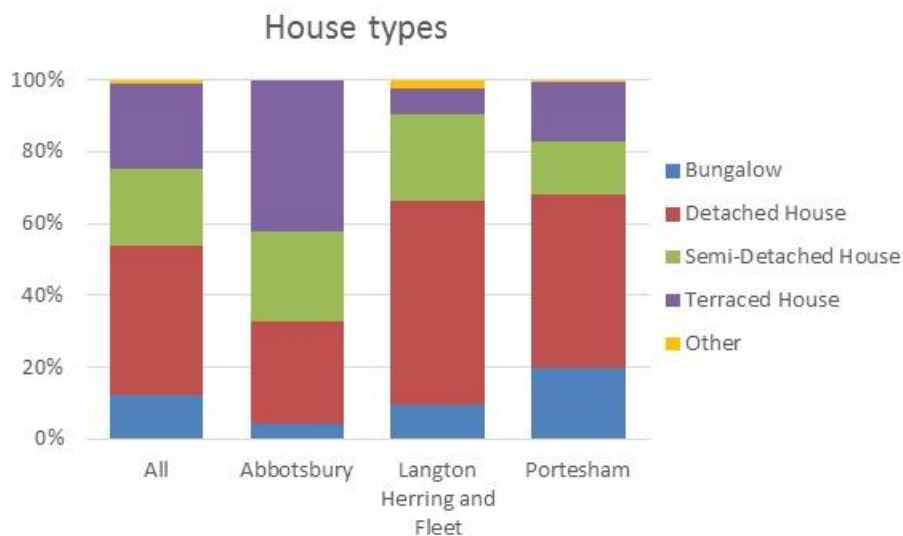


Main Findings

Household types and housing stock

The mix of house types (excluding duplicate responses from the same household where these could be identified) showed the most common house type to be detached homes (42%), with about the half that amount as semi-detached and terraced houses (21% and 24% respectively) and about one in eight (12%) as bungalows.

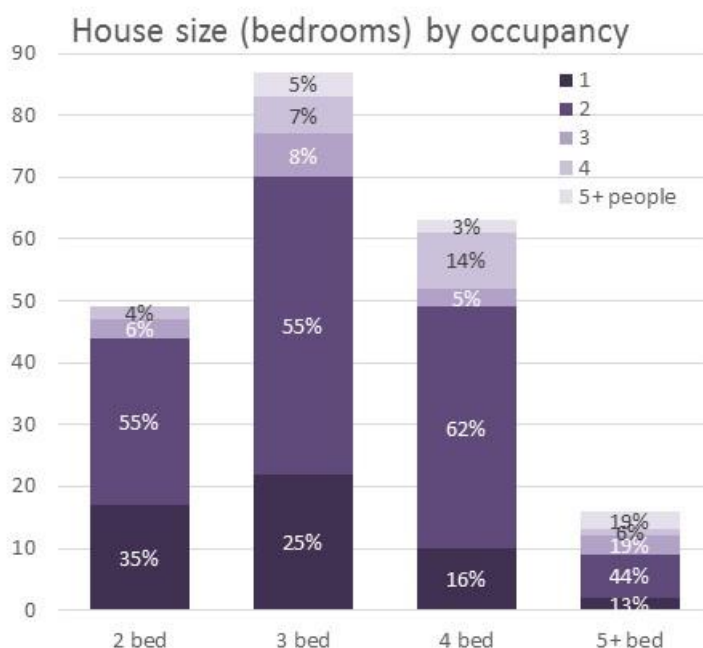
There were very few response from people living in flats and apartments or other house types (such as park homes), which accounted for less than 1% of returned surveys. The proportion of responses from people living in bungalows was much higher from Portesham respondents (accounting for about 20% of their responses), and responses from people living in terraced housing was much higher in Abbotsbury (accounting for about 42% of their responses, with very few bungalows), indicating that there is quite a difference in the housing mix between these two villages. Whilst the 2011 Census does not differentiate between houses and bungalows, it does show that flats / apartments and park homes are less than 4% of the stock. It also shows that there are generally more detached properties in Portesham and Langton Herring / Fleet, whereas Abbotsbury has a comparatively higher number of terraced properties (comprising nearly 40% of the housing stock there). This is general borne out in the survey responses.



Analysing the results by age of respondent shows that older households are more likely to opt to live in a bungalow than younger households (as it accounted for 21% of pensioner's house types), with very few (4%) households with only working age adults living in bungalows, and no families with dependent children in this type of housing.

The average number of bedrooms in each dwelling was 3.2 bedrooms (this also reflects the 2011 Census findings, where the average number of bedrooms varies from 2.9 in Abbotsbury to 3.4 in the more rural parishes of Langton Herring and Fleet). Only 2% of the responses were from 1 bedroom homes.

The average number of people in each dwelling was about 2.2 (this also matches the 2011 Census). Nearly one



quarter (23%) of responses were from one-person households (the 2011 Census indicates that the actual proportion of dwellings occupied by one person is likely to be about 27%). Whilst the smaller households (with one or two people) will tend to occupy dwellings with fewer bedrooms, most homes are ‘under-occupied’ in that there are clearly more bedrooms than generally required (ie there will generally be one or more spare bedrooms), with (for example) about a quarter (24%) of 1 person households and two out of five (38%) of 2 person households in homes with 4 or more bedrooms.

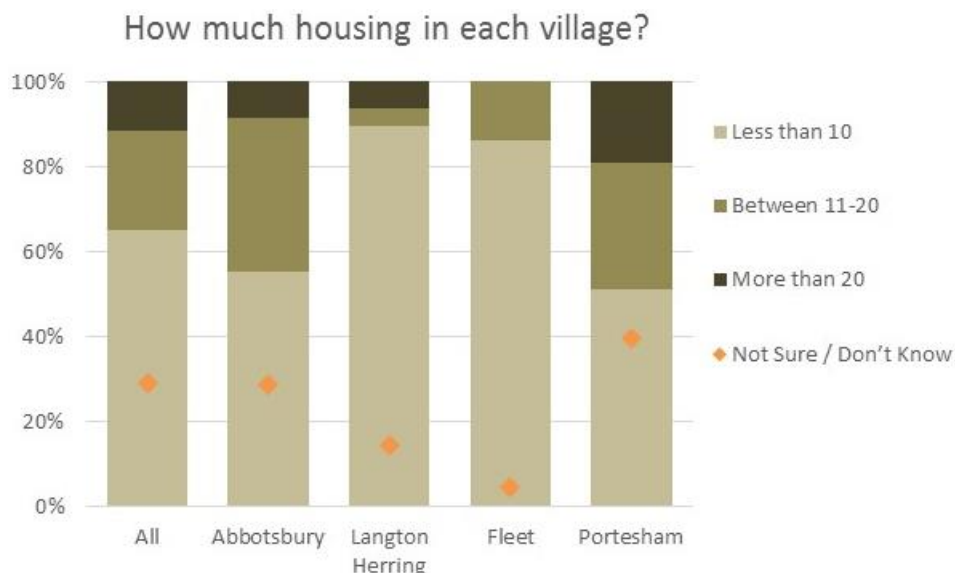
There is a high degree of home ownership in the area, with 79% of households who responded owning their home (with or without a mortgage). Abbotsbury had a much higher proportion of responses from households in private rented accommodation (about 29%). The 2011 Census shows 64% of the housing stock across the area as being owned, with a higher than typical proportion of private rented properties (at around 20% across the area and as high as 37% in Abbotsbury, compared to 14% in West Dorset) – so it may be that there were comparatively fewer responses to our survey from households that rent. About 5% of the survey responses were from people whose property in the area was their second home (and not their main residence).

Further housing need and development

About a quarter (26%) of responses to our survey indicated that their housing need was likely to change in the next 10 years. Perhaps not surprisingly, this figure was higher (at around 34%) from households with dependent children.

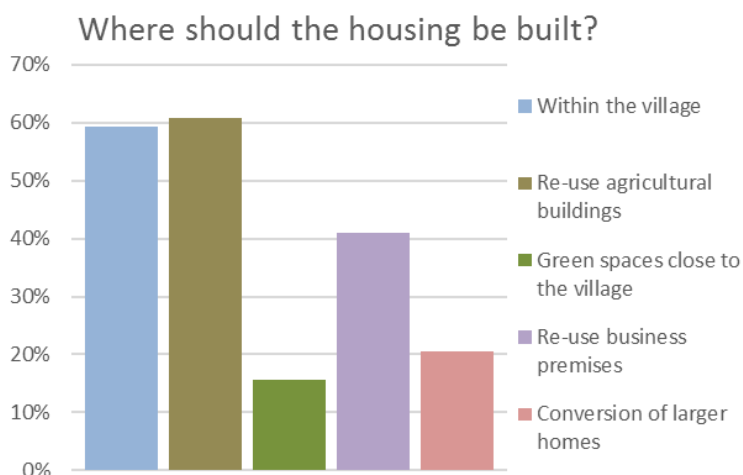
For those indicating that their housing need was likely to change, the main need (accounting for 86% of the responses) was for housing to buy or rent on the open market. The remaining need (14%) was approximately equally split between affordable to buy and affordable to rent (though the numbers are relatively small to be statistically robust). The main requirement was for 2 or 3 bedroom homes (accounting for 38% and 43% of the demand respectively), with just one response indicating a specific need for a wheelchair accessible / adapted housing.

We asked how much housing people felt was needed in their village. Whilst about 30% of the respondents didn’t know or were unsure, of those that expressed an opinion most opted for the category ‘less than 10’. This opinion was particularly strong in the parishes of Langton Herring and Fleet, which would be considered the least sustainable in terms of access to facilities etc.



Those living in Abbotsbury and Portesham were generally more positive about development, with almost equal numbers considering a higher level of growth. However it is clear that there would be little appetite for more than 20 homes in a 10 year period in any of the villages.

Following on from this, we also asked where this housing could be built. We gave five options (on spare land within the village, on green spaces close to the village, re-using existing farm / agricultural buildings, re-using business / commercial premises, converting larger homes into more housing), and we also gave people the ability to suggest other options. Over 90% of the respondents ticked at least one option. The most popular options agreed by the majority of people responding,



were building within the village envelopes (on spare / underused land), and re-using farm buildings. The re-use of business premises for housing was also reasonably well supported, by about two in five respondents. What was also clear from the returns, was that the use of greenfield land outside of the village envelopes was the least popular option. Whilst there was some variation by location (for example, Fleet residents were more likely to support re-using business premises) these variations were not particularly significant to suggest a different approach should be taken in the different areas (e.g. prioritising conversion of farm buildings in one village, and prioritising the subdivision of large homes in another village).

There were very few alternative ideas put forward in response to this question. Most comments were that no new houses should be required / would be appropriate. The re-use of empty homes was suggested by two respondents, and one person suggest that the very occasional detached building on long country roads with a space of say five miles in between could be considered.

There was general agreement (nearly 90% in support) that the Neighbourhood Development Plan should attempt to influence the location of future development in the village.

The suggestions of possible sites that respondents felt could be considered for development (about 18 in total) has been included as a list in Appendix A. A couple of the sites in Portesham were mentioned more frequently than others, these were:

- Field behind North Mead / east of North Mead Farm
- Site opposite Duck's Farm Shop / behind Possum House

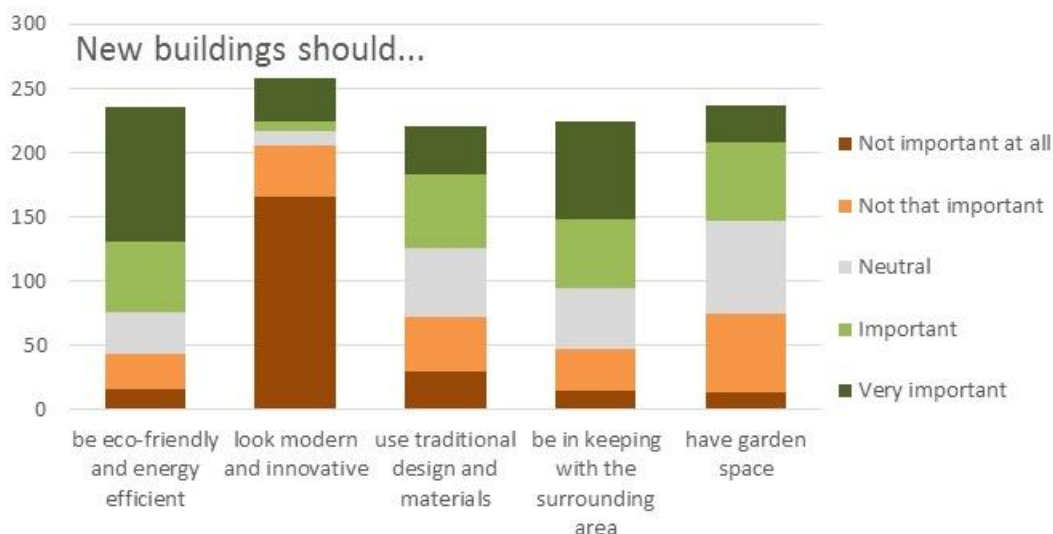
Linked to this we also asked whether there were any green spaces within or adjoining the village that local people felt were of particular local value and significance (such as for recreation, wildlife, landscape or historic value) and should be protected. Suggestions of possible sites put forward for protection has been included as a list in Appendix B. In addition to specific sites, quite a few respondents used this opportunity to reaffirm that all green areas were important to them.

Design criteria for new buildings

We used the survey to gauge the priorities for the design of new buildings.

The most important factors that local residents agreed upon was that new buildings should be eco-friendly and in keeping with their surroundings. There were relatively mixed feelings on

whether buildings should have garden space, and whether they should use traditional designs and materials, with just slightly more in favour than against these ideas. Local residents did not consider that it was important for new buildings to look modern and innovative, with only one in six respondents (16%) saying this factor was important to them. These opinions were broadly consistent across the area, and by household type.



There was general agreement (over 80% in support) that the Neighbourhood Development Plan should attempt to influence the appearance of future development in the village.

Final points

Our last question in the survey asked what concerned people the most about any potential housing development in your village. We gave seven options (loss of village identity, negative impact on views / outlook, increased traffic, inadequate parking facilities, adverse impact on the historical character of the area, affordability, adverse impact on existing infrastructure) and asked people to rank these, and add any further comments that they felt appropriate.

A 'weighted average' score (giving 7 for top concern to 1 for least) was produced, as a way of analysing the results from this question. There was little variation in the weighted average scores, with all of the options scoring in the range of 2.7 to 3.4 points. Increased traffic appears to be the top concern on this based, but only by a relatively small margin, followed by loss of village identity. Parking facilities was the least ranked concern. Another way to look at the results was to rank them based on how many respondents scored that issue as their top concern. Using this method, affordability would be the top issue, followed by loss of village identity, followed by increased traffic, with inadequate parking as the least chosen 'top' concern.



When considered by location, in Abbotsbury affordability and adverse impact on the historical character of the area come across more strongly as top concerns. Inadequate parking came out more strongly as a concern for Langton Herring, second to increased traffic. Affordability was also a higher priority in Fleet, but still second to increased traffic concerns. In Portesham, negative impact on views / outlook came slightly higher in third position.

The main comments by area are included in Appendix C

[Appendix A – suggested locations for development](#)

(x) indicates if suggested by more than one respondent

Do you know of any sites that might be suitable or available for development?

[Ideas from Abbotsbury residents](#)

- Above The Glebe
- Back Street - where allotments are
- Land adjacent to Hands Lane and Glebe Close
- Opposite Ducks Farm Shop and behind Jollif new builds
- Red Lane
- The old rail track between the village and Portesham

[Ideas from Fleet residents](#)

- Redundant Farm Buildings

[Ideas from Langton Herring residents](#)

- Garden / grounds of Higher Farmhouse (x2)
- Disused farm buildings
- Farmyard with redundant buildings at western edge of village
- Large open paddock East and NE of Shop Lane and South of the main lane into the village.
- Open land West of Chapel Close towards Coastguard Road.
- Lower Farm, Langton Herring

[Ideas from Portesham residents](#)

- Behind Possum House / south of B3157 (Goose Hill & Bramdon Lane) (x3)

- Bits of Coryates (x2)
- Disused barn on railway path, near Abbotsbury
- Dobles Field
- Field behind / east North Mead Farm (x2)
- Land north of Malthouse Meadows
- Land South of Portesham House bounded by old railway line and B3157
- Land / Paddock south of school field bounded by old railway line
- Northmead Farm (x6)
- Portesham Dairy Farm Caravan Park

Appendix B – suggested green spaces (specific sites)

(x) indicates if suggested by more than one respondent

Are there any green spaces within or adjoining the village that you consider are of particular local value and significance (such as for recreation, wildlife, landscape or historic value) and should be protected?

Ideas from Abbotsbury residents

- Abbotsbury Recreation area, Hannah's Lane (x3)
- All land behind West Street / Red Lane / Back Street
- Allotments (x3)
- Area around the thatched barn
- Areas off Hands Lane and further up the hill.
- Children's farm area
- Children's park / playground (x9)
- Cricket Field (x7)
- Duckpond area,
- East Farm
- Fields on Hannahs Lane (x2)
- Land around chapel hill / leading up to the Chapel (x15)
- Land around The Swannery (x6)
- Monastic / abbey ruins and church precinct (x2)
- Portesham playing field (x3)
- Railway track / embankment (x2)
- Seaway Lane (x2)
- The Fleet (x2)
- The Swan Pub parking area
- The woodland from Rosemary Lane to The Glebe
- Tithe Barn (x4)
- Tropical Gardens (x2)
- Village Green
- Wears Hill (x3)
- White Hill (x3)

Ideas from Fleet residents

- Coastal area (x4)
- East Fleet common by Fleet Old Church (x2)
- Nature reserve

- Setting of the two churches in the village (2)
- Some parts of Fleet Road
- The Fleet lagoon (x6)

Ideas from Langton Herring residents

- Children's Play Area (x10)
- Churchyard / graveyard (x4)
- Elm Tree Pub overflow car park (x2)
- Field at end of Shop Lane
- Green space adjacent to the children's play area.
- Langton Cross
- Lime Kiln (x2)
- Medieval fields on Lower Farm
- Paddock next to pub (x2)
- Playing field
- Roadside of Coastguards Road
- The fields on either side of the lane from "the Cross" to the village
- The Fleet (x5)
- The Village Pound (x5)
- Village amenity field / recreation area (x6)
- Village green (x14)
- Wild flower meadows at Ivy Farm
- Woods alongside road into Village / around village (x4)

Ideas from Portesham residents

- Allotments (x3)
- Cemetery (x2)
- Duck pond area (x6)
- Elevated land north east of village (SY606860)
- Field area outside school
- Fields beyond Goose Hill
- Fields either side of Winters Lane (x3)
- Glebe Field / Glebe Land (x4)
- Green areas on the south side of Bramdon Lane on entering the village from the Weymouth direction
- Hardys Monument (x2)
- Kings Arms grassed area (x2)
- Land round village hall
- Old Railway Track (x8)
- Pond areas in village
- Portesham Hill / valley (x2)
- Recreation Ground (x2)
- Rocky Lane / Rocket Quarry (x2)
- School Playing Field (x14)
- Tennis courts
- The area up by Portesham Farm
- The Farm
- The Old Quarry, Portesham Farm (x2)

- The Ridgeway
- The river and banks
- The willow beds
- The wood (copse), owned by the Ilchester Estate, bordered by the bottom end of Cemetery Road
- Village Green (x12)
- Withers Close