

The Young People's Questionnaire

A First Look at Results

The Young People's Questionnaire was distributed at the same time as the Household Questionnaire. 106 forms were collected and keyed into a specially-constructed Filemaker database.

Age and Gender

There were almost equal numbers of girls and boys, 54 to 52.

The age distribution is quite even for both groups :

Age	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Female	2	5	10	5	8	8	8	5	3
Male	3	3	8	8	5	7	11	4	1

Schools

Most young people (45 girls and 42 boys, 82% of the total) attend either Uplands Middle School (45) or Sudbury Upper School (42). The rest are scattered in ones and twos across ten other schools, with one having a job and one having left school without a job.

Lived Here How Long?

Nearly half (46 or 43%) have lived in the village for their whole life; 21 girls and 25 boys.

The rest are distributed as follows :

Years in LM	<1	1-3	3-5	>5	Whole life
Female	5	2	5	21	21
Male		2	4	21	25

There does not appear to be any particular pattern in the ages within each group, though possibly those who have come most recently tend to be younger (none over the age of 15).

Spare Time in Melford

Young people take part in a wide range of activities. The pattern demolishes a few stereotypes, too!

	Total	Girls	Boys	% of total
Football club	16	3	13	15%
Cricket club	5	0	5	5%
Scouts/Guides etc.	20	11	9	19%
Use the play areas	32	16	16	30%
Hang out with friends	72	38	34	68%
Watch TV	91	44	47	86%
Playstation	54	13	41	51%
Internet	70	36	34	66%
Reading	49	21	28	46%
Bike/Skateboard	56	24	32	53%
Motorbike/quadbike	7	4	3	7%
Other activity	31	15	16	29%

Thus Scouts and Guides, use of the play areas, hanging out with friends and watching TV are almost

equally popular among girls and boys. The same is true of the Internet and (surprisingly) use of motorbikes and quadbikes. Boys actually outnumber girls as readers, as well as in using playstations and Biking/Skateboarding. The balance only tips firmly towards boys for Playstations (3:1), Football (4:1) and Cricket (no girls at all.).

The 'Other activities' cover an immense range, from domestic pursuits like 'walking the dog' to 'karate', several varieties of dance, war-gaming, bird-watching and various indoor and outdoor sports (pool, darts, running, wrestling, swimming . . .)

Spare Time Outside Melford

This question is set up to ask separately about shopping and various other activities. They are analysed below :

Shopping

71 people regularly spend time shopping (67%). 45 of them in Sudbury, 14 in Bury St Edmunds, 13 in Colchester and 2 in Ipswich. (Some go to more than one town). The most common time is Saturday afternoon, though those who go further are more likely to take all day.

Of those who go to Sudbury, 11 (24%) go by bus, with a further 13 by bus or car (29%), making just over half that uses public transport. The rest are car only. Nobody goes by bicycle. The proportion using public transport *increases* for the longer journeys. More than 75% of those going to Bury St Edmunds and Colchester use public transport at least some of the time.

Swimming

50 people swim regularly (47%). Sudbury is by far the most popular venue, with 45 going there. The most popular times are Saturday (18), followed by 'weekends' (11) and a scatter through the rest of the week. Travel is unspecified for 3, 11 go by bus, 7 by 'bus/car' and 3 apparently walk (!).

Other swimmers go to Colchester (2 Saturday all day, by bus and train) and Halstead (1 Friday and 1 Saturday morning, by car). One person apparently swims 'at home'.

Cinema

56 people go to the cinema regularly (53%). Bury St Edmunds accounts for 33 (sometimes in combination with other places), Colchester for 26 (sometimes as an option with Bury), Braintree for 4 and Ipswich 1 (in combination, and possibly as an afterthought). Transport to Bury is more by car than by bus. Colchester, on the other hand, is reached mainly by train and bus (at least 19 out of 26).

Rollerskating

This is a minority activity, with 13 participants in total (12%). 7 people skate in Sudbury, 4 in Colchester and 3 in Bury St Edmunds. In most (but not all) cases, rollerskating is on the same day and roughly the same time slot as some other activity, such as Cinema.

Bowling

35 people (33%) go bowling, 33 of them in Sudbury, with 1 each in Colchester and Bury St Edmunds. Roughly half are either at 'weekends' or 'Saturday'. Transport is mainly by car, with one or two using the bus.

Other Sport

47 people (44%) do some other sport regularly. Football is the most popular (14), followed by Hockey (9), Horse riding (4) and Rugby (4), with a huge range of others including airgun shooting, badminton, cricket, golf, gym, netball, tennis and trampolining.

Locations very widely, with Great Cornard common for hockey and football. Most transport is by car, with a few walking, cycling or using the bus. All four of those who use bicycles are also horse riders.

Other Activities

There is a good scattering of 'Other Activities' with 20 people (19%) taking part. It is difficult to summarise the range, other than to say that three are involved in the Scout movement, and (only)

two in music. Others go salsa dancing, birdwatching, BMX biking, walking the dog or simply hanging out with friends.

Inactivity

10 people (9%) claim to do no regular leisure activity outside Long Melford. 8 are boys, and all but one are less than 15 years old.

Getting Out of Long Melford

Question 7 reveals that 54 people (51%) use the bus at least once a week to get out of the village. 18 of them use it 3 or more times a week (up to 10 times) and the rest only once or twice.

6 people use a taxi (usually only once per week).

Lifts by car are popular. 88 people use them regularly (83%), with 30 having 5 or more car rides per week. Another 16 have 4 car journeys, and the remaining 38 have 3 or less. The average for those 88 who get lifts is 4.2. (The average across the whole cohort of 106 is obviously less than this, and is actually 3.5.)

26 people (25%) use a bicycle from time to time. The number of times per week ranges from 10 (for 1 person) down to once (for 5 people). The average is very close to 3. It is interesting to find that bicycle users have slightly *more* than the average number of car journeys in a week (4.5). Maybe they are just a slightly more active group.

Lack of Transport

In response to Question 8, 34 people (32%) say that lack of transport is a handicap. Comparing them with those who say they don't have a problem we find :

	Number	% using car lifts	Average bus trips	Average car lifts	Average Bicycle trips	Average Age
'Yes' lack of transport	34	88%	1.6	3.4	0.5	14.2
'No lack of transport	72	81%	1.3	3.6	0.8	12.5
Total	106	83%	1.4	3.5	0.7	13.0

It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from this, since those complaining about lack of transport are slightly *more* likely to be given a lift at some stage in the week than those who don't. On the other hand, they do use buses more and bicycles less than the average. Maybe the average age is the most important indicator. As young people mature, their transport needs increase, and they are more likely to feel frustrated at dependence on lifts from others.

Bus Service Improvements

Sixty-three people (59%) suggested possible improvements in the bus timetables (up to four each). Of these :

- 34 ask for Saturday improvements, (all through the day)
- 28 ask for additional Evening services
- 27 want Sunday services to be better, ('All Day' and 'evening')
- 12 ask for Friday evening improvements, plus one for Friday morning.
- 5 quote 'Weekends' as the problem time

Those requesting improvements are slightly older than average (13.5 to 13.0) and make distinctly more than the average number of bus trips per week (1.9 compared with 1.4).

Facilities

The responses to suggested new facilities are :

	Yes, would use	Would Not Use
Youth Club for Middle-School age	36	70
Youth Club for 13 or 14+	31	75
Skateboard Park	25	81
Sport for Girls	39	67
Basketball Court	52	54
Tennis Court	58	48
Improved shelter on the playground	39	67
Somewhere for off-road motorbiking	24	82
A cinema club	55	51

The most popular suggestions are a tennis court (55%) and a cinema club, with a basketball court close behind. All of the suggestions have reasonable support, but it is interesting to find that a skateboard park or off-road motorbiking are the least favoured items on the list, though still with 23% of the vote or more.

Youth clubs are only moderately popular, with around a third of the vote.

It is striking that boys and girls are in almost exactly equal proportions for most of these. The exceptions are 'Sport for Girls' with only 2 boys claiming they would take part (!) and 'Somewhere for off-road motorbiking' which only attracts 7 girls out of a total of 24. Basketball, tennis and the two youth club options are very evenly balanced.

Other facilities suggested (by freehand text comments) include :

- 10 for a social centre for teenagers; café, leisure facility or just a meeting place
- 9 for better shops for teenagers; DVDs, clothes, computer games . . .
- 8 for sports facilities of various sorts including badminton, netball, basketball, a climbing wall
- 7 for football goals, nets and even lighting for pitches in 'The Park'
- 5 for swimming pool or use of the Primary School facility during holidays
- 4 for a cinema or a cine club
- 3 for dance club
- 3 for rugby club/pitches/posts
- 3 for running club
- 3 for skateboard park/quadbike track/off road cycling

There are at least 12 other suggestions, too, with smaller numbers of proposers (from drama club to riding school).

There were 57 written suggestions in total (54%), several with more than one idea.

Information

Most people who responded to the questionnaire have several sources of information. The raw figures are :

	Yes	Yes/No

LM library	32	0.43
Sudbury library	48	0.83
Internet access	102	25.50
Email	78	2.79
Mobile phone	94	7.83
Suffolk Free Press	42	0.66
The Mercury	29	0.38
'What's On'	12	0.13

Almost everyone has Internet access, and 89% have a mobile phone. Libraries are well used by a minority, and the most popular local news-sheet is the Suffolk Free Press.