

North Tawton Town Council

Report on Climate Consultation Questionnaire

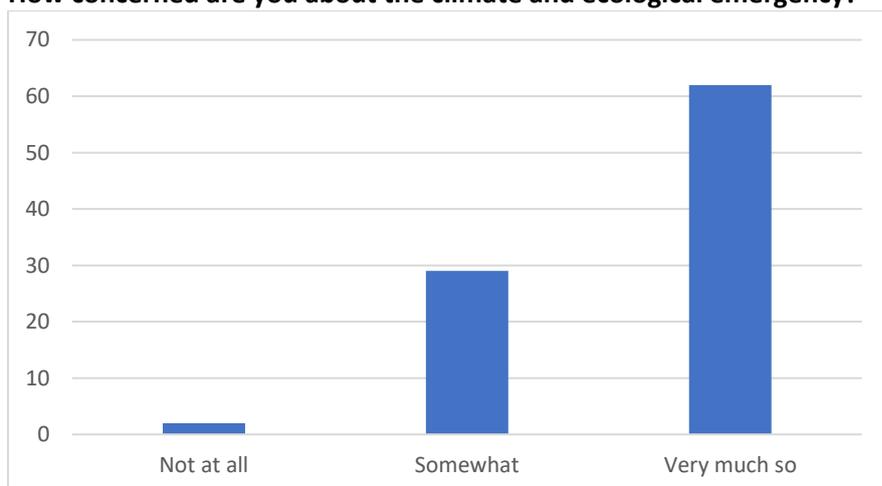
Introduction

The climate consultation questionnaire was devised due to there being no other way to consult with the community due to COVID19. At the time of starting the consultation it was not considered a viable option to deliver a questionnaire to every household due to concerns over the spread of infection. The questionnaire was available online and advertised extensively on social media, it was also advertised in the Roundabout, and hard copies made available on the steps of the Town Hall, in Jen’s Café and in the Merry-go-round. Cllrs Davies and Testa also distributed copies to passers-by in the Town Square on two occasions.

93 responses were received, and the majority of the respondents completed all the questions. The results of this questionnaire should be seen as a first step, and if specific projects emerge from this process that the council feel require further consultation with residents then this should take place.

The first section of this report presents summaries of the responses for each question (full results can be provided on request), and the second presents proposals for the council to consider based on the responses.

1. How concerned are you about the climate and ecological emergency?



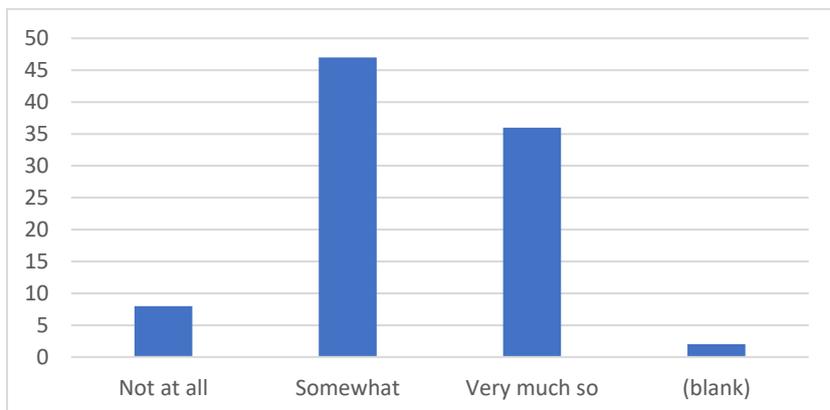
Comments include;

‘So much information in the media. I feel overwhelmed by the negativity of the information . Also I feel pretty helpless on an individual basis’

‘We all must act now for the future of the people of the town.’

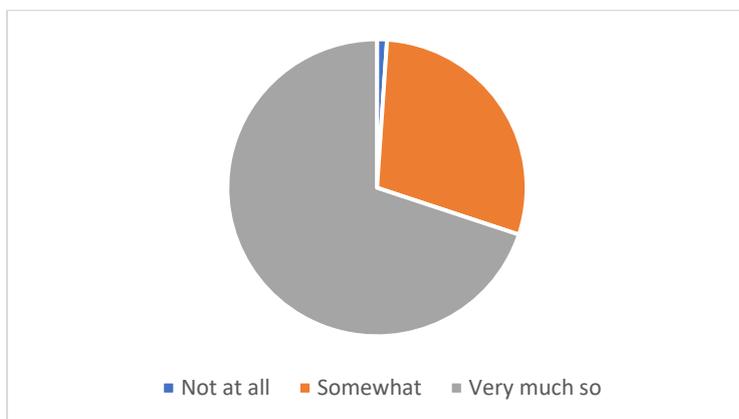
‘Very concerned about the constant using of green spaces to build on.’

2. Do you feel at risk of climate change impacts in North Tawton - flooding, heat, storms etc. Do you think the town is likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change within the next 15 years?



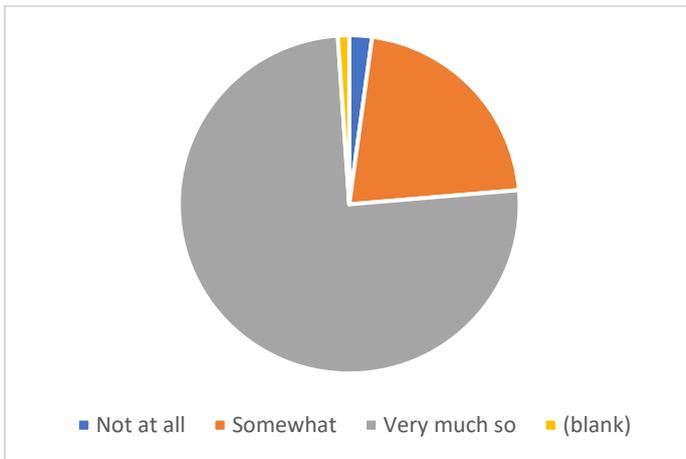
'We've already started to see those changes and erratic weather recently.'
'The heat is my greatest concern it's much hotter here than it's ever been and some days its unbearable to enter our garden which is a natural sun trap.'
'North Tawton is less likely to be vulnerable to be affected by localised climate change phenonema but nevertheless will be affected by world changes which will affect everyone in all localities'
'The flood defense system has yet to prove its efficiency , but I'm relieved to see it there.'
'Flooding is a real concern as is drought/extreme of weather.'
'Extreme weather events will have a big influence on area. And will have a big effect on the farming industry.'
'On a personal level no I don't feel at risk'

3. Is it important to you to be able to source your food locally?

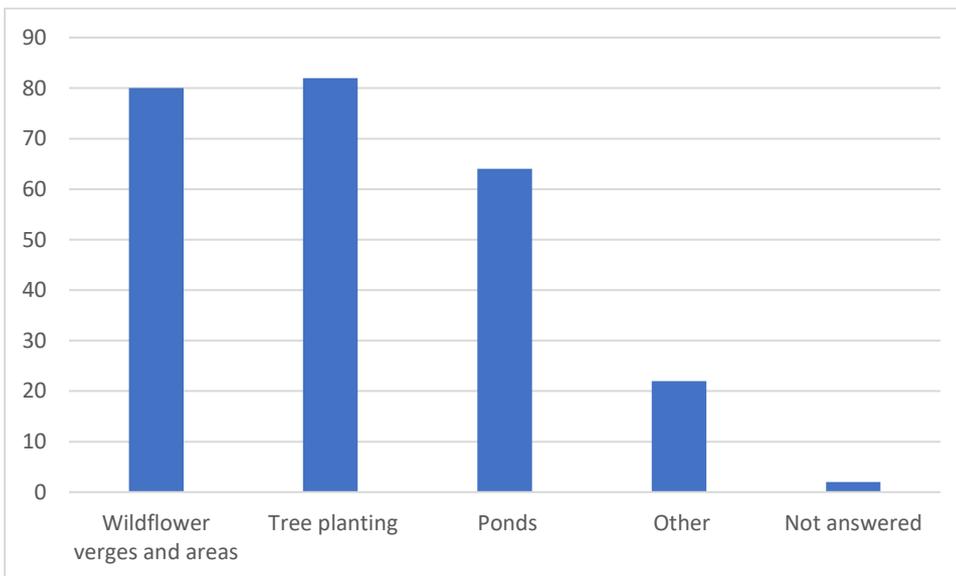


'Stalls in the square and town hall have been very popular in the past. It would be great if they could happen on a frequent and regular basis.'
'We should be source of as much as we can locally to help local sales and businesses, minimise our carbon footprint and make sure that we are in touch with what we eat, where it comes from and how it is oroduced'
'I feel that this is absolutely vital, to the economic, and ecological, and social economy. I have always felt strongly that North Tawton Town Council could do so much more, to support it's community of absolutely amazing local food producers. It's clear that the community is keen to support local producers, and I strongly feel that a regular local produce market would be a jolly good start...'
'I have a limited budget and am often torn between the need to shop economically vs the desire to shop ethically'

4. Do you think more should be done to protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity and habitat provision in North Tawton?



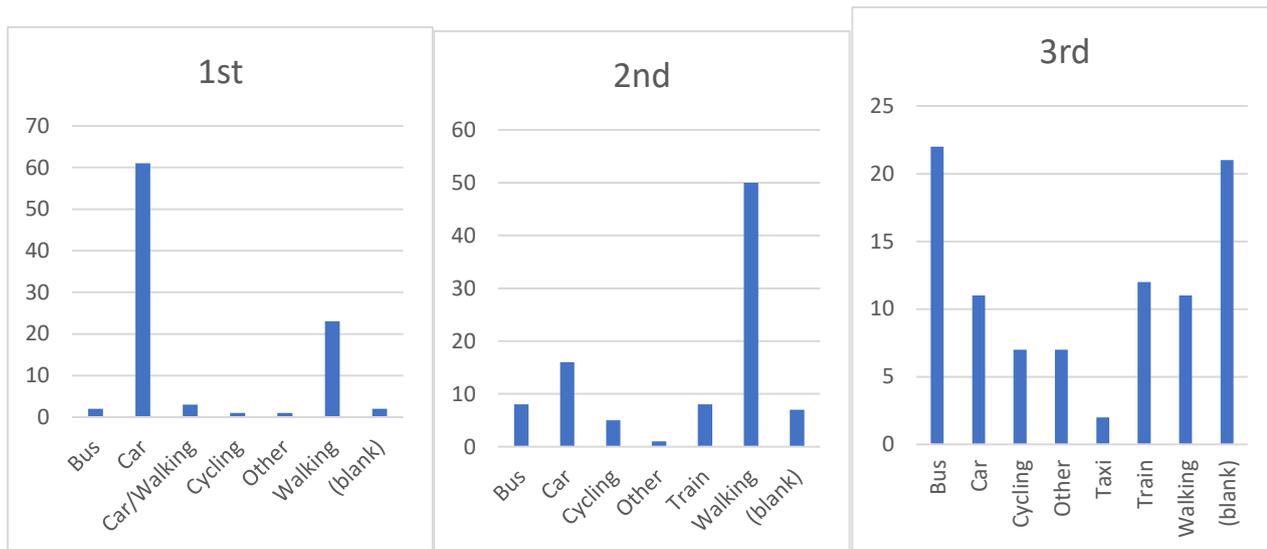
5. What types of enhancements would you like to see?



Comments on Q4 and Q5 include;

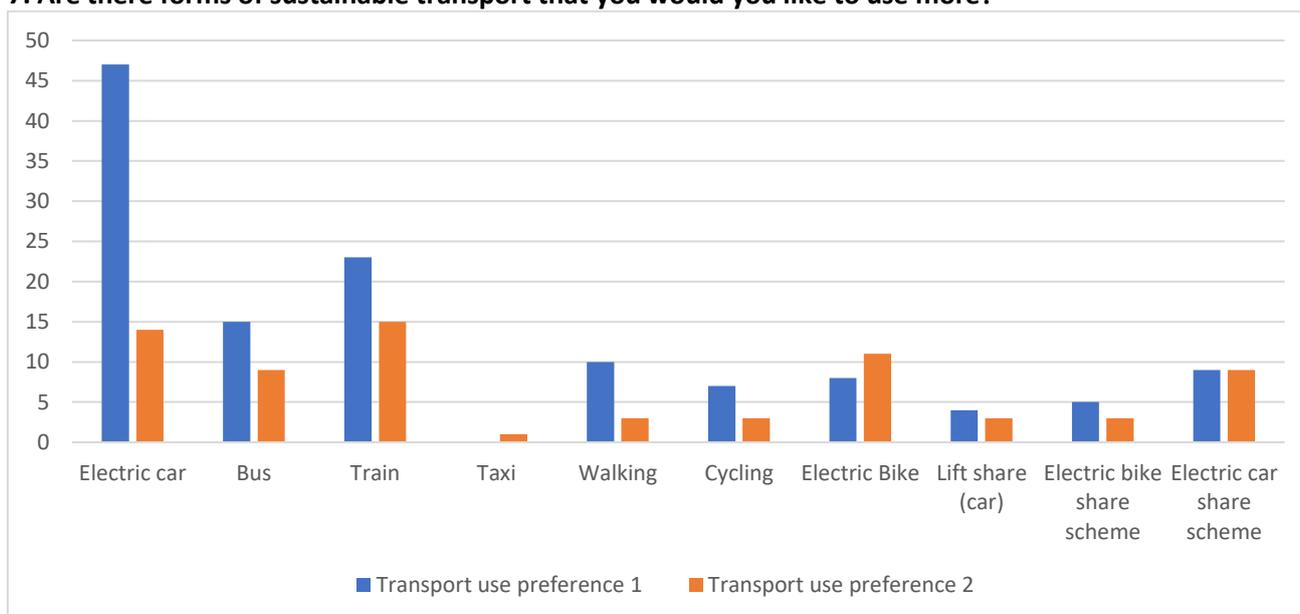
- 'Wildflowers only if it doesn't impact safety. Tree planting - maintenance costs are a burden'*
- 'Not verges - h&s issues, dedicated dog walking space - off lead!'*
- 'Yes - less chemicals for w/flower areas, hedges too, a swimming pond'*
- 'Litter reduction'*
- 'Community garden/allotment'*
- 'Visibility at junctions needs to be maintained'*
- 'Wildflower meadows'*
- 'The town square needs trees, There is no vegetation to soak up carbon and car fumes.'*
- 'Apple and plum trees planted, where practically possible'*
- 'Wildlife corridors'*
- 'Veg/fruit planting on un-used ground for all to grow/harvest/share'*
- 'Promote wild corners in gardens and the wildlife corridors along borders/through walls/fences etc.'*
- 'We have so much wildlife we need to preserve and protect'*
- 'Need to remember the other priorities of local people e.g. parking. Only 5.9% of UK land is built on'*

6. What forms of transport do you use most? Tick your top three:



Other includes; Electric Car, lifts from neighbours, horse riding

7. Are there forms of sustainable transport that you would you like to use more?



Barriers to use include;

Electric Cars – Cost, chargin points/availability, distance before recharge needed

Buses – infrequency of service, lack of direct bus to Okehampton, lack of flexibility, poor routes

Trains – no local service, cost, need to drive to a station

Taxis – expensive

Walking – lack of pavements on fast road, lack of footpaths, poor pram accessible routes, most places too far to walk, disability

Cycling – no bicycle, roads too dangerous due to traffic, pot holes, disability

Electric Bike – too expensive, need training to use one, Roads are too busy and unsafe for cyclists, disability

*Lift share (car) – none locally, OCDT driver but no actual lift share, disability

*Electric bike share scheme – no scheme locally, disability, safety issues

*Electric car share scheme – no scheme locally.

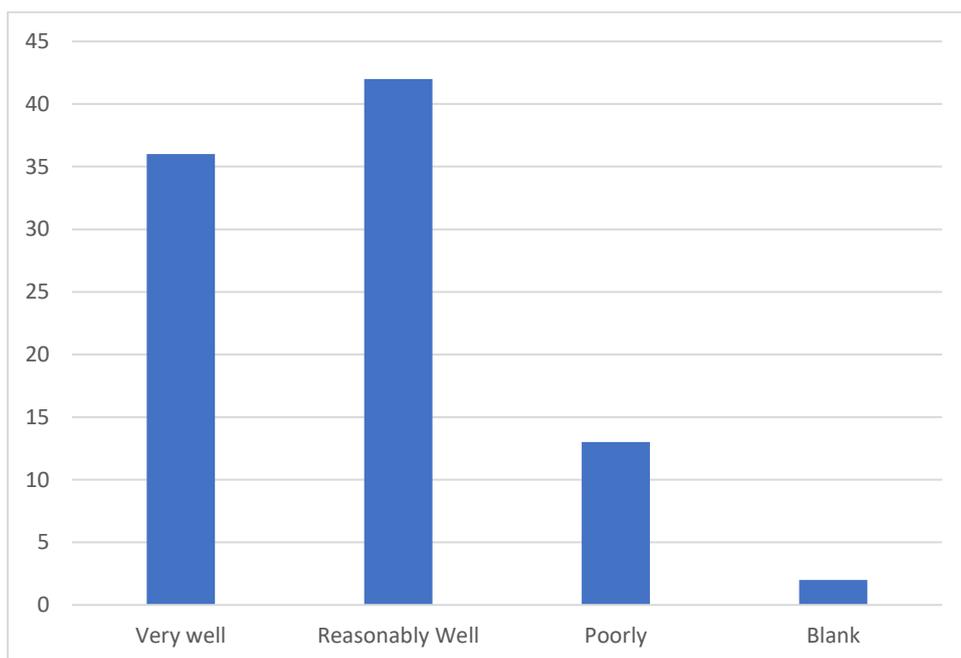
* respondents to these 3 options did indicate a desire to use them if they were available

8. What improvements could be made to the public transport infrastructure in the area?

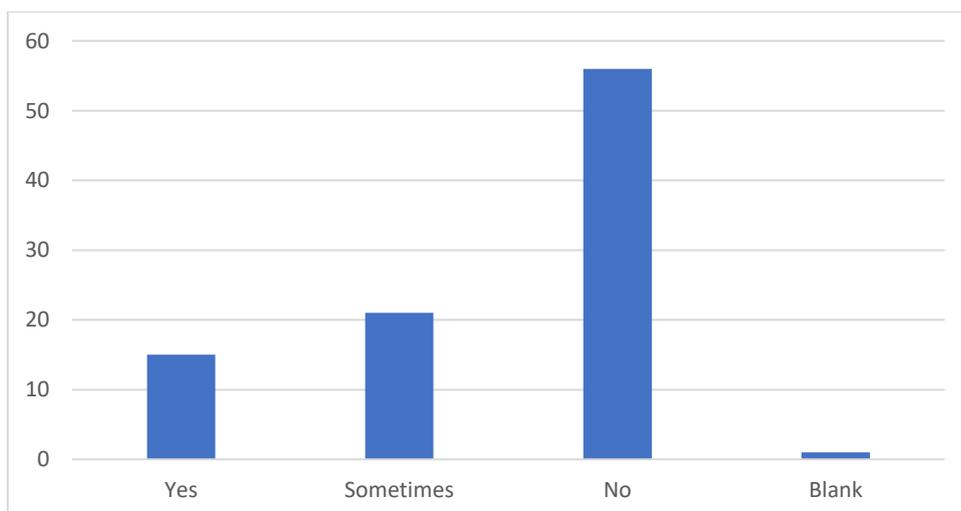
The majority of responses wanted to see improved bus services, with a direct bus to Okehampton, later buses to/from Exeter to allow for evenings out, Sunday buses, greater frequency of services. Respondents also wanted to see the buses run on integrated timetables so that they tie in with trains in Exeter/Copplestone/Crediton and other bus services.

There was also a lot of interest in the Okehampton-Exeter rail link, and a desire to see a station reopen in North Tawton, and a direct bus line to any local train stations that open (e.g. in Okie).

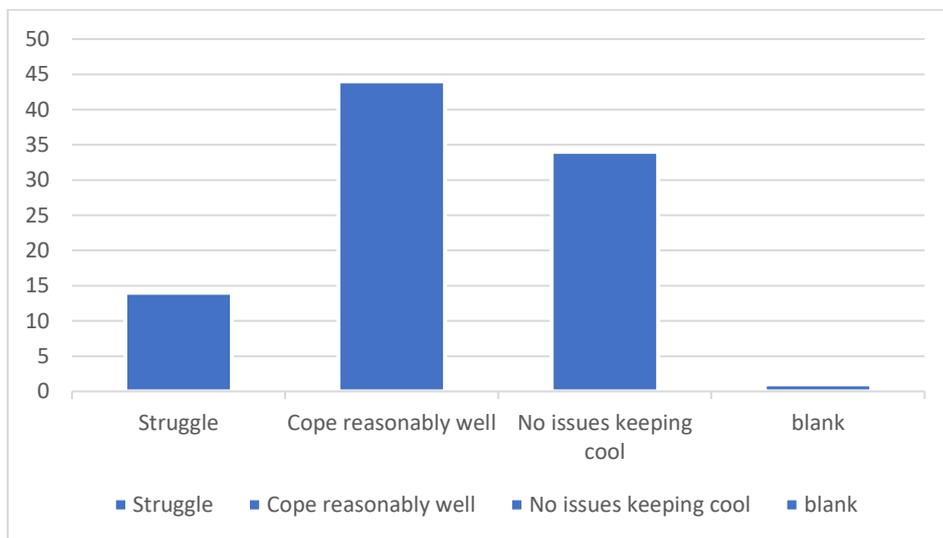
9. How well insulated is your home?



10. Do you struggle to keep your home warm in the winter?

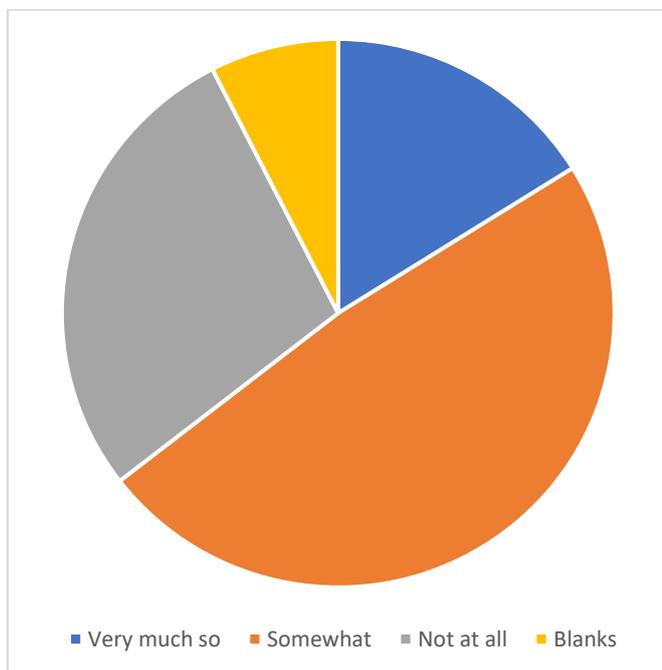


11. Do you struggle to keep your home comfortable during heatwaves? Would your home be resilient if heatwaves increased in frequency or severity?



From Q9 to Q11 it is clear that there is a section of the population that have poorly insulated homes and/or struggle to stay warm in winter and/or keep cool in summer.

12. Would you benefit from advice on making your home climate change resilient?



Approximately 2/3 of respondents felt that they would benefit from some form of climate resilience advice.

'would welcome a presentation or open day giving hints and tips on this subject'

'I note that the chancellor has announced some home insulation measures recently. It would be good to get advice on what support is available. Not everyone has the time/wherewithal to do a cost / benefit analysis themselves so I think this is something the council could do really well, as they know what's in the town.'

'I doubt being fully informed'

Recommendations

This will be considered in terms of three areas – Short-term aspirational ideas, long-term aspirational ideas and transport issues. For each of these we have put forward ideas based on the responses received and have set out a brief proposal of how each could be taken forward.

Short-term aspirations

Regular market in town – work with and support the North Tawton events group to continue running the local market that started prior to lockdown.

More wildflower areas – Nature group to engage with residents and local businesses (including farms) to seek opportunities for this across the parish. A small budget for purchase of seed and seed packets that can be distributed to all homes in the parish to allow small areas to be sown in gardens.

Less churchyard mowing – Nature group will start conversation with the Rector and parishioners around changing the churchyard management.

Education and facilitating: A series of talks/coffee morning sessions etc to cover topics including; wild corners in gardens, grants and improvements for houses. Climate home resilience. Local co op for locally grown food, How to work out your carbon footprint etc.

A regular article in the Roundabout with information on grants, energy saving tips, what can be recycled and where etc.

Pairing of those without growing space of those with – garden sharing for produce. Possibility of the climate group or the Environment Trust being approached to help set this up.

Reduce length of time that street lights are on – NTTC to feed into any DCC consultations on street lighting, and to input to the Devon Climate Emergency Task Force

Recycling bins – provision of recycling bins alongside regular waste bins. NTTC to liaise with WDBC as to whether this is possible.

Litter picking/taking responsibility for wilder spaces – investigate setting up a regular (monthly?) working party to help manage wildflower spaces, litter picking, community garden etc. Nature group to take this forward.

Request that all new builds/extensions consider sustainability and therefore look to include energy saving/generating measures as per the NTTC Neighbourhood plan.

NTTC to work with DCC to improve drainage around the parish, including keeping the drains clear.

Longer Term Aspirations

Community orchard/growing space that requires land purchase/rental.

Electric charging points – NTTC will need to work with DCC and others to enable a network of charge points to be installed over the longer term. Diesel and Petrol vehicles will be phased out from 2030, so this will be a requirement.

Community Energy Project – NTTC To discuss if this is something that we would be interested in and work out next steps.

Transport Issues

Buses – direct bus route to Okehampton, later buses to/from Exeter, Sunday services, more frequent smaller buses to local areas. NTTC Parking and Transport group to look into this.

Reinstatement of trains from Okehampton to Exeter, and possible reopening of NT station – NTTC Parking and Transport group to look into this and provide an update to the Town.

Car sharing Okehampton/Exeter. NTTC to promote the use of car sharing websites such as - <https://www.traveldevon.info/drive/carshare-devon/#:~:text=Carshare%20Devon%20is%20a%20free,sharing%20using%20our%20savings%20calculator.>

Investigate the possibility of a local car sharing scheme for residents. NTTC Parking and Transport group

Electric Car-Share Scheme – NTTC to approach co-cars to see if this is something that they would consider rolling out in more rural areas. <https://www.co-cars.co.uk/>