

FOCUS GROUP: PARENT/CARER & TODDLER GROUPS

Composition: Noah's Ark (Tuesday 12th May 2009)
Twyford Toddler Group (Wednesday 6th & Friday 8th May 2009)

Total of 28 people involved in the discussions including mothers, fathers, grandparents and child-minders.

Main Topics – likes and dislikes, environment, housing need and variety, medical services, crime, leisure facilities, transport, shopping, education

Overview

1. What do you like about living in Twyford?

Village community atmosphere (top response)
Christmas Fayre
Panto
Nice area, lots of things for a small village
Nice parks for children to play in
Convenience of shops, especially Waitrose
Big park
Friendly
Access to other towns – Henley, Wokingham, Maidenhead, Reading
Motorway access
Rural feel – green spaces (as opposed to Winnersh which starts to become part of Reading)
Mainline train station
Good size - like a village but with the amenities of a town

2. What do you dislike about living in Twyford?

Cars at the traffic lights – jump the lights then speed off
Bus links
Nothing
Aging community
Delivery vans parking in the High Street
People parking outside the newsagents on double yellow lines
Lack of car parking for people who work in Twyford
Inconsistency in parking restrictions e.g. permits etc.
Dangerous for people cycling – need road markings
Why no speed cameras?
Narrow footpaths, especially past the opticians
Too far from the beach!
Not much for local residents to do
House prices too expensive
Traffic at the cross roads – stops people from cycling
Getting from Broad Hinton to the centre of Twyford
People with no children parking in the parent & child spaces at Waitrose
Parking for the train station

Environmental Issues

3. Are there any other parts of Twyford that need improving?

Better library – top response
The area around J.W.Greens ('wee alley')
Parking
Grafitti
Shops
Youth Shelter

Top entrance to the play area in King Georges Field
Not enough play areas/better play equipment
Not really

4. Are there any important views, open spaces, or buildings that we need to protect?

Need to protect all the public open spaces – new builds are filling every little area
Charvil country park / Loddon Lakes
Keep all the open spaces well looked after
King Georges field
Allotments
Shame we can't stop back garden developments
Views when coming from Hurst and Maidenhead, Scarlet Lane, Milley Lane

5. What are the most important environmental issues facing Twyford today – and in the next 10 years?

Traffic – top response
Rubbish – including a syringe found in King Georges field
Carbon footprints – could become a 'sustainable town' e.g. there is a town where people can sell homegrown produce through their local Budgens
Matching people with big gardens with people who can't get allotments
Kerbside recycling needs improving
Back yard development
Rats – not just one persons problem e.g. running between Paddock Hights/Byron Road, bird feeders are part of the problem
Air pollution at the traffic lights – cars waiting over 5 minutes with engines running
Cars coming from Hurst ignore the 30 restriction
Bad road junctions: Hutst Rd/Waltham Road, Station Rd/Waltham Rd – poor visibility and speeding
Dog poo bins – big problem
A new resident was surprised that no wheelie bins are provided

Housing

6. Is there an under-or over-supply of any particular types of housing in the village?

Too many big (not affordable) houses with small gardens – affects animals and wildlife
Fine
Good range
Most new houses have at least 3 bedrooms which is good for families but what about school places?
Too much back-garden development has changed the character of he village
Under supply of big houses in my price range!
Under supply of affordable housing
Lack od smaller bungalows for older people
Building new houses but lack of infrastructure to go with it

7. Do you intend to stay living in Twyford if possible? If not, why not?

Majority said yes
Only a few said no: tend to move every 5/10 years anyway
move to Hurst for Holt School catchment – want choice
want a family house with a larger garden

Health Services

8. What are your opinions on health services locally?

Generally good – top response

Baby clinic is overstretched due to lack of resources at Reading

Health visitor services have significantly reduced over recent years

Excellent – like the Health Centre

GP services not helpful – don't care, say 'nothing we can do'

No choice of midwife

Good baby clinic

Health visitors are easy to access

GP services are hard to access, can't get through on the phone, can't book

Much more approachable than before

Moved from Twyford GP to Wargrave GP

9. Are there any improvements you'd like to see at the Health Centre, dentists, RBH, Townlands or from domiciliary services and if so, what?

Only 1 NHS dentist – not very good reputation

Thank goodness for bookable appointments on Saturday mornings!

More NHS dentists needed – many did not know that one had just opened next to

Nationwide

RBH is excellent

Go to Henley A&E for minor accidents – much less waiting than at RBH

Waiting time with children at RBH is too long

Breastfeeding mothers need more support – need someone local to champion it

The baby clinic is too busy – puts you off using it

Getting GP appointments for husbands is difficult, also with children – if they get ill during the day you can't get seen

Parking at RBH

Need more access to bookable appointments to see a GP, and more people manning the phones

Sport, Leisure and Culture

10. Are there any additional facilities you think could be provided in Twyford for either yourself or your children?

Small children's play equipment in Broad Hinton – WBC closed the smaller children's area and promised to put new equipment in the older children's area but this has not happened

Sports Centre/Leisure Centre

Indoor swimming pool

Community gym

We have to get in a car to travel to these facilities (above) but as the population of Twyford increases we need these things locally

We are well provided for with lots of halls and things going on

We can't ask for things that big towns have, it's not feasible, there's no room

We need public toilets near the play areas/open spaces

Casual café – child friendly

Too many restaurants – need a butcher and veg. shop

Childcare provision – before and after school

Charity shop

Improve the library

Wheelie bins

Ice rink

Transport and Accessibility

11. Do you have enough information about public transport and if not, would you know where to obtain it?

Opinion was divided with half saying yes they did have enough information, and half said no
Comments:

Struggled with buses; not running on time, especially hard to get links, confusion about where they run. Most said they would look online for more information, others said leaflets in the library or the train station.

12. Do current public transport services meet your needs and those of your family?

The majority said yes, with only a few saying no

Many people take their children to Henley on the train

Can't get to Wokingham very easily

Can't use buses for local travel – e.g. to get to Charvil to do singing group with the children

13. Do you find it easy to get around on public transport with buggies and young children?

Opinion was divided. Several had not even tried. All agreed that the new bridge with a lift being built at Twyford station would make a big difference

14. What would encourage you to use public transport more?

Lifts at the station over-bridge

Would choose trains over buses – not sure why they would use a bus

If it was free!

Better bus information

Pre-paid system like an oyster card – don't know how much the fair will be and don't want to have to struggle with change while carrying kids/buggy/shopping etc

Don't like public transport, services don't run on time, just not easy with small children

Big gap between train and platform

15. Are there any parts of the village too far from a bus stop?

Not sure

16. What would reduce the use of the car for the school run?

A quarter said they didn't use a car

Better weather!

Somewhere to shelter outside school/pre-school in bad weather while waiting

A 'walking train' from Charvil to Twyford and one from Broad Hinton to Polehampton schools

17. Can you shop and walk around the village centre safely with buggies and young children?

Half said yes, half said no

Concerned about people reversing out of their drives

Need better access to the library

Pavements are too narrow heading from the lights towards the church on both sides

Some shops are hard to get into with buggies

Shopping

18. Would you like to have more shops and services in the village centre and if so, what?

The majority said yes, with only a few saying no

Closure of Nationwide is an issue

No more Indian restaurants

Book shop
Toy shop – for last minute invites to birthday parties
Café – child friendly
Second hand clothes shop
Greengrocer
More variety of shops
Clothes shop – M&S
Butchers shop
Very lucky to have Waitrose
Hardware/household items – need to drive to Woodley
No charity shops to donate clothes to, although get lots of bags through the door – what about Daisy's Dream?
Bakers

Education

19. Are there sufficient toddler and pre-school facilities in Twyford?

Toddlers: All said yes
Pre-school: All said yes
Comments: Lots going on for young children, new things like Rugby Tots etc.
Could do with more swimming for small children – need indoor pool
Pre-school places may need increasing for the future – back garden developments attracting families with young children

20. Can you foresee any problems obtaining the school place of your choice for your children?

The majority said no, only a few said yes, but these were residents of the Colleton catchment area
All the new-builds are affecting pupil numbers and the catchment areas are based on old data – before Broad Hinton was built.
Had problems getting into Colleton and we live 0.3 miles away from the school – couldn't get in twice (2 children).
People in Colleton have to drive to school
Need clarification of catchment areas – numbers are skewed by Broad Hinton estate