



## **A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR ASHFORD**

*Our village, our future*

### **CATALOGUE OF EVIDENCE**

### **DROP-IN EVENTS**

**MARCH 2018**

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## **Background**

### **The process to create an “Evidence Base” to support the initial draft of a Neighbourhood Plan for Ashford:**

In February 2018 as part of the evidence gathering process for the development of the Ashford Neighbourhood Plan, printed flyers were hand dropped to each household and followed up with additional drops and email invitations to encourage the residents of the Parish of Ashford to attend a series of three “Drop-In Events”. These were designed to capture the community’s initial views and comments on a range of topics that the residents felt were relevant to communicate to the working party.

There are a number of other components of the evidence based activity to be carried out, including discussion with parish community groups, the completion of the household questionnaire, reporting input from a number of external agencies and not for profit organisations and the commencement of dialogue with landowners and businesses in the parish. Once these activities have been completed, an overall analysis will be undertaken to establish the key elements and structure of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

In the next phase, Mr James Shorten, the external Planning Consultant for the Ashford Neighbourhood Plan, will be engaging fully with the working party to agree the structure and key elements of the plan based upon the facts that have been established from these three activities.

All the members of the working party were involved in the design and staffing of the “Drop-In Events”, which were held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March, Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March and Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

The purpose of these events was to enable residents (young people and adults) of the Parish of Ashford to provide feedback against a number of topics by writing their comments and views on luggage labels on the day. From the outset it was decided that working party members would not participate in logging their own views and comments until the week after the events had been completed. This was to ensure that working party members did not inadvertently “lead” or influence other members of the community with pre-conceived views or ideas.

The luggage labels, together with interviews carried out at each session, plus comments from the working party and six emails received after the drop-in events, are listed in the following pages. They are categorised and separated by using different text colour to allow identification back to the source material.

This document sets out the comments, views and opinions of the community catalogued verbatim under eleven separate headings listed below. The numbers (NN) are the number of comments recorded in each category:

<b>(34) Environment</b>	<b>(2) The Neighbourhood Plan</b>
<b>(49) Facilities</b>	<b>(3) Drop In Venue Displays</b>
<b>(61) Traffic/Safety/Parking</b>	<b>(6) s106 Money</b>
<b>(8) Transport</b>	<b>(11) Future Household Survey</b>
<b>(11) Community</b>	<b>(4) Attitudes and Behaviours</b>
<b>(43) Conservation/Housing</b>	

### **Analysis of Attendance**

In total...

43 Ashford households were represented out of a total 115 i.e. 37%  
68 residents attended (including 6 children/young people aged 9-14)  
4 non-residents attended  
92 luggage labels were completed providing 99 comments in total  
25 people were interviewed, including some couples and 3 children/young people

6 residents sent emails with their comments post drop in

Note

The total of 43 Ashford households shown above as attending the drop-ins is slightly less than the aggregate of those recorded at each meeting – because in a few cases members of the same household attended different meetings.

This document contains the total of 232 comments made across 11 headings from residents attending the three Drop-In Events, the post drop-in emails and the working party individual comments.

### **“Drop In Comments”** **Verbatim**

Text colour Black = resident input written on coloured luggage labels

Green = verbal input recorded at meetings and recorded on laptop computer

Blue = Working party (WP) member input after the events were completed

Purple = Six emails received post drop in

## Environment

1. Tidy up Meadowside "Green" + cut hedges to provide a view
2. Wildlife should be protected as much as possible so preserving the green banks & the current rural nature of the village, including the last few fields in the village is very important, not least because Ashford is already largely a conservation area. Its intrinsic character is this rural green nature-yet so close to Barnstaple. Excessive development on the edges or infill of the remaining fields will alter this permanently. If there was to be a development brownfield should be the 1<sup>st</sup> consideration. Ditto keeping the roads narrow & without street lighting will help to preserve the rural character
3. I think the lighting on Meadowside should be changed to the lighting used on the A361 Less glare and cheaper to run
4. The unique environment of Ashford needs to be preserved for future generations
5. Clearer access to public footpath route 1 for walkers/dog owners. Some paths inaccessible e.g. the one down long lane towards the nursery (*watery lane*)
6. It would be nice to have the local walks and lanes mapped out on board for everyone to have it easily available.
7. I would like Ashford to retain its rural feel and therefore no new buildings should be allowed to encroach on the surrounding areas. This would cause a serious threat to the environment green space, etc
8. To include the surrounding fields used as pasture, owned privately? How does the plan protect from development?
9. Don't need or want street lighting. In fact my worry is there is already too much light pollution from the caravan park and the A361. I'm not sure how delivery vehicles can be stopped although they clearly are a nuisance particularly for pedestrians. A footpath or narrower hedge banks might help.
10. Public footpaths being maintained by landowners so they are passable
11. Strand lane traffic – please no new houses in Ashford until this bottleneck is sorted
12. The ditches all up the village need a good clear out
13. We have beautiful well stocked hedgerows and feel that must be protected, footpaths cleared and bulbs planted. The litter team was a good move
14. Not only Tarka Caravan park lighting needs sorting but the Nursing home lights are also incredibly bright. Both need low level LED down lights.
15. With the playground adult exercise equipment to keep everyone entertained. Wildlife seems to be getting less. More trees and hedges kept in good order
16. Conservation area should mean just that - with no new developments!
17. Keep Ashford as dark as possible. Note caravan park , security lighting on houses and caravan park and supported living units on A361
18. Keep hedges intact. No new street light pollution to minimum. Protect Long lane footpath
19. We like NOT having street lighting – it is good to be dark in the country!
20. A wildlife sanctuary for birds and etc. would be helpful – perhaps with nest boxes and a place to feed them
21. There is some very bright lighting in the Supported Living Home that should be dimmed more effectively to cut down on light pollution.

- 22. We should keep Ashford dark at night and avoid light pollution
- 23. Basically, I don't want much change – Ashford's rural and should stay that way
- 24. We should keep animal and wildlife pathways – not public footpaths but greenways with flowers for bees and butterflies
- 25. Meadowside should have the anti-polluting down-lights, like on the dual carriage rather than the bright lights they have now – the village should be as dark as possible – dark skies
- 26. Strand Lane hedge banks should be preserved and any footpath should go on the other side of the hedge

27. Source – email five.

A key point to be made in regard to this process is that residents should not forget that it is a “lifestyle choice” of residents to live in a small, rural settlement such as Ashford with its quiet pass-times based on an enjoyment of the surrounding countryside. Inevitably it follows that some services and facilities enjoyed by those living in towns and cities are not available in Ashford. Nor should they be. People are free to move to such areas if they prioritise the importance of such benefits over and above the attributes of this beautiful location. Therefore I feel that little account should be taken in this process of requests for services, developments or facilities that would impair or destroy the innate character, very nature and attributes of the settlement that residents have come here to enjoy! In particular, we live in a unique, rural, estuarine valley setting. It follows that any development that impairs the beauty and enjoyment of that setting, and the lifestyle choice we made to live in it, in my view, is most unwelcome.

For example, I consider it of the utmost importance that all ribbon development along the A361 between Potterton Barnstaple gateway and Wrafton / Chivenor roundabout should cease absolutely, regardless of whether it is commercial or residential. Such beautiful estuary settings as this are “not being made any more”. It is unique, of rare value, cannot be replaced and in my view is at the tipping point so that, if further damaged, would progressively be beyond recovery. No further development should be permitted, including: Sporadic housing developments, the caravan park, retirement homes, the Strand Lane garden/retail centre.

There should be robust enforcement of planning law to prevent and reverse “mission creep” where it has taken place. In my view, for example, NDDC should review again the planning permission granted to the Wyevale retail centre and, if and where it has developed activities and buildings beyond those expressly permitted by the original permission, there should be enforcement of the law to require the reversal of such activities or facilities.

The lack of street lighting is a wonderful attribute of the village enabling the enjoyment of amazing night sky views. I would not want to see further lighting installed

28. WP1

The quiet rural ambience of Ashford must be preserved.

The preservation of green fields and wildlife corridors within the parish must be given a very high priority when any development is considered

29. WP2

Safe-guarding the nature of the lanes with their high banks & hedges full of wild flowers and homes for creatures.

Recording and maintaining all the footpaths as wild-life corridors.  
Preserving trees especially around the caravan park and the big trees on Long Lane (footpath 8) called Watery Lane.

30. WP3

What I like about the parish of Ashford and want to see unchanged:

Its rural nature surrounded by fields with animals grazing

Its dark skies with very limited street lighting (only in Meadowside and on the A361)

Its amazing location in a stunning landscape, with spectacular views of the tidal River Taw and, from the upper part of the parish, the north Devon coast reaching as far as Hartland Point.

What I would like to see changed:

A higher level of protection provided for the farming landscape and the environment, including the possibility of the parish being designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty due to its farming heritage, its proximity to the banks of the Taw estuary and an SSSI and its appeal, shown by its use by walkers, horse riders, runners and cyclists

The Parish of Ashford encompasses an area of great beauty which needs to be preserved And enhanced including:-

The fields adjoining the banks of the sandy tidal estuary of the River Taw with its accompanying migratory bird population and the opportunity to walk/cycle along the Tarka Trail

Traditional farming in the fields, with cattle, sheep and crops surrounding the village High traditional Devon banks (which are a preserved feature) which not only contain a huge variety of wild flowers and vegetation but also provide a habitat for wildlife

The parish rises from sea level up the hillside overlooking the River Taw and provides views reaching the sea and the Devon coast at Clovelly and Hartland

The local wildlife flourishes including pheasants, rabbits, the common buzzard and bats.

31. WP4

We enjoy our 'dark skies' area – so restricted carefully managed use of street lighting as part of any new development

We live on a hillside exposed to the prevailing westerlies, receiving a lot of direct and often heavy rainfall/ there are lots of natural springs and watercourses within the parish. Often very high levels of water runoff from fields and natural water courses are witnessed that have the potential to flood and cause damage. It would be sensible to undertake general analysis of where the streams, springs and watercourses run, and consider policies that manage this risk so any development should only be undertaken when once a thorough assessment of the drainage and impact on neighbouring properties and public roads has been provided

The same applies to taking a detail study on local our 'natural heritage and habitat' assets – we are surrounded by fields, hedgerows, and a river estuary. Attractive natural habitats for flora and fauna. We only know what we stand to lose when we know what we actually have but the general feeling I get is people who choose to live in Ashford do so partly because of they are attracted by its rural nature despite its proximity to Braunton and Barnstaple. So if a study highlights any element assessed of being merit, policy provision could be considered to protect and conserve it.

32. WP7

An appreciation of our wildlife in this area and a willingness to conserve the habitats. Even removal of a few hedges disrupts the green corridors used by birds and insects and deprives small mammals of their habitats

33. WP8

I cannot see how Ashford would qualify as an ANOB designated area. While we may enjoy and value the local environment in which we live, it is nothing special in this region of the country. That said, I do think that it's important that trees, hedges and waterways in the Parish be carefully managed and protected in years to come. These offer wildlife corridors among the existing housing in the village.

34. I do think that flora and fauna habitats should be surveyed even though this is not a required imposed on us by NDC. Future development of the Parish, including spend of 106 money, should ensure that our natural environment is protected and where possible enhanced

## **Facilities**

1. I think that we have some good facilities in the village, however, the church hall limits us. A decent hall would serve all our needs
2. We would love a play area for children and a car park for the village hall
3. A community area, green space/parking for village Fairs, bonfire night, community garden, place of solace a place to walk to would be great
4. We need an appropriate size hall to serve the community – with parking
5. Pop Up Pub like Marwood + Village to store grit so that it is accessible when icy
6. More frequent use of church hall for village community social events. e.g once a month pop up quiz night / charity auctions
7. A large community hall space with additional public parking would be great. A community space would allow more social/sporting/youth/elderly events. More parking spaces at the church hall
8. Somewhere to buy basic groceries, a community hub for the village, we could capitalise on the many independent craft businesses based in the village. A café/pub/room for hire/ footpaths to access them
9. Encourage development of a village pub – great for the community (not next to my house mind!)
10. Community hall larger than Church Hall with parking. Views opened up in front of benches on Meadowside. Continued increase in community activities. Parking for Church hall
11. It would be nice to have a proper village green for local events and sitting areas
12. We should be able to park at the village green and visit the graveyard
13. I would like to be able to park outside the village hall as it's the only public car park area as far as I know in the village
14. A foot path around the village + some bee hives
15. A shop or some facilities for daily milk, bread, eggs within the garden centre perhaps
16. A car park for the village hall
17. Parking for the Church?
18. The parking spaces outside the church hall should be for the use of villagers visiting the church/church hall/graveyard/library – not just for the same people. And we should not have to book a space if there is an event on

19. I don't want more facilities such as shops /pub, etc. I live here because it's quiet – shops are very close by and if I wanted to live next to them I would have done
20. We need public parking signs on the spaces at the village green
21. A car park near the Village Hall & church is needed, especially given that Ashford has an aging population
22. The idea of a car park area for the Church & Village Hall is a good idea. The children's play area is a good idea.
23. Pub, Ale festival, non HGV signage, playpark, road surface repairs
24. Childs play park
25. It would be nice to have a much bigger village hall with ample parking so we can have such things as yoga classes, village fete, etc which would bring the community together
26. Acquire a car park to give easier access for these > Build a village hall with green and a playground. A face book page for the village. Is there anyway the garden centre can be made to function as a shop or can its facilities be made available to the village?
27. Ashford would benefit from purpose built Village Hall/Community centre and a playing field, centrally located with adequate parking facilities. It would bring people together and give a sense of cohesion to the village. It would facilitate the organisation of activities –village clubs and shows, fetes and adult learning, etc
28. We should have a small park near the centre for all children, not just the very young – with exercise machines – but it shouldn't obstruct people's views
29. We have young children so we want a play area – which will encourage more young families – and we have no proper community hub to bring people together whereas other very small villages have community shops and, etc
30. We should have a grassy area for safe playing with some equipment – a lot of people like football but there's nowhere to play here We'd like to have more children in the village – it would make it more friendly [9]
31. We should have a grassy area for safe playing with some equipment – a lot of people like football but there's nowhere to play here We'd like to have more children in the village – it would make it more friendly [9]
32. By the church we need a bus shelter for when we're going to school in the rain – it could go where the bench is so it could go next to that without cutting of the sunshine in the summer [about 8 young people catch the bus there at the moment
33. The Church Hall needs replacing badly – with something bigger and more accessible – so more people can do more activities there – that would do a lot for the village and for people in it
34. A proper village hall is needed!
35. The only place for a car park is David Clapp's field – there is nowhere else
36. Parking is difficult near the church hall so I have to walk up and I'm lacking in mobility so it's very hard
37. We badly need a carpark for the church and hall, because access is so difficult
38. The village green should be for public use – the village hall is not ideally placed but we all have to share the site for general good use Hiring the hall is less attractive because of the difficulties with parking and the councillor's attitude, but people feel intimidated about speaking out

39. If money is available a larger village hall would be good for the village if it had parking
40. Parking for the church is a big issue for elderly people, but we don't want just disabled parking
41. Fullabrook should be asked about funding for a village hall or anything else we can benefit from

42. No specific inputs under this category. Some general references made within comments recorded elsewhere

43. WP2

A car park near the Church Hall with perhaps a play area tooL

44. WP3

What I would like to see changed:

Better facilities provided at the church hall such as access and parking, especially for elderly people or those with a disability, a high quality toilet cubicle with a disabled toilet, a new kitchen and general refurbishment

A small playground/recreational area provided for children and young people in the parish

Ashford parish provides few services or amenities other than the parish church and the church hall. These, however, provide key and well used venues for Christian worship and community events and should be supported and enhanced where possible.

45. WP4

To have a large green space in the centre of the village, accessible to all for use as playing field, village amenity space (bonfire night?), 'green parking and overflow on village events', an outside space to sit (benches), rest and meet others.

46. WP5

If the Garden Centre were to be developed, it would be an ideal location to include a community village hall.

47. WP6

The decision taken by the Parish Council in February 2018 to potentially purchase land with 106 monies known as the "North field" opposite the church is good idea.

However, the following aspects need strict attention ongoing, they are;

a) The land purchase needs to be negotiated in such a way so that a Covenant is drawn up and agreed by all parties that expressly denies ongoing access through to the lower field, thereby, inhibiting further development of housing in what is the Conservation Area of Ashford.

b) A height restriction will need to be deployed to inhibit use of camper van parking

c) The area purchased should be for the sole use of residents wishing to park to attend church or community events at the church hall.

d) The grass area proposed behind the parking area should be restricted to use by children and adults and off limits to dogs.

e) That residents interests in the immediate area who have foul drainage into this field are made immune of any costs associated with repair costs or replacement costs of pipe work and sceptic tank systems that need to be repaired or moved.

48. WP7

A larger community hall somewhere in the village with adequate parking

49. WP8

I appreciate the growing sense of community in the village and would want future development to be planned such that it continues to enhance the feeling of togetherness. Having a village hall (significantly bigger than the current church hall) somewhere within the Parish would be a major asset for the future. If appropriately sited, it could include a playing field / sports field which would broaden the use of the facility.

I have deliberately avoided commenting on the Wyevale garden centre site at this point. As far as I know, the closure of this business is speculation and while any closure would obviously offer a development opportunity, I cannot see how it could be specifically highlighted in our neighbourhood plan.

### **Traffic/Safety/Parking**

1. If possible, a safer walking route down Strand Lane to bus and main road
2. Safe footpaths from A361 to village (Dangerous walk in the dark)
3. A joined up circular footpath & green lanes would be good
4. Roads need serious debate – More homes more cars. Roads have always been a problem for walking and passing.
5. Strand Lane reduced to 20mph
6. A cycle / footpath from the A361 into the village so that people can walk or cycle safely
7. I often use the 303 bus. Recently the bus was trying to go up the Strand . There was a Horse Box and a Land Rover coming down Strand Lane with two cars behind. The 303 had two cars behind it. No one could move either way. In the end the bus driver had to manoeuvre. I feel if Ashford cannot accommodate this amount of traffic how could it cope with more!
8. I would like the road speed reduced from 30mph to 20mph 100 metres before Ashfield Close through the village
9. I think we were short sighted with regard to the proposed developed of the two fields maybe one of the fields could be used as a layby
10. I would like to see a couple of speed ramps (sleeping policeman) in certain positions along Strand Lane to reduce speeding
11. Accepting that widening the roads through Ashford is just not practical and the issues over preserving hedges + roads. Where it possible to put footpaths in to avoid the roads, this would be brilliant
12. Safer pedestrian access from the top of Strand Lane to the bottom. Have teenagers who walk frequently to and from bus stop to get to college. It is unlit & you cannot always see pedestrians when driving.
13. Safer walkways through village from main road. Kids have to walk up unlit narrow road!
14. Drainage issues on Strand Lane need to be addressed together with problems of mud from agricultural use of fields particularly during wet periods! Access onto A361 is dangerous
15. Lanes – if the edges of the hedges were efficiently cut back the lanes would probably gain 1ft or more or as near as
16. Better feasibility for right turns at A361 junction, eg Traffic lights or a roundabout
17. Pedestrian crossing over A361for safer crossing from bus stop

18. Improved cycle and walkways down to the dual carriageway would improve safety. Regular pot hole maintenance important to conserve the village community and the aesthetics of the village
19. There is not enough parking at the Church/Hall. Speed at the A361 junction should be 30mph to allow us to get out to Braunton or Barnstaple. No pavement from A361 up Strand lane concern as my children get bus home & walk up the hill. Could a path be made?
20. What time of the year will the cameras be in action? Consider road usage during summer months
21. We need a roundabout at the A361 Strand Lane junction
22. Passing bays from Ashfield Close to Ashford garden centre are free & for between, +in poor repair. I feel very sorry for all of the home & land owners whose car's consistently pull into their driveways just not on!!
23. Given the importance of Strand lane as the main road into the village from the A361, we should really have fully adopted pull-ins /passing points rather than rely on the good nature of certain people to allow cars to pull in to their drive.
24. I'd like a pedestrian cycle way down Strand lane from Ashfield close on the other side of the hedge. Don't want the road widened – traffic will just go faster!
25. I struggle as many do to get onto the A361 – hopefully the traffic plan survey will go towards changing things.
26. I would like more pavements and footpaths for cycling (*child input*)
27. Would like a footpath/cycle path through the village. No to street lighting would cause light pollution. Re junction between Strand lane and A361 needs traffic calming roundabout
28. Cycle path down Strand lane on land on fields adjacent to Strand lane
29. Maybe some passing places on the Strand towards the bottom using the fields opposite the driveways that are currently used
30. Widen Strand lane to include a pavement and / or cycle track
31. A roundabout at the bottom of the village is needed. It would alleviate problems of access, and slow traffic. If a controlled crossing was added it would give a safer pedestrian route to the Tarka trail and the bus stop
32. Adder and Strand Lane can be awkward to see the cars coming quite quickly – and it can be awkward when cars park – especially just below the church outside the small gate to the house – the bus comes down Adder Lane and then turns right into Strand Lane where it picks us up – so any obstruction at that bend is very difficult
33. The A361 crossing is straight which helps, but there is a lot of fast traffic so it can be hard to get across – we have to wait until the whole crossing is clear – it is bad at night – we need lights and lighting there – motor cyclists particularly are likely to go very fast – a Zebra crossing would be good – particularly for cyclists – when it's very hard if there are more than just two trying to cross at once – Drivers are not always aware of it – the central part is too narrow to use effectively as an island for bikes crossing [we're getting bikes soon] – the soldiers from Chivenor use the crossing a lot – and that is awkward in the winter dark – it is a much busier crossing than one would imagine in the country – need better lighting and wider waiting area to cross from [14, 12] – want the children to be self-sufficient in their transport in their teens – so they can get about themselves and use the bike track.
34. The dangers of the road – Strand and Adder Lanes – the traffic is fast and increasing

35. Strand Lane can get very congested in the upper sections
36. We need a better footpath down to the Tarka Trail – and we keep driving down due to the difficulties as a pedestrian – we could develop the pathway that goes down via the caravan park so that it is more usable
37. Pavements for cyclist are important.
38. There is a hill just outside our house with a tight turn – and cars can come very quickly and not see you in time!
39. There is a lot of traffic on Strand Lane as a short-cut is (to) the other villages – which causes congestion – would it be possible to have a new road to Braunton?
40. We don't want a roundabout at the bottom of Strand Lane because that would be more intensive and urban and lead to more traffic in the village.
41. U-turns to the car boot sales are dangerous and undesirable.
42. The road at the bottom of Ashford is dangerous due to summertime
43. U-turns to the car boot sales – so yellow hatchings would be helpful to prohibit the turns
44. A 20 mph limit on Strand Lane would be irritating and unhelpful and Unnecessary
45. A pedestrian light-controlled crossing would be very helpful on the Tarka crossing point.
46. Passing places on Strand Lane would be helpful too – instead of using driveways informally
47. The footpath down Strand Lane would be good but it's a non-starter
48. We don't want a lot of road widening – we want to keep the little lanes even though they are difficult for cars and pedestrians
49. The right turn to Braunton at the bottom of Strand Lane is dangerous – traffic lights would help

50. Source – email one.

What are the cameras for? Is it for traffic numbers and/or speed? What is this information going to be used for?

I'm not sure about the suggestion of a disabled parking space as I don't think we have anyone with a disabled badge in the village who would use it, therefore it would remain empty. The various elderly residents who need to drive to the hall as they are not able to walk up the hill do not have a disabled badge so would not be able to park in a disabled space. I do hope the Parish Council are able to go ahead with a car park so parking for hall users can be made available –a perfect solution for all!!

51. Source – email three.

Councillor [name deleted] is monopolising two parking spaces outside the church hall. He thinks he can do as he likes. I've heard about his disagreements with [names deleted] about parking and other issues and how he was very objectionable and aggressive. Church hall parking is for the public!

52. Source – email four.

The traffic surveys are presumably to demonstrate the high volume of traffic and therefore unsuitability of Ashford for development. The photos and width measurements at the drop in sessions were intended to emphasise the same.

Should the results show this, will the WP be advocating a widening of Strand Lane and perhaps a roundabout at its junction with the A361?

There is some feeling that Ashford and Strand Lane in particular are too busy and difficult to negotiate. This view is largely by residents who are finding driving difficult

due to age or by those used to main roads. Some probably always had poor anticipation. The reality is that there are busy periods especially if an incident takes place on A361, but most of the time Strand Lane is relatively quiet. It is unreasonable to think you can live a mile from 35,000 people and be within 150 yards of a major A road and expect the traffic volume to be akin to the middle of Exmoor.

53. Source – email five.

The narrow lanes, often defined by lovely Devon banks, trees, hedges and historic walls and buildings in the conservation area are a distinctive part of village character and life, generally prompting a friendly wave, smile or acknowledgement of neighbours and residents waiting for one another to execute their driving skills at a tight patch. For those that want wider roads to pass one another at high speed, maybe a short wait for the dual carriageway on the A361 is required, or the M5 is just beyond Tiverton!

It would be a foolish, retrograde and destructive step to even contemplate widening the lanes or seeking to provide easier access. To do that is simply to invite an increase in traffic from non-residents, particularly those wanting to use Strand lane as a “rat run” from busy times on the A361. Very quickly it would create a further deterioration in the quiet, character of the village where local residents can still, at the quieter times of the day, enjoy a walk up through the village to the church, the post box, a neighbour’s house or an event at the village hall, enjoying the views without being overwhelmed by passing vehicles.

Rather, access should be actively discouraged by placing “No thoroughfare -Access to residents only” signs (or similar) at the Top farm, Adder Lane and westerly Strand lane gateways to the village.

54. WP1

There should be a 20 MPH speed limit on Strand Lane, along its whole length.

There should be proper passing places along Strand Lane, to lessen the need to use private drives and field access gates for this purpose.

There should be traffic bollards, or yellow hatched boxes at the bottom of Strand Lane, to prevent traffic on the A361 performing dangerous U turns.

It would be highly desirable to have a safe gravelled footpath from somewhere near the junction of Meadowside/Strand Lane giving access to the bus stops on the A361

55. WP2

Strand Lane needs proper passing places instead of using field gateways or house driveways

56. WP3

What I would like to see changed: Strand Lane (and possibly Adder Lane and Top Road) designated as “Quiet Lanes” (see under ‘Transport and Roads’ below)

The main street, Strand Lane, through the parish and the village, is single track only in places with high Devon banks and no pavements. In particular, the conservation area and tight bends around Woolstone Corner, St Peter’s Church and the Old Post Office restrict wide vehicles passing through the centre of the village. This affects the amount of traffic possible and retains the character of a rural settlement. The road is already under pressure from agricultural vehicles, waste disposal vehicles, trade vans and a general lack of parking space outside of people’s homes. The very setting of this parish does not allow for any planned increase in traffic and I would prefer it remain so.

The roads in the parish (excluding the main A361) are used not only by vehicles but by pedestrians, runners, hikers, horse riders and cyclists.

I would like to see Strand Lane, Adder Lane and Top Road designated as a "Quiet Lane" by the local authority to provide the benefits underlined below.

See below from the CPRE's Guide to Quiet Lanes with my own underlining's:-

"Country Lanes are an integral part of our rural environment but the volume and speed of traffic, and the presence of heavy lorries can make them uninviting and intimidating. Quiet Lanes are a positive way of: > providing a chance for people to walk, cycle and horse ride in a safer environment; > widening transport choice; and > protecting the character and tranquillity of country lanes."

"Walk, cycle and ride in safety Quiet Lanes are designated minor rural roads intended to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and the mobility impaired. They are designed to enable users to enjoy country lanes in greater safety and encourage car drivers to respect more vulnerable road users.

Widen transport choice.

Quiet Lanes are a key way of widening transport choice in the countryside by encouraging local journeys to be made on foot or bicycle, and for recreation. While cars are not banned and use of these roads is shared, lower speed limits and discrete road signs can encourage drivers to slow down and help to promote a more tranquil rural environment.

Quiet Lanes as a network

Quiet Lanes work best when they are part of a network of designated lanes which can link local residents to, for example, the local shop or school, and connect lanes around a village centre or to a nearby village. Quality of life Quiet Lanes are about appreciating the beauty and tranquillity of country lanes rather than travelling along them from A to B as quickly as possible in a car. By helping to protect the character and tranquillity of the countryside from traffic, reducing the intimidating effects of traffic on rural roads, building community links and encouraging healthy, recreational activities, Quiet Lanes play a valuable role in improving people's quality of life."

#### 57. WP4

A cycle/pedestrian route to safely access the top to bottom of strand lane would be a welcome improvement. It is very dangerous as we all know – a safe route would unlock and open up access to the buses, garden centre, cycling into Braunton or Barnstaple, or a leisure cycle along the Tarka trail for many more residents of Ashford, including toddlers.

#### 58. WP5

Current traffic speeds along Strand Lane are a serious danger to pedestrians and cyclists. The speed limit should be reduced to 20mph.

#### 59. WP6

In order to provide a safe, walking/cycle /pushchair route on the lower section of Strand lane i.e. from Meadowside towards the A361. It is proposed that at the earliest opportunity (when 106 monies are available) that a strip of land is purchase from landowners that will provide a safe off road passage through to the corner opposite "Higher Strand". This will help provide safer walking access to the A361 and bus routes for a large proportion of residents living in the community.

Access Across A361- Traffic volumes and speed of traffic, plus narrow central standing area in the mid-section of the A361 makes this pedestrian crossing very

dangerous, especially with cycles and baby buggies. It is proposed that this crossing be upgraded with pedestrian traffic lights to make this safer ongoing.

60. WP7

Walking on Strand Lane is dangerous; I would like to see a lower speed limit and some provision for pedestrians. Ideally a designated footpath/cycle path, but appreciating the width of the road it may be at the edge of the fields, behind the hedges.

A pelican crossing across the A361 at the garden centre to give safer crossing for pedestrians to access the Tarka Trail. I don't think this would upset the flow of traffic

61. WP8

The roads of Ashford were not designed for either current traffic volumes or the ever growing size of vehicles, including family cars. Growing use of online shopping is inevitably leading to a growth in the number of delivery vehicles using our roads as well. I'm not sure that a 20 mph speed limit is required but if it is considered, it should be for the whole village rather than just Strand Lane (as so far suggested). It would be illogical to apply 20 mph to just Strand Lane. Would that mean that traffic could then accelerate to 30 mph as it moves into Meadowside or Adder Lane? Whole village 20 mph or known of it restricted to 20 mph.

I certainly do not support the use of speed bumps or chicanes to control traffic speed for many different reasons.

I wouldn't object to the 'Quiet Lane' approach being applied throughout the village.

I support the idea of installing a Pelican crossing instead of the little island in the middle of the Braunton Road. This would give much safer access to the Tarka Trail.

Bridges or underpasses for pedestrians and cyclists would not be appropriate alternatives in my view.

I would want to ban any U-turns at the bottom end of Strand Lane. I have observed many near miss accidents at this junction since living here and most of these have been associated with people doing U-turns

## Transport

1. With Teenage kids more buses coming through the village
2. Transport is Ok by car and buses here – but there is only one bus in the morning which is never full – so that's enough – Ashfordians all have cars.
3. More frequent bus service
4. The bus service should return more quickly from Barnstaple
5. No specific inputs under this category

6. WP3

Access to most services, situated mainly in Barnstaple and Braunton, such as doctors, dentists, chiropodists, physiotherapists, supermarkets, opticians, post offices and the local Barnstaple hospital is by car, bus or taxi. Home visits can often be arranged for many services, usually on a private fee basis. Local volunteers (such as Age Concern) provide voluntary assistance for senior citizens with mobility and access problems. The local towns of Barnstaple and Braunton lie only 2 miles and 3

miles away respectively. An occasional daily bus service either provides a stop on the A361 close to the garden centre or at Meadowside, within the Ashford village.

7. WP4

More focus on transport (access to and impact on) in all planning development applications in the Parish - greater weight should be implied when assessing impact applications might have on the current existing lanes and road network in Ashford. Consider a contract with a local bus firm to provide access to Barnstaple on a regular schedule on a day time different to the Filers bus?

8. WP6

To secure a pedestrian path being created from "Higher Strand" to the existing pathway past the telephone box.

## **Community**

1. I feel this is the beginning of a helpful thoughtful group with all the village included. Well Done keep Going!
2. A system of sending village alerts? Facebook could help, post offers of help eg bad weather /transport issues. Have shared village fruit trees.
3. I love the close village community and would like to see more help for the community
4. Keep up with the community events
5. We need a children's and adult's playground with suitable exercise machine - to encourage exercise/mobility for all – including the aged
6. The village should have a Facebook Page
7. It is good to encourage more younger families – because Ashford is getting to be a very elderly
8. The APC does not actively encourage people to go along to meetings and take part – it should do more to welcome and encourage people to meetings
9. No specific inputs under this category.

10. WP3

The community aspect where, due to its limited number of people, there is a genuine sense of neighbours knowing and caring for one another and therefore a reduction in isolation. The opportunity to be involved in community events and regular clubs such as gardening

11. WP4

The village network / societies / village email news letter – the recent and increased activity of these groups and communications is a brilliant way to show how the community can flourish and become more integrated – all such endeavours to be encouraged, supported and if required funded. There is limited access to the public transport, so a better integrated village may improve resident support (such as with car lifts) for those that cannot drive.

Monthly pop-up events - a village 'pop-up pub' 'pop up cinema' 'pop up restaurant' etc. If a field were purchase – summer fetes, picnics, village bonfire night celebrations etc.

## Conservation/Housing

1. Conservation should be saved at all costs , no development
2. SHLAA - Area's that have already designated for Ashford should be made use of and considered first in Ashford, and density levels & retirement homes should be carefully considered & addressed on these two areas maybe just one of the fields.
3. If there is housing to be built. It would be better to have affordable houses that young families or seniors who would like to down size. NO executive homes this leads to more isolation
4. If Wyevale goes there is room for a great many houses. They will use Strand Lane as A361 gets very blocked either to Braunton or Barnstaple as the ones now cause accidents or damage then pedestrians or cyclists will be in great danger or killed
5. If we are to have more houses in Ashford I feel they should be smaller homes so that current residents could downsize without moving to another area
6. Already too many houses as Strand lane treated as a bypass for Braunton causing mayhem. Wall hedges damaged. No affordable are needed as many thousand already been built or in process or been given permission. More conservation is needed as it has been destroyed at alarming rate several empty houses for over 11 yrs
7. Conservation area designation hopefully means something! i.e. it will help to preserve the character of the village – essentially rural. If the designation were to be reconsidered perhaps it should include, Ashford Close & Meadowside although I'm not sure about this as the conservation area essentially ring fences the old farming buildings - but it should prevent infill inside its boundary- hopefully.
8. Housing as few as possible – Keep to preserving village
9. There is a need for a number of dwellings suitable for local people to downsize to – flats perhaps
10. I do not want to see any new homes built. Ashford does not need this. It's a conservation area. Ashford does not support local amenities here
11. At the top od Ashfield close the road was constructed to let future development continue into the next Meadow. Planning once given but it lapsed. It's an obvious site there is still a ransom strip in place.
12. If further housing in the parish is inevitable I would prefer it not be infill of fields. If there are any brownfield possibilities that would be preferable as they would then not change excessively the rural character of the village. Additionally, Ashford is in need of some public parking space are there is virtually none and if further development was to be considered or to happen –parking would be needed. I would also like to see a larger hall for the community use than the church hall currently provided. It is too small for community events and it is at present. Housing should be more affordable as there is a lack of such housing in the village for younger families.
13. Fully approve of the concept of the neighbourhood plan – more housing is inevitable, this gives the village opportunity to influence how it happens
14. New houses should be at the top or off N side of Strand lane
15. The Conservation Area is being reviewed but it has almost outdone its original purpose since it failed to protect the open spaces in the village with the building of Strand Close – the new village hall could have gone on that land

16. The current conservation area is too big – it should be adjusted to exclude the new houses that have been built Brownfield housing – need to think! Definitely not the caravan park though! It is quite big and I don't know how many houses they might want there – so not sure at this stage – ideally we'd have another garden centre or an rural-related shopping area perhaps with several small outlets and a teashop on the same site. Preferably not housing there!
17. Prefer not to see any more housing, like everyone else – it seems to be going up everywhere
18. Housing is a good thing for an area like this – to give more choice and options for people – and the Brownfield has no access/traffic problems
19. We don't want affordable housing here and in any case some affordable housing is not protected in subsequent sales.
20. We should be able to do something about houses/cottages that are left empty and are deteriorating badly – there are examples where the houses have been neglected
21. We have some second homes in Ashford – there are several that we know of – and my concern is that the village will become less active and social if there are many absentees
22. Ashford hasn't changed much in 45 years – the new building has been very reasonable overall
23. We shouldn't have more affordable or starter homes – we don't want a housing estate! This is not suitable for affordable housing.
24. We should be able to express our opposition to the building of new houses on green field site which take up countryside, but we don't oppose in-filling and small scale building or renovations for local people in the village – that can be done without spoiling the village. However, we don't want new houses put up just anywhere in the village, for that's not relevant to local needs
25. Brownfield should be preferred to greenfield and new expansions – for obvious reason
26. Any development should be in proportion to the size of the village – not too big!
27. We want the village to remain as it is with lanes as they are – it would be totally inappropriate to build 25 houses off Ashfield Close – and the field should remain agricultural
28. There is no need to spoil the village with all the housing that's going on in the wider area
29. If the garden centre closed, housing there would be positive and better than the alternatives – and it could sort out the lower road junction and provide for a village hall – while also giving parking for access to the Tarka Trail
30. The NP should consider what should be done IF any brownfield site came up in Ashford – for example, it should seek to influence what goes there, including a proper village hall, parking and appropriate housing which would all benefit Ashford – the NP needs to be proactive and consider how desirable features can be brought together on the site to make it acceptable and beneficial for Ashford The village should remain as it is – we like the rural setting and I don't want a big housing estate We don't mind in-filling houses in Ashford – that's better than having affordable housing imposed on us

31. Source – email one.

I can remember when Ashfield Close (10 homes), Meadowside (22 homes) and Strand Close (3 homes) were FIELDS and when all those homes were built we welcomed newcomers to the village, not expecting to keep the area to ourselves! A very different reaction to that of some residents now!

32. Source – email two.

While none of us wants to see the village swamped with development and traffic, most of us live in houses which were part of ‘development’ in their day –e.g. Ashfield Close and Meadowside.

33. Source – email four.

Most discussions and publicity about the NP have emphasised the risk to Ashford of development. There is no particular risk to quote Graham Townsend

A NP cannot contradict local or national planning guidelines. They must be positive or more supportive of development, not negative. Therefore if an application was received for houses in the conservation area the NP cannot have clauses to stop the possibility of this being approved.

The WP wish to build a wall around Ashford. This would be the highest, thickest, strongest wall possible. They will be lucky to end up with a kerb stone around the parish.

34. Source – email five.

The conservation area is a lovely remnant of old Ashford, the Ashford of yester-year, a different age....with lovely examples of the built environment of historic, rural, Devonshire. It should be protected at all costs

I understand that there is no requirement for the Ashford parish to provide new housing under the local plan. None should be offered in my view.

Ashford is not a workplace for anyone other than maybe one or two agricultural workers and those at one or two establishments located on the A361 for whom a regular and frequent bus service is available. There is, therefore, no significant requirement for affordable homes to be built in the parish. Barnstaple already has significant supply of affordable homes available and, should more be required, then the local authority should firstly (a) invest in upgrading old housing stock to be made available as affordable homes (thereby killing two birds with one stone by both, regenerating run down areas of the town, and increasing the availability of good quality, low cost housing)..... and secondly (b) recover derelict commercial buildings and brown land in the town centre for new affordable developments thus avoiding the need to encroach upon and destroy more precious green field areas, as well as regenerating town centre locations.

Further development of higher cost homes should be avoided since it will increasingly change the nature and character of the village as well as put pressure on infrastructure. There are many areas in the North Devon locality that are available for new builds to be constructed. This particular settlement is unique and its innate character and rural, estuarine valley setting should be protected at all costs, as previously explained. I do not accept that there should be further “infill” development in the settlement. Its beauty is largely attributable to the fact that it is NOT a high density residential area and does NOT have a uniform structure but has gently evolved, wandering over the hillside in a “patchwork” of homes separated by sporadic fields supporting livestock or crops, large gardens, lanes with hedges, trees and other open spaces. Further infill will convert a naturally spacious rural settlement into yet another housing estate. I don’t buy the excuses to permit it.

35. Source - email six.

Our concern is the amount of houses that are being built in the area.

The roads were not built for this amount of traffic. Any extra houses within Ashford would mean total congestion, and trying to get out onto the main road from Strand Lane would be impossible.

Lots of the houses that have already been built are still empty!! A few ideas: - Brexit, lots of people have gone back to their own country. Too expensive, built on flood plains, not many extra schools, Doctors surgeries, Dentists, Play grounds, finding jobs... They don't seem to be creating any new jobs. People who already live here find it hard to get a job!!!

The North Devon Hospital CAN NOT COPE WITH THE VOLUME OF PATIENTS NOW!!!! What will the situation be like when all these houses are built, and if they are all bought... how many unnecessary lives will be LOST????

People say "there are not enough Doctors and Nurses.... BUT there are. They just don't want to take a job in an Hospital that is threatened with closure all the time, or down- sizing it. When they take on a job they want it to be permanent!!! Money is also available for the up keep of the hospital, it is just a matter of getting it released.

I was informed of all this information when I started a 'Save our A & E Dept, Baby unit and the stroke department, it was on the internet and went global.... I got almost 10,000 signatures to save the hospital. We won the case to keep these three units, but for how long???

IF the hospital can't cope OR CLOSES we have to travel to either Exeter or Taunton hospitals, which inevitably means travelling along the Link Rd A361, this road is a death trap within itself and is frequently closed.

Have the planners thought of all these mishaps which WILL HAPPEN, if they carry on expanding in this area.

Now The Tarka Caravan site wants to encroach on our village, having already expanded it.... It wants to expand it even more, coming right up to the village, with footpaths through the fields where cows and sheep graze.

Holiday traffic during school holidays already stretches our roads to the limit of their capacity; add the extra traffic resulting from the house building in the area and the roads will be at a complete standstill during the summer months

36. WP1

1. The scale of any new housing must be restrained and must numerically be in reasonable proportion to the housing which already exists within the parish.
2. Ashford needs more good quality smaller houses (2 or 3 bedrooms) and any new development must prioritise these.
3. The location of new houses should be assessed on a case by case basis.
4. The design of new houses must reflect Ashford's rural character and must harmonise with existing properties.
5. There should be no further expansion of the Tarka Holiday Caravan Park and any development must respect and not have an adverse impact on the quiet rural nature of Ashford.
6. 'Strip development' along the A361 must be avoided

37. WP2

- Infill preferable to green-field sites.
- Smaller houses for down-sizing.

Starter homes -courtyard or terrace type development.

Ashford has enough 'executive' homes, 4-5 bedrooms with large gardens.

Tarka Holiday Park - seen as 'subtle urbanisation' by the developers. It must not be allowed to spread into the green fields to the south of the village and dwarf the village homes

### 38. WP3

1. What I like about the parish of Ashford and want to see unchanged:

- The conservation area of the village with its narrow street, cob houses, high Devon banks and traditional parish church.

2. What I would like to see changed

- The conservation area at the heart of the parish endorsed again by North Devon District Council

I believe that any major development of residential housing, retail businesses or caravan parks in the parish would impact the parish negatively, reducing the number of traditional fields for farming, disturbing and uprooting wildlife, bringing street lighting (thus increasing light pollution and reducing the view of the stars), increasing traffic delays and the likelihood of accidents, increasing noise and raising the possibility of ribbon development between Braunton and Barnstaple, linking the two towns which, in my view, would damage the environment permanently and spoil this amazing landscape for all time.

Rather I think that this stunning environment needs to be cared for, enhanced if possible and preserved for generations in the future.

The parish of Ashford needs to retain and enhance its central core of housing around the village centre rather than permission being granted for ad hoc random large scale residential development along both sides of the A361 or along the length of Strand Lane. Some properties with large gardens in the central core could, with planning permission, be developed by the owners to provide additional housing, including possibly some smaller units. It could be that the needs of people wishing to downsize and remain in Ashford could be met by one or more of the larger (currently unsold) homes being converted into apartments. This might also benefit young adults wishing to remain in the parish although there are also suitable affordable homes in nearby Barnstaple and Braunton.

I am opposed to wide scale housing development which would destroy the intrinsic nature of the parish and to development on the fields surrounding the village. I am also opposed to any further housing development along the A361 in the parish which would contribute to ribbon development connecting, eventually, the towns of Barnstaple and Braunton.

### 39. WP4

Housing and development should be properly assessed - what housing stock is actually needed, where should it be placed – any development should be focussed on what the parish actually 'needs'.

To ensure the Conservation Area status is better defined and managed

Ashford still has a definable character as a 'rural settlement/village' with a farming heritage nestled above the Taw estuary. The winding lanes, high hedges, traditional and varied buildings and the few open green field's spaces within the village are very important aspect of this character and in my view are essential to be preserved and maintained. Recent development is threatening to dilute and diminish it particularly in

the Conservation Area. Policy to protect the green spaces and rural character from inappropriate development would be welcome.

Equally the parish boundaries are demarked by patchwork agricultural fields – I fear the encroachment of Barnstaple and Braunton along the A361 corridor to create one long linear development such as evidenced along the Bickington, Fremington, Yelland, Instow road. Having protected boundaries effectively an Ashford ‘greenbelt’ could be looked at?

40. WP5

Ashford’s conservation area is at the heart of the village and every effort should be made to protect it from development.

There is a requirement for properties that meet the needs of residents wishing to downsize and remain in the village

41. WP6

I’m not against development nor am I for it! I like Ashford the way it is, that’s why I chose to live here. The reality is however, that Ashford will have to take its fair share of expansion ongoing. If expansion is going to happen then let’s attempt to influence what we as a community feel is required! Ashford house building has always been based upon executive type properties i.e. four bedroom and above. The focus on building starter homes (and some affordable) across Devon is now underway with many sites. We need to consider building properties particularly suited to older retired people as against 5 bedroom executive homes and starter homes. As the elderly residents of Ashford move on there has always been a regular supply of executive homes available each year. The problem is that elderly residents of the Parish due to the lack of choice are forced to downsize and leave the parish! In view of this, I believe that future developments within the Parish perhaps should be based solely upon building suitable properties for the elderly. i.e. Low maintenance two bedroom Bungalow type properties with double garage and parking for two cars off road and communal garden areas. Legal covenants could restrict ongoing development of roof height and building size so they remain used solely for elderly living accommodation as they change ownership ongoing.

42. WP7

If housing is to be built here, a consideration of what is needed in this area. We have more of a need for smaller dwellings than large family housing

43. WP8

Tarka Holiday Park:

In common with the majority, I am opposed to any further expansion of the park. I am also very annoyed by the amount of trees that have been removed from the site as this has just made the existing place more of an eyesore.

I certainly do not want to see large scale housing or industrial developments within the Parish but I am not opposed to development per se. We have to be realistic that further housing, and places for people to earn a living, will be needed for the growing population of our islands and Ashford cannot expect a privileged ‘no build’ position. Many of us in the WP also need to acknowledge that we live in homes that were part of past expansion of the village over the last 40 or 50 years. Without that past expansion, some of us wouldn’t be living here now.

I think it more important that any new housing tends to attract families rather than offering smaller homes to single elderly people. I don’t buy in to the perceived wave of need for suitable down-sizing housing for the elderly. Many of the WP members

could be slotted into the elderly description and for various reasons have chosen to buy larger houses.

I do not expect the conservation area to be expanded by the next NDC survey. In fact I expect the conservation area to be reduced in size rather than anything else. My own home is sited in the current conservation area because it was built after the last conservation area boundary was set. There is no way this house has any historic significance for the village.

I join those that wish to avoid development growing along the A361 (or Top Road) which would merge Ashford into Barnstaple or Braunton (or both).

### **The Neighbourhood Plan**

1. We can't have an NP that is too cloud-cuckoo-land – that's just a wish-list!
2. No specific inputs under this category

### **Drop-in venue and displays**

1. This is all very nice!
2. Thanks to the whole team who have put all this together
3. I'm very impressed with all this display

### **s106 Money**

1. Can section 106 money from Ashford development stay in the village?
2. To avoid the Parish Council having to make random decisions about any 106 money we should have a "Big Plan" that we can achieve as money comes in. This should be to buy a piece of land in the village to create a village green with a plan to build a village hall, have some seating, BBQ's, play and exercise equipment, village orchard and some parking spaces. This would create a centre to the village where people could meet up.
3. We need S106 money to pay for things – So we need a FEW building projects to fund those things
4. No specific inputs under this category
5. WP6  
To secure a pedestrian path being created from "Higher Strand" to the existing pathway past the telephone box.
6. WP4  
S106 Money – formulate a better process to deciding how any money is spent - have a parish improvement projects list where ideas are proposed by residents and a list published on parish website (can be either specific, costed and deliverable projects or more general 'would likes') when money becomes available be proposed and

voted on at Parish council meetings by all residents rather than purely a decision of the Parish Council

### **Future Household Survey**

1. Household survey question 30 – age should be in bands – not actual age
2. The questionnaire needs to focus on the provision of small housing – rather than affordable housing – for people who might need to down-size or who have retired and want smaller homes
3. The questionnaire is specific about ‘development’
4. The preview of the questionnaire was very useful; too, I’ll go and think about it.
5. The sequence of questions is currently about the household but not the needs of the persons within it
6. Do we need questions about relatives of those here who might want to come here or come back here? Is that local need?
7. The questionnaire also needs a map re the areas for potential housing – so people can see what is talked about.
8. Some questions have open boxes (conservation) but others have lists of options to nominate – eg where should housing go – but you need to be consistent in your approach
9. You need to say why the information is being collected.
10. The questionnaire needs to focus on the provision of small housing – rather than affordable housing – for people who might need to down-size or who have retired and want smaller homes
11. There is to be a questionnaire for the village. This is to be extremely detailed and very invasive. Is the PC aware of this and will they have any control as to the personal nature of the questions?

### **Attitudes and Behaviours**

1. Source – email one.  
Having lived in Ashford for most of my life, I’m very sad about all the scaremongering, rumours, exaggerating and even lies with regard to planning issues. Never before, in all the years I’ve been here, have I witnessed such behaviour and feel that all this discussion about a Neighbourhood Plan only tends to encourage such extreme responses.
2. Source – email two.  
I am genuinely not able to attend the latest Drop-in events (visit of Bishop last Sunday, Messy Church this afternoon). I am quite happy that there should be a Neighbourhood Plan for Ashford, if this is what people want, but am concerned that the process of setting one up seems to have engendered aggression and misrepresentation.
3. Source – email four.

Ashford has 2 councillors who are alienated from the rest of the Parish Council. (PC) There are historic reasons for this. They are supercilious and have their own agenda. The NP is an ideal platform for them to demonstrate their perceived superiority over the rest of the PC. Neither were at the meeting that explained the NP but there was evidence that a NP was deemed unsuitable or unnecessary for Ashford.

They are determined to resist development in the village. They have surrounded themselves with likeminded residents to form the working party. These residents have been responsible for many of the letters of objection submitted to planning applications in the last few years. They have encouraged and even bullied others to write. They don't realise planning is not a popularity contest or that lecturing the Local planning authority on their own policies is unlikely to get an application refused if approval is indicated.

A WP should have a neutral view on how a NP should develop not begin with their own agenda.

If the recent drop in sessions mirror the attendance of 2 informal sessions held earlier it would seem unlikely that more than a third of the village attended .Some would be against so perhaps that is nearer a quarter.

Therefore at least 2/3rds of the village are disinterested. Should PC take their opinions into account.

Residents who have taken an interest, yet know little of planning/ local politics or the status of a NP are falsely being led to think that by suggesting items they may happen. Yet the NP has no power to deliver their suggestions.

The current framework of PC leading projects like the play area and car park shows what can be at least initiated without a NP.

The WP wanted these 2 projects attached to the NP to heighten its credibility.

Some parishes have taken 5 years for a NP to be adopted. Does the WP have the staying power to survive many reverses? How will costs be managed if negotiations extend over years and how will the PC react?

At present the PC seems to have little control of anything to do with the NP and in fact have little idea of what is taking place. Yet the NP is in the PC's name.

The WP has circulated leaflets which explain that many other areas are developing NPs. These include Bideford and South Molton. All parishes mentioned are infinitely larger than Ashford. There is a reason for this. Bigger areas recognise the need for development of all types and have the space to determine where that can happen.

They also recognise the need for change and the benefits that housing for all ages and skills brings.

Go forward 10 years and with a NP in place, there will be little achieved that could not have been done within the present PC framework. In conclusion a NP is a waste of time and public money.

#### 4. Source – email five.

The invitation of the Government under the National Planning Policy framework for “allowing people and communities back into planning” is a most welcome part of our democracy. The vehicle of the Neighbourhood Plan as a means of engaging with the community is an invaluable opportunity for the people to offer their views. The work of the NP team in Ashford is much appreciated. Thank you all for the time and effort you are making for the benefit of the village as a whole.