



# **Ethelburt Avenue Road Improvement Group**

## **Survey of Residents' Views, March 2021 - Results**

Dear Neighbour,

Thank you if you completed the recent survey of views about maintenance and improvement of Ethelburt Avenue. 68 responses were received – out of a total of 108 houses in the road. The results are summarised in the graphs attached, together with written comments received. The comments presented are complete apart from three comments about parking which are not considered appropriate to distribute in full as they mention specific house numbers and one comment about the AGM, from which it was possible to identify the commentator.

Some of the questions asked this time were the same as in 2007. Comparison of those results is given in the attached data.

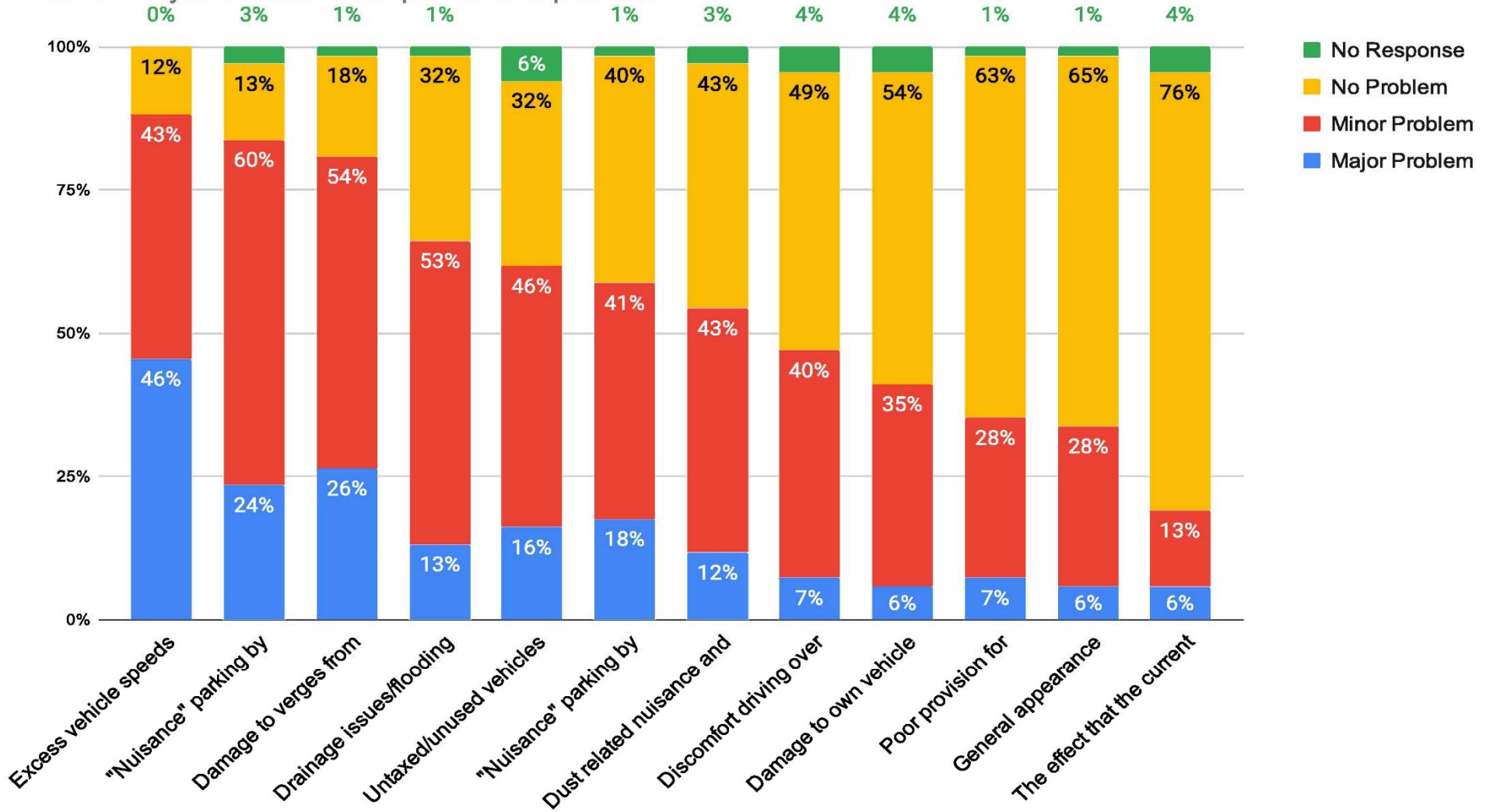
The next step will be for the RIG to agree the detail of proposals for road maintenance and improvement going forward, which will be based on the majority views expressed regarding priorities and willingness to fund the cost of improvements. Some of the suggestions made require decisions by Herbert Collins Estates Limited and the wider Residents' Association. RIG will discuss those with the relevant parties.

A copy of this document will be made available on the HCERA Facebook page and the HCERA website.

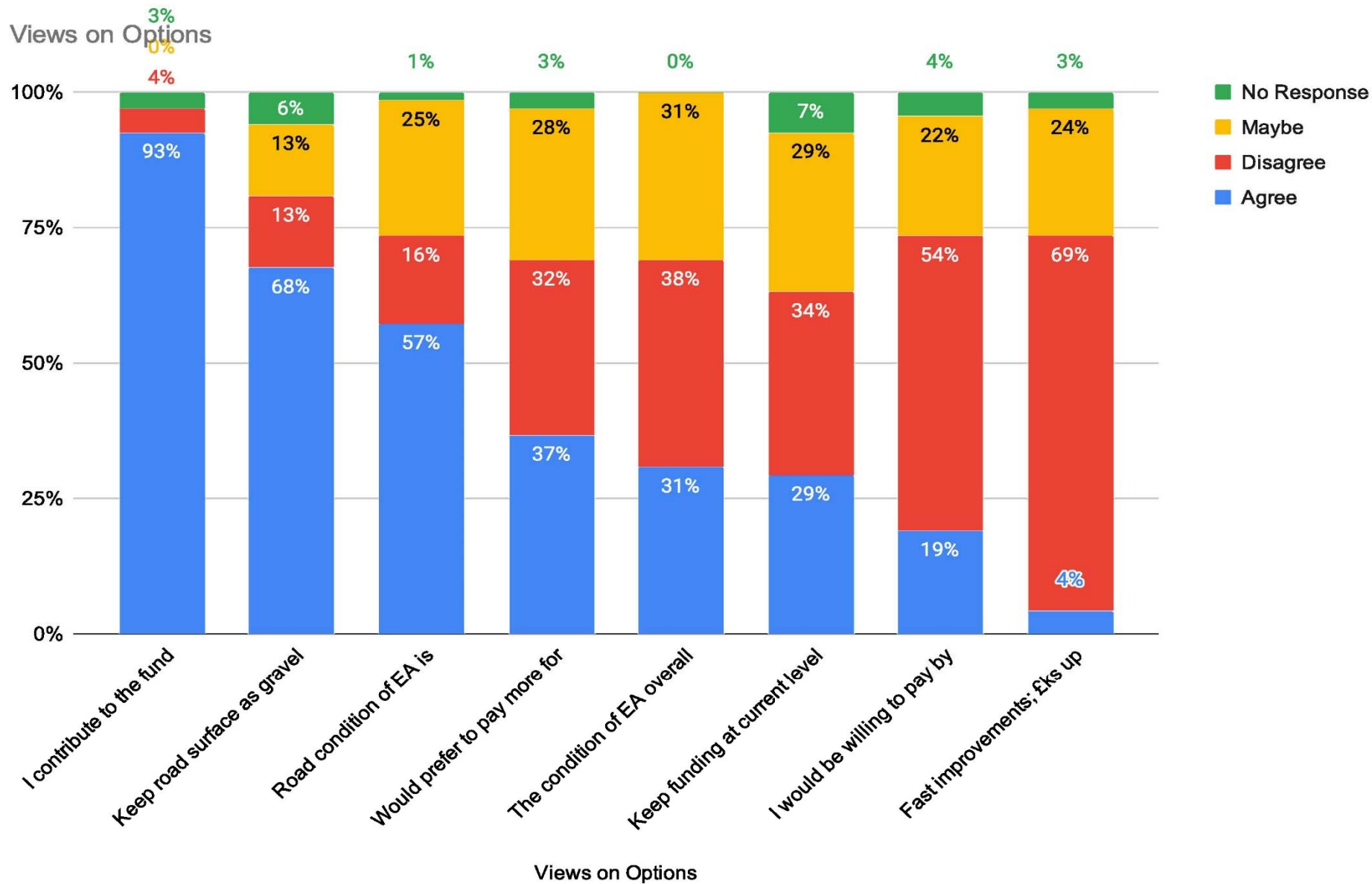
Kind Regards,

**RIG**

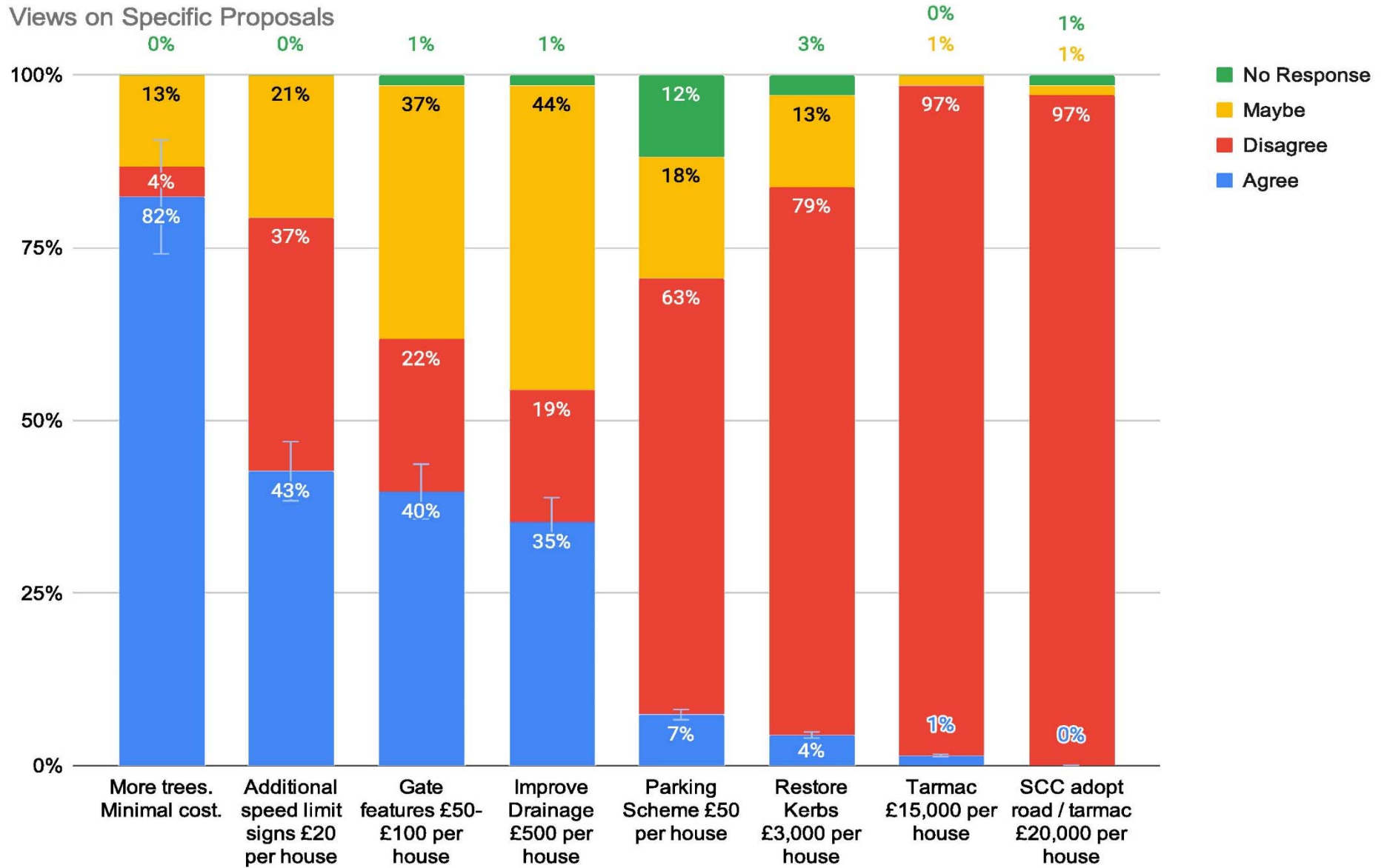
Which do you consider to be problems at present?



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### Views on Specific Proposals



Question	Major Problem			Any Problem		
	2007	2021	Change	2007	2021	Change
<b>Which of the following do you consider to be problems arising from the current condition of the road</b>	n=48	n=68	+20	n=48	n=68	+20
Excessive Speed	48%	46%	-2%	92%	88%	-4%
Dust	38%	12%	-26%	92%	54%	-38%
Erosion of Verges	31%	26%	-5%	79%	81%	2%
Poor provision for pedestrians	19%	7%	-12%	67%	35%	-32%
General Appearance	13%	6%	-7%	50%	34%	-16%
Discomfort driving over bumpy surfaces	10%	7%	-3%	60%	47%	-13%
Detrimental effect on house prices	10%	6%	-4%	17%	19%	2%
Damage to vehicles from potholes or stones	10%	6%	-4%	42%	41%	-1%

### Other Comments on problems

Nuisance parking is the biggest problem, one of my neighbours has 4, sometimes 5, vehicles littered around the top close. Unacceptable for a 2-person household.

Encourage residents to park on their own driveways where possible.

Concerns re condition of large tree on lower green. Canopy is heavy resulting in constant debris falls resulting in need to clear guttering, gardens and surrounding areas. Difficulty manoeuvring large vehicles. HCERA contacted by me - no action taken, who is responsible for any damage which may result from falling debris or uprooted trees.

Overhanging trees on lower green - falling debris (cones, branches etc) - large vehicles damage branches - can a professional opinion be sought on safety, stability and lopping?

We would move if the road was tarmac we feel the estate would lose its charm, the road would become a rat run and we feel house values would drop. Non-residents/delivery drivers seen to not abide by speed limits. More speed limit signs?

I have bought a house in this road because of the road, I very much like it the way it is!

Elderly residents with walking aids find this surface difficult. Wheelchair users find it impossible. Holiday parking when the airport is open has occurred and is not restricted to the ends of the road. The road has a unique appeal to a certain type of person. This is not affected to a large degree by the road condition. This appeal would be lost if it became just another tarmacked road.

Some households have multiple cars (over three) and work vans which feels very unfair. We are highly concerned about dust and dirt. Our daughter has developed asthma since we moved here.

Damage on verges at entrance to Ethelburt Avenue.

Work vans and neighbours' cars parked outside other people's houses. This doesn't affect us luckily. Houses were built when people had Austin 7 cars and probably only one. Terrace houses and shared drives were never designed for multiple cars so not much can be done.

Haven't noticed any (untaxed/unused vehicles). I think you've covered everything

Loose gravel kicking up from bike tyres causing potential damage to motor vehicles. Loose gravel making cycling a challenge.

Drainage is not an issue for us specifically, note on excessive vehicle speeds by delivery vehicles in particular. I suspect people living on the "main" road might have different opinions!

People not parking on their own drives where they can, particularly on south side where shared access is not an issue. Too many vehicles per household and too many vans parked on road. People forced to walk on verges due to the number of parked cars on the road.

Nuisance parking by EA residents - people choosing to park both cars on the road with drive always empty

How - and who - decided what constitutes a "nuisance". Also what action can be taken against so called "nuisance" parkers? I think this is a particularly nasty question and very unnecessary in this questionnaire. I also think the leaving of notes on windscreens is unpleasant and petty. We can actually park wherever we like.

Dust is a major concern and needs to be addressed urgently.

Damage to verges varies as there has been quite bad damage on certain verges.

Clarification on flooding - raised road surface height and poor drainage leads to occasional flooding down driveway and into garage. Partially mitigated by gully at top of drive and "dam" at garage door but cause remains. Excess vehicle speeds are primarily delivery vans but some residents are also guilty.

At this end of the road flooding isn't so much of an issue. The speed at which cars take the corner is though.

Damage caused to car by severe humps created to aid drainage.

We feel general appearance of road can easily be improved by tree and hedge planting at entrances. Re: parking is to do with people parking over the junctions, particularly, at the top of the road limiting safe view of cars approaching on Bassett Green Road.

We think drainage is a significant issue and that professional advice and guidance is required. Unused/untaxed vehicles should be reported to the DVLA. Reinstatement of verges would be welcome.

Muddy verges.

Unattractive road ends with part tarmac/part gravel and variable width. Signs need cleaning or re-painting.

## Additional Comments

I think the gravel road is a defining feature in the conversation area. I am concerned that the present level and standard of maintenance appears inadequate and feel some professional advice may be beneficial in establishing a more robust repair.

Thank you for conducting the survey and the trouble you take for us all.

I realise I may be in a minority of one but currently the road surface of Ethelburt is unacceptable and dangerous for a motorcycle owner. I find riding my low slung Harley Davidson extremely difficult due to both the potholes and drainage ridges. There needs to be a clear, flat route through the middle for motorcycles. My machine bottoms out many times when riding up or down the road and I have nearly fallen off several times.

Gating with security - strongly against this idea mooted by some over recent years. Narrowing entrances - might work at the bottom but would cause increased parking issues at the top end. RIG need something in the welcome packs. I don't think many new residents get that slow is better re: safety (stopping speeds on gravel) and dust and that we maintain voluntarily. Thanks for all your efforts guys.

Residents are drawn to live here because of the natural appearance of gravel on the road, giving it a country feel. This would be ruined if it were replaced by tarmac. Perhaps double yellow lines could be painted on the tarmac at the entrance to the road to stop people making the entrance and exit narrower by people parking there. Extra signs on the road itself would also have the effect of spoiling the feel of the road.

A means to discourage cars parking on the top bend of the road and also bottom verges - perhaps small posts outlining curve of verge possibly with small No Parking symbols.

Our view is that, as it is a conservation area, it should be conserved as it is, and not changed. Which is partly why we moved here, knowing that it would stay the same.

I consider Ethelburt Avenue a very special place and would like to offer any help to maintain its condition. I would like to thank all those who give their time and effort, particularly the RIG to mend and arrange such good work. I am amazed at the sense of community spirit which has built up in the area. Thank you all.

Thank you for the time and thought which it must have taken to prepare and compile this survey, and for all of RIG's hard work over the years. While our preferences have been indicated in our responses, you can assume that we will be prepared to accept the decisions of the majority.

We are fortunate to live in a small and caring community. We would not like to lose the character of Ethelburt Avenue as defined by the "unadopted road". However, we recognise that changes could be made to improve its image. Car parking in some areas is a bone of contention. Untaxed cars, building rubble and damaged verges are unsightly and take away the charm of the gravel road. It would be nice if each household could take responsibility for keeping their road frontage clear.

Personally, I feel the greatest issue is the speeds being driven. This is by both delivery drivers AND residents. Reducing speeding motorists would reduce the wear on the road, mean parked cars would stop mounting the verges for fear of being hit and make the road safer for pedestrians.

Ethelburt Avenue is a very special road. It's charm lies in its village like atmosphere which is, in large part, created by the current appearance of the road. If people want to live in tarmacked roads with pavements there is no shortage of those in Southampton. The regular road improvement sessions are important annual events that help to foster a spirit of joint enterprise and belonging. I hope this is going to remain so.

Think the appearance of Ethelburt Avenue is part of its charm. Apologies for the red car left outside 46. Will be asking Maltese owner to remove as soon as international travel is allowed.

The parking for residents of 41-63 must be looked at and not sure about volunteering to notify the parking operator of infringements. The middle side road section is heavily congested, and some change is needed. Large vehicles are not able to drive between the cars without risk of damage to the cars. All the paths are covered by vehicles. On one occasion when I needed an emergency ambulance in the very early morning It had to squeeze behind a parked car onto the lawned area to get to the front of the house. We have at least 12 vehicles parked there and often that figure swells to 15. The turning circle at the end of the road is blocked. The underpasses are not wide enough for most cars and parking at the front currently is the only option. I would like to offer three solutions for discussion (1) our gravel drives to the houses should be widened by removing a section of the lawn on each side and replace it with gravel to allow two cars to park side by side off the road leaving room for a path (2) my preferred solution is to take a section of lawn parallel to the road from each lawned area to sufficiently widen the road to create a road and paths with parking space on the newly gravelled area (3) the turning circle could also be removed to provide parking for the 2 houses whose cars currently park on the turning circle. I would also like to add that the main drivers responsible for speeding is almost always parcel delivery drivers including royal mail and dpd.

We do have concerns about dust and debris, and also the accessibility of the pavements and verges for those who are less mobile than we are.

How about parking permits, two per household included in road fees. One visitor per household. For houses with more than two cars, they pay more ie double the road fees for two extra car spaces.

Road contribution should be compulsory for every house and added to the lease.

Ethelburt Avenue is unlike any other road I know of in Southampton. It is quiet, peaceful, rustic, pretty and has very little traffic. Having to drive slowly and carefully along it is a small price to pay for living somewhere with so much charm. I would like to keep it exactly as it is.

Just to say I don't have a spare £15,000 or £20,000!!! A great part of the appeal to the properties in the avenue is the current appearance of the gravel avenue itself. Many of my friends have commented on how lovely it is. It has a "rural" charm.

Thanks for all the work!

I am happy for the the road to remain in a stoney condition as I feel it is a unique feature of the estate. To make up the road, even with speed bumps and pinch points, would undoubtedly lead to increased traffic attempting to avoid the traffic lights. Being an uneven road surface currently discourages drivers using Ethelburt Avenue as a rat run! I would not be able to meet the costs involved if the council takes over responsibility for the road. What would happen to residents who are unable to meet those costs?

How much would it cost to hire a contractor twice a year to carry out the road maintenance usually carried out by the volunteers? Clearly more expensive than currently, but would the improvements last longer with a professional doing the job?

I do feel that the lower part of Ethelburt Avenue is being used as a car park. Therefore, the verges are being made into a mud pack when it is wet. Perhaps some wooden posts would be a good idea.

We love living on the road but recognise the challenge of maintaining its current form is considerable. We moved into the road because we loved the gravel road, the wide road and the semi-rural environment to which the road so much contributes. We are strongly opposed to any re-surfacing which speeds up traffic on the road. We are also extremely concerned that the volume of traffic using the road as a short-cut between Bassett Green Road and Stoneham Lane would greatly increase. This would be detrimental to the quality of life experienced by residents using the road and living beside it. We are opposed to becoming a gated community. We are opposed to dividing the road into two and preventing traffic from entering the road at either end.

A balance has to be struck between maintaining the road and maintaining the "low traffic neighbourhood". Simply "tarmacking" the road would impact on the "ltn". Thank you for the work that has gone into this survey.

Consider options to reduce/control vehicle speeds. Consider wildflower planting on verges. Consider planting additional trees in the greens.



I think we would need lots of (expensive?) "gate" features/traffic calming features if the road was tarmac - without that it would become a rat run with dangerous possible consequences to children/pets and pedestrians. I do think that part of the charm of the Avenue lies in its unadopted status but appreciate that it is hard work for this road team to maintain. There are many more cars than when we moved in, in the 1970s, so more wear and tear from residents. It would be good to implement helpful improvements at some extra cost whilst still maintaining a gravel surface if possible.

Contribution should be based on the number of cars owned/used by the household. All are required to pay for road maintenance and more should be done to enforce this, particularly from those who don't give up their time to help maintain the road.

The aesthetic of the gravel road, grass verges etc was the main reason we bought this property. I believe tarmac would discourage buyers. Although the uneven road surface could be described as annoying, I believe it keeps vehicle speeds down without the need for excessive eye-sore signage. My concern with significant improvements to the road would be increased vehicle speeds as well as non-residents using it as a rat-run to get around the traffic lights.

Things have changed since the road was [can't read word]. (1) Average length of tenure is becoming less - people are moving home more often, so why will they pay? (2) if the road is tarmacked then it will become a cut through/rat run at peak times (3) If made up the road will need to be blocked in the middle to stop rat running! (4) Each household has more cars? 2/3/4/6/8!? (5) non-payers - how do we get them to pay and make the charge vehicle based? (6) We will not pay to have the road [can't read word] as we will not see the value back - and its not needed! The gravel road is part of the charm "history" of Collins and the road. If made up it would be just another housing estate. Road repair builds community.

I have lived in Ethelburt for nearly 40 years and the state of the road has never bothered me. I believe it adds to the character. You need to take into consideration that not everyone has the money to contribute regardless of whether they agree with your proposals or not. There are far too many questions on this and costings are vague. In the end I think you'll carry on doing the same as you do now.

Soft landscaping is what is needed (reference to restoring kerbs in section 3). I have suggested this before. It could be repeated at places along the road to act as traffic calming. Excess speeds are also an issue with some residents not just deliveries and visitors. (reference to gate features in section 3). I have long believed we should use narrowed gate like entrances to help slow the traffic entering the road. The surface is not really a major problem. TRAFFIC SPEED IS. Fast traffic also damages the road and accelerates deterioration. If the road was narrower with parking and overtaking laybys this could help. The road is a pleasant place to live and should not be changed too much. Keep the character but slow traffic down to 10 mph is plenty fast enough. The paradox is that the road is unsuitable for modern vehicles and driving habits. So we must change the road or driving habits.

All houses to contribute to the RIG fund as part of their covenant responsibilities. The last few pothole repairs do not last as long as they should / have done in previous years. Possibly a water drainage issue, however, can the quality of the materials be looked at, or have the repairs completed professionally once in a while.

I am happy with the condition of the road and really appreciate all the effort that RIG undertake. I have no problems using a shopping trolley or pushing my granddaughter in her pushchair along the Avenue.

I would like to explore with SCC and the freeholder how they can help us maintain Ethelburt Avenue. I believe the RIG should be a sub-group of the freeholder and work entirely under their authority and insurance. The scope of the RIG needs to be clearly defined e.g. is it potholes only? potholes and drainage only? Or the entire maintenance of Ethelburt Avenue to include verges, footpaths etc.

EA improvements needed limited to drainage (Section 2). Ambivalent to Direct Debits (Section 2). Maintain gravel road as is with improvement to drainage (Section 2). Willing to contribute upfront to drainage improvement. Not willing with regard to change in road surface type (ie tarmac). Strongly disagree with any proposal to tarmac the surface. This would lead to Ethelburt Avenue becoming a rat-run to avoid the Stoneham Lane / Bassett Green Road traffic lights. Suggest "gate" features at ends of road along with some narrowing of the entrances to make road more separate from the main road at either end. This could be extended to reduce/prevent parking at road ends (sketches attached). For us the unmade surface and resultant countryside ambience are significant factors in the attractiveness of Ethelburt Avenue as a place to live.

We chose to move to Ethelburt Avenue in the full knowledge of the limitations of the road (and the conservation notice) and also our obligations as a resident. I feel strongly that, if people want to live on a tarmac road, there are plenty of other places to live, but few with this character and appearance. To take this away from us would be a very bad thing. Key issues to address (in my opinion) vehicles driving too fast > 15 mph, ongoing maintenance burden (can this be reduced and still have a gravel road?), too much whinging without joining in with the community effort. No contribution, no vote.

I wouldn't want us to end up like Orchards Way where there are pavements. It feels overcrowded with parked cars there, and unsafe for kids and pets. I would support restricted access to Ethelburt Avenue, gates for example, that would discourage van drivers using it as a rat run. Mostly I like how it looks and am very grateful to everyone who joins the road gangs. When my kids are older, I hope to be able to help more.

Costs - assume that every household in the street contributes. If road maintenance is the responsibility of homeowners due to covenants why is there is an option for home owners not to pay. Provide costs to redo the gravel surface professionally and improve drainage.

One of the deciding factors when we moved here nearly 30 years ago was the gravel road. According to estate agents I have spoken to, this feature adds to the value of the properties. If the unmade road doesn't suit people then there are plenty of other roads to live in. After all, this is a conservation area. We think the tarmac aprons are a bad idea and should either be removed or dressed in gravel.

The possibility of introducing a one-way system in each cul-de-sac with clear signage.

We have lived with resident parking permits and private parking operators before and both caused more problems than they solved. We very much like the look/feel of the avenue as it is. It is really only the potholes that need addressing. We feel that improving too much, ie tarmac, will encourage more cars driving faster and will cause more problems as it would become a rat-run as people short cut through.

Re: gate features, I also think this would slow down traffic. We think planting trees at the entrances and along Ethelburt to narrow them will improve the appearance, noise and air pollution, stop parking at entrances and slow down traffic whilst boosting wildlife. Gates would also be great. I also wonder if there is a role for temporary drainage/balancing ponds along Ethelburt to help improve drainage and provide space for wildlife.

Traffic speed and drainage are two big factors in maintaining the road - dealing with these would reduce the burden on residents. Whilst happy to pay more, how can this be audited? A big issue is who makes decisions regarding the road and there must be more clarity on what role the freeholder can play. In addition, why have SCC made this a conservation area and not help fund the maintenance of the road as part of that. Either RIG or freeholder should begin working with SCC on this. Overall, £30 and 3 days a year are a small price to pay - but we could do better.

The Facebook group have suggested adding some wildflower planting to the greens and we would support this. How about some lamp post hanging baskets as well to brighten up the road?

We support looking at features at the end of the road but are 100% against gates.

I think where any new trees are placed and how they are managed is a key issue - we actually have problems with a tree in the avenue already - who should we speak to about how it is managed?

If the consensus is for adoption of the highway and/or for adoption by the local authority, traffic calming (speed reduction measures) are a must.

Vehicles parked at each entrance to the road and vehicles parked on grass verges which spoil the grass. Speed: vehicles driving too fast causes most damage to the road surface and the huge increase in delivery vans has exacerbated the problem. Maintenance: costs should be compulsory and perhaps linked to the number of vehicles per household. Double parking: should be discouraged, especially on the top green where it blocks the road. We need to know how the huge sums for real improvements have been costed. £50k-£100k would seem excessive for gate features. Each time the road is repaired it seems insufficient materials are purchased to really fill the holes properly. I felt the overlayer of gravel which was put on at the top/bottom of the road several years ago was a great improvement but was discontinued.

In addition to my comments on the recent survey, may I suggest that small signs on each corner of the greens, detailing "odd numbers" e.g. "odd numbers 65-95" on the top green would stop delivery drivers tearing in frustration around the narrow road and damaging the road surface. The addition of "Private Road" signs at the top and bottom of

the road may also deter casual drivers.

Those who do not contribute to the road fund need publicising in the newsletter. There is absolutely no excuse for non-payment of this.

The attractive unadopted gravel road was one of the major reasons I moved to Ethelburt Avenue. It is a refreshing change from the conventional tarmac roads with crude signage, road markings and harsh concrete kerb stones found in most residential areas of Southampton. The informal rough grass verges without straight edges and flowering cherry trees perfectly complements the architectural character of the houses, with their hedged or open plan front gardens and gravelled driveways. This difference to normal roads and the shared vehicular and pedestrian use, usually makes road users slower and more careful. I would be concerned that with a smooth surface and straight road traffic speeds would increase and it would become a rat-run for motorists wishing to avoid the traffic lights at Stoneham lane/Bassett green road. It would be good to return the untidy tarmac ends of the road to a gravel surface either by removing the tarmac or top dressing with gravel. The current No Parking signage is too wordy for motorists to read without stopping - suggest removing them and replacing with a sign simply saying "Private" or "Unadopted". It would be good to replace the missing section of verge outside 111 Ethelburt Avenue. Narrowing the ends of the road by re-introducing the verges/tree planting or addition of railing/gate features would discourage access and parking by non-residents.

Generally, the road is OK, the gravel means people rarely use it as a rat run and keeps traffic slow. Very much against the idea of including gates, problem parking and traffic calming could be done by planting more trees, adding raised flowerbeds, even benches for older residents etc. This would look much nicer. Planters down the road may also help traffic calming/safet for pedestrians e.g. communal planters for growing veg/herbs/wildflowers. Plenty of ways we can make a feature of the unadopted road and make it a community asset without much cost.

I don't think we see any major issues but think some heavy-duty planters at top/bottom of road could help discourage verge parking and help traffic calming / safety too. Would obviously have a cost but planting them up would be a good communal activity. Gates would be a real pain, I think. In general, although it would be a marginal benefit, more trees on verges.

I also wonder if residents' contributions should be based on number of cars owned. Or number of people in household - all the things you list suggest higher costs but for a single elderly pensioner would be prohibitively expensive

I don't contribute as good money after bad. No improvement as messy, bumpy and disappears within days/weeks. I feel it would be a good idea to take a picture of the Collins Houses in Orchard Way. Lovely tarmac road with either brick or gravel paths and more tree lined verges. Might help to encourage those against the idea of tarmac? I think that at present the road will never see improvement with the continued maintenance. Needs diggers, whackers, taking back to a level and re-doing properly if people want to stay with gravel I feel. Have you had quotes just to sort verges and drainage? Can we go with majority?

It seems to me that there are 2 issues (1) Increased volume of traffic, particularly heavy vehicles (2) increased rainfall resulting in disintegration of road surface shortly after repairs. If putting in new drains really would make a difference to the drainage, I would support that project (£500 a head) but if it did not work it would be money down the drain (so to speak!). Also, a big thank you for all you do voluntary to make the Avenue roadworthy.