

Report for Chilthorne Domer Parish Council, 8 January 2026

Garden Plots Survey Results / Findings

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1. Introduction

A sub-committee of the Parish Council has been established to take forward activities associated with the garden plots at Little Sammons. This report includes the findings of a survey conducted by the sub-committee at the end of November / beginning of December 2025.

2. Background

It has been agreed in principle for the land at the Little Sammons allotments / Garden plots to be transferred from Somerset Council to the ownership of Chilthorne Domer Parish Council. The Parish Council is currently waiting for this to be legally processed.

Currently the land is let by the Somerset Council to local residents', as ten plots on an individual tenancy agreement basis for allotment use.

The Somerset Council has advised Chilthorne Domer Parish Council that the land is not formally classified as allotment land. Currently it has been decided to use the term *Garden Plots* when describing this parcel of land.

The Parish Council has the option to use the land for a range of purposes, subject to planning requirements. The Parish Council has agreed in principle to continue to deploy the land for use as garden plots for residents. This will enable School Beanz to continue and hopefully thrive and develop. It will also allow the parish council to fulfill its obligation to provide allotment space if there is a request from parishioners.

In reaching the decision to accept the ownership of the parcel of land, the Parish Council decided to seek the views of village residents about the future management and development of the land / plots.

3. Summary of Findings Overall

- There is overwhelming support for the Parish Council to acquire the Garden Plots so we can ensure it be kept for the use of the community.
- There is great appreciation and respect for the work of Skool Beanz project, which respondents felt the Parish Council should be doing their utmost to support.
- The majority of people believe the Garden Plots provide a positive impact for the village in terms of amenity, character and enjoyment of their properties. No one said there was any negative impacts, including from people living next to the plots. Some commentaries did

raise concerns about the use of parking spaces at Little Sammons by the Skool Beanz being a potential issue.

- The majority of people want the Parish Council to be in overall control of the plots in their capacity as the land owner. For day-to-day management 57% answered this should be with a single leasee, with the implication this might be the Skool Beanz project (x4) 43% answered the Parish Council. One person suggested a combination.
- The option of an Allotment Association is not supported. This seems to suggest the Parish Council will need to consider carefully how it arranges day-to-day management, so that it has a strong input, whilst not overwhelming Parish Council meetings with Garden Plots business. It could be the current Garden Plot sub-committee continue with the involvement of the Skool Beanz project.
- There was a lot of feedback about control of the day-to-day issues affecting use of the plots and some concerns. One person requested that the properties surrounding the plots should be individually invited to comment about any proposals to erect structures.

4. Conclusions

- The engagement exercise was successful in:
 - informing residents about the future proposals for the garden plots,
 - collecting resident views on the overall management and control of the plots
- There is strong support for the Parish Council to acquire the garden plots land to safeguard it from development and provide an ongoing community resource.
- There was a lot of feedback about the future development of the plots, asking the Parish Council to both support the Skool Beanz project and to also ensure ongoing control, so it continues to provide a positive impact for the village, especially for those living in properties surrounding the garden plots.
- Residents living in properties next to, or overlooking the plots should be consulted as part of any decision to allow the erection of larger community use structures on the plot.

5. Survey Method

- A structured questionnaire (see Appendix 3). The front page of the questionnaire provided information about the current status and the desire of the Parish Council to seek the views of our village residents.
 - a copy delivered to each house bordering and overlooking the Garden Plots (x14),
 - promoted and available at the engagement event held on 27 November 2025
 - hard copies available at the Rec and Village Hall.
 - Digital copy published on the Parish Council website.
- A notification leaflet to every household with the What's On newsletter, pointing to the Parish Council website for further information (the parish council presentation and the questionnaire).
- A meeting held at Recreation Centre Pavillion on Thursday 27 November 2025, where there were information presentations by the Parish Council and the Skool Beanz. This was attended by around 25 people (not counted). The majority were familiar residents and a current plot holder who lives in Yeovil. There was a discussion session after the meeting.
- Phone numbers provided on the survey for a list of the Parish Councillors. One call was received by Karen Taylor. The main purpose being to understand the meaning of some of the questions in the questionnaire.
- 9 completed surveys were returned
- See Appendix 1 for the summarised feedback from the 27 November village engagement meeting.

6. Questionnaire Findings

Q1. How important is it to keep the land for community use?

100% answered *Very Important*.

(1 person did not answer this question)

Q2. Impact of the plots on the village

Availability of plots - character and amenities

89% answered Positive Impact

(1 person answered neutral)

Availability of plots - enjoyment of your home directly

67% answered Positive Impact

(1 Slightly Positive, 1 Neutral, 1 marked reply N/A)

Availability of plots - enjoyment of your home indirectly

44% Positive Impact, 33% Slightly Positive

(1 Neutral, 1 marked reply N/A)

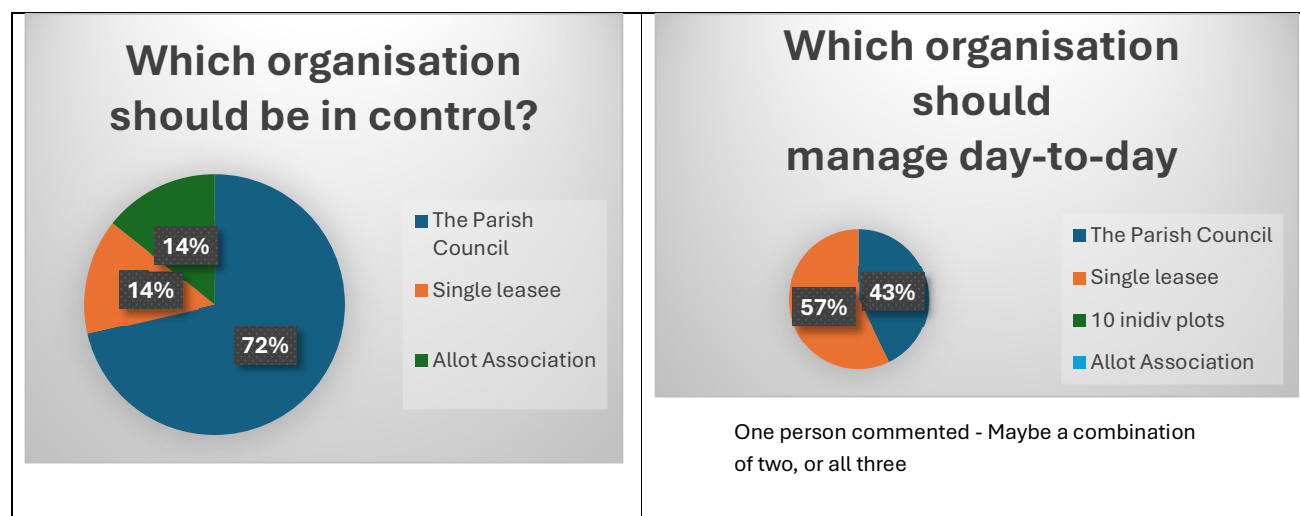
Q2a. Does your home border the plots?

Yes = 55%, No = 33%

(1 person did not answer this question)

Note: There was no correlation between those people who answered Yes and more negative responses to the first parts of question 2.

Q3 and Q4



Q5. If there was an Allotment Association, would you be willing to be a member?

No = 7 , Yes = 1, one person answered it depends on what is involved

Q6 and Q7

These were commentary answers. See Appendix 2. This should be read, as there is a lot of richness in the comments, not possible to include in the summary. There is a very strong theme on

the expectations of the Parish Council to control the activities on and the development of the land.

7. Testimonials collected by Skool Beanz

At the same time as the Parish Council's survey, the Skool Beanz independently chose to canvass feedback from persons' associated with the project, to present to the Parish Council. Many testimonials were presented. These are wholly positive about the activities and impact of the project. A copy is available for councillors to read at the Parish Council meeting on Thursday 8 January 2026.