

Somerset Roadshow conversations – Rurality JSNA 2014/15

Summary of themes identified from the Roadshows, summer 2014

The public were asked the question ‘What are the three good things and what are the three things that are not so good about living in the countryside?’ The number of responses from the three events are summarised below.

Roadshow	Number of positive responses	Number of negative responses
Compass Disability Event	42	34
Mid Somerset Show	154	122
Minehead Centre	17	15

These responses were grouped into ‘themes’ where possible. Where comments did not fit a particular theme, they have been grouped as ‘other’. These were predominantly comments that related to someone’s individual circumstances, and therefore could not be generalised.

Positive Themes – all areas

Combining the responses from all roadshows together, the most popular 3 were ‘Less traffic/quiet’, ‘Community’ and ‘Air Quality’. These are shown below. The most popular 3 themes by roadshow are summarised at the end of the document.

Positive themes	Number of responses
Less traffic / quiet	39
Community	29
Other	26
Air quality	23
Lovely area / scenery	22
Activity easier	19
Good facilities	11
Space	10
Better quality of life	9
Safe	6
Fewer people	6
Low crime	4
Freedom	4
Good food	3
Range of activities	2
Grand Total	213

Less traffic / quiet : Respondents used words such as ‘peace and quiet’ and ‘less traffic’

Community: Words such as ‘friendly’ and ‘neighbours’ were used, in addition to ‘community’

Air quality: ‘Fresh air’ and ‘No pollution’ were the main words used

Lovely area / scenery: Words such as ‘Countryside’, ‘Beautiful scenery’, and ‘Views’ were used.

Activity easier: Most respondents referred to ease of walking, and access to areas to exercise.

Good facilities: 11 respondents were positive about the local amenities, with good schools and pubs most frequently mentioned.

Negative Themes – all areas

Combining the responses for all roadshows, the most popular three were ‘Planning / housing development’, ‘Poor bus service’, and ‘Access to services’. These are shown below. The most popular three themes by roadshow are summarised at the end of the document.

Negative themes	Number of responses
Other	28
Planning / housing development	22
Poor bus service	22
Access to services	21
Road maintenance / hedge cutting	14
Few amenities	10
Isolation	9
Speeding traffic	8
Flooding	8
Big vehicles in lanes	6
Mobile signal / broadband	6
Emergency services	4
Outsiders	4
NHS access	4
Supermarket	3
Little for young people	2
Grand Total	171

Planning / housing development: This theme covered a range of comments including ‘too much housing’, the actual siting of housing developments, and the costs; ‘affordable housing’.

Poor bus service: This included comments such as ‘lack of buses’, ‘bus service cuts’, and ‘poor bus services’.

Access to services: In some cases this is related to the poor bus service theme. Comments included ‘cost of having to travel’, ‘distance from amenities’, and ‘shopping difficult unless you have a vehicle’.

Road maintenance / hedge cutting: Respondents commented on the poor state of the roads, and ‘overgrown hedgerows’.

Few amenities: This theme covered comments such as ‘village shops closing’, ‘services not as good’, and ‘lack of amenities like shops and fuel’.

Top three themes by Roadshow

Roadshow	Top three positive themes	Top three negative themes
Compass Disability Event	Lovely area / scenery Less traffic / quiet Activity easier	Poor bus service Road maintenance / hedge cutting Access to services
Mid Somerset Show	Less traffic / quiet Community Air quality	Planning / housing development Poor bus service Access to services
Minehead Centre	Less traffic / quiet Community Air quality	Access to services Few amenities Planning / housing development

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