

East Devon District Council

Colyford Community Governance Review

Spring 2022

Summary of Results

Should Colyford have its own parish council?

56% of all respondents agreed with the proposal that Colyford should have its own parish council, 44% disagreed.

- Of those who live in the Colyford area, 76% felt it should have its own parish council.
- Of those that live in the Colyton area, 40% felt that Colyford should have its own parish council.

What should the boundary be?

66% of all respondents agreed with the proposed boundary for a parish council for Colyford, 34% disagreed.

Those that disagreed were asked how they would improve the boundary. The most common comments were:

- There should be no separation, it should all remain as Colyton Parish Council. (73 comments)
- Colyford has been given too much area, that area isn't Colyford. (10 comments)

In addition:

- Of those that live in the Colyford area, 81% agreed with the proposed boundary.
- Of those that live in the Colyton area, 53% agreed with the proposed boundary.

It is suggested that if Colyford has a parish council, it should have 7 parish councillors. Do you agree with this number?

60% of all respondents agreed with 7 parish councillors, 40% disagreed. Those that disagreed were asked how many there should be, the most common comments were:

- None / things should stay as they are now (89 comments)
- Five (72 comments)

In addition:

- Of those that live in the Colyford area, 74% agreed with 7 parish councillors.
- Of those that live in the Colyton area, 49% agreed with 7 parish councillors.

Currently Colyton Parish Council has 13 Councillors. It is suggested that if Colyford has its own parish council, the number of Councillors on Colyton Parish Council should be reduced to 11. Do you agree with this proposal?

56% of all respondents agreed with 11 parish councillors, 44% disagreed. Those that disagreed were asked how many there should be, the most common comments were:

- Remain at 13 / no change / don't split the councils* (117 comments)
- Eight (18 comments)
- Ten (15 comments)

In addition:

- Of those that live in the Colyford area, 68% agreed with 11 parish councillors.
- Of those that live in the Colyton area, 47% agreed with 11 parish councillors.

**For many comments it was unclear whether their comment was stating that it should be 13 because Colyton and Colyford should remain as one parish council, or whether they felt it should be 13 in addition to the Councillors proposed for Colyford Parish Council so they have all had to be added together.*

Method

After a proposal from the Colyford Village Residents' Association, East Devon District Council had to begin a Colyford Community Governance Review.

In total we received 801 completed copies of the consultation:

- We sent out copies of a consultation to the 2,776 people on the electoral register within the current boundary of Colyton Parish Council. They were given the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire on paper and send it back in the post, or fill it in online. 683 electors filled in the paper questionnaire, and 106 electors filled it in online.
- In addition, people who were not on the electoral register were also given the opportunity to go to the website and fill in a copy of the questionnaire. We received 12 copies of the questionnaire back from non-electors.

Where results have been split into those from the Colyford area, and those from the Colyton area, this has been done as to whether our Elections Team classifies the household as being in the Colyford or Colyton area which is broadly, but not exactly, in line with the proposed boundary for a parish council for Colyford.

In addition, we received emailed comments not using the questionnaire template from:

- Colyton Grammar School
- Colyton Burgesses
- Colyton Parish Council
- Colyford Village Residents' Association

These could not be added to the main results, but have been sent to the Strategic Lead for Governance and Licensing in full, and are summarised in Appendix 1.

Full Results

1. Please tick the box below to confirm you've read and understood the above data protection statement: If you do not tick this box we can't use your questionnaire responses.

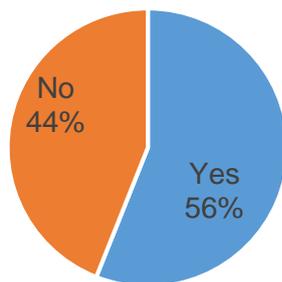
Everyone whose data is included in these results had to tick this question to allow us to process their data. If the question was not ticked then we could not include their data in these results.

2. Unique Code or enter your address:

People filling in the questionnaire had to enter the unique code that appeared on the letter sent to them in the post, or enter their address to prove they lived within the current area covered by Colyton Parish Council.

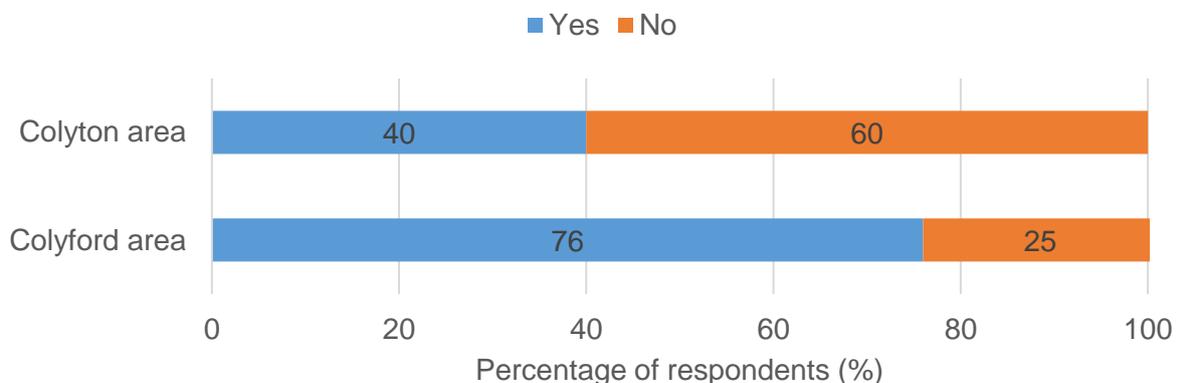
3. Should Colyford have its own parish council?

There were 787 respondents to this question



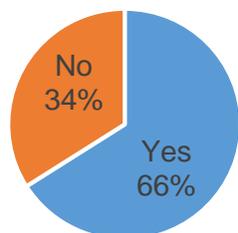
The results for this question were split into data from those living in the Colyford area and those living in the Colyton area:

There were 351 respondents from the Colyford area and 436 respondents from the Colyton area.



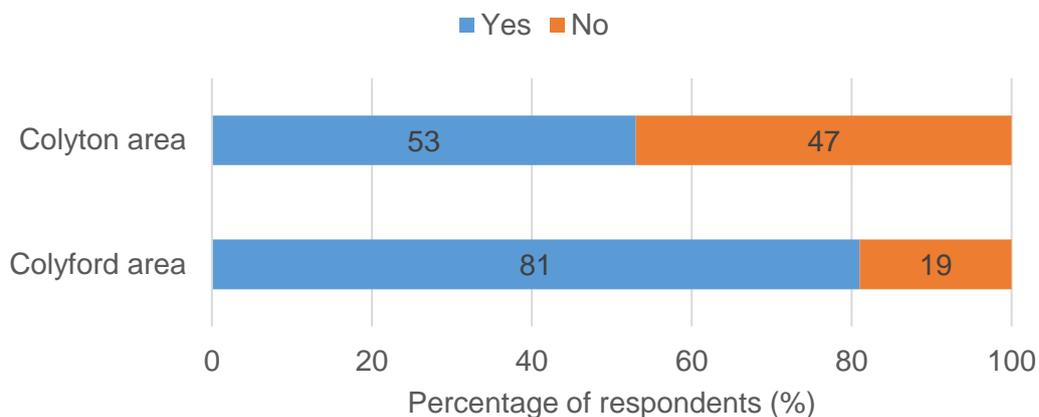
4. It is suggested that if Colyford has a parish council, the boundary should be as shown on the accompanying map. Do you agree with this proposed boundary?

There were 740 respondents to this question.



The results for this question were split into data from those living in the Colyford area and those living in the Colyton area:

There were 335 respondents from the Colyford area and 405 respondents from the Colyton area.



If no, please describe the boundary you would suggest:

There were 198 comments.

Common comments stated by three or more respondents.	Number of respondents making that comment
There should be no separation, it should all remain as Colyton Parish Council.	73
Colyford has been given too much area, that area isn't Colyford.	10
Seaton Town Council's boundary should be moved South of the A3052 at Harepath Hill and Harepath Hill should be included in Colyford.	8
Just include the village of Colyford itself.	7
I've been placed in the new Colyford boundary, I identify with Colyton not Colyford.	7
It's too arbitrary / illogical / drawn for a different purpose.	6
Colyton Grammar needs to be in Colyton.	5
The map isn't details enough / boundary is unclear.	4

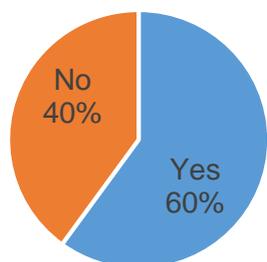
Colyford is land grabbing.	4
Use the ancient Colyford village boundary.	4
The proposed Colyford boundary should be much further South.	4
Stafford Cross must be in Colyton (as land there is owned by the parish council).	3
The boundary should be up to the lower side of New Sidmouth Road from Old Sidmouth Road and up to the A3052.	3
Further North, stopping at Ruffold House.	3

In addition, there were these very specific comments giving a proposed new outline to the boundary:

- Along the R Coly, following the existing parish boundary, across just N of Ruffold House (which should be in Colyford), up Shells Lane to Fairview Lane, turn right up to Four Elms Cross, then turn left down Stafford Lane to the crossroads at Colyton Grammar School, turn right up Whitwell Lane to Old Sidmouth Road, turn left along Old Sidmouth Road to Whitegate Lane, turn left at the junction with the A3052, take in Gatcombe Farm and follow Colyton parish boundary back to Colyford.
- From the river Axe to Ryffold House. Up Shells Lane, left down to the grammar school. Up Whitwell Lane to Old Sidmouth Rd. Left to Ashdown Lane. Left along Ashdown Lane to A 3052. Across to Gatcombe Farm then follow the Seaton town boundary.
- East - Tower Services, West - Boss Hill Cross, North - Peak Tree Corner, South - Seaton Cemetery
- With reference to the Northern boundary east of 4 elms cross; The line of this boundary does not seem to correspond with any geographical features. Using Shells Lane would seem to be a sensible decision but taking into account properties on the N side of Shells Lane. Where the boundary passes through pieces of Land in private ownership it is unreasonable that a landowner may need to deal with 2 Parish Councils. Also, with some of the land in this area part of the green wedge, it is important that the boundary does not give one Parish Council greater influence than the other over possible future changes to this designation. The boundary needs to be clearly defined for future trouble free decision making.
- The northern boundary of the proposed new parish captures properties on the southern side of the new Sidmouth Road which have no clear links with Colyford but are directly lined to Colyton.
- Old Sidmouth road and land to the south to Witwell lane should be Colyton.
- Practically, rather than being down the back of the houses in Coly Vale and Courtenay Drive and including land right up to the Old Sidmouth Road, the Western boundary should be along Shells Lane and then loop around to the junction of the A3052 and Harepath Road. I also believe that neither Holyford Woods local Nature Reserve nor Colyton Grammar School should be included in the proposed boundary. This is because both are community assets for the whole of the Colyton area and their future shouldn't be dictated by the particular interests of Colyford
- Boundary to be as shown for the northern, eastern and southern boundary. The western boundary should be along the Gulley Shoot & Stafford Lane roads. Colyford would then be in the centre of a proportional area of land.

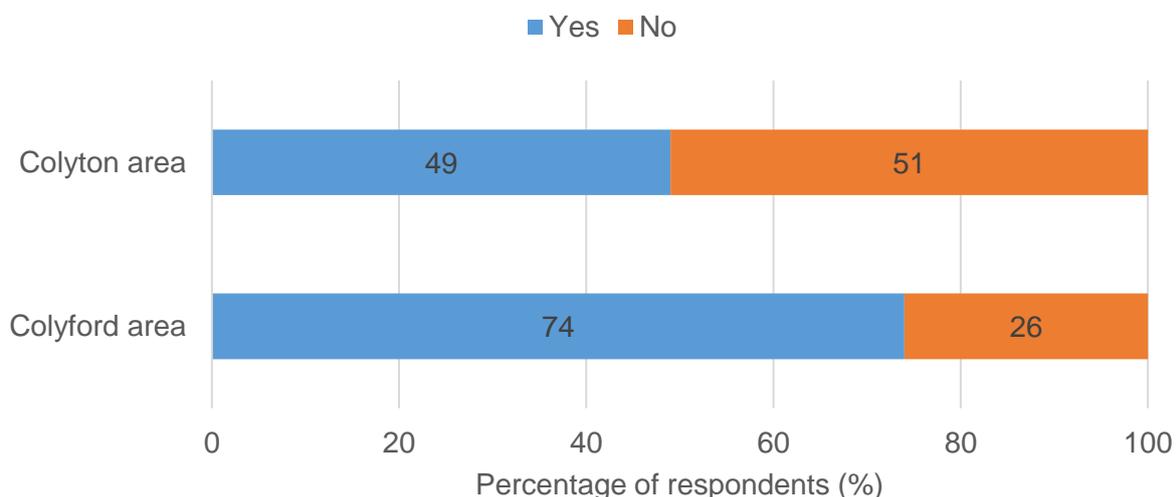
5. It is suggested that if Colyford has a parish council, it should have 7 parish councillors. Do you agree with this number?

735 respondents answered this question



The results for this question were split into data from those living in the Colyford area and those living in the Colyton area:

There were 332 respondents from the Colyford area and 403 respondents from the Colyton area.

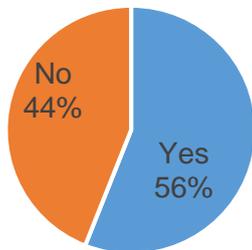


If no, how many Councillors do you think should sit on the proposed parish council?

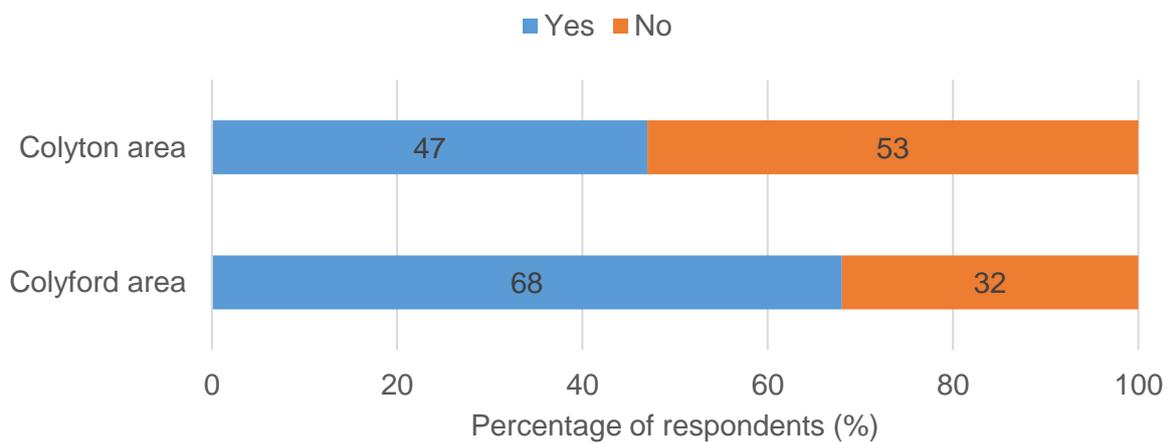
209 respondents commented.

Common comments stated by three or more respondents.	Number of respondents making that comment
None / things should stay as they are now.	89
Five	72
Nine	8
Four	6
Six	6
Ten	3
Twelve	3

6. Currently Colyton Parish Council has 13 Councillors. It is suggested that if Colyford has its own parish council, the number of Councillors on Colyton Parish Council should be reduced to 11. Do you agree with this proposal?
733 respondents answered this question.



The results for this question were split into data from those living in the Colyford area and those living in the Colyton area:
There were 328 respondents from the Colyford area and 405 respondents from the Colyton area.



If no, how many Councillors should sit on Colyton Parish Council?
256 respondents answered this question.

Common comments stated by three or more respondents.	Number of respondents making that comment
Remain at 13 / no change / 13 / don't split the councils *	117
Eight	18
Ten	15
Seven	11
Twelve	8
None	5
Five	5
Fifteen	4

Six	3
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*For many comments it was unclear whether their comment was stating that it should be 13 because Colyton and Colyford should remain as one parish council, or whether they felt it should be 13 in addition to the Councillors proposed for Colyford Parish Council so they have all had to be added together.

7. Any other comments?

321 people commented.

Most common comments: (Those said by more than three people)	Number of people that made that point
It's unnecessary, things should stay as they are/ work well as they are / remain united / stronger together.	46
Disagree with proposed separate parish council / Stay as it is.	37
Waste of money / extra expenses / time.	33
There would be too much extra administration / extra expense if a Colyford Parish Council was created for not enough benefit. Confusion.	27
It's unnecessary, only the newcomers / power hungry few want it. Vanity project. Has worked for 100yrs. Locals are happy with it as it is.	24
Colyford residents need more say in how they are governed.	20
Colyford has its own identity and issues so needs to be separate.	10
No need for separate PC / parishes are too small / detrimental.	10
This is a sensible proposal / well overdue.	9
This proposal will mean Colyford gets a fairer amount of money.	8
Having a separate parish council for Colyford will cause issues and rivalries between the two villages. Disharmony & division.	5
Colyford is too small to have its own parish council.	5
How has the boundary been decided? More info needed.	5
Sufficient level of bureaucracy already exist / don't need more.	5
No strong opinion for or against proposal.	4
Parking needs sorting out / traffic problems / Colyton Grammar bus problems.	4
Makes sense to have separate parish council.	3
Colyford has grown and now is the right time to have own administration.	3

If Colyford have PC then council tax for Colyton should be reduced / not an increase in Council Tax.	3
Colyford already have say, so no need to have separate council.	3
May reduce money for parishes which needs more resources as it is bigger / make it less effective.	3
If the separate then parishes should have proportionate councillors.	3
Views of Colyford Village Resident Association should be given greatest weight / for Colyford residence to decide.	3

Appendix 1

Non-questionnaire responses summarised:

1. Response from the Colyford Burgesses

The Burgesses maintain that strong tradition and ceremonial role with a variety of social events throughout the year, especially the Colyford Goose Fayre in September. Additionally, the Burgesses engage with the community and use local fund raising to support the village and also retain a reserve fund that can be used for emergency purposes, and to cover the costs of Colyford Common within the Wetlands, and the three Village gateways owned by the Burgesses.

The Burgesses look forward to the EDDC draft proposal and further consultation. At Stage 3, the Burgesses will be able to consider how to transfer their "de facto" role in the community to the proposed governance and also to retain their important ceremonial and historic role in support of the Ancient Borough of Colyford.

2. Colyton Grammar School

Our Board of Trustees is keen to build a robust relationship with our local Colyford community. Currently, we have started a fresh dialogue with the Colyford Village Resident's Association, who have shown a clear understanding of the issue with the transport of pupils to CGS and the congestion that cars, coaches and buses bring to the local roads. Both sides have a clear understanding of the associated risks to residents and pupils alike that this causes. We are determined to find a solution with their support and advice

Our Board believes that the opportunity of local governance through a Colyford Village Council (CVC) would be of great benefit towards building on this relationship. Not only would a CVC provide a local focus of contact with local councilors to discuss CGS activities but we could aim to build a fresh rapport where the CGS pupils could make a contribution to the community. This year, for example, we offered our CGS brass band to play at the Colyford Goose Fayre in September, and this could lead to other support with the Colyford Mayoral Ceremonies which are held throughout the year.

We envisage therefore that a new local CVC would be a most helpful and mutually supportive opportunity for both CGS and the Colyford Community. Would you please consider our submission to the EDDC Stage 1 Consultation as a positive example of where local governance would significantly improve community engagement and assist in developing a solution for the transport challenge that has faced both the school and residents for so many years.

3. Colyton Parish Council

Our two communities have been represented by one Parish Council since 1894. There are no limits on the number of Colyford residents that can be elected to the Parish Council, so it is possible for Colyford to have a majority of Councillors. However, this has never been a real issue as the Parish Council has always treated Colyford matters in the same way as those from Colyton and all Councillors are treated equally.

As Colyford has grown the main issues that have become important are:

- Traffic on the A3052. The Parish Council has for years been pressing Devon County Council Highways for traffic calming measures. Recently the CPC voted for £10,000 of Parish Council funds to be spent purchasing a Speed Camera, only for the Police to reject this proposal.
- Buses for the Grammar School. The CPC have been in ongoing talks with the Grammar School and bus operators to alleviate this problem. Some improvements have been made, but the CPC is still urging the County Council to allocate money to remove the buses from the road.
- Planning. Colyford is surrounded by Green Wedges between Seaton and Colyton. These prevent the village merging into bigger settlements. In the past, when these have been threatened, the CPC have fought hard to retain them. Just recently the Colyton Neighbourhood Plan has been accepted by the East Devon District Council, one of the main features is the preservation of the Green Wedges.

The Neighbourhood Plan is a good example of the two communities working together. It took nearly six years to complete and was supported by an overwhelming majority of Colyton and Colyford residents during the public consultations.

The proposed new boundary between Colyford and Colyton is based on an arbitrary line originally proposed to indicate properties the Mayor of Colyford would have responsibility for. It was never intended to be a line dividing two parishes. Furthermore, the proposed boundary map of Colyford would alienate a good many residents who strongly identify as Colytonian and includes property owned by Colyton Parish Council, the revenue from which is used towards maintaining the cemetery.

Finally, Finances. Two Parish Councils will mean two clerks, two offices, two sets of meetings and duplications of other tasks and therefore increased costs and less money to spend on maintaining either of the two communities.

The CPC is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Cemetery, allotments, playing fields, three play parks, including the one in Colyford, and green spaces around the Parish, they also have a mowing contract which includes biannual cuts of roadside verges.

The Parish also has a network of 43 public footpaths and 7 bridleways cared for and maintained by the Parish Council. They can be used and enjoyed by ALL residents of the Parish.

If Colyford are to go independent, the sport and play facilities for the young people will not be able to be maintained to the high standards that they are now and Colyford residents would not have the same priority to the allotments that they currently enjoy. Cemetery fees for people living outside of the Colyton Parish are double and this would be the case for Colyford residents.

The opinion of the Colyton Parish Council is that the two communities are far stronger together as one Parish Council than they would be apart as two.

4. Colyford Village Residents' Association

We believe in our desire to self-govern and form a proposed new Colyford Village Council (CVC) that is pivotal for the future of our community. We are determined and enthusiastic to deliver a modern, efficient and effective council instilled with fresh values such as leadership, honesty, openness, selflessness and trust to restore democracy and deliver

local benefits for the community. We have undertaken diligent research, and we have spoken to a variety of organisations such as DALC, DCRF, Devon AONB, the Colyton Grammar School along with other Parish Councils, County and District councillors to prepare well for the challenging task ahead to empower our proposed village council.

The submission shows our intent and provides details of the perceived benefits, current legacy issues, risks, and how to realise our Blueprint vision with the current Steering Group, and a proposed Stakeholder Group in Stage 3 of the CGR. Two enclosures attached are: our Blueprint vision for the proposed CVC and a four year Financial Plan starting in FY23/24. We envisage the Financial Plan is a key enabler to launch the CVC and a starting point for CVRA financial discussion with your team should the positive decision be approved for a self-governance in December 2022.