

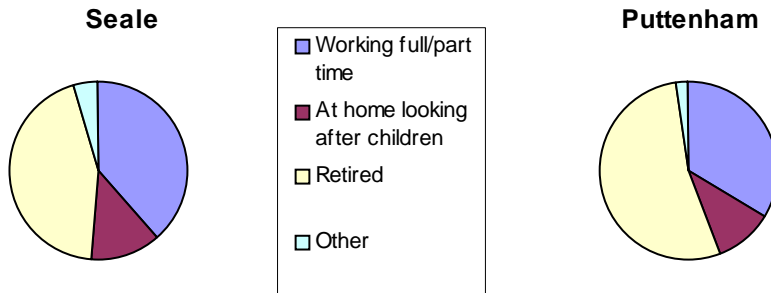
# Parish Survey 2007

At the end of January a questionnaire was delivered to households in Puttenham, Seale and Sands. The intent was to ascertain people's attitudes to the churches in the villages, and to find out about church attendance practices and what might be done differently to meet people's wishes. We also sought views on what more the church should be doing in the community. Households in Wanborough were not included in the survey because the population of the village itself is small, and it would not have been possible to draw valid conclusions from a small number of responses.

The number of returns exceeded what is generally expected for surveys of this kind. Of 445 questionnaires sent out in Seale (shorthand for Seale & Sands), 137 were returned (31%). In Puttenham, 86 were returned from 205 sent out (42%).

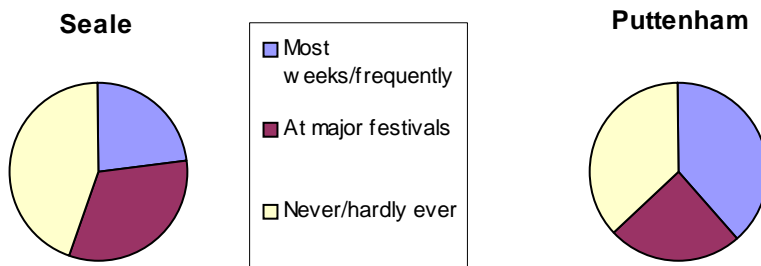
## Occupation

Most respondents are retired, 44% in Seale and 53% in Puttenham. A higher proportion of respondents in Seale than in Puttenham are working full or part time, and relatively few stated they were at home looking after children.



## Frequency of attendance

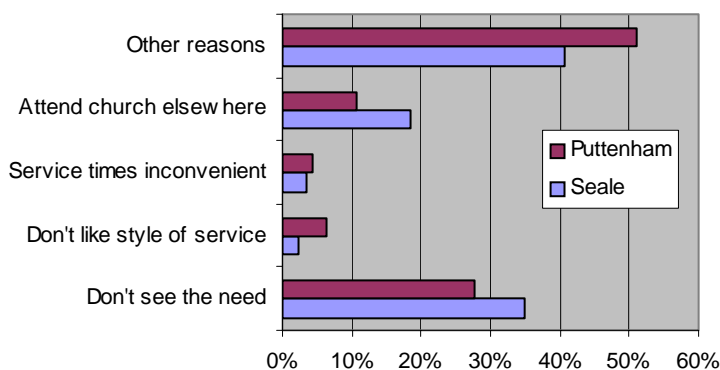
Of the Puttenham respondents, 38% attend church in the parish most weeks or frequently. This is a significantly higher proportion than in Seale where the corresponding figure is 23%. Conversely, a higher proportion of respondents in Seale attend only at major festivals or do not attend at all, but the differences in relation to Puttenham are not statistically significant.



## Reasons for infrequent attendance

Of those that attend infrequently or never, few gave the reason as being dislike of the style of service or the times of the services. 19% of them in Seale and 11% in Puttenham stated that they attended a church elsewhere, whilst some 30% don't see the need.

Reasons for infrequent attendance



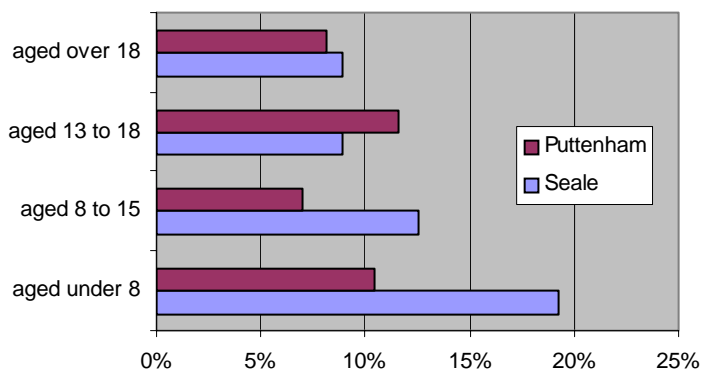
\* Statistically significant at the 95% confidence level

in each village said they did not feel the need to attend church more frequently. 50% in Seale and 40% in Puttenham gave reasons in the 'other' category for their infrequent or non-attendance. The most commonly expressed reasons were agnosticism/atheism and family/other commitments. Other reasons included doctrinal reasons, work commitments on Sundays, previous adverse experience, poor health, and laziness.

## Respondents with children living at home

One third of respondents in both Seale and Puttenham had one or more children living at home. In Seale, almost 20% of respondents had one or more children under the age of 8 years; the proportion of respondents having children in the older age groups tails off. This finding is in contrast to Puttenham where families with children in the 13-18 age group outnumbered families with children in the youngest age group. There are more children in Seale than in Puttenham, both in absolute terms and relative to the number of respondents.

**Respondents with children living at home**

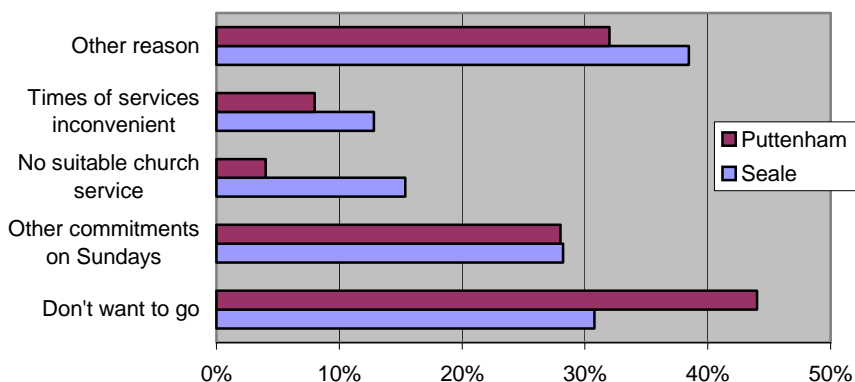


Of the respondents with children living at home, only 13% of those in Seale stated they had a child that attended church regularly, and just 7% in Puttenham.

## Reasons for non-attendance of children at church

Of the families who gave reasons why their children did not attend church regularly, 44% of the Puttenham population and 31% of the Seale population said the reason was that their children did not want to go. 'Other commitments' was the reason given by over a quarter in both Seale and Puttenham. The service times and the suitability of services were not important factors.

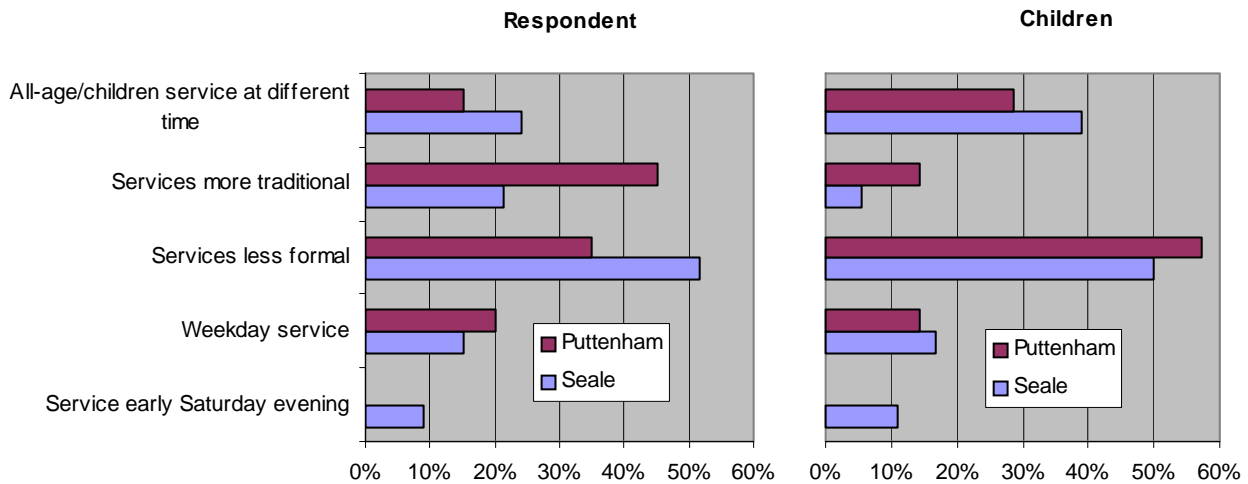
**Reason for non-attendance of children**



## Factors that might lead to more frequent attendance

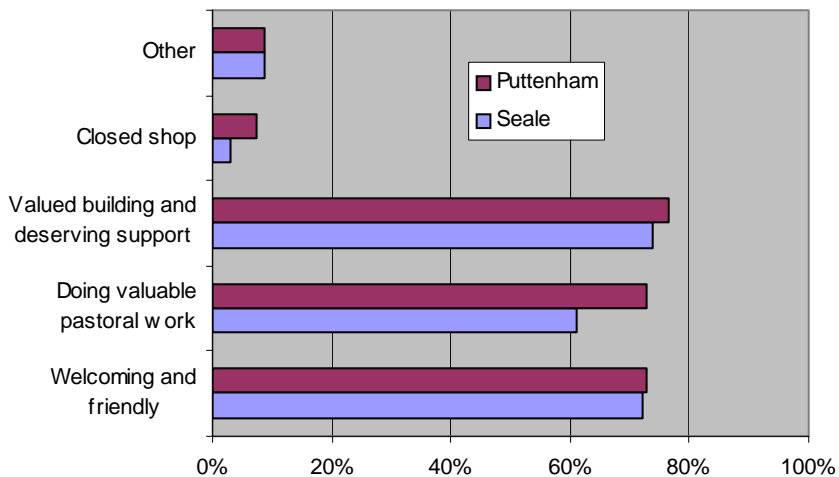
Few respondents completed the questions that asked about the factors that might lead them to attend more frequently, and even fewer about factors that might change children's attendance.

In both Seale and Puttenham, the replies suggest that more children might attend if the services were less formal (see charts on next page). But the responses also suggest that a consequence of that might be that some adults in Puttenham are turned off. There was also a suggestion that more children might attend if the All Age Worship/Children Service were at a different time. There was little appetite for a service early Saturday evening.



## How the church is seen

The large majority in both Seale and Puttenham found that the churches were welcoming and friendly, that they do valuable pastoral work, and that the buildings are valued and deserving of support. Few found them to be 'closed shops'. 'Other' included such comments as "no opinion".



## What respondents would like to see the church doing more of in the community

There were 53 written comments from Puttenham respondents and 80 from Seale. They covered a wide range of topics; many were in the nature of remarks about how things were done now rather than what more the church might do in the community in future. No single topic was mentioned by a large number of respondents.

The suggestions made by more than one respondent were (ranked by number of proposers):

- Start a Sunday School
- Have evening meetings in churches with a talk by an inspirational speaker or with two speakers with opposing outlooks in the form of a debate
- Meeting points for the elderly and visits to the sick and lonely
- Mid-week service for mothers and toddlers
- Weekday club for the young
- More social activities in the churches, eg musical evenings (modern style)
- Events for children at festivals, eg egg and spoon race at Easter
- Village arts and crafts fair
- Midweek service after school hours
- Create 'space' in the churches for the young.