

Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council

PARISH PLAN STEERING GROUP

PROJECT UPDATE

In accordance with the requirements of the DEFRA parish plan grant awarded to Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council in February 2007.

Land Use Questionnaire

By early July as many questionnaires as possible had been collected in by patchworkers and delivered to the Steering Group. Between 550 to 600 valid, completed questionnaires were returned and nearly 100 youth questionnaires. Imperial College and University of Kent students resident in Wye were not consulted at this stage as most of them had gone down before the survey started. The need to a separate survey has been discussed with the Campus Dean. The next phase of the process, discussed at meetings of the Parish Plan Steering Group on 25 June and 30 July, was seen to comprise

- a) Getting all the data from the questionnaires transferred to the database specially designed by a local IT specialist who has recently joined the Steering Group.
- b) Verifying the data entry.
- c) Up-dating the parish on progress.
- d) Analysing the data and producing reports.

About thirty Patchworkers and members of the Steering Group enjoyed a 'thank-you' celebration on the evening of 9 July at the home of Ian Coulson, the Chairman of the Steering Group. The occasion provided an opportunity for people who hitherto had not met, to do so and to share their experiences and ideas. The cost of the event was borne by members of the Steering Group. At the close of the evening members of the Steering Group discussed how best to organise data entry onto its database. Despite attempts, it had not been possible to find volunteers to undertake a week of data entry work within the very short timeframe available. Estimates from two data processing businesses were compared and the cheaper estimate (of 50p per questionnaire, compared to £2.50) was considered very reasonable. It was also favoured because the business in question is part-run by a local Wye resident. It was agreed that this option should be taken up. The Parish Council ratified the necessary expenditure from Parish Plan funds at its meeting on 19 July 2007.

When the Parish Plan Steering Group met again at the end of July, most of the data from the questionnaires had been loaded into the database. It was agreed that independent verification of the data entry is important, to be absolutely sure of the accuracy of the results. This would involve verifying a random sample of 10% of the questionnaires (c.60) so that any data entry errors can be noted. This was calculated as representing c.3 hours' work. The Parish Council's Internal Auditor has agreed to undertake the work involved on 22 August and produce a statement on the quality of the data entry.

At its meeting on 30 July the Steering Group's IT specialist produced some sample reports and agreed to produce reports for all the closed questions on the questionnaire during the following week. For the open/text responses another Steering Group member offered to record all the key points in Excel. Plans have not yet been made as to how to deal with the young people's questionnaires, but this is less time critical, as this second survey does not relate directly to the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD.

Keeping the parish informed of progress is considered very important and since 30 July arrangements have been made for an up-date to be published in the September issue of the Parish Magazine. A 360 word update was posted on www.wyeweb.org on 8 August and also published in the Kentish Express newspaper on 9 August. (The Steering Group promoted the new web address in the covering letter to each resident which it issued with the questionnaire).

It is intended that a progress report and summary of the questionnaire results will be distributed in due course to every household in the parish. A comprehensive report of the results of the questionnaire survey, and a validation event to confirm the findings is being planned for September and will be discussed by the Steering Group at its next meeting on 20 August. The consultation exercise (on the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD) that Ashford Borough Council (ABC) originally suggested would be held in July has now been delayed to September and may even slip further. The Parish Plan Steering Group is advising the Parish Council on how the results of the land-use survey can be fed into ABC's consultation process and how that process can be refined to suit the particular needs of Wye.