

Residents' questionnaire

Analysis of comments on a vision for the neighbourhood plan area

October 2014



Introduction

The following summarises the results of the responses to the household survey questionnaire concerning the identification of a “vision” for the future of the Neighbourhood Plan area. These are collated under a series of broad headings, and the figures in parenthesis refer to the total number of respondents mentioning each category. The “Others” category includes a list of more discrete issues which could not readily be included in the main categories, and which in each case received fewer than five mentions.

Of the 500 plus forms returned 200 contained an entry relating to a future vision for the area and the following analysis relates to these. The project management team will use these views to draw up its final proposed vision statement.

Managing/reducing traffic

Securing a reduction in through traffic. **(38)**

Achieving more effective management of traffic in order to improve safety and reduce related environmental and amenity consequences through introducing a variety of calming measures such as enhancing pedestrian priority, enforcing speed limits, introducing shared surfaces and quiet lanes, restricting on street parking etc. **(49)**

Restricting HGV's through the village. **(8)**

Relieving traffic congestion by providing a by-pass and or closing Beacon Road to through traffic. **(21)**

A number however were opposed to closing Beacon Road. **(5)**

Car parking

Providing additional car parking facilities for residents and visitors to relieve existing difficulties and ensure adequate provision for the future. **(30)**

Public transport

Improve public transport links and facilities. **(16)**

Footpaths, bridleways and cycling

Protect and enhance existing footpaths and bridleways including improving provision for walkers and cyclists such as providing pedestrian links from the bottom of the Beacon to Ditchling and a cycle path to Keymer. **(21)**

Natural environment

Protect the countryside and landscape generally especially in the National Park, and preserve the rural tranquillity of the area. **(20)**

Protect woodland and wildlife habitats and other ecological assets. **(5)**

Protect valuable open spaces in villages plus open countryside providing separation from adjoining settlements (eg between Ditchling and Keymer) in order to maintain the distinct character of the village. **(29)**

Preserve the downland rural character of the area and its villages. **(47)**

History and conservation

Conserve the historic character and building assets of the area's villages. **(28)**

Housing and growth

Ensuring that additional housing growth is modest in scale and accommodated mainly on brownfield and infill sites with no large estates. Additional provision should be focussed at Ditchling preferably avoiding greenfield sites, with only limited infill at Streat and Westmeston. Development should be of a form which blends with the existing character of the area and is of small scale and well designed. **(24)**

Providing more affordable housing, smaller dwellings and housing for young families. **(20)**

Catering for tourists and visitors

The Neighbourhood Plan should take advantage of the opportunity provided by the area's location in the National Park to promote tourism and provide appropriate facilities to cater for visitors. The impact of this however, including the implications for traffic and parking should be carefully and sensitively managed. **(32)**

Role of Ditchling

Ditchling's role as a service centre should be maintained and enhanced with provision being made for more local shops and services leading to the creation of a more vibrant village centre. **(25)**

Community

Ditchling and the area generally should sustain a thriving, caring, cohesive and balanced community catering for all ages and backgrounds, and continue to foster a strong and friendly community spirit and atmosphere. **(44)**

Business

Provide for a range of employment opportunities appropriate to the area including footprint-lite smaller businesses and artisan businesses. **(7)**

Improve broadband connectivity to enhance business activity. **(5)**

Recreation facilities

Ensure adequate recreational provision to cater of the area's needs and all age groups, coupled with more intensive use of and further investment in the Ditchling recreation ground. **(8)**

Others

The following comments concern specific issues and practical suggestions which individuals feel need to be addressed. Many are not covered by the remit of the neighbourhood plan (which is largely about policies rather than specifics) but are nevertheless valuable and will be passed on to the relevant authorities.

Restrict new or extended use for commercial purposes for property on Streat Lane and limiting this to cottage industry type facilities.

Restrict the further inappropriate expansion of Plumpton College.

Resist sale of the village hall in Streat.

Number of cyclists in the area is too high and exacerbates traffic problems.

Water drains in the area are not adequately maintained.

Additional housing should be accommodated in a new village.

Infill development should be resisted as it is spoiling the rural character of Ditchling.

Move the Nursery in East End lane to the recreation ground.

Ditchling should aim to be a "best kept" village.

Provide more rubbish and dog litter bins.

Oppose any more housing in the National Park or Ditchling.

Ditchling does not need new development.

Provide more Community orchard type schemes.

Use Ditchling Nurseries as a housing development site.

Provide a bus station.

Encourage provision of a farmers market.

Ensure better maintenance of verges, ditches, footpaths, hedges and roads.

New housing should be provided in surrounding towns with rail stations.

Improve local options for pre school and primary school.

Encourage a thriving craft community.

Provide only for low impact sensitive development including re use of buildings.

Oppose low cost housing.

Protect agricultural communities interests and encourage traditional farming practice.

Provide only for very restricted growth in Streat and Westmeston.

Keep Ditchling as it is with no change.

Population of Ditchling should increase by 200-300 people.

Maintain and update local facilities and amenities generally.

Provide better street lighting in Ditchling.

Support Ditchling's artistic heritage.