

Notes of the Open Village Plan (Business) Meeting 19th July 2011

The meeting was held at 8pm in The Green Man, Toppesfield. Present: Mary-Ann Stevenson, Ros Castle(part), Maureen Dimmock, Richard Evers, Ray Papworth, Dave Bagnall, Lynn Collard, Alan Collard, Steve Amerio, Malcolm Braithwaite (Chairman)

1. **Apologies** had been received from Claire Condie, Sheila Braithwaite, Jean Bagnall, Nick Hasler, Trisha Roberts, David Oxnam, Molly Stevenson
2. The **minutes of the last meeting** (11th May 2011) were agreed.
3. **Matters arising**
 - a) Progress versus the agreed timeline is on track to date.
 - b) Letter to Braintree District Council: RE has received a response from Richard Poulson and Richard Last from BDC identifying a contact in ECC, Angela Balcombe, responsible for managing the Parish Plan funding. RE will contact via e-mail to alert ECC to our project.
4. **The Questionnaire**

Collection of completed questionnaires was considered to have been very successful with all those received to date delivered at the meeting. Specific details are listed on the attached table on the level of returns, with some 203 being delivered and 152 returned, i.e. a yield of approx. 75%. This return was considered more than adequate for “democratic purposes” and therefore no real need to chase returns much harder. Colleagues reported varying degrees of enthusiasm but generally the questionnaires were well received and enthusiastically completed. Some refusals were encountered and some notable residents had yet to fill in their questionnaires. It was decided to pursue particular, significant residents but close collection by Sunday 24th July. MB/RP will collate and despatch to Warwick Network for analysis. Raw data will be available 3-5 weeks after Warwick receive the forms. It was agreed that Warwick should be asked (MB) to separate the Toppesfield and the Gainsford End results since it is expected that the views will be very different, and then to amalgamate them in a Parish total to get an overview.
5. **Stakeholder engagement.** The importance of buy-in from community interest groups was again emphasised and the process is on-going. School (further contact necessary in new school year – LC/NH to arrange), pre-school, church, Village Hall, Local transport (Hedingham Bus Company awaiting further contact after results are obtained), local business (e.g. Village shop), Farming community, etc. contacted and seeking written ‘evidence’ by September on their development wishes/plans.
6. **Next Steps** – after some discussion it was agreed to organise an open Village meeting in the Village Hall on Thursday 13th October to reveal the raw data. It was suggested that some form of enticement, e.g. cheese & wine, might be appropriate to encourage attendance. From the meeting it would be intended to re-form the sub-groups to develop action plans for implementation by the Parish Council. Alan Collard stated that he now has a conflict of interest since becoming a member of the Parish Council, and therefore he will decline to lead a sub-group, but will be available for ‘advice’. The VP project was initiated, and therefore formally owned, by the Parish Council. The VANTAGE group was formed as an independent body of residents to develop the Village Plan; has a formal written agreement with the PC; is funded by RCCE via the PC; and VANTAGE must be dissolved after the Village Plan is published. The Parish Council cannot be forced to implement the action plans, but with the democratic backing that the questionnaire return will bring, they could be ‘encouraged’ by a residents’ group so to do. Clearly, VANTAGE might metamorphose into such a “residents’ interest group”.

- 7 Our membership of **RCCE** Community-Led Planning Network gives us access to advice and training courses organised by RCCE. Several relevant courses have been notified to us and are widely advertised on RCCE's website and their newsletter "Oyster". MB will attempt to get copies of Oyster for circulation to the group members.
- 8 **Funding** – initial £400 grant from RCCE has been spent on preparation and printing of the questionnaire, and a further £2000 for analysis and printing final plan has been successfully obtained via RCCE and cheque was sent to Andrew Bull on 4th July (MB to check receipt). Other potential sources of funding via ECC were noted.
- 9 **Any Other Business** – RP raised the issue of the Parish website being out-of-date, and therefore not useful. This had been raised with the Parish Council and is being addressed.
- 10 The next meeting will be on Thursday 29th September at 8pm in The Village Hall, and will focus on the raw data results and preparation for the 13th October meeting. (MB to book Village Hall). Please diarise these two dates.

Questionnaire Returns List

Location	Distributor/Collector	Ratio of collections:distributions	Percentage Yield
Camoise Close	Clare Condie	11:14	78.5
The Causeway / Yeldham Road	Alan & Lynn Collard	28:38 (4 houses unoccupied)	73.7
The Street	Nick Hasler	8:12	75
Church Lane/ Dordell Court	Richard Evers	17:25	68
	Richard Evers	3:8	37.5
Park Lane	Roz Castle	17:21	81
Carters Hill/Cust Hall/Hoses /Froyz/Sainsbury Cottages	Maureen Dimmock	3:6	50
Stambourne Road	David Oxnam	19:21	90.5
Gainsford End Road/ Harrow Hill	Mary-Ann Stevenson	8:13	61.5
Gainsford End	Sheila Braithwaite/Trisha Roberts	31:34	91.2
Grass Green/RidgewellRoad/ Gunces Farm	David Bagnall	6:9	66.7
Various external interested parties	Malcolm Braithwaite	1:2	50
Totals		152:203	74.9