

OPEN HOUSE REPORT

12-3pm, 29 January 2017, West Horsley Village Hall

Introduction

WHNP's Open House was organised as part of the Steering Group's ongoing programme of engagement with the West Horsley community.



The event was part of an informal consultation on the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Its focus was the 15 policies (listed below) within the Draft Plan. These, along with all supporting documentation, were put on display in the Village Hall with members of the Steering Group on hand to answer any questions. Copies of the full Draft Plan and draft supporting Documentation were available.

Once again the Open House took the format of a 'drop-in' hosted by members of

the WHNP Steering Group and members of the Parish Council. It was attended by 200-250 people, including residents, local business owners and Borough Councillors.



Set up and ready to go

The main objectives of the Open House were to:

- Present the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan to the community and to encourage feedback;
- Quantify the level of support for the 15 policies within the Draft Plan;
- Provide residents with the opportunity to comment on the Draft Plan in a structured manner;
- Continue to expand the WHNP database of residents requesting to receive information about WHNP via email;
- Offer a further update on the actions being taken by WHPC in response to GBC's Local Plan;
- Continue to clarify exactly what a Neighbourhood Plan can do for West Horsley, and what it can and can't achieve in relation to the GBC Local Plan.

Q&A

Two Q&A Sessions, hosted by the WHNPSG chairman and the WHPC chairman, were held in the Cedar Room at 13.30pm and 2pm. They were very well attended and some interesting questions, were raised and answered.



Standing room only at the Q&A

The Feedback Survey

Open House attendees were asked to complete a feedback survey. The survey followed the simple pattern of asking "Do you support this policy intended to..." Yes/No? followed by an invitation to leave comments on the policy.

A 'tea room' was set up in the hall to facilitate the completion of the survey and to enable people to take time to review the full version of the Draft Plan and supporting documents. This proved very popular (as did the homemade cakes) and 83 completed surveys were returned during the event. A further 44 residents completed the survey online using a link via our website. 295 individual comments were received and each comment has now been considered by the Steering Group and some changes have been made to the Draft Plan as a direct result.



An Informal Community Consultation on the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan - January 2017

Thank you for participating in this survey, the purposes of which are to find out if you agree with the policies in our Draft Plan, to identify any issues or concerns you may have and to collect tangible evidence of our engagement with the community.

The community's support for the proposed policies, as demonstrated by the completed surveys, was overwhelming:

WH1	Design Management in the Conservation Area	95% support
WH2	Design Management in the Village Settlement	90% support
WH3	Design Management with Rural Areas	93% support
WH4	Housing Mix	87% support
WH5	Rural Exception Housing	88% support
WH6	Community Facilities	98% support
WH7	Education Provision	97% support
WH8	Local Buildings of Historic Interest	99% support
WH9	West Horsley Place	94% support
WH10	Employment	97% support
WH11	Local Green Spaces	97% support
WH12	Green and Blue Infrastructure	97% support
WH13	Sustainable Urban Drainage	98% support
WH14	Biodiversity	97% support
WH15	Dark Skies	96% support

Website

Two weeks prior to the Open House the Draft Plan and all supporting documents were uploaded to the WHNPSG website along with a link to the survey. This gave residents the opportunity to examine the documents before attending the event. The online survey remained live for one week after the Open House.

Publicity

The Steering Group continues to use many methods to communicate with the community. Publicity for the Open House included:

- Articles were placed in the St Mary's Church Magazine and the Horsley Countryside Preservation Society's Newsletter
- A4 and A5 Open House posters were displayed around the Horsleys on noticeboards, in shop windows and on tables in cafes;
- An invitation inviting residents to the Open House was hand delivered to every house in West Horsley;
- Activity on Twitter, Facebook and Streetlife was increased for a sustained period prior to the Open House and for a week afterwards to maximize the number of responses to the survey;
- The WHNPSG website was set up to inform visitors about the Open House, to provide access to all the draft documents and to encourage participation in the survey;
- Invitations to the Open House were sent to the existing WHNP email database.



The event was very well attended

Clarity on Neighbourhood Planning

It was evident that there is still a need to differentiate between what a Neighbourhood Plan can do for the village and what it can't do in terms of fighting Guildford Borough's Local Plan. The Q&A Sessions were invaluable in this respect, especially as Charles Hope, the chairman of West Horsley Parish Council, was able to explain the Parish Council's role in this 'fight' and to explain what action the PC is taking at present.

Next Steps

Having carefully considered all the comments, the Steering Group is now preparing a Draft Pre-Submission Plan. This next Draft Plan will go to Guildford Borough Council for an informal health check and once the Council's recommendations have been considered a Pre-Submission Plan will be finalised.

A statutory Community Consultation on the Pre-Submission Plan will be arranged by the Steering Group and will last for at least six weeks. At the time of writing we anticipate this taking place in April/May 2017. Further details will be announced shortly.

Summary

A very successful event resulting in evidence of strong support for our policies and some very worthy comments. We will continue to communicate with the community and to make sure that everyone who wishes to, has the opportunity to participate in the next community consultation.

To join our mailing list please go to www.westhorsleyneighbourhoodplan.org .