



LINDFIELD VILLAGE



Action Plan 2006

PEOPLE AND CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Local democracy provides the opportunity for all of us to influence the decisions of our councillors and decision-makers at grass roots level. This means that we can participate actively in this process, sharing ideas and working together for the good of the whole community.

A Parish Action Plan gives everyone this opportunity. A team of local volunteers has collected and distilled these views into a coherent set of proposals that have been offered to the community for review. The output from this process has resulted in a succinct Action Plan as a basis for future planning and implementation by Councillors and community leaders at all levels.

The village of Lindfield has a long history dating back to at least 765AD. It has a multiplicity of attractive, listed buildings, a tree-lined high street, a common and village pond. But it is also a thriving, contemporary community with shops, businesses, churches, pubs and community groups serving a population of some 6,800 people of all ages.

The Village is served by two Parish Councils – Lindfield and Lindfield Rural (which also covers Scaynes Hill and a wide hinterland to the north and east of the village). It lies within the areas of the Mid Sussex District Council and the West Sussex County Council.

We are told that *“The Government wants local communities to take more control of their lives, to say what they want doing in their own neighbourhoods and to engage with other powers to get it done.”*

According to the Rural White Paper 2000 the purpose of a Village Plan is to: *“..set out a vision of what is important, how new development can best be fitted in, the design and quality standards it should meet, how to preserve valued local features, which the community needs to safeguard for the future”*.

Plans should: *“identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved”*

At the instigation of the Lindfield Parish Council, supported by the Lindfield Rural Parish Council, initial public meetings took place on February 12 & May 17 in 2005. The Lindfield Village Plan Steering Committee first met on July 7 and the five Working Groups were set up in the summer.

In October 2005 every household in Lindfield received a Village Plan questionnaire, distributed through “Lindfield Times”, seeking answers to 44 questions. Residents were invited to share their views and visions for the future of the village. 516 completed questionnaires were returned, something like a 20% return.

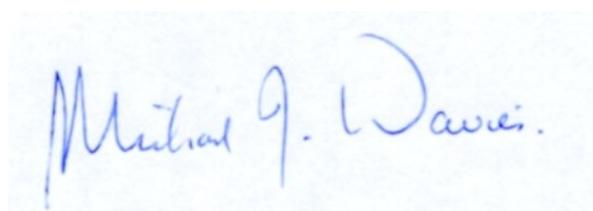
On Nov 5, 2005 a major exhibition was held to display the initial work of the Steering Committee and five Working Groups on:

- Facilities & Amenities
- Housing & Environment
- Safety & Security (in association with the Local Action Team)
- Sport & Leisure
- Traffic & Transport

Early in 2006 the results of the consultations and the responses to the questionnaire were studied by the Working Groups, some Actions were drafted and presented at a second exhibition on April 1 and the Village Plan was then finalised in the form you now have it.

The task of the Steering Committee and Working Groups has been to listen to the people of Lindfield and then to set out, in the form of this Village Plan, the wishes, visions and hopes expressed for the future of our community. This task is now complete and the Plan will be placed in the hands of the local government authorities, relevant groups and organisations and indeed the community as a whole. We all hope this will lead on to effective action to realise the dreams and implement the proposals.

Lindfield has had its say. The ball is now in the court of those with the power to take action. We shall all be watching carefully!



Chairman, Lindfield Village Plan Steering Committee

20th April 2006

Definition of Priorities

Immediate - Things already in hand or which can be implemented immediately [e.g. for those actions that do not have any or have very limited cost implications or which need urgent action].

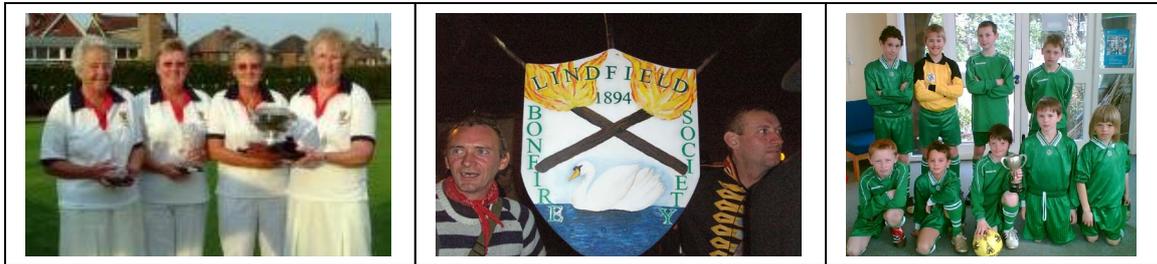
Ongoing - Some proposals are for a single, one-off action. Others will be constant or be repeated regularly and these are designated "ongoing".

Future - Medium or longer-term objectives where implementation depends on detailed research and planning and the availability of funding.



COMMUNICATIONS

A common theme arising from the process has been the need to improve the availability of information about the village of Lindfield and the activities in the village.



ACTION 1: TO INCREASE PROMOTION OF EVENTS & ACTIVITIES IN THE VILLAGE

- Review the provision and use of notice boards.
- Encourage clubs and societies to make use of village publications such as Lindfield Times, Parish Council Newsletters, Lindfield Preservation Society circulars and church publications to promote events and recruit members.
- Encourage greater use of the Parish Office as a source of information.
- Keep websites up to date.

Who:

- Societies & organisers of events.
- Parish Councils.
- Webmasters & publishers of newsletters.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

In order to retain a thriving village, basic facilities and attractions are essential. The questionnaire responses indicate that for the majority of the inhabitants the provision of service shops, a post office, sufficient free car parking for shoppers and visitors, public toilets, adequate meeting places for functions, clubs and societies and information about the village and events are all important.



ACTION 1: TO PRESERVE A WIDE RANGE OF SHOPS

- Identify further adequate free parking.
- Encourage residents to use village shops.
- Publicise services and facilities available from existing businesses in village publications.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council and Mid Sussex District Council
- Local business organisations.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing

ACTION 2: TO PROVIDE BETTER PUBLIC TOILET FACILITIES

- Retain and improve facilities in Denmans Lane.
- Reinstate toilet facilities in the area of the common.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council and Mid Sussex District Council

Priority:

- Denmans Lane – Immediate & ongoing
- Common – Future.



ACTION 3: TO INCREASE PROVISION OF SUITABLE SPACE FOR MEETINGS ETC. TO KEEP PACE WITH THE GROWTH IN VILLAGE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.



- Extend King Edward Hall facilities
- Seek additional accommodation

Who:

- King Edward Hall Management Committee
- Lindfield Parish Council

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.

ACTION 4: TO ENCOURAGE VISITORS TO EXPLORE THE WHOLE VILLAGE

- Display in the High Street area a village map showing pictorially places of interest.
- Continually updating the Lindfield Online website
- Make existing promotional leaflets available in hotels and places of interest outside Lindfield.

Who:

- Parish Councils.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.



ACTION 5: TO RETAIN AND INCREASE POST OFFICE FACILITIES IN THE VILLAGE

- Publicise services currently available.
- Liaise with Post Office for re-establishment of Post Office facilities away from village centre.

Who:

- The Post Office
- Post Office Rescue Campaign.
- Lindfield Parish Council and Mid Sussex District Council.

Priority:

- High Street Post Office – Immediate & ongoing,
- Re-establishment of additional Post Office – future.



ACTION 6: TO ENCOURAGE THE EXPANSION OF MEDICAL FACILITIES IN THE CENTRE OF VILLAGE.

- Support the present Practice
- Regularly monitor the situation.

Who:

- NHS Primary Care Trust
- Lindfield Parish Council and all relevant political bodies including our local MP.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.

Working Group - *Chairman:* Brian Newcombe, *Members:* Ray Jones, John Roberts, Alison Stevenson, Alison Woodhead, Caroline Young

HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT

Actions 1 to 4 recognise that Lindfield village includes an exceptional collection of architecturally and historically important buildings. High priority is given to their preservation and to the protection of their settings, and the special character of the village by:

- Seeking to apply high standards to the design and layout of all future developments,
- Resisting inappropriate proposals,
- Producing a Village Design Statement, and
- Getting it adopted by the local planning authority.

Actions 5 to 7 seek to maintain and improve those aspects of the village environment, which most affect the quality of life in our community.



ACTION 1: TO PRESERVE HIGH STANDARDS IN ALL VILLAGE BUILDINGS

- Communicate to responsible authorities the importance of protecting our very special historic and architectural heritage.
- Identify, in consultation with their owners, further buildings and structures for Listing.
- Carry out village-wide consultations on major planning proposals affecting the village as a whole.
- Assist the owners and tenants of public buildings in the village to improve access opportunities for the elderly and less able.

Who:

- Parish Councils, Lindfield Preservation Society.
- Those entrusted with the care and maintenance of public buildings.
- English Heritage and the Department of Culture, Media & Sport.
- Mid Sussex District Council Environment Department.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.

ACTION 2: TO PREPARE AND ISSUE A VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

- Draw up the village design statement in accordance with the comprehensive guidelines set out by the Countryside Commission and with the agreement of the Local Planning Authority to inform Local Planning Policies.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council, Lindfield Preservation Society, Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Ongoing & future.

ACTION 3: TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE HOUSING FOR THE VILLAGE

- Press Mid Sussex District Council for high standards of design and construction in sympathy with existing buildings.
- Oppose new housing schemes without the provision of sufficient additional medical facilities and, where appropriate, schools.
- Oppose inappropriate large-scale housing developments.
- Support initiatives to build affordable housing under conditions that ensure long-term affordable prices and rents.
- Support initiatives to build more sheltered and very sheltered housing within easy reach of the village centre on suitable brown-field sites.
- Resist proposals to build low-rise apartments by demolishing existing houses.

Who:

- Parish Councils, Lindfield Preservation Society and others concerned.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.



ACTION 4: TO RAISE STANDARDS IN THE LOCAL PLANNING PROCESS

- Inform Mid Sussex District Council of village opinions about the planning process as seen by applicants and others for both housing developments and trees.
- Make constructive suggestions to the Parish and District Councils about improving the planning process.

Who:

- Parish Councils, Lindfield Preservation Society and others concerned.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.

ACTION 5: TO MAINTAIN LINDFIELD AS A “BEST KEPT VILLAGE”

- Seek Volunteers to address issues raised by the Village Plan Questionnaire in a timely way, including young people interested in forming a band of “Lindfield Conservation Volunteers” similar to the Tree and Pond Wardens.
- Re-enter national and regional competitions to increase local interest and awareness.
- Support village initiatives to reduce air and noise pollution from traffic and other sources such as bonfires and garden machinery.
- Press responsible authorities for improved services to deal with overgrown roadside hedges, collection of dog waste, litter removal and green waste collection.
- Provide assistance to the elderly who need help with green waste removal.

Who:

- Parish Councils, West Sussex County Council, Mid Sussex District Council as appropriate.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing



ACTION 6: TO MAINTAIN ATTRACTIVE TREES & FLOWERS IN THE VILLAGE

- Schedule prominent village trees under the guidance of the Tree Wardens and press for Tree Preservation Orders on trees identified as having public amenity value and at risk.
- Press for pollarding kerbside trees in High Street.
- Give publicity to Parish Council policy for flowers in public spaces.

Who:

- Parish Councils.
- Parish Tree Wardens aided by additional Volunteers.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing



ACTION 7: TO MAINTAIN THE POND AS A HEALTHY AND ATTRACTIVE PUBLIC AMENITY

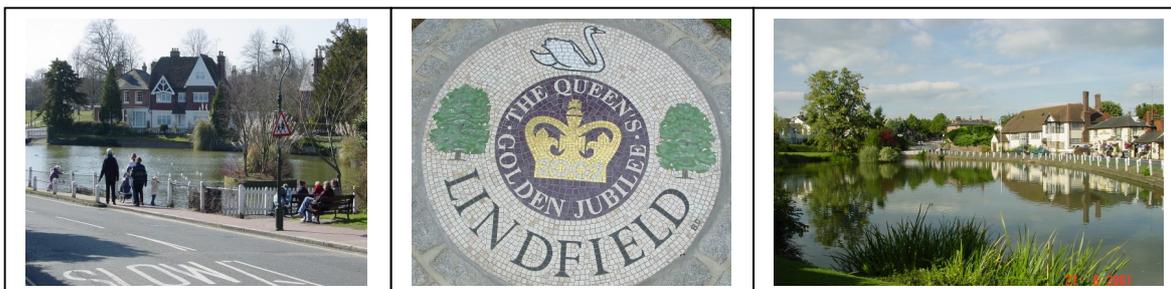
- Work with the Pond Warden to develop and publicise guidelines to improve the health of the pond, including the installation of public notices about feeding wild-fowl and consider a scheme to make suitable bird-feed available.
- Action appropriate issues raised in the Village Plan Questionnaire.
- Develop and implement a better pond aeration system.
- Collaborate with the responsible authorities to protect the long-term physical integrity of the pond, and to ensure periodic pond cleaning and maintenance.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council.
- Parish Pond Wardens aided by additional volunteers.

Priority:

- Ongoing.



Working Group - *Chairman:* Alan Gunson, *Tree Wardens:* Hilary May & Julia Chorley, *Pond Warden:* Richard Powell, *Members:* Heather Burlong, Gill Harrison, John Jesson, Margaret Nicolle, Peter Terry, Janet Wade

SAFETY & SECURITY

Over one half of Lindfield residents feel some measure of insecurity, especially at night. Four Actions are proposed to address the issues resulting from anti-social behaviour, often in combination with under-age drinking, with consequential vandalism. In common with many other similar communities these issues have become a dominating concern in the village. Volunteers, like those engaged in the Lindfield Local Action Team, are working on some of these problems in collaboration with the police. Additional aspects of personal safety are dealt with by other Working Groups such as Traffic and Environment.

ACTION 1: TO REDUCE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

- Enhance communication with the police and other relevant authorities.
- Encourage residents to report all incidents, as Police records only take account of reported incidents.

Who:

- Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Watch and the Local Action Team.
- Voluntary and youth organisations (such as Streetmate).

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

ACTION 2: TO RESTORE AND EXPAND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH THROUGHOUT THE VILLAGE

- Recruit Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators with the aim of achieving total street coverage.
- Improve communication between the Police and all levels of Neighbourhood Watch Volunteers.

Who:

- Neighbourhood Watch Organisation (Regional & Local) in co-operation with the Police.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.



ACTION 3: TO ACHIEVE A UNIFORM STANDARD OF LIGHTING THROUGHOUT THE VILLAGE

- Institute an inspection procedure for all existing public-owned lighting.
- Ensure contractors are systematically advised of malfunctions or when lights are obscured by trees or hedges.
- Upgrade lighting where and when appropriate.
- Install additional lighting where considered necessary and when finance is available.
- Encourage Neighbourhood Watch Street Co-ordinators and residents to report problems, especially where street lighting is obscured.

Who:

- West Sussex County Council and Parish Councils.
- Police and the Lindfield Local Action Team.
- Residents Associations for unadopted roads.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing
- Additional lighting - future.

ACTION 4: SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE OF FOOTPATHS AND PAVEMENTS

- Make regular inspections to identify obstructions on pavements.
- Regularly trim back public and private hedging that impedes access to footpaths and pavements.
- Ensure hedges and trees do not obstruct street lighting and road signage and driver and pedestrian sight lines.
- Report damage and unevenness of pavements and tactile paving that might cause accidents.
- Minimise random car parking on pavements and verges.

Who:

- Parish Councils, West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council and Police as appropriate

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

Working Group - *Chairman:* Margaret Nicolle. *Members:* John Brown, Ian Cooper, Michael Davies, Alan Gunson, David Macmillan, Ken Markham & Steph Sayers.

SPORT & LEISURE



It is clear that young people (particularly those under 26) are not so well provided for compared with all other age groups with regard to both the quality and level of provision. This is even more the case when considering non-sporting facilities. Although a large number of youngsters attend Church-based youth events, few other “youth facilities” are provided in the village. This leads to the conclusion that it is young people who are most in need of additional facilities. There is for some people a transport problem in getting to sport and leisure activities. The final point to make is the need for better and wider availability of information on what facilities are available.

ACTION 1: TO PROVIDE BETTER FACILITIES FOR THE YOUNGER AGE GROUPS

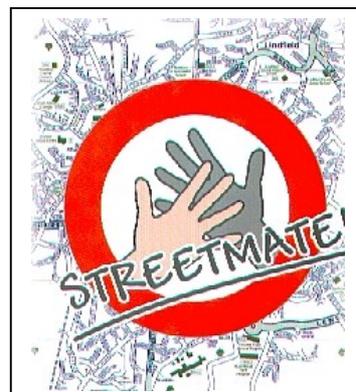
- Provide more meeting places for young people.
- Give increased support to Streetmate.
- Provide for a multi-purpose outdoor all-weather playing surface and skate board area. This could be used for informal practice and training for many sports particularly during adverse weather when grass areas are unsuitable.
- Continue the ongoing discussions with local schools and explore what facilities could be utilised more.
- Approach local clubs to step-up their profiles, particularly to the younger age groups.

Who:

- Parish Councils.
- Local clubs and societies.
- Local Action Team.
- Village youth organisations.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing & future.



ACTION 2: TO GIVE LOCAL YOUTH A VOICE THROUGH A LINDFIELD YOUTH COUNCIL

- Establish a Youth Council with the support of the Lindfield Parish Councils and the involvement of all relevant local youth bodies.

Who:

- Churches.
- Schools.
- Sporting organisations.
- Other bodies engaged in organising youth activities.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

ACTION 3: TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES



- Consider the options for making it easier for people with disabilities to be brought to King Edward Hall by vehicle.
- Promote car-sharing and “lift offer” schemes.
- Promote greater use of Bluebird Transport.

Who:

- King Edward Hall Management Committee.
- Parish Councils, Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council.
- Local clubs and societies.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

Working Group – *Chairman & Secretary:* Ian Cooper, *Members:* Martin Delbridge, Martin Higgins, Christopher Snowling, Valerie Upton, Brian de Ville

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT

Traffic volumes will inevitably increase and we cannot reverse this trend. However action can be taken to manage how traffic flows through our village. The Actions seek to protect and improve the relatively good road safety record of Lindfield against current and future volumes.

Many of the identified traffic concerns stem from a lack of consideration and excessive speed that must be addressed by a range of engineering measures that create awareness and encourage self-enforcement.

The Actions offer an integrated package of improvements that should have tangible benefits for road safety and the environment whilst maintaining the special character of our village. Support is also provided to wider initiatives that encourage a move away from car usage, with a particular focus on public transport.



ACTION 1: TO IMPROVE THE LEWES ROAD/HIGH STREET JUNCTION

- Install a mini-roundabout

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council in conjunction with West Sussex County Council

Priority:

- Future.

ACTION 2: TO IMPLEMENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & CALMING MEASURES

- Introduce measures to reduce speed and to discourage through traffic in Hickmans Lane & Sunte Avenue, with complementary measures in Finches Park Road & By Sunte if necessary.
- Initiate actions to reduce through traffic in Eastern Road, Luxford Road, Newton Road, Dukes Road and Brushes Lane.
- Implement enhanced measures to increase driver awareness of the West Common/Appledore Gardens mini roundabout and investigate speed reduction measures for West Common.
- Introduce a 40mph speed limit on the B2028 northern approach from Hollyrood on Buxshalls Hill to the Lindfield gateway.
- Implement effective calming measures at or inside key gateways into Lindfield.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council.
- West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Future.

ACTION 3: TO REDUCE PEDESTRIAN – VEHICLE CONFLICT

- Build up kerb and pavement at entrance to Lewes Road to discourage vehicle overrun.
- Provide surface treatment and associated measures to protect pedestrian space at eastern end of Hickmans Lane to High Street.
- Provide appropriate pedestrian crossing points, e.g. ‘build-outs’ in central High Street [below Alma Road], lower High Street [near Pondcroft Road], Lewes Road [east of Old School Court and/or near Noahs Ark Lane] and Summerhill Lane [near school].
- Provide pedestrian island refuge in Westlands Road at junction with Gravelye Lane.

Who:

- Parish Councils.
- West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Future.



ACTION 4: TO MONITOR THE PERFORMANCE AND EFFECT OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT.

- Assess and pursue effective local authority parking enforcement.
- Review impact and assess further parking measures and provision required.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council in conjunction with Mid Sussex District Council.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

ACTION 5: TO INVESTIGATE FEASIBILITY OF INTRODUCING A 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT AND HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS IN LINDFIELD

- Investigate the feasibility of introducing a 20 mph zone within the five entry points to Lindfield village, or at least in the vicinity of schools.
- Investigate HGV 'access only' restrictions for Hickmans Lane & Sunte Avenue, Lewes Road and High Street.

Who:

- Lindfield Parish Council in conjunction with West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Future.

ACTION 6: TO REDUCE SCHOOL-RUN TRAFFIC THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND PROMOTION OF SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

- Encourage active parent participation in the delivery of the Lindfield Primary, Blackthorns and Oathall school travel plans together with support for the 'Safer Routes to School' initiative.

Who:

- Lindfield, Blackthorns and Oathall schools.
- Parish Councils.
- West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.



ACTION 7: TO LOBBY BUS OPERATORS TO PROVIDE ENHANCED SERVICES

- Provide route information and timetables at bus stops.
- Seek improved routes and service hours.
- Investigate innovative solutions to increase bus usage.

Who:

- Parish Councils and West Sussex County Council in conjunction with bus operators.

Priority:

- Immediate & ongoing.

ACTION 8: TO ENCOURAGE CYCLING FOR SHORT JOURNEYS



- Provide lockable cycle parking facilities in central Lindfield and on the common.
- Actively support West Sussex and Central Mid Sussex Area transport plans for safe cycle routes and promote the inclusion of the Lindfield area in any network.

Who:

- Parish Councils in conjunction with Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council.

Priority:

- Immediate & future.

Working Group - *Chairman:* Richard Bryant, *Members:* Alan Gunson, Tony Lambert, David Macmillan and Jason Robinson.

THE RESULTS OF THE VILLAGE PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE.

In October every household in Lindfield received a Village Plan questionnaire seeking answers to 41 questions. Residents were invited to share their views and visions for the future. 516 completed questionnaires were returned, analysed and studied by the Working Groups, which then formulated the Actions set out in this Village Plan. The detailed results have been tabulated and are set out in detail in the Village Plan Commentary (copies of which may be obtained from the Parish Offices). The Commentary also includes lists of the many detailed comments and suggestions contributed by those responding, collated under the specific questions being addressed.



All the data collected cannot be included here but a few illustrations may be of interest:

- 34% said they had some concern for their safety in the village (for 6% this was a serious problem, 17% said “only slightly” and 34% said “only at night”).
- 97% said the Post Office in the High Street is vital (and 58% felt there ought to be another one between Lindfield & Haywards Heath).
- 91% said we need a public toilet in the village (though the District Council wanted to close it) and 70% said there should also be one on the common, (though the District Council has already closed and demolished one there).
- Only 42% said a village website was important, whereas 48% did not think so (the remainder did not reply).
- 77% had visited the Parish Office (most of them on planning matters, to collect a bus/rail pass or green refuse bags – or just to get information).
- As many as 30% would be willing to pay a higher tax to the Parish Council to meet the needs of the village – for a wide variety of perceived needs – proper toilets, provision for young people, better parking and traffic management etc).
- The great majority believed that before more housing is permitted, the capacity of local schools (74%) and of local health care facilities (86%) must be increased.
- Undoubtedly traffic issues (parking, speed, “rat runs” and large vehicles in the High Street) are enormous areas of concern and generated pages of comments and suggestions.

All the information collected has been taken into account in preparing the Lindfield Village Plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE THANKS

The Steering Committee would like to express its very sincere thanks to everyone who has assisted in this process – by participating in the two initial public meetings and the two later exhibitions, by completing the Questionnaire in the autumn and by giving us suggestions and comments. There are also a great many individuals and groups who have given much time and effort to bring this Village Plan to fruition. For example, the analysis and collation of the questionnaire responses, the drafting, editing and designing of the plan, the organising of the public meetings and exhibitions have all employed a great deal of voluntary effort. We would like to place on record our profound appreciation to all those concerned.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lindfield Village Plan Steering Committee recommends:

1. That the Lindfield Parish Council and the Lindfield Rural Parish Council approve and accept the Lindfield Village Plan.
2. That the two Parish Councils establish a joint LINDFIELD VILLAGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE to oversee the implementation of this Village Plan. The Development Committee should be a permanent Sub Committee of the two Councils. It should prioritise the Action Points in the plan and seek the co-operation of the District, County and Regional Government Authorities and any other appropriate organisations to implement them. It should report twice a year to the two Parish Councils on what has been achieved. Members of the Development Committee should be appointed annually and should include representative Councillors from both Councils, representatives of local organisations and individual residents.

The Lindfield Village Plan has been funded by grants and contributions received from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) through Action in Rural Sussex, the Lindfield Preservation Society, the West Sussex County Council, and the two Parish Councils.

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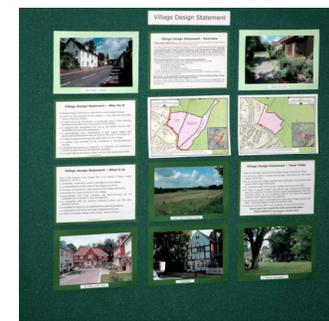
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Digital images by: Chris Bosker, Richard Bryant, Alan Gomme, Alan Gunson, John Jesson, Lindfield Bonfire Society, Lindfield Bowling Club, Lindfield Primary School, & Margaret Nicolle.



Additional copies of the Village Plan may be obtained from the Parish Office. A “Commentary” is also available summarising the responses to the questionnaires and explaining in more detail the conclusions of the Working Groups.

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