

## Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan - Summary of subgroup reports

### **Economic** (Business, Utilities)

The Business subgroup contacted 95 small businesses and limited companies, shops, pubs and farmers in connection with the Neighbourhood Plan. They were asked if they would like to take part at some point in the process. Only 3% said that they were not interested; 24% said that they were, and 72% did not reply. As we are still at a very early stage we may reasonably expect that some of the latter will want to express a view later on with regard to services, and housing for employees.

These initial contacts with the business community – who have often little time to devote to peripheral matters – produced quite a good response, and we hope to develop these contacts at a later stage.

### **Social** (Village organisations, Services)

Informal discussions were held with nine village social groups. Two simple questions were asked regarding the future development of our village: What don't you want? What would you like?

Eight issues of concern were identified: Housing, Traffic, Health Centre, School, Facilities, Environment and infrastructure, Community, and Village character. The most frequently expressed comments related to the need for:

- more affordable homes, especially for local young people
- improved road safety on Heath Road, and to a lesser extent, Steeles Road
- less traffic in the village centre, but more parking near the centre
- an expanded Health Centre, with more doctors
- a bigger school and pre-school centre (both are under pressure of numbers)
- improvements to surface water drainage in some areas of the village

Some people pointed out that new building would be good for local shops and businesses; others called for better integration of newcomers to the village.

### **Environmental** (Sport & Recreation, Transport)

A number of issues were identified: pinch points on routes through the village; the need for increased focus on footpaths and cycle ways; and for more drop kerbs.

Sports activities take place in the Village Hall and the Institute as well as on the playing fields. A view from the Youth Club was that outdoor sports provision, with the existing emphasis on cricket, should promote other sports such as football in order to be more socially representative.

### **Housing**

Contacts were made with several estate agents. Although some showed no interest, two or three were quite informative, and stressed the advantages which Woolpit possesses as a place to live and therefore to build and sell houses. They see well-planned development as adding value, so would consider neighbourhood planning to have potential benefits, and could be persuaded to become involved in the process.

These reports highlighted many viewpoints which will help to inform the neighbourhood planning process.