

HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

LAUNCH MEETING

MONDAY 10th OCTOBER

5.00pm in the Merry Bells Coffee Room

The relocation of the Post Office to the old Barclays Bank building gives the village a wonderful opportunity and incentive to improve its central environment, particularly in the High St, in order to attract more people to support the shops, and to support local businesses.

It is on this basis that the Parish Council agreed unanimously to set up an Advisory Group to consider all options.

High on the list is the eyesore of 'Toilet Square', which needs to be sorted out. A number of suggestions have already been received, and it has featured on the recent Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire.



Also high on the list of priorities is parking in the village.

The meeting has been arranged for 5.00pm for the convenience of the retail shops.

The Parish Councillors on the Advisory Committee are:

Roger Bell, Tim Davies, Richard Harding, Ian Roberts and Andy Walkey.

Please make every effort to attend as your views and concerns are important.

Meeting agenda overleaf

SATURDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2017

11.00 til 3.00

THE MERRY BELLS

EXHIBITION

SUGGESTIONSTOTIDY UP THE CENTRE OF WHEATLEY

IDEAS WILL INCLUDE:

Removing the existing eyesore of "Toilet Square"

- from this:

- to this



- creating a "Village Square" with trees, plantings, seating, a community wall

Improving Parking Options:

- signage to use what we have more efficiently,
- removal of bollards to create extra spaces
- incorporating 2 spaces into Village Square concept

Wake Up To Wheatley campaign to drive awareness of village shops, facilities and history

Consider installing public convenience:

- SODC Car Park,
- use Merry Bells facilities between set times

COME AND FIND OUT - HAVE YOUR SAY

INTRODUCTION

Brief: Minute 62 of the **WPC** Meeting held on 5th September 2016 approved the following resolution unanimously: "An Advisory Group be established to draw up a proposal for sorting out the Village centre which includes "Toilet Sq." The object is to make the centre attractive, welcoming and to maximise all parking opportunities. The group to include shop owners, a lawyer, an architect and no more than 4 parish councillors". The remit was widened from only the area from Bell Lane to the Post Office.

Recordings & Attendance: Meetings have had Notes prepared and reports have been published in the Wheatley Newsletter. An email list of those attending who have freely given their details are copied with updates.

Organisation: Sub- Groups: In order to progress plans the following sub-groups were formed:

- **Greening of Wheatley Square:** Georgina Roberts, Mary Hall and Roger Simmons took the lead and have consulted widely. They have involved the Primary School, architects, an urban planner in addition to their considerable knowledge.
- **Retailers:** Ian Germain took the lead supported by Geoff Coleman, and David Martel. They have held regular meetings with the Retail Group organised by Geoff Coleman and Ian G has called on businesses not only in the High Street but also around the village. Creating additional parking, improved signage and special parking permits for the retails have been examined. Consultation has taken place with members of SODC and OCC.
- **Parking:** The Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Group assisted us and carried out surveys in the High Street and on Church Road to help form an idea about congestion, vacant spaces and usage by residents, commuters and others. Their report **has not yet been finalised** and will be submitted as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- **Land Ownership:** Allan Hicks investigated the ownership of the land making up Wheatley Square.
- **Wake Up To Wheatley:** This was the initiative of Andy Walkey following his experience when he was the Head Teacher of Woodstock Primary School when the town carried out a very successful campaign. He used this experience and contacts in Thame also held a similar campaign. It is primarily about promoting Wheatley and has been welcomed especially by the retailers. Doug Lamont has agreed to move this project forward.
- **Finance:** This has been discussed and the main contributors are considered to be SODC, Section 106, sponsorship and the WPC. SODC paid £391,037 to 15 organisations in 2016/17 and has reserves to continue such payments. Section 106 monies related to the Taylor & Wimpey, London Road development are available for claiming under the following categories: Public Open Spaces £10,049; Community Facilities £33,294, Green Infrastructure £19,917 and Public Art £12,077.

Process: Up to Christmas 2016 meetings were held every three weeks and after the New Year emphasis focused on an Exhibition to obtain the views of residents. To maximise attendance every household was notified on the back of the Newsletter, posters and a banner.

The exhibition was held on 18th February 2017 when questionnaires were distributed. The analysis of these questionnaires is shown below and the summary from the Retailers Group is attached.

Questionnaire Feedback Summaries

1. Feedback from General Questionnaire (Tim Davies -163 replies)

- a. Responses with over 50% support were:
 - i. Do you use the shops - 96.93%
 - ii. Do you think we are fortunate to have them - 96.93
 - iii. Tree plantings to hide flats and garages - 74.23%
 - iv. Big display map showing points of interest -71.17%
 - v. Signage for footpaths - 64.42%
 - vi. Improved lighting - 62.58%
 - vii. More room for parking spaces - 61.96%
 - viii. Sympathetic surface - 57.67%
 - ix. Better signage for amenities - 55.21 %
 - x. Better signage for car parks - 52.76%
 - xi. Provision for car parking in Square - 51.53%
 - xii. Compromise between car parking / tree planting / communal space - 49.69%

2. Feedback from the Questionnaires collected at the Exhibition (78 replies):

- a. The Square (Georgina R, Mary H, Roger Simmons)
 - i. Trees need to be mature and bird friendly
 - ii. Trees need to provide cover throughout the year
 - iii. May trees & flowering cherries preferred
- b. Good lighting
- c. Support for mosaics which are to be led by the community
- d. Support for a Map of Wheatley but location was questioned
- e. Support for 'living wall' but concern expressed about maintenance
- f. Surface to be porous
- g. Surface to be 'link' style
- h. Seating to be around tree
- i. Parking - no consensus on removal of bollards

3. Retailers (Ian G, Geoff Coleman and Retailers group - 70 replies)

- a. Extra High Street parking spaces - 81%
- b. Church Road car park requires Business Permits - 80%
- c. In favour of landscaping-78%
- d. Require additional parking - 78%
- e. Increased and improved signage - 69%
- f. Concerns were raised about 'commuter parking' especially on Church Road

- g. Support for removal of bollards (Unofficial support from OCC Highways engineer who lives in Wheatley)
- h. IG confirmed 20 business had been consulted and were part of the Retailers Group.

4. Parking (David Harverson, David Maney, Doug Lamont)

- a. A survey had been carried out as part of the NP study
- b. Results showed spaces were available throughout the day but this did indicate accessibility at key times to the shops in the Square
- c. Concern was raised as to the lack of parking to the west of Station Road/Holloway - including the Chemist and Wheatley Collectibles

5. Wake Up To Wheatley (Andy Walkey)

- a. AW is moving as the sale of his house has progressed more quickly than expected.
- b. Doug Lamont will be taking over this initiative
- c. No survey had been conducted but strong support had been expressed at the Exhibition and was supported by the Retailers.
- d. General comments were for better signage