Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan – Community Aspirations

Community Aspirations - Major Projects

Introduction

Community Aspirations are non-statutory elements of the Neighbourhood Plan. They are generated from parishioners' input into Neighbourhood Plan consultations and the Household Survey and will guide the Parish Council and other stakeholders, including parishioners and voluntary groups, on how to prioritise and allocate efforts and funding.

Community Aspirations are closely linked to Parish development, because part of their funding may come from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which in turn is generated by the number of homes built in the Parish in coming years.

Projects needing higher levels of funding, planning and engagement with the community are considered 'major projects' and are designated as 'M' in the table below. These major projects have been further consulted on in the Regulation 14 Feedback Survey.

Regulation 14 Survey Results

Thirteen major projects were submitted for community consultation. These were chosen because they were deemed to be significant 'one-off' projects, rather than forming part of WPC's 'business as usual'. The consultation asked respondents to rank the benefit they would receive from each project on a scale ranging from 1 ('No benefit') through to 5 ('High benefit').

The 13 projects (with the corresponding Household Survey aspirations) were listed as follows:

A1. IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY: Investigate the introduction of traffic calming measures such as including 20mph limit and / or traffic lights at key congestion times.

A2. REDUCE CONGESTION & IMPROVE PARKING: Add parking space in Wadhurst village or investigate edge-of-village carpark and a park 'n' ride scheme. Encourage parkers to help our High Street by only parking on the road to use the shops (through notices etc.).

A3. PROMOTE NON-CAR TRANSPORT: Investigate viability of an expanded community shuttle bus to provide a link between key areas of the Parish, including Wadhurst village, Durgates, Station, Tidebrook with potential to extend further and / or link with any possible park 'n' ride scheme.

A4. ENCOURAGE CYCLING & WALKING: Improve the provision of footpaths and cycleways between settlements within the Parish and improve cycle connection to local facilities, e.g. Bewl Water. Provide cycle stands/rack in the Parish and at key points throughout the area. Provide improved and more secure cycle storage at the station

A5. PROMOTE TOURISM: Improve visitor information including signposts and information points in the village, at the station, and at key points around the Parish.

A6. ENCOURAGE COMPOSTING: Investigate community desirability and commercial viability of Community composting.

A7. GREEN TRANSPORT: Provide electric car power points in Parish car parks.

A8. BETTER RECYCLING: Investigate the feasibility of reopening the rubbish tip / recycling centre or consider alternative use of the now redundant site. (Since the consultations, the site has been sold).

A9. BETTER HEALTH FACILITIES: Provision of a new, fit-for-purpose Health Centre to accommodate health professionals, including doctors, nurses and physiotherapists with adequate dedicated off-street parking.

A10. MORE COMMUNITY SPACE: Provision of a new village green, or pocket park, with seating situated near the centre of Wadhurst village.

A11. BETTER LEISURE FACILITIES: Investigate the viability of a public swimming pool. Different options: re-open Uplands open-air pool, or commission a feasibility study for a new indoor / lido pool.

A12. OUTDOOR FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: Investigate the feasibility of an outdoor area for young people (e.g. a skatepark and hangout area) perhaps at the Sparrows Green Recreation ground.

A13. INDOOR SPACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE: Investigate the feasibility of an indoor social area for young people in the village, to include a low-cost café and activities which meet their needs.

In any survey, it is possible that the averages inflate the degree of *absolute* importance placed on any factor. Indeed, the average score given per respondent wasa healthy-looking 4.01. This could be a vindication of the SG's selection of aspirations from the data collated from the Household Survey. The alternative interpretation is that the Survey suffered a form of 'grade inflation'.

The results of the Regulation 14 Survey are summarised in Exhibit 4 below. For each aspiration there were about 440 responses, with 52% of respondents being in the 50-69 age category, 22% aged 19-49, 23% over 70 and less than 5% aged 0-18. Across all the age ranges, the three most popular aspirations wereA8 (Better recycling), A9 (Better health facilities) and A4 (Encourage cycling and walking). The least popular three were A5 (Promote tourism), A3 (Promote non-car transport) and A1 (Improve road safety). The range of average scores ran from 3.66 to 4.73.

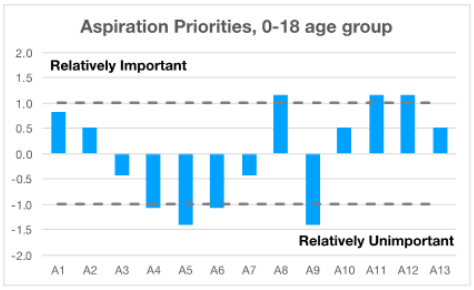
Given that 75% of respondents were aged over 50, responses were analysed from the four main age groups to see what aspirations were favoured by each group.[1] This information has been presented to highlight the *relative* preferences. Summarised findings are shown in graphs below.

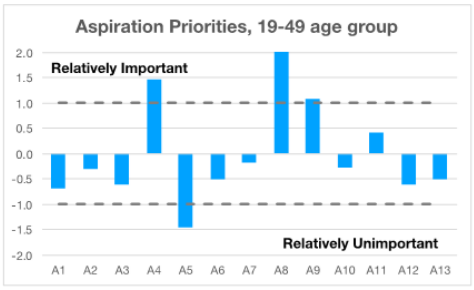
While the youngest age group is the smallest cohort, it is worth noting that they ascribe relatively low importance to better health facilities, compared to the other age groups, who rate this of greater worth. Moreover, this younger cohort also places relative importance to improved facilities for young people - both better leisure facilities and outdoor facilities.

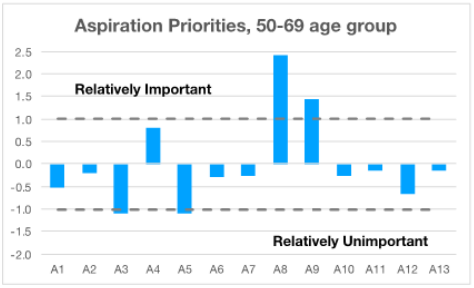
Exhibit 4.

AVERAGE SCORES	ASPIRATIONS													AGE GROUP	
	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	AVE	SD
0-18	4.75	4.50	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.25	3.75	5.00	3.00	4.50	5.00	5.00	4.50	**4.10**	**0.79**
19-49	3.88	3.98	3.90	4.48	3.65	3.93	4.02	4.68	4.38	3.99	4.19	3.90	3.93	**4.07**	**0.29**
50-69	3.83	3.93	3.65	4.26	3.64	3.90	3.91	4.77	4.46	3.91	3.94	3.78	3.95	**3.99**	**0.32**
70+	3.44	3.91	3.68	4.09	3.67	3.85	4.07	4.68	4.67	4.01	3.66	3.82	3.98	**3.96**	**0.37**
Unknown	4.11	4.44	4.67	4.56	4.11	4.00	4.11	4.89	4.67	4.22	3.56	3.89	3.89	**4.24**	**0.38**
All respondents	**3.76**	**3.95**	**3.73**	**4.26**	**3.66**	**3.89**	**3.97**	**4.73**	**4.48**	**3.96**	**3.93**	**3.83**	**3.96**	**4.01**	**0.31**

[1] Calculated 'z scores', which measure the deviation of the score for each aspiration away from the overall average. Using +/- one standard deviation as a cut-off point to denote relative importance, or unimportance, of each aspiration.







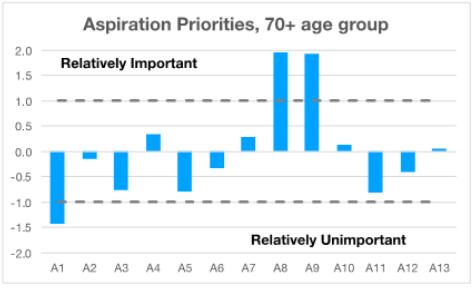


Exhibit 5: Relative preferences* summarised by age group (based on z score analysis)[2]

No	Aspiration	0 - 18	19 - 49	50 - 69	70 +	All
A1	Improve road safety				Unimportant	
A2	Reduce congestion & Improve parking					
A3	Promote non-car transport			Unimportant		

[2] Note: * The table addresses relative preferences not absolute preferences. While all aspirations may be important, this exercise screens out relative importance by age group. 'Important' (unimportant) preferences where score is one standard deviation above (below) the average for the age range. Very important (very unimportant) preferences triggered when z score is two standard deviations above (below) age group averages.

A4	Encourage cycling and walking	Unimportant	Important			
A5	Promote tourism	Unimportant	Unimportant	Unimportant		Unimportant
A6	Encourage composting	Unimportant				
A7	Green transport					
A8	Better recycling	Important	Very Important	Very Important	Important	Very Important
A9	Better health facilities	Unimportant	Important	Important	Important	Important
A10	More community spaces					
A11	Better leisure facilities	Important				
A12	Outdoor facilities for young people	Important				
A13	Indoor space for young people					

The ‘long list’ of aspirations from the Household Survey follows, so that the reader can follow the audit trail of the Community’s Aspirations.

Aspiration Category	* see below	Specific projects	% in favour (Household Survey)	Lead	Stakeholders
Encourage Tourism	W	Additional facilities for visitors such as information boards, clear signposting, route guides, Parish website	76.3%	WPC - Amenities	Carillon Cottage Footpath Society
Encourage Tourism	W	Develop co-operative initiatives with other bodies in the tourism sector such as Bewl Water.		WPC - Amenities	
Encourage Tourism	W	Strongly brand Wadhurst as a tourist destination in a way that links it to Bewl and the High Weald. Encourage the use of this by all businesses.			
Encourage Tourism	W	Improve visitor information including signposts and information points in Wadhurst village, at the station and at key points around the Parish.		WPC	
High Street sustainability	M	Create a new village green/pocket park situated in the centre of Wadhurst village. WPC to investigate locations, such as the front of the Commemoration Hall and other suitable alternatives. To include: - Seating - Planting - Visitor information - Maps of Parish/footpaths/local area - Community cafe in Commemoration Hall	62.7%/67.7 %	WPC - Amenities	Parishioners Business owners
High Street sustainability	W	Encourage a wider range of shops and small businesses in the parish.	84.8%	WPC	

High Street sustainability	W	Focus should be given to new businesses or activities which create more “footfall” for other businesses and activities, e.g.: - A community owned and operated Parish pub or cafe - More events - music nights, open-air cinema - More restaurants		WPC	
Improve communication of local information.	W	Create and maintain a centralised booking system for all public halls and meeting places and ensure that parishioners are aware of the new system and familiar with its use. This booking system should be accessible online and should allow clubs and societies to publish & promote upcoming events. **See also Parish Website aspiration**		WPC - Communications	Halls Parishioners & businesses (ideally would be done as part of a Parish website
Improve communication of local information.	W	Development of a Parish website for Tourist and Parishioner use: Events, Business directory, Walks, maps, Local history/information etc		WPC - Communications	Parishioners Businesses Community Groups
Improve communications networks.	W/P?	Encourage service providers to install the appropriate infrastructure so that high speed broadband is available to every household in the parish and ensure a strong mobile signal is available to all parts of the parish.		WPC	
Improve leisure facilities for Children & Teens.	M	Investigate the feasibility of an outdoor area for young people, at the Sparrows Green Recreation ground, including: - Skate/BMX park, climbing wall	74.0%	WPC - Amenities WPC - Recreation Ground Management	Uplands Parents of young children Local teenagers

		- Hangout areas' - all-weather sports area			
Improve leisure facilities for Children & Teens.	M	Provide unstructured open areas and playground close to the centre and south-east of Wadhurst, e.g. behind Commemoration Hall	69.8%	WPC - Amenities WPC - Recreation Ground Management	Primary school & Nursery parents & children Commemoration Hall & Field Trust
Improve leisure facilities for Children & Teens.	W	Safe transport to and particularly from Tunbridge Wells needs further consideration. A community bus/taxi might help to meet this need and avoid the temptation for young people to drive while drunk or take lifts from others who are so. (See in Sustainable Travel re Community Shuttle Bus)		WPC	
Improve leisure facilities for Children & Teens.	W / C	Investigate the feasibility of an indoor social area for young people in the Parish, like The House in the Basement Youth Café (HiTB) in Sevenoaks, to potentially include: - low-cost cafe - gaming area - pool, table tennis, table football, basketball - music (band practice/recording studio) - films - skills / advice sessions Such an area could double up as a business hub during the school day.		WPC - Amenities	Uplands Parents of young children Local teenagers
Improve leisure facilities for Children & Teens.	W/C	Improve travel and activities for young people, e.g.: - More after school/weekend clubs		WPC	Schools Teenagers Parents Local

		- Make roads safer for cycling & better off-road links - Youth Voice/Council - giving young people a say - Non-competitive activities, e.g. sports, dance, arts activities - Cinema - Access to cheap/free sports facilities & activities - Community projects, e.g., through schools			Community Groups
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	M	Create safe routes for cyclists (ideally, combined off-road “utility" cycle/footpaths) between Cousley Wood and Sparrows Green; Sparrows Green and Wadhurst High Street and from Wadhurst Station into these links.	58%%	WPC - HTL	Parishioners Sustrans
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	M	Provide a safe cycle route (on-or off-road) to Wadhurst Station as a major priority for local business, tourism and increased connectivity with towns up the mainline (Tunbridge Wells to London) and down to the coast (Hastings) thus improving public transport options in the area.		WPC - HTL	
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W	Study community transport feasibility, e.g.: - Community shuttle bus to provide link between key areas of parish, including Wadhurst village, Durgates, Station, Tidebrook, Cousley Wood with potential to extend	53%/55.8%	WPC - Amenities	

		further - Station taxi rank			
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W	Work with existing or new transport providers to offer better transport links between the station and the High Street			
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W	Provision of secure cycle parking and storage in the Parish and at key points throughout the area		WPC - HTL	
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W	Provision of secure cycle parking and storage at Wadhurst Station		WPC - HTL	Network Rail
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W	The development of new walking/cycling routes for school students and appropriate community transport, is strongly supported.		WPC	Wadhurst Primary Uplands Sacred Heart
Improve options for sustainable forms of transport.	W/P?	Ensure that all new developments and local services (particularly the schools) are safely accessible through active travel (walk/bike) and that safe access to the site can be achieved for all people of all ages (the elderly, young families with pushchairs and handheld children etc.), including those without cars.		WPC	
Protect and improve public facilities.	C	Improved arts and cultural facilities, particularly at the Commemoration Hall. A consultation led by the Trustees of the Hall and Field, with users and local arts & cultural	78.8%	Trustees of Commemoration Hall and Field	Commemoration Hall and other facility Community Group users +++

		groups, on its future use should be completed.			
Protect and improve public facilities.	C	Support policies which ensure the long-term success of the Commemoration Hall. While any decisions made will be undertaken by the trustees of the Hall & Field and hope that these are addressed wisely and with a structured approach. The results of the household survey confirm that the parishioners strongly support initiatives which seek to improve and maintain this facility at the heart of the village.		Trustees of Commemoration Hall and Field	Parishioners
Protect and improve public facilities.	M	Support the building of the new school on the Uplands site, containing a significant community resource.			
Protect and improve public facilities.	M	Investigate the feasibility of reopening the rubbish tip with community funding and consider alternative use such as park 'n' ride car park.	89.7%	WPC - Amenities	
Protect and improve public facilities.	W	Improve accessibility of Wadhurst Station platform (particularly London-bound: - it is not currently possible for people with mobility issues to access the north bound platform)	40%	WPC	Network Rail
Protect and improve public facilities.	W	Maintain or enhance the library. Ensure that it continues to appeal to all age ranges and provides internet access for those parishioners who are unable to use the internet at home.		WPC - Amenities	Parishioners

Protect and improve public facilities.	W	WPC to work with Uplands and local arts and cultural groups to maximise community use of Uplands' facilities, now and in the future (including community use of parking on site)		WPC - Community Liaison WPC - Amenities	Uplands
Protect and improve public facilities.	W	Support the provision of an Early Years Centre at the Primary School		WPC - Community Liaison	Wadhurst Primary Uplands/Sticky Fingers
Protect and improve public facilities.	W	Support the retention of the Uplands Community Centre site for community use.		WPC - Community Liaison	Uplands
Protect and improve public facilities.	W	Compile list of Assets of Community Value and initiate protections		WPC - Amenities	Parishioners
Protect the local environment.	C	Establish a Wadhurst environmental action group to promote conservation and nature in the Parish and lead on projects such as: - Wild flowers/ grassland areas & verges - Encouragement/incentives to improve hedgerows & woodland - Encourage wildlife-friendly activities - Community Gardening / Eco Groups - Wildlife corridors / Green ways - Widely available information - Maintain ponds / more ponds - Green area in the High Street - Wildlife viewing areas & information posts - Forest School / use of Uplands or Commemoration Hall fields to create more nature and education opportunities.		Community Groups WPC - HTL	Parishioners

		- Remove litter particularly from unkempt areas and footpaths - Modernise public litter bins (to be larger/emptied more often and fox proof)			
Protect the local environment.	W	Encourage and promote biodiversity through the sharing of best practices across the parish; including those land management methods needed to maintain the HWAONB character.		WPC - HTL	Community Groups Landowners
Protect the local environment.	W	Map notable trees and apply for Tree Preservation Orders on them.		WPC - HTL	
Protect the local environment.	W	Create a local Wadhurst Wildlife Nature Reserve		WPC	Community Groups Landowners Parishioners
Protect the local environment.	W	Protect Dark Skies in Wadhurst Parish: - WPC should continue its programme of replacing polluting bulbs and resolve the issue with ESCC so that faulty bulbs are routinely replaced with dark-sky friendly options - WPC should consider an incentive scheme for businesses and households, to encourage the replacement of polluting lamps and lamps which are left on all night.		WPC - HTL	

		Funding for such a scheme could be sought from the Lund Foundation. - The possibility of turning off all streetlamps at midnight should be explored with ESCC - WPC to provide information to households and businesses to promote the importance of Dark Skies and provide information on appropriate lighting. Information to be on WPC or Wadhurst website			
Protect the local environment.	W / C	Investigate community desirability and commercial viability of Community Composting.	81.0%	WPC	Allotment Association Wadhurst Community Groups
Protect the local environment.	W / C	Develop and implement initiatives with other organisations such as a regular walk to school day.		?	Schools Wadhurst Community Groups
Protect the local environment.	W / C	Encourage environmental issues groups with involvement of young people (including existing ones such as Wadhurst Community Gardeners)		Community Groups	
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	M	Tackle congestion in the High Street by investigating possible remedial measures, e.g.: - Additional parking space in Wadhurst village - Investigate edge-of-village car park and park 'n' ride scheme - Encourage parkers to help our High Street by only parking on the road to use the shops	84.7%	WPC - HTL	Business owners Parishioners Shoppers

		(through notices etc) - More limited High Street parking			
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	M	Provide adequate parking facilities in Wadhurst High Street and in Durgates. There should be sufficient parking spaces to allow shopkeepers and office-based workers to park all day while also ensuring adequate parking capacity for shoppers and visitors.	80.8%	WPC - HTL	Business owners Parishioners Shoppers
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	M	Any future new development in the High Street should look to widen the High Street roadway and pavements – not constrain them further. Wealden / WPC to sponsor an architectural design of a widened High Street and associated development feasibility study to be undertaken.		WPC - HTL	ESCC WDC
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	M	Provide an edge of village car park and seek agreement from the schools and other employers to use this so that the High Street is available for customers.		WPC - HTL	
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	W	The ESCC High Street Improvement Programme will be reviewed again and the agreed results implemented for better traffic control and improved pedestrian safety. An alternative “fit for purpose” scheme must urgently be		WPC - HTL	ESCC

		introduced, even if on an experimental basis.			
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	W	Raise awareness of alternatives to private car use, e.g. via signage or maps on website.		WPC - HTL	
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	W	Reconsider short time limits to High Street Parking to discourage space blockers.		WPC - HTL	ESCC
Reduce congestion & improve parking.	W	Work with Uplands to make sure they provide appropriate on-site parking.		WPC - HTL	Uplands
Reduce detrimental effects of new development.	W/P	Investigate mandating and funding independent surveys on planning issues such as - Landscape visual Impact assessments, traffic surveys, development design compliance with High Weald Housing Design Guide, tree & habitat surveys.		WPC	
Reduce detrimental effects of new development.	W	Undertake an annual assessment/survey of all current infrastructure capacities (GP facilities, Schools, Sewage and Water etc.). The Parish Council to then promote improvements and ensure capacities are not breached and remain within national standards, considering new development proposals.		WPC - Amenities ?	
Reduce detrimental effects of new development.	W	Develop a brownfield site register.		WPC - Planning	Landowners
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	M	Promote the provision of new/improved/well maintained sustainable footpaths/cycle/mobility paths and community transport networks to all	77.4%	WPC - HTL	

		parts of the Parish, including between settlement communities and to the High Street and Railway station.			
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	M	Improve the provision of footpaths and cycleways between settlements within the parish and improve cycle connection to local facilities, e.g. Bewl Water.	76.4%	WPC - HTL	
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Pressure should be maintained on ESCC to improve and maintain pavement conditions and eliminate cracked or raised paving, especially along the High Street and down to Wadhurst Station.	73.3%	WPC - HTL	ESCC
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Investigate the introduction of a pedestrian crossing at key strategic locations in Wadhurst and the surrounding areas, e.g.: - near Uplands School - near Jempsons - at an appropriate location at Pell Green on the Cousley Wood Road	70.9%	WPC - HTL	ESCC
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Investigate introduction of 20 mph speed restriction to replace the current 30mph restriction, specifically: - the High Street & Lower High Street - Sparrows Green Road - through Durgates	57.2%	WPC - HTL	
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Promote and prioritise sustainable modes of transport by providing public electric charging points for cars and cycles; electric bicycle hiring stations; and promoting longer term		WPC - HTL	

		solutions such as electric community transport.			
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Maintain pressure on ESCC to maintain road conditions (including on rural roads outside the High Street): - rapid repair of potholes - prevention of further deterioration - regular resurfacing		WPC - HTL	ESCC
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Investigate introduction of traffic calming in busy areas, including: - Traffic calming measures at entry points into main residential areas, e.g. Lower High Street, Pell Green - Assessment of benefit of traffic lights or flashing signs at key congestion times - Possible introduction of speed bumps or other surface treatments		WPC - HTL	ESCC
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Provide formal traffic speed/traffic volume monitors, traffic pollution monitors and Neighbourhood Watch security cameras in the High Street.		WPC - HTL	
Safer Streets for pedestrians, cyclists and mobility aid users	W	Conduct an 'Accessibility' street audit throughout the main Wadhurst Village area to establish necessary improvements, to cover: - Crossing points in village (e.g. Uplands, Jempsons, Durgates, near Fire Station) - Seating in High Street and at bus stops - Better pavement to road access for wheelchairs/scooters		WPC	Parishioners Community Groups

		- Better access to shops, cafes and public amenities for wheelchairs/ scooters/ pushchairs - More disabled parking near Surgery and in High Street - Banning pavement parking			
Support new and existing businesses.	W	Provide support to new and existing businesses, e.g.: - reduced business rates to new start-ups for an agreed period - a financial contribution to rents on business premises for a defined period - permission and financial support to businesses starting in unused premises in the High Street or in unused farm buildings		WPC	
Support new and existing businesses.	W	WPC to work with Wadhurst Business Association to create a strategic businesses/enterprise group which can foster greater cooperation to sustain businesses, especially in the High Street. Such a business association should be given a charter by the Parish Council to: - Develop and facilitate a business strategy for the Parish - Produce an Infrastructure priority list of projects - Provide networking and information sharing for Wadhurst businesses - Advocate the needs of Wadhurst businesses to local (and national)		WPC	Business Association Local business owners

		government at all levels - Encourage activity which improves the viability of local businesses (joint promotions, special events and openings etc.) - Encourage skill-sharing, mentoring and support - Encourage all local businesses to use other local businesses to meet their needs (printing, IT support etc.) - Support business start-ups, pop-up shops and home-based businesses - Keep register of businesses and available business accommodation. Register to include new businesses targeted / required.			
Support new and existing businesses.	W / C	Support the creation of a business hub, providing office support and/or meeting space for small businesses and home workers.		WPC - Amenities	WPC Business Association Small Businesses
Wellbeing & Leisure	M	Provision of a new, fit-for-purpose Health Centre to accommodate health professionals including doctors, nurses and physiotherapists with adequate dedicated off-street parking. WPC needs to investigate the most feasible potential location.	73.6%	WPC - Amenities	
Wellbeing & Leisure	M	Investigate the viability of a new public swimming pool and the attractions of different options: - Re-open Uplands open-air pool - Commission a	69.1%	WPC - Amenities	Uplands Parishioners

		feasibility study for an indoor pool as soon as possible (see also the Appendix to Wellbeing & Leisure Closing Report)			
Wellbeing & Leisure	W	Better maintenance of public footpaths with better signage and more publicity of available paths		WPC - Amenities	Footpath Society Parishioners

*

C Community projects needing minimal funding and led by local groups.

W Regular WPC committee agenda

M Major projects, requiring funding

P Incorporated in Policies

WPC Committee abbreviations

EHT Environment, Highways & Transport