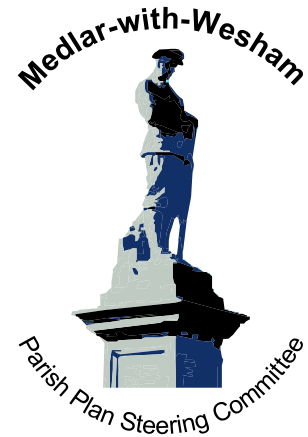


INTRODUCTION

What is a Parish Plan?

Communities are constantly changing. Producing a Parish Plan provides an opportunity for members of the community to influence changes by identifying local concerns and opportunities for improvements and development. This Parish Plan for Medlar-with-Wesham records the issues arising from consultation of the community, and defines actions to tackle them.



Why do we need a Parish Plan?

A period of expansion of the town of Wesham is underway. Further developments in the Parish are likely to be proposed in the new Fylde Borough Council Local Development Framework (LDF) which will replace the current Local Plan. Therefore this is an appropriate time to set out a vision for the future that is based on the views of the existing residents and local businesses, with the overall aim of making Medlar-with-Wesham a better place in which to live and work. This Parish Plan, and the associated Action Plan, will enable us, the local community, to become more involved in influencing and implementing changes to achieve the vision.

Objectives of our Parish Plan

- *To identify local concerns, needs and opportunities for improvement of the town and parish*
- *To set out a vision for the future of the town and parish, based on the opinions of the community, including residents and local businesses*
- *To define an Action Plan with recommendations to achieve the vision*
- *To provide a reference for decision-making by the Town, Borough and County Councils, and other organisations and service providers*
- *To justify funding for specific projects and services*

Funding of our Parish Plan

The production of our Parish Plan has been funded by a grant administered by Community Futures. Community Futures, previously known as the Community Council of Lancashire, promotes and develops social, economic, cultural and community activity in Lancashire and beyond, working with voluntary groups and in partnership with public bodies.

The Parish Plan Process

Medlar-with-Wesham Town Council decided that a Parish Plan would be of benefit to the town and parish, and they subsequently applied for a grant to produce the Plan.

Community Futures provided guidance, advice and assistance throughout the process of producing of this Plan.

A successful public meeting was held in May 2007 to launch the Parish Plan process. A large amount of valuable feedback and suggestions were received. Also a number of local residents

volunteered to help.

Shortly after the public meeting the Medlar-with-Wesham Parish Plan Steering Committee of volunteers was formally constituted. This Committee has authority to act on behalf of the Town Council to produce the Parish Plan, and is also responsible for implementing the Plan.

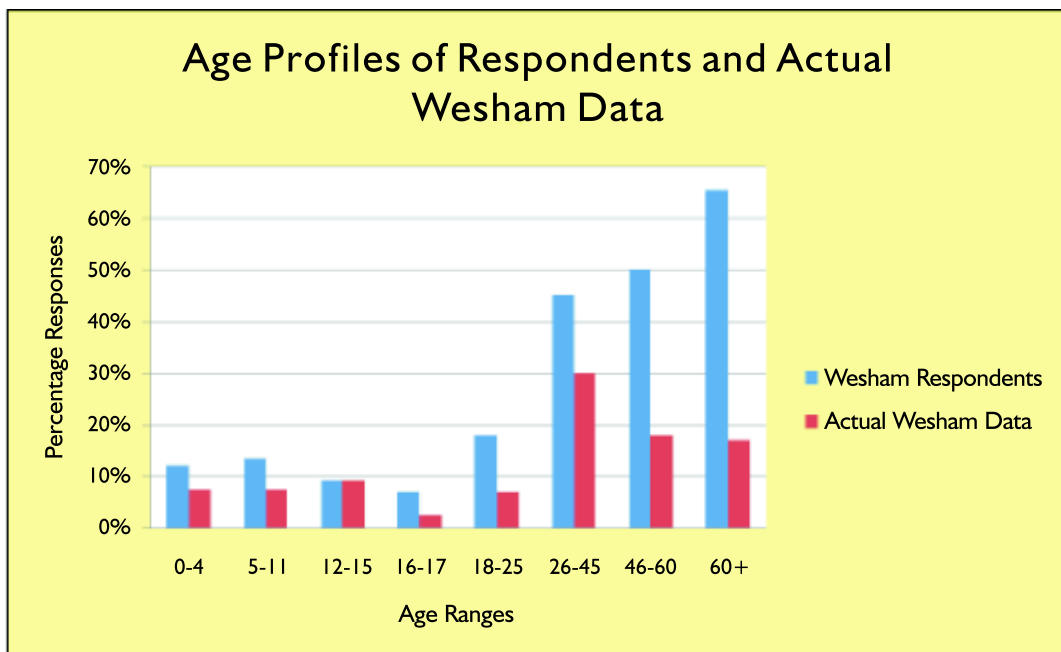
A Residents' Questionnaire was devised by a small Working Group of members of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee also decided that the Parish Plan should be informed by the needs and concerns of local businesses, in recognition of their contribution to the economic prosperity of the town and parish. A separate Local Business Questionnaire was produced and distributed.

The Questionnaire responses were analysed and the results used in this Plan to identify and describe the issues arising from the consultation.

A copy of this Plan is distributed to every household and business in the parish, and to other relevant authorities, organisations and individuals. The Plan is also available on the Wesham Community Website: www.wesham.org.uk.

The Residents' Questionnaire

The questions in the Residents' Questionnaire were based on feedback from the public meeting and advice from Community Futures. A copy of the Questionnaire was distributed to every household in the parish (approximately 1,400) with the instruction that the views and comments of **every member of the household** should be recorded in the response.



The Local Business Questionnaire and its Findings

The Local Business Questionnaire was distributed to a total of 46 local businesses in the parish, including some just outside the parish boundary at Medlar. Questions were asked about the business, the workforce, the premises, Wesham as a place to operate, the local economy, crime and security, transport and highways, and future business needs.

Significant findings from the responses received:

- All responders rate the Town/Parish as *Good/Very Good* as a place to operate
- Nearly all responders rate the Town and Borough Councils as *Helpful/Very Helpful*
- Nearly all responders rate local police coverage & support as *Effective/Very Effective*
- Nearly all responders have no problems recruiting suitable employees
- Lack of parking for customers was a significant concern of businesses in the town
- There is some demand for shared facilities/services
- Half the businesses that responded depend on the post office for distribution
- All (bar 1 uncertain) responders intend to keep their business in the Parish
- There is some future need for local business premises, eg. land or a business unit

