

## **Ringmore Parish Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Initial Opinion Gathering Exercise – Challaborough West**

#### **Introduction**

During the week beginning 21/8/17, residents in the Ringmore Parish side of Challaborough (Challaborough West) were informally approached and asked whether they would attend an event convened to canvass initial opinions for development of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Responses were generally “luke-warm” and, combined with the fact that some residents were away over the August Bank Holiday, it was clear that a bespoke event would be unlikely to attract a good attendance.

#### **Method**

In view of situation outlined above, a document was compiled with similar wording to the Ringmore Garden Party NP introductory text, and an invitation to comment under identical headings to the Garden Party “post-it board” headings. Each house in Challaborough West was called upon during the week preceding the Bank Holiday and the purpose of the NP, along with the work of the Steering Group, was outlined. Residents were canvassed to note their views and opinions under each heading and return their comments on an anonymous basis.

In total, 14 houses were visited. In some cases occupants were away so the response document was left along with an explanatory note and brief personal message. The addresses are listed below

Homes invited to provide comment were:

*Beach Cottage, Slipway Cottage, Westside, Sea Moose, Casanueva, The Broch, Captains House, 3 Coastguard Cottages, 2 Coastguard Cottages, 1 Coastguard Cottages, Lindrick Dell, Peregrine Cottage, Hillcot, Waverley, Burgh Island View*

The Parkdean Manager’s house was not included since, although the manager is technically a resident, this house comes with the job and was thus assumed to be part of the Parkdean commercial operation. The Manager may, of course, be invited to offer his Company’s perspective at a later date. Four holiday homes which had been let in the run up to the holiday weekend were also not canvassed.

#### **Results**

Of the 15 homes visited 6 returned completed documents. While the overall sample is small this nevertheless represents a response rate of 40%.

It is probably fair to say that, both “on the doorstep” and as measured by the response rate, the NP initiative is not currently well supported. This was a disappointment considering that the initiative, and the role of residents in shaping it, was personally explained during house calls.

Responses were collated and common threads emerging under each of the headings were identified using a fairly basic colour-coding approach. The results of this exercise are noted below.

#### ***ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY (current problems, creating a sustainable community, ecology and wildlife)***

- The poor aesthetic appearance of Parkdean Holiday Park was highlighted, often in more than one category, in most responses. Comments included, “the Park is in need of updating”; “the Park includes some blots on the landscape”; “the buildings are shabby”; and “neither park is aesthetically pleasing”

#### ***HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT (housing types, locations, affordability, etc - note that Local Plan currently cites “around ten” houses having to be built in Ringmore Parish)***

- There was some comment in the vein of, “no more housing” but this was generally framed by the weak infrastructure and pressure on amenities
- Affordable housing need was mentioned but this was tempered with concomitant need to ensure that affordable homes would not, sooner or later, become holiday homes
- There were conflicting commentaries on the style of housing that should be allowed; some suggesting architecture should be “in keeping with the environment” while another wanted to encourage rather than spurn contemporary architecture.

#### ***INFRASTRUCTURE (power, water, sewage, roads, broadband, mobile signal, refuse management, childcare, etc)***

- Almost everyone commented that the current road system in the Parish is inadequate, often being used beyond its capacity and not being properly maintained. Drainage and debris removal, in particular, were frequently cited problems.
- A third of respondents said that the current overhead cable systems (electricity and telephone) should be buried as soon as possible.
- The need for improvement to broadband and mobile phone signals was often cited and this was noted as limiting potential for development of new and existing businesses.

#### ***TRANSPORT (bus services, car sharing, connections, etc)***

- Almost all respondents commented upon currently almost non-existent public transport in the Parish. Some connected this with development and suggested that no housing development should be allowed without significantly improved public transport.

#### ***TRAFFIC (volume, speeds, parking, delivery vehicles, etc)***

- The need to reduce traffic speeds was mentioned by most respondents.
- Commenters also wanted commercial operators in the Parish to take proper responsibility for the traffic they generate, including delivery vehicles and holidaymaker cars.

#### ***EMPLOYMENT (job opportunities, commuting, etc)***

- Some respondents queried the true economic contribution made by the two holiday parks operating in the Parish; one contending that any future holiday park development should be accompanied by detailed economic benefit analysis which includes use of infrastructure

#### ***COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (holiday parks, shops, provision for small businesses, etc)***

- There was general agreement that planning decisions must take account of effects upon amenity, aesthetic and infrastructure for residents, rather than decisions being made in an abstract context.
- Significant light pollution emanating from commercial businesses in the Parish was mentioned in some of the returns.

#### ***COMMUNITY (village halls, clubs, societies, provision for children/young people, etc)***

- Very little meaningful comment was made under this heading, other than interest in integrating Parkdean swimming pool into the Parish infrastructure. (Editor's note: the original swimming pool development was agreed and partially funded by SHDC on condition of access for local residents)

#### ***RECREATION & LEISURE (sports facilities, access, footpaths, etc)***

- As noted above, a number of respondents mentioned access to Parkdean recreational facilities.
- One respondent commented upon the difficult access from Challaborough to the westbound coast path

#### ***HERITAGE & HISTORY (preserving historic aspects, monuments, church buildings, etc)***

- A perceived lack of respect by commercial operators for the SW Coast Path, AONB, and Coastal Preservation Area was mentioned. Fryer Tuck's in particular (within Bigbury Parish boundary. *Editor*) was highlighted in this respect.

