

## **Ashby de la Zouch Neighbourhood Planning Drop In Sessions April 2013**

Four drop in sessions were held in the week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> April 2013:

- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2:00pm to 4:30pm when 12 people signed in
- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 9:30am to 12pm when 9 people signed in
- Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 6pm to 8:30pm when 12 people signed in
- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 10am to 12:30pm when 10 people signed in

In addition comments were given by students attending an Adult Education Literacy Class, people going to WeightWatchers, tutors at a numeracy class and people helping at or attending the Hospice Hope Support Café. Comments were also obtained from people attending the Farmers Market, so approximately 60 people in total took part in the consultation.

### **Themes emerging**

What do you like about Ashby?

- The current facilities are praised e.g. leisure centre, schools, library. It is seen as a reasonable sized town with generally good amenities. (28 people)
- The atmosphere of the town which is seen as a friendly market town. (10 people)
- The community spirit in the town, including community events and strong links between community and churches and between organisations. (19 people)
- Thriving organisations, community organisations and churches (7 people)
- National forest and open spaces near the town (15 people)
- Parks, play areas and Bath Grounds (11 people)
- The overall appearance of the town (7 people)
- Ashby as a historic town (6 people)
- The town centre shops and market (21 people)
- Location with good road links to the rest of the Midlands (9 people)
- Relatively safe on the streets (1 person)
- Footpath network (2 people)
- The current size and scale of the town (2 people)
- No HGV's in the town centre make it relatively quiet (1 person)

What do you not like about Ashby?

- Traffic congestions (9 people)
- Speeding cars (1 person)
- Too many road signs (1 person)
- Car parking seen as inadequate, not controlled and expensive (11 people)
- Lack of facilities for teenagers (3 people)
- No community hall (1 person)

- School provision – need new secondary and primary school (Leicester Road side) (2 people)
- Old Ashbians who don't want any change and dislike newcomers although they will take their money! (Ironic considering that Ashby has changed constantly since its inception!) (1 person)
- Lack of leisure facilities, especially on some estates (1 person)
- Residents who do not value the town or get involved (1 person)
- Town Councillors are too passive (1 person)
- Key decisions at District Council are taken by Councillors who do not reside in or near the town or use it (1 person)
- Dog fouling (5 people)
- Litter (8 people)
- Bath Grounds, glass and their state since circus and festivals used it (2)
- Market mix in town centre – too many fast food and charity shops, other useful shops are missing. (38 people)
- Out of town difficult for older people and many complain about size of Tesco (1 person)
- Pubs not suitable for quiet drink and opening hours of pubs and clubs (2 people)
- Empty business premises (5 people)
- Too many edge of town retail is being built and proposed (major threat to Market Street retailers) (1 person)
- Tesco and its impact (6 people)
- Lack of a good hotel (1 person)
- Need for mix of house types (2 people)
- Too many houses no more needed (4 people)
- Need to encourage businesses in to business parks (1 person)
- Too big, loss of charm and facilities can't cope (2 people)
- Inappropriate development e.g. warehousing (1 person)
- Developers who use money to force through their plans (1 person)
- Prospect of further massive housing development, threat to Money Hill and integrity of the bypass (1 person)
- Lack of public transport (11 people)
- Make Ashby cycle friendly (1 person)
- The health centre need replacing (9 people) and need to keep a central location (3 people)
- Threat to cottage hospital (1 person)
- Nearest hospitals Burton/ Coalville/ Loughborough (1 person)
- Could do with NHS Walk In centre (1 person)
- It may become a commuter town (1 person)
- Loss of historic employment (e.g. biscuit factory, soap factory) potential loss of dairy (1 person)

What would you want that Ashby doesn't have?

- Develop and maintain the open spaces so they are attractive leisure spaces (4 people)
- Assurance that the National Forest is being given care, protection and attention (1 person)
- Golf Driving range + short course or pitch and putt (that is not exclusive to 'members only'. (1 person)
- Action to protect the environment, on dog mess and litter (3 people)
- Wildlife strategy for farming land as well as urban land (1 person)
- Bee friendly strategy (1 person)
- Multi functional community facility, available at low cost to charities (13 people)
- More community events (3 people)
- Maintain facilities in town centre (1 person)
- Better facilities for youth and children e.g. youth centre (7 people)
- Cinema/ 10 pin bowling (16 people)
- Better market mix in town centre (21 people)
- Regular street market (2 people)
- Improved health centre (10 people)
- Police station (1 person)
- More employment opportunities and a better mix of those opportunities (7 people)
- Improved school provision (4 people)
- A train station (6 people)
- More parking and or free parking (16 people)
- Better public transport to neighbouring towns and cities (2 people)
- Cycle and scooter lane at Hood Park to Northfield (1 person)
- Better balance in planned housing development (1 person)
- No out of town development, it will kill town centre (1 person)
- Need awareness of businesses already there when considering new planning proposals (1 person)
- Direction of growth should consider S West Measham Rd/ A42 quadrant (1 person)
- Extra Care housing (1 person)
- Creation of mixed use employment and residential sustainable urban extension in strategic location (1 person)
- Infrastructure to support massive build that is proposed (1 person)
- Traffic calming and management measures (6 people)
- Defined and maintained cycle route network (2 people)
- TV's tuned by default to East Midlands not West Midlands (1 person)

- Ivanhoe FC playing at least two leagues higher – with ground development (1 person)

Other more general comments were:

What benefit will we have by having HS2?

Ashby does not want a free for all housing building spree. This town cannot sustain this influx, it would become a dormitory town for people to work in Brum, Nottingham, Derby and Leicester.

### **Key themes and issues that seem to be emerging**

- People like living in a historic market town in the heart of the National Forest, which they see as friendly with a good community spirit and facilities which need retaining and building on
- The town centre – issues around the mix of shops and businesses and car parking
- The open spaces are appreciated but they could be developed further and put to greater use
- There are concerns about the traffic infrastructure and congestion and about the perceived lack of public transport
- Where new development is going to happen people want it to be of the right type and have the right mix of housing and be in the best location for the town.
- There are concerns about the ability of the existing infrastructure coping with the additional houses e.g. the health centre is of concern and the current location of schools
- There are concerns about lack of facilities for teenagers (with some people concerned about the growing elderly population)
- There is a need for a multi functional community facility and more community events in the town
- The need to encourage a range of employment opportunities in the town and utilise the existing business parks

### **What next?**

It is proposed that a questionnaire is devised telling people what the key themes and issues are and whether they agree they are relevant or not. It will be a simple tick box, but with a general question at the end about whether there are any other issues they feel are missing from the list. This form can then be used on Market Street on a Saturday morning and at the Food Festival. This should get us a greater volume of responses.

Karen Edwards, Deputy Town Clerk

1<sup>st</sup> May 2013