



Ruishton & Thornfalcon Neighbourhood Plan

Young People Consultation School Years 7- 11

Conducted by
The Community Council for Somerset
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Secondary School Consultation

The Ruishton and Thornfalcon Neighbourhood Plan group commissioned CCS to carry out a consultation with the young people at the Heathfield Community School for students aged 11-16 and school years 7-11. The group had already carried out an extensive consultation through a household questionnaire which was delivered to all homes in the parishes. This additional piece of research was carried out to ensure all parts of this community were involved in the process and that their views, ideas and ambitions for their community can be included in the plan.

How did we do it?

To capture a snapshot of the views of the young people it was decided that it would be most effective to work through the school as this is inclusive, nearly all young people will be included as opposed to out of school activities which would attract different groups of young people with different issues/concerns/views.

To gain a view from all the ages of young people attending the school we worked with Natasha Rand who is the Student Voice co-ordinator. She arranged for two students (one male and one female) from each year to be invited to attend the workshop at 9am on March 13th. Unfortunately we were unable to include students from year 8 as they had a special event on that morning but we had two students from the other years.

The group were invited to sit around a table together and the purpose of the consultation and the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan was explained. We then placed a large sheet of paper on the table with one of the questions below on it. The students were asked to write their own answer on a "post it" and stick it on the sheet without talking to the other participants. They then were given a sticky coloured dot to place on the comment that they most agreed with, other than their own and to discuss the comments given and if appropriate to add additional comments after the discussion. These comments have all been recorded and have been used to create the information below.

The questions we used were:

1. What do you like about living in Ruishton, Thornfalcon or Henlade parish?
2. What don't you like about living in Ruishton, Thornfalcon, Henlade parish?
3. What would you like to see here in the future?
4. What do you like to do in your free time?
5. How can we protect the environment in our area?
6. What is important to you about our villages?
7. Do you walk or cycle to school? Do you feel safe? What would help you get to school?
8. What do you think about the traffic in our villages?

9. Do you think you will live and/or work in our villages in the future? If not, why not? If yes, what would you like to do? What sort of housing would you like?

The Results

The results of the consultation were reviewed and analysed. From this we can see what the main outcomes are from the questions.

1. What do you like about living in Ruishton, Thornfalcon or Henlade parish?

The main thing the students said they liked about living in the area is the friendliness, one person said "I know pretty much everyone" which was agreed with. They also liked being near friends, the countryside and that the community is small. They like the park and one person mentioned the produce market.

2. What don't you like about living in Ruishton, Thornfalcon, Henlade parish?

The main thing was the lack of a shop, this was mentioned by all the students. They would also like more equipment at the park, especially for people in their age group as the existing equipment is for younger children. There was also concern about flooding.

3. What would you like to see here in the future?

They would like to have a drinking water fountain at the park and an outdoor gym. They would like a shop.

4. What do you like to do in your free time?

Going to the park to see friends was really popular. Other activities they enjoy included swimming, dance using games consoles, water polo and scouts and guides

5. How can we protect the environment in our area?

The students said that flood defences are important as well as planting more flowers to increase biodiversity.

6. What is important to you about our villages?

The students said they value the friendliness of the villages and the countryside.

7. Do you walk or cycle to school? Do you feel safe? What would help you get to school?

About half the students cycled to school. They said they generally feel safe except with large lorries and vans. There was a suggestion that road lines could be improved to make it clearer.

8. What do you think about the traffic in our villages?

They said overall that traffic wasn't a problem apart from during the school run time, particularly with families driving to the primary school.

9. Do you think you will live and/or work in our villages in the future? If not, why not? If yes, what would you like to do? What sort of housing would you like?

Most of the students didn't think they will live in the area in the future, they said there weren't enough jobs around the area and that the parishes are too small.

Conclusions

From this results you are see that there are some key issues and concerns which need to be considered as part of the Neighbourhood Plan, these are:

- 1) The best things about living here is that its a friendly community where they are known and know lots of people. In terms of facilities the park the most important place to the young people.
- 2) The most negative things about living is the lack of a shop and that the equipment at the park is not suitable for their age group.
- 3) The young people would like to see more appropriate equipment at the park to include an outdoor gym and water fountain as well as a shop. In addition, to encourage more cycling it would be good to the young people's feeling that it is safe to do so.