

V4B GENERAL APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A – ANALYSIS OF SURVEYS

Report by Alison Eardley

The Vision for Beaconsfield Steering Group undertook a range of engagement activities to gather local opinions that could feed into the project. This included three surveys which aimed to capture a snapshot of views from the community that could be explored further by the Working Groups. These surveys were:

- Residents Survey – aimed at all those living in Beaconsfield, the survey was available to complete online between December 2014 and April 2015.
- Three Wishes Survey – aimed at local school children in Beaconsfield, this comprised a simple survey asking respondents to fill in their top three wishes for Beaconsfield. The survey was issued via the schools and also at the Festival of Lights.
- Business Survey – aimed at local businesses and again available to complete online.

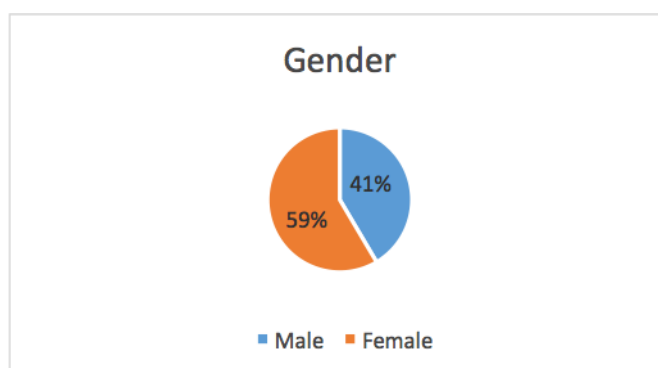
In total, 81 wishes were received from children and their families, 522 residents completed the Residents' survey and 13 businesses completed the business survey.

Residents' Survey

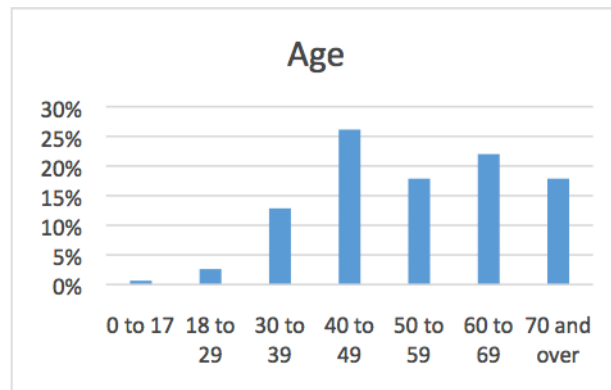
Who completed the survey?

In total 522 people completed the Residents Survey between December 2014 and April 2015. According to the 2011 census, Beaconsfield has 12,081 residents, of which 9,529 are aged 16 and over, the typical age from which completing surveys such as this one becomes more likely. There are 4,733 households. This corresponds to a 5% return by individual or an 11% return by household.

Gender: The survey was completed by more females than males. 268 females answered against 190 males, with 64 not specifying their gender.



Age: Of those providing their age, the majority of respondents were over 40 years old with good representation of all age brackets above this. Less than 5% of respondents were aged less than 30 years old.



Connection to Beaconsfield: Almost 90% of respondents lived in Beaconsfield itself with the majority having lived here for over 20 years, perhaps reflecting the predominant age brackets of those completing the survey. Approximately half the respondents suggested that they are actively involved with local community groups and organisations.

Survey Constraints

The survey provides a useful snapshot of views from the local population. In addition to the survey, a great deal of engagement was undertaken with groups and individuals around the town using a range of mechanisms such as: one-to-one meetings; drop-in days; pop-up stalls at local events; and social media and press contact. This has helped greatly to increase the level of engagement with locals with all information received being fed directly to the Working Groups investigating each of the themes of the plan.

It is accepted however that further engagement is required to ensure that a more balanced view can be achieved. For example there is a clear deficiency in the number of younger age groups represented (particularly teenagers and 18 to 30 year olds).

It is suggested therefore that the Vision for Beaconsfield's published action plan is viewed as the beginning of a prolonged dialogue with local people rather than the conclusion, with the hope that whilst it can offer already proposed actions stemming from tested ideas and projects, this is not exhaustive list and more is likely to emerge as time progresses and more local people are engaged with the plan. This is not atypical of plans of this sort and experience from other towns and communities illustrates that it is normal for community activism to continue to gather pace as people begin to observe positive changes as a result of the community planning process. Beaconsfield is in the early stages of its community planning journey, and it is clear from the engagement to date that there is an appetite locally for it to expand.

Content of the survey

The survey asked respondents to offer their views on a series of statements relating to four overarching themes:

- Environment
- Business
- Community
- Transport and Infrastructure

Respondents were also able to provide free-text comments on each of these themes to ensure that they could provide their full feedback. In addition to the themed questions, residents were also asked to provide their views on the following questions:

- What do you like most about Beaconsfield?
- What is your biggest concern about Beaconsfield?
- If you could bring about one positive change to Beaconsfield what would it be?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your aspirations for Beaconsfield?

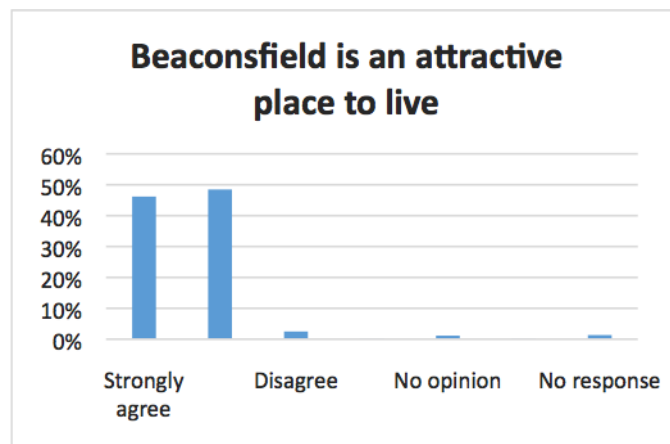
A summary of the responses to each theme and open-ended question is presented below.

Environment

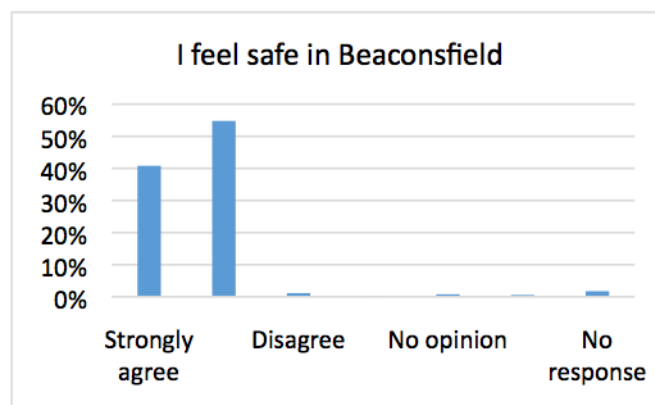
Taking into account all the comments relating to the environment, the key emerging issues for Beaconsfield are:

- **Maintaining roads and footpaths** – residents called for footpaths to be better maintained, more well-lit and clear of undergrowth. In terms of roads, this included a call for improved maintenance in terms of removing potholes, reducing unnecessary signage and generally maintaining the road surfaces.
- **Protecting green space** – there was a strong call for more green spaces across the town with a particular focus on a need for a new park or open space, ideally incorporating a children's play park. Residents were also keen to reduce the amount of development that is impacting on existing gardens. There was support for a general 'greening' of the town to include more planting in particularly along the major routes into town.
- **Retaining local character** – residents were keen to protect the local character of Beaconsfield, many people considering it to be eroded by unsympathetic new build.
- **Keeping the town tidy** – residents felt that the town was becoming scruffy both in terms of the amount of litter present and also the state of buildings, which many felt to be run down and in need of attention. The Town Hall was mentioned as an example here.
- **Enabling modest development** – residents were generally in favour of modest development that was both in-keeping with the character of the town and addressed a perceived need for more affordable homes. Some felt that a proportion of green belt land could be used for development in the future if this meant safeguarding open space in the town itself, although there was an eagerness to ensure that the town did not spread so far as to adjoin to other settlements.

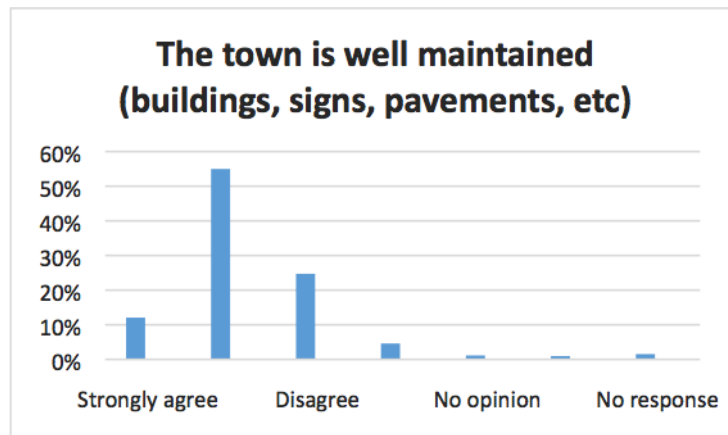
Commentary: An overwhelming majority (96%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Beaconsfield is an attractive place to live. Only 2.5% voiced disagreement.



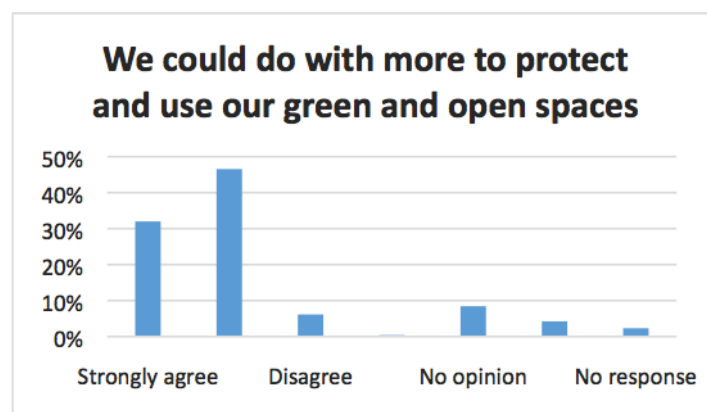
A similarly large majority agreed it is a safe place to live, even fewer voicing disagreement (1.3%). There were however several comments about the safety - with poorly maintained pavements, roads and street lighting making it unsafe to walk, especially at night.



Residents were more divided as to whether the town is well-maintained. Two thirds felt that it is, but nearly 30% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is borne out by the comments themselves with the majority reflecting concerns about the poor maintenance of pavements and roads around the town. Roads and pavements were also views as unsafe with the state of their dilapidation reflecting poorly on the otherwise prosperous town. The general scruffiness of buildings, including the Town Hall, was also noted as was the need to remove unnecessary signage.



Over three quarters of respondents agreed that there is a need to protect and enhance Beaconsfield’s green spaces, with fewer than 7% disagreeing. This was the second most commented-on topic. Many residents called for a new town park or the development of existing ones with features to benefit particular groups of residents such as families and teenagers. The high level of don’t know/no opinion (12.5%) may reflect a lack of knowledge of what there currently is in Beaconsfield and/or what can be done to maintain it.



There was strong support for maintaining the greenbelt with 90% agreeing that it should be protected against just 4% disagreeing. This however should be read in the context of the more nuanced comments, with *more* than 4% commenting that protection of ‘isolated’ bits of greenbelt could/should be balanced against a need for affordable housing (often defined as affordable to the next generation) or for parking to relieve the town’s problems. Several specific sites were identified.

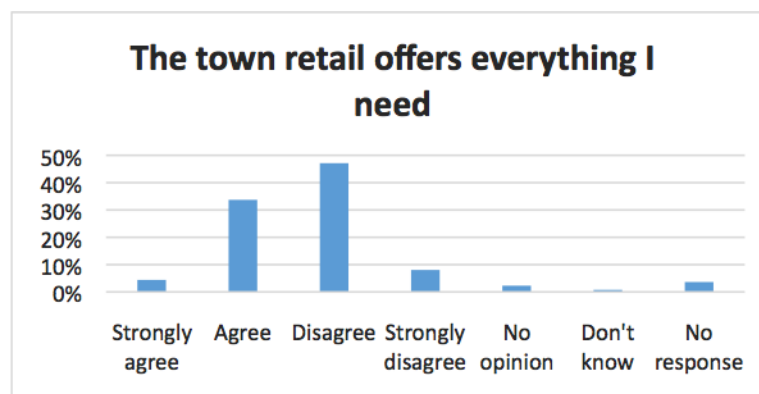
Many comments related to overdevelopment and its impact – on congestion and parking especially.

Economy

Taking into account all the comments relating to the economy, the key emerging issues for Beaconsfield are:

- **Providing a diverse shopping offer** – residents wished to maintain a wide variety of shops in both the Old and New Towns with a preference toward independent stores and fewer charity shops.
- **Promoting the visitor economy** – the majority of respondents felt that promoting the town further would result in even more traffic congestion and heightened issues around parking which is already considered a problem for Beaconsfield. A smaller number of respondents however felt that more could be done to promote the cultural heritage of the town with town trails and town museum given as examples.
- **Supporting local businesses** – there was widespread concern that traders, in particular independent ones, were struggling to survive in the town possibly as a result of the difficult landscape in which they are having to operate. High rates and rents were mentioned frequently here and a lack of parking for employees.
- **Improving car parking** – this was felt to be inadequate, particularly in the Old Town, and acting as a deterrent to retailers and visitors.

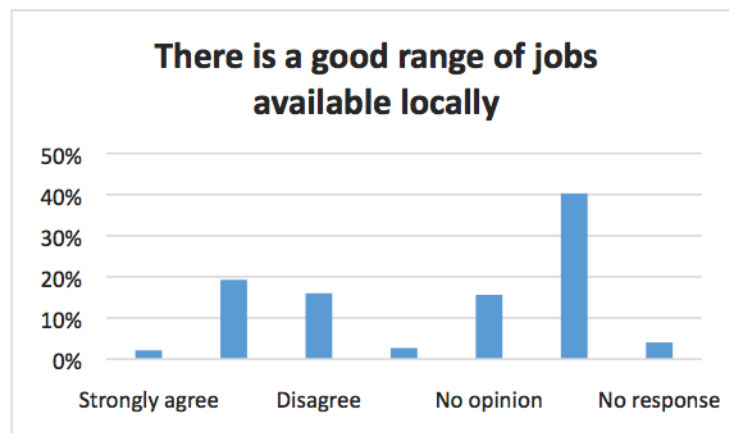
Commentary: The statistics illustrate strong support for more independent shops (68%) with just 13% disagreeing. 18% had no opinion/did not respond. A slim majority (55%) disagreed that the retail offer of the town was sufficient for their needs, with 35% feeling that it was not.



Comments in favour of independent businesses focused on a regret for the loss of pre-existing shops and amenities and a wish for their return. Many also noted their contribution to the town's character. However, others supported the arrival of chain stores as more affordable and saving them having to travel further afield for example to Wycombe. The numbers of charity shops, hairdressers and estate agents was deemed by many to be too high and detrimental to the overall offer.

As far as opinions on the town being a good place to start or run a business were concerned, there was a perhaps understandable high level of 'no opinion/don't know' at about 57%. Those who felt able to comment were divided roughly 2:1 agreeing/disagreeing. The majority of comments related to the challenges associated with running a high business: high rates and rents and falling footfall possibly as a result of the lack of parking and congestion. It was felt that these factors particularly affected smaller independent retailers and that more needed to be done to support them. This was not just true of the retail sector. Interestingly the loss of these businesses also means the loss of employment opportunities - one commentator noted that he had moved his business to Bourne End because of high running costs, and since then his business had grown to employ 90 people.

Opinions of the availability of job opportunities were equally divided between those who agreed and those who did not (21% vs 19%), and again the majority (56%) ticked no opinion or don't know. Jobs did not feature in comments at all, probably an indication of current reach of survey.



The question of tourism divided opinion. While 47% of people agreed with the proposition that more could be done to support tourism, 23% were against. The most negative comments related to the impact of any additional tourism on an already congested town with major parking problems.

Bekonscot's importance in the town was widely acknowledged but apart from that, many could see no reason why Beaconsfield should promote itself at all. Those in favour of doing more to promote the town mentioned its value as an attractive historic market town with an interesting cultural heritage. Some felt there should be more information available at local points such as the Town Hall. Others suggested cultural events as a better route, noting that many of our heritage locations no longer exist.

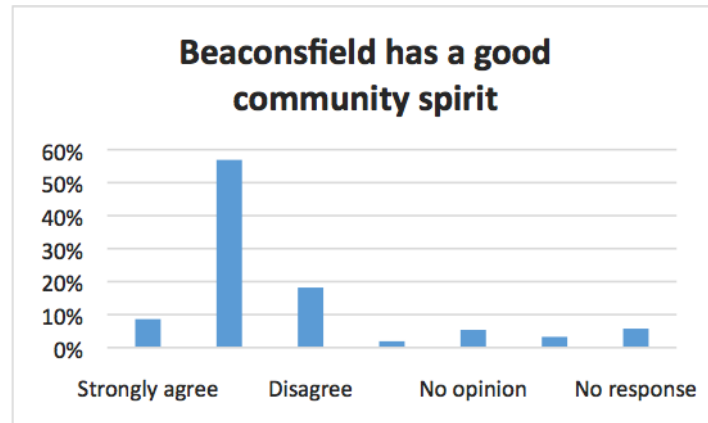
Community

Taking into account all the comments relating to the community, the key emerging issues for Beaconsfield are:

- **Providing more community facilities** – many respondents commented on their desire to see new facilities in the town including a swimming pool, sports facilities, arts centre, community hub, facilities for young people and children and a cinema. Many wondered if existing facilities could be made better use of and also whether activities might be more appropriately clustered.
- **Making the most of Wilton Park** – many commented on the potential opportunities to install new community facilities as part of the Wilton Park development.
- **Retaining community spirit** – a number of residents were keen to suggest that the town benefits from a good level of community spirit and that Beaconsfield is a pleasant place to live. They wished this to continue especially in the face of a growing community.

Commentary: A two thirds (65%) majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the town has a good community spirit, with only 20% disagreeing. There were however many voiced concerns about the future as the town evolves, with many organisations needing volunteers. This may reflect

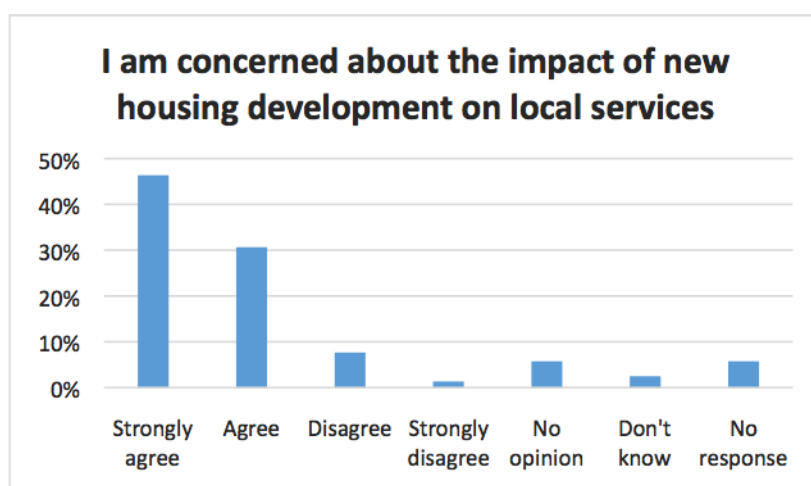
the fact that local community groups were canvassed to encourage members to fill in the survey and those people would naturally be more tied into the community than others and more aware of the challenges.



The same could explain the positive response to the question about finding out about community events and groups. 62% said they knew how to do this, against 26% saying they didn't. There were many calls for a central 'hub' for communication about local societies and events.

80% of the respondents were positive about our current local services such as schools and health provision, which corresponds with independent views such as the Friends and Family Test for our surgeries and Ofsted reports on our schools. Only 9% disagreed.

Probably for this reason, 77% of respondents voiced real concern about the impact of current development on these facilities, 46% of them strongly so. Only 9% said they were not concerned. This was the most commented on issue, whether specifically for Wilton Park or generally.



With regard to cultural and leisure opportunities, 35% felt there was a good range in town, with a full half disagreeing. A higher percentage (60%) felt there was not enough for young people to do. The need for better and new sports and leisure facilities featured highly in the comments along with a call for a swimming pool and general facilities.

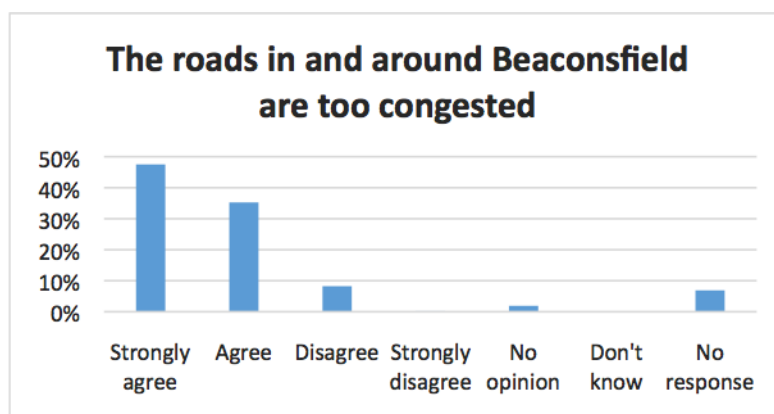
Opinions were more positive about how the town meets the needs of older people, with 45% agreeing that needs are well met and only 15% disagreeing. Over a third of respondents however did not know or had no opinion on this important matter which is surprising given the age profile of those completing the survey.

Infrastructure and Transport

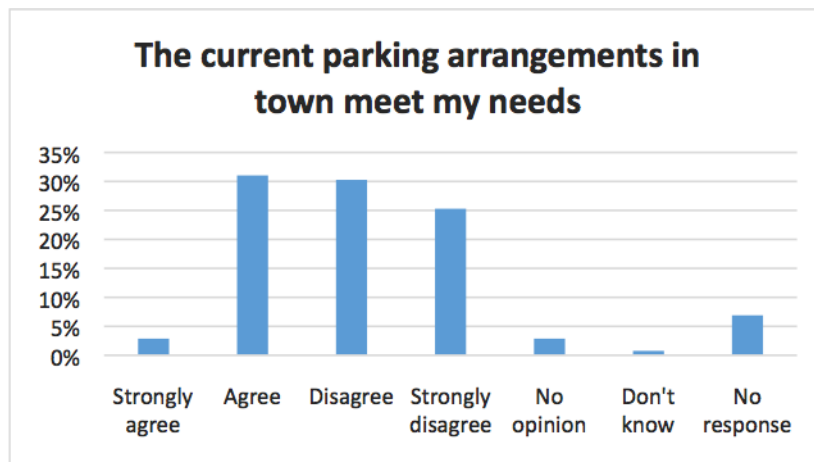
Taking into account all the comments relating to infrastructure and transport, the key emerging issues for Beaconsfield are:

- **Improving car parking provision**– this was raised by a great number of respondents throughout the survey with calls for more parking, more short-stay parking and ideally free parking. Commuters clogging side streets was mentioned as an issue to address. The Old Town was felt to be of particular concern with little repercussion for those flaunting parking regulations.
- **Revamping cycling infrastructure** – this topic attracted a mixture of comments. Generally cycling is supported in the town however many respondents felt that the existing cycling lanes were inadequate and sometimes dangerous with limited link-ups to other routes and too often encroached upon by parked vehicles.
- **Reducing traffic congestion** – the sheer amount of traffic in the town was raised and its impact on road safety and congestion particularly at peak times. The idea of a creating a bypass was raised here and also in the free-text questions toward the end of the survey. Additionally thoughts were raised as how to create better connections between areas of the town that did not rely on using the car.
- **Supplying more affordable housing** – many respondents were concerned about the level of new development that was at the higher end of the housing scale as opposed to the more affordable end.

Commentary: held very strong opinions on traffic in town with nearly 50% strongly agreeing that the roads are too congested, and another 35% agreeing. Less than 9 percent disagreed. Comments ranged from purely negative to suggestions on solutions, including several calls for the bypass.



As far as satisfying parking needs is concerned, opinions were much more divided, with 34% fairly content with current provision but 56% disagreeing. A quarter of all respondents fell into the “strongly disagree” category on this issue.



Parking was the number one topic for comment across the survey as a whole with many suggestions and examples of schemes from elsewhere that might be suitable for Beaconsfield. The two key issues of commuter parking and cost of parking in town car-parks were often raised as was the need for short-stay 30 minute parking slots in the Old Town.

There was disagreement about opportunities for walking and cycling, with 55% feeling there were enough opportunities, and 31% disagreeing. Cycle lanes in particular divided opinion with many saying they are a waste of money, but an almost equal number feeling that more should be done for cyclists (even if they didn't like the current solution).

Public transport is seen as adequate by 41%, while 21% disagreed with this. 31% of respondents however ticked “no opinion” or “do not know”, perhaps indicating the high rate of car use in town. Comments covered the poor bus links to outlying villages – rail services were considered excellent.

This part of the survey also covered development and housing in town. Nearly three quarters of all respondents were concerned about current trends in development and 57% agree that there is not enough affordable housing. Against this, just short of 10% were *not* concerned about development, and 10% ticked no opinion/don't know. Similarly 15% did *not* agree that there is a lack of affordable housing, and a full 20% recorded no opinion/don't know on this issue.

APPENDIX B – BLUE SKIES WORKING GROUP

Chair: Mike Elliott

Members: Jenefer Farncombe, Simon Woolf, Lucy Irvine and Nicole Frazer

Other contributors/consultees: Peter Foster, Jane Woolf

The central Vision Statement of our Working Group is:

We want to see Beaconsfield thrive by being open to new ideas, best practices from elsewhere and willing to explore innovative ways to improve all aspects of our Town. We believe Local Councillors, Officers, Businesses, Community organisations and Residents should all play a part in making Beaconsfield the best Market Town in the UK.

We have reviewed the responses which have been made to the Vision for Beaconsfield consultation survey on our website, have taken comments via social media and in face to face contacts during the project. We have been encouraged by the interest and passions generated. Beaconsfield is very lucky to be able to draw on such a rich source of informed opinion.

The issues that emerged as “Blue skies” which have given focus to this working group are listed below. In some cases the group has explored more general topics that did not fit within other sub-groups, in other cases we have handed these on to the most appropriate sub-group:

Blue skies topics

- Public art
- Use of “nudges” to influence behaviours
- Local Council engagement with the community
- Localism opportunities and potential of Neighbourhood plans
- Beaconsfield Local Area Forum
- Future purpose of the Town Hall
- A Beaconsfield Festival

Topics discussed and handed to other sub-groups

- The lack of primary school places in the town
- Changing nature of work
- Shared space as a solution to balance needs of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians
- BCC Local Area Forum
- Multi-use sports facilities and potential for a pool
- Community bus feasibility
- Sustainability and future form of Fair Day, Tuesday and Farmers’ markets
- Common Land and other enforcement challenges
- The need for affordable homes for priority occupations, sons and daughters
- The need for options for ageing residents looking to stay in the Town.

Beaconsfield Blue Skies Vision - 2025

The Town will remain an excellent place to work, rest and play. Excellent communications, proximity to London and an ANOB, excellent education choices and lifestyle opportunities will continue to attract affluent professionals to set up home here and stay for many years. Challenges of traffic congestion, parking and development pressures will be mitigated by a relief road, improved rail services including links direct to Oxford and revised parking schemes. The lack of community cohesion will be addressed by fresh initiatives such as a multi-sports facility, arts and pride in the town.

Development in the Town is inevitable but must be planned with the needs of current and future residents in mind. Areas such as those between the A40 and M40, the area around Pyebush Roundabout and the area between the proposed relief road and the Amersham road are potential sites for further residential property, community health, sports and arts facilities, also employment opportunities through starter units and retirement living. The existing Town Hall, Beacon and Curzon Centres will be repurposed in an holistic approach to community facilities.

Blue Skies Specific Recommendations

- 1. That a Public art strategy and policy be developed and implemented in the Town.**
An increasing number of local authorities have public arts policies and visitors to France can see many examples of this in practice. The benefits include:
Enhance the physical environment
Create a sense of place and distinctiveness
Contribute to community belonging and cohesion
Contribute to social health and wellbeing
Contribute to economic value through inward investment and tourism
Foster civic pride and confidence
Raise quality of life
Discourage crime
- 2. That authorities should seek out and use “nudges” to influence behaviours as an alternative to ineffective signage, byelaws and regulation.** Examples are painted footprints to the litter bins, painted paw prints to the dog waste bins, multi-coloured pavements suggesting parking bays on the common land to encourage structured parking.
- 3. That Local Councils at Town, District and County level increase their engagement with residents.** This may include some of the following suggestions: restructure Council meeting agenda to encourage greater participation from the floor, an annual consultation on the level of the precept, Leader and Committee chair “surgeries” much like our MP offers, a Council Twitter feed, a Beaconsfield annual happiness index, a regular bulletin on the website, in the parish magazine and other written and online social media.
- 4. That the Town investigate the Localism opportunities and potential of Neighbourhood plans.** Local Towns and districts have availed themselves of the potential to influence the

development of their Towns through the creation of Neighbourhood plans and we believe there is a strong case to do so in Beaconsfield.

5. **That the constitution of the Local Area Forum be revised to include community group representation in common with almost all the other local areas in Buckinghamshire.** The Beaconsfield LAF unusually has no community representation and say in how c £45k of BCC monies are spent on the Town.
6. **That a review take place of the current and future purpose of the Town Hall.** The Town Hall is a major expenditure element in the BTC budget, requires considerable upkeep and has a diminishing community usage and value. It requires a fundamental review as part of an holistic appraisal of community assets in the Town. Its location makes it an ideal community hub, yet it fails to fulfil this purpose.
7. **That key arts groups investigate the idea of coordinating existing and new arts activities to create a Beaconsfield Festival.** By coordinating activities, leveraging publicity and other resources it should be possible to create a situation where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We have seen locally at Woburn Green how this principle has worked well, and importantly encouraged community involvement and cohesion. There is potential to include a community arts project in this festival or separately. A US example of the sort of thing that can be achieved, the project engaged the community in the definition, construction and ongoing maintenance of an arts installation in the local library targeted at the children visitors generating positive community benefits at many levels.

Topics for other sub-groups

1. The lack of primary school places in the town
Current levels of organic development in the town have created a shortage of primary school places and known expansion at Wilton Park and elsewhere is likely to further exacerbate this issue. Having to walk, bus, cycle or drive primary school pupils is undesirable at many levels, adequate planning and provision should be made.
2. Changing nature of work
Increased home working, the need for faster broadband connections to support this, also business bureau capability say for fast high volume printing, scanning, by the hour meeting and serviced office space, informal and discrete coffee shop meeting opportunities.
3. Shared space as a solution to balance needs of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.
The example of Poynton where a major intersection in the middle of a town was changed from a highly controlled to free shared space with remarkable results seems a powerful potential solution for New Town between Waitrose and Grove road, also London End and Old Town roundabouts.
4. Multi-use sports facilities and potential for a pool
A review of the various sports in the Town and their different challenges it appears that a multi-use sports facility would be a fantastic asset to the Town. Initial review suggests that this could be sustainable if central changing room, reception, security, café and bar facilities

were shared on a single site allowing families and individuals to enjoy different activities at the same location.

5. Community bus feasibility

Work done on this in the context of park and ride and the Motorway services development were revisited and passed on.

6. Sustainability and future form of Fair Day, Tuesday and Farmers' markets

It is vital that the markets continue to adapt and thrive if the Town is to retain its market town heritage. More needs to be done to support the markets. The Fair is a valued institution that needs to adapt to survive in the 21st century.

7. Common Land and other enforcement challenges

The lack of apparent willingness, powers or resource to enforce regulations are a concern and need more investigation to identify why it takes 18 months to remove illegally installed lights on the Crazy Bear, many months to move a lorry from the common land, so many cars seem to treat double yellow lines with impunity say outside the post office in the New Town.

8. The need for affordable homes for priority occupations, sons and daughters

Carers, Health workers, Police and so on increasingly need to be able to live in or near the Town or as travel costs in both time and money mean fewer will be able or wish to come to Beaconsfield to work. Our children grow up in the town and many wish to stay but lack of affordable housing makes this difficult for many.

9. The need for options for ageing residents looking to stay in the Town.

Lack of places to downsize, in assisted living, in residential homes or in care homes will drive our ageing population to leave the town where they have lived for decades and wish to remain there.

Mike Elliott – Chair of Blue Skies

1st June 2015

APPENDIX C – ‘THREE WISHES’ SURVEY REPORT

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

WISHES RECEIVED:	92 (NB some clearly from families/parents)
Butler’s Court	13
Davenies	11
High March	7
Holtspur	19
St Mary’s	17
Other/anon	10
Via email	15

Overview:

Beaconsfield’s children have a clear-eyed view of their town and what they want from it.

Our children are sharply aware of our ‘adult’ problems with traffic flow and better parking (free or cheaper short-term parking was requested by many). Speed bumps and traffic cameras also featured – and filling the potholes even got one wish, as did more affordable housing and not knocking old houses down. One respondent asked for a boy’s secondary school.

Children want to **feel safe**. Many wishes focused on improving **traffic** to make it safer to walk or cycle round town. They were keen to have a more **bike friendly** town, with more bike lanes, bike ride events and bike racks. There were also individual calls for zebra crossings on busy roads near schools (2), speed cameras, better street lighting and CCTV. One child asked for the nettles and thorns to be cleared from the town paths in summer. And a couple of wishes came in for more local buses into town.

The majority of responses were about things our families would like to see and DO in Beaconsfield. Often, our children want what they can find in other towns, set up here.

Unsurprisingly, calls for a **swimming pool** came out on top with 51 wishes - mentioned more than twice as frequently as the runner-up wish for a **cinema** in town (20 wishes). About half of all our respondents asked for a swimming pool as one of their three wishes, with one enthusiast wishing for it three times! There were also many wishes (~15) for an **indoor leisure centre**, often incorporating water slides and pool, or a gym, climbing wall, etc. Soft play for younger children was popular. And a snow dome got one vote.

Also very high on the list are wishes for more and better **outdoor playgrounds** (12) and/or playground equipment such as climbing frames and zip wires, with children very keen to have play areas *close* to their own homes – in the New Town, Old Town or Holtspur. There were helpful suggestions about having a café facility linked to the playground, making it a social space for the whole family. **Football pitches** for everyone are also on the wishlist.

There was a clear message that older children needed places to play and ‘hang out’ in town, with specific wishes for a **skatepark** (6) and for a **youth club** (6).

Beaconsfield children appear to value the town's **green spaces**, and there were about 12 calls for a bigger park, with flowers to make the town 'a friendlier place to live' and paths to scoot or cycle along- and one great suggestion to have a place where children could grow flowers and vegetables.

Town shopping was also seen through children's eyes, with various calls for a (bigger and better) toy and games shop (7), music shop (2), pet shop (2), bike shop and clothes shops for children – but 'no more charity shops'. They were keen to see child-friendly restaurants (2 big chains mentioned) and food shops – one wishing specifically for an ice cream parlour. Four children wished for an Arcade, although it is not clear if this was just for shopping or with games - one specific wish was to add a games room to the Library.

Children in Beaconsfield seem to enjoy the **festivals and events** put on in town, and want more! There were calls for carnival parades with floats, more fun fairs, a further summer event to rival the Festival of Lights, and more 'community activities' such as town trails at Easter and Hallowe'en. Others suggested a special Christmas Tree and a giant Advent Calendar in the centre of town to act as a festive marker for everyone. Some families would like to see a community centre as a cultural focus, with a place to find out about what's on in town.

Beaconsfield children have shown us that they have bright minds, vivid imaginations and kind hearts. There were calls for a zoo and a circus, a space rocket and a visit from Spiderman – as well as half a day off school every two weeks and no more 11-plus! There were also touching and personal wishes for happiness for everyone, for every family to have a mother and father, food on their plates, and £10 in their pockets.

Deirdre Smaje
Steering Group Committee

05.01.2015

APPENDIX D – SWOT & PESTEL ANALYSIS

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats - SWOT Analysis

The Steering Group, comprising interested individuals and those representing wider organisations, undertook an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats they perceive in relation to Beaconsfield at their meeting on the 5th November and edited during the project. The following issues were identified:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosperous • Stable population • Generally well kept • Good transport links • Good schools • Strong faith community • Low rate of crime • Good range of shops - self-sufficient in terms of shopping offer • High rate of employment • Good standard of education among population • Lots of organisations and groups operating in the town - there is a lot going on • Good range of sporting facilities and activities • Attractive natural environment - it's a pleasant place to live and people generally like it here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No (central) town park • Lack of parking (not enough spaces and too expensive) - for visitors which deters shoppers; deters businesses locating in Beaconsfield; makes it difficult to hold events; also for workers • Transport - congestion • Lack of community cohesion – Holtspur, New and Old towns • Not enough cycle paths - though there are some new ones and some bike racks at the station • No theatre • No public swimming pool • Local community do not always engage in Beaconsfield life - feeling of a dormitory town • Town centre is disjointed - lack of one focal point • Not enough affordable housing making Beaconsfield an expensive place to set up home • Aged population • Public services stretched at the moment • Infrastructure stretched – water, power, sewerage • Shortage of school places • Lack of range of activities for the young • We don't know what all the groups/organisations are here • We have lost a lot of our independent and specialist shops • There is not enough land available for development of additional housing, commercial, employment • Not enough jobs (with good prospects) locally for school leavers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor bus services • Expensive place for young people including travel costs to get around • No arts centre • Lots of community buildings, but not always fit for purpose - lots doubling up and making do • The school is a dedicated 'arts school' but there are no associated opportunities locally for school leavers • Not much in the way of cultural provision for the 20-60 age group • Shortage of 'special housing' and affordable housing - is provision (actual and planned) adequate for all sectors of the community? • Administrative boundaries can make planning difficult - we straddle S Bucks and Chiltern DCs • Lots of people identify with Beaconsfield but technically live outside • The railway bridge is too narrow making it a pinch point for users and especially dangerous for pedestrians • Little for youth to do in the town
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilton Park Development • Social media as a community "binder" eg. My Beaconsfield • Harnessing youth/children's activities to create greater inclusivity • Opportunities presented through Localism • There is a lot going on but we are not good at telling people • Better links with the young of the town to get them more involved in civic life (youth council?) and to enable further activities for them • Bringing together the older and younger populations to learn from/support one another • More joined up thinking involving the young of the town • The British Legion building redevelopment. • Some minor brownfield opportunities for infill etc eg. Ex Esso service station. Some greenfield also available • A fair amount of community capacity and available venues which could be better mobilised/organised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HS2 - impact of construction and legacy once built • Over-development leading to overstretched infrastructure • "High Street" nationally in decline • Wider policy decisions that will impact on the town • Pockets of disenfranchised people • Isolationism among local population - pockets of deprivation v gated communities • Division of children into separate attainment groups at 11+ level • Wilton Park development • Housing becoming increasingly unaffordable particularly for those working locally • Grammar school places under pressure • Health care provision under pressure • By pass (relief road) - if it either doesn't happen or is done badly • Closure of the library

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could we create a multi-storey car park? • Promotion of tourism • Development of more/better provision of services/activities for older people • A bus service to link various facilities by merging services • New school, expand existing. • Make more use of school facilities for the wider public • Opportunities for community-run activities such as a community theatre, library etc • Community response to reduction in public sector provision • Capitalising on local/regional/national policies and spending priorities • Funding opportunities 	
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Analysis of External Influences on Beaconsfield – PESTEL Analysis

Alongside the above, we considered any external forces that might have an impact on life in Beaconsfield and reflected them in preparing this plan. This includes Political, Economic, Social and Technological drivers of change, also Environmental aspects were included.

Political influences	Economic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of councillors in 2015 and impact of this on continuity/ strategic objectives for the town • Emphasis on localism agenda • Impact of wider government policy • Aims/objectives of District and County Councils and impact of these • Town Councillors influenced by party political interests. • Realignment of three tier Local Authority in Bucks and potential merging of Chilterns and South Bucks in particular • SBDC that is capital rich and revenue poor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of jobs locally? • Failing high street, reduced business rate revenues • Wider austerity at National, County and District level forcing alternative sources of LA income generation e.g. aggressive parking charges, reduced road and other maintenance • Disproportionate energy price rises well in excess of inflation and economic growth • Disproportionate rise in travel costs reducing suitability as dormitory town for London commuters

Social influences	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The population is gradually aging which will bring new challenges • Changes in habits - eg. Shopping • Isolation from fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by older residents • Overly protective parenting from fear of crime and anti-social behaviour • Blame and claim culture • Over emphasis on real or imaginary Health and Safety legislation as reasons not to do things e.g. Volunteering in general and with children in particular • Expectation of instant access to information, products and services. • Lower paid workers unable to live or economically travel to the town • Declining indigenous population birth rates, rising immigrant birth rates • Greater language diversity in the town • Practicing faith communities under pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to high speed broadband • Disintermediation, near perfect markets and choice/range/reach from Internet breaking traditional business models e.g. travel and estate agents, insurance brokers, retailers • Mobile telephony and access • Cashless society • GPS • Internet enabled Democracy and potential decision making through petitions, blogs, social media • Electric vehicles reducing pollution
Environmental and Legal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure capacities including flooding, sewerage, power, roads, rail. • Fewer more expensive landfill • Greater compliance and awareness of the need of recycling, upcycling • Over emphasis on real or imaginary Health and Safety legislation as reasons not to do things • Global warming directives on LA's and residents 	

Assets / What's missing?

Finally, it might be worth listing out particular assets in town that you wish to safeguard and any assets that are missing. This can include both buildings and land.

ASSETS	MISSING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legion (charity owned)• Town Hall (debatable as to asset or liability)• Curzon Centre• Beacon Centre• St Theresa's (church owned)• Fitzwilliam Centre (church owned)• Masonic Hall (charity owned)• Tennis club (privately operated)• Squash club (privately operated)• Rugby club (privately operated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Central town park• Safe walking, trails, running, cycling spaces• Football pitches for junior teams• All weather facilities (Astro turf floodlights)

V4B Blues Skies for discussion - Working Group topics

ART CENTRE – CINEMA, CONCERTS, THEATRE LOOK AT WALLINGFORD COVER RAILWAY
REPURPOSE TOWN HALL SOCIAL MEDIA TOWN BLOG FOR TOWN AND EVENTS
COMMUNITY CENTRE LIKE BURNHAM HEDGERLEY PRIMARY CARE CENTRE
PULL PEOPLE TOGETHER THRU ARTS – EG WOKINGHAM 3G SPORTS DAY NIGHT FACILITY
1 HOUR FREE PARKING 20MPH SPEED LIMIT A BYPASS TOWN LOOS
CINEMA OR SIMILAR FOR YOUNG TEENS SWIMMING POOL CAFÉ CULTURE
FREE ELECTRIC BUS OR TRAM AROUND TOWN MORE TRAFFIC FREE CYCLE PATHS
TOWN PARK IMPROVE LEDBORO LANE A355 JUNCTION ARTS CINEMA
RESIDENTS PARKING PERMITS IN TOWN FOOD FESTIVAL OR SIMILAR TOWN EVENT
REPURPOSE BEACON CENTRE INCLUDING A POOL TOWN DIRECTORY CLUBS COURSES ETC
CHILDRENS PLAY AREA IN NEW TOWN EASY ACCESS VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES
SHUTTLE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW TOWNS MORE SOUL AND ENERGY LIKE HENLEY
MARKET AS “MOST PICTURESQUE MARKET TOWN IN SOUTH EAST”
30 MINS PARKING AT POST OFFICE PEDESTRIANISE THE NEW TOWN – POYNTON
A BOWLING GREEN ON TOWN HALL GREEN WITH CAFÉ IN TOWN HALL BETTER XMAS LIGHTS
ELDERLEY DROP IN CENTRE, CLUBS REPURPOSE TOWN HALL / CURZON CENTRE
RE-EMPHASISE TOWN AS PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE FRIENDLY, NOT MOTORIST
PLAY AREA IN NEW TOWN REFURBISH CURZON AS WELCOMING COMFORTABLE HUB
RESTORE THE TOWN HALL REVISE TOWN BOUNDARIES TO MORE NATURAL AREA
TRAFFIC LEAVING STATION TO TURN LEFT OR NEW ROUTE TO A355 HERITAGE WALK/PLAQUES
LOOK AT MARLOW /OLD AMERSHAM FOR VIBRANT CENTRE STOP HIGH ST LOOKING “SAME AS”
PARKING IN DRIVES SCHEME “NUDGES” EG FOOTPRINTS TO LITTER BINS
GREEN GROCERS/BUTCHERS/LESS CHARITYSHOPS LOOK AT WINDSOR DIAL A BUS / TRAM
REDUCE VISUAL CLUTTER, MAINTAIN GOOD SIGNAGE EG FINGERPOSTS A COMMUNITY CHOIR
LOOK AT CHESHAM MOOR AS SUSTAINABLE POOL / GYM LIBRARY TO TOWN HALL
FREE WIFI IN TOWN. BETTER BROADBAND PRESERVE “GARDEN SUBURB” CONCEPT
MORE TOWN EVENTS LIKE F of LIGHT SHARED / COLLABORATIVE SPORTS FACILITIES
WILTON PARK A1 STANDARD AND INCLUDE COMMUNITY ASSETS A TOWN CLOCK FEATURE
THRIVING MARKET BETTER INTEGRATION/INFORMATION HOLTSPUR – OLD – NEW TOWNS
GALLERY SPACE REPLACE TREES, LEAFY BCF, EG CHEERY TREE ROAD OTHER TOWN PLANS

APPENDIX E – PUBLIC ART STRATEGY FOR THE TOWN

It is agreed that a public art strategy should be implemented into the town of Beaconsfield.

Public art would create visual cohesion, linking the different 'satellite' areas of the town. The public art would be integral in the street furniture, way finding and 'nudges' in the town itself. There would also be some main feature works, which would be mirrored in all the aforementioned integrations. The strategy would involve the community at the early planning stages: working with local groups and schools via workshops. The public art would help to re-shape the public spaces and bring re-vitalization to the town.

The Public art would:

- Enhance the physical environment
- Create a sense of place and distinctiveness
- Contribute to community cohesion
- Contribute to social health and wellbeing
- Contribute to economic value through inward investment and tourism
- Foster civic pride and confidence
- Raise quality of life
- Reduce crime

A recommendation is made that the any construction/development in the town includes this public art strategy in their development. We expect support from our local and district council in implementing this scheme.

(see percent for art scheme and Heart of London Business Alliance)

Author: Lucy Irvine