

HARTEST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - SURVEY FORMS

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

February 2014

The survey

The survey was carried out during May 2013. Survey forms were delivered to all households in Hartest and in Boxted and the form could also be downloaded from the Hartest website. Completed forms were collected a few weeks later.

Aim of the survey

A range of topics related to living in the villages of Hartest and Boxted was explored with the aim of obtaining the views of residents in the villages. The prompt questions were deliberately open, designed to stimulate discussion and encourage the contribution of suggestions and diverse responses from different people. It was not intended to be a statistical survey.

Analysis and summary of responses

- A total of 78 completed survey forms were returned and these include some from Boxted.
(ed - It has since been decided to limit the Neighbourhood Plan to the parish of Hartest, but the Boxted responses are still included in this summary.)
- The responses have been collected together in the original sections of the form, presented under the prompt questions.
- This summary (February 2014) attempts to reflect people's views and distil the essentials from the responses in a way that ensures all views are represented. No attempt has been made to analyse the results statistically - if this had been the intention, the questions would have been presented differently.
- A more detailed summary (October 2013), retaining much of the original wording of individual comments, is available on request (*email: scilla.turner14@gmail.com*)
- At the end of the survey form, there were opportunities for more open responses, including views on identity and sustainability as well as space for people to add their own comments - specific or general. These more open responses offered valuable views and suggestions and included many interesting ideas and views on particular issues. These have not been included with this summary - firstly, because it would be impracticable to do so (in terms of space) and secondly, it is inappropriate to reveal the identity of the people making the comment.
However, all contributions are available for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and will be given full consideration during discussions leading to development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Finally, we say thank you to all of you in Hartest and Boxted for your responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Survey. The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is very grateful to all who have contributed with your opinions, ideas and suggestions. These will be considered carefully and be valuable in helping to shape the Neighbourhood Plan for the village of Hartest.

on behalf of: Hartest Parish Council

May 2014

HOUSING

- *Does your home meet your needs? If not, how would you want to change it.*
- *Do you think new houses would be appropriate for our villages? What sort of houses should be provided?*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

Many considered their home does meet their needs but some indications of limitations.

- some wishes for extensions, need for bathroom upstairs, too small for full-time occupation
- awareness of energy costs and desires for improvements in heating, use of solar energy etc
- desire for more land + space for parking
- soon need to downsize but remain in the village

General acceptance that new houses might be needed for future with many comments with regard to the nature of the houses. Some clearly oppose further developments.

sympathetically designed + fit with landscape

- emphasise need for sympathetic design, small scale developments, self-sustaining and aesthetically pleasing, use traditional materials in the character of the historic village
- large scale developments not appropriate
- not large "executive" homes
- not ribbon development or estates but careful sited within the landscape, adequate spacing
- infill, boundary
- re-develop some existing houses

modest scale / affordable / diverse mixture

- support need for family houses, mix of 2, 3, 4, 5 bed houses
 - affordable houses for young people / encourage working in the village / low cost
 - need to integrate with other facilities (such as shop, businesses)
 - starter homes / single storey (for elderly)
 - link to development of light industry / business in village
- suggestion for Community Land Trust

BUILDINGS USED BY PUBLIC

- Do existing buildings used by the public serve your needs? (say which you refer to)
- Do we need additional public buildings or services? (e.g. shop, business facilities, other) Would you use them?

Comments, concerns, suggestions

Recognise value of doctors' surgery, garage + school - more specific comments below.

Under "additional buildings", many comments emphasised the need for shop + post office.

Institute

- some positive comments: excellent facility, attractive, excellent restoration, welcoming space
- some negative comments: needs more creative management, serves as "Hall for hire" rather than community centre, not warming and acoustically poor, could serve needs better if not over-obsessed with appearance + parking
- need to adapt to those in village during the day - coffee, tea, drop-in, newspapers, games (table tennis + billiards) and become more of a meeting place (could even house a shop??)

pub

various negative comments but these were made before recent changes

- calls for "proper village local" + pointers towards opportunities to open up with shop + post office and make it more of a community centre
- should be free house

Church

- could be more of a communal facility for non-religious gatherings, under-used but good to see it used for concerts and lectures, serve coffee / tea + newspapers etc (link with Institute)

community shop + post office

- need for community shop + post office, as volunteer project, important for social interaction, in centre of village as community hub, include cafe
- various suggestions for what it would do, nature of goods, other facilities it could provide
- loads of possibilities with local foods
- several responses show awareness of the difficulties and efforts that were made previously, but generally in favour of trying again

business premises

- need for "rough and ready" buildings for local people to set up employment

ROADS AND PARKING

- Are they suitable for car users in 2013?
- If not, what changes would you like to see? (e.g. speed control measures, more parking)

Comments, concerns, suggestions

Responses showed some support that roads are adequate but with reservations and concerns

speeding - concerns and suggestions for traffic calming

- too many cars speed, need for controls
- use technology to control speed / flashing signs / speed bumps to slow traffic at start of village + within village / enforce speed controls / speed cameras
- avoid traffic islands, pinch points etc - too suburban and not in character of village
- speed control of 20mph in village

size of vehicles

- need for restrictions - large lorries and farm machinery (cause damage and too large for roads)
- weight limit for vehicles

parking

- some need for more parking, particularly in The Row
- conflict between available parking places and "look" of the area
- suggestions for parking site near centre of village
- improvement needed near school and for residents in The Row
- need to protect grass verges on narrow roads

other comments and suggestions

- need for sensible bypass
- concept that village is a "people-centred" area
- some refer to maintenance, potholes, winter gritting

GREEN SPACES

- *In what way do you value our green spaces? (e.g. the Green, Harest Wood)*
- *Should we provide more and if so what? (e.g. playgrounds for children, sports areas)*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

Many positive responses emphasise their value, particularly The Green but also the wood

The Green

- “focal point” of the village, “is” the village, defining characteristics of the village, protect at all costs as historic core of the village
- concerns relate to management with over-zealous mowing resulting in sterile appearance / over manicured / becoming “twee” and suburbanised (so losing village character), need for more sympathetic management
- suggest area of longer grass to give more informal appearance and encourage some wild flowers, remove avenue of pink chestnuts (and have whole area as grass, no road)
- encourage more use of The Green - by children (playground, football, reinstate football posts)

Harest Wood

- valued, but some comments indicate under-used, too far from village
- some calls for enlarged wood + features to enhance wild life

playground and other facilities

- support for children’s playground (*ed - though note that recent changes at Pub may help in this respect*)
- some calls for sports facilities (including tennis court) though recognition that village population is small to support this fully
- some suggestions to work more closely with school (including use of swimming pool)
- suggestions for community allotments, community orchard

FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS

- *Is the footpath network extensive enough as a means of walking around our villages?*
- *If not, should we have more paths or bridleways? (e.g. to link Harest and the Wood)*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

- excellent network of footpaths, but welcome more (including link between wood and village + other possible links)
- some concerns over maintenance, cutting of vegetation, dog mess, difficulties with push chair
- sometimes difficult when path goes across ploughed field but appropriate uncultivated field edges and their potential use
- suggest prepare village footpath map for display + useful to highlight where more links could be developed
- note some adverse use by horse-riders and motor bikes

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

- Are existing bus services and broadband speeds adequate?
- Should these links be improved? (e.g. car sharing / car clubs, better mobile signal, faster broadband)

Comments, concerns, suggestions

bus services and other transport

- generally considered inadequate (though some admit to depending on car and not using buses)
- suggestions for smaller buses, more frequent, extend hours, extend range (if the bus service is to be useful)
- a few suggestions for car sharing (or taxi at reasonable cost)

broadband

- variable comments with general call for improved broadband speed but some realise better than in other similar villages (or good enough for what I need)

mobile signal

- general comments that coverage / signal poor or unreliable
- need for better mobile signal

BUSINESS AND WORK

- *Do you work in the village? What facilities could improve this?*
- *Would you like to work in the village? What facilities might make this possible for you?*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

Many responses say the people do not work in the village - some of these are retired or gave "N/A"

- some work in Hartest or surrounding villages, or part-time, or occasionally
- concerns emphasised need for post office / parcel collection point / community shop as drop off point
- could encourage "hub of activity" if more people worked in village
- suggestions for development of small scale / "rough and ready" units for local work (but not large scale industrial development)
- emphasise need for improved broadband

SHOPS AND OTHER FACILITIES

- *Are you happy with existing provisions?*
- *What other facilities would improve your village for you? Would you support them regularly?*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

While many responses indicated people are “happy” (or accept) existing provisions, a frequent call was for establishment of a shop in the village

- need for community shop (see above)
- call also for post office
- recognise that shop also provides focus for social interaction especially if community shop is run as a voluntary project
- range of suggestions for what it (the shop) would sell + provide - coffee / tea + other facilities
- appreciate previous efforts but worth another try
- aware of difficulties + changes in shopping habits
- variable responses on how far people would support shop (or other facilities)
- recognise value of butcher and garage (currently in the village)
- suggestions for allotment area (*see later section*)

COMMUNITY HELP AND SUPPORT

- *Are current provisions adequate for your needs? What are you most likely to require?*
- *Would you like some support services more locally based? (e.g. resident nurse or care worker)*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

- some responses indicated people feel they are fine at the moment but recognise they are likely to need more later (as they get older)
- currently strong support for doctors' surgery and nurse facility in surgery and need to keep them
- general appreciation of need for care workers (for older people) + support to enable people to stay in their home
- drop in location for health visitor and childcare an issue for some
- need for "neighbourliness" and community network
- suggestions for neighbourhood watch / anti-theft officer / village bobby
- need for shop and post office (*see other sections*)

ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

- *Do you have access to enough land for your food and fuel needs?*
- *Would you support more provision (e.g. for allotments, orchards, woods and hedges for fuel) Would you like to see community energy projects considered and if so what?*

Comments, concerns, suggestions

allotments and orchards

- some would be glad to have more land (for growing food)
- several responses in favour of development of community projects (e.g. as allotments or community orchard)
- suggestion of new houses being built around an allotment area
- not all need allotments (e.g. garden already big enough) but nevertheless recognise the benefit / input

woods, fuel and energy

- several responses support the potential for harvesting more wood from hedges or woodland
- aware of importance of appropriate management of hedgerows
- some wider comments on pros and cons of wind turbines + solar panels
- support for the principle for community energy projects
- a few not interested in such projects or feel not relevant for them