

ANNEX B
RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2008
TOWN PLAN CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE
REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN

You may remember that in June 2006, we circulated a leaflet to all households entitled 'Ringwood's Future' that explained how we were going to produce a Town Plan for the future of Ringwood.

Ringwood Town Council had identified a need for a Town Plan for Ringwood to help manage and cope with change in the future. We needed to identify actions to manage change as far as possible and to make life better, more inclusive and richer for the community as a whole. These actions had to come from the community itself and so we embarked on a lengthy period of public consultation.

The Town Council employed a Project Officer to facilitate the process which examined all aspects of life in the town to establish what is good and valued about Ringwood, what problems and challenges face the town, and what opportunities exist to overcome them. A Town Plan Partnership Steering Group was formed of six volunteers from the public and six Town Councillors. Working groups comprising over fifty volunteers gathered information and consulted across the town over a period of eighteen months. Following an extensive period of public consultation, the Town Plan is now ready to be published, along with a list of projects aimed at addressing many of the issues raised by the community.

We asked you for your opinions in a Love It, Hate It, questionnaires which went to all households and was posted on the website. You responded in large numbers. We held public consultations on four days and two evenings, gave talks at public meetings, held two public 'roadshows' and consulted widely with statutory, voluntary, private and public organisations in the town on the draft town plan before publication. We analysed all our findings and from those results the Town Plan was written

Whilst change and growth are often uncomfortable and may have their downsides, they are preferable to the prospect of decline. The way forward is to manage our future and to have real influence over what happens. The Town Plan provides a starting point from which to shape our future. In many ways, it represents a realistic wish list but it must be emphasised that the projects put forward are dependent on many factors, often outside the scope of the Town Council. They are also dynamic and time limited and so need reviewing regularly to ensure that they are still appropriate and viable.

You have told us what the issues are and how you would like to retain the character of the town even if development is necessary. These are the plans that we believe will deliver this vision. You will be able to access the Town Plan and full details of all the projects in the Strategic Implementation Programme at www.ringwood.gov.uk.

All I would ask is that you watch the local press for opportunities to be involved.

Cllr Brian Terry
Town Mayor