

Notes from the NDP 'Warm-up' meeting held at the Salutation Weobley on Wednesday 19th August 2015 at 6pm.

Present: 11 people linked to businesses operating in Weobley:

Whitehill Garage (John and Gail Simpson), Primasil (Richard and Angela Frost), Maycott Berry (Josie), Magpie Gallery (Bernadette and John), Mark Hurds (Butcher – Whitehill), The Gables (David Williams), Myst (Michael and Mary) and from the NDP Steering Group: Pru Lloyd (PL), Lesley Brook (LEB), Richard Lloyd (RL), and Lyn Bruce (LB)

PL introduced the meeting and welcomed everyone, explaining some of the background information and why an NDP is thought to be necessary for the village.

LEB introduced the first question emphasising that we are looking for issues and solutions and that the reason for holding this event is because the NDP is evidence based, evidence to be collected from as wide and varied an audience as possible:

- **How can we best support local businesses and services that contribute to the life of residents and visitors of all ages, including support for new diversification and the use of new technologies?**

The following comments were made:

- Primasil- the support of the Parish Council essential to promote business growth especially if premises need to be extended and therefore planning permission is sought
- Broadband and mobile phone signals are very poor and limit business activity and need to be increased and a better provision is needed from all providers
- Whitehill Garage: problem now that MOTs are online – broadband is too weak/flaky
- Myst: Domestic residences seem to get an improved broadband provision before businesses. Need 'fibre to the door' not 'fibre to the box'
- Magpie Gallery: Commercial space is important – very little available in the village and yet some types of business don't suit being on an industrial estate eg beauty, galleries, gifts
- Maybe some incentives for those selling properties to keep as business premises or the space available for businesses will diminish eg Red Lion annex. Over the years much space lost to residential accommodation.

The next question to be tackled was:

- **How can we reduce the environmental impact of road traffic, and lessen the need for car use by encouraging alternative modes of transport?**

Suggestions made included:

- A one way system for traffic in the centre of the village
- Coach parking is very difficult – coaches often too large to safely navigate the centre of the village – where could they be parked? Also they ‘clutter up’ the village, spoiling the place they have come to admire! Maybe a designated dropping off point for passengers and the coach to park elsewhere – Bell Square, Village Hall, behind the Red Lion?
- Coach companies to be contacted with better guidance for parking and given more information about the village eg shops, facilities etc for passengers before arriving in the village so they can plan their visit
- Bell Square car park could have 2 wider entrances – to allow safe coach parking with a drop off place in the village centre
- Some visitors arriving by coach are elderly and not able to walk very far
- Could the Bowling Green be turned into a car park? Or a village green?
- Pavements around the village need improving especially the one going to Whitehill.
- Some enthusiasm was expressed for starting a Weobley Business group comprising local business people who would co-operate and work together, sharing and helping support each other.
- Gadbridge Road often congested near the Health Centre/Dentist’s surgery – concerns expressed that these services are sufficient for a growing village

It was agreed that tourism is a vital part of village life and as such should be encouraged, fostered and grown and as such needs to be managed well so that everyone benefits from it and the value it brings to the village

Thanks were expressed to everyone for their contributions and everyone was encouraged to keep in touch via the web and by email.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm followed by refreshments served by the Salutation staff.