The Future of Compton – (Neighbourhood Development Plan Update for September)

The Steering Group is starting to build momentum following the summer holidays and has formed the various work groups to develop the themes identified in the Survey Results. Hopefully you will have had an opportunity to see the results of the survey at one of our drop-in sessions organised during September or at the fete back in sunny hot July. If, however you were unable to attend we have selected some of the results below to give you a flavour of how people responded, (there is too much information to include it all in Compilations).

As previously reported we had 414 surveys returned, with the majority being completed by those between 41 and 64 years of age and with slightly more female respondents than men. We will therefore be working hard to reach those other age and gender groups. In terms of what you value most about living in Compton, the top three responses were: 'village', 'countryside' and 'community' in that order. In terms of describing Compton, the most popular responses were: 'rural', 'peaceful' and 'safe'. These were similarly reflected in how you would like to see Compton develop over the next 15 years. As far as what most needs improving it was 'traffic/speeding', 'road conditions' and, interestingly, 'village community'. Clearly while we all like the fact that we live within a village community there seems to be room for improvement.

In response to what sustainable development could deliver, 'investment in infrastructure' (including broadband, 'sewerage', 'mobile phone coverage' and 'transport') came out top. Next came 'a well-balanced community with diversity of age' and 'income related issues', followed by 'leisure and recreational facilities'. 'Strengthening village identity and community' came a very close 4th.

Thinking about future housing and development in Compton in addition to the 140 houses plus workshops already approved for the Pirbright (IAH) site, most people voted for no more than 25 houses in small scale developments using existing brownfield sites or infilling. A strong desire was expressed for affordable housing for local people to be made available under a rural exception site, followed by starter homes, closely followed by community housing schemes and social rented homes. The Housing and Development work group will be taking all these views into consideration as we develop our neighbourhood plan. West Berkshire Council will provide us with an indication of our housing allocation later this year, but it is very unlikely to be as low as 25 additional houses; therefore, much work will need to be undertaken to reach a village consensus. As mentioned in a previous article the housing allocation stems from government who allot to local councils who in turn divide it up between the various parishes. While the Neighbourhood Development Plan cannot influence the number, it can influence where and what type of housing is provided.

The Institute site came out a clear favourite for development both for housing and for business with the overriding majority of respondents voting to preserve greenfield sites in and around the village. Finally, as far as this summary goes, you voted to preserve the community facilities (e.g. village shop, post office), natural features (e.g. rivers, trees, fields

etc.) and social facilities (e.g. pub, sporting facilities, village hall, etc.). Clearly there is much to value about living in Compton, which is why so many of us choose to live here and continue to stay here so long.

We will endeavour to post the survey results on the website www.comptonndp.org.uk if you would like to see all the results. If you would like to get involved in the Compton Neighbourhood Development Plan either speak to a committee member or email comptonndpsec@outlook.com.

Winners of the raffle held at the September Drop-in events were:- Siri Moorby and Harriet Saunders.

Your Neighbourhood Development Team.