

# 7

## Next steps

The preceding chapters have described the Wincanton People's Plan for the future. Now we need to make it happen.

### Publicising the Plan

The first step is to make sure that everyone in Wincanton and the surrounding settlements knows about the Plan.

The Steering Group will be organising a launch event and will distribute a one-page summary of the Plan to every household in Wincanton and its surrounding area.

The Steering Group is organising a summary of the Plan as a computer-based presentation. We intend that you will be able to see this presentation at the Town Hall community office, the public library, in some shops and at other locations. You will also be able to view the presentation and the full Plan document online at [www.wincantontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.wincantontowncouncil.co.uk).

### Taking the Plan forward

#### Overseeing the Plan

The Steering Group will continue and it will oversee the plan as it develops. This will include:

- deciding on the programme of what to do
- acting as broker to identify the lead bodies for each project
- bringing together the stakeholders for each project.

The Steering Group's independence will be maintained by actively recruiting people with a wide range of interests and backgrounds onto the Group. The chairmanship of the Group will be regularly rotated.

## **Prioritising and reviewing the projects**

Broad priorities for the next five years have already been identified by the Steering Group as explained in Chapters 3 and 4. But we need to take a pragmatic approach, so that projects are moved up the priority list if, for example, specific funding opportunities arise.

The Steering Group will take responsibility for generating new projects as the need arises and for retiring old projects if they are no longer relevant, informing its decisions through consultation with the community. There will be a formal review once the plan has been in operation for two years (see below). In addition, the Plan and projects will be monitored on a continuing basis to ensure they remain relevant and to identify where new projects are required to meet changes in circumstances or opportunities.

## **Making the projects happen**

The Steering Group will not itself manage projects. It has decided that it can be more effective, flexible and responsive to the community if it keeps its present non-corporate structure and open membership. But this means the Steering Group itself will not be able to make contracts or handle funding.

Therefore, the Steering Group will identify the most suitable lead body for each project. This could be, for example, the Town Council, Wincanton Recreation Trust, the Balsam Centre, South Somerset District Council, the Chamber of Commerce to name just a few. This way, instead of 'reinventing the wheel', we can efficiently use existing organisations and structures.

The appropriate lead body will enter necessary contracts and undertake commissioning. The Steering Group will ensure projects develop along agreed lines by working with funding bodies and building appropriate conditions into funding agreements. Agreements between the Steering Group and other parties will be carefully documented and monitored.

## **Knowing whether the Plan is working**

### **Evaluation**

We need to evaluate the Plan and its projects as they progress so we can ensure we do move towards our vision. It may be that some projects are not as effective as we had hoped and so may need to be altered or even, in an extreme case, abandoned. Other projects will be more successful than we had expected and we may want to expand or extend them.

Evaluation is especially important because funding, volunteers and other resources are scarce. We want to make sure that the resources we have are used in the best way possible. By monitoring the progress of each project, we can quickly identify if resources would be better shifted to alternative uses.

## Monitoring projects

The key to monitoring projects is to ensure that their expected and possible outcomes are expressed as measurable objectives - for example, if the aim of a project is to ensure that employment land meets identified needs, measurable objectives might be a target increase in the number of businesses located in Wincanton over a specified time period and a specified decrease in the proportion of local people commuting out of the area for work.

The Steering Group will work with lead bodies and will require them to build measurable objectives into projects. The Steering Group will either undertake the evaluation of each project itself or will outsource to a third party as appropriate.

## Monitoring progress towards the goals and vision

The Steering Group will conduct a formal review of the Wincanton People's Plan after it has been running for two years and at regular intervals after that.

The review will consider objective evidence and community views in assessing progress towards the goals and vision. The review team will initiate research - for example, quantitative and qualitative surveys - as necessary to aid its evaluation. The findings of the review will be published.

In addition, the Steering Group will undertake more informal continuous monitoring.

### Next steps and you

The Wincanton People's Plan is not a Town Council, District Council or government initiative. It is **your** plan and you are the people who can make it happen.

The projects that form the Plan are many and varied. If a particular project appeals to you or you have skills that are relevant to it or you would like to be trained in relevant skills, get involved. The first step is to call 01963 31693.

You can shape the future of Wincanton.  
It is you who will create our vision:

**Wincanton - a welcoming, thriving, caring community**