

Report on Business Consultation

I started with the list of businesses which you had produced. I added all businesses which I could find by enquiring on internet trade directories. This produced a total of 57 including farms within the parish boundaries. I divided these as equitably as I could between myself, John, Chris and Malcolm (who had volunteered to make calls), and supplied each of them with a list of names and phone numbers. We thought that personal contact by phone was the best way to approach the businesses, so that we could treat them individually. I had minimal feedback, except that John said that (despite trying hard) he had nil response from St Wystan's School. You will recall that Melissa had previously met with Repton School, and that Ruth made a presentation to Repton Junior School. My own experience of contacting my batch of businesses was: two of them were moderately interested, and filled in the questionnaire, although their comments were much the same as on the individual questionnaires. Two didn't know about the Neighbourhood Plan and said that they were interested, and I went to see them and had a nice chat and handed them questionnaires, but they didn't get back to me. Five of them I left messages but they didn't return my calls. Four didn't answer their phone or have a messaging service (so probably no longer in business). The five farms I contacted by letter, because I couldn't find phone numbers, and one of these phoned me and we had a nice chat about police, dementia and other things but not relevant to the questionnaire. I imagine that the other volunteers had similar experiences. In summary I think that the business people probably felt that they had already said what they wanted to say, using the main questionnaire, or felt that they had nothing that they wanted to say. I know that this exercise was a flop but hope that these comments are of some help.