

What is the Rye Local Action Plan?

- Local Action Plans offer the opportunity for the wider community to be involved in shaping a vision for the future for the place where they live, work or study.
- They cover a range of issues that affect daily life and express the needs, aims and aspirations of those who have contributed to the consultation process.
- Action Plans help to identify local projects and provide a focal point for them to be discussed and developed.
- Having an action plan can result in an increased number of people becoming involved in getting projects off the ground and greatly improves access to funding. The Rye Action Plan has been adopted by the Town Council and copies have been presented to District and County Councils, the Environment Agency, Police, and the local MP. Others will find the Plan useful when deciding the resources to allocate to Rye.
- The Rye Action Plan will guide the Town Council's business planning.
- An action plan can be the bridge which links government agencies and the local community.
- Residents of Rye and local community groups may request their own copy of the Action Plan, view it on the Rye Town Council website or browse a copy in the Community Help Point in Cinque Port Street or Rye Library.
- A flyer summarising the key findings was inserted into 'Fixtures' and delivered to all households in Rye.
- The Rye Action Plan will be reviewed annually and updated every 5 years to ensure it addresses the prevailing economic, social, cultural and environmental issues that concern the town and its people; and to ensure that the actions within it are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Mission Statement

The aims of the Rye Action Plan are to:

Embrace the ideas of the people of Rye, and to seek out those who may not otherwise participate in consultations.

Support local community groups who wish to develop ideas into projects and to guide them towards funding opportunities.

Work with others to ensure that Rye remains an important cultural centre and tourist destination.

Develop the economic health of the town by encouraging locals and residents of surrounding villages to shop here.

Who did we consult?

The Rye Action Plan was initiated by the Town Council in March 2007 with a community open day to help identify the needs and issues of the people living and working in Rye, and to understand and highlight how their daily lives may be affected by things happening around the town. Visitors to the open day completed questionnaires and wrote ideas on post it notes.

The Steering Group, which had been formed from local residents and councillors who had expressed an interest in taking the Action Plan forward, analysed the data collected at the open day and it became apparent that the majority of the people surveyed came from a similar age range. It was agreed that it would be necessary to employ different techniques to ensure that the information collected for the plan covered people of all ages to truly reflect the views of the Rye community. It was also decided that a 'fast-track' approach be adopted and this was implemented in November 2008. A co-ordinator was appointed, consultation strategies agreed and monthly – increasingly fortnightly - decision making meetings held.

To ensure that the opinions of older and younger generations were not missed a series of 'out and about' informal information gathering sessions were held at the Rye Medical Centre, Ferry Road Health Centre, Sports Centre and Rye Boys Club, the library, nurseries and Age Concern. Questionnaires and competitions were organised with the Rye Community Primary School and Rye College and each has a page in this Plan dedicated to their views. Around 750 people took part in this phase of the consultation process, just under 580 of those being young people. A general questionnaire was sent to the 2,093 households in the parish of Rye at the beginning of February 2009 and 533 of these were returned completed. This means that around 25% of households participated in the main consultation. With 50 questions on each form (some being multiple choice and others open ended so that people could add their views and comments), it was decided that to do justice to this wealth of information the questionnaires should be independently analysed. This process was carried out by Dr Simon Kiley of Action in Rural Sussex. Other sources of data informing this Plan include comments received at a dedicated email address, in letter format, via a comments book and the documentary film made by young people from Rye College and older residents of Tilling Green, supported by Sound Architects and AmicusHorizon. Their main concern was the lack of a community space on the Estate which young and old alike could use for a variety of activities and their hope was that the decommissioned Tilling Green School could be reborn as a community centre.

