

Knutsford Town Plan



A Blueprint for the Future

March 2010

Foreword by the Town Mayor

The Town's Motto is '*Respice, Aspice, Prospice*', look to the Past, the Present and the Future. This plan looks firmly to the future, as it must if we are to have a sustainable Town. Encouraging people to visit, live and work in the town is a priority, so our town must be attractive, retain its character, and at the same time be progressive.

I thank Laurie Burton and the initial nucleus of the Steering Group for picking up the project when it looked as if it would fail to get off the ground. It has been an excellent and painstaking job for those involved in the working parties and the other volunteers who supported them in bringing the Plan to fruition. On behalf of the Town I thank everyone who gave up their time in the production of this first stage of the plan.

Councillor Tony Want
Town Mayor

Foreword by Chairman, Town Plan Steering Group

It has been a privilege to work with the Steering Group who have put so much time and effort into producing the Knutsford Town Plan. Together with the much larger group of volunteers (see Appendix 5) who formed Working Groups or helped with the task of transposing thousands of questionnaire responses and written comments into the computer database they have set out a clear Action Plan for Knutsford for the next 10 years or so.

The fact that so many people took the trouble to complete the survey questionnaire shows the strong sense of community and civic pride in Knutsford, and the Steering Group will next form a Town Plan Implementation Committee to monitor progress of the Action Plan and work to make sure the Recommended Actions are implemented in the way the community has indicated it desires. I look forward to working with the Implementation Committee to help get the best possible quality of life for Knutsford.

Laurie Burton
Steering Group chairman

Steering Group Members

Laurie Burton (Chairman)
Councillor Francis Aldhouse, CBE (Deputy Chairman)
Dick Warwick (Treasurer)
Jan McCappin (Secretary)
Derek Empson MBE (Data Coordinator and Work Programme)
Bill Gore (Public Consultations and Surveys)
Bob Quin (Communications and Publicity Officer)
Councillor Peter Raynes
Councillor Peter Coan

Executive Summary

The Knutsford Town Plan Report and Action Plan have been prepared following in-depth analysis of the large number of responses to the Survey Questionnaire. A Working Group of volunteers was allocated to each of the six topics identified in preliminary surveys. They collated all the views expressed by the community, and then thoroughly researched the topics, including many meetings with agencies and individuals. For example, the Parking section received advice, free of charge, from a car park design/build consultant. More than 5,000 hours of volunteers' experience and expertise have produced a review of the opinions of Knutsford people that would have cost many tens of thousands of pounds, and has the advantage of coming straight from the community itself.

It shows that the community wants to retain and enhance the open green spaces that surround Knutsford, preserve the historic character of the town, and at the same time promote its attractions in order to attract tourists and shoppers. It identifies the community groups that are currently engaged in maintenance of public open spaces and seeks a close liaison between them and local authorities to achieve stated objectives of conservation of the natural and built environment.

It recognises the parking difficulties faced by residents of three and four bedroom terraced homes, who may have two or three vehicles, with the influx of motor vehicles of business staff and shoppers to a vibrant, popular market town renowned for its bars, restaurants and speciality shops. It accepts the need for a good balance between the requirements of residents and workers and the visitors the town desires to attract in the interests of economic viability. This analysis of car parking included research into numerous previous reports, reviews and studies. It combines them with the community survey responses to recommend short-term solutions for immediate implementation, followed by a comprehensive review to provide for all future parking needs.

To make the shopping environment safer and more convenient for shoppers, it recommends Pedestrian Priority measures in a part of King Street, again with suggestions coming out of extensive research. For example, the local markets could be much more attractive, and popular, in a pedestrianised area, and important town centre facilities like the Heritage Centre would be more accessible.

While the community appreciates its local facilities, it considers improvements are needed, especially to the Leisure Centre. The Studio Cinema is highly valued, especially by the less well-off, young people and the elderly; there is concern that the coffee bar is never open and this, and poor marketing, leads to Civic Centre meeting rooms being grossly under-used. The local community also expresses a strong desire for the Town Council to have more control over local issues, while wanting to see better communication between the Council and the people of Knutsford.

The Knutsford community is also generally quite satisfied with Public Services, although concern is expressed about the future of Bexton Court as a specialist dementia and respite care centre, and there are strong views about which services should be provided in any new Medical Centre.

There are recommendations to encourage more people to use public transport or cycle in an effort to reduce traffic through the town. The concerns about the number of vehicles and management of traffic in Knutsford have resulted in a recommendation for a thorough professional study to consider all options, including speed limits, one-way streets and a by-pass to reduce traffic through the town.

This comprehensive assessment of the community's opinions reveals a clear call for direct action by the new CEC, rather than the seemingly endless round of consultant's reports and studies seen over previous years. The message from the people of Knutsford is that they want local authorities and other agencies to adopt these recommendations into their Local Development Frameworks and Community Strategies, and to proceed with their implementation as quickly as possible.

Contents

Executive Summary	2
1 Introduction	4
1.1 The Town Plan Purpose	4
1.2 Our Location	4
1.3 Our History	4
1.4 Local Government	5
1.5 Community Profile	5
1.6 The Town Centre	6
1.7 The Town Plan Process	6
1.8 Map of Conservation Areas	8
2 Analysis of Community Surveys	9
2.1 Environment and Heritage	9
2.2 Parking and Shopping	15
2.3 Pedestrian Priority and the Town Centre	23
2.4 Community Facilities	29
2.5 Public Services	35
2.7 Transport and Highways	40
3 Vision Statement	48
4 The Action Plan	48
Appendices:	
1 Cheshire East Ward Profile 2008 – Knutsford	55
2 Knutsford Town Plan Project Specification	59
3 References	60
4 Town Plan Working Group and Survey Transposition Volunteers	60
5 Acknowledgements	61
6 Abbreviations	61

This Town Plan Report and Action Plan is available in Braille, audio or cassette. To order a copy telephone 01565 634867 or 01565 650300 or email laurieburton@btinternet.com

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Town Plan Purpose

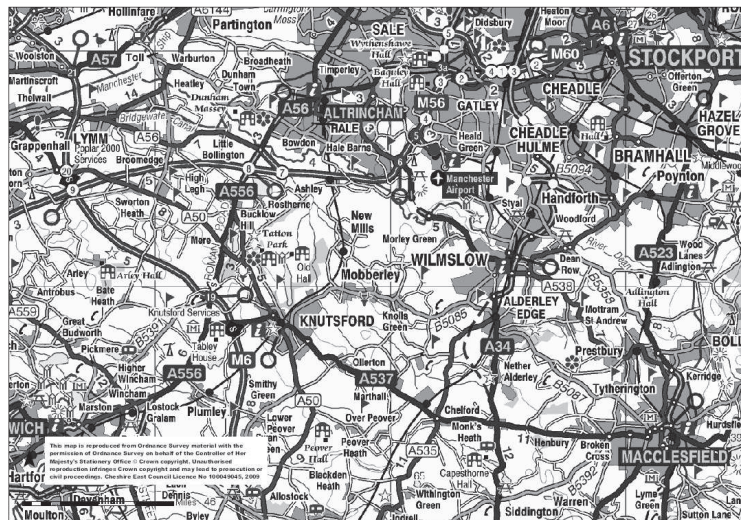
A Town (or Parish) Plan is a critical, in-depth survey of the views of a community carried out by the community itself. The aim is to collect the opinions of the people who live and work in the town and from this information find out how the community wishes to see itself develop over the next 5 to 10 years. An Action Plan is prepared, identifying the actions that need to be taken to move the community from its present position to achieve its vision for the future.

The Knutsford Town Plan (KTP) is led by a Steering Group assisted by Working Groups and others, all of whom are volunteers. Three members of the Steering Group are members of Knutsford Town Council (KTC). Together, the volunteers carry out community surveys, create the Action Plan and initiate recommended actions. The KTP Steering Group works in close collaboration and co-operation with Cheshire East Borough Council (CEC) as well as KTC, but is entirely independent of them.

1.2 Our Location

Knutsford is an historic market town situated on an east-facing slope of the Cheshire Plain approximately 24 miles from Chester and 16 from Manchester. The proximity of the M6, M56, Manchester Airport and the Manchester – Chester railway has made it a dormitory town for residents who commute to work in Manchester and other parts of the north-west.

The Moor is now a centrepiece of the town and, together with the Heath to the north-west, provides recreation areas that are highly valued by residents. To the north is Tatton Park, a National Trust Park and Garden. The town is surrounded by the Green Belt.



1.3 Our History

Knutsford was granted a charter to hold a market in 1292. It grew in importance and in 1761 became one of only two Quarter Sessions towns in Cheshire, with Chester. The Crown Court still sits in Knutsford in the former Sessions House. By 1801 it was the fifth largest town in Cheshire after Chester, Stockport, Macclesfield and Nantwich.

Knutsford became a separate Ecclesiastical parish in 1741 and the new St John's Church was built in 1744. The parish was further divided in the 1860's when St Cross and Toft Churches were built, as well as the Methodist Chapel and a Roman Catholic Church. A Unitarian Chapel built in the 1690's is the burial place of the author, Elizabeth Gaskell, who spent her childhood in Knutsford and whose novel *Cranford* is based on the town's inhabitants.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, it became an important stop for coaches, with about 36 inns within the town. A racecourse operated on the Heath in 1729 until it closed in 1875. In the 19th and early 20th centuries many prestigious buildings were constructed including the Sessions House, the Town Hall and buildings in unique Italianate style under the patronage of Richard Harding Watts. The Cheshire Midland Railway was constructed in 1863, connecting Knutsford to Altrincham and Northwich, and then to Chester in 1874.

Knutsford continued to expand in the 20th century but its population has been overtaken by many of the surrounding towns. The town has prospered, but has never become industrialised, and remains a desirable location for the fairly affluent. There is a deep sense of community involvement, as shown by the hours worked by volunteers in producing the Town Plan, and the large number of people who responded to the Survey Questionnaire. More than 100 local community groups were consulted for their input into the initial surveys.

1.4 Local Authorities

In 1974 the old Urban District Council (UDC) was abolished and the second tier of local government was provided by the new Macclesfield Borough Council (MBC). A successor parish to the old Urban District was created, with a Parish Council which adopted the title of Knutsford Town Council (KTC). A re-formed Cheshire County Council (CCC) continued to provide education, social services, highways and some planning functions.

In April 2009 the CCC and MBC were abolished and their functions taken over by a single authority, the new Cheshire East Borough Council (CEC). The KTC then began seeking to take on some of the very local functions administered prior to 1974 by the old UDC.

1.5 Community Profile

Following much 20th century Inter-War and Post-War house building, the population of Knutsford is now relatively stable. Council housing estates were built notably at Westfield Drive and Shaw Heath and by the former Manchester Corporation at Longridge. Elsewhere, more expensive private houses and apartments took up any available land. Further expansion is constrained by the Green Belt surrounding the town.

The 2001 National Census showed a population total for Knutsford of 12,656 in 5,648 households. The latest CEC 2008 Ward Profile for Knutsford Parish (**Appendix 1**) shows a slight reduction of population to 12,510. 2,600 of those were aged 65 years and over, and there were 7,690 aged 16 – 64. 41% of those in employment were in managerial and professional occupations, compared with a Cheshire East average of 32%, and average household income was £39,100, compared with £37,000 for the whole of Cheshire East. The CEC Profile, compiled from various sources, is included in this report as the most up-to-date information available, and the 2001 Census is shown in full on the Town Plan website, www.knutsfordtownplan.info.

1.6 The Town Centre

Knutsford town centre is made up of three densely built-up streets, King Street, Princess Street and Minshull Street, surrounded by three large open spaces, the Moor, the Heath and Tatton Park. The streets are narrow and lined with Georgian and Victorian buildings, punctuated by the distinctive Richard Harding Watt towers, with many Listed buildings, and many offices, public houses, restaurants and tea rooms, as well as specialty shops.

The conflict of motor car and pedestrian needs in the busy streets, and the intense demand for car parking is well documented in *Knutsford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, 2005*¹ which formed part of the MBC Local Development Framework



1.7 The Town Plan Process

Following requests from residents for a Knutsford Town Plan, KTC initiated the process in September 2007. Residents willing to be involved were asked to complete a skills audit and the composition of the Steering Group (SG) was agreed in April 2008. It set itself the following objective:-

“To produce a blueprint for the short, medium and long term development of Knutsford based on the views expressed by the local community, to include in it recommendations to local authorities and other decision-making agencies and to set up a Monitoring Committee to ensure those views are taken into account.”

By May 2008 the SG had agreed the **Town Plan Project Specification** (see **Appendix 2**). The first task was to find those topics of most concern to the Knutsford community to incorporate into a Survey Questionnaire. In order to reach the widest possible cross-section of the community, stands were manned at the Lions Fayre and Longridge Fun Day in May 2008. Leaflets inviting comments were distributed in July in Booths supermarket and letters were sent to voluntary Clubs and Organisations. Suggestions were also sought and received from all schools in Knutsford. The website www.knutsfordtownplan.info was set up, and a detailed list of all the Town Plan activities is available there.

More than 1,250 suggestions for topics were received, and these community views were used to prepare the questionnaire. The topics were divided into six sections, and a Working Group (WG) of about five volunteers was formed for each. The sections were:

- . **Environment and Heritage**
- Parking and Shopping**
- Pedestrian Priority and the Town Centre**
- Community Facilities**
- Public Services**
- Transport and Highways**

The 8 page questionnaire allowed 101 multiple-choice answers, and another 14 questions allowed free text answers and comments. In order to get as many responses as possible via the Internet an on-line survey collation and analysis application called *Survey Methods*² was used. In addition to the on-line questionnaire on the Town Plan website 5,500 paper copies were delivered to Knutsford homes and 2,500 copies were distributed through local schools and collection boxes around the town.

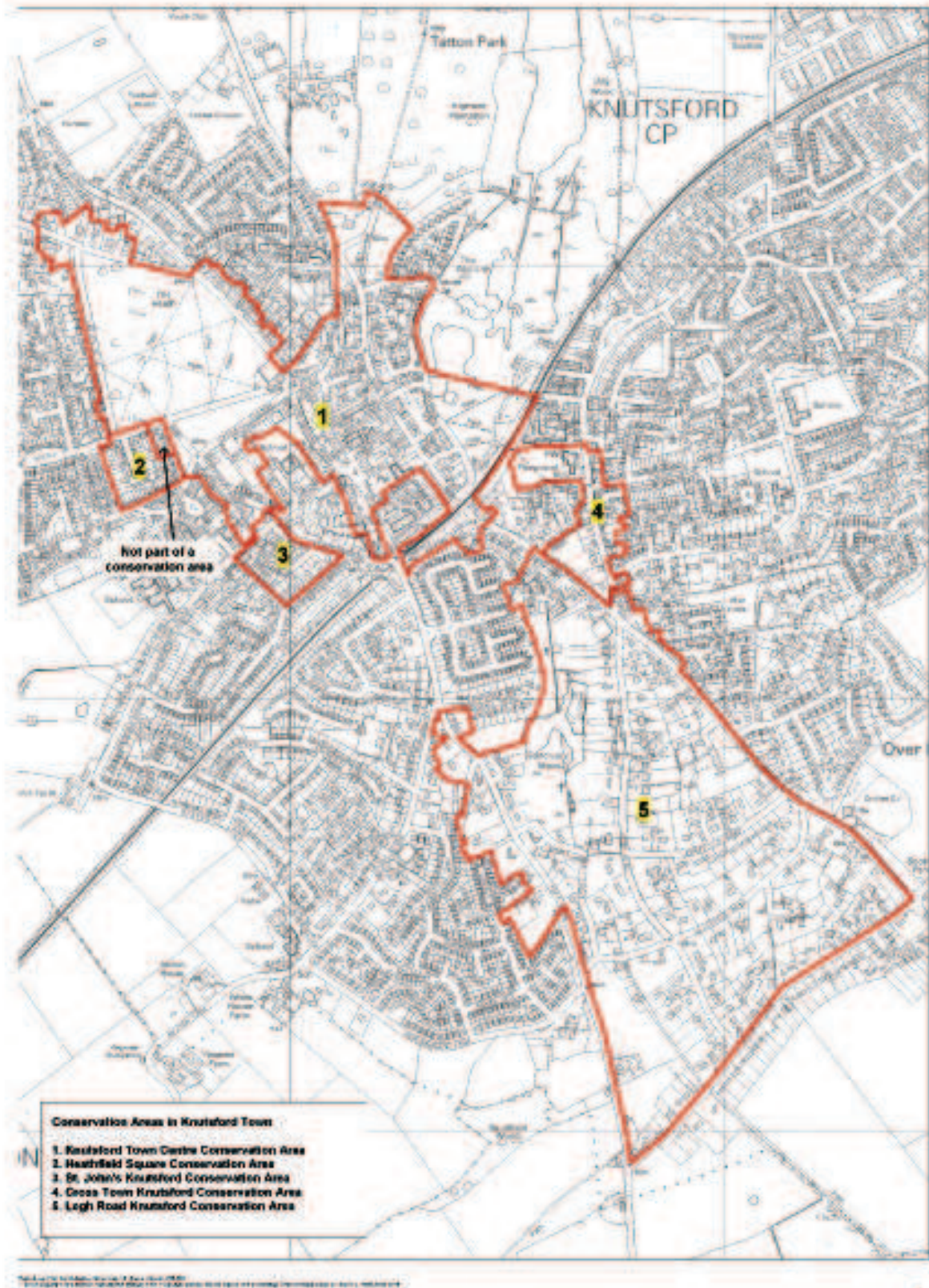
The result was a most comprehensive response. 2,632 questionnaires were completed, including 1,131 submitted on-line, equivalent to more than 45% of households. This is considerably more than average for this type of survey, and reflects the community spirit of the town and the willingness of its people to get actively involved in community projects.

A team of volunteers transposed the paper copy responses into the *Survey Methods* software and the detailed analysis of the results is listed on the website www.knutsfordtownplan.info and in hard copy in the Knutsford Library. Each response, including every individual comment, is available for scrutiny on the website.

The Working Groups used this analysis to prepare the recommendations in their section of the Final Report and Action Plan, and the relevant table of responses is shown at the beginning of each question analysis. The question number for related comments is also shown to facilitate website reference. To avoid confusion, question topics are dealt with in one section only; where they relate to similar topics in other sections, they are dealt with where they are most relevant.

This Report and Action Plan, issued in March 2010, marks the end of the first phase of the Knutsford Town Plan. From this date a new Town Plan Implementation Committee (TPIC) will work to carry out Action Plan recommendations as well as monitoring progress by Councils and other organisations in implementing recommendations. Further consultation with the community and with Local Authorities and other Agencies will be held as required.

1.8 Knutsford Conservation Areas



2 ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY SURVEYS

2.1 Environment and Heritage

Overview

The MBC Local Plan of 2004 list of objectives for Knutsford includes:

(a) to conserve and enhance the historic character of the town centre.

(b) to retain and enhance the attractive open spaces which form an essential part of the historic setting of the town centre.

The Town Plan surveys showed that the people of Knutsford value their heritage and strongly support the above objectives. Their high regard for the natural and built environment is coupled with a strong desire for increased economic vitality, by attracting more visitors, tourists and shoppers.

2.1.1 Analysis of Question 1 answers and related comments (Question 2).

1. How important do you think the following are to the future of Knutsford?						
	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Can't say / No opinion	Total
1.1 Care of parks and open spaces:	2078(79.71%)	500(19.18%)	17(0.65%)	1(0.04%)	11(0.42%)	2607
1.2 Care of natural features & wildlife:	1871(72.27%)	648(25.03%)	46(1.78%)	5(0.19%)	19(0.73%)	2589
1.3 Closer links with Tatton Park:	884(34.09%)	1212(46.74%)	401(15.46%)	44(1.7%)	52(2.01%)	2593
1.4 Keeping the Moor for recreation use only:	1764(67.98%)	622(23.97%)	139(5.36%)	30(1.16%)	40(1.54%)	2595
1.5 Preservation of distinctive buildings:	1863(71.57%)	639(24.55%)	71(2.73%)	6(0.23%)	24(0.92%)	2603
1.6 Protection of Conservation Areas:	1794(69.27%)	685(26.45%)	78(3.01%)	7(0.27%)	26(1%)	2590
1.7 Energy conservation schemes:	1033(40.01%)	1086(42.06%)	306(11.85%)	86(3.33%)	71(2.75%)	2582
1.8 Renewable energy schemes:	959(37.39%)	1043(40.66%)	355(13.84%)	132(5.15%)	76(2.96%)	2565
1.9 Improved recycling schemes:	1226(47.46%)	969(37.51%)	283(10.96%)	58(2.25%)	47(1.82%)	2583
Total Responded to this question:					2624	99.7%
Total who skipped this question:					8	0.3%
Total:					2632	100%

2.1.2 Care of parks and open spaces:

99% of respondents thought the care of parks and open spaces important for Knutsford's future, and most comments emphasised that it is crucial to the town's appeal. However, 10 people criticised the lack of sports facilities and children's play areas and 23 expressed concern about poor maintenance of spaces like the Heath and the Moor. A separate survey in Longridge found that 65% of respondents thought green areas there needed improving, and 57% were concerned about fly tipping.

"The open spaces and particularly the many trees make Knutsford a delightful place to live".

The Moor Pool is part of Tatton Mere's Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and *Ramsar Site*³ – it is one of the largest areas of fen and reed swamp in Cheshire, valued for its nesting

warblers and overwintering water birds. In 2009, Tatton Mere's SSSI was re-assessed by Natural England (NE) and the Moor Pool was rated "unfavourable" because of encroaching scrub and Japanese knotweed, so improvements are necessary.

Responsibility for the upkeep of open spaces like the Moor can be quite complex. The owner of the Pool area delegates maintenance to Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) but, as an SSSI, permission must be sought from NE for activities like litter picks, to minimise disturbance of wildlife. United Utilities also become involved in the event of water pollution. The rest of the Moor is owned and maintained by CEC and volunteer group Friends of the Moor (FOTM) is the link between them and the community. It advises on what needs doing and helps, with other volunteers, with some specific maintenance such as litter picking.

Negotiations with the various owners are also needed to introduce additional facilities to enhance the quality of these areas, e.g. improving paths and boundary fencing, providing enough picnic tables, litter and dog waste bins, informative signs (on and to sites), play facilities, especially for older children, and encouraging events such as fetes. CWT has now provided informative signs on the Moor, where one respondent suggested a viewing platform.

The people of Knutsford also share the objective of the MBC Local Plan reason for Policy KTC1 (Section 14.7) *"The townscape character of Knutsford comprises a historic core surrounded by green open spaces. Knutsford's narrow, curving streets run along the slope beside 'The Moor', the marshy head of Tatton Mere. This open space and the Heath provide a green and pleasant foil to its cohesive tightly enclosed streets. The maintenance and enhancement of the historic core is the foremost objective of the Borough Council"*.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 1)

Regular meetings to be held between stakeholders to discuss maintenance, safety and cleanliness of open spaces such as the Heath, the Moor, the Dip, and to foster public involvement in litter picking and reporting vandalism or pollution problems.

2.1.3 Care of natural features and wildlife:

98% of survey respondents think this is important. 17 comments mentioned the need to care for ancient woodland, hedges and trees. 5 were concerned about the preservation of natural features and habitats when new developments are built. It was suggested there should be closer links between Knutsford and CWT in order to encourage biodiversity and to inform people about local wildlife and Designated Wildlife Sites. Part of the Heath is an example of rare lowland heath and Knutsford Natural History Group made a comprehensive survey in 1991/2 stressing the need for its management in order to benefit wildlife.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 2)

A Knutsford Natural Environment Group to be formed to work closely with CWT and NE to preserve natural wildlife habitats and protect them from development, and to include tree surgeons and/or wardens to survey trees.

2.1.4 Closer links with Tatton Park:

81% of respondents think this is important and comments showed that Tatton Park is greatly valued, both as a green space for local people and to attract tourists. However, it was felt the Town and the Park could each advertise the other's attractions more effectively. Since the Town Plan survey the Promoting Knutsford Forum (PKF) has been organised by the CEC Town Centres Manager and 30,000 leaflets have been distributed to Tatton Park visitors.

A quarter of those commenting felt car entry/parking costs were too high if local people were just taking children to the play area and farm, although the season tickets are valued. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Show shuttle bus service was appreciated, and one suggestion was for a bus service from Parkgate. 7 comments were that opening hours were a problem for local Knutsford people, especially in summer. It was thought longer opening hours would attract more in the "off-season" when special events were not occurring.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 3)

Liaise closely with Tatton Park to consider optimum opening times and entry costs for local residents, and mutual advertising of the Park and the Town.

2.1.5 Keeping the Moor for recreational use:

92% of those who responded think this is important. The Moor is very popular as a green space and as a pathway between the town centre and the Mobberley Road side of the town. It was listed by MBC as a Character Area of the Town Centre Conservation Area, and in 2009 it achieved Green Flag status, a mark of quality for parks and open spaces. A 2003 MBC survey showed how people use it – the children's play area, feeding the ducks, sitting and admiring the scenery, eating lunches, fishing, cycling, dogwalking and exercising. The play equipment, seating, artwork and picnic tables are all heavily used, and so it is put under pressure, especially at weekends. A third of the 50 survey comments were about the need to keep the Moor and the adjoining Pool free from litter and fly tipping.

Although 6 people suggested using the edge of the Moor (and part of the Heath) for car parking, 19 respondents were firmly against this. One suggested that the Moor could be considered for Village Green Status, to safeguard it from any development. There were suggestions for formal gardens or various sports facilities, but these are not feasible, as the area is at times waterlogged – many attempts by Councils to solve this have failed. However, the play areas have been enlarged and suggestions from the Schools Forum for play areas for under-10s and older children, and for measures to stop the dumping of litter, are feasible.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 4)

Retain Green Flag status for the Moor, safeguard it and the Heath from any development and assist CEC and local voluntary groups to improve facilities.

2.1.6 Preservation of distinctive buildings:

96% of respondents think this is important. 25 of the 29 comments stressed the need to preserve the unique character of Knutsford's distinctive buildings that are valued by locals and tourists. Many town shops are in buildings of considerable age and 5 people commented

that unoccupied buildings should be used, if only temporarily, to prevent deterioration when empty. 7 comments expressed concern about frontage changes in modern style and blanking out of shop windows. They noted that some new buildings, e.g. Tatton Lodge, fit in well with the style of the Italianate buildings of Richard Harding Watt, and asked that alterations should be in keeping and buildings checked to ensure their appearance does not deteriorate.

Responses to question 20.6 in the Community Facilities section were similar, with 94% of respondents supporting the need to protect Knutsford's historic buildings from development, together with the expressed desire for related planning issues to be under more local control.

2.1.7 Protection of Conservation Areas:

Again, 96% of respondents think protection of Conservation Areas is important. 5 comments said that shop fronts and street furniture like lamps should be in keeping with the area and traditional in style. Knutsford Conservation Areas cover much of King Street, Princess Street, Drury Lane, Gaskell Avenue, Toft Road, Adams Hill, St Johns Road and Legh Road and many buildings are Listed by English Heritage (EH). Many people assume that Area status ensures protection, but it does not stop development or demolition. It simply means that planning decisions must pay particular attention to the need to preserve or enhance the Area.

The EH "Buildings at Risk" register says that 45% of Conservation Areas have no formal community support, 83% have had unsympathetic changes to doors and windows, 45% have street clutter, 34% unsuitable changes to building fronts and 23% have advertisement problems. Only 13% have Article 4 designation⁴, which they say can prevent small-scale but damaging changes to buildings as consent must be sought for small changes which are normally allowed automatically. Article 4 designated areas are almost twice as likely as other Conservation Areas to show improvement in 3 years. Another suggestion was for the community to produce a Design Statement, which would influence the planning process so that any developments will reflect the town's character and preserve the qualities the community values. It could form a Supplementary Planning Document which will help planners assess their proposals in the light of local knowledge.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 5)

To protect Knutsford's Conservation Areas, the TPIC to seek Article 4 designation for them, to monitor planning applications and Registers of Listed and Locally Important Buildings, and to produce a Town Design Statement.

2.1.8 Energy conservation schemes:

Although more than 80% of respondents thought energy conservation schemes important, comments indicated there is little local knowledge of available schemes.

2.1.9 Renewable energy schemes:

78% of respondents considered these important. The Government's Regional Spatial Strategy says the North West should aim for at least 10% use of renewable energy by 2010, 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020, and in its Local Development Plan, CEC is recommending that communities should be self-sustainable. Survey comments showed little knowledge of the schemes available and a few criticisms. One said tax incentives would be needed to encourage people to try renewable energy schemes.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 6)

Form a Renewable Energy Group to study energy conservation and renewable energy schemes and provide information to households and businesses.

2.1.10 Improved recycling schemes: Merged with sections 2.4.20 and 2.4.21.

2.1.11 Analysis of Question 3 answers and related comments (Question 4)

3. To what extent do you think the following affect the quality of life in Knutsford?						
	A great deal	A fair amount	Not very much	Not at all	Can't say / No opinion	Total
3.1 Noise from road traffic:	659(25.46%)	1073(41.46%)	766(29.6%)	63(2.43%)	27(1.04%)	2588
3.2 Air pollution and emissions from traffic:	880(34.07%)	1042(40.34%)	594(23%)	45(1.74%)	22(0.85%)	2583
3.3 Noise from aircraft flights:	1348(51.89%)	794(30.56%)	377(14.51%)	56(2.16%)	23(0.89%)	2598
3.4 The risk to the town of aircraft accident:	715(27.56%)	550(21.2%)	910(35.08%)	369(14.23%)	50(1.93%)	2594
Total Responded to this question:					2614	99.32%
Total who skipped this question:					18	0.68%
Total:					2632	100%

2.1.12 Noise from road traffic: Merged into section 2.6.2

2.1.13 Air pollution and emissions from traffic:

74% of respondents think this affects them a fair amount or a great deal, and it is seen to be especially important for asthmatics. Air quality is assessed for 3 yearly DEFRA reports by measuring nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulphur dioxide, lead, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide, benzene and dust at the A50, Manchester Road, Canute Place, Gaskell Avenue, the Day Nursery on Adams Hill and the A556 road sign. Respondents suggested other sites might be useful, for example, King Edward Road near Ash Court. Reports by the CEC Environmental Control officer indicate that NO₂ levels in Manchester Road exceed permitted levels by 25%.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 7)

Air pollution levels in Manchester Road to be reduced, and consideration given to the taking of measurements at more sites.

2.1.14 Noise from aircraft flights:

83% of respondents think aircraft noises affect them. Most complaints were about night flights, planes judged as straying off route or too low. Although Airport representatives meet regularly at the Library to answer questions there were enquiries on how to complain, and some thought dialogue between Manchester Airport and the town was poor. It was thought fines, which currently go into the Community Fund for local projects, should benefit those affected, e.g. help with glazing or a reduction in Council Tax. In July 2009, the Airport published a draft Noise Action Plan, which included planned improvements. From summer

2010, the daytime decibel limit will reduce, with increased fines for exceeding it. New landing techniques and night flight rulings should help minimise disturbance. A public consultation ended in October 2009 and published results are awaited.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 8)

TPIC representative on Manchester Airport Consultative Committee (MACC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to press for reduced aircraft noise, especially at night, and to inform the community on Airport procedures.

2.1.15 Risk to Knutsford of aircraft accident:

Concern about an aircraft accident affecting Knutsford was evenly divided, with 49% saying a great deal or a fair amount and 49% not very much or not at all. A meeting on 14 October 2009 between a KTP team and Manchester Airport officials discussed safety measures to prevent nine specific types of accident that could potentially endanger Knutsford. The one hazard identified as requiring improvement is Foreign Object Debris (FOD) on aircraft movement surfaces, which can result in major fatal accidents (e.g. the Concorde crash in Paris). The Town Plan team expressed reservations about the Airport's reliance on road sweepers rather than special FOD*BOSS removal equipment. The Airport agreed to trial the suggested equipment and, following this, have decided to purchase an FOD*BOSS.

A meeting on 28 October 2009 with the Joint Cheshire Emergency Planning Team (JCEPT) examined emergency readiness, rescue and recovery plans for Knutsford, based on the *Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Local Resilience Forum Community Risk Register, 2007*⁵. The JCEPT agreed that a Command Post Exercise to test emergency responses would be valuable and an Emergency Support Plan would greatly assist incoming emergency services.

Recommended Action (Ref. EH 9)

TPIC to monitor all aspects of safety of aircraft over-flying Knutsford, including development of an Emergency Support Plan, and the implementation of a Command Post Exercise assuming an aircraft crash on Knutsford town centre.

2.1.16 Analysis of Question 5 answers and related comments (Question 6).

5. Do you agree or disagree that the following actions are required in Knutsford?						
	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Can't say / No opinion	Total
5.1 More action to attract tourists and visitors:	845(32.49%)	1255(48.25%)	314(12.07%)	49(1.88%)	138(5.31%)	2601
5.2 More promotion as an historic market town:	1073(41.38%)	1148(44.27%)	244(9.41%)	25(0.96%)	103(3.97%)	2593
5.3 More community events like Royal May Day:	740(28.54%)	1223(47.17%)	394(15.19%)	62(2.39%)	174(6.71%)	2593
Total Responded to this question:					2610	99.16%
Total who skipped this question:					22	0.84%
Total:					2632	100%

2.1.17 More action to attract tourists and visitors:

81% of respondents agreed that there should be more such action, with some concerns about the type of shops, the added congestion and the need for a balance between the requirements of residents and tourists. 6 comments said there should be more affordable shops with longer opening hours, including Sundays, and 10 said the town should be easier to reach and walk around, with public transport, plentiful cheap parking and pedestrianisation, with continental-style pavement cafes, to aid safe browsing. 5 people said there should be advertising posters at stations and car parks, and one suggested a motorway sign “Home of Elizabeth Gaskell”. The consensus of comments was that it is important to make the town inviting, clean and litter-free, with measures to attract visitors.

2.1.18 More promotion as an historic market town: Merged with section 2.2.13. 86% of respondents agree that more promotion as an historic market town is required, although half of the 54 comments said that the Market should be improved first. **See 2.2.13**

2.1.19 More community events like Royal May Day:

76% think there should be more events like Royal May Day. There was a wide range of suggestions for new events from respondents of all ages, including fairs or a carnival at Longridge, music festivals (especially jazz), art, drama, culture, sport, a food/beer/wine festival, special markets, a Christmas market linked with the lights switch-on, Whit walks, Fun events like It’s a Knockout on the Heath or the Moor. Events celebrating local connections were considered especially important (e.g. Elizabeth Gaskell’s 200th anniversary when CEC and several local organisations will be organising events). Some said there should have been more exploitation of the highly successful TV series, *Cranford*.

As stated in section 2.1.4 the recently-formed PKF has begun to carry out Town Plan survey recommendations. The Town Plan Implementation Committee will continue in membership of this group, and will recommend introduction of new community events.

2.2 Parking and Shopping

Overview

The 2004 MBC Local Plan⁶ states (14.5) *“Careful consideration needs to be given to the provision of more car parkingRemoving traffic from the historic core will make Knutsford a much pleasanter and safer place in which to shop, live and work”*, and (14.15) *“The aim is to maintain and enhance the vitality and attractiveness of Knutsford Town Centre as an historic town and important local shopping resource”*.

The KTP survey reveals a desire for the Local Plan objectives to be delivered without further delay. The extra parking spaces need to be provided unobtrusively, as shown by the positive response for underground parking and comments made concerning appearance of any multi-storey car park. The overall views of the community expressed in the survey are that current town centre parking provision is unsatisfactory and should be reviewed to stimulate businesses, and long stay, low cost parking for workers is needed, to alleviate the parking difficulties faced by town centre residents and shoppers. Economic stimulation could be improved by a shop / trade mix encouraging local people to shop locally.

In view of the large number of past surveys, studies and reviews, and the variety of KTP survey comments and suggestions, relevant comments have been combined with the results of the studies and incorporated into a comprehensive programme of recommendations designed to assist early completion of the 2004 MBC Local Plan⁶ commitments without the further expense of yet another series of surveys and reviews.

2.2.1 Analysis of Question 7 answers and related comments (Question 9).

7. What is your opinion of the following car parking facilities in Knutsford?						
	More than enough	Just enough	Not enough	Serious shortage	Can't say / No opinion	Total
7.1 For residents in and around the town centre:	145(5.67%)	920(35.95%)	855(33.41%)	414(16.18%)	225(8.79%)	2559
7.2 For shoppers and tourists in the town centre:	135(5.28%)	749(29.32%)	1008(39.45%)	589(23.05%)	74(2.9%)	2555
7.3 For business staff in the town centre:	131(5.14%)	420(16.47%)	877(34.39%)	561(22%)	561(22%)	2550
Total Responded to this question:					2571	97.68%
Total who skipped this question:					61	2.32%
Total:					2632	100%

2.2.2 Car parking facilities in Knutsford:

Of those who gave an opinion 72% said there is not enough parking space in Knutsford for business staff, 64% said not enough for shoppers, and 54% said not enough for residents. Most of the 77 comments thought the main problem is parking costs for business staff and shoppers who park in residential areas to avoid paying. Suggested solutions included residents' parking schemes, free parking for at least 2 hours for shoppers/tourists, prevention of town business expansion without adequate staff parking provision and business staff to use all day parking at Tatton St. car park. A KTC car parking strategy draft document (Oct. 2008)⁷ identified a Town Centre Residents Parking Scheme as an area for action, as it seeks to *“prioritise the needs of residents in areas affected by non-residential parking”*.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 1)

Implement a Residents Parking Scheme for town centre residents.

Research into Knutsford town centre parking showed many recommendations that have been made [Appendix 3], yet few implemented. Other earlier recommendations were:

- Changing Princess St. car park to maximum 4 hours parking.
- Ceasing the issue of car parking permits at King St., Princess St., and Silk Mill St. car parks.
- Moving King St., Princess St. and Silk Mill St. permit holders to Tatton St. car park.
- Front of Tatton St. car park to become 3 hour short stay for shoppers.
- Improved signage to car parks.
- New parking facilities – south side of Church Walk.
- New parking facilities – multi-storey at railway / Tatton Street car parks.
- Decriminalise parking.
- Give priority to short stay parking in the town centre.
- Promote long stay parking in more peripheral car parks.

A 2009 KTC survey⁸ requested responses from 148 town centre businesses. The 91 replies stated that they had 382 cars needing parking spaces. As the 2005 business rating list shows 220 businesses in the town centre, this may explain most of the problems in residential areas. Figures from *MBC Car parking Review (April 2005)*⁹ showed most town centre car parks operating at 100% capacity throughout the day and over saturation of town centre on-street car parking, with occupancy levels of 105 / 106%.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 2)

Restrict the use of town centre car parks to short stay and limit long stay parking to the Tatton Street car park.

2.2.3 Analysis of Question 8 answers and related comments (Question 9).

8. To what degree would you support or oppose the following in Knutsford?						
	Strongly support	Tend to support	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	Can't say / No opinion	Total
8.1 A multi-storey car park (2 or more levels):	461(18.54%)	608(24.46%)	545(21.92%)	788(31.7%)	84(3.38%)	2486
8.2 A single-level underground car park:	720(28.88%)	1099(44.08%)	315(12.64%)	230(9.23%)	129(5.17%)	2493
8.3 A Park-and-Ride scheme:	347(13.98%)	689(27.76%)	668(26.91%)	411(16.56%)	367(14.79%)	2482
8.4 Free weekend parking in the town centre:	1419(55.67%)	746(29.27%)	191(7.49%)	102(4%)	91(3.57%)	2549
8.5 Free weekend use of company car parks:	1615(63.46%)	663(26.05%)	97(3.81%)	57(2.24%)	113(4.44%)	2545
Total Responded to this question:					2573	97.76%
Total who skipped this question:					59	2.24%
Total:					2632	100%

2.2.4 A multi-storey car park: Opinion was divided, with 53% opposing and 43% supporting this. The 137 comments were not consistent with the overall result; 30% being in favour, 25% opposed and 44% might give support dependent upon cost, location and appearance of the proposed car park. The preferred sites were King St., Silk Mill St., Tatton St. and Canute Court/Railway Station, with the latter two preferred for a 3 storey car park.

2.2.5 A single-level underground car park:

Of those who gave an opinion, 73% supported this. 26 comments supported and 25 opposed the proposal, while 21 wanted more details of location and cost before giving an opinion. Comments about all types of new car park were clear that any new construction should be as unobtrusive as possible and in harmony with the style of Knutsford buildings, which could be why the majority supported an underground car park.

At a meeting between representatives of CEC, KTC and KTP on 23 September 2009 Highways officers advised that a multi-storey car park could be built with an unobtrusive appearance. Jordangate in Macclesfield was quoted as an example. They also stated that underground car parks are much more expensive to build than multi-storey.

The MBC Local Plan Policy KTC 19 says *“The existing car parks will be retained for car parking”* and the reason given (14.25) is *“A range of car parks are (sic) needed to meet*

the needs of shopping and other short stay visits and provide long stay parking spaces”.
Policy KTC 20 says *“The following sites are allocated for new or additional car parking*
1 Provision of a multi-storey car park on the British Rail car park.
2 Surface car park on South side of Church Walk”.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 3)

To minimise the impact of PA 1 (and the recommended Pedestrian Priority area in King Street) build the multi-storey car park on the Railway car park as set out in Policy KTC20 of the MBC Local Plan (above). It must be as unobtrusive as possible.

With the support of KTC, advice was sought from an interested car park design/build consultant. He advised a feasibility study to look at the possible development of three sites:

The Heath – possibility of underground parking option

Booths car park – possibility of a single tier.

Railway car park – possibility of a single tier to span over the railway line.

A residents’ scheme needs to consider the displacement impact it will have upon other areas of the town, as identified in the 2005 car parking review. It needs to be done in conjunction with new parking developments in order to minimise such impact. The main problem for residents is long stay parking by business staff, so this must be considered as a key issue.

There were 5 suggestions for King Street as the site for an underground car park, 4 for the Heath and 1 suggested under the proposed Aldi development. The area adjacent to the Knutsford entrance in Tatton Park was also suggested as a possible site for parking. The Park is currently closed on Mondays in winter and only open to vehicles between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. on other working days. Another suggestion is to convert the foot paths around three sides of the Heath (Manchester Rd., Northwich Rd., Tabley Rd.) into chevron parking, creating possibly 285 long stay spaces. Alteration could be limited to removal of kerb stones and smoothing to road level with the painting of chevron parking lines, at moderate cost, and easily reversible.

At the meeting with representatives of CEC, KTP and KTC on 23 September 2009 it was said that the Rail company would probably not agree with any building over the railway line, and KTC have previously rejected the idea of chevron parking beside the Heath. However, it was also suggested that a full parking review of Knutsford would probably be carried out by CEC in Spring 2010 and all suggestions put forward by respondents to the Town Plan survey have been listed to enable such a review to consider all possible options.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 4)

Liaise with CEC in its town centre parking review, which should consider the effect of the above recommendations, inform on any additional car park/s required, and include a feasibility study into all possible options. .

A strategic car parking plan can resolve many issues such as:

- Parking for staff who work in the town's businesses.
- Long term parking for residents in and around the town centre..
- Short and long term parking for shoppers and visitors.
- Possible pedestrianisation of sections of town centre roads.
- Safety improvements for pedestrians in town centre.
- Economic vitality of the town centre.
- Parking needs of people with disabilities.

The *CEC Car Parking Strategy (April 2009)*¹⁰ seeks to reduce road traffic in East Cheshire, promote better use of public transport and encourage staggering of working hours by commuters. Knutsford residents, in addition to family pressures, employer demands and significant time constraints, have no adequate public transport to major local employers (eg airport / hospitals) and no direct rail links with towns in East Cheshire, where they work and from where Knutsford businesses employ people, making the car the obvious choice. It is unrealistic to expect commuters to use an inadequate public transport system.

Unless serious flaws in public transport are addressed, it is unlikely that all the aims of the CEC Parking Strategy, which rely upon reduction of car use, can be realised. There are many existing and possible future pressures on parking:

- An underestimate of numbers of commuters / businesses needing long stay parking
- Inappropriate availability of long stay parking in town centre car parks (Princess St. and King St.), which should be available for short stay shoppers / visitors
- Loss of 55 parking spaces due to the Royal George development (250 extra spaces were estimated to be required)
- Impact of possible pedestrian priority schemes, with loss of free on street parking
- Impact of possible introduction of the residents parking scheme

2.2.6 A park and ride scheme:

Opinion was split on this, with 42% supporting and 43% against the idea. 54 of the 74 comments were very dismissive, and no action is considered necessary.

2.2.7 Free weekend parking in town centre streets:

85% of respondents were in favour. 61 comments called for free parking; some wanted free parking every day or for specific durations and others were critical of people that want free parking. As Sunday parking is free, the issue really relates to Saturday parking.

2.2.8 Free weekend use of Company car parks:

90% of respondents supported this. There were only 18 comments, 11 of which were in favour and 7 expressed reservations..

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 5)

Consult with CEC on the possibility of free weekend parking in the town centre and with local businesses on obtaining use of Company car parks at weekends

2.2.9 Analysis of Question 10 answers and related comments (Question 12).

10. What time limit do you think should be applied to free weekday parking in the town?							
	None	30 min	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	24 hours	Can't say / No opinion
10.1 In town centre streets:	138(5.43%)	565 (22.23%)	1046 (41.15%)	485 (19.08%)	183(7.2%)	58(2.28%)	67(2.64%)
10.2 In surrounding nearby roads:	214(8.5%)	174(6.91%)	623 (24.75%)	814 (32.34%)	364 (14.46%)	201(7.99%)	127(5.05%)
Total Responded to this question:							2547
Total who skipped this question:							85
Total:							2632
							96.77%
							3.23%
							100%

2.2.10 Free parking time limits in town centre streets:

41% of respondents favoured 1 hour, 22% 30 minutes and 19% 2 hours, while 3% did not give an opinion. There were 71 comments, most of which wanted time restrictions to be eased. 4 people commented about poor enforcement of parking regulations in the town centre.

“30 minutes is not enough time to do anything useful”

2.2.11 Free parking time limits on surrounding nearby roads:

32% of respondents favoured 2 hours, 25% 1 hour, 14% 3 hours and 9% wanted no free parking at all, while 8% wanted all day free parking to continue and 7% wanted 30 minutes. 10 comments expressed concern about residents being unable to park outside their homes because of office workers/shoppers and 10 asked for a residents' parking scheme.

The Town Plan survey responses were similar to a KTC survey of town centre businesses in 2009⁸ which showed that 84% of them feel that current parking regulations have a negative effect on business, and would like the current 20-30 minute limit changed. The preferred time limit was 1 hour, and 80% of business respondents felt this should apply across all streets, with 45% feeling it would be appropriate to have unlimited waiting time.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 6)

Change free parking times to 1 hour on town centre streets and maximum 2 hours on adjacent surrounding streets outside the town centre.

The design consultant (2.2.5) was asked to assess the town centre car parks. It was said that additional spaces could be organised, particularly in Tatton St. car park; a low cost option, requiring line redrawing. There may be Health and Safety shortfalls which could be rectified by simply painting direction arrows. Future car park development could also possibly incorporate new technology, e.g. spaces for electric charging of electric powered vehicles. In view of problems caused by long stay parking, town centre car parks could be designated as short stay only and Tatton St. car park as long stay at reasonable charges. Any new development should accommodate the large amount of long stay parking required.

Comments from survey respondents also suggest there is poor signposting and information in the town centre regarding car park location and available spaces. Electronic display of available spaces should be considered. Many businesses say shoppers are “clock watching”,

rush their shopping, cut short their visit and so affect town economics. A pay on exit system would remove pressure on shoppers and diners and may facilitate introduction of an electronic display system and allow free use of car parks e.g. for the first hour, which would reduce the need for people to drive repeatedly around the town looking for free parking, adding to the pollution in the town centre.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 7)

Include in the review (PA 4) improved signposting to car parks, the use of space and the feasibility of introducing electronic displays and of changing “pay and display” to pay on exit, perhaps with free parking for a limited stay.

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 8)

Construct new car parks (underground if feasible) as set out in Policy KTC19 of the MBC Local Plan, based on findings of the feasibility studies (PA4 and PA7 above).

2.2.12 Analysis of Question 11 answers and related comments (Question 12)

11. What is your opinion of the range of these shopping outlets in Knutsford?						
	More than enough	Just enough	Not enough	Serious shortage	Can't say / No opinion	Total
11.1 Supermarkets:	420(16.53%)	1313(51.67%)	659(25.93%)	128(5.04%)	21(0.83%)	2541
11.2 Hardware / DIY / household goods:	33(1.29%)	235(9.18%)	1198(46.78%)	1041(40.65%)	54(2.11%)	2561
11.3 Lower cost clothing & shoe shops:	205(8.09%)	445(17.57%)	1060(41.85%)	679(26.81%)	144(5.68%)	2533
11.4 Lower cost restaurants & hot food outlets:	814(32.1%)	952(37.54%)	409(16.13%)	198(7.81%)	163(6.43%)	2536
11.5 Specialist food (fruit & veg, fish, meat etc.):	114(4.48%)	985(38.67%)	1061(41.66%)	309(12.13%)	78(3.06%)	2547
11.6 Shops outside the town centre:	187(7.42%)	638(25.32%)	766(30.4%)	276(10.95%)	653(25.91%)	2520
Total Responded to this question:					2574	97.8%
Total who skipped this question:					58	2.2%
Total:					2632	100%

2.2.13 Range of shopping outlets in Knutsford:

68% of respondents are happy with the range of supermarkets, whereas 89% feel there is a lack of hardware / DIY stores, and 69% a lack of lower cost clothing and shoes. 70% feel there are enough lower cost restaurants and 54% would like more specialist food shops. 50% feel there are not enough shops outside the town centre. Segmentation analysis showed the response is representative of all the demographic areas of Knutsford even if the large number of people with no opinion of the range of shops outside the town centre is excluded.

There were 380 comments concerning shopping. TABLE 1 summarises them, with some respondents obviously listing more than one point. It highlights the dilemma of balancing low cost outlets, which might “lower the tone”, with “luxury” outlets which are considered too expensive and inaccessible by many. 48 comments related to the general shopping experience being responsible for driving shoppers out of town, and being too elitist.

TABLE 1:

TOO MANY	No.	NOT ENOUGH	No.
Kitchen / bathroom / bedroom	42	DIY / hardware / everyday goods	65
Restaurants and coffee shops	30	Specialist local independent food	36
Hairdressers and beauticians	27	Affordable shoes and clothes	33
Charity shops	23	Supermarkets / cheaper food outlets	31
Anti “low cost restaurant” feeling	20	Cheaper restaurants and fast food	16
Expensive boutiques and bridal	18	Better market facilities	13
Estate agents	12	Chain stores	11
Gifts / arts	7	Children’s / teens / school clothes	8
		Sports shops	8

16 comments related to the level of support given to local businesses, with a strong feeling that more could / should be done by CEC to help. There were 60 comments that business rent and rates are too high with suggestions that rates be reduced /capped /abolished for sole traders and essential or traditional shops. This is driven by market forces and is considered unachievable within the remit of the Town Plan.

10 comments related to finding ways to promote businesses and encourage trade. Any parking developments should allow for future economic development of the town and embrace latest technologies. As a local market town and a tourist destination, Knutsford has to meet the needs of locals for everyday requirements as well as those of tourists, who want highly individual shops and restaurants. Knutsford’s high rents and rates are not an attractive business proposition for selling cheaper merchandise, given competition from supermarkets, online shopping and shopping outlets.

They said more should be done to promote less expensive retail outlets. The main cheaper shopping alternative is the market, which, for a town described as an “historic market town”, is considered inadequate. With the potential to open frequently, a revitalized indoor/outdoor market, possibly extending into pedestrianised areas, could be a huge attraction.

54 comments from the section 2.1 criticised the Knutsford markets, held on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, with a Farmers Market on the first Saturday of the month. 27 said they are “pathetic” and 14 that they need improvement, and others that there could be a wider range of stalls, they are poorly advertised with no clear signage in the town, and so tend to be visited by regulars and not to attract new customers.

The Town Plan Steering Group, through its membership of PKF, as detailed in section 2.1.18, will monitor the placing of location maps for shops and services in car parks and other appropriate places (e.g. main streets and railway and bus stations).

Recommended Action (Ref. PA 9)

Upgrade and promote the market, possibly by moving to a pedestrianised area and changing opening times and days – a Sunday market might be more popular.

2.3 Pedestrian Priority and the Town Centre

Overview

For many years there have been highly vocal proponents and opponents of Pedestrian Priority (PP) in Knutsford, but no robust assessment of the view of the community. The Environmental Appraisal (section 14.6) of the 2004 MBC Local Plan states *“Pedestrian Priority measures help to provide a sustainable urban environment through the reduction of air and noise pollution”*, objective (c) is *“to improve the environment, particularly for pedestrians, through pedestrian priority measures”*, which, says Policy KTC 18 (14.24), *“will make the town centre a safer, pleasanter and more attractive environment”*.

As the Town Plan survey responses, for the Environment and Heritage section as well as this one, clearly support these Local Plan policies, they are combined here with all the community suggestions into a programme for speedy implementation of Pedestrian Priority measures.

Knutsford people also greatly value their town centre facilities, with very high levels of satisfaction being expressed from users, although comments suggested possible areas for improvement. The only dissatisfaction expressed, which was strong, was with Public Toilets.

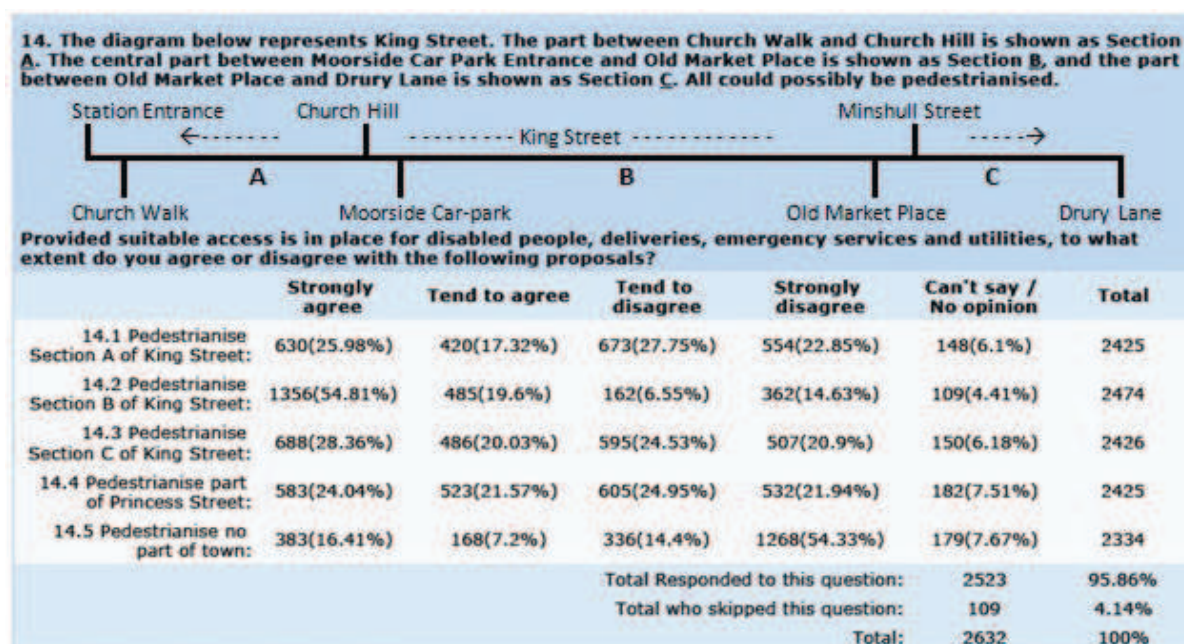
2.3.1 Analysis of Question 13 answers and related comments (Question 16).

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about pedestrianisation?						
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't say / No opinion	Total
13.1 It would enhance the character of the town:	1169(46.06%)	676(26.64%)	276(10.87%)	321(12.65%)	96(3.78%)	2538
13.2 It would adversely affect trade:	373(14.85%)	456(18.15%)	894(35.59%)	597(23.77%)	192(7.64%)	2512
13.3 It would increase the risk of crime:	154(6.16%)	216(8.64%)	979(39.14%)	780(31.19%)	372(14.87%)	2501
13.4 It would be more convenient and safer for people with children, prams, wheelchairs etc.:	1490(59.03%)	686(27.18%)	137(5.43%)	117(4.64%)	94(3.72%)	2524
Total Responded to this question:					2550	96.88%
Total who skipped this question:					82	3.12%
Total:					2632	100%

When asked their views on the likely effects of PP, 73% believed that it would enhance the character of the town; 33% thought it would adversely affect trade, 70% felt it would not increase the risk of crime and 86% that it would be safer and more convenient for the disabled, for people with children and prams and for wheelchair users.

69 respondents identified themselves as business owners or workers in the town. Although a small sample, the opinions of this group showed similar trends to the main survey, although not as marked. For example, 61% thought it would enhance the character of the town and 44% thought it would adversely affect trade. 72% thought it would not increase the risk of crime and 85% thought it would be safer and more convenient for the disabled, for people with children and prams and for wheelchair users. Evidence from this sample is that the views of town traders and workers are largely in agreement with those of the majority of the community.

2.3.2 Analysis of Question 14 answers and related comments (Question16)



When asked about specific parts of town, 74% voted for pedestrianisation of the central section B of King Street (as shown above - roughly from the access slip-road for the King Street car park to Old Market Place or 109 King Street). Only 24% voted against this, a majority of 3 to 1. Opinions were more evenly divided about the lower section A (43% to 45%) and upper section C of King Street (48% to 45%), and of Princess Street (45% to 47%). Many respondents were concerned that PP might cause parking problems that would need to be addressed. However, PP in the central section of King Street will result in the loss of no more than 27 short term parking spaces, limited at present to 30 minutes free parking. 21 new spaces have recently been provided on Church Walk and recommendations are being made in the KTP for additional parking in the town centre.

Of 67 respondents identified as business owners or workers, 57% agreed that the central part of King Street should be pedestrianised, 35% agreed with section A and 48% with section C. Again it seems traders and business staff are in agreement with the rest of the community.

There is clearly a significant demand from the Knutsford community for PP in the central section of King Street, but no obvious mandate for it elsewhere in the town. These findings support the commitments for pedestrian priority measures in the 2004 MBC Local Plan⁶ (Policies KTC 17 and 18) and confirmed in the 2005 Supplementary Planning Document *Knutsford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal*¹. For these reasons it is strongly recommended that pedestrian priority measures in the central section of King Street, as detailed in the diagram above, should be implemented.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 1)

Implement Pedestrian Priority measures in the central part B of King Street (see section 2.3.2) as set out in the 2004 MBC Local Plan Policies KTC17 and 18.

170 comments were received. 31 were concerned with the hours of operation, with no clear pattern emerging. Similarly, there were not enough comments to show a clear opinion on detailed design, access for deliveries and emergency services and the various other factors that will need to be taken into account. Nonetheless, the Town Plan working group carried out detailed research into the subject, and makes some constructive suggestions based on that and the general wishes of the Knutsford community shown elsewhere in the survey.

A recent example of a historic town pedestrianising a main shopping street is Sherborne in Dorset. Their Town Council and Chamber of Commerce found a trial period invaluable in assessing both general viability and the need for detailed improvements or changes. The one-year trial was successful and adopted permanently; with the initial concerns of some traders being appeased.

The following general principles are recommended for implementing pedestrian priority measures in the central part of King Street.

1. The scheme should be trialled for 6-12 months to assess viability in principle and, if positive, any need for improvements in detail.
2. To take account of both the town's consensus view that the centre of King Street should be pedestrianised, and also the practical needs of local businesses (eg for deliveries), the working day should have a significant amount of time (eg: the whole morning) where vehicle access and parking is permitted as now, and the rest of the working day (eg the afternoon) pedestrianised.
3. If, after the trial period, pedestrianisation is adopted in one form or another, its effects should be regularly reviewed with a view to improving its operation. Also, if these reviews deem it to be successful, consideration could then be given to extending it, either in timing (eg: to summer evenings, if a "café culture" has developed) or geographical (eg: the top or bottom of King Street). Such changes should again be trialled.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 2)

The TPIC to conduct ongoing surveys on community opinion and liaise with CEC in the detailed design stage of Pedestrian Priority measures in King Street.

2.3.3 Analysis of Question 15 answers and related comments (Question 16).

15. If you have made use of these facilities in the past year, what is your opinion of them? If you have not made use of them, select "Not Applicable"						
	Very good	Fairly good	Fairly poor	Very poor	Not Applicable	Total
15.1 Heritage Centre:	542(21.68%)	704(28.16%)	89(3.56%)	17(0.68%)	1148(45.92%)	2500
15.2 Library:	1256(49.82%)	646(25.62%)	53(2.1%)	9(0.36%)	557(22.09%)	2521
15.3 Studio Cinema in the Civic Centre:	1142(45.46%)	657(26.15%)	85(3.38%)	30(1.19%)	598(23.81%)	2512
15.4 Other parts of the Civic Centre:	358(14.4%)	819(32.94%)	118(4.75%)	33(1.33%)	1158(46.58%)	2486
15.5 Information Centre:	473(18.89%)	664(26.52%)	206(8.23%)	42(1.68%)	1119(44.69%)	2504
15.6 Public toilets:	37(1.47%)	219(8.73%)	474(18.88%)	488(19.44%)	1292(51.47%)	2510
Total Responded to this question:					2548	96.81%
Total who skipped this question:					84	3.19%
Total:					2632	100%

A recurring comment about all the town centre facilities was that they very much need to be more widely advertised. Some respondents did not know where they are located. This is reflected in the large percentages of local people who had not used the facilities in the past year. Some who had done so said activities and events should be advertised more.

2.3.4 The Heritage Centre: 46% of respondents said they had not used the Heritage Centre in the past year. Of those who had, 92% expressed satisfaction. From mid 2009, the Centre has been run exclusively by volunteers. A Lottery Heritage funded curator was in place for the three years prior to 2009, but after that no further significant funding could be found. The Centre is responsible for bringing many visitors into the town and as such its attractions should be encouraged for the prosperity of the town. It should therefore maintain a professional core for administration and promotion, with volunteers utilised for day to day events.

“Unfortunate location – pedestrianisation would help”.

“The heritage and information centres could be combined to save money.”

Other towns in the administrative district of Cheshire East have created positions with this in mind. Middlewich Town Council now has its own Events Manager and Heritage Officer, funded by the town’s Council Tax precept. The Heritage Centre is currently funded almost exclusively through fund raising events and donations. Notwithstanding a recent decision of CEC to transfer its operations to the Library, the suggestion that the Information Centre could be combined with the Heritage Centre, with a paid Manager, should be considered.

If pedestrianisation is introduced it may be an ideal opportunity to introduce some sort of historic trail embedded into the street surface for the Cranford tours and to direct people to the Centre. Access is available from King Street via a narrow passage or via Red Cow Yard off Princess Street. The latter is the only available disabled access but lacks signage from King Street / Canute Square.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 3)

Transfer the facilities and funding of the Tourist section of the Information Centre to the Heritage Centre, and employ a Manager to run the combined Centre. Display the international ‘i’ sign at the entrance.

2.3.5 The Library:

22% of respondents had not used the Library in the past year, but. 96% of those who had said they were satisfied. There were 35 comments. Of these, 20% criticised the lack of toilet facilities for the public, 20% felt that more access hours were desirable and 20% would like more books. The remainder covered a range of subjects with no clear pattern.

“Toilets should be available in the library”

Though not specifically mentioned in the survey, subsequent research noted that the existing toilet facility, intended only for staff and the disabled, is not in compliance with current building regulations. The door does not open outwards, making it very difficult to close once a mobility vehicle is inside.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT4)

Adapt the existing Library toilet facilities for use by all, include a fold-down baby changing table, and put signage in place to identify its availability.

2.3.6 Studio Cinema in the Civic Centre:

76% of respondents had used the Cinema in the last year, and 94% of them said they were satisfied, with nearly two-thirds selecting very good. The Studio Cinema is clearly a highly valued town facility. There were 42 comments, most of which merely reflected the figures above, saying that it is a great asset to the town.

However, 13 of them were critical of the sound quality, and, although this represents less than 1% of users, this was mentioned during a discussion with the former Manager of Community Centres for CEC, Shelagh Malley. Cinema systems are checked annually and, in 2009, there were two extra visits from sound technicians. It has been agreed that there will be a more proactive effort to obtain cinema patrons' feedback, not just on sound quality but on their whole experience.

2.3.7 Other Parts of the Civic Centre:

In contrast to the cinema, 47% of respondents had not used the rest of the Centre in the past year. 88% of users said the facilities were fairly or very good. There were 12 comments that were critical in different ways - acoustics and heating of main rooms, doors not wide enough for prams, too expensive, depressing etc. The only pattern to emerge from a total of 42 comments was a feeling that the Centre was under-used and under-publicised (*"Where is the Civic Centre?"* perhaps the most extreme example). Certainly it is clear from the data that the Centre is not used by 47% of survey respondents and CEC would like to see it used more by the community.

The principal need identified is to make the local community more aware of the range of activities and facilities available. Several comments recommended more use of the bar facility to improve the experience of using the Centre generally, and the cinema in particular, and to increase both awareness and revenue. A business case might be constructed for a bar/coffee-bar that produces net income for the Centre and should be explored.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 5)

Conduct proactive open-ended research to assess patrons' views of their experience of the cinema, assess the results and costs of any proposals, such as opening the bar for longer, and actively consider responding where financially possible

Some local groups such as the Gang Show have gone elsewhere to put shows on. However, it may be possible to offer better facilities now that Centre Management is part of CEC rather than just Macclesfield, and liaison with other arts/community centres in the county is producing results, e.g. Crewe Lyceum Theatre¹¹ had not only lent the Centre advanced lighting equipment but provided technical help in setting it up.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 6)

Consult former users to ascertain what improvements to the Centre would persuade them to start re-using it.

2.3.8 Information Centre: Merged with section 2.3.4.

2.3.9 Town Centre Public Toilets:

Only 49% of survey respondents said they had used town centre public toilets. 79% of users (nearly 80%) felt that the facilities were poor or very poor. The low satisfaction rate indicates there are serious issues. All of the 119 comments were negative. Poor cleanliness was the issue in 54% of the comment and 24% criticised inadequate access times. Of these, 55% wanted longer and/or reliable access hours, 35% wanted access at weekends and 10% expressed a need for access on Bank Holidays.

“Toilets are absolutely disgusting”

The remaining 22% of comments were critical of the location and/or number of toilets, with a few commenting on the the lack of nappy changing facilities and the inadequacy of disabled provision. 2 respondents suggested that traders should be encouraged to make their facilities available to the general public.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 7)

Review standards of cleanliness, with Gel cleaners in all toilets and cleaning records displayed along with Phone numbers for reporting lack of cleanliness and/or damage. WCs in Northwich Road to be replaced with conventional units with seats and lids.

Recommended Action (Ref. PT 8)

Introduce Sunday and Bank Holiday opening for Public Toilets with automatic timed access, up-to-date opening hours signs and clearly visible information about availability of RADAR¹² keys for disabled toilets

2.4

Community Facilities

Overview

The clear message from the Town Plan surveys is that improvements are needed to many of the town's community facilities. More children's play areas are wanted and major re-developments are sought at the Leisure Centre. Concern was expressed about all the sources of information for the local community, and this is particularly important for KTC in view of the strong desire to see more local issues controlled by KTC. There was strong support for protection of the town's historic buildings, for improvements in waste collection and recycling and in general street cleaning.

2.4.1 Analysis of Question 17 answers and related comments (Question 18)

17. What do you think of these facilities for young people in Knutsford?						
	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Inadequate	Can't say / No opinion	Total
17.1 Children's play areas:	310(12.38%)	1134(45.29%)	268(10.7%)	136(5.43%)	656(26.2%)	2504
17.2 Pre-school care facilities:	361(14.49%)	534(21.44%)	61(2.45%)	24(0.96%)	1511(60.66%)	2491
17.3 Swimming Pool at the Leisure centre:	210(8.39%)	917(36.62%)	329(13.14%)	173(6.91%)	875(34.94%)	2504
17.4 Other facilities at the Leisure Centre:	131(5.26%)	876(35.15%)	234(9.39%)	107(4.29%)	1144(45.91%)	2492
17.5 St John's Wood Community Centre:	96(3.85%)	326(13.09%)	44(1.77%)	36(1.45%)	1989(79.85%)	2491
Total Responded to this question:					2518	95.67%
Total who skipped this question:					114	4.33%
Total:					2632	100%

This question explored views on the existing recreational facilities in the town for young people. Of the 2632 respondents to the Survey, only 131 declared that they were aged 'under 18 years' so their contributions to Question 17 are statistically insignificant. Their responses have been analysed and found to be consistent with the general broad picture. It should be noted that many households completed one questionnaire on behalf of a family.

2.4.2 Children's Play Areas:

Whilst 78% of those expressing an opinion rated these as excellent or fair, 36 comments made suggested that this high rating is dominated by attitudes to the central, recently-enhanced play area for young children at the Moor. The high regard for this area and the Moor Pool, together with the need to keep it clear of litter and rubbish repeats the feelings expressed in the Environment and Heritage Section (2.1). However, the appreciation of the Moor highlights shortcomings elsewhere. Whilst there is also a play ground at Shaw Heath and one recently opened at Longridge, there are other areas around the town without any.

The need identified is for play facilities in residential areas with high populations of young children and, as at Longridge, these could be pursued by the TPIC working with local groups to identify each area's needs and with those groups and other Agencies to have them provided. There is also a perceived lack of facilities for older children and teenagers. Private sports clubs exist for structured team play but can be expensive. Another need is for simple, open ground for football and other ad hoc activity and the provision of, for example, a skate-

board facility more centrally located than the one at Longridge. For the older ones the need is for a readily accessible site with skate board or other facilities, clarification, and where possible extension, of access to existing clubs and for more access to open, common ground.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 1)

TPIC to identify areas where a need exists for play facilities for young children and teenagers, and to work with agencies to have them provided.

2.4.3 Pre-school care facilities:

91% of those expressing a view rated these as excellent or fair, and with only 9% saying they are poor or inadequate, no recommendation is considered necessary.

2.4.4 Swimming Pool at the Leisure Centre:

35% of respondents did not give an opinion, and 69% of those who did were satisfied with this facility. 57 comments expressed concerns about the perceived poor level of cleaning and maintenance. The facility was also said to compare unfavourably with pools in nearby towns.

2.4.5 Other facilities at the Leisure Centre:

46% of respondents did not express an opinion and 75% of those who did rated them as fair or excellent. Many of the comments addressed availability of the facilities for adult use which is specifically raised in section 2.4.14. For continuity, the responses to that question are also included in this section.

20% of respondents did not give an opinion on more availability for adult use, but 97% of those who did supported the proposal. The Centre, opened in 1975, operates under a shared-use agreement between educational and public amenity interests. Because of this, availability for adults is very limited during school hours. 41 comments highlighted this poor access, 39 complained that changing facilities for adults are inadequate and 25 suggested there should be more and improved gym and exercise equipment.

There is a clear-cut demand for better access and facilities for adult use that would require major revamping of the Centre. It would involve extensions and internal restructuring to extend access and provide a new gym, reception and changing rooms.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 2)

The Leisure Centre to be revamped and developed, including a large gym with suitable equipment and changing facilities.

2.4.6 St John's Wood Community Centre:

80% of respondents did not give an opinion, and 84% of those who did rated the Centre as fair or excellent. The Centre adjoins a special needs school for about 50 children and contains separate facilities for adults. These are currently underused, and the very high percentage of respondents who did not offer an opinion suggests that action should be taken to advertise its existence, facilities and availability, and to investigate whether it and its vacant land could be used for children's activities.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 3)

Features of St. John's Wood Community Centre to be better publicised, and reviewed for possible uses for children.

2.4.7 Analysis of Question 19 answers and related comments (Question 21)

19. How do you rate these methods of providing information to the community?					
	Very important	Fairly important	Not at all important	Can't say / No opinion	Total
19.1 Communication to and from the Town Council:	1161(46.68%)	947(38.08%)	115(4.62%)	264(10.62%)	2487
19.2 The Information Centre:	899(36.13%)	1042(41.88%)	201(8.08%)	346(13.91%)	2488
19.3 A good local newspaper focused on Knutsford:	1869(74.28%)	519(20.63%)	44(1.75%)	84(3.34%)	2516
Total Responded to this question:				2522	95.82%
Total who skipped this question:				110	4.18%
Total:				2632	100%

2.4.8 Communication to and from the Town Council (See also 2.4.18):

This was identified as important by 95% of those expressing an opinion. However, 16 comments suggested that the current level of communication is poor and patchy and improvement is needed. KTC should review the objectives, presentation, format and range of its website and arrangements for keeping it up-to-date. It could carry, for example, a monthly Newsletter also posted on the KTC notice board and other strategic sites in the town centre.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 4)

KTC to improve its communications with the public.

2.4.9 The Information Centre: Merged into section 2.3.4.

2.4.10 A good local newspaper focused on Knutsford:

The support was most strong for having a good local newspaper, with 95% of respondents identifying it as important. 35 comments made, however, indicate that, with the recent closing of the Knutsford branch of the local Guardian and the loss of a Knutsford-based reporter, the service provided is seen as no longer adequate. It is suggested therefore that this concern be addressed with the Guardian management to see how the current situation can be improved. One possibility would be to agree to receive increased input from the KTC and from the many groups and societies operating in the town.

There are alternatives to the traditional newspaper in the e-papers and the Knutsford Times, as well as the Guardian, provides a good service to those with e-mail facilities. Further developments in this field may be anticipated.

2.4.11 Analysis of Question 20 answers and related comments (Question 21)

20. To what extent would you support or oppose the following in Knutsford?						
	Strongly support	Tend to support	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	Can't say / No opinion	Total
20.1 More garden allotments for residents:	697(27.78%)	1068(42.57%)	107(4.26%)	34(1.36%)	603(24.03%)	2509
20.2 More opportunities for Adult education:	745(29.88%)	1288(51.66%)	53(2.13%)	10(0.4%)	397(15.92%)	2493
20.3 More availability of the Leisure Centre for adults:	763(30.48%)	1181(47.18%)	56(2.24%)	12(0.48%)	491(19.62%)	2503
20.4 More health and fitness facilities:	739(29.62%)	1173(47.01%)	102(4.09%)	15(0.6%)	466(18.68%)	2495
20.5 Additional housing for first-time buyers:	747(29.78%)	1023(40.79%)	304(12.12%)	114(4.55%)	320(12.76%)	2508
20.6 Protection from development of the town's historic buildings:	1700(67.62%)	664(26.41%)	56(2.23%)	17(0.68%)	77(3.06%)	2514
20.7 More control over local services for the Town Council:	1142(45.79%)	932(37.37%)	118(4.73%)	36(1.44%)	266(10.67%)	2494
20.8 Provision of more street litter bins:	1045(41.65%)	1101(43.88%)	139(5.54%)	39(1.55%)	185(7.37%)	2509
20.9 Provision of more recycling facilities:	941(37.62%)	1144(45.74%)	202(8.08%)	50(2%)	164(6.56%)	2501
20.10 Weekly collection of household waste bins:	1025(40.72%)	591(23.48%)	504(20.02%)	181(7.19%)	216(8.58%)	2517
Total Responded to this question:					2538	96.43%
Total who skipped this question:					94	3.57%
Total:					2632	100%

2.4.12 More garden allotments for residents:

24% of survey respondents did not give an opinion, however, 92% of those who did supported the availability of more garden allotments for residents. There are 116 allotment plots in Knutsford on three sites provided by CEC. The waiting list currently stands at 40 but the list was closed some months ago and is now probably higher. It is understood that the Council has land that could in principle become a further allotment site but the cost of clearance and subsequent installation and maintenance of services is considered prohibitive. Nevertheless, in view of the substantial demand, it is recommended that CEC provides a further 40 – 50 allotment plots in Knutsford.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 5)

40 – 50 additional garden allotment plots to be provided for residents.

2.4.13 More opportunities for Adult Education:

16% of respondents gave no opinion. Of those who did, 97% were in favour. Detailed analysis needs to be undertaken of classes provided in Knutsford by the range of teaching outlets in recent years, and their take-up, in order to identify those topics, times and locations needed to meet this major demand.

2.4.14 More availability of the Leisure Centre for adults: Merged with 2.4.5.

2.4.15 More Health and Fitness facilities:

19% of respondents gave no opinion on the issue, but of those who did 94% were in favour. The Leisure Centre situation is, of course, relevant here, and this is discussed in section 2.4.5.

A further useful contribution could be made with a fitness / exercise circuit sited in a readily accessible public area.

2.4.16 Additional housing for first-time buyers:

Of those expressing an opinion 81% were in favour of more housing being available for first-time buyers. This is potentially a vital issue since it is essential that Knutsford has more affordable housing if it is to retain a significant proportion of young people in the town. It is proposed that this issue be addressed by investigations to identify suitable sites, infill or brown field, where Housing Associations could provide 'affordable' or share-ownership housing. Housing Associations should also be encouraged to acquire existing property in the town to provide share-ownership accommodation.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 6)

Investigate the need and encourage opportunities for affordable housing.

2.4.17 Protection from development of the town's historic buildings:

Merged into section 2.1.6

2.4.18 More control over local services for the Town Council:

93% of those expressing an opinion supported the need for KTC to have more control over local services. This is particularly important for key issues identified in the Town Plan. The recent replacement of the Macclesfield Borough and Cheshire County levels by the CEC provides a timely opportunity to review the boundaries of responsibilities in the new two-tier system. It is a key issue, therefore, that changes made as a result of discussions between KTC and CEC should reflect the vision in the Town Plan in a way most likely to bring about the developments sought in the Plan.

However, 18 comments made by respondents were critical of the performances of councillors in recent years, and this does suggest some concerns. The need for KTC to improve its communication with the public has already been stressed at section 2.4.8.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 7)

KTC to seek more control (and associated funding) over local issues.

2.4.19 Provision of more street litter bins:

The need for more street litter bins was endorsed by 92% of the respondents who offered an opinion. This clear statement reflects the deep-seated concern that the general cleanliness of the town's streets is below acceptable levels. It is proposed that a study be undertaken to identify the high litter areas in the town and to determine whether bins, including dog litter bins, are currently well sited and where new bins might most effectively be placed.

Equally important are improved programmes to empty bins and of street sweeping to clear other debris, particularly in those areas where mechanical sweepers are unable to access. Whilst a more systematic approach to siting and emptying of bins, and general street cleaning

should improve the street litter situation, people need to be encouraged to use the bins and drop less litter. Anti-litter campaigns, bye-law enforcement, sponsored litter collection and other relevant actions all need to be pursued if this issue is to be seriously tackled.

Recommended Action (Ref. CF 8)

Carry out review of distribution of litter bins and street cleaning arrangements, together with public awareness campaigns.

2.4.20 Provision of more recycling facilities:

Support for the provision of more recycling facilities was expressed by 89% of those respondents who gave an opinion. The increasing awareness of the importance of waste recycling has been reflected in the significant improvement in recent years in waste segregation. Currently, the Shaw Heath Recycling Centre is seen as very good in these respects but there is a clear need to upgrade the facilities at the High School to accommodate a wider range of segregated materials.

106 comments called for the doorstep collection of segregated plastic waste. Such collection systems are already in place in Holmes Chapel, Crewe, Congleton and Nantwich, and it is understood that CEC intend shortly to regularise these arrangements throughout the Borough. The Shaw Heath facility has a repository for plastic bottles, but individual households on Knutsford must currently put all plastics with general waste in their black bins.

Other respondents wanted information on the disposal of waste food, cooking oil, batteries and envelopes. Several businesses wanted recyclables to be collected from their premises. The local Schools Forum suggested a new recycling depot in Knutsford.

Recommended action (Ref. CF 9)

Provide households with containers for all plastics as part of regular waste collection and review frequency of collections.

2.4.21 Weekly collection of household waste bins:

Currently household waste is collected on a two-weekly cycle but 70% of those expressing an opinion supported a move back to a weekly collection. However, 83 comments were in favour of a continuing fortnightly collection and 40 wanted to change to weekly. The comments suggest that fortnightly collections of recyclables like paper, textiles, cardboard, tins and glass are quite acceptable but respondents are concerned over the current collection system for general household waste (black bins).

These concerns include the amount of waste generated by large families, problems experienced by those living in terraced houses and apartment dwellers without communal waste facilities. There is unease over possible health and vermin problems, particularly in hot weather, and access difficulties can sometimes lead to failure to collect. Because of the high intensity of the concern, it is suggested that the CEC address the specific problem areas to see what changes can be introduced to alleviate the difficulties with the present arrangements.

2.5

Public Services

Overview

The Survey Questionnaire shows a high level of satisfaction with local Public Services from those who expressed opinions. The questions relating to the proposal for a new combined Medical Centre were asked several months before full details were revealed. Although opinion on the principle of a new Centre was evenly divided, there were very definite views expressed on what services such a Centre should provide, if it were built.

2.5.1 Analysis of Question 22 answers and related comments (Question 23)

22. What is your opinion of the performance of the following services in Knutsford?						
	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Inadequate	Can't say / No opinion	Total
22.1 Police Service:	295(11.88%)	1100(44.3%)	352(14.18%)	262(10.55%)	474(19.09%)	2483
22.2 Fire Service:	1184(47.61%)	456(18.34%)	4(0.16%)	4(0.16%)	839(33.74%)	2487
22.3 Ambulance Service:	1002(40.32%)	571(22.98%)	26(1.05%)	14(0.56%)	872(35.09%)	2485
22.4 First Responders:	980(39.66%)	313(12.67%)	49(1.98%)	8(0.32%)	1121(45.37%)	2471
22.5 National Health Service:	982(39.47%)	1101(44.25%)	102(4.1%)	54(2.17%)	249(10.01%)	2488
22.6 Social Care Services:	204(8.23%)	489(19.73%)	104(4.2%)	53(2.14%)	1629(65.71%)	2479
22.7 Education Services:	563(22.73%)	715(28.87%)	56(2.26%)	19(0.77%)	1124(45.38%)	2477
Total Responded to this question:					2507	95.25%
Total who skipped this question:					125	4.75%
Total:					2632	100%

2.5.2 Police Service:

19% of respondents did not offer an opinion, but, of those who did, 70% thought the Service fair or excellent. 127 comments were received, mainly expressing concerns about lack of Police cover in the town centre at weekends and insufficient foot patrols with too much reliance on CCTV. There were also concerns expressed about the lack of follow-up of reported crimes, with many incidents only being issued with a crime number.

Meetings were held with a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) who confirmed that meetings with various community groups have already taken place and information was being sent to them regarding local police activities. It was also stated that, although Knutsford Police Station is a base for local PCSOs it is not always manned when the officers are out on patrol, but they are linked by radio to the station intercom system. It should be noted that the PCSOs do not have the power of arrest and therefore most incidents involving anything other than minor disturbances have to be referred to the Crime Police in Wilmslow.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 1)

The generally good communication between the Police Service and the local community to be maintained, with some emphasis on ensuring that the public perception of the Police is improved.

2.5.3 Fire and Rescue Service:

34 % of respondents did not offer an opinion, but 99.5% of those who did rated the Service as excellent or fair. There were 7 comments, all from people pleased with the response of the Service or for their smoke alarm programme. **No recommendation is considered necessary.**

2.5.4 Ambulance Service:

35% of respondents did not offer an opinion, and 98% of those who did rated the Service as excellent or fair. However, 5 people reported poor service mainly relating to long response times and not to the medical services received. Meetings were held with the North West Ambulance Service in Liverpool to pass on data and establish if there are reasons for the high percentage of the community not offering any opinion on this important Service. They stated that they would appreciate the assistance of the TPIC in promoting better understanding and increasing public involvement in community action schemes such as the Critical Friends Network and the Voluntary Car Drivers Group.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 2)

The TPIC to liaise with NW Ambulance Service to raise public awareness of its activities and to seek to increase public involvement in community schemes such as the Critical Friends Network, First Responders and Voluntary Car Drivers Group.

2.5.5 First Responders:

96% of respondents rated the First Responders as excellent or fair. There were 9 comments with 6 saying they had actual good experience or knowledge of the services.

2.5.6 National Health Service:

10% of respondents gave no opinion, with 93% of those who did saying the Service is fair or excellent. This result was in line with the Local Area Partnership Profile of Knutsford of July 2009, in which only 8% of those questioned considered Health Services as a priority for improvement. 27 of the comments received considered that the three GP surgeries are best-placed to serve the majority of their patients and although parking can be difficult at the Manchester Road and Toft Road surgeries, there is alternative parking sufficiently close by to counter this. **No need for any recommendation was identified.**

2.5.7 Social Care Services:

66% of respondents did not give an opinion, while 81% of those who did felt the current service is fair or excellent. The 6 comments received were critical of services relating to the seriously disabled and those with Alzheimer's. The comments echoed concerns about the former CCC proposals to close Bexton Court, which resulted in objections, including a petition of 3,500 signatures. As a result, the proposals to close the specialist dementia care centre were passed on to the new CEC to decide.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 3)

Local Social Care services should be retained, particularly Bexton Court as a specialist dementia respite care centre.

2.5.8 Education Services:

45% of respondents did not offer an opinion, and 91% of those who did thought the services are fair or excellent. 29 comments were received with the main concern being the perceived lowering of standards at the High School resulting from pupils being bussed into Knutsford from Manchester and Trafford.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 4)

Knutsford High School should communicate with the community to clarify the facts about bussing in of pupils from outside areas.

2.5.9 Analysis of Question 24 answers and related comments (Question 25)

24. To what extent do you support or oppose the following in Knutsford?						
	Strongly support	Tend to support	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	Can't say / No opinion	Total
24.1 More CCTV surveillance cameras:	730(29.51%)	934(37.75%)	428(17.3%)	229(9.26%)	153(6.18%)	2474
24.2 More police patrols in the streets:	1567(62.91%)	710(28.5%)	106(4.26%)	50(2.01%)	58(2.33%)	2491
24.3 The new combined Medical Centre:	421(16.93%)	667(26.83%)	512(20.6%)	630(25.34%)	256(10.3%)	2486
Total Responded to this question:					2504	95.14%
Total who skipped this question:					128	4.86%
Total:					2632	100%

2.5.10 More CCTV surveillance cameras:

6% of respondents gave no opinion, and 72% of those who did supported more CCTV cameras. The 42 comments mainly stated that they were no substitute for police patrols as they do not act as a deterrent in social disorder situations and, if they were to be effective for crime detection they should be limited to key areas, be monitored continuously and be technologically suitable for HD photo recording in bad light. Discussion with the local PCSOs confirmed that these cameras are in operation 24/7 with the control room manned at all key periods based on past experience. The PCSOs are in contact with this control room and can be quickly directed to problem areas.

2.5.11 More Police patrols on the streets:

91% of respondents stated support for more patrols in the streets. The 44 comments received expressed concern at the lack of foot patrols in the town centre in the evenings and at weekends and elsewhere where vandalism and other problems have been experienced.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 5)

Sufficient Police foot patrols to be provided at weekends and in known problem areas, if necessary by appointment of an additional PCSO.

2.5.12 The new combined Medical Centre:



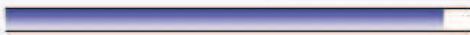







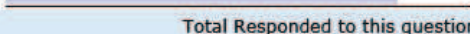
Survey respondents were almost evenly split when asked about the proposed Combined Medical Centre, with 44% supporting and 46% opposing it. It should be noted that the questionnaire was issued before the Cheshire & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) preferred location at Shaw Heath was known. However, of the 231 comments received 35% were concerned about the location, with the consensus being that any new Medical Centre should be centrally located in Knutsford, with good public transport access and adequate parking facilities. Analysis of these comments indicated that they came from a mixture of respondents supporting or opposing a new Centre. 45% of the comments said that facilities at the Community Hospital and current GP practices are good, though some upgrading of outpatient services was desirable. The remaining comments were mixed, with only a few supporting a new Centre, qualified by questions about cost, and the services to be gained.

After the site location was announced, surveys by local MP George Osborne and by the Knutsford Guardian, and the hostile reactions of the public, particularly at the first of the three meetings held by the PCT all indicated strong support for the status quo of a Community Hospital with separately located GP practices. These were taken into account in forming the recommended actions. Public opinion now seems to be very much in line with the NHS Confederation pamphlet *“Ideas from Darzi: Polyclinics”*¹³ in which the recommendation for market towns with populations between 20,000 and 25,000 (approved by the BMA) is a “federated” or “hub-and-spoke model” with a central Community Hospital flanked by satellite GP practices. The model of combining all services and GPs into one building was recommended for city areas with more than 150,000 patients.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 6)

The £800,000 set aside for new equipment for a combined new Medical Centre should be used to upgrade equipment at the Community Hospital and GP practices.

2.5.13 Analysis of Question 26 answers and related comments (Question 27)

26. Which of the following facilities do you think should be included in the new combined Medical Centre? Please select every box that applies.			Responses	Percent
26.1 Public transport availability and access:			1821	77.29%
26.2 Free Dial-a-Ride transport:			1391	59.04%
26.3 Adequate free car parking for patients:			2218	94.14%
26.4 A & E facility (open 24 hours every day):			1763	74.83%
26.5 'Drop-in' surgeries (24 hours every day):			1720	73.01%
26.6 X-ray diagnostics:			1918	81.41%
26.7 Minor injuries clinic:			2140	90.83%
26.8 NHS Dentist:			1624	68.93%
26.9 Pharmacy:			1364	57.89%
26.10 Child's play area:			1111	47.16%
26.11 Outpatient clinics:			1968	83.53%
Total Responded to this question:			2356	89.51%
Total who skipped this question:			276	10.49%
Total:			2632	100%

Recommended Actions for this Survey Question, sections 2.5.14 to 2.5.24 below, are included with Ref. PS 7

2.5.14 Public transport availability and access:

77% of respondents said this should be included. The 10 comments received highlighted the fact that Knutsford is poorly served by public transport and has a large percentage of patients over 60 years old and without their own transport. Therefore any relocation of medical facilities should address accessibility by public transport as a major concern.

2.5.15 Free Dial a Ride transport:

59% of the respondents wanted this included. The 6 comments highlighted that Dial a Ride should only be a back up to public transport and targeted at patients whose situation did not allow them to use public transport. Further investigation showed that there are several voluntary car services operating independently.

2.5.16 Adequate free parking for patients:

94% of respondents considered this to be necessary. The 10 comments received said that if the medical facilities were privately developed it was unlikely that there would be sufficient free parking and undercover cycle parking would not be provided.

2.5.17 A&E facility (Open 24 hours each Day):

91% of respondents including the 19 comments considered this a necessity. An example of this kind of service is the Minor Injuries Unit at Altrincham General Hospital where treatment is provided for a range of injuries and illnesses. It is open from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 6pm on weekends and Bank Holidays, and the average waiting time is less than one hour.

2.5.18 Drop-in surgery (24 hours per Day):

73% of respondents wanted such a facility. All of the 19 comments recognised that open “no-notice” drop-in surgeries are not practical but nonetheless considered that surgery hours should reflect patient needs and working hours and that some flexibility should be built into the system. An interesting example is provided by the scheme proposed at Crayford Marshes under the auspices of the Bexley Care Trust.

2.5.19 X- Ray diagnostics:

81% of respondents considered this facility to be a necessity. With the advance in technology it should be possible to extend X-Ray services to include many of those currently covered by Macclesfield Hospital, with a computerised link so that X-rays could be reviewed by experts.

2.5.20 Minor Injuries Clinic:

91% of respondents wanted this included. It could be provided at the Knutsford Community Hospital if it were integrated with A & E plus X- ray services.

2.5.21 NHS Dentist:

69% of respondents considered this facility to be a necessity. The 5 comments were concerned with the effect on local practices and the fact that there are already two NHS dentist practices in Knutsford. **This was not considered to be an issue requiring action.**

2.5.22 Pharmacy:

58% of respondents were in favour of a Pharmacy in any new medical facility, but all comments argued against it. They expressed concern that such a pharmacy would impact seriously on the viability of the existing pharmacies and may be contrary to the new NHS strategy of promoting pharmacies to offer additional preliminary advice and/or treatment. **This was not considered to be an issue requiring action.**

2.5.23 Children's play area:

47% of respondents favoured a children's play area, with provisos, principally advocating separation from the waiting area and supervision so that access to children (possibly suffering from infectious illnesses) could be controlled. **This was not considered to be an issue requiring action.**

2.5.24 Outpatient Clinics:

84 % of respondents considered this to be a necessity.

There is considerable confusion and lack of knowledge about which services are currently provided at the Community Hospital and which are provided by the Macclesfield, Leighton and Wythenshawe hospitals.

Recommended Action (Ref. PS 7)

The services, that the community have indicated should be in Knutsford, should be provided in the upgraded Community Hospital and GP practices, using the funding set aside for the proposed combined Medical Centre.

2.6

Transport and Highways

Overview

The questionnaire results shows concern about traffic congestion and safety in the town, poor maintenance of highways and a wish for improved public transport links. There is significant demand for improved bus links to local towns and for rail links into Manchester to connect with Intercity services. The recommendations vary from inexpensive improvements to assist Cycling which could be progressed rapidly to very significant changes to the road system which should not be undertaken without a professional study of the town's requirements.

This should also address the concerns of management of vehicles through Knutsford, principally through the town centre, congestion and safety around schools and the long-running demand for one-way traffic in Cranford Avenue. The suggested scope of the study, which should consider all options including a by-pass, is detailed in section 2.6.14.

One set of proposals can have unintended consequences elsewhere. The preliminary advice of the CEC traffic management specialists is that, for example, one should not consider making Cranford Avenue one-way without consideration of the effect on vehicle speed and

diversionary routes. Similarly there is national guidance that 20 mph limits should not be used unless traffic engineering can make them self-enforcing.

2.6.1 Analysis of Question 28 answers and related comments (Question 29).

28. How do you rate the following in and around Knutsford?						
	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Inadequate	Can't say / No opinion	Total
28.1 Management of traffic congestion:	68(2.75%)	1193(48.3%)	775(31.38%)	327(13.24%)	107(4.33%)	2470
28.2 Provision of secure cycle parking:	8(0.33%)	183(7.45%)	764(31.08%)	390(15.87%)	1113(45.28%)	2458
28.3 Ability to cycle safely, especially near schools:	21(0.86%)	253(10.31%)	804(32.75%)	567(23.1%)	810(32.99%)	2455
28.4 Adequacy and type of street lighting:	278(11.31%)	1727(70.29%)	242(9.85%)	88(3.58%)	122(4.97%)	2457
28.5 Adequacy and upkeep of appropriate signs:	156(6.38%)	1548(63.31%)	470(19.22%)	110(4.5%)	161(6.58%)	2445
28.6 Maintenance of road surfaces:	36(1.45%)	527(21.23%)	1002(40.37%)	866(34.89%)	51(2.05%)	2482
28.7 Upkeep of pavements and adjacent hedges:	33(1.33%)	649(26.17%)	909(36.65%)	823(33.19%)	66(2.66%)	2480
Total Responded to this question:					2493	94.72%
Total who skipped this question:					139	5.28%
Total:					2632	100%

2.6.2 Management of traffic congestion:

51% of respondents rated this as fair or excellent. 12 comments suggested traffic calming measures such as traffic lights and 11 suggested speed control. 6 comments stated that parking and the width of shopping and residential streets inhibited the flow of traffic. One factor highlighted as having an adverse impact on traffic congestion, and more generally on the environment, was the excessive use of private cars in transporting children to schools. We believe that schools are required to produce travel plans and **we recommend** that they should be encouraged to update and publicise these.

67% of respondents in section 2.1.12 say they are affected by road traffic noise. Traffic diverted from the M6 when there are incidents leads to acute congestion and noise problems, heavy vehicles travelling through the town can be disturbing and even minor residential roads such as Cranford Avenue can suffer at times. The main problem areas were identified as the A50, Adams Hill, Mobberley Road, Chelford Road, the *White Bear* and Manchester Road. Respondents suggested improving traffic flow and slowing it with speed bumps, and 11 people suggested there should be a bypass around Knutsford.

2.6.3 Provision of secure cycle parking:

45% of respondents did not offer an opinion, and 85% of those who did rated provision poor or inadequate. Knutsford is a popular destination for recreational cyclists especially on Sundays and there is no provision for cycle parking at the train station, which is a concern to cycle commuters. We recommend that secure and well designed cycle stands be installed as and when funds become available. These should be dispersed around the town in convenient and visible locations. Provision of cycle parking should be considered along with car parking with any new commercial development. Further pressure should be put on Northern Rail to install cycle stands at Knutsford Station as they already have at other stations along the line.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 1)

Cycle stands to be installed in convenient and visible locations around the town, at the Railway station and with any new commercial development.

2.6.4 Ability to cycle safely, especially near schools:

3% of respondents did not give an opinion, and 83% of those who did considered it to be poor or inadequate. In particular the trunk roads and congestion around schools at the beginning and end of their day were issues. Competent, confident and considerate cyclists are, and feel, less vulnerable so education is paramount. Cycle proficiency should be obligatory in year 6 and adult training could be introduced as part of the adult education system or as a local road safety initiative. Research should be carried out into the certificated trainer resource and if necessary obtain funding for the qualification of suitable candidates.

Cycle Routes have limitations and can be visibly intrusive unless carefully designed for a particular purpose such as to sports facilities, e.g. those on Mereheath Lane, or to schools. We recommend a feasibility study into the development of a route from the town centre to Egerton Youth Club and the sports club, and funding for the production of the “Cycling Street Map of Knutsford” which is currently being developed by volunteers. This will enable residents to devise their own routes suitable for their own level of expertise. Cyclists have a right to use a public highway so designating footpaths should only be considered where there is no alternative to using a dangerous road. In Knutsford there are several stretches of wide footpath, which could if necessary be used.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 2)

Provision of a programme to encourage cycling, with in-school training, mapping of safe cycle routes and provision of cycle lanes or dual use paths where needed.

2.6.5 Adequacy and type of street lighting:

82% of respondents judged street lighting to be fair or excellent, and there were around forty comments. These were split between those who wanted more lighting and those who wanted less. Some called for lights in specific places – such as the Moor for safety reasons and some made the point that safety considerations should predominate over calls for economy or ‘environmental ‘ reduction. A few called for lights to be switched off particularly late at night. Some 6 comments suggested ‘historic’ lamp posts in which Knutsford was compared unfavourably with Mobberley. One respondent suggested making lighting on the Moor movement sensitive. The general view of the town is that street lighting is generally satisfactory and street lighting would not be a priority for a major expenditure programme.

The historical style of lamps in Princess Street, King Street, Canute Square and Minshall Street are more than adequate. There is no lighting in the narrow short lane adjacent to the Cross Keys Hotel. Because of the narrow width, if thought to be necessary, a lamp could be fixed to one of the side walls. Heritage Way does not have any lighting. The public car parks in Tatton Street, Market Place, backing on to King Edward Road and King Street all have adequate provision of suitable lamp standards.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 3)

Specific ‘dark spots’ due to lack of adequate street lighting to be identified and rectified, and study for gradual reduction in light pollution to be organised by CEC.

2.6.6 Adequacy and upkeep of appropriate signs:

75% of respondents who expressed an opinion rated this fair or excellent. The 70 comments concerned the lack of cleaning and obstruction of signs and the adverse impact on the appearance of the historic town, with 25 of them complaining about the excessive number creating sign clutter, in particular, the new ‘road safety’ signs on the A50 between Knutsford and Holmes Chapel. On the other hand, 2 respondents asked for more signing at safety critical points such as schools and for events such as the RHS at Tatton. There was acceptance of the reasonableness of the traffic signing in Knutsford, but they should be maintained better. However, there is a developing demand that signage should be reviewed with the object of achieving safety and assistance with noticeably fewer signs to the benefit of the appearance and environment of the town.

2.6.7 Maintenance of road surfaces:

75% of respondents classified this as poor or inadequate. There were roughly 200 individual comments, all criticising poor maintenance. There was some recognition that principal traffic routes such as the A50 were well-maintained, but such remarks were balanced by criticism of minor road maintenance. The strong feeling conveyed by the response to the questionnaire is that this can only be done by the allocation of more resource. Notwithstanding budget limits, this is a priority for residents and should be taken into account in the setting of budgets. **We recommend** that the priorities are set by the highways department and made available for comment on the internet (KTC and KTP web sites) as well as available in the Library and Information Office. A programme to remove the backlog of road maintenance should be included. Utility companies regularly dig up roads, and their subsequent repair is of variable quality. Volunteers from the community should inspect and report defects directly to the highways department copied to KTC.

“There are potholes in every street in town – it’s a disgrace”

“Town centre pavements are an utter disgrace”

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 4)

Priorities for highway maintenance, and for clearing the backlog, to be set by Highways Department and made publicly available.

2.6.8 Upkeep of pavements and adjacent hedges:

70% of respondents said upkeep is poor or inadequate. Almost fifty respondents wrote in additional comments. These were adverse remarks about overhanging trees and bushes and the problems caused for pedestrians and other road users. Several called for greater action to prevent private trees, hedges and bushes from encroaching on footpaths, highways and road signs. Overhanging trees are a significant problem and arrangements should be made to

organise effective local pruning of trees which obscure lights and road signs. The town is not looking in this case for substantially increased expenditure but better ‘housekeeping’ and cleaning and more use of long-standing powers to compel adjoining landowners to remove obstructions. Overhanging vegetation obscuring the highway and footpaths can belong to either the Council or private individuals.

We recommend that KTC take over responsibility from CEC for controlling publicly owned vegetation. This should simplify and speed up maintenance. Letters sent from the Town Council to private individuals have been found to be adequate to ensure the majority of residents prune their trees and hedges. It is proposed that KTC works with the local community to identify and act on these issues in the future. If the problem is not resolved it would then be passed on to CEC for an enforcement notice to be issued.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 5)

KTC to take over responsibility for the control of publicly-owned vegetation and to ensure trees obstructing pavements, street lights and signs are effectively pruned.

2.6.9 Analysis of Question 30 answers and related comments (Question 32)

30. To what extent do you support or oppose provision of the following?						
	Strongly support	Tend to support	Tend to oppose	Strongly oppose	Can't say / No opinion	Total
30.1 A by-pass to reduce traffic through Knutsford:	965(39.28%)	705(28.69%)	381(15.51%)	230(9.36%)	176(7.16%)	2457
30.2 One-way only traffic in Cranford Avenue:	914(37.29%)	718(29.29%)	194(7.92%)	160(6.53%)	465(18.97%)	2451
30.3 A 20 mph speed limit in the town centre and near schools:	1237(50.24%)	781(31.72%)	213(8.65%)	141(5.73%)	90(3.66%)	2462
30.4 More pedestrian crossings, particularly where school children cross roads:	1163(47.24%)	861(34.97%)	165(6.7%)	109(4.43%)	164(6.66%)	2462
Total Responded to this question:					2481	94.26%
Total who skipped this question:					151	5.74%
Total:					2632	100%

2.6.10 A by-pass to reduce traffic through Knutsford:

73% of those who expressed an opinion supported a by-pass. Reduced traffic in the town was the single reason given for supporting a by-pass, while most of the 46 comments were objections because of the potential for infill of housing between the by-pass and town, damage to the surrounding countryside, unrealistic cost, the M6/M56 acting as a by-pass already and the opinion it would adversely affect local businesses.

2.6.11 One-way only traffic in Cranford Avenue:

19% of respondents did not offer an opinion, and 74% of those who did supported making Cranford Avenue one-way. It is a difficult street to drive down, with vehicles parked on both sides and only a single lane available for traffic. 25 comments expressed support and also proposed other roads, namely, Sugar Pit Lane, Ladies Mile, Tatton Street, Gaskell Avenue, all roads between Cranford Avenue and Westfield Drive. A few objections were based on the possibility it may increase the speed of traffic and be unpleasant for residents.

2.6.12 A 20 mph speed limit in the town centre and near schools:

85% of respondents who expressed an opinion were in favour. 11 comments were made on issues such as: the enforcements of current 30 mph limit, 20 mph limits around schools only at certain times, 10 or 15 mph speed limits for the town centre. **We recommend** a fact finding project into the experience of other towns.

2.6.13 More pedestrian crossings, particularly where school children cross:

88% of respondents who gave an opinion wanted to see more pedestrian crossings. A number of busy roads intersect at Knutsford. This presents problems to pedestrians in the town. 16 comments noted that existing crossings at Canute Square, Egerton School Crossing and Toft Road were considered ineffective or dangerous. New crossings were proposed at the junction of Beggarman's Lane and Toft Road, and at the junction of Hollow Lane and Brook Street. Assisted crossing was suggested for Manor Park and Bexton Schools.

"Please, please put a pedestrian crossing at Hollow Lane before someone gets killed." (signed Nina, age 10 years)

2.6.14 Traffic Management Study:

We recommend the adoption of a guiding philosophy to management of traffic in Knutsford on the following lines:

- a. The concerns and physical abilities of pedestrians should be given greater weight in dealing with pedestrian vehicle conflicts;
- b. A general reduction of traffic speed should be sought in the residential areas of the town especially around schools;
- c. Traffic engineering methods should be adopted to achieve speed reduction and preference should be given to more visually attractive and less 'uncomfortable' methods such as the use of chicanes rather than speed humps;
- d. Means should be sought to give preference to traffic having business in the town rather than through traffic;
- e. Signing should be reduced as much as possible both in conjunction with schemes to reduce traffic speed and generally.

A programme needs to be developed to implement change in the town at a pace consistent with the very limited resources available for highway matters. The first step in developing such a programme should be a survey of the vehicle and pedestrian traffic needs in the town. Such a survey should look at traffic routes, traffic speed, pedestrian crossings and be related to a study of on and off street parking in the town. The study should be carried out by or under the auspices of CEC Highways Department. With the assistance of KTC and volunteers, the cost and time of the study could be greatly reduced. It should be completed within one year of the adoption of this Plan, and include a draft implementation programme

Recommended Action (Ref.TH 6)

A comprehensive Traffic Management Study to be carried out on all aspects of traffic in Knutsford and to consider all options raised by residents such as one-way streets, 20 m.p.h. speed limits and a by-pass.

2.6.15 Analysis of Question 31 answers and related comments (Question 32)

31. What is your opinion of the following aspects of our public transport services?						
	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Inadequate	Can't say / No opinion	Total
31.1 Upkeep of the Bus Station and vehicles:	172(6.97%)	1211(49.11%)	296(12%)	72(2.92%)	715(28.99%)	2466
31.2 Destinations accessible by bus:	81(3.29%)	714(29.04%)	544(22.12%)	259(10.53%)	861(35.01%)	2459
31.3 Frequency of service, including on Public Holidays:	39(1.59%)	498(20.31%)	573(23.37%)	291(11.87%)	1051(42.86%)	2452
31.4 Upkeep of the Railway Station and carriages:	61(2.48%)	858(34.91%)	739(30.07%)	304(12.37%)	496(20.18%)	2458
31.5 Destinations accessible by train:	114(4.65%)	953(38.87%)	626(25.53%)	332(13.54%)	427(17.41%)	2452
31.6 Frequency of service, including on Public Holidays:	39(1.59%)	540(22.07%)	722(29.51%)	463(18.92%)	683(27.91%)	2447
Total Responded to this question:					2480	94.22%
Total who skipped this question:					152	5.78%
Total:					2632	100%

2.6.16 Upkeep of Bus Station and vehicles:

29% of respondents did not offer an opinion. 80% of those who did considered the upkeep of the Bus station and vehicles to be fair or excellent. 27 comments show that respondents consider the buses to be of reasonable standard and the bus station adequate.

2.6.17 Destinations accessible by Bus:

35% of respondents did not offer an opinion. Of those who did, 51% said poor or inadequate and 49% said fair or excellent. 26 comments revealed strong opinions among those requesting bus links to surrounding towns and the airport.

2.6.18 Frequency of Bus Services, including on Public Holidays::

43% of respondents did not give an opinion. 61% of those who did felt service is poor or inadequate. 35 comments asked for more frequent services including on Sundays, Bank Holidays and in the evenings. It was felt that advertising of the existing service was limited.

2.6.19 Bus improvements:

There is support within the Survey for the refurbishment of the Knutsford bus station to be similar to the Macclesfield design and standards. In general, the buses were considered in good condition and well maintained, but there were requests for faster and direct services to local towns such as Altrincham, Manchester Airport, Warrington and Crewe.

CCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011¹⁴ included objectives: ***“To reverse the decline in bus passenger journeys; for 74% of local bus service passengers to be satisfied by 2011; to improve punctuality of local bus services.”*** We recommend that CEC and KTC review the LTP and update it in line with current geographical and administrative changes. They should aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Upgrading the Knutsford bus/coach station to Macclesfield's 21st Century standards.
- To lobby the 6 different bus companies serving Knutsford to provide some new and improved services requested by the public.
- To install new services where sensible on Sundays, Bank Holidays and evenings.

- To improve methods of informing the public of all the services available.
- To improve the services to Altrincham, Northwich and Wilmslow and create new direct services to Manchester Airport, Sandbach, Crewe, Nantwich and Warrington.
- To approach the Knutsford Times to advertise all bus services as currently available.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 7)

The Local Transport Plan to be updated in line with current geographical and administrative changes.

2.6.20 Upkeep of Railway Station and carriages:

20% of respondents did not give an opinion. Of those who did, 52% thought it poor or inadequate. There was strong support from 92 comments in the Survey for improved upkeep of the station and better maintenance and cleanliness of the vehicles.

2.6.21 Destinations accessible by train:

17% of respondents did not offer an opinion. Of those who did, 52% said these were fair or excellent. 19 comments asked for restoration of through trains to Manchester in peak hours and 37 said there should be additional trains in the schedule, with support for achieving better connections by using the Northwich – Sandbach railway line for passenger services to and from Crewe, and by extending the Metrolink tram service from Altrincham to Knutsford.

2.6.22 Frequency of Train services, including on Public Holidays:

28% of respondents did not give an opinion. Of those who did, 67% said it was poor or inadequate. 116 comments asked for more frequent train services. **We recommend** that KTC should collaborate with Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association (MCRUA) to put pressure on Northern Rail for the following improvements:

- Better upkeep of Knutsford station.
- Deterrence of vandalism by CCTV or increased human presence.
- Improved quality of trains.
- Restored through trains to and from Manchester in peak hours.
- A better late evening train service from Manchester.
- A half-hourly train service between Knutsford and Altrincham throughout the day.
- Extension of the Metrolink service between Altrincham and Knutsford.

We recommend that KTC supports the Middlewich Rail Link Campaign (MRLC) to:

- Reopen the Sandbach – Northwich railway line to passenger traffic.
- Introduce direct peak hour trains between Knutsford and Crewe.
- Introduce an hourly train service between Northwich and Crewe.

Recommended Action (Ref. TH 8)

KTC to collaborate with MCRUA and support MRLC to achieve improvements as detailed in section 2.6.22.

3 VISION STATEMENT

The foregoing analysis of responses to the Town Plan surveys by those who live, work and go to school in Knutsford provides a clear vision for the future. The community is proud of its heritage and historic buildings and wishes these to be protected and future developments carefully planned and managed consistent with that heritage. Seen as equally important is the long-term care and protection of the town's unique open spaces – the Moor, the Heath, the greenbelt and access to Tatton Park. There is a strong desire to see a better balance between traffic and pedestrians, with improved parking, part pedestrianisation and good traffic management.

These fundamental aspirations should be set in a vibrant town that welcomes visitors, encourages commercial enterprises and provides balanced shopping opportunities. This vision embraces efficient public services, managed as locally as possible, across the whole range of support and opportunity. It expects high quality medical, educational, public transport, police, emergency and waste management services and modern health, fitness and child-play facilities.

While Knutsford is seen as a desirable and enjoyable place in which to live, the community vision is to move forward, improving public services and facilities whilst preserving the town's character. Whether these innovations are short-term and modest or long-term, and in a few cases more costly, the overall vision is to pursue them with optimism, realism and vigour. This will be done, whatever the state of public resources over the next few years.

4

Action Plan

In order to achieve the Town Plan vision set out above, the Analysis of Community Surveys identified specific Recommended Actions. These are compiled in the following Action Plan under the six topic headings from the Survey Questionnaire as follows:

Environment and Heritage
Parking and Shopping
Pedestrian Priority and the Town Centre
Community Facilities
Public Services
Transport and Highways

Each Action is cross-referenced to the relevant section of the Analysis Report and includes estimates of cost and time scales, together with possible partners for implementation. The recommendations have been classified into three Priority Levels:

Level 1 = Essential

Level 2 = Highly Desirable

Level 3 = Desirable

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
EH 1 (2.1.2)	1	Regular meetings to be arranged between stakeholders to discuss maintenance, safety and cleanliness of open spaces such as the Heath, the Moor, the Dip, and to foster public involvement in litter picking and reporting vandalism or pollution.	CEC TPIC	CWT KTC Local Groups	Low	Short (1-2yrs) then Ongoing
EH 2 (2.1.3)	1	A Knutsford Natural Environment Group to be formed to work with CWT and NE to preserve natural wildlife habitats and protect them from development, including tree surgeons or wardens to survey trees.	TPIC	CWT NE	Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
EH 3 (2.1.4)	3	Liaise closely with Tatton Park to consider optimum opening times and entry costs for local people, and mutual advertising of the Park and the Town.	Tatton Park NT	KPF CEC TPIC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
EH 4 (2.1.5)	1	Retain Green Flag status for the Moor, safeguard it and the Heath from any development and assist CEC and local groups to improve facilities.	CEC FOTM	KTC TPIC	Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
EH 5 (2.1.7)	1	To protect Knutsford's Conservation Areas, TPIC to seek their Article 4 designation, to monitor planning applications and Registers of Listed and Locally Important Buildings, and to produce a Town Design Statement.	TPIC	KTC CEC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
EH 6 (2.1.9)	3	A Renewable Energy Group to be formed to study energy conservation and renewable energy schemes and provide information to households and businesses.	TPIC	CEC KTC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
EH 7 (2.1.13)	2	Air pollution levels in Manchester Road to be reduced, and consideration given to the taking of measurements at other sites.	CEC	TPIC KTC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
EH 8 (2.1.14)	2	TPIC representative on Manchester Airport Consultative Committee (MACC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to press for reduced aircraft noise especially at night and inform the community on procedures.	TPIC	MACC	Low	Short 1-2 yrs)
EH 9 (2.1.15)	2	A) TPIC representation on MACC and TAG for aircraft safety issues B) KTC, JCEPT and TPIC, to develop Knutsford Emergency Support Plan C) JCEPT to mount Command Post Exercise of aircraft crash on town centre	TPIC	MACC KTC JCEPT	Low Low Medium	Short (1-2yrs)

PARKING AND SHOPPING

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
PA 1 (2.2.2)	1	Implement a Residents Parking Scheme for town centre residents.	CEC	KTC TPIC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PA 2 (2.2.2)	1	Change the use of town centre car parks to short stay and limit long stay parking to the Tatton Street car park.	CEC	KTC TPIC	Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
PA 3 (2.2.5)	1	To minimise the impact of PA 1 and the possible pedestrianised area in King St. carry out Policies KTC19 and 20 of the MBC Local Plan. The multi-storey car park must be as unobtrusive as possible.	CEC	Private Sector	High	Short (1-2 yrs)
PA 4 (2.2.5)	2	Liaise with CEC in its town centre parking review, which should consider the effect of the above recommendations, inform on any additional car park/s required, and include a feasibility study into all possible options.	TPIC CEC	KTC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs) Short (1-2 yrs)
PA 5 (2.2.8)	2	Consult with CEC on the possibility of free weekend parking in the town centre and with local businesses on weekend use of Company car parks.	CEC	Local Traders	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PA6 (2.2.11)	2	Change free parking times to 1 hour on town centre streets and maximum 2 hours on surrounding adjacent streets outside the town centre.	CEC	KTC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PA 7 (2.2.11)	3	Include in the review (PE 4) improved signposting to car parks, the use of space and the feasibility of introducing electronic displays and of changing “pay and display” to pay on exit, perhaps with free parking for a limited stay.	CEC	KTC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
PA 8 (2.2.11)	2	Construct new car park or parks (underground if feasible) based on findings of the feasibility study (PA4 and PA7).	CEC	Private Sector	High	Long (5 + yrs)
PA9 (2.2.13)	2	Upgrade and promote the market, possibly by moving to a pedestrianised area and changing opening times – a Sunday market might be more popular.	CEC		Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY AND THE TOWN CENTRE

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
PT 1 (2.3.2)	1	Implement MBC Local Plan Policy KTC 17 and the part of Policy KTC 18 identified in section 2.3.2 as the central part B of King Street.	CEC		High	Medium (3-5 yrs)
PT 2 (2.3.2)	1	The TPIC to conduct ongoing surveys on community opinion and liaise with CEC in the detailed design stage of Pedestrian Priority measures.	TPIC	CEC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 3 (2.3.4)	2	Transfer the facilities and funding of the Tourist section of the Information Centre to the Heritage Centre, and employ a Manager to run the combined Centre. Display the international 'i' sign at the entrance.	KTC	CEC	High	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 4 (2.3.5)	2	Adapt the existing Library toilet facilities for use by all, include a fold-down baby changing table, and put signage in place to identify its availability.	CEC		Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 5 (2.3.6)	2	Conduct proactive open-ended research to assess patrons' views of their experience of the cinema, assess the results and costs of any proposals, such as opening the bar for longer, and implement where financially possible.	CEC	KTC TPIC	Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 6 (2.3.7)	3	Consult former users to ascertain what improvements to the centre would persuade them to start re-using it.	CEC	KTC TPIC	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 7 (2.3.9)	1	Review standards of cleanliness, with Gel cleaners in all toilets and cleaning records displayed along with Phone numbers for reporting lack of cleanliness and/or damage. WCs in Northwich Road to be replaced with conventional units with seats and lids.	CEC		Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PT 8 (2.3.9)	2	Introduce Sunday and Bank Holiday opening for Public Toilets, with automatic timed access, up-to-date opening hours signs and clearly-visible information about availability of RADAR ¹² keys for disabled toilets	CEC		Low	Short (1-2 yrs)

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
CF 1 (2.4.2)	2	TPIC to identify areas where a need exists for play facilities for young children and teenagers and to work with Agencies to have them provided.	CEC	KTC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
CF 2 (2.4.5)	1	The Leisure Centre to be revamped and developed, including a large gym with suitable equipment and changing facilities.	CEC	Private Trust	High	Medium (3-5 yrs)
CF 3 (2.4.6)	3	Features of St John's Wood Community Centre to be better publicised, and reviewed for possible use for children.	CEC	Local Groups	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
CF 4 (2.4.8)	2	Knutsford Town Council to improve its communications with the public	KTC CEC	Local Press	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
CF 5 (2.4.12)	3	40 – 50 additional garden allotment plots to be provided for residents.	CEC KTC		Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
CF 6 (2.4.16)	2	Investigate the need and encourage opportunities for affordable housing.	CEC KTC	Private Sector	High	Long (5 + yrs)
CF 7 (2.4.18)	1	KTC to seek more control, (and associated funding), over local issues.	CEC KTC		Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
CF 8 (2.4.19)	3	Carry out review of distribution of litter bins and street cleaning arrangements, together with public awareness campaigns.	CEC		Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
CF 9 (2.4.20)	2	Provide householders with containers for all plastics as part of regular waste collection.	CEC		Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)

PUBLIC SERVICES

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
PS 1 (2.5.2)	3	The generally good communication between the Police Service and the local community to be maintained, with some emphasis on ensuring that the public perception of the Police is improved.	Police		Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PS 2 (2.5.4)	2	TPIC to liaise with NW Ambulance Service to increase public awareness of its activities and public involvement in community schemes such as the Critical Friends Network, First Responders and Voluntary Car Drivers Group.	N.W. Ambulance	Local Groups	Low	Ongoing
PS 3 (2.5.7)	1	Local Social Care services should be retained, particularly Bexton Court as a specialist dementia respite care centre.	CEC	PCT	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PS 4 (2.5.8)	3	Knutsford High School should communicate with parents to clarify the facts about bussing in of pupils from outside areas.	High School	School Governors	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
PS 5 (2.5.11)	2	Sufficient Police foot patrols to be provided at weekends and in known problem areas, if necessary by appointment of another PCSO.	KTC Police		Medium	Ongoing
PS 6 (2.5.12)	1	The £800,000 set aside for new equipment for a combined new Medical Centre should be used to upgrade equipment at the existing Community Hospital and GP practices.	PCT	Local GPs	High	Short (1-2 yrs)
PS 7 (2.5.14 to 24)	2	The services, that the community have indicated should be in Knutsford, should be provided in the upgraded Community Hospital and GP practices, using the funding set aside for the proposed combined Medical Centre.	PCT	Local Groups	Low	Ongoing

TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

Action Ref.	Level	Recommended Action	By Whom	With Whom	Cost Scale	Time Line
TH 1 (2.6.3)	2	Cycle stands to be installed in convenient and visible locations around the town, at the Railway station and with any new commercial development.	KTC	Local Groups	Medium	Short (1-2 yrs)
TH 2 (2.6.4)	3	A programme to encourage cycling, with in-school training, mapping of safe cycle routes and provision of cycle lanes or dual use paths where needed.	KTC	Local Groups	Low	Short (1-2 yrs)
TH 3 (2.6.5)	3	Specific 'dark spots' due to lack of street lighting to be identified and rectified, and a study for gradual reduction in light pollution to be organised.	CEC	Local Groups	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
TH 4 (2.6.7)	1	Priorities for highway maintenance, and for clearing the backlog, to be set by Highways Department and made publicly available.	CEC	KTC	High	Long (5 + yrs)
TH 5 (2.6.8)	2	KTC to take over responsibility for the control of publicly-owned vegetation and to ensure trees obstructing pavements, street lights and signs are effectively pruned.	KTC	CEC	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
TH 6 (2.6.14)	1	A comprehensive Traffic Management Study to be carried out on all aspects of traffic in Knutsford and to consider all options raised by residents such as one-way streets, speed limits and a by-pass.	CEC	Local Groups	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
TH 7 (2.6.19)	2	The Local Transport Plan to be updated in line with current geographical and administrative changes.	CEC	Bus Firms	Medium	Medium (3-5 yrs)
TH 8 (2.6.22)	1	KTC to collaborate with MCRUA and support MRLC to achieve improvements as detailed in section 2.6.22.	KTC	MCRU A	High	Medium (3-5 yrs)

Knutsford Unitary Ward

Cheshire East

Ward Profile 2008 Knutsford



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General Background

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Oneeshire East Information in brackets (%)		Age Groups ²	
Area ¹ hectares	1,000 (116,637)	0-4	6% (5%)
Population ² 2008	12,510 (358,900)	5-15	12% (13%)
Households ³ 2001	5,650 (147,144)	16-24	9% (10%)
Total Employees ⁴	6,793 (163,000)	25-64	53% (54%)
Unemployment ⁵	1.0% (1.3%)	65-74	10% (9%)
White ⁵ 2001	99% (98.2%)	75+	10% (9%)
Non-white 2001	1.5% (1.8%)		

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007⁷ (IMD 2007) showed that Knutsford has 0 Lower Layer Super Output Areas* that fall in the top 20% most deprived LLSOAs nationally.

The highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town NorthL4 which ranked 17 out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

*Lower layer super output areas have been designed to present data in a standard way for the next 20 years. They have no relationship with administrative boundaries. They are the basic units for analysing information and government data. More information can be found at LILAC (<http://lilac.cheshire.gov.uk>).

The above information was compiled by the Research & Intelligence Unit. All unitary ward profiles are available at www.cheshire.gov.uk/randi. Further information can be obtained from Gordon Hamilton (Telephone 01244 972409), randi@cheshire.gov.uk

Prepared February 2008

Safer and Stronger Communities

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Fire ⁸ fires attended per 1,000 population	2	(2)
Burglary ⁹ crimes per 1,000 households	14	(11)
Criminal damage crimes per 1,000 population	15	(19)
Violent crime crimes per 1,000 population	14	(15)
Theft and handling crimes per 1,000 population	29	(27)
Anti-social behaviour crimes per 1,000 population	35	(54)

ONS* lifestyle area profile¹⁰

Blue Collar Communities	14%	(13%)
City Living	3%	(1%)
Constrained by Circumstances	13%	(6%)
Countryside	4%	(20%)
Multicultural	0%	(0%)
Prospering Suburbs	51%	(40%)
Typical Traits	15%	(20%)

The percentages represent the proportions of residents in the ward who live in each of the area types.

*The ONS area classification is a market tool combining geographic and demographic information. It helps understand areas likely to need certain services.

The IMD 2007 crime domain, showed that the highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town SouthL3 which ranked 36 (where 1 is the most deprived) out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

Children & Young People

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Population: 0-4: 750 5-15: 1,470

GCSEs ¹¹ % GCSE candidates 5 or more at A*-C grade	65%	(63%)
Key stage 2 % of pupils achieving level 4 or above		
English	90%	(86%)
Maths	81%	(82%)
Key stage 3 % of pupils achieving level 5 or above		
English	78%	(77%)
Maths	87%	(82%)
Free school meals ¹¹ % of pupils eligible	9%	(8%)

The IMD 2007 child poverty index, showed that the highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town NorthL4 which ranked 9 (where 1 is the most deprived) out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

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Prepared February 2008

Healthier Communities and Older People

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Population: 65-74: 1,300 **75+:** 1,300

General Health ¹² % of all people aged 65+		
Good or fairly good health	83%	(80%)
Not good health	17%	(20%)
With limiting long term illness	44%	(47%)
Disability Living Allowance ¹³ % of total population	4%	(4%)
Carers ¹⁴ % of all people		
Providing unpaid care	11%	(11%)
50 or more hours per week	2%	(2%)
Accommodation ¹⁵ :		
People aged 65+ living in social rented accommodation % of all people socially renting	24%	(24%)
Pensioners living alone % of all households	18%	(14%)

The IMD 2007 health domain, showed that the highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town NorthL4 which ranked 11 (where 1 is the most deprived) out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

Economic Development and Enterprise

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Population: 16-44: 4,350 **45-64:** 3,340

Number of businesses ⁴	760	(13,365)
Average household income ¹⁶	£39,100	(£37,000)
Occupation type ¹⁷ % of people aged 16-74 in employment		
Managers and officials	23%	(19%)
Professional occupations	18%	(13%)
Associate professional and technical occupations	15%	(14%)
Administrative and secretarial occupations	11%	(12%)
Skilled trade occupations	7%	(11%)
Personal service occupations	7%	(7%)
Sales and customer service occupations	5%	(7%)
Process, plant and machine operatives	4%	(7%)
Elementary occupations	9%	(11%)

The IMD 2007 employment domain, showed that the highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town NorthL4 which ranked 15 (where 1 is the most deprived) out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

The above information was compiled by the Research & Intelligence Unit. All unitary ward profiles are available at www.cheshire.gov.uk/randi. Further information can be obtained from Gordon Hamilton (Telephone 01244 972409), randi@cheshire.gov.uk Prepared February 2008

Environment

Cheshire East information in brackets ()

Journey to work¹⁸ % of all people aged 16-74+

Works mainly from home	12%	(11%)
Travels by bus	2%	(2%)
Travels by train	3%	(2%)
Travels by motorcycle	1%	(1%)
Travels by car (includes passengers and taxi)	64%	(71%)
As a passenger in a car/taxi	4%	(6%)
Travels by bicycle	2%	(3%)
Travels by foot	11%	(9%)

The IMD 2007 barriers to housing and services domain, showed that the highest ranked LLSOA in Knutsford ward is Knutsford Town SouthL4 which ranked 46 (where 1 is the most deprived) out of the 231 LLSOAs in Cheshire East.

Dwelling stock by council tax band¹⁹ % of all dwellings

Band A	6%	(17%)
Band B	15%	(20%)
Band C	22%	(20%)
Band D	16%	(15%)
Band E	17%	(12%)
Band F	13%	(8%)
Band G	11%	(7%)
Band H	2%	(1%)

Sources

For more information: <http://lilac.cheshire.gov.uk>

¹ Areas based on Ordnance Survey and Statutory Instruments

² Office for National Statistics (ONS) population estimates and Cheshire County Council small area population estimates

³ Census 2001, key statistics table 20. © Crown Copyright 2008

⁴ Inter Departmental Business Register 2005

⁵ Office for National Statistics, NOMIS, December 2007

⁶ Census 2001, key statistics table 6. © Crown Copyright 2008

⁷ Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2007

⁸ Communities and Local Government; Research and Statistics Division (RSD), as part of the Fire and Resilience Directorate

⁹ Management Information Unit, Cheshire Constabulary

¹⁰ ONS 2001 area classification

¹¹ Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC), Cheshire County Council Jan 2007

¹² Census 2001, census area statistics table 16. © Crown Copyright 2008

¹³ Information Analysis Directorate, Department of Work & Pensions

¹⁴ Census 2001, census area statistics table 25. © Crown Copyright 2008

¹⁵ Census 2001, census area statistics table 17. © Crown Copyright 2008

¹⁶ CACI household paycheck data 2007

¹⁷ Census 2001, key statistics table 12. © Crown Copyright 2008

¹⁸ Census 2001, key statistics table 15. © Crown Copyright 2008

¹⁹ Valuation Office Agency 2006

KNUTSFORD TOWN PLAN PROJECT SPECIFICATION

Purpose: to collect and set down the criteria which the Knutsford community believe should guide governing bodies and the development of the Parish to ensure the well-being of Knutsford during the next 5-10 years.

Area of Study: Knutsford Civil Parish

Resources: the manpower and expertise within the community; grants and donations; help and advice from Cheshire Community Council, governing bodies and service providers.

Scope: initially, anything that affects the quality of life of the community.

Practical level for achievements: it will be better to exceed modest targets than to fail to reach over-ambitious goals. Seek guidance from governing bodies and service providers upon which areas they are willing to consult and take notice of community views.

Eligible Participants:

Residents	– all those who live within the Parish boundary
Workers	– anyone who spends a large proportion of their working time in Knutsford or who runs a business operating in Knutsford
Scholars	– all pupils attending Knutsford schools.
Players	– regular users of Knutsford amenities for sports, hobbies, exercise, social and cultural activities
Patients	– those who are registered users of Knutsford medical and dental services
Customers	– regular users of Knutsford services and businesses for their day-to-day needs including categories A1, A2, A3, B1, C1, C2, D1 and D2.
Landlords	– owners of major units of land or property within the Parish (and tenants where they have control over land use or development and public access).

The Target: to maximize participation from all sections of the community

Transparency: 100% (where 0% indicates only broad statements of support; 100% implies providing accurate figures of the number of people consulted and the responses received, and sufficient detail for the survey to be reconstructed)

Target Market (i.e. those whom it is hoped to influence through the medium of the Town Plan): any governing or commercial body that regards Knutsford as an entity or provides a universal service to the Parish. This may include CCC, MBC, CEC, KTC, Court services, police, fire and ambulance services, relevant branches of the NHS and hospital Trusts, utility companies (water, drainage, gas, electricity, fixed and mobile telecommunications, television and cable companies), the Post Office and Royal Mail, Manchester Airport, rail, bus and taxi operators, Newsquest Cheshire, National Trust, RHS, English Heritage, developers.

References:

- ¹ Knutsford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, May 2005
(Part of MBC Local Development Framework)
- ² Survey Methods (Computer Database Software)
- ³ Ramsar Site (On the List of Wetlands of National Importance, especially
as Waterfowl Habitat, protected under international treaty)
- ⁴ Article 4 designation (Removes all, or some, of the rights of property owners
to undertake small-scale alterations without planning permission).
- ⁵ Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Local Resilience Forum Community Risk Register
- ⁶ Macclesfield Borough Local Plan, January 2004
- ⁷ Knutsford Town Council Car Parking Strategy, draft 1, Oct 2008
- ⁸ Knutsford Town Council Business Parking Survey, April 2009
- ⁹ Macclesfield Borough Council Car Parking Review, April 2005
- ¹⁰ Cheshire East Council Car Parking Strategy, April 2009
- ¹¹ Crewe Lyceum Theatre (Edwardian Grade 11 listed building, Crewe, Cheshire)
- ¹² RADAR keys (from Royal Association for Disability And Rehabilitation)
- ¹³ Ideas from Darzi: Polyclinics (Pamphlet from NHS Confederation listing recommendations
from Lord Darzi for Medical Centres for populations of various sizes)
- ¹⁴ CCC Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011

Other researched documents:

KTC car park committee recommendations, July 2003
Macclesfield Borough Council Car Parking Strategy, July 2005
Macclesfield Borough Council Business Rating List, 2005
Annual ticket sales income from parking 07/08

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Abbreviations:

CEC	Cheshire East (Borough) Council
CCC	Cheshire County Council
CWT	Cheshire Wildlife Trust
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EH	English Heritage
FOD	Foreign Object Debris
FOTM	Friends of the Moor
HD	High Definition
JCEPT	Joint Cheshire Emergency Planning Team
KTC	Knutsford Town Council
(N.B. Local Plan Policy KTC = Knutsford Town Centre)	
KTP	Knutsford Town Plan
MBC	Macclesfield Borough Council
MCRUA	Mid Cheshire Rail Users' Association
MRLC	Middlewich Rail Link Campaign
NE	Natural England
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PCT	(Central & Eastern Cheshire) Primary Care Trust
PKF	Promoting Knutsford Forum
PP	Pedestrian Priority
RHS	Royal Horticultural Society
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TPIC	Town Plan Implementation Committee
UDC	Urban District Council

