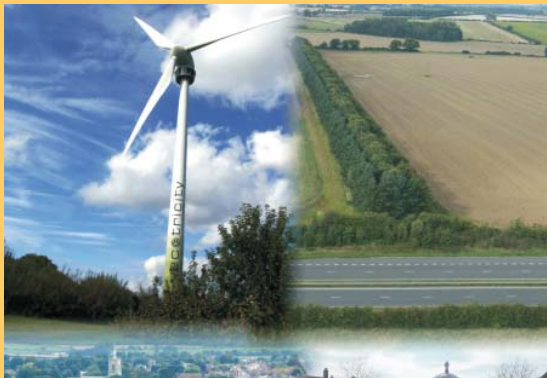


# ‘Perspectives on Swaffham going forward’: key findings from four surveys

Dr. David Bek, *Project Officer, Swaffham Town Council*



Swaffham Town  
Group Survey  
Report 2008



Swaffham  
Business Survey  
Report 2008



Swaffham Town Group



Swaffham Visitor Survey  
Report 2008

Socio-economic change in Swaffham:  
a report for the Swaffham Town Group  
by Craig Wheway

# What's good about Swaffham? (1)

## Historic Centre

- ✚ Central Townscape and Church the most popular features in the Main Survey
- ✚ Central town environment was most popular feature in the Visitor Survey



## Illustrative evidence

- ✚ 40% of respondents named the Town centre and the church as their favourite aspect of the town environment
- ✚ 75% of visitors consider the town's environment to be 'good' or 'very good'



# What's good about Swaffham? (2)

## Geographic situation - 'Crossroads of Norfolk'

- ✚ Residents enjoy the ability to access countryside and coast, other centres such as King's Lynn, Norwich, Dereham for shopping and work.
- ✚ Visitors can access other attractions locally and travel to coast
- ✚ Young People can access education, shops and leisure opportunities
- ✚ Businesses can access goods and markets and attract staff from a wide area.

## Illustrative evidence

- ✚ 82% of people shop in King's Lynn, 76% in Norwich, 74% in Dereham
- ✚ 55% of people go to Norwich for entertainment
- ✚ Nearly 60% of businesses consider that the town's location offers significant advantages.

# Transport Issues

## Cycling

- ✚ 64% consider that provision of cycle routes is poor
- ✚ 2% of young people cycle to school (although cycling is a popular hobby) and 71% consider lack of cycle paths a problem.

## Public transport

- ✚ Provision of bus services for work, school and shopping received largely favourable ratings but need for improvements to bus services were the largest single issue raised.

## Traffic related

- ✚ 80% of young people noted speeding traffic as a concern; support for increased speed restrictions on residential estates.
- ✚ Traffic noise, air pollution and congestion at peak times were also raised as problems.

## Parking

- ✚ Generally positive but some concerns about on-street parking and enforcement of restrictions.
- ✚ Businesses against introduction of pay and display but some support for controlling all day parking around the town centre.

# Environmental Issues

People expressed very strong pro-environmental opinions

- ✚ More than 80% consider recycling, energy conservation, renewables and use of local foods to be 'vital' or 'very important'.



- ✚ People feel that more could be done in Swaffham to control litter/fly tipping, to promote composting, to control air/noise pollution and to promote cycling.



# Interesting Paradoxes

- + Swaffham has high proportion of shops in relation to its population size...  
**But** majority of people feel that provision is inadequate
- + Town has over 100 clubs and societies  
**But** many people feel there is a shortage of leisure and recreation opportunities
- + Fear of crime/anti-social behaviour is quite high  
**But** reality is that Swaffham is a pretty safe place
- + Only 10 % of young people feel that enough is done to encourage healthy lifestyles  
**But** young people's favourite aspect of Swaffham is the chip shops!



## Miscellaneous findings

- ✚ 75% of young people consider that attitudes of their peers and/or adults are a problem.
- ✚ Many businesses are concerned about red tape, rent/rates levels, skills shortages.
- ✚ People are very positive about the availability of key services in the town such as doctors, dentists, banks and building societies.
- ✚ ‘Welcoming’, ‘thriving’, ‘environmentally friendly’ and ‘traditional’ were the most popular words chosen to describe Swaffham in the future.

## Way forward – reconciling realities

- ✚ Change is inevitable
- ✚ Most people want enhanced availability of local goods, services, leisure and opportunities
- ✚ **But** many people do not want the essence of Swaffham (the archetypal quaint English market town) to be lost.

### Crystallising the challenge...

‘Development projects should enhance the unique historic townscape rather than encouraging bland, clone style buildings and facades’