**WOTTON UNDER EDGE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2016**

***A working document although approved by Wotton Town Council July 2016***

***Updated November 2020***

| **No** | **Description** | **Lead** | **Partners** | **Desired Outcome** | **Actions**  **Required** | **Progress** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Need for a diverse selection of shops and reduction in number of vacant premises. | COT | COT/  WTC  Regen  Cttee | Better selection of quality shops to encourage shoppers into town.  Increased prosperity of town centre. | 1. Discuss with landlords the possibility of reducing rents to help fill empty shops and improve appearance of shops **(COT).**  2. Explore with SDC the possibility of reducing business rates. Recent changes in law which will enable District Councils to retain business rates may facilitate this **(COT).**  3. Identify additional types of retailers needed and encourage their establishment in town **(COT).**  4. Expand and rejuvenate Farmers Market (WTC/COT/Regen).  5. COT to Discuss with the Co-op the possibility of creating a rear entrance giving direct access to the car park. | 1. Discussions have been held with local landlords to help improve situation.  2. Government support provided during the Covid emergency.  3. WTC has supported change of use planning application for several new businesses.  4. Farmers Market closed due to lack of public support but project scored well in the 2019 community consultation. Opportunities to re-open and expand the Market will be explored once additional space is available when the new Symn Lane car park is operational in 2021.  5. Issue discussed but due to building layout and unloading requirements this is not currently possible. |
| 2 | Improve condition of verges, pavements and footways. | WTC | WTC  COT  SDC  GCC | Improved appearance of town making it more attractive and welcoming. | 1. Identify problem areas (WTC).  2. Action Town Council staff to tidy problem areas, including overtime, if needed (WTC).  3. Encourage shop owners to clean frontage pavement (COT).  4. Action higher authorities where appropriate (WTC).  5. Make it easier for those with physical and visual impairments to travel around the town (WTC/SDC/GCC) and wider area.  6. Improve and maintain gateways into Wotton. | 1. Councillors and public to ensure that problem areas are reported to WTC for action.  New Footway Survey commenced Jan 2017 and was completed in early 2019. Issues have been reported to County Council. Footpaths Survey also completed in 2019. The new surveys, planned to start in 2020 have been delayed due to the pandemic. Lighting the OK footpath scored well in the 2019 community consultation and project will be reviewed once Greenway route has been selected.  2. Town tidying duties now included in WTC caretaker role. Additional funding for town tidying included in WTC budget. Possibility of using Leyhill prisoner effort has been explored but is not currently possible.  3. COT has pursued this but owners not keen.  4. Some action taken to introduce dropped kerbs. New Dryleaze development will introduce more.  5. WTC investigating improvements to Marchesi Walk.  6. Continue border management around the town with emphasis on perennials, shrubs and bulbs, augmented by some summer bedding. Wildflower bank planted at swimming pool and will be considered for Marchesi Walk. |
| 3 | Promote tourism. | WTC  COT | WTC  COT  Regen Cttee  Footpath  Cttee | Increased number of tourists visiting and using town facilities. | 1. Ensure that any new parking provided includes provision for coaches (COT).  2. Encourage more residents to provide bed and breakfast (COT).  3. Explore opportunities for more hotel/inn accommodation, a walker’s hostel and camping facilities (COT).  4. WTC and Heritage Centre to work together to provide a Visitor Information Centre (WTC).  5. Explore ways of exploiting location on Cotswold Way (WTC/COT).  6. Get Wotton walks into more guidebooks (WTC).  7. Encourage festivals (See Action Plan 7).  8. Encourage visitors to other local attractions (e.g. Newark Park, Berkeley Castle, Westonbirt, Tortworth, Slimbridge) to visit Wotton (brochures, signage etc) (WTC/COT).  9. Ensure that Wotton’s amenities (pool, cinema, Heritage Centre, specialist shops, Arts Centre) are fully exploited and advertised (WTC/COT).  10. Provide better facilities for cyclists (WTC). | 1. New car park permitted by SDC DCC in 2019 includes coach parking. WTC has agreed to take on management of car park, once complete.  2. OSS & Heritage Centre amalgamated B&B lists. Also some properties advertised on Air B&B.  3. Swan Hotel has established more accommodation.  4. WTC has provided substantial grant funding to the Heritage Centre to assist with operating costs and provide a Town visitor Information Centre.  5. Walking Festival held May 2017, 2018 and 2019 with grant support from WTC. 2020 event cancelled due to pandemic. Wotton became a Walker are Welcome town in 2020. Wotton has been included in the Cotswold AONB Gateway Project and routes are being established.  6. Updated WTC Walk leaflets available on-line.  7. Arts Festival, Blues Festival, Walking Festival, Winter Wanderland all established, with some WTC support.  8. Plans to display a Wotton poster at Newark Park abandoned due to objections from the National Trust. WTC explored the possibility of installing more Brown tourist signs to Wotton on the gateway routes, but action proved to be too expensive (GCC costs).  9. New tourist area initiative of ‘Cotswold Edge and Severn Vale established. Regeneration Committee has taken on liaison with this group.  10. Cycle racks installed outside Rope Walk toilets in 2017 by WTC. |
| 4 | Provide more parking in the town at no extra cost to residents. | COT | WTC  COT | Extra parking available, thereby encouraging more shoppers into town. | 1. Continue to explore and support initiatives which would provide additional parking in the town (COT).  2. Work with community to seek support for additional parking (COT/WTC). | 1. COT has made arrangements with the Auction Rooms to allow trader parking in their car park.  2. SDC DCC permitted the Symn Lane housing/car park development in 2019 and all planning conditions were passed in 2020. Start of development is awaited. WTC has agreed to take on management of car park, once established, and to install EV charge points. |
| 5 | Improve public toilets. | WTC | WTC  SDC | Improved facilities making town more attractive to visitors. | 1. Take immediate action to refurbish Old Town toilets (WTC).  2. Establish longer term plan to replace Old Town toilets with a modern multi-use facility (WTC).  3. Explore use of other facilities (such as Parish Room) (WTC).  4. Ensure that SDC takes action to improve Rope Walk toilets (WTC).  5. Explore introducing a scheme whereby shops can permit public use of their toilet facilities (WTC/COT) | 1. Re-painting carried out in 2016 but major refurbishment abandoned in favour of a new build due to poor condition of building structure.  2. Top project from 2019 community consultation. Funding for replacement Old Town Toilets has been earmarked by WTC and SDC has set aside £40k from its market towns initiative. Architect appointed in 2018 to produce initial designs. Progress has been disappointingly slow and it is not clear if the architect wishes to continue after a positive start. A £45k PWL will be needed to fund.  3. Investigated but no practical solutions found.  4. Rope Walk toilets refurbished by SDC in 2017 and WTC improved the area in front of toilets in 2016.  5. Shopkeepers not keen. |
| 6 | Improve footpaths and open spaces including Holywell, churchyard, cemetery and allotments. | WTC | WTC  CALGS  Cotswold  Wardens | Improved management, use and range of facilities. | 1. Establish strategy and identify problem areas.  (WTC/Footpaths/Wardens).  2. Seek ways of supporting and exploiting Synwell playing field (SPFA).  3. Consider action to protect areas by designating land as Local Green Space in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (WTC).  4. Improve Rope Walk open area.  5. Improve and maintain Holywell Leaze.  6. Improve and maintain Council allotments.  7. Improve and maintain cemetery.  8. Consider making Knapp Field a community area. | 1.Footpath Survey started in Sep 16 and completed in early 2019. Similar Footway Survey created and completed.  2. Grants provided by WTC and S106 money allocated to improve play equipment.  3. Requires nomination in a formal Neighbourhood Plan but no action planned until scope of new Local Plan is available.  4. WTC has improved the area outside Rope Walk toilets using grants to fund. Work completed in Oct 16.  5a. Cotswold Wardens completed Holywell Leaze Wall repairs and seating in early 2019 with WTC funding.  5b. WTC agreement with adjacent landowners at Holywell regarding stream bank management established in April 2017 – all satisfactory and no joint works required at present (2020).  6. Improvements to New Rd allotments via new underground piping and path stabilisation completed in early 2018. Risk assessments of all allotments undertaken.  7. Excess spoil removed from cemetery edge in Sep 16. Monitor to ensure new spoil is removed from cemetery. Tree maintenance work continuing.  8. Project not supported in 2019 community consultation but site now made available to WACAN for woodland planting. |
| 7 | Promote arts, entertainments and festivals. | WUEA | WUEA  Arts Assoc  WTC Footpath Cttee  Regen Cttee  COT  WCSF | Improved range of entertainments etc and increased audiences. | 1. Establish strategy (WUEA) and timetable.  2. Establish regular Blues Festival.  3. Establish Walking Festival (WTC/Footpaths/public).  4. Re-establish Christmas Event. (COT)  5. WCSF Events.  6. Open Gardens event. | 1. Action in hand – awaiting WUEA input but delayed due to Covid. WTC has agreed a rent holiday.  2. Completed. Blues festival well established with WTC support. Blues Festival now a separate charity. Not held in 2020 due to Covid.  3. Walking Festival Committee established with WTC support and festivals held in 2017, 2018 and 2019.  4. WTC/COT worked with partners to ensure a Christmas market event took place in Dec 2016, 2018 and 2019. No event in 2020 due to Covid. It is hoped that the event can continue in 2021.  5. Party in the Parc held with WTC financial support.  6. Open gardens events held in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Not held in 2020 due to Covid. |
| 8 | Expand youth facilities and activities. | WYLG | WTC  WYLG  The Door  SDC | Identify and provide additional facilities and activities needed. | 1. Consider additional facilities needed such as a meeting shelter for young people (WYLG/WCSF).  2. Encourage young people to express views on local issues and influence local decision making (WTC/WYLG/Door/SDC).  3. Promote a comprehensive programme of summer events for young people (WTC/WYLG/Door). | 1. Shelter installed near skate park. WTC sponsored provision of additional sessions at Youth Centre.  2. Young people involved in SDC Youth Forum and its successor.  3. Summer programme funded by WTC/WYLG from 2016 and latterly with some support from The Door. |
| 9 | Promote and encourage a welcoming and “inclusive” community. | WTC | WTC  WYLG  Village Agent  Local Orgs  Door  SDC/NH Wardens | Active, accessible, inclusive and welcoming community and facilities. | 1. Continue to support and encourage the many volunteer and membership organisations serving the Wotton area as listed in Appendix 3 (WTC/Orgs).  2. Hold a Clubs & Groups Fair to encourage volunteers and support community groups in the area (WTC).  3. Support and encourage intergenerational activities in the town (WTC/WYLG/YCS).  4. Facilitate regular consultation with people across all sections of the community to ensure that all views are taken into account in local decision making (WTC/WYLG/The Door/SDC).  5. Work towards becoming a “Dementia Friendly Town” (Dementia Connections/WTC). | 1. WTC has representation on several organisations.  2. Clubs & Groups Fair held in 2016 and 2018 in council buildings.    3. Series of Friday inter-generational sessions funded by PCC took place but not continued.  4. Regular progress meetings with Youth Provider. Feedback from young people included. Council monitors social media for issues. Regular WTC feature in Wotton Directory. Booklet produced for Parish Assembly.  5. Progress actions to enable registering with Dementia Action Alliance. Dementia Friends session held for WTC. Discussions with traders on becoming more dementia friendly. Sensory garden established by WCSF. |
| 10 | Improve traffic management. | WTC | GCC | Improved traffic flow and road safety. | 1. Identify problems and consult with GCC. | 1. Town Council sponsored a Traffic Regulation Order for additional yellow lining at problem areas. New lines installed in late 2018. |

**Abbreviations**

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| WTC | Wotton-under-Edge Town Council |
| WYLG | Wotton Youth Liaison Group |
| WUEA | Wotton under the Edge Arts |
| GCC | Gloucestershire County Council |
| YCS | Youth and Community Services |
| SDC | Stroud District Council |
| NH | Neighbourhood (Wardens) |
| PCC | Police and Crime Commissioner |
| COT | Chamber of Commerce and Trade |
| Arts Assoc | Wotton Arts Association |
| Door | The Door Organisation |
| Regen | Regeneration (Committee) |
| Cttee | Committee |
| WCSF | Wotton Community Sports Foundation |
| WACAN | Wotton Area Climate Action Network |
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