

A sense of community

Considering Wick has neither a pub, shop, post office, village hall or school, the survey showed an overwhelming feeling of a sense of community.

“Wick is a friendly village and there’s always something going on”

Although there were comments regarding the lack of these amenities, especially a shop (118 people) it was generally accepted (and history has proved) that a small village such as Wick, with no through traffic, could not fully support or sustain such facilities. Also, its close proximity to Pershore means that all such services are close at hand.

What was also highlighted and

celebrated was Wick’s friendliness, sense of community and social organisations (though one or two comments mentioned a ‘socially divided’ village) with 66% of all 25 – 60 year olds being very happy with activities and events, although some felt there were not enough activities aimed at children or young people.

Wick Parish Council

This is the formal body of the village and is elected every four years. As with all parish councils it has little real authority and very limited fund raising powers. It does however provide the link between

the village and the District and County authorities on many matters including planning, flood alleviation issues and local roads.

Wick Club

A welcome feature of the village is Wick Club which has over 250 members. As well as filling the role of the missing pub it hosts various events throughout the year, including music nights, quizzes, competitions including photography, cakes and horticulture, as well as having facilities for pool, darts, cards, dominoes and other pub type games. It is also available to hire outside its



Photo: Exhibition in St Mary's Church

A sense of community continued

“Suggestions were also made for a Wick website to be set up as another form of communication”

Photo: Prizes for the Fete raffle and tombola



normal opening hours, but this is limited. One suggestion made via the survey was that a communal marquee be purchased for the use of village organisations and individuals.

Also Wick Club has various teams participating in local leagues, such as skittles and crib.

Other societies and organisations include:-

Wick Wives

Established in 1970, it has a membership of approximately 40 who meet on a regular basis, arranging talks, outings, social events and help for various local charities. Highlights include the annual dinner, progressive supper, quiz night, carol singing and hosting a senior citizens dinner every Christmas. Husbands are welcome at many of these events!

Ladies Afternoon Club

When the “Mothers Union” closed many of its members founded the “Ladies Afternoon Club”. Established in 1975 the Afternoon Club is set up for the more senior ladies of the village. Members meet monthly to hear speakers on various topics. Also during the year there are such events as a garden party, luncheon, social evening and outings.

Wick Walkers

Originally founded in 1969 to encourage young families in our local countryside it is an unofficial group i.e. as in no membership or committee. It now has approximately 50 in number that meet for monthly walks of distances averaging 6 – 7 km (4 miles). On a few occasions there are longer walks with a break for a pub lunch!

Men’s Lunch Club

Established in 1995, another informal group who meet for lunch on the third Wednesday of each month. Ladies are invited occasionally, i.e. the Christmas dinner and summer events. The lunch club also takes part in the annual Wick quiz.

Friends of St. Mary’s

This is a registered charity consisting of villagers who assist in raising funds for maintaining and supporting the fabric of the church. This is done through a series of social and musical events, often held in the church itself.

A sense of community continued

“Most surveyed were happy with the flow of information within the village”



Photo: St Mary's Church from the village photo archive.

St Mary's Wick

St Mary's Church is the spiritual centre of the village and parts are believed to date back 800 years. Services are held every Sunday at different times throughout the month including Family Service and Holy Communion. The church comes under the auspices of Pershore Abbey and has a dedicated curate. Some musical and social events are held in the church often run by The Friends in aid of the church fabric. The annual Fete also raises funds for the Church.

intra village quiz, an E. Wick versus W. Wick cricket match and a Christmas Fayre.

Future Developments

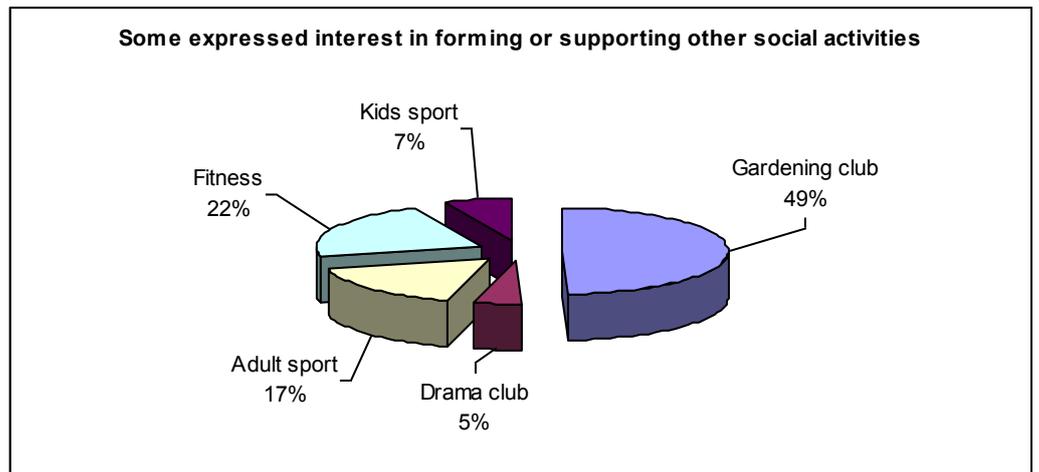
Already as a result of the survey a gardening club and a photography club have been established. One suggestion made via the survey was that a communal marquee be purchased for the use of village organisations and individuals.

Wick Playground Association

Although the Parish Council is the leaseholder of the children's playground the Association is responsible for its day to day running, fund raising for improvements and repair. Regular safety checks are also carried out jointly between the Association and Parish Council. Other annual village events include the Fete, a harvest supper,

Communications

Most surveyed were happy with the communication and the flow of information within the village, with Wick News (177) and word of mouth (166) being the most effective. Other methods are village notice boards, hand delivered flyers/leaflets and the Wick Directory.



A sense of community continued

Good Neighbour Scheme

Results of the Questionnaire also highlighted the idea of a ‘Good Neighbour’ scheme (136 in favour). Although it is obvious that support for each other exists in an informal way, it was felt that a more structured network of people, with a central point of contact, would be more able to help villagers in need. This could be in the form of emergency transport, helping to clean up after a flood, or supporting the sick or elderly. Also it was felt it could be extended to welcome newcomers to the village.

Actions for consideration

- Purchase of a communal marquee
- Setting up of a ‘ Good Neighbour’ scheme
- Support the setting up of any new organisations such as the new gardening and photography clubs
- Investigate the setting up of working parties to support community projects.
- To discuss with the Playground Association the possibility of more events for children and young people
- Investigating the possibility of setting up a village web site, as distinct from the subsidiary one with Wychavon.

“ Houses rarely come up for sale in Wick; people move here and then decide to stay.”

Photos: Barns at the end of Owletts Lane and Vandyke Court



Crime and Safety

Crime and safety, thankfully, is not considered a major issue in Wick with 90% of the respondents thinking Wick is safe place to live and only 5% of respondents having been the victim of a crime within the last 10 years. These are believed to be relatively minor thefts from gardens, sheds and cars or of agricultural vehicles.

There is a neighbourhood watch scheme but apart from distributing notices and information it has had very few calls on its services; for example the offer of free Smart Water for marking property has been poorly taken up.

Despite all this there was a significant demand for more police presence even though the village now has patrols by a Community Liaison Officer. Only a minority of respondents knew of his existence! Clearly this is a communications issue, and the Police have addressed this with an exhibition recently in The Club, which again was poorly attended.

“Thankfully, crime is not considered a major issue in Wick”

Actions for consideration

- To involve the Community Liaison Officer more in Parish activities.



Photo: One of the parish notice boards displaying parish news and crime prevention advice.

Agriculture

There is evidence for agriculture in the parish of Wick since before the Roman Invasion. Indeed the indigenous Iron Age population absorbed the Roman culture and became the Romano British. Wick has evidence of these farmsteads.

Farming in Wick has carried on from the ancient times through the medieval period, into the eighteenth century when the Enclosures Act was introduced. With the coming of mechanization in Victorian times, large scale production arrived in Wick and fields of vegetables began to replace orchards and hop fields. This produce was sent by train or lorry all over the country including Covent Garden, Birmingham and Manchester.

Livestock has always been part of farming in the parish. There are now no dairy cows or pigs but there are still two

beef farms one of which runs some sheep. Land is rented out for the grazing of sheep and cattle to farmers outside of the parish.

Wick parish still has four working family farms and four farmsteads, where farmers have retired and rented out land to other agricultural businesses. There are no tenant farms in the parish.

Some farms have diversified to add complementary businesses to keep the viability of the family farm going, these have resulted in the Real Confetti Company and Purr-sure cats boarding cattery. Both of these provide work for local people.

Most redundant farm buildings have been converted to housing and sold or privately rented out and there are still some buildings that may become redundant to farming

but at the moment are still in use. There are still a few farm workers cottages but if no workers need them they are rented out as part of the farming enterprise.

The farms of Wick have been involved in various conservation projects for some time and these have been added to and improved over the years. These include pond and woodland establishment, widening field margins, bi-annual hedge cutting and game cover planting.

All these schemes are having very good results with many more birds using the feeding areas and many have been ringed and recorded.



Photo: Confetti fields

“Diversification has resulted in complementary businesses providing work for local people”

Our Environment

“What makes Wick special is being able to glimpse the countryside all around.”

The results of the survey showed that preserving the environment and ambience of Wick was very close the vast majority of residents’ hearts. For example over 70% of respondents thought the existence and preservation of the following features was very important and worth doing:

- Orchards
- Small woods
- Meadows
- Ponds and streams
- Animals and plant life
- Ditches and hedges

There was not such enthusiasm for modern farm buildings.

What was interesting is the relatively low enthusiasm for new projects:

- Planting hedges and trees (57%)
- Relaxing open space (33%)
- Create a wildlife nature area (46%)

The message seems to be to preserve what we have and leave well alone!



Photo: Sheep in Vandyke field

Flooding

By far and away the overwhelming environmental issue for the village is the ever present danger of flooding. This can be seen as coming from three different sources;

- Localised flooding from drains and ditches
- Flash flooding from the fields north of the B4084
- River flood water rising from the Avon and extending beyond its normal flood plain

Flooding from drains and ditches is predominantly an issue of good maintenance as the current systems can cope in all but the most extreme of circumstances. The maintenance of the underground flood drains is the responsibility of the Severn Trent Water Authority. The ditches should be maintained by the local landowners and their tenants, if appropriate. Since the major flood of 2007 there appears to be considerable improvement and the systems have generally coped well with “normal” weather conditions. Clearly this needs to be maintained.