

**OUR FUTURE CIRENCESTER**

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:  
STREET SCENE, HERITAGE, PLAY,  
ROUTES, NATURE,  
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

**OFC INFRASTRUCTURE WORKING GROUP**

**SEPTEMBER 2008-MARCH 2009**

## **BACKGROUND**

In September 2008, Cirencester Town Council adopted its Community Plan, "Our Future Cirencester" (OFC). This contained 16 community development projects including one to produce Heritage and Sustainable Transport Strategies for Cirencester. The strategies must be based upon sound evidence that derives from the community. This evidence will be used to support grant applications and other bids for resources for these and other projects in the plan.

From September 2008 to March 2009, the OFC Steering Group set up four working groups to consider how to take the community plan forward in detail. The task for the working groups was to consider specific topics and to make recommendations to the Steering Group in March 2009 on how the project should proceed in the 2009-2010 year. The four working groups were Heritage, Business, Infrastructure, and Children/Young People.

The Infrastructure Working Group's task was to undertake two major consultation exercises, based on the "Planning for Real" model to serve as base data for the preparation of detailed project plans and grant applications in Year 2 of the project. The Infrastructure Working Group was composed of around 10 local people who met monthly to plan the events, undertake them, and then analyse the results.

## **PLAN YOUR TOWN EVENT**

A "Planning for Real" event was scheduled for 6 and 7 February 2009 in the theatre at New Brewery Arts. Press coverage was good and posters were put up in local shop windows. However, on the morning of 6 February, Cirencester was covered in heavy snow and the event was cancelled since there was nobody in the town to participate. The second session on Saturday, 7 February took place as planned. Despite cold weather and residual ice and packed snow in the Brewery Car Park, volunteers succeeded in convincing over 220 people to come into the theatre and give their views.

Five tables were set up with large scale maps of Cirencester. Each map was annotated to show key features on the topics of: street scene, heritage, play, routes and nature. Each table had a flip chart marked out in a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). Each table was facilitated by one of the members of the Infrastructure Working Group.

Participants were asked to give their views on any of the five topics that interested them in any way they liked. Most people enjoyed discussing their ideas with the facilitators and wrote their ideas on post-it notes which they put onto the SWOT charts. Some people made small flags out of paper and “flew” them from cocktails sticks held down with blue tack to make comments about specific sites. People also discussed their ideas with each other, and often made comments on other people’s post-its.

Many participants took part for over a half hour, some for over an hour. The mood was energetic and many people commented that it was good to be able to give their views in this way.

## **HERITAGE CONSULTATION EVENT**

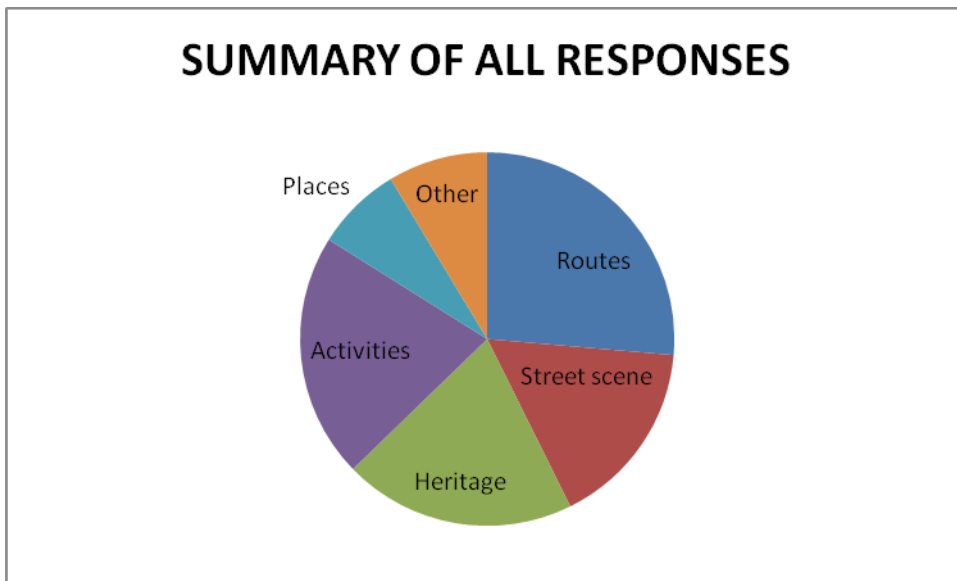
A second event was held on 21 February 2009 in the Bingham Gallery for members of the Cirencester Archaeological and Historic Society and the Civic Society. Participants were invited to attend in a letter from the Chief Executive of the Town Council. Comments were sought on the following matters:

- Better signage to guide people around the town;
- A town-centre audio tour that can be accessed from mobile phones;
- A town map;
- More town trails with supporting interpretive material;
- Improvements to parks and open spaces with improved historic interpretation;
- An area on a community website where interpretive material can be readily accessed;
- Working with local education institutions to help our young people understand and value our historic environment and heritage.

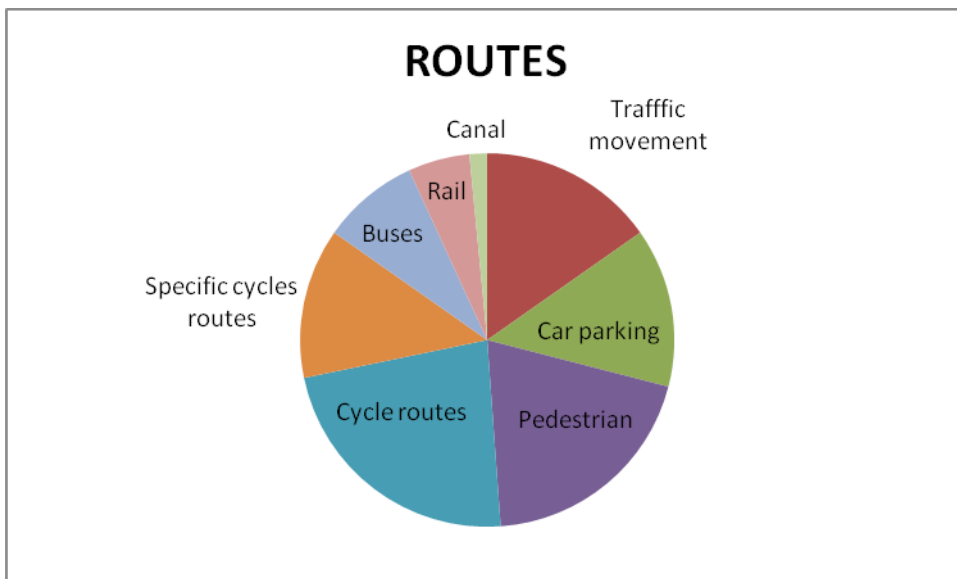
The event was well attended and 52 people were counted as having attended. They were asked to give their views in any way that they felt comfortable. Many wrote their ideas onto post-its but some chose to speak to the volunteer facilitators who then wrote their views for them. Some people even chose to write their ideas down and bring them along to the event.

## SUMMARY CHARTS

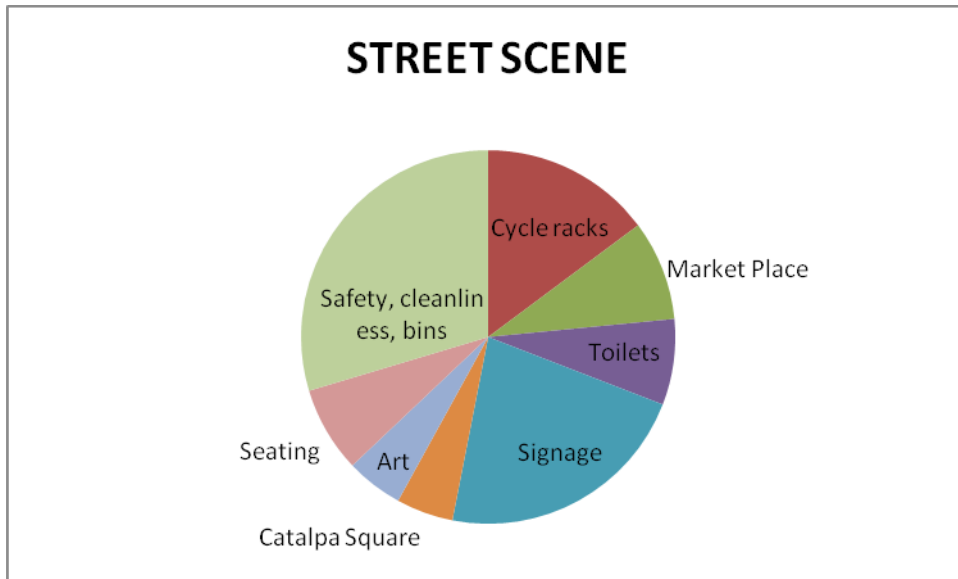
A total of 497 comments were lodged by participants which the working group volunteers sorted into main categories. The detailed comments can be found in the main report on consultation.



131 comments were received on the topic of routes



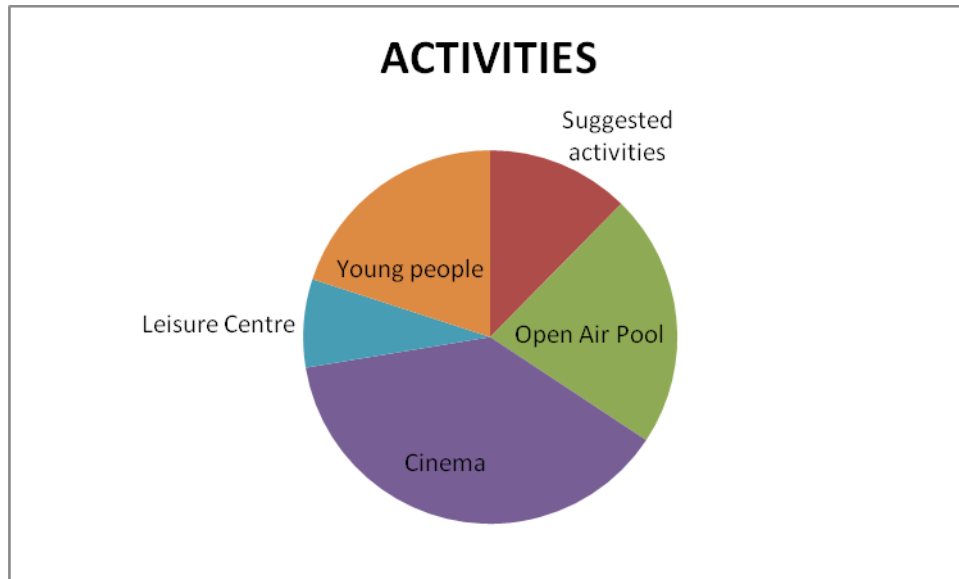
81 comments were received on street scene



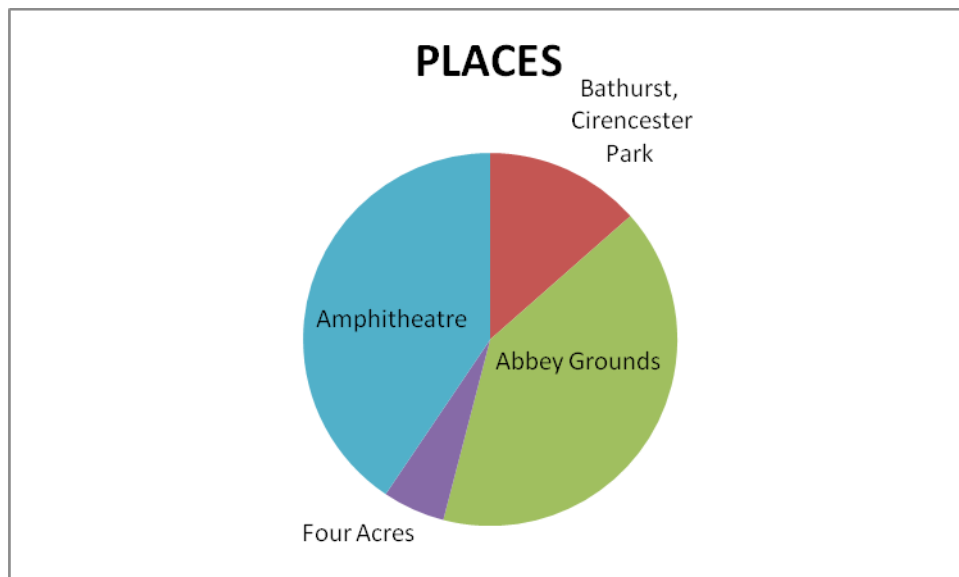
100 comments were received on heritage



105 comments were received on activities



37 comments were received about specific places



43 comments were received about other matters

