The Great Wyre Jigsaw project took place during summer 2006 and was part of the plan for delivering better public services across Wyre. It was set up by Wyre Borough Council and Wyre Local Strategic Partnership and aimed to find out how people feel about living in the Borough.

The Great Wyre Jigsaw is one of the largest community consultations ever carried out in Wyre: 2,000 people took part in the project and told us what’s special about living in Wyre, what should be preserved or looked after to keep the character of the area and what, if anything, would make Wyre a better place to live. This information will be used to shape our community plan for the area and to help public bodies plan services that are more in line with local people’s needs.

275 people living in Thornton gave their views and this booklet shows what they said.
The aim of the project was to find out how people feel about living in Wyre and focussed on four key questions:

- **What’s great about living in Wyre?**
- **What are the main problems about life in Wyre that you and your friends talk about?**
- **What, if anything, would improve Wyre as a place to live?**
- **To keep Wyre special, what needs to be preserved or looked after?**

The project set out to gather the views of 2,000 people and to consult with people in each of the six regional forum areas: **Cleveleys; Fleetwood; Poulton; Rural East** (the area which includes Garstang, Scorton and Great Eccleston); **Rural West** (the area which includes Knott End, Preesall and Stalmine) and **Thornton**.
The consultation was carried out by Pathways Consultancy from Manchester. The Pathways team worked at key community venues such as libraries; attended village fetes, festivals and countryside events and spent time ‘on the streets’ talking to people. Pathways also carried out 10 one to one interviews or meetings with key workers representing specific interest groups in Wyre. **2,136 people gave their views this way.**

In addition 1,100 postal questionnaires were posted out by Wyre Borough Council: **200 people gave their views this way.**

The results have been analysed and written up by Pathways. The quotes used in this booklet were given during the consultation and have not been altered in any way.

Pathways devises and runs research, consultation and evaluation projects.

To contact us please call: **0161 273 8235**

or visit our website: **www.pathwaysconsultancy.co.uk**

or alternatively email: **projects@pathwaysconsultancy.co.uk**
In Thornton three things stand out: that the rural nature of Wyre is very important to people; that they value the good local facilities and services available to them and that they value the sense of community and village atmosphere of Thornton.

46% of people value the countryside and the rural nature of the area and enjoy living close to the sea and the beach. They like the fresh air, the open spaces and the scenery.

43% of people told us that having good facilities and services ‘on the doorstep’ made them feel very positive about living in Thornton. People told us that they value the leisure centre, the theatre, the parks that are close by, the local health centres and the library but more than anything else they value their local shops and the local shopkeepers.

24% of people who gave their views said that the peaceful, quiet, ‘village’ feel of Thornton is important to them. The sense of community in the town is also important to 22% of people, who said that the feeling that everyone ‘knows each other’ makes Thornton a special place to live.

Together these two issues account for 46% of people.
In addition:

16% of people told us that the local transport system makes Thornton a great place to live – helping them to access a wider range of services and facilities.

Within minutes you can be near the sea, in town or in the countryside – I really like the contrast.

What’s great about living in Wyre and the Thornton area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>Rural/Coastal area</th>
<th>Good local facilities and services</th>
<th>Peaceful, quiet village feel</th>
<th>Strong community</th>
<th>Good local transport systems</th>
<th>Accessible to other places</th>
<th>Civic pride/good street scene</th>
<th>Feels safe</th>
<th>Accessible for people with mobility problems</th>
<th>Things are getting better</th>
<th>A sense of heritage</th>
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The top five issues that were raised by people during the consultation were:

- Problems with traffic, congestion and the poor state of the roads
- Declining civic pride
- The lack of things for young people to do in the area
- Social problems – like antisocial behaviour
- Overdevelopment

1. Problems with traffic, congestion and the poor state of the roads

*The top issue – 31% of people raised this as an issue.* The majority of people who raised the issue of traffic and congestion in the town related this directly to the building of new homes. Other concerns included the lack of parking in town and the knock-on effect of people parking in residential streets. There is also widespread concern about the poor state of repair of roads and pavements. For people who rely on public transport there is a need for more and cheaper buses.
2. Declining civic pride

This is a concern for 28% of people, who want to see things like litter and vandalism tackled; the parks and beaches better maintained; dog dirt picked up; overgrown trees and hedges cut back; and the refuse collectors being more careful not to leave rubbish behind them in the street.

3. The lack of things for young people to do in the area

This is a concern for 23% of people. In the main people want more facilities and activities to be on offer for young people and for young people to stop ‘hanging around’ in groups in the evenings.

4. Social problems – like anti-social behaviour

20% of people told us they are concerned about the social problems in their community. In particular they are concerned about drink related, anti-social behaviour.

5. Overdevelopment in Thornton

19% of people are concerned about the amount of building taking place and the associated loss of green spaces; they are worried that the local infrastructure and services cannot support the number of houses being built.
People in Thornton particularly want the parks and green spaces in their town kept and preserved, the area’s historical character retained and their wider local environment looked after.

Overall, **48% of people want to see the parks, gardens and green space in Thornton preserved.** Many of these people are concerned that green spaces are being built on or developed inappropriately. The proposed development of the site next to Thornton library was often mentioned to illustrate these concerns.

**In addition 17% of people also told us that keeping the area’s rural nature is important:** they want the countryside, the wildlife habitats and the beach to be looked after. Overall therefore we can say that protecting the local environment – in terms of green spaces and the area’s rural nature - is important to 65% of people in Thornton.

**24% of people also feel that it is important to retain Thornton’s historical character and ‘market town’ feel.** Protecting period buildings is important to people and they want to see the traditional shops supported.

*Every year we see less green belt, it’s not supposed to be built on but it is*
What needs to be preserved or looked after?

Other important features to look after are:

✔️ **The local services and facilities**: these make Thornton a great place to live for many people and they want to see them maintained.

✔️ **The public spaces and the street scene**: things like high-quality flower displays and keeping the area litter-free are important to people.
Better public transport and traffic management

The top issue - 29% of people raised it. Their concerns covered a wide range of issues including Thornton-specific concerns such as parking in the town; the need for more bus stops and more buses which take more than one pushchair or wheelchair; reopening the Fleetwood to Blackpool railway line; and getting the Knott End ferry working.

Because of the range of issues and ideas we would suggest that it would be worthwhile for the Council to initiate more detailed discussions with local people around transport issues.

Provide more things for young people to do

A concern for 19% of people. Ideas include more affordable activities for young people; holiday activities and youth clubs; more children’s playgrounds; go-karting; a football pitch and a basketball court.

Improve community safety

An issue for 18% of people who want to see more policemen in the community, proactive policing and more policing at night.
Improve local facilities and services

Also an issue for 16% of people, who want to see their swimming pool retained and upgraded, and local shops encouraged to remain. Many people want to have a bank back in Thornton.

Improve the street scene and bolster civic pride

15% of people raised this as an issue and they want to see the state of the roads and pavements improved; less rubbish left behind by refuse collectors; the beach and promenade tidied up; and more litter bins in town.

Curb overdevelopment

12% of people said they would like to see over-development curbed. Many people had already mentioned this in discussing their concerns around the loss of green spaces.

Keep it green – stop building and stop cutting trees down
This booklet, together with information from the other five areas of Wyre, will be used to produce a spatial portrait of the Borough. The portrait will then become part of the land use plan for the Wyre – the Local Development Framework.

The information will also be used to help develop a ‘vision’ for Wyre. This is a collective view of how we all want the Borough to be in the future. This vision will set the direction and agenda for all service organisations in the Borough and therefore needs to be based on community need as recognised and agreed by all agencies. The Great Wyre Jigsaw is the first step in the process of achieving a vision for Wyre.

**What you can do now:**

You can find out what people from the other areas of Wyre told us by reading the booklets for those areas.

You can get copies from **Wyre Borough Council** · Telephone 01253 891000

The results of this exercise will also be discussed at the Area Forum taking place in your area. Area Forums now meet in each area of the Borough to discuss issues of concern to local people and to ensure a response. For more details of the area forum in your area, contact :

**Donna Midgley-Davies** on 01253 891000

or email [dmidgley-davies@wyrebc.gov.uk](mailto:dmidgley-davies@wyrebc.gov.uk)