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.

155 people living in Rural West 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 focused 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**
The majority of people we interviewed were in Knott End and two things stand out: that people value living in a rural coastal area; and that living in a place with a strong sense of community is important to them.

74% of people told us living next to the sea in a rural area made them feel very positive about the Rural West. People told us that they appreciate the peacefulness of the area; being near the sea and the beach; having views of the coast and the Lake District; and being able to walk along the beach and the promenade. Others praised a laid-back pace of life and being ‘out of the rat race’.

50% of people told us that they value living in an area with a strong sense of community. Knott End and Preesall are small communities and people told us that they are friendly places which have a village atmosphere and good social networks. Other people told us that it is a good, safe place in which to bring up children; they also enjoyed the numerous community-centred activities.

There’s peace and quiet, open spaces and countryside with lots of places to go for walks.
What’s special about Wyre and the Rural West area?

Other things that make living in Rural West great are:

- The good local facilities and services – **35% of the people we spoke to told us that they value the good shopping available in Knott End village, the library, good schools and good places to eat out.**

- Good public transport – **22% of people told us that they valued the good, reliable bus service which offers affordable access to their social network.**

What’s great about living in Wyre and the Rural West area

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<th>Number of people</th>
<th>120</th>
<th>110</th>
<th>100</th>
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<tr>
<td>Rural coastal area</td>
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<td>Strong community</td>
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<td>Good local facilities and services</td>
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<td>Accessible for people with mobility problems</td>
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<td>Civic pride/good street scene</td>
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<td>Accessible to other places</td>
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<td>Peaceful quiet village feel</td>
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Three main issues were raised by people during the consultation and these were:

- Problems with traffic and poor public transport
- Feeling unsafe, crime and vandalism
- Declining civic pride

1. Problems with traffic, parking and poor public transport

   The top issue – 52% of people raised it. The two key concerns when we met them were speeding (cars and motorbikes) and the ongoing problem with the ferry from Knott End to Fleetwood.

   Motorbikes seem to be a problem unique to Knott End in Wyre – the café advertises itself as a bike-friendly place and some people feel that, as a result, too many bikes come to town on Wednesdays and Sundays. People also told us that speeding cars through the village, and youngsters in cars who speed and rev their engines until the early hours, are also a problem. The ferry is not operating and this is exasperating for local people: some told us that it has also affected trade in the local cafés and shops. Other problems raised include lack of parking for visitors; infrequent buses and expensive fares; no public transport in Stalmine; and traffic wardens – some people think there are too many, others not enough!
2. Feeling unsafe, crime and vandalism

*This is a concern for 38% of people.* They told us about young people hanging about at night; about feeling scared to go out at night themselves; and about racial abuse and harassment. People also told us that the police are not responsive and are not local.

3. Declining civic pride

*An issue for 34% of people who want to see* vandalism tackled; litter and fly tipping controlled; the beach and the jetty area cleaned up; dog-fouling laws enforced and more dog bins installed in the area.

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**We used to have a lengthsman who cleaned the beach**

**Fleetwood is known as a port and fishing town – why can’t we get a shallow-water ferry working?**
People in Rural West are especially keen to protect the rural nature of the area that they live in: 35% of people told us that this was important to them.

They want to retain the quiet feel of the area by looking after the seafront and beach; restricting new development and preventing new building on green space; keeping the footpaths; and protecting the wider countryside along with its wildlife. People also told us they want to keep the village atmosphere and maintain community spirit.

21% of people told us that they want to preserve the historical character of the area. They want to keep the old and architecturally valuable buildings in the area – such as the Bowen Arms (a Grade II listed building). Someone told us about Iron Age relics that had been found in the area and then lost. Other people were keen that the village atmosphere should be retained and that new buildings should be in character with the existing core.

14% of people told us that they want to keep the parks, green space and trees.

10% are concerned that public space in the area is kept litter-free and in good order.

Look after the whole area. Especially along the front – there’s so much wildlife round here.
What needs to be preserved or looked after?

Nobody seems to bother about local history – the area has been occupied since Neolithic times but no one preserves the very old stuff.

What needs to be preserved or looked after?

- The area’s rural nature
- The area’s historical character
- Our parks, green spaces and local environment
- Our high quality public spaces and street scene
- Local services & facilities
- Public transport services
- Our sense of community
Better traffic management and public transport

The top issue – 41% of people raised it. Their ideas ranged widely: traffic calming in the middle of Knott End to reduce speed; closing the carpark at night to prevent youngsters in cars congregating; a better bus service; getting the ferry working; more parking spaces; pedestrian/pelican crossings; a cycle path and footpath to Lancaster. People are divided on whether or not they want a bridge to Fleetwood.

Provide more things for young people to do

A concern for 30% of people. Ideas include “monitoring the local park to stop older kids pushing out younger ones”; building a new park or playground – people told us the nearest playground is a mile and a half away and the children are tired by the time they have walked there (someone suggested that ICI have just sold some land off cheaply that might be ideal for a playground); a centre where young people could hang out; and a skate park.

Improve local facilities and services

An issue for 23% of people, who want to see a range of issues addressed. Ideas include a café in the centre of Knott End; better shops; a supermarket; sports facilities; changing the library into a gym or health studio; an ambulance station in the area; and more local adult education.
Other areas for action raised by the people we interviewed are:

**Declining civic pride**

A concern for 17% of people, who suggested local volunteers getting together to clean the beach and jetty area; a campaign against litter; and having more dog bins on the front.

**Overdevelopment**

Also a concern for 17% of people, who want an end to building on green spaces, especially in Knott End; new buildings to be in character; local authority restraint when granting planning permission; a firm “no to the proposed gas storage plant.”
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**