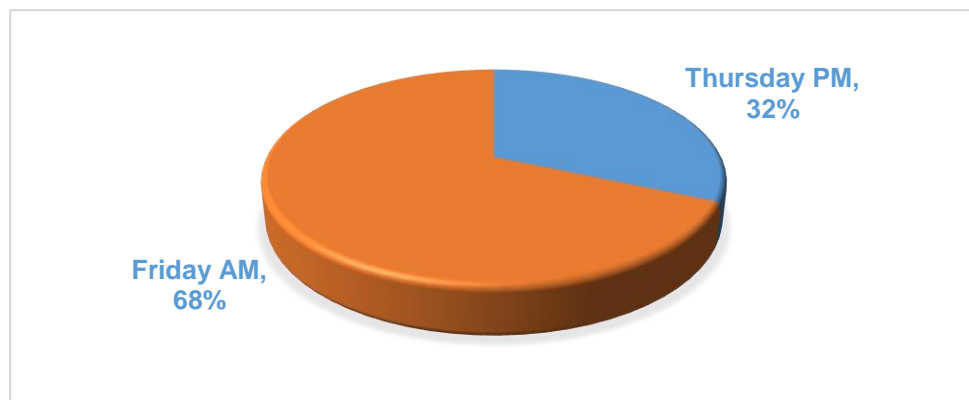




Community Engagement February 2016 Information Drop-In Events Report

Overview:

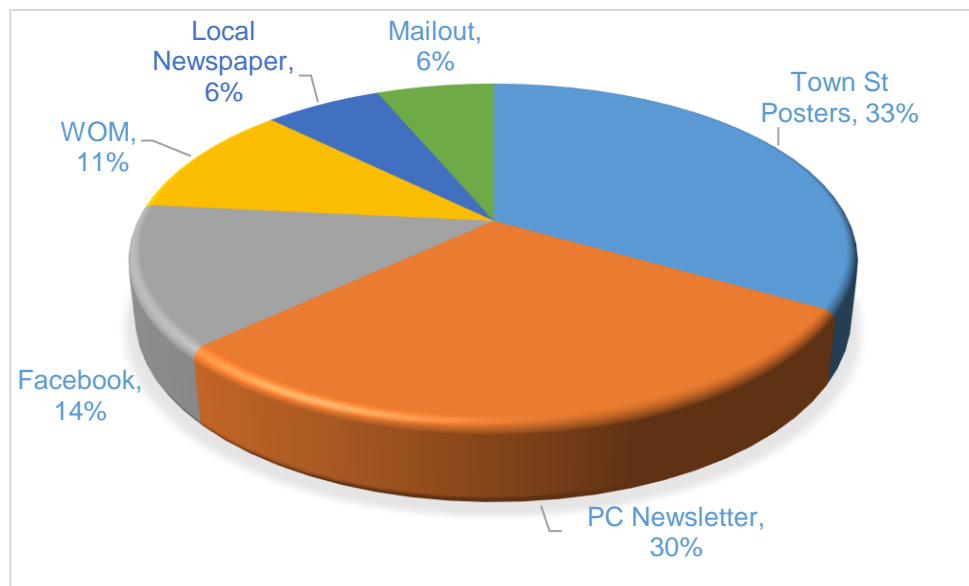
Event Date	Thursday 25 th February 7pm – 9pm & Friday 26 th February 10am – 1pm
Venue	Guildhall, Town Street, Thaxted.
Purpose	To commence community engagement in the Neighbourhood Plan process by providing initial information of the purpose of the Plan
Audience	Key stakeholders, local businesses and residents
Attendance	35 Thursday PM 76 Friday AM 111 Total 96% Residents



Data Capture Full data capture log attached
51 requested to be added to future mailing list

Promotional Methods Used:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facebook Page (Event Boost Promotion)Local Newspaper AdvertisingParish Council NewsletterPosters displayed on Town Street (and at CIC)Stakeholder Mail outWord of mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1273337715
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Promotional Effectiveness





Information event for the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan

THE FIRST INFORMATION event for the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan will be held in the town's Guildhall next week.

Members of the Steering Group, including parish councillors and members of Thaxted Society and Hands off Thaxted, will be on hand to explain what it is hoped can be achieved, the scope of the plan and the steps and stages involved which will enable local people to influence where and what development takes place in Thaxted in the future.

Said a spokesman for the event: "Please do make time to visit us. We have a dedicated website www.thaxtednp.com where you can lodge comments, raise questions and find out more about the proposed Plan."

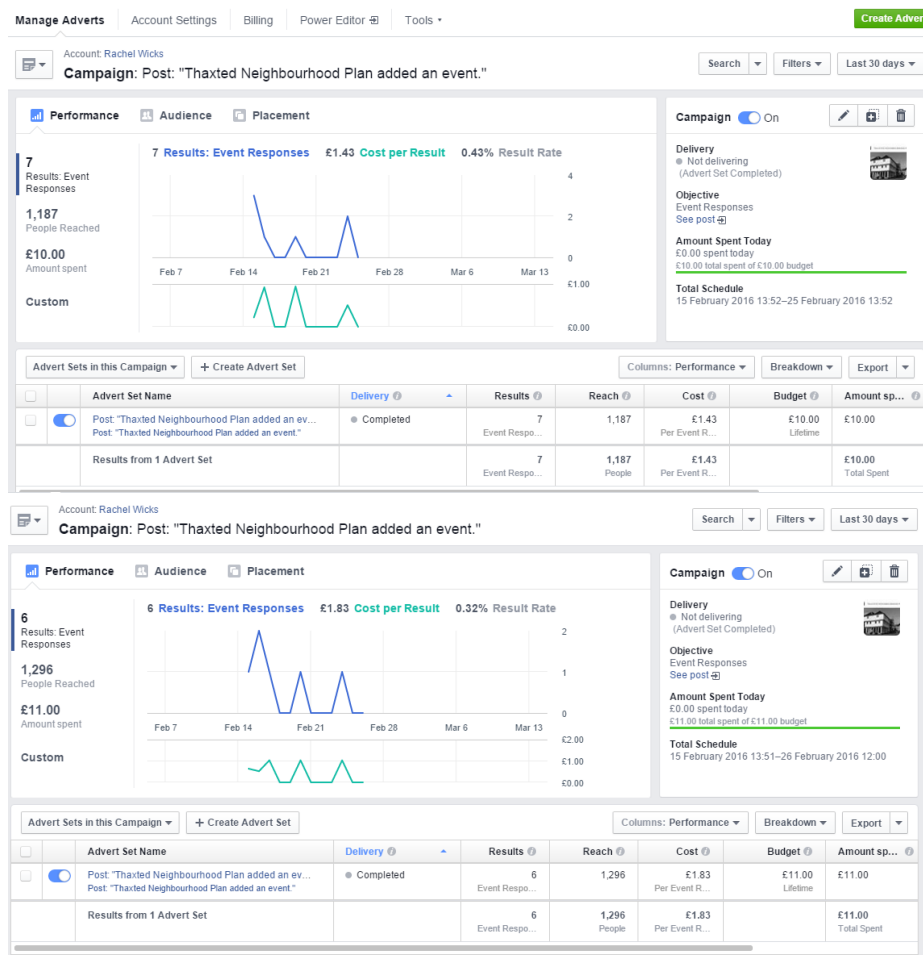
The event will be held on Thursday February 25 7-9pm and Friday February 26 10am-noon.

- 100 likes (people who are actively engaged with/following the page posts)
- Two event posts set up on the page
- £20 promotion placed on Information Event posts



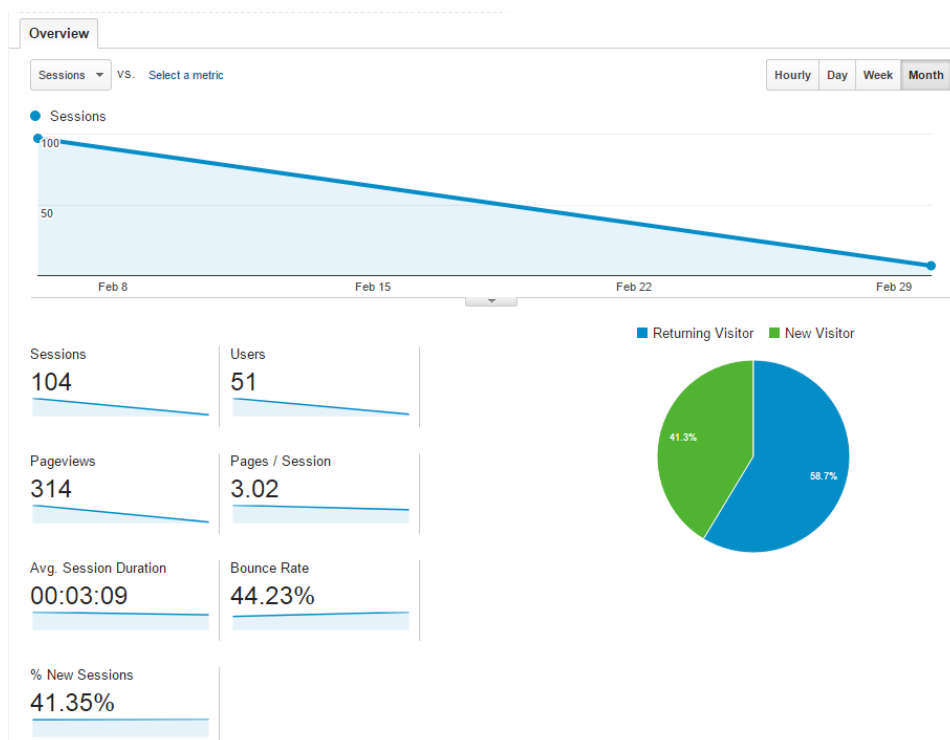
Facebook Event Posts Promotion Results

- Total of 2,483 people were reached across both posts on a geo targeting location of Thaxted plus 5km



Website

The new Thaxted NP website is showing good early traffic flow:



Engagement Activity

Attendees were asked to provide comments on the following:

1. Things I like best about Thaxted
2. Things that could be improved

Things they liked about Thaxted

- The best thing is living here
- The historical character, community, quintessential England
- Architecture - The beautiful town, the historic environment (the Guildhall, Church and Windmill), and period houses
- The variety of community organisations and activities
- Open spaces
- Friendly atmosphere, 'the people who live here' Sense of
- Beautiful countryside best
- Good School
- The fact that Thaxted is not a large town
- Thaxted has a reliable, decent, honest, reasonably-priced car mechanic.

Things they thought could be improved – grouped by Plan Themes

- **Traffic/Highways:**
 - Restrictions on heavy traffic
 - Traffic calming on Weaverhead Lane
 - Improve the road junction at Town Street/Tanyard//Dunmow Road/Park Street.
 - Traffic through the town was causing a problem. Weight restrictions on HGVs and a 20mph speed restriction on all traffic were requested. Traffic calming was suggested in the Tanyard and Town Street. The disturbance of traffic noise at night was mentioned - particularly from the new plant at Station Road. A pedestrian crossing was wanted.
 - Parking thought to be a problem, particularly in Newbiggen Street (which was considered seriously dangerous) and in Weaverhead Lane.
- **Drainage (Sewage/flooding):**
 - Run-off from new houses into Copthall Lane happening now - will worsen when building development is completed Sewage spilling into Copthall Lane and the bottom of the High Street
 - The inadequate drainage, and said that drains bigger than 4 inches were required.
- **Community Facilities:**
 - Use Church Hall site for new Community Centre
 - Community Centre with kitchen
 - Better indoor sport facilities
 - New improved GP surgery.
 - New, larger school with or near playing fields (outdoor facilities)
- **Environment:**
 - Reduce dog fouling (Different deterrent measure taken against dog fouling, particularly near the school)
 - Increase litter picking
 - Move aircraft away
 - More flowers
- **Housing:**
 - More bungalows for older people near the town centre
 - No to high rise flats
 - Any new housing should be of better quality and more aesthetically pleasing. No more housing was wanted on Wedow Road because of existing traffic problems.
 - Any more housing in Thaxted was thought to be unsustainable.
- **Transport:**
 - An improvement in public transport links to Dunmow, Stansted and the airport.
- **Various:**
 - The poor mobile phone signal.
 - A Local Plan that is taken notice of in planning decisions

Competition

A photographic competition was launched at the event. Inviting (via application form) residents to submit photographs of Thaxted with the 12 best shots being made into a calendar in 2017. Several application forms were taken from the event.

Housing Needs Survey Launched

The Housing Needs Survey was launched at the event following the despatch with the Thaxted Parish Council Newsletter, to be completed and return by 25th March 2016. Some attendees stated the survey had not been received. Duplicate copies were made available to them.

Information Handout

Attendees were invited to take away two documents:

1. Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan- An explanation
2. Housing Needs Survey

THAXTED NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN: AN EXPLANATION

WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

The Government is keen to ensure that local people have a voice on what's built and its effect on their community. The Localism Act 2011 gives communities this right by means of Neighbourhood Planning.

A Neighbourhood Plan involves residents, businesses and landowners being consulted and all contributing to the plan which should result in a stronger and more united community. The completed Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the local plan and form the basis for determining planning applications in Thaxted.

THE SCOPE OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Neighbourhood Plan will:

- Empower local people to have a major statutory say in influencing where and what development takes place;
- Enable local people to preserve areas and views which are historically and/or environmentally sensitive;
- Provide the basis for the determination of local planning applications providing there is no conflict between the Neighbourhood plan policies and the Local Plan;
- Reinforce the Thaxted Design Statement to ensure design quality in new buildings

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

- Drafting a vision for community consultation of how people see Thaxted's Future;
- Consulting all local businesses, landowners, statutory bodies and authorities to advise them that a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared and inviting them to contribute;
- Commissioning consultants to assess what views and landscape features are important to local people;
- Local experts are surveying buildings, street scenes, entrance routes and open spaces which are important to local people;
- Assessing shortfalls in service provision in Thaxted.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The success of Thaxted's Neighbourhood Plan will be dependent on feedback from residents, businesses and organisations through regular consultations, updates, etc. There will be workshops and other public meetings at specific stages.

The community can contribute via our website and register for updates at www.thaxtednhd.com. We also have a Facebook page. We welcome your comments and thoughts and want to keep you updated on our progress and how you can help.

There will be surveys to ascertain housing needs, what local people think is good about Thaxted and what's not so good and what would make it better.

WHO IS DOING IT AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The project is led by a steering group made up of members of the Parish Council, The Thaxted Society and Harolds Off Thaxted.

Members of the community who have particular expertise are also involved and as the Plan develops we will need further contributions from local people.

We started in October 2015 and we expect it to be completed in summer 2016.

The first major consultation is anticipated to take place in early summer this year when we have the results of the professional landscape assessment.

YOUR THAXTED - YOUR VOICE- YOUR PLAN

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

You will have received a Housing Needs Survey form with from the Rural Community Council of Essex. Please complete the form so that we can gain an understanding of the demand in Thaxted for:

- New affordable housing - rent or shared ownership
- Open market housing to buy
- A home to rent from a private landlord
- Supported or elderly persons housing

We also need to know more about

- The type and size of housing that might be needed
- Whether you want to or will need to move and why
- How many bedrooms you need
- Whether you are already on a housing waiting list
- Whether you need specific housing eg, wheelchair access

Please return your completed form in the pre-paid envelope provided by 25 March 2016.

YOUR THAXTED - YOUR VOICE- YOUR PLAN

Event Images



Summary

Benchmarking Exercise.

Based on the data captured, 85 attendees are assumed as coming from a single household (i.e. if married couples attended only 1 is noted from each household). The total number of households in the town is 1,351, therefore an approximate 6% of households attended the event(s).

The morning event achieved a greater attendance level than the evening event.

The majority of attendees appeared to be retired residents.

The three most effective methods of event promotion were:

- Parish Council Newsletter
- Posters displayed on Town Street (and at CIC)
- Facebook Posts

Overall response to the first information event was felt to be very positive based on interaction with the audience, with over 50% of attendees requesting to be keep regularly informed on progress via email.

Future considerations

- Methods to increase attendance from 6% of overall households
- Greater engagement with the younger residents in the town
- Location of the event has better access (i.e. disabled access)
- Potentially hold roadshow style events