

4. About Woodhall Spa Parish Plan

The Woodhall Spa Parish Plan is a document that takes into account both the past and the present and outlines the community's thoughts about how they would like to see the parish develop over the next 10-15 years. It identifies local issues and opportunities, sets out an achievable and longterm vision for the future, and provides a plan of action to achieve this vision.

The Parish Plan is a holistic document that encompasses all aspects of the parish from physical planning to social activities. It is designed to be easy to read and is based on practical issues which can be tackled locally. The Plan is not a legal document and is not exhaustive in its narrative of the issues and opportunities within a parish. The Plan shares some similarities with a Village Design Statement (VDS), although a VDS only looks at planning issues. The Parish Plan is a wider document exploring many issues to ensure a parish is kept healthy. Parish Plans are part of the 'Vital Villages' scheme being run by the Countryside Agency. In November 2000 the Government's Rural White Paper 'Our Countryside - The Future' launched the concept of parish and town plans. The Government then asked the Countryside Agency to take forward the concept of parish / town plans and make additional funding available to help parish and town councils produce them.

Parish Plan

To set out a vision of what is important, how new development can best be fitted in, how to preserve valued local features and to map out facilities which the community needs to safeguard for the future.

Rural White Paper

The Process

Responsible for the Parish Plan:

- Parish Council
- Parish Plan Steering Committee
- Community Council of Lincolnshire
- Countryside Agency
- 15-22 Consultancy
- ELDC

The Parish Plan process was launched by the Parish Council at a packed public meeting in the spring of 2004.

All organisations and businesses in the Spa were formally invited to attend and widespread publicity was given to the concept of a plan in the local press.

After the meeting, a Parish Plan Steering Committee of 18 people was formed. A formal constitution was agreed and officers elected. Following the publicity, members

of the public submitted a list of issues and ideas for the committee to consider.

Sub-groups were formed to consider these issues and prepare questions for a parish-wide survey. Four different questionnaires were prepared - youth, business, housing needs and a general survey, with the help of the Community Council of Lincolnshire.

Because of the wide range of issues, it was necessary to limit the questions to those topics where the views of the public and business were essential. The questionnaires were delivered to every home and business in the whole of Woodhall Spa, including the areas technically in Roughton Parish; the general questionnaire was also available on the Internet. Widespread publicity throughout the village and local media promoted the various surveys and urged everyone to take the opportunity of influencing the future of their community. The youth questionnaire was handed out at the nearby secondary schools serving Woodhall Spa. In addition, the primary-aged children at the local state school contributed their vision of Woodhall Spa. The general questionnaires and housing needs survey generated a tremendous response rate in excess of 40% - a measure of the interest in this venture.

Quote

"I'm pleased a survey is taking place"

The questions were then analysed by an independent consultant; the results presented to the public at another packed public meeting in May 2005 and given extensive coverage in the local press and in the Parish newsletter. A draft Plan was produced and distributed around the village,

including being loaded onto the Parish Council web site, for community comment; copies were also sent to the District and County Councils. An Open Evening was held on 8 August 2005 to allow anyone who had any comments to pass them onto the Steering Committee or simply to discuss the draft Plan with the Committee. Following a further meeting, attended by a representative from ELDC, the final version of the Plan was produced incorporating those comments and passed to the Parish Council for adoption.

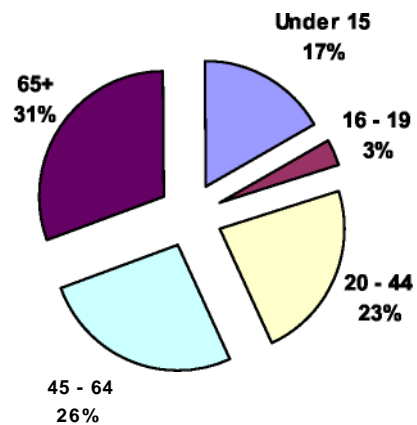
Woodhall Spa - Facts and Figures

Woodhall Spa is situated in the centre of Lincolnshire, 18 miles from Lincoln, 15 miles from Sleaford and 17 miles from Boston. The nearest town is Horncastle, 6.4 miles away.

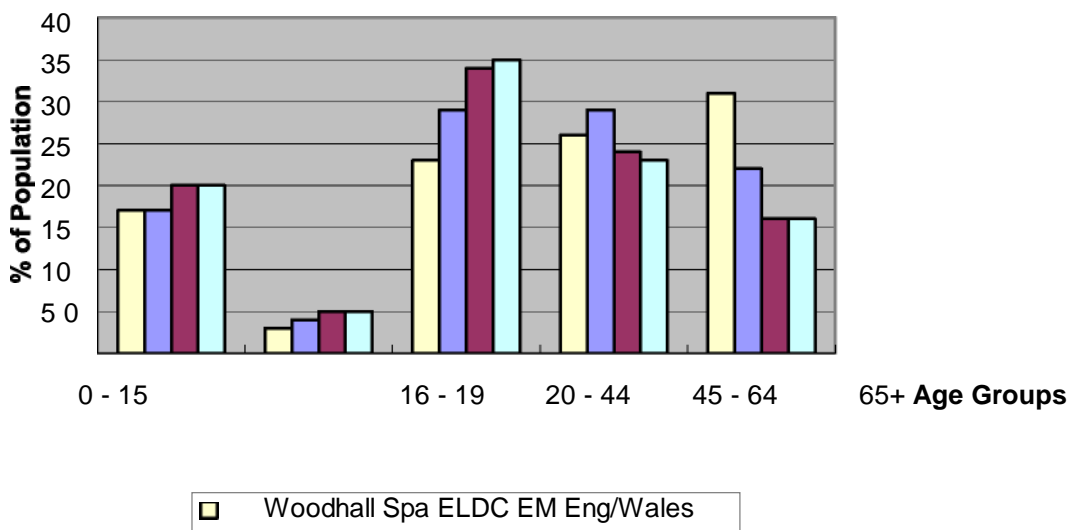
The Spa sits on the western edge of the East Lindsey District and is surrounded by the parishes of Roughton, Stixwold and Kirkby on Bain and Tattershall Thorpe in East Lindsey and across the River Witham, Martin Dales in North Kesteven.

Part of Woodhall Spa is in the Parish of Roughton, which can cause problems when obtaining accurate figures on population and development. The population of Woodhall Spa is 3,6457, with approximately 500 more people in the overlapping area in Roughton, according to the 2001 census, though there has been considerable growth since then.¹ Of significance is the relationship between the demographics of Woodhall Spa and that of East Lindsey, East Midlands and England/Wales as identified in the last census, as shown below. These figures clearly show the higher proportion of the population aged 65 and above, and the smaller proportion between 20 and 44 compared to district, regional and national statistics.

Age demographics Woodhall Spa



Demographic Comparison



¹All census data. Source: National Statistics website: www.statistics.gov.uk
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It is estimated that the population increases by up to 25% when the visitor accommodation is full.

Woodhall Spa is a rural parish. Land use is a mixture of farming and leisure, in the form of two golf courses, and woodland. There is limited industrial development, with most jobs associated with the leisure and retail sectors.

The Spa has two Anglican churches, a Methodist chapel, and a Catholic Church. There are two medical practices, two dental practices (one private), a Fire Station, three residential homes, one nursing home, a bank, two Post Offices and a library. It has four hotels - one of which has a national and international reputation - three guest houses, three pubs, a wine bar, restaurants, fast food outlets, three estate agents and numerous retail premises, including a pharmacy. Woodhall Spa also has a famous two-screen cinema, the Kinema in the Woods. There is also a Scout Camp on Kirkby Lane.

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, the only state school, is very popular and frequently is over-subscribed. The Woodhall Wizards Children Centre is located within the School grounds; Woodlands Nursery School is also located in the village. St Hugh's private Preparatory School, which also has a nursery section, is also thriving. There is a playgroup and a children's play area.

The Championship Golf course and a second new course are run by the English Golfing Union (EGU), which had its headquarters here. The Jubilee Park has an open air heated swimming pool, bowls, croquet, tennis and putting facilities with a cricket field nearby. A separate football field and another bowling green make up the sporting facilities.

There are two caravan parks in the parish, and four more just outside with a holiday complex of log cabins and caravans at Bainland Park, just inside the Roughton boundary.

There are two filling stations, one in the Roughton part of the settlement, though both are now subject to applications to be demolished to make way for more houses.

The national grid reference for Woodhall Spa is TF 1962.

The main road is the B1191, Woodhall Spa - Horncastle 'B' road

There are buses to Boston, Lincoln and Horncastle and the National Express bus to London passes through the Spa each day. The village is also served by Dial-a-Ride, InterConnect6 and CallConnect although none of these transport services provide evening or weekend services, thus limiting availability.

