

## COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

11<sup>th</sup> July 2013

### Magna Carta

#### **Purpose of the Report**

This report informs and seeks the views of the Select Committee on the proposals that will be presented to Cabinet on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013 outlining the plans for improvement to the Egham area and a programme of events to celebrate the Magna Carta in 2015. The aim of the recommendations is to celebrate our heritage, raise the profile of the area, increase economic growth and enhance existing facilities to encourage healthier lifestyles.

#### **Introduction:**

1. The sealing of the Magna Carta in Runnymede is a major part of Surrey's heritage and cultural identity, and the 800th anniversary (15<sup>th</sup> June 2015) will be an occasion of national and international prominence and significance. The site witnessed the sealing of the Magna Carta which established the Rule of Law and Human Rights and effectively challenged for the first time the divine right of Kings. The County Council is providing strategic leadership to ensure that the focus of this celebration is Runnymede and, working with partner organisations and stakeholders from across the County, we want to ensure that the 800th anniversary raises the profile of the area, attracts inward investment and ensures that this important historic event is fully promoted and celebrated - for the benefit of residents and visitors now, and in the future.
2. In October 2012, Cabinet approved an in principle £5m contribution to the funding for a new visitor centre, with £4m of additional match funding to be raised externally, subject to appropriate project governance and management being put in place. The Communities Select Committee subsequently considered the matter and key stakeholders raised a number of objections to the proposals. In December 2012, SCC withdrew its financial support for the visitor

centre but requested that officers develop a masterplan for the site together with proposals for the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

3. Surrey County Council has been working closely with officers from Runnymede Borough Council, National Trust, and Royal Holloway and Brunel Universities to develop these plans. At a national level, all partners are represented on the Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> Committee. This ensures there is coordination with national plans for celebrating the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Fully developed plans will be submitted to Surrey County Council's Cabinet on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013.
4. Surrey County Council is supporting this scheme because of the tremendous importance of Magna Carta in terms of heritage education, economic development, tourism and civic pride in our county. Through the events in 2015 and an enhanced visitor offer, the profile of Surrey will be enhanced both nationally and internationally which will benefit the area in both the short and longer term. This report covers:-

4.1 The legacy – this concentrates on improving the visitor experience at this historically important site in Runnymede, introducing improved connectivity with neighbouring towns and villages. One of the key ambitions for the 2015 anniversary (at both local and national level) is to provide improved visitor facilities and interpretation arrangements without negatively impacting on the natural environment

4.2 Celebration events – creating an event programme that will raise the profile of the area, attract visitors and bring the community together to participate in a variety of cultural, healthy and educational pursuits.

## The Proposals

### The Legacy

- 5 The vision for the legacy is based on a regional park concept to create a culturally branded destination and tourism identity for the Runnymede area - with the aim to increase economic benefit to the vicinity through increased visitor numbers and promote awareness of the national and international historic significance of the location – including its heritage, countryside, wildlife, landscape conservation and bio-diversity of the area. This will be achieved by raising the profile of Runnymede and its environs. Historic Egham will be promoted as the “gateway” to “Magna Carta Country” – thereby generating an economic dynamic to support the growth/regeneration of the rural area and associated towns.
- 6 The area will embrace the site of the sealing of the Magna Carta, Runnymede Pleasure Ground, the ancient historic National Trust Runnymede Meadow estate, Wraysbury, Ankerwycke, the Magna Carta and Kennedy memorials – as well as including the RAF Memorial and its adjacent woodland setting. The diverse habitats at Runnymede are rich in flora and fauna and represent a distinctive landscape area to be promoted for conservation and access. Key to the concept would

be the promotion of access to the wider adjacent countryside and landscape for leisure and recreation purposes – land-based on the southern stretch and water-based activities on the northern section of the park.

7 The plan to improve the visitor offer includes:-

7.1 Improving/enhancing visitor facilities utilising existing buildings e.g. toilets/cafe/educational facilities.

7.2 Improved interpretation through digital smartphone technology and website, which will be developed with expertise from Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL).

7.3 Creating the economic dynamic to support the growth and regeneration of Egham and surrounding areas which will inform the Egham and RHUL masterplans. These masterplans will create an additional inward investment into the area and provide a significant revitalisation/improvement to the town centre and local economy.

7.4 Promoting awareness and understanding of the national and international historic significance of Runnymede and the surrounding area.

7.5 Improving access to, movement around and understanding of the area's heritage, countryside, wildlife and biodiversity. This will include improvements to the Thames Path, boat moorings, walking trails around the area, reducing the impact of the A308 (speed limits and safe crossing points) and improved opportunities for boat trips along the river. This improvement of the area together with better information will encourage greater opportunities for physical activity.

7.6 Providing a lasting legacy of the sealing of the Magna Carta through a nationally funded and designed memorial.

Chris Blandford Associates have been appointed and are developing the heritage, ecology, planning, interpretation, public art and transport plans. Recent work of their's includes the masterplanning for Stonehenge, Kew Gardens, the National Wetland Centre for Wales, and Avebury World Heritage site. Their concept ideas will be shared at the Committee.

### **Celebration Events**

8 The overarching plan will comprise proposals for awareness raising events in 2014 and early 2015, major celebratory events on the weekend of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary and activities on the site during the summer months/school holidays of 2015.

9 Expert consultants who were senior advisors for the Cultural Olympiad have been advising the Council on the events programme. A range of

events are being proposed providing a cross section of ideas to cover a range of budgets. Each proposal will be assessed on the basis of relevance to the Magna Carta, the ability to attract national and international media attention, political and public profile, audience and community engagement, the ability to create international links, cost, practicality and risk. An event plan and proposals will be presented to the Committee.

### Consultation

- 9 A meeting of all key local stakeholders was held on the 4<sup>th</sup> March at Egham library. Initial thoughts on the vision were presented and views sought on issues that needed to be addressed. A copy of the key findings from this event is attached as Annex A. This feedback informed the questionnaire – online and paper copies were then promoted widely and distributed locally through key stakeholders, local newsletters and newspaper adverts. Physical copies of the questionnaire have been available at public buildings, social media has been used by partners to encourage participation and all SCC Runnymede Members have been informed.
- 10 Face to face public consultation has taken place on the following occasions where residents and businesses were asked to complete questionnaires:-

Date	Group Consulted	Location
4 <sup>th</sup> March	Stakeholders	Egham
27 <sup>th</sup> May	National Trust Visitors	Runnymede Meadows
29 <sup>th</sup> May	General Public	Egham High Street
11 <sup>th</sup> June	Wraysbury Skiff and Punting Club Members	Egham
11 <sup>th</sup> June	Egham Residents Association	Egham
15 <sup>th</sup> June	General Public	Magna Carta Day
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Local Chamber of Commerce	Egham
22 <sup>nd</sup> June	General public at Englefield Green Village Fair	Englefield Green
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Local museums	Runnymede
29 <sup>th</sup> June	Carnival	Virginia Water

- 11 An up to date evaluation report is provided in Annex B taking into account the views expressed through online and face to face feedback from a representative sample of over 400 members of the community.

## Information on the Area

- 12 The statistics for Borough of Runnymede indicate that the percentage of obese residents is higher than the county average – in both the children and adults categories. The likelihood of babies being born with low birth weights in Runnymede is higher than the SE average. Where statistics are broken down to ward level, Englefield Green and Egham Hythe frequently score badly on many indicators of deprivation - childhood poverty, households in receipt of income support or job seekers allowance, unemployment, and the percentage of the workforce in the lowest levels of employment when compared to the average for the South East. Additionally, the average life expectancy for males in Egham Hythe is over 5 years less than the average for Surrey. The proposals in this report to provide inward economic investment and provide better, but free, healthy activities are aimed at contributing to both the economic and health and well-being of the residents in the area. A table of the statistics for the area is shown below:-

Statistics	Egham/Egham Hythe	Englefield Green	Comparators
% of households in receipt of Income support	11% in Egham Hythe	10% in West	9.5% in SE
% of workforce in lowest levels of employment	17.7% in Egham Hythe	19.1% in West	14.7% in SE (18.1% national)
% in low income families	11% in Egham Hythe	10% in West	9.5% in SE
% Unemployed		7% in East 4.3% in West	5.9% in SE (7.7% national)
Male life expectancy	74.4 in Egham Hythe		77.7 national (79.9 Surrey)
NEETS	4.3% in Egham Hythe	3% in West	5.6% in SE
% of CYP in poverty	17.6% in Egham Hythe	21.4% in West	14.5% in SE
Smoking rate	32% in Egham Hythe, 27% in Egham	32% in West	

## Conclusions:

- 12 SCC has been working closely with National Trust, Runnymede Borough Council, Royal Holloway and Brunel Universities to develop these proposals in line with the views expressed by the public of Egham and Englefield Green. Consultants are working with us to develop these proposals and produce broad costings.

**Recommendations:**

- 13 The Communities Select Committee is asked for comments on the proposals which will inform the report to be presented to Surrey County Council Cabinet on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2013.

**Next steps:**

Identify future actions and dates.

-----

**Report contact:** Rhian Boast, Programme Lead – Events and Magna Carta

**Contact details:** [rboast@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:rboast@surreycc.gov.uk) tel 07968 474649

**Sources/background papers:**

- 1) 2010 SCC - *Runnymede Summary 14-19 (25) Needs Analysis Summary Paper*
- 2) 2012 SCC & Public Health Team - *Adult Health & Social Care Commissioning Profile: Runnymede*
- 3) 2011 SCC – *Families in Poverty Needs Assessment - Policy & Research Team Strategy and Commissioning Service (Children , School and Families).*
- 4) Nomis – *Official labour market statistics -*  
<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157333/report.aspx?town=runnymede#tabearn>

## **ANNEX A**

### **Analysis from Stakeholder Event**

Egham Library 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013

#### **1. Tourism**

The concept of “Magna Carta Country” was popular. For the concept to work better, the following ideas were suggested:

##### **i) Better connectivity**

- There need to be better connections between the points of interest across the whole site, with improved links between Englefield Green, Coopers Hill and Egham.
- There should be better river links, connecting the site with Ankerwycke, Windsor and Hampton Court. This could be joined into a more marketable package.
- Create circular routes that are managed
- Use footpaths and cycle paths to connect area, and potentially reduce road congestion.

##### **ii) Visitor centre**

The following locations were suggested:

- National Trust Lutyens Lodges
- Runnymede Pleasure Ground
- Brunel University boathouse
- Egham
- On a boat moored on the river

##### **iii) National Magna Carta Memorial**

- A Magna Carta garden in St Anne’s with medieval plants
- A piece of commissioned artwork
- A memorial bridge over the river
- Move the fountain in Egham to the Pleasure Ground
- 27 trees to represent each baron, and one royal oak to represent King John.
- A memorial bridge over the A308
- Think forward to the 1000th anniversary now, eg have 8 monuments / trees and space for 2 more.

##### **iv) Digital Interpretation**

- Use digital media widely
- Digital partnership between Egham Museum and Royal Holloway University
- Digital interpretation to include history, landscape, geology and ecology.

## 2. Improvements to Existing Facilities

- Egham and Englefield Green need to be tidied and cleaned
- Refurbish Pleasure Gardens; improve cafe and derelict house
- Refurbish Lutyens lodges
- Refurbish the Boathouse
- Thames path needs to be improved
- Ensure elderly/disabled access on paths and from boats
- Landing stage needs improvement
- Keep the integrity of the site (don't lose what we have, preserve it)
- Memorials need to be refurbished
- Restore the pillar at the Lutyens buildings
- Footpaths need to be improved and tidied
- Cattle should be kept away from paths
- Reduce fencing and padlocked gates on the common.

## 3. Amenities

- Coach parking needs to be available
- Food offer needs to be improved, perhaps have medieval food on offer
- Review the need for CCTV cameras that were installed for 2012 security
- Signposting for routes
- Can all-weather paths be created?
- Park and Ride facilities should be considered
- Better toilet facilities
- More bins

## 4. Highways

- Public transport operators may need to put on more services
- The speed limits on the A308 create a safety concern for pedestrians
- The Runnymede roundabout may create congestion

## 5. Events

The following options were put forward:

- Need to put in place inclusive events for summer and special event for the Queen
- Queen to arrive on Gloriana
- Pageant and water pageant
- Feast to celebrate the event
- Have themed local shows e.g. Egham Royal Show, etc
- Music festival/choir
- Obtain a copy of the Magna Carta
- Medieval fair
- Replicas of barons flags are available for events
- Fireworks
- Beacons



- Filming an international documentary that can be shown on the site and worldwide
- Series of lectures
- Create a new scout/youth badge
- Letterboxing/orienteering/geocaching trail
- Archery contest
- Organise school events
- School living activities
- Liberty – workshops in local schools
- lasting memento for schools
- Bell ringing
- Songs of Praise
- Citizenship service at Royal Holloway
- Play at Strodes College
- Incorporate more history into Magna Carta Day in Egham
- Have a series of outdoor plays, such as Shakespeare's 'King John'.
- Link a baron with each local school
- Dress up volunteers in medieval costume to meet and greet people
- Work with the Arts Society esp. Theatre
- Floats – local tradition.
- Arts Society has a magazine, so circulate to members, musical and jazz groups used
- Drama group at Royal Holloway
- Chertsey – local artists. Many willing volunteers
- Series of lectures on a Citizen Trail
- Horse racing / chariot racing
- Constituted conversation at Cumberland Lodge – branches out beyond local
- Jousting
- Human chain of torches from Magna Carta Memorial to the Air Force Memorial
- Waitrose development – new artwork
- Performance at the Royal Albert Hall
- Tapestry
- Scouts badge
- Share and coordinate local ideas online

## ANNEX B

### Summary of Magna Carta consultation

#### 1. Introduction:

The objective of this consultation exercise is to understand the wishes and aspirations of as many local people and visitors as possible. These views are being used to inform the plans for a Magna Carta celebration and tourism destination.

Number of responses received: 430 (108 online and 322 forms completed)

For graphs of the results (as of 01/07/13) see Appendix A

For a list of the consultees – see Appendix B

#### 2. Key findings:

96% of people agree that: Runnymede should be promoted as the location where the Magna Carta was sealed.

##### Creating a legacy:

83% of people agree that the area (Meadows, RPG and Ankerwyke) should be enhanced.

84% of people agree that memorials should be refurbished as necessary.

98% of people feel information should be provided, and the most popular suggestions were digital (website and smartphone apps).

Respondents felt that:

The **existing facilities** most in need of improvement are the toilets, car park and catering.

**New facilities** that could be considered include family activities, gift shop and cafe.

**Boating, walking and cycling** are popular activities that could be improved.

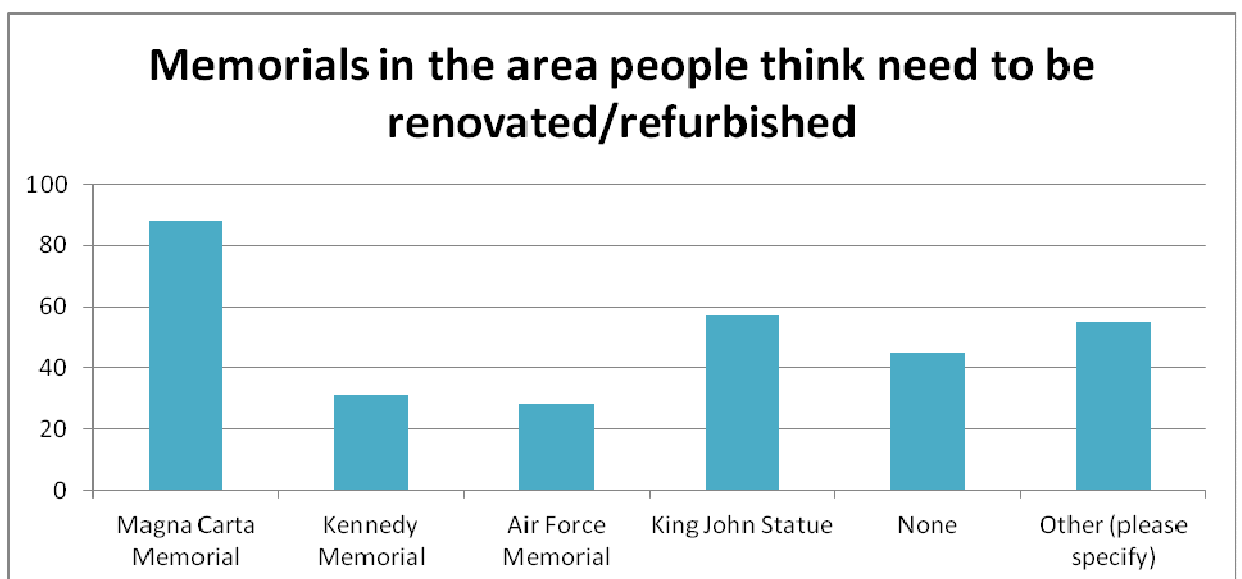
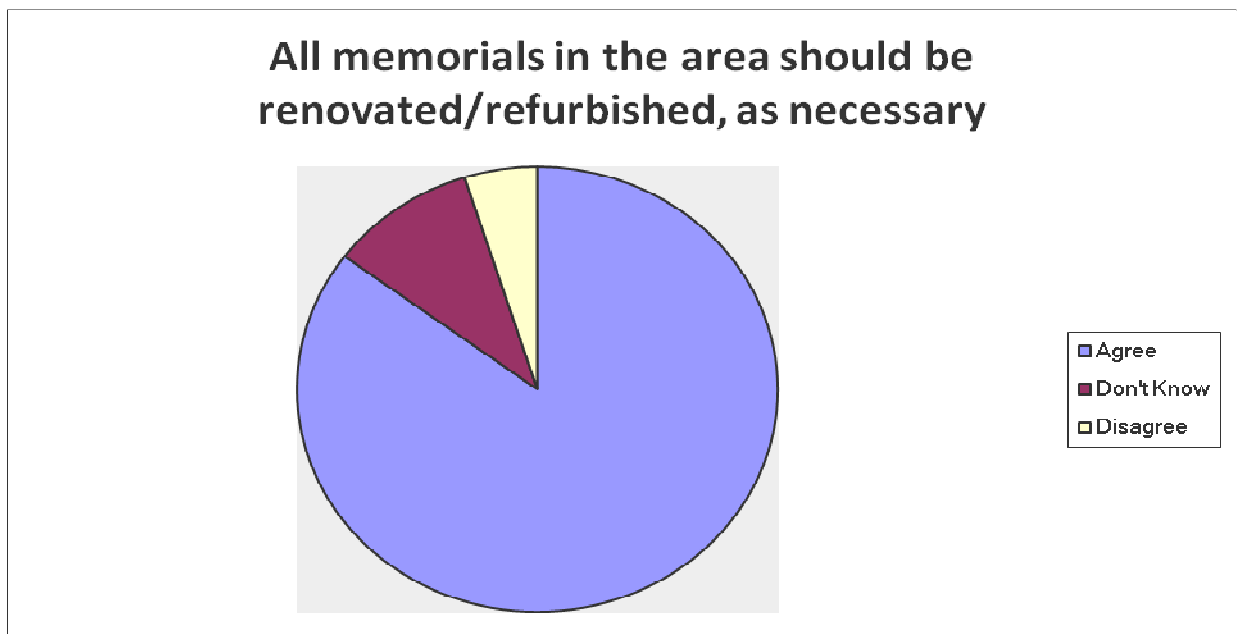
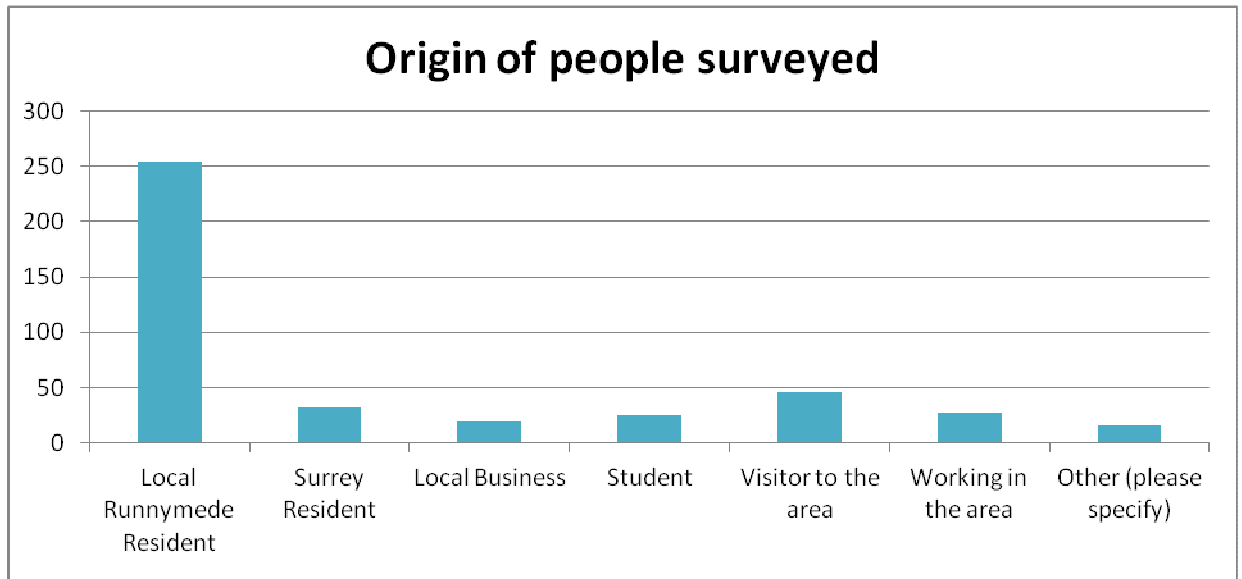
##### Events:

There are a broad range of suggestions, those that feature the strongest being historical re-enactments, medieval fairs, concerts and family fun days.

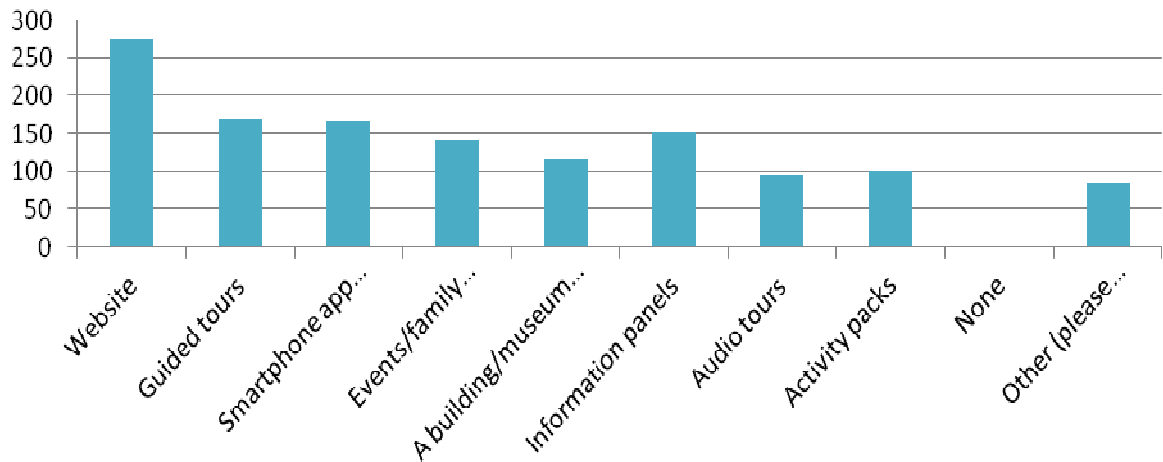
#### 3. Other Issues:

A308 traffic and speed

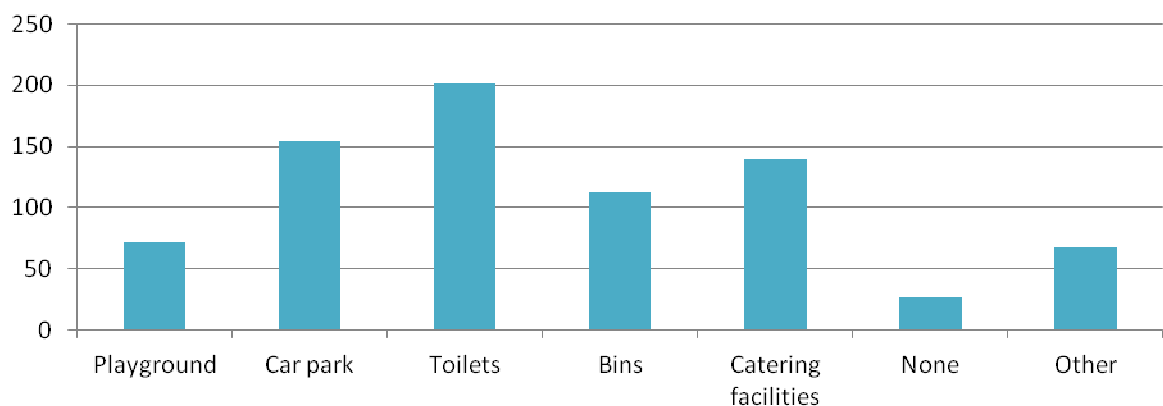
Improve transport links to the area



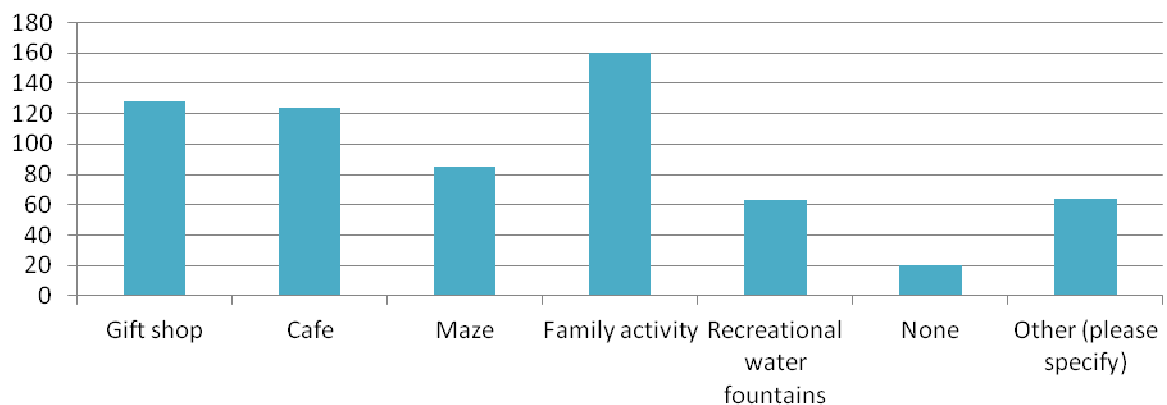
## How people think information should be provided to visitors



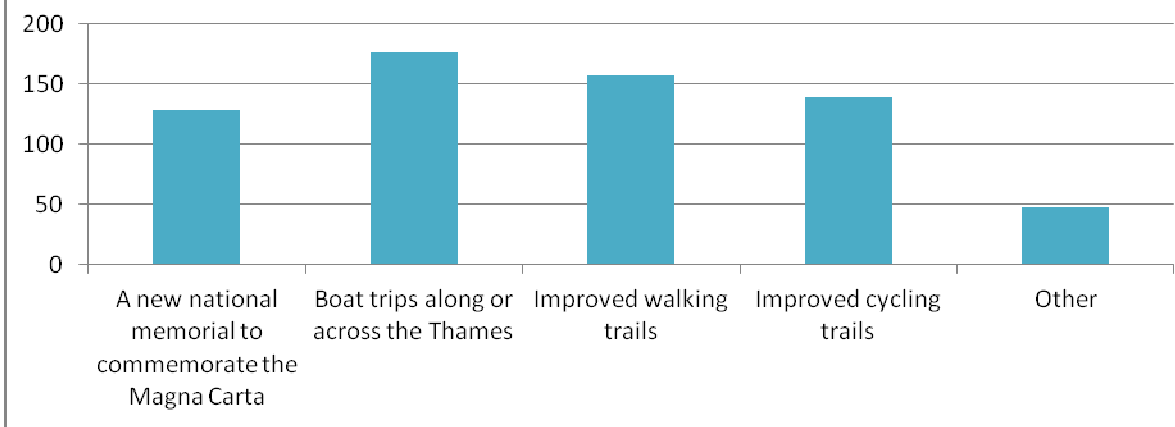
## Existing facilities people think need to be improved for visitors



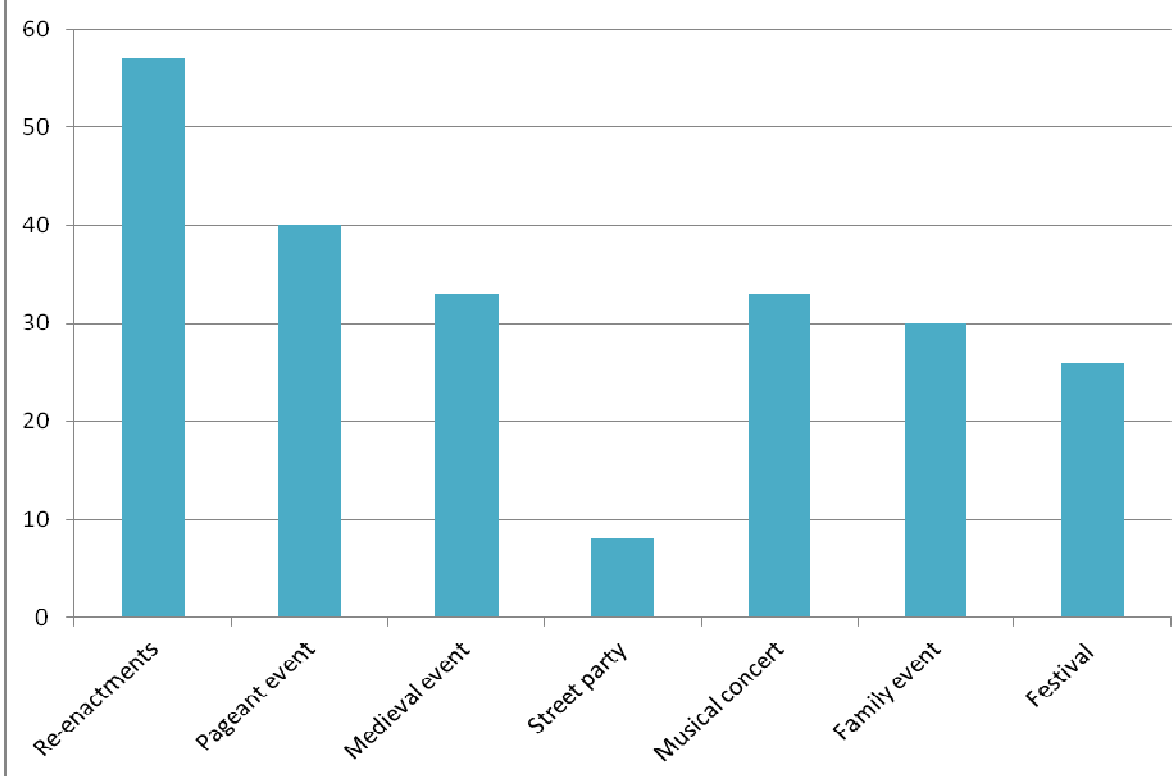
## Additional facilities people would like to see developed in the area (part 1)



### Additional facilities people would like to see developed in the area (part 2)



### Events and activities people would like to see at a potential 'Runnymede Park' (the open space by the A308 Windsor Rd in Egham and Ankerwycke) to mark the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta in 2015



## Appendix B – List of Consultees

<b>Environmental:</b>
CPRE Runnymede
Open Spaces Society
Natural England
<b>Community:</b>
The Runnymede Access Liaison Group
Egham Residents Association
Englefield Green Residents Association
<b>Cultural:</b>
800 Committee
Egham Museum
Cherstey Museum
Magna Carta Action Community Group
Runnymede Arts
Thames Alive
Chertsey Society
Wraysbury Parish Council
American Bar Association
<b>Business</b>
Egham Chamber of Commerce
Runnymede Business Network
Runnymede Hotel
Chelgate
French Bros
Runnymede Pleasure Ground Trust
<b>Land holders:</b>
American Bar Association
RAF Memorial
Magna Carta Memorial- ABA are above
Wraysbury Skiff and Punting Club
JFK Memorial
Windsor and Maidenhead
Culture Department RBWM
Visit Surrey
<b>Government:</b>
Surrey County Councillors for Runnymede
RBC Councillors (Project Councillors and Ward Councillors)
Wraysbury Parish Council
<b>Education:</b>
Magna Carta School – all local schools
Runnymede School Confederation
Strodes College