

WALPOLE
Towards 2020
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION
2012

WALPOLE NORNALUP AND DISTRICTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP (INC)

Report prepared by Richard Oades
South West Development Commission
From Surveys and Consultation Documents



Preamble & Methodology

The Walpole Community Development Group decided it was time to retest community opinion as 10 years had passed since the work of the Community Opportunity Workshop Committee of 2000/2001. The following report was subsequently developed from documentation arising from a community survey, focus groups and meetings held in Walpole to set the vision for the future.

Firstly a community meeting and workshop was held to review the achievements gained since priorities were set by the Community Opportunity Workshop Committee's extensive consultations in 2000/2001. That workshop (April 2011) then developed material for a new vision, identifying the values of Walpole and surrounds and what people consider to be important about their town.

Next an 'on line' community survey was developed by the Walpole Community Development Group and the community was encouraged to take part through completing the survey. A subsequent analysis of the survey outcomes indicated that some gaps in information were evident and hence a third process of targeted focus groups were facilitated, to draw out more qualitative information.

WALPOLE

Walpole is a small community in the South West of Western Australia. It is located on the coast and is part of the Shire of Manjimup. Within the shire, the township of Walpole is 130 kilometres from Manjimup township and is close to the border with the Shire of Denmark. The town is the main service centre for surrounding districts of North Walpole, Hazelvale, Peaceful Bay and Nornalup.

Between 2006 and 2011, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the population of the area had varied very little.

PEOPLE	2006	2011
Male	469	454
Female	464	473
TOTAL	933	927
AGE		
0-4	46	41
5-14	101	123
15-24	55	40
25-54	305	283
55-64	196	175
65 and over	163	223
Median Age	48	49
Median Household Income	\$1027	\$1234
EMPLOYMENT		
Farming	74	n/a til late 2012
Accommodation	40	n/a til late 2012
State Government	37	n/a til late 2012
Retail	21	n/a til late 2012
State Education	19	n/a til late 2012
PROFESSIONS		
Managers	180	n/a til late 2012
Labourers	72	n/a til late 2012
Trade Workers	56	n/a til late 2012
Professionals	52	n/a til late 2012
Community & Personal Service	13	n/a til late 2012

COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP

A workshop was held in April 2011 and approximately 40 people attended. They were asked to self allocate to interest areas of 'Business', 'Lifestyle' and 'Services'. From that perspective they were asked to respond to 3 questions:

1. *What values are important to us as a community?*
2. *What places and other things are important to us as a community?*
3. *What events are important to us as a community?*

Attendees were then asked to move to each of the other interest areas and respond to the questions from the other perspectives. There follows a summary of the resultant responses.

1. What values are important to us as a community?

There were similarities in response and hence the following appears in priority of value, with the greatest value at the top, in (a).

a) A Sense of Community

Maintain small town image
A place where people are welcome
Affinity for the whole area
Personal/community wellbeing
Community involvement in decision making
Friendliness
Looking after each other
A self reliant community – able to think outside the box.
Community spirit
Community in action
Respect – random acts of kindness
Small town friendliness – with plenty of get up and go
The can do attitude – gets jobs done

b) Natural Environment

Natural environment, clean air, pristine water
Fishing conservation for the future
Lifestyle – sea change & forest change (what we have is important)
A lifestyle choice – (isolation, wilderness)
Location – wilderness (reality of life to influence development)
Maintaining and sustaining what we have as where we want to be
Development needs to balance with surrounding environment.
Diversity of landscape – agriculture, sea, forest, inlet

c) Sense of Identity

Our history and where we have come from – giving a cultural identity and connection.
Our history is still recent and valued
Inclusion and diversity

d) Health

Maintain & increase doctor service (population aging increasing)
Attract nurse practitioners and allied professionals to live in Walpole
Community to have say in health services delivered
Home & community care – allow people to stay at home

e) Safety

Law and order - personal values in respect of law
Personal and property safety
Value independence (neighbourhood watch)

f) Town presentation

Attractiveness – town needs to be attractive and friendly
Townscape – neat and tidy (feel proud)

Other responses:

- Entry statements
- Sustainable power and water
- Universal access to education
- Available day care (for working parents)
- Value youth population
- Sport & recreation services
- Access to emergency services
- Youth & seniors interacting in a learning environment

2. What places and other things are important to us as a community?

The following are not prioritised but appear to reflect that in Walpole there are many places and ways by which people can satisfy some of their values.

- Recreation – walking, riding and picnicking
- Better roads and mobile coverage
- Visitors Centre
- Tree Top Walk
- Rec Centre
- Aged Care Facility
- The natural environment – marine terrestrial
- Our wilderness/national parks/marine parks
- Continued access to natural resources

- Dog Beach closer to town
- Jetty refurbishment and enlargement
- New playground at Pioneer Park
- Generation and intergenerational events
- Marine park
- Walpole Primary School
- Community Resource Centre
- Hall
- Library
- Health Centre
- Family Centre
- Outlying district – Peaceful Bay, Tingle Dale, Nornalup
- Independent living units (seniors)
- Country Club
- Pioneer Park – Markets
- Police Station
- Hospitality Industry
- WOW - Eco Tours
- Affordable access to education
- Highway to Manjimup
- Broader scope to training

3. What events are important to us as a community?

Again there was no prioritising of these comments indicating a wide range of satisfactory events occurring. However, the highest rated four events were:

- The Pioneer Cup
- The Markets
- Australia Day Event
- Southern Arts Trail

Followed by:

- Red faces
- Need for winter events to retain tourism
- Events around the Mundabiddi Trail
- Choir Harlequin Ball Live entertainment
- Children Friendly events
- Gary Muir
- Fishing Competition
- Walpole in Winter event
- Need for Triathlon
- Well Women

- Pit Stop for Men
- Baby Club
- Playgroup
- Community Bus Trips – Albany, Manjimup pool, youth activities
- Rocks Farm
- Art and Craft in Action

Summary

A vision that might be developed from this workshop could be one emphasising *“the natural environment and a strong sense of community which has resulted in the sense of place and ownership of the many events and places in and around Walpole.”*

Walpole and Districts Community Visioning Survey

The Community Development Group developed an on line survey; a copy of which is attached.

There were 75 initial responses from the population of 900, being a response rate of 8% , which is a good rate for this type of survey. 23 of the respondents came from the township of Walpole. 45% were male and 57% female. There were 25 subsequent responses from the Primary School Year 6/7 class.

Of the adult respondents 25 were over 65years, 29 were aged 45 to 65. 19 were between 25 and 45 years.

72% were permanent residents and 12% were renting properties.

Due to the nature of the questions it was later determined that further questions were necessary to obtain qualitative data. That information was obtained by holding targeted focus workshops. One workshop was held for Business Proprietors (18 attended); for Agricultural Business Proprietors (7 attended); for Young Mothers (8 attended) and for Rural Women (12 attended). The results of those workshops appear below in the survey results where extra information was required. (The additional questions are clearly indicated as 'supplementary questions'.

It is believed that there is very little duplication in responders and hence, with the initial workshop included, ***up to 150 people, or 16% of the population took part.***

SURVEY RESULTS

TOURISM

Question 5. Given the importance of tourism to the district do you think the number of tourists who visit throughout the year are:

Not enough	45%
Just Right	35%
Other	32%

Question 6. How does tourism affect your lifestyle?

Work	41%
Services	55%
Leisure	55%
Environment	60%
Other	21%

Questions 7-10. Do we do tourism well?

Yes 21%

Comments: Visitor Centre & Information
DEC camping good facilities
Tree Top Walk
Picnic Facilities
Bibbulmun Track
Scenic Drives/access
Accommodation

Yes but could do better 67%

Comments: Need more accommodation
Increase parking
Boost food & entertainment
Walk maps
More bitumen
Townscape

No 12%

Comments: Front staff do not have local knowledge
Improve customer service
Entry statements
Walpole brand
Improve commercial frontage
Rostered cafes
Marketing – sell activities.

Supplementary Focus Group question: *Tourism was recognised as important for the community. Can you suggest how the area could attract more winter tourists? (In priority order)*

Marketing/Advertising:

Promote winter breaks; Walpole is not as cold as people think. Let people know what Walpole has to offer.

Better advertising. TV coverage (Getaway). Offer wildflower tours.

Advertising the beauty. Fernhook Falls, Circular pool. Advertising through big groups like "Australia's South West" – which concentrates on Margaret River and Geopraphe more than here.

Advertising winter breaks, encouraging outdoor activities even in winter, providing for hire of umbrellas and good wet weather gear for bush walking. Have consistent good food services e.g. cafes and restaurants. Promote red wines in the area – making the most of successful surrounding wineries

Winter getaways are popular – more promotion of this area.

Increased seasonal marketing. Targetting groups/weddings. Aim for 9 month tourist season, still have quiet 'breathing time' – but make more money in the 9 months.

Improved branding and marketing.

Accommodation:

Accommodation which advertises warm cosy, open fires, comfortable furniture and not overpriced.

More accommodation for country living i.e. open fires, wood oven, comfy atmosphere, milking cows, chickens, gardens.

Good accommodation with winter rates.

Accommodation – cosy winter weekends. Locals invite visitors down during winter.

Events:

Winter events e.g. food wine festival, music events – opera in the forest. Winter breaks and farm-stays.

Festivals/ regattas.

Develop a winter festival to embrace specialness of Walpole.

Activities in Pioneer Park to be accessible to passing tourist trade.

OTHERS:

Pursue 'clean green' message. Engage the whole community.

Be more friendly to visitors especially shop assistants

Have a good supply of wood and availability of TV coverage for worst days.

Some locations have no shelter.

Fishing – on beach and boats

Open caravan parks on suitable farms.

Open Rec Centre in winter and people pay small fee. Have coffee for Mums and Dads while children play.

Nice coffee and dining experiences

Unique attractions – needs more services like Denmark.

More services, retail, cafes.

Hiking bush walks with DEC to access Aboriginal areas and how they collected plants.

Canoeing trips.

Make sure grey nomads stay overnight – free overnight?

Supplementary Tourism question to Focus Groups: Employees of local businesses were identified as important 'front of house' contacts for tourists. How do you view their role?

Walpole businesses need to be friendly. If their first contact in town is a grumpy unfriendly person they label ALL the people in town.

Creating a positive respectful environment will bring people who want employment and reflect these values and will gradually bring change.

Their role is very important; conversation and promote tourism.

Proper hospitality is the answer. Some businesses are great, some are terrible. Big hotels are disappointing. Makes it hard to target large bus groups.

Question 11. What do you value most about living in Walpole?

The main responses from the survey reflected the major values from the earlier workshop.

- Climate
- Ocean
- Environment
- Community spirit
- Lifestyle

- Safety

Supplementary Focus Group question which reinforced this data: *What do you value most about living in Walpole?*

Environment

- Walpole wilderness.
- Environment; small community; isolation; access to beach & forest; community's common values.
- The natural environment.
- The peace and quiet, the climate, lack of traffic, the beautiful countryside.
- The peace and quiet. The changing weather.
- Fresh air,
- Surroundings, forest.
- Quietness and south coast beauty.
- The clear air is beneficial to my health. The peace and quiet and friendliness.
- Relaxed living
- Surroundings
- Beautiful surrounding area.
- Environmental values. Social Values.
- Environment – we still have really good quality wilderness, it would be nice to keep it that way. Great place to bring up kids.
- The water, fishing, solitude, peace.
- The surrounding environment, the trees, beaches, inlets, mountains and all the recreational activities I can partake in!
- The climate.
- Walpole is a living forest with the community amongst it and it should stay that way.
- Clean fresh air, lifestyle.
- Clean environment, good soil, air, water. Peaceful. Scenery.
- Clean air.

Sense of Community

- Lovely natural lifestyle for raising children. Small town community is very friendly. Support is here if needed. Enough activities and social events to keep us busy and happy.
- Knowing everyone. Small community. Easy to make friends. Friendly community. Country living with kids. Family.
- Friendly people, slower pace (too slow at times).
- The friendship of the local people.
- The people and sense of community. The place and it's natural environment. My own block and surrounds.
- Community spirit. Environment.
- Friendly environment,
- Sense of community. Diversity. Community spirit.
- Community. Environment. Farmland, water – microcosm of Australia.
- All the lovely people I know.
- My group of friends. The unusually friendly town community.
- Friendly people who take an interest in you personally.

Health

- Access to health problems – solutions.
- Silver Chain service, community activities, friendly.
- Great support from Silver Chain when needed.

Safety

- Safety.
- Safety and security particularly for children and seniors.

Question 12. What do you least like about Walpole?

- Distance to services/specialists
- Cost of living
- Limited retail
- Lack of year round employment

The Focus Groups provided a wide range of response but similar to the survey.

Isolation

- Distance from Perth.
- Isolation.
- Its distance one has to travel for specialist services.
- The isolation. A far distance to entertainment. Medical assistance is a fair distance.
- Remoteness for medical care may (be)come a problem.
- Distance to everywhere.
- The distance you have to travel for specialist treatment and the “expert” technicians.
- Distance from Perth.
- Isolation. On raining days there is not a lot to do when you need to get out of the house.
- Isolation; small community; lack of services for children ie. Drama, dance, swimming, circus, yoga. Entertainment lack ie. lack of dining options. Distance to travel to seek services. Cost of services are higher if they come to Walpole.
- Isolation (living out of town).
- Long way from major towns and services. Transport to major communities.

Nothing – commonly stated

Others

- Bad radio reception, Silver Chain needs to be 24 hour service.
- Lack of income/seasonal work. Lack of social options/music.
- Bad radio reception. Bus service re seniors. Lack of Silver Chain 24 hour service.
- The lack of Shire involvement and investment in Walpole. Upset about Silver Chain not being available every second weekend.
- Relaxing
- Street scape
- Tourists feel it is a long way to travel, depending on the time they have. Ficus in the main street would look great. Street scape – look how attractive Balingup is as you drive through.
- It definitely makes me want to stop there.
- Having to leave to access some services. The struggle to develop community organisations

- with a small pool of volunteers.
- The “rape & pillage” wrought by tourists, ie overfishing of the inlet, too many boats on inlet, 4WD's not using roads sustainably
- The end of the line in many areas – power, water, sewerage, transport, roads.
- The South Western Hway to Manjimup! Dangerous road. Speeding along town streets, particularly in front of school.
- Limited job opportunities.
- The stubbornness of the Shire of Manjimup.
- The extra cost of fuel and groceries. No mobile phone coverage at our farm.
- The stupid double road out the front of IGA.
- Often a wait for services e.g. plumber, sparky. Bad mobile connection outside town.
- No mobile coverage, not enough employment. Our children have no choice but to leave the area once completed education as no work.
- The lack of food shopping options. The lack of night life options. Distance to study and good work.
- Flies and snakes. Cost of living. Quality of fresh fruit and veg, local organic produce.
- Lack of diversity. Less services due to smaller community.

Question 13. What do you see as being the greatest challenges to Walpole and Districts in relation to Community Culture? Please rank them in order of priority.

Employment Creation/Retention	57%
Health and Wellbeing	36.2%
Education	31.3%
Housing Affordability/Accessibility	27.5%
Standard/Cost of Living	24.6%
Heritage Values	16.9%
Child Care	6.2%

Question 14. Additional Comments in relation to Community Culture.(28 responses)

- Low income housing
- Positive community culture
- Comprehensive education
- Support needed for community events
- Threat of progress

Supplementary Question for Focus Groups: *Year Round Employment was identified as a need in the Town. Do you have any suggestions as to how this could be increased?*

- Not sure, makes it hard when we rely on tourism so much.

- Start men's services ie. Pool, all day gym, creche, market/garden/community space.
- Growing more of our own food for the town. Biodiversity and disease management in forests etc. Improving riparian zone management on private and public land.
- Viable vegetable gardens to supply fresh vegetables.
- Community farm- which grew fruit and veg and meat to serve to local community. Need for younger people “teenagers” to have employment in town. How? Not sure.
- More population results in more services and more jobs all year round.
- If the town's population could increase in size then more employment opportunities will follow.
- More people.
- More permanent residents needed to boost jobs.
- Expansion of vehicle maintenance – more choice of cattle transport.
- Business to take on juniors or apprentices. Keep offering “work experience” positions.
- New business, locals to support these e.g.: most people I know here do not shop here as the produce is not fresh at supermarket.
- Employment is difficult in our age group. The jobs tend to be seasonal.
- More employment in this area will not happen for many years/ due to very slow growth.
- Only by a substantial increase in a) residents & b) tourists.
- We need to target new businesses to come to Walpole. Increase population. Market Walpole.
- A lot of businesses including farming are using “best practice” or new innovative and sustainable methods. We need people to recognise their “current value” and market it such that they can realise the value that they already have.
- Increase tourism is obvious. Promote winter breaks. Winter is a good time to revamp the town, this create employment.
- By means of more services e.g. eating out, entertainment, A/hours services.
- More tourism, especially winter. Would increase employment in various areas. More visitors in Winter would keep us all busy then we could keep people busy.
- Trying to ensure that when businesses are established they are planning to take on workers – whether it be casual work, part time, full time. And finding a way of making the employment process easier for these business owners by providing support.
- A labour hire centre where people requiring employment could list and people employing can seek.
- A drive to attract businesses to town for example, “cabinet maker” with a grant or incentive to move here and be supported by the community by them actually using them.
- Value add to existing business(e.g. improved branding and marketing) (e.g. Organic farming). Innovative enterprise development based on town's assets e.g. Sailing facility. Attract more professional tree/sea changers.
- Younger families. Small farms. Health Retreat.
- Increased concentrated agriculture
- Increased tourism marketing of W.W.A. (Walpole Wilderness Area?)
- Walpole needs a brand. Shop owners and farmers need to pull together on this. We need a sales pitch so we can stand out from the rest.
- Expand tourism to attract tourists during Winter. Health Retreat. Winter Breaks. OR Businesses need to take more advantage during out tourist season and accept that during Winter people don't want to come during Winter.
- More smaller farms. Cottage industries like truffles, garlic, tea tree, flowers, winery, horticulture, marron farming, small scale abattoir.
- Water bottling facility.

Supplementary Question for Focus Groups: *As an adult would you like to have more education opportunities? If Yes in what area?*

- Yes, More education – covered by the Telecentre and internet.
- Services are good. Bigger choice of computer courses at Telecentre.
- No. There are plenty of courses available here and online.
- Local resources for sharing information – hub such as Community Garden; CRC – workshops.
- Self sustainability in power, water and local produce.
- More focus on the environment.
- Quite well provided for.
- No I don't feel the need for additional ed. opportunities.
- Not for myself but if more traineeships could be provided by businesses able to - to give.
- I feel education is well represented at Telecentre.
- For me as a resident, no. Using on-line education and distance education offer lots of opportunity, For visitors: they need to understand what it is that sustains the town; environment.
- Yes.
- No, I am too busy and too old.
- Yes. University of the 3rd Age. Workshops in all aspects of art.
- Yes. Everything.
- No
- Possibly yes. Not too deep. Mainly lifestyle subjects – cooking, photography etc.
- Yes.
- No.
- Adequately covered by Telecentre (Community Resource Centre).
- Old time dancing.
- Too old.
- I think what is offered at the moment is fine.
- Dance, art, yoga, computer, sustainable practices, garden, food.
- Yes. Environmental science, politics, negotiation.
- Tertiary education opportunities. Music opportunities for children and adults to learn instruments.
- Offer workshops in Walpole. Or offer transport to TAFE in Denmark/Albany.

Question 15. What do you believe is the greatest infrastructure challenge to Walpole?

In priority order:

1. Water Supply
2. Power supply
3. Roads and drainage
4. Internet and mobile phone coverage
5. Increase in town density (2 responses of 70 total)

Question 16. Please rate the priority of need for improvements to the following infrastructure.

Of 23 items provided the top priorities were:

1. Water Supply
2. Electricity supply
3. Roads and sidewalks
4. Sewerage
5. Street light/parking

In addition to the above - Comments:

Considered to be OK Road signs

Sport rec centre

Community Hall

Visitors Centre

Public Toilets

Walpole Community Resource Centre

Family Centre

Medium to high priority

Roads

Public Transport

Primary School

Yacht Club

Boat Ramps

Question 18. What do believe are important environmental issues? Please rank them

The first 50% of responses are ranked:

1. Inlet/river protection
2. Improper use of national and marine parks
3. Fish/whale protection
4. Salinity
5. Climate change
6. Development
7. GM crops

Question 19. Should Walpole be involved in environmental issues?

Yes	67%
No	17%
Don't Know	15%

Supplementary question to Focus Groups: What does sustainable development mean to you?

Similar Notions

- Creating environmentally and socially positive economic opportunities and increased living standards.
- Development that we have the infrastructure to cope with.
- Developing without destroying the environment.
- Development which is self sufficient and not reliant on volunteers to run them.
- A Development that will last the test of time and economic rises and falls.
- Sustainable development. Sensitivity to the environment and conserving the ecological values that we already have. Tourists need to understand their impacts – e.g. overfishing, limited water in town.....
- Development that can maintain itself.
- Growth of town without impeding of natural eco system. Softly as you go.
- A deep consciousness for how current practices will affect future generations and the natural environment into the future and then ensuring that developments will have positive or neutral impacts.
- Town development which can be maintained; environmentally friendly.
- Ongoing benefits. Greener future.

Others

- Successfully and financially managing your business.
- Businesses that can maintain their current status within the community whilst creating a “flow on” economic benefit to the rest of the community.
- Development is important for growth otherwise you get left behind and other country towns will take over and Walpole will die.
- Sustainable is a very tired and misused word. I think the original ideas on which it was based have been lost. I think we should avoid the phrase and be specific about what we mean. Eg This town uses less power per head than any town in the state.
- The inevitable growth of Walpole without losing its VERY small, rural town feel. We do NOT want another Margaret River.
- Availability of trained personnel and less unemployed.
- We are able to maintain a good standard of living.
- Home affordability for locals. Limit amount of holiday homes sold so more people can settle here.
- Producing own produce, fresh fruit and veg, meat etc. Water use being wise. Development that holds the essence of Walpole environmental values at heart and develops or progresses with this in mind.

Question 20. Do you believe the Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities concept/ Litter-free Walpole focus is an important part of Walpole's image?

Yes 85%

No 11%

Don't Know 4%

Comments: Provides a negative context – thinks of rubbish

Not an Entry Statement

Let's show what we can be known for: "Clean Green Town"

"Living in the Heart of the Wilderness"

"Wild by Nature; Warm at Heart"

Supplementary question for Focus Groups: *There were suggestions for an alternative Entry Statement. What do you think of?*

"Clean Green Town"?

"Living in the Heart of the Wilderness"?

"Wild by Nature; Warm at Heart"?

Responses in priority: 1. Living in the Heart of the Wilderness

& Wild by Nature; Warm at Heart – EQUAL FIRST 11 Votes each

2. Keep Existing Entry Statement – 4 votes

3. Clean Green Town

Other comments:

- "Clean Air Breathe" "Pristine Water"
- Creating regional identity as sustainable environmentally and human decency.
- Not certain an entry statement is necessary.
- Whatever it is needs to have that special "something". "Sustainable communities" is good but only means something to certain people. It needs to attract a broad audience – a few words can have a lot of meaning.
- It would be good to get a new entry statement and once the survey is collected and the direction (that the town is moving) is decided a statement may emerge.
- Comment: Working together to maintain the "standard" to participate for title Tidy Town

- Award and allowing standards to “fall off” after awards announced.
- None of those. Retain “Litter Free”.

Question 21. What seven services (as in Rec Centre, Silver Chain, Resource Centre but not limited to these) do you utilize in Walpole and Districts?

Main Group: Silver Chain
 Community Resource Centre
 Recreation Centre
 Library
 Visitor Centre
 Post Office
 Shops/fuel
 School
 Bank

Then: Boat Ramp
 Hall
 Pharmacy
 Police Station

Question 22. What additional services do you believe we need now and into the future?

Doctors
 Pool/hydrotherapy
 Fresh Food Co-op
 Expanded Aged Care
 Upper School
 Tourist Accommodation

Supplementary Question for Focus Groups: *What additional services are needed in the community?*

Associated Health

- More medical service.
- More veterinary service.
- Full time doctor in Walpole.
- Dentist
- Doctors.
- Don't want Silver Chain to cut back any more. SC offers a great service and would like to see it continue to grow.
- More doctors.
- Full time vet.
- Dentist
- Health services are quite good but need doctors – access.
- Dentist.
- Better health services e.g. full time doctor, dentist.
- I am happy with the services available except for Silver Chain not being available 24/7.
- Doctor. 24/7 Silver Chain Nurse.
- Specialist visits on medical matters on a regular basis.
- Local counselling services for depression prevention. Not just by phone and Medicare backed, that is, means tested.

Communications

- The telecommunications in rural areas need improvement.
- Better internet.
- Wireless internet in town.
- Communication tower on Mt Franklin. Communication with DEC.
- Complete communication tower on Mount Franklin for both radio and TV etc.
- Communication services need upgrade.
- Mt Frankland tower- communications.

Primary Produce

- Fruit and veg shop.
- Supplier of fresh fruit and veg.
- We need change of legislation to permit “micro abattoir”. We need to lobby government for this change. Develop organic products; need to tackle tree farmers and farmers re sprays, phosphates. Composting fertiliser making facility. Spread information. Food Co-op.
- Abattoir, process our own meat so we can have regional “clean, green” marketing. CDO to follow up opportunities- tapping into what's happening in surrounding towns. Denmark drying facilities – herbs.

Water Supply

- Improved water storage supplies. To stop water carting from Mjp.
- Water supply

Other Comments

- More camping areas for tourists and locals with playgrounds.
- Better maintenance of gravel roads.
- Something for the young adults to do of an evening.
- Walpole services are excellent for such a small community. Keep up the good work.
- Availability of restaurant services.
- A respite place for aged people.
- None.
- Xmas decorations, regular meetings for the business community (not too regular).
- Christmas decorations.
- Very little. Most services are here. Just need to be expanded and improved.
- A dedicated area/ hall where all the local artists of all mediums can show their work and sell it too!
- Guidance/mentoring opportunities for youth e.g. those that have left school by year 9/10 and have no work opportunities. A stronger Early Years Network group/ Family learning.
- Happy with the services but Town look out on “Tower Hill”. Sound shell in Pioneer Park.
- Casual overnight in-town (paid or unpaid) parking for RV's.
- More after hours facilities. Not long enough in the community to make more comments. Still finding out what's out there.
- More variety in retail. More entertainment.
- Slightly larger school (up to 250).
- Facilities for teenagers in town. Labour hire centre.
- An undercover play area for children.
- Pool; indoor play activities, regular yoga etc; skate/performance area; day spa; all hours gym with a creche; team sports; community garden/market/notice board. Sustainable centre to drop in to catch up.
- Closer birthing centre.

- Playground in Pioneer Park. Regular yoga/relaxation/meditation/beauty centre in natural environment.
- Gym with creche. Fresh fruit and veg. Swimming pool – children's swimming lessons. Some form of public transport/support. Indoor playground – hard in winter to entertain kids. One main community board. Team sports.
- Renew yacht club jetty.

Question 23. Within the next 12 months it is highly likely no Doctors will attend in Walpole. Please rate the priority you place on the availability of a GP and/ or 24 hour Nurse/Nurse Practitioner.

High Need 97% (72 of 74 respondents)

Question 24. Do you belong to one or more community organisation?

Yes 84%
No 15%

Question 25. Do you do volunteer work with the organisations you belong to?

Yes 87%
No 12%

Question 26. What do you see as the future economic strength for Walpole and Districts? A public meeting identified the following seven categories, please rank them in order of priority.

1. Tourism
2. New business ventures
3. Agriculture
4. Home based business
5. Population growth
6. Commercial /Industrial
7. Government

Question 27. Additional comments to question 26.

- Encourage business development
- Diversify agriculture

Question 28. In your opinion, what are the most important things that could be done to improve retail/ service businesses in Walpole? (60 responses)

1. Improve service orientation
2. Lower prices
3. Increase local loyalty
4. Make local knowledge/ advice available (2 responses)
5. Larger population (2 responses)

Supplementary question to Focus Groups: *What are the problems that you as a business person experience on operating a business in this area?*

Physical Distance

- Remoteness. Mobile phone coverage useless!!
- Isolation. Transport costs. Surviving the quieter months e.g. Winter.
- The distance from Perth and the cost of fuel is stopping people from coming here. The high dollar and cheap airfares are making Australians holiday overseas.
- Transport and distance. Availability of products because there are restrictions of orders by businesses.
- Transport -too hard to the variety you would like to carry.

Reliable staff

- Lack of staff. Staff commitment.
- Seasonal income. High labour cost. Reliable employees.
- Finding good staff.
- Vibrant and plentiful workforce.

Local Loyalty

- Locals are very slow to trust “outsiders” and building a business can be a painfully slow process.
- Town businesses don't know about us even though I advertise at the Tourist Bureau.

Other Comments

- Too many restrictions from the Council.
- Mainly sustain numbers. Small population, so hard on volunteers and hard to get enough numbers for events. Just not enough people to go around.
- More local produce and crafts etc. Signage, Communication with what's on. Lighting at night. A theme in our main street. More local artefacts and crafts.
- I am remote from my clients, which is good because they are mainly mining companies. No specific problems.
- The problems that I have (e.g. beef cattle prices) are national not local. The high quality of the environment (including farming land) is not promoted or marketed enough.
- Seasonal business opportunities. Getting spare parts for machines and engines. Transport of parts and equipment, in and out of Walpole.
- At least one passing lane between Manjimup and Walpole.
- DEC not taking responsibility for fencing. Wildlife taking part of your crop.
- Terrible roads affecting the trucks coming to our business.

Question 29. How would you like to see Walpole and Districts developed over the next (10) years – (ie what is your Vision for the region?)

- Sustainable growth
- Preserve environment
- Environmental tourism
- Balance of tourism; country lifestyle
- Clean living
- No change
- More employment

Supplementary question for Focus Groups: *What is your vision for the District over the next 20 years?*

Stay as it is

- For Walpole not to grow but stay as it is now.
- Leave Walpole alone as we have a wonderful community spirit. Too much growth could work against this. Scenic Drive via Vista Street is too crowded with trees to see view. Suggest thinning out so view can be seen from car!!
- I really like the small community of Walpole, I hope the population is maintained (under 1000 people). Primary School upgrade (to make it more attractive for families who live out of town/ closer to Denmark). Nature is used and enjoyed but not abused (regulations on number of boats, sound pollution etc). Artistic, musical events/ social activities like dances. Local organic produce available.
- I would like to see the area and people continue to diversify out of “traditional” industries. Keep the small town feel.

Some Growth but Keep What Is Good

- Hopefully, expansion without spoiling the beauty of the area. Walpole itself would benefit from some ornamental trees and something that makes it look less like a long car park.
- To be able to go to town and get the service (ie food, petrol) that is necessary. Over some holiday periods the tourists find everything “shut” at 5pm.
- More growth and always a beautiful place to live. No more black spots.
- Some growth -up to 1000. Strong Walpole Brand. Protect our natural assets and generate value from them. A main street scape with a consistent theme aligned with the brand. Clean green, innovative.
- More population.
- To grow a little bit so we can encourage more people to live here with more services. To try to keep the environment in pristine condition.
- Slow, steady growth in population with all the consequent flow on benefits – all shops full and profitable.
- A town that has grown slowly without losing its special values.
- More population to Walpole to support more services and jobs. Faster internet connections. More advertising for Walpole on TV/ Internet/Face book. More education choices etc. Cheaper land prices.
- Smaller farms. Hopefully more people and more services. Agriculture promotion for other industries (more milking – dairies because of weather conditions). Diversification.

Other Comments

- Prices of housing to stabilise. Another shopping centre for competition.
- I wouldn't like to see the area grow too big. We don't want another Margaret River.
- Would like to see the town centre look better
- Senior citizen accommodation finished.
- Affordable accommodation, proper service communication like mobile phone & internet.
- Keep Walpole unique. Retain it's wholesomeness. Sustainability.
- A heritage museum in Pioneer Park. The main street needs a face lift. Pioneer Park could do with a children's playground. Better parking for mobile homes and caravans. Visitor Centre is too hidden.
- Provision for more lighting in main street e.g. Christmas tree lights for tourism. Better sustainable water supply, independent of other towns. Safer road areas around school.
- Any tourism increase needs to have an eco or sustainable basis.
- The main street of Walpole needs to be much more attractive. It needs to be inviting to people arriving for the first time.
- A small sustainable community that has continued to economic growth and can support its existing families and individuals with employment opportunities.

- As someone who has visited the area for 50 years ,who now lives here. The sleepy hollow will remain. Personally I would like a developer to put a major tourist development here.
- Sustainable development. Inclusion of new services and development of employment areas. Face book for Walpole with better connection. Protection of wilderness remaining and development of more eco tourism. Activities celebrating this. Better communication ie. Mobile, internet, avenues of advertising activities.
- Sustainable agriculture. DEC office working to ensure health of the natural environment with meaningful involvement from the broader community. Education Centre for organic food production, farm animal welfare, forest health management. Self sufficient and permanently sustainable water and energy supply. Fun nights.
- Sustainable organic community. Give the people of Walpole a better quality of life.
- Need to adapt to Walpole Wilderness Area – original image of areas closer to population more intensively managed for fire safety and tourism. (with) Core Wilderness Area managed for bio diversity. Organic vegetable production.

Question 30. What do you believe should be priorities?

- Environmental Protection
- Tourism Excellence
- Waterways Conservation
- Health/medical services
- Upgrade Mainstreet
- Aged Care Industry
- Power and Water
- Community Focus.

Question 31. In your view, what needs to happen to make your vision for the future of Walpole and Districts, a reality?

- Engage the Community
- Planning – timeline
- Engage the Shire
- Sustainable Development

Question 32. Are there any barriers that you can think of that will hinder your vision for the region from happening? (Of 52 respondents the majority suggested the following in priority order).

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Fear of change, backward thinking, apathy | 20% (11) |
| 2. Simple development mentality at any cost (govt and business) | 20% (10) |
| 3. Planning, building regulation and red tape (local govt and Politicians) | 14% (7) |
| 4. Inability to engage people in the vision (too busy, not involved) | 8% (4) |

Conclusion

From this process there is a great deal of agreement in the aspects of the community which are valued by the participants. This small town has a spirit of community and while set in a wilderness environment has sufficient services to provide a comfortable lifestyle. The resources which are available for recreation and to support the residents are enjoyed with a sense of safety. As a result of the input of volunteers and local agencies there are events in the area which provide entertainment opportunities. The primary producers in the community are under-represented in the responses although they are a major employer.

Respondents to the survey highlighted tourism as an important economic activity and made useful suggestions for its future expansion and viability. Indeed some of the suggestions for marketing of some of the aspects of Walpole and Districts will be important for both tourism and primary production. Engaging local people in a development of a “brand” and entry statement will be a worthwhile goal.

Although it may appear that Walpole and the surrounds offers a utopian existence there are counter points to the very factors which are valued. There are limitations of some resources due to the size of the population, there is the isolation from larger regional centres, the fragile economic viability of local services and the constant lag of infrastructure behind the demand for services. These issues will ensure that residents continue to work together to lobby for and facilitate local services.

Although there were people who would like to see the area unchanged into the future most respondents supported growth and sustainable development . Many defined this as development which can be maintained by growth that does not impede the natural eco systems, whilst not spoiling what Walpole already has. Local services were valued particularly health, recreation and business support. Future needs included the year round employment opportunities, maintenance/expansion of health services, reliable water supply and efficient communications systems. Some very practical suggestions such as continued development of the tourist industry, diversification of agriculture, a local fresh produce co-op and a small abattoir may require significant planning and organisation but could directly address the disadvantages of the “small town lifestyle”.

Overall respondents to the survey provided many practical suggestions and observations in looking at the future of Walpole and it's surrounding district.

Suggested Vision:

The District develops in a manner which preserves the natural environment and the community spirit which has resulted in the community having a strong sense of place and ownership of the many events and places in and around Walpole.

Thank you to all of the participants in this ***Towards 2020*** activity.