

VISIONING HORSHAM DISTRICT

Meeting with VCS, Parish Councils, Market Town Community Partnerships

**Thursday 2nd October 2008
Billingshurst Village Hall, Billingshurst**

Present:

Paul Mackie (Storrington & Sullington Community Partnership)
John Forrest (Southwater Parish Council)
Gwen Parr (Pulborough & District Community Care Association)
Neil Peachey (Slindon Village Hall)
Jackie Mullin (Horsham & Crawley Counselling Service)
Caroline Williams (Sussex ADHD Support Group)
Janet Brown (Horsham Area CVS)
F Gibson (Trafalgar Neighbourhood Council)
Beverley Bell (Billingshurst Parish Council)
Joyce Shaw (Upper Beeding Parish Council)
Ken Johnson (Billingshurst Community Partnership)
Nigel Tinkler (Age Concern)
Nick Handley (West Sussex Mediation Service)
David Sheldon (Partnership with Older People Project (POPP))
Colin Pidgley (MS Society)
Vicki Pidgley (Billingshurst Resident)
Amanda Easthaugh (Downland Housing Association)

In attendance:

Clare Ebelewicz (Horsham District Council)
Julian Carrington (Horsham District Council)

FEEDBACK NOTES

Theme 1: A Better Place to Live

Table 1

- Housing – more statistics about housing stock, eg % rental, owner-occupied – impacts on strategy for community facilities, eg local shops
- Rural nature of the District
- Transport key to all – 90% households have a car but if breadwinner takes car to work, is rest of family stranded?
- Pavement surfaces very bad – impacts broadly on ‘access’, ie hinders people’s ability to get out, especially those in wheel chairs
- Cycle network would improve accessibility – network between villages
- Local services – shops, schools – community focus
- Mixed community – not driving away young people (stop ‘uprooted youth’ trend) – caring for older people in the community
- Is there a Horsham District strategy for employment? – few large companies in District offering career progression to young people

- What do we like about Horsham District – qualities to protect: peace and quiet, countryside, pace of life, not far from coast, green space
- Parking in Horsham not good – Park & Ride very good
- Keep pollution to a minimum – keep Horsham District clean: clean fuels, strategy on light pollution, green spaces, meaningful recycling, eg glass collection?
- Farmers markets – ease of access to local produce

Table 2

- What is affordable for low income workers? ... supply of social housing
- Vulnerable people
- Rising unemployment
- Support for older people on low pensions - Continuous Care Retirement Communities
- Promote downsizing as appropriate
- Extend 'Homeshare' (WSCC scheme?)
- Part ownership with local authorities
- Volunteer support to help older people stay independent ... cleaning, gardening, shopping, DIY, Transport, Befriending – recruiting the volunteers and funding!
- Community Hubs!

Table 3

- Drainage of young people at a key time in their lives out of the Horsham District
- So who is getting the affordable homes?
- Availability of land, eg Upper Beeding
- Builders only want to build large houses – maximise profits
- Local Planning Authority needs to take a tougher line with developers to promote affordable housing – no more large houses
- Affordable housing for older people – move out of larger houses to smaller homes within their area
- Private sector for older persons very expensive
- Not enough affordable housing for older persons
- People with some funds, but not enough for private sector older persons' accommodation – drop through the system
- *'Key Missing Point': sense of community – people caring for each other, eg elderly luncheon clubs, befriending schemes, parenting skills*

Transport

- Need for District-wide strategy for Community Transport to meet needs of elderly and young people
- Rural transport services under threat
- Very difficult to travel within district, not on key routes
- Affluent society so more people learn to drive, then less use public transport, so services reduce

Rural Affairs

- Need help from HDC with Tourism – important to rural economy
- Need District tourism strategy and visitor strategy
- Need help to distribute village tourism leaflets

Theme 2: Opportunity for All

Table 1

- Gatwick widely recognised as commuter area, but don't forget London – lack of commuter parking – time to commute (ie not back till late) leads to lack of community cohesion and fewer volunteers
- Attracting 'cool' or glamorous employers would encourage young people to remain in the District
- Always the same people volunteer ... More support needed for volunteer recruitment
- Promote / encourage 'employee volunteering', especially to help local community groups (ie to balance publicity for big 'splashy' headlines for major organisations and projects)
- Transport ... Access!
- Volunteering is becoming an older person's thing – must encourage young people to get involved, start with schools (volunteering awards scheme)
- Co-ordinate volunteers / volunteering at local village level
- Training / career enhancement - Volunteer credits especially for job seekers
- Mentoring within the community
- Making it easier for people to volunteer
- Access to health services – can take half a day
- Access to counselling
- Disabled access to community buildings and local health services
- A lot of time and money to access free services!
- Greater flexibility for carers at work – carers save the country a lot of money; more support for them needed
- More capacity for and availability of respite care

Table 2

- Volunteers need support, encouragement, focus ... smaller groups in particular
- Extend allotment type opportunity 'Garden Share'
- Extend Youth Enterprise Scheme (Prince's Trust?)
- Tradesmen co-operatives / Skills share
- Bartering schemes – LETS schemes
- Promote subsidised and Community Transport particularly for young / active people
- Integrate those with disabilities into volunteering

Table 3

Economic

- Airport – Airlines are suffering

- We should get people into Sussex, especially as they cannot afford foreign travel
- Tourist Information points needed
- Keep websites up to date
- Maximise people's spend when they get here
- Depth of retail offer – train shop keepers – window displays – customer service
- Persuade people to shop local. Get traders to trade with themselves
- Free parking
- Cannot compete with Crawley or Guildford – need different offer
- Bad publicity - need local press on side
- Need to get businesses into the district – loss of workers from Horsham who would have used local shops at lunchtime
- Encourage home workers who will shop local
- Home working – very isolating

Education

- We need skills – apprenticeships
- Government needs to subsidise apprenticeships
- Young people should be encouraged to do 'on job' training, not just university
- How do young people get to apprenticeships, places of work?

Voluntary Sector

- Health and Safety Issues, liability risk assessment
- Responsibility of running voluntary clubs
- Employers should be encouraged to support their staff to do voluntary work

Leisure

- Nothing about older people
- People retiring earlier

Theme 3: Better Health for All

Table 1

- Replace stiles with 'kissing gates' – barrier for older / disabled people walking
- Ageing population – huge issue, helping older people stay in their own homes got to improve services ... stop cut-backs for low level support – 'Help at Home' and 'Handy Van' excellent services
- Keeping older people healthy and active ... helps keep them independent longer
- Dog share schemes – encourage older people to walk more
- Health services not accessible for all ... travel time / lack of easy access to get to hospital, eg East Surrey Hospital at Redhill (excellent service provided)
- Community Transport – lifeline for many
- Many people struggle to afford regular access to gym / swimming ... discount for older people to access gym provision
- More 'After School Clubs' needed to promote active lifestyles
- More specialist nurses needed in Horsham District, eg MS Specialist Nurse

- Promoting healthy eating

Table 2

- Provision of more cycle tracks
- Horsham Hospital is pending
- Increase use of Telecare (pendant alarms, smoke alarms, etc) and build this into new homes
- Use trained volunteers to deliver frontline services in homes – supported by statutory authorities
- Comply with 'Every Child Matters', Sure Start ... set up community hubs like Storrington Forge House

Table 3

- Care for those with dementia
- Respite care
- Support for carers
- People's savings too great to get help from social services, but cannot afford private care
- Preparation for old age – planning for retirement, interests, opportunities to volunteer
- Green Gym
- More 'Life is for Living'
- Hospital in north east of District – acute services
- Billingshurst Community Transport goes to 19 hospitals – why?
- Need more centres like Pulborough – daycentre, dentist, pharmacy
- Visiting inpatients – parking costs, petrol costs

Children and Health

- Parenting support
- Playgroups
- Support Groups for school age children
- Special needs playgroup needed

Theme 4: Staying and Feeling Safe

Table 1

- Feels less important than themes 1,2 and 3 (don't live in Brixton) – but issue is 'fear of crime'
- Get true statistics about crime levels in HD publicised
- Fear of 'telling' for fear of reprisal
- Opportunities for young people so they don't hang around the street, eg TAG
- Inter-generational opportunities to create community cohesion, eg YES Project ... develop understanding of why young people 'hang out' and why older people find this so intimidating
- Underage drinking
- Transport to enable young people to access leisure provision, eg cinema
- Support outreach projects, eg 'snack wagon'

- Voluntary organisations should be congratulated for their efforts to reduce crime figures
- Higher profile for community policing – PCSOs plus Wardens really work as they know and can link communities
- More work in schools related to police working with young people
- Community cohesion ... people knowing who lives in the community, reducing fear of crime (ie ‘know your neighbour’)
- Southwater is a model for empowering to identify / action plan and implement solutions to anti-social behaviour (ASB) / fear of crime ... recipe for sustainability, community cohesion, and ownership
- Randomness of attacks (such as they are), feeling of concern

Table 2

- Implement government plan on youth crime: enforcement, prevention and support, eg increase police visibility, control alcohol sales to the young
- Increase penalties for traffic offences (speeding)
- ‘Satnav’ system control
- Upgrade appearance of localities

Table 3

- Need a local Police base
- Need support for things like dog fouling
- Alcohol issues
- People not worried about burglary – it’s anti-social behaviour that worries people
- Fear of crime
- Wardens - positive assurance
- Remove graffiti quickly – stops people feeling unsafe
- Citizenship – education for all ages
- ASBOs and ABCs are working
- ASB goes in cycles – train Junior Wardens before they get involved

Road Safety

- No. of fatal accidents – ‘born again bikers’
- Train more people to use SID
- Junior Wardens

Missing

- *Fire safety*
- *Carbon monoxide detectors*