

NOTES OF MEETING ON 6TH MARCH 2014 TO DISCUSS HIGHCLIFFE SHOPPING CENTRE

Those Present: Cllr Lesley Dedman (Mudford & Highcliffe Division)
Cllr John Lofts (Highcliffe Ward)
Cllr Myra Mawbey (Highcliffe Ward)
Richard Fereday HOSTA
John Mather HRACIC
Malcolm Mawbey
Apologies: Cllr Claire Bath (CBC)
Eric Wood (HCA)

1. Formation of Partnership

Those present agreed to the formation of a partnership – the Highcliffe Centre Partnership (HCP) and agreed that:

The objective of the Partnership would be to work together to improve the Highcliffe Shopping Centre in the Lymington Road for the benefit of residents, visitors, local traders and local commercial businesses (offices, estate agents etc).

The Highcliffe Shopping Centre was defined as the primary and secondary shopping cores in the Lymington and Waterford Roads as described in the Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy. JohnL suggested that the relevant pages from the Core Strategy should be copied to members.
Action Malcolm

2. Membership

The core membership would consist of representatives from Dorset CC , Christchurch BC, HOSTA, HRACIC and HCA. It was agreed that Connie Pearce (HELP), Adrian (Pettengell's) and the manager of the Hoburne Office should be asked if they would wish to join the HCP. Others might be invited to attend meetings as appropriate – for example a representative from the police.

3. Highcliffe Centre Strategic Management Plan

Members had received copies of the draft source paper “Review Of Highcliffe Shopping Centre ” (Malcolm) in December 2013 and the “Summary” more recently. They agreed to adopt them as a suitable preliminary way forward which could be developed. Lesley highlighted that a number of the recommendations could be implemented readily whilst others were long term. Richard commented that for HOSTA members it was desirable for them to see progress in the short term. JohnM commented that funding would be necessary for some of the longer term actions; there were grants available for suitable projects.

4. Floral Displays

Lesley had made some preliminary enquiries about the height of the hanging baskets on the lamp-posts which had been installed; she was awaiting a response from SEC and it was hoped that the supports could be lowered so that the flowers would be more visible. Myra stated that CBC would plant the hanging baskets and the three flower towers and water them. There was a large council owned planter opposite Seaton Road which had been neglected; she would contact CBC to see whether it could be planted up.

Action Myra

Richard would encourage HOSTA members to provide their own floral display; he would establish to what extent the Christchurch Chamber of Commerce members fund their displays. Obtaining water for the Community Garden next to the Globe had been a problem. JohnM agreed that water could be obtained from the Old School House. Myra would advise Connie Pearce of this arrangement.

Action: Myra

5. Trees

Malcolm had circulated some guidance for the planting of trees which would have to be in the private forecourts. He said that he had received details of funds which could be applied for from Wilbert Smith (CBC). Richard commented that traders would be unlikely to wish to have trees on their forecourts and the potential planting sites would be limited to the extremes of the shopping cores.

6. Block Paving

Lesley reported that the cost of replacing the pavoids would be around £80k and that DCC did not have the funds available. Repairing potholes had the greater priority. Minor repairs of the pavement could be carried out but if there were major safety concerns then the pavement would have to be tarmacked. Myra agreed to check the pavements to establish whether areas for repair needed to be highlighted to DCC.

Action: Myra

7. Traffic through the Shopping Centre

It was agreed that the number of HGVs coming through Highcliffe was increasing and that they were having an adverse effect on shoppers. Lesley said it was a safety concern and that it would be tragic if an accident occurred as had happened in Christchurch High Street. Richard agreed but said some HOSTA members welcomed the HGVs because they slowed other traffic down; however it was agreed that other measures could be introduced to lower speed levels.

The problem would worsen when gravel extraction started and if the Navitus Bay Wind Farm were to be approved. Several long-term options were mentioned in the Strategic Management Plan. Members discussed the option of re-routing the heavy vehicles using the Ringwood Road and the A35 between the Milestone and Somerford roundabouts. JohnM suggested that the suitability of the Ringwood Road to take the traffic would need to be professionally assessed. Lesley offered to approach DCC Officers to see whether the option had been considered by them.

Action: Lesley

Malcolm would provide Lesley with a map of the proposed route and the assessment he had made of options for dealing with the traffic.

Action: Malcolm

Lesley had been involved with the process concerning the Canford Bottom roundabout and had valuable experience which she would share.

8. Parking

It was noted that the free parking period in the Wortley Road car park would end at the end of March. Whilst the pilot had been helpful it was suggested that it would be better to have the free period between 10am and 2pm since the remaining bank closes at 1pm. Richard pointed out that if the car park were to be free all day, it would be used by office workers and by holiday makers in preference to the cliff-top car park.

9. Town Plan

Lesley considered that Highcliffe should have a Town Plan; Ferndown had produced one which had taken three years. JohnM agreed and said that he had details of how funding could be obtained. JohnL mentioned that Steve Duckett and Neil Farmer had knowledge of the process. Malcolm said that it could go beyond HCP's agreed objective but he would establish what would be involved.

Action: Malcolm

JohnM asked that details of the Highcliffe Ward boundaries should be provided to members; Malcolm agreed to do circulate the details.

Action: Malcolm

10. Events

Richard said that HOSTA was considering a number of events. Amongst these were an Easter egg hunt, something linked with the Cheese and Wine festival and Morris and Maypole dancing on the Recreation Ground. Organisers were keen to plan for an Easter Carnival next year. Myra mentioned that previous initiatives to celebrate St George's day had not been well-supported. Malcolm said it could be worthwhile linking themes to Christchurch and Highcliffe Castle events like the "tossing the pancake" races.

Date of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting should be on Thursday 3rd April at 7pm at 16 Wharnccliffe Road.