

BASSETLAW LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUB-GROUP

6 March 2003

2pm-4pm

TOWN HALL, RETFORD

Attending:-

John Harrison	Chair of the Sub-Group, Bassetlaw District Council
Maureen Holgate	North Notts College
Craig Jordan	Bassetlaw District Council
Chris Telford	Bassetlaw District Council
Gail Maxfield	Age Concern
Rob Packer	Nottinghamshire County Council Youth Services
Vicky Rawson	Focus on Young People
Malcolm Robson	Access Officer
Andrew Tatham	Partnership Officer, BCVS
Dermot Loughran	Leicester Housing Association
Hamish Adams	Nottingham Community Housing Association
Roy Tomlinson	Bassetlaw Tenants' and Residents' Association
Steve Ellis	South Yorkshire Housing Association
Christine Clegg	Hallam Housing Society
Yvonne Mitcheson	Bassetlaw Women's Aid
Graham Jackson	Bassetlaw District Council
Frank Raspin	Nottinghamshire County Council
Gillian Blenkinsop	Bassetlaw District Council

1. Apologies

PC Bill Brown, Worksop Police Station; Tim Challens, Notts County Council; Joy Ellis, Womens Resource Centre; Simon Finch, East Midlands Art Board; Annie Fletcher, Landlords Forum - Centreplace; Tim Harris, Head of Arts Community Services; John Harrison, Bassetlaw District Council (Chair of Sub-Group); Maureen Holgate, North Notts College; Gail Maxfield, Age Concern; John Payne, Bassetlaw District Council; Roger Ranson, Bassetlaw Development Agency; Elizabeth Whittles, Bassetlaw District Council; Catherine Williams, Bassetlaw Development Agency; Peter Williamson, Bassetlaw PCT; David Wright, Misterton Parish Council; Jane Young, Guideline Careers.

2. Introductions and Welcome

John Harrison opened the meeting and welcomed members of the group and visitors.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 6th March 2003

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record with the addition of Frank Rospin's apologies.

4. Presentation by Chris Telford, Bassetlaw District Council

Chris advised the group that Bassetlaw District Council was carrying out the preliminary stages of drawing up the Local Plan for the District. This was termed the "issues" stage of the Plan's development and involved widescale consultation, of which this meeting was a part. This would be followed by a statutory period of consultation once the Plan has been drafted.

This "issues" period of consultation was a real opportunity for local people to influence how Bassetlaw would be developed in the future. The challenge for local planners was to ensure that the distinct character of Bassetlaw is maintained whilst making it attractive as a place for business and individuals to locate. The Plan would include far more policy statements to give clearer guidance to prospective developers. The deadline for the Plan's production is 2005/2006.

Members of the group were keen that mistakes with past developments would not be made e.g. where large housing estates are built without the appropriate amenities or transport links. The group were assured that this would not happen.

It was confirmed that the area does have available land for future development but that this would need to be carefully managed.

Craig Jordan advised the group that a Masterplan exercise had been completed with the help of an external consultant which highlighted all the available development land in Bassetlaw.

The group stated that it was one of their objectives to see more creative building design and for opportunities to include artistic features to be explored. The aim of this was to make more aesthetically pleasing and more attractive to users and visitors. Again this is an issue that planners will be considering and this could be the subject of Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The question of the density of house building was raised. Some members of the group were fortunate to live in older housing that had large gardens. Both Chris and Craig advised the group that there was now pressure to build more housing on less land.

5. Youth Assembly – an update

Vicky Rawson from the Task Group for the Youth Assembly reported back to the group on the recent meeting.

She commented that the representative from Hartland School had discussed the youth council in place within the school. It was felt that Jim Wainman, Head of Citizenship at the school would be a valuable member of the task group due to the school's experience of organising a youth council.

It was suggested that the assembly should comprise 13-19 year olds as it was felt this was a prime age to attract young people. The aim of the Assembly would be to give young people a voice and to demonstrate the talents and skills of young people. The Assembly would then provide links to the National Youth Parliament.

It was hoped the Assembly would allow those involved to have influence on decision-making in the area. The activities, which they would be involved in, would also enable them to gain valuable skills for their Record Of Achievement. It would be important that the young people involved in the Assembly guide us through the process rather than it being adults leading the meetings and discussions. A representative from the Assembly would have a place on the Connexions Board.

The Task Group will meet again on Thursday 30th January with a group of young people who could be involved with the Assembly. This group of young people will act as an initial sounding board regarding the idea of an Assembly and assist in planning the next steps. Financial support for the project will be through NCC Youth Community and Play, with BDC supplying rooms and photocopying as required.

It is hoped that group will be dynamic and able to shape their own agenda however they will have workers there to back them up when they put suggestions forward and work to meet targets.

Councillor Troop noted that there was not consistent reporting of good news stories in respect of young people within the local press.

Carola Jones announced that a network of young volunteers was to be set up. Christine Precious from BCVS was a point of contact for information regarding this new network.

Gillian Blenkinsop also mentioned that we already had a Youth Engagement Team in place, which were involved with various groups across the district. The Team were also assisting with the Youth Assembly.

6. Equal Opportunities Event – verbal report

Andrew Tatham reported back to the group on the meeting of those involved with the Equal Opportunities Event and the writing of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Four people attended the Task Group meeting for Equal Opportunities, and Andrew felt that some progress had been made. They mainly concentrated their discussion around the first principle of 'What form should the event take?' and 'Who should be targeted and how should they be approached?'.

He noted that the Local Authority was working to the National Equality Standard, and that this Task Group needed to tackle the issue in a bite-size way.

Those present at the Sub-Group meeting then discussed how the issue could be approached. It was agreed employers within the district needed to be targeted to ensure equal opportunities was on their agenda and was a key part of all their planning. It was also agreed that the Bassetlaw Business Association would be a way of reaching local businesses, regardless of size, ensuring information and advice was available for them. A breakfast meeting to promote the issue of equal opportunities would allow a wide range of employers and providers to be reached at the same time.

Andrew said that the next meeting of the Task group should include more LSP members to enable other dimensions to be explored. The actual Equal Opportunities Policy was felt to be a future item to work on. However it was important to tap in to all areas, which could profile ordinary people at promotional events, including the young and old.

Jackie Collins raised the issue of new legislation due in April 2003. This would give parents with children over six, the right to ask for flexible working hours.

Una Key commented that Trade Unions give legal advice for employees where they feel they are being discriminated against or unable to exercise their rights. Kus Amar added to this by saying it would be useful if our providers could tell us if this is an issue with clients asking for advice.

It was raised that we should have an event related to parents and equal opportunities in National Parents Week in September.

7. 2003 Work Programme

Due to the presentation and discussion around debt advice it was agreed that the group Action Plan needed to include a target related to promoting availability of debt advice. Gillian again asked for volunteers

to form a task group to discuss the work plan for 2003 and the groups Action Plan. Volunteers were:
Steve Brown
Carola Jones
Andrew Tatham
Vicky Rawson.

8. Date of next meeting

Thursday 6th March 2003, 2pm – 4pm. Discussion would be on Affordable Housing and Tackling Homelessness.

9. Any other business

No issues were raised