



The Neighbourhood Plan- Coming to you soon!!

The final public consultation on the proposed plan will take place before Christmas. Nigel Cheetham, our Steering Group chairman has said he wants to press ahead for the plan to be examined, put to a referendum of the townspeople and hopefully adopted by East Northants Council as early as possible in 2015. To that end, discussions are underway with district council planners on the exact timing of their remaining tasks in the project plan.

Remember the Community Plan?

Even if you don't, Sandra Mitcham, our Town Clerk and her Steering Group (SG) project teams certainly do! One year on from the public launch in the Bede House at the end of September 2013, work on the catalogue of high, medium and low priority actions in the long term plan which you, the residents of the town, said were needed to improve their lives has been progressing well. Here are the successes so far:

Topic	Task	Action Taken
Development	Location and Type of Development. Preservation of character of the town	Formal Neighbourhood Plan in progress. Adoption in 2015
Highways & Transport	Implement temporary car parking provision for Market Square events.	This is now in place
	Campaign for Chown's Mill for immediate roundabout improvements and before any further town development	Schemes are now being designed for short term improvements –local MP leading a campaign. Highways Agency hoping for funding to be announced in Autumn SMT (December)
	Introduce traffic calming measures	Meetings held with Highways. Money being sourced for design costs
	Improve Rushden Higham Link service, bus shelters and timetable information.	Meeting held with Public Transport Manager
	Review existing traffic and cycle related signage.	Car Park signage reviewed for Saffron Rd Car park and new signs installed
Community Facilities	Improve Communications and Information about the town	List Of community Groups and Businesses started. Community Groups need to be checked
	Review of Hecham Chronicle	Higham Times launched in

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		October 2013. Although a Council responsibility, the aim is for it to be a community newsletter
	New Community building	Negotiations between Methodist Church and Town Council now halted as agreement could not be reached. Other options being considered in the Neighbourhood Plan.
	Tennis Courts underused	More advertising this year. Tennis court bookings quadrupled. MUGA is left open between 9am and 5pm. A tennis net has been left in MUGA during summer holidays for free use
	Consider feasibility of holding formal tennis coaching session in the holidays.	TC planning Summer Activity Clubs for 2015
	More Planting and Shrubs	Higham Ferrers Tourism purchasing planters for railings near Queensway. Tourism funding watering equipment for the TC to use
	Underuse of site outside Henry Chichele School	Being used for school parking for about 6 months to alleviate parking problems here. Council is planning to remove the shrub bed and replace with grass
	Provision of Allotments	Will likely be part of land initially allocated for a cemetery. See below
	Cemetery	Council employed consultant has reviewed available land and shortlisted possible sites, all owned by the Duchy of Lancaster. Request submitted for more invasive testing of the sites. Answer outstanding.
	Lack of Youth Facilities	Funding for skateboard park

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		secured and hopefully to be installed by Spring 2015. Committee established who are aiming to start a youth group in November
Economy	Improve vitality of the Town Centre	A Town Centre Manager (shared with Rushden) will be funded from Rushden Lakes developer contributions. A Tourist Information Point has opened in the library, partnered jointly by HF Tourism and the Library
	Increase footfall at Farmers Market	For past 6 months Council have worked on this. 200 Jute Bags given away as an incentive. These are now on sale. Special features at some markets e.g, music, birthday celebrations. More advertising in surrounding village magazines. Ongoing
Health	Comments about service at Doctors and Dentists	Doctors Surgery made aware of comments. Practice Manager involved with SG. SG members also on Patients Forum
Library	Provide more information about services	Completed
Environment	Dog Fouling	Offending locations mapped. More signage to be installed
	Road Maintenance	Comments forwarded to County Highways Dept
	Make Town approaches more attractive	Town Sign installed