

Nothing to do in Emsworth?

The Community Board decided to follow up the findings of two recent documents, the Town Action Plan and the Emsworth Design Statement which, through consultation with local people, concluded that there is 'a lack of things for young people to do', that 'older children seem to be poorly catered for' and recommended 'an increase in recreation facilities and establishment of a drop-in centre for young people'.

The Community Board has identified two particular issues which seem to affect our young people. The first is that there is no Secondary School in Emsworth and so our young people have to travel to a wide range of schools in Havant, Waterlooville, Southbourne, Chichester and Portsmouth. This means that they lose touch with each other and have neither the shared experience nor the out of school facilities that a secondary school in their home area could provide. The second issue is that, although we have a beautiful harbour and surrounding countryside, much of it is designated a conservation area and teenagers are forbidden from doing many of the things they would like to do. It seems to young people that it's 'NO' to anything except taking the dog for a walk.

Of course there are organised activities for young people provided by the churches in Emsworth, the Scouts and Guides and the SYRCH Centre. However, we have an estimated 500 teenagers living in Emsworth, the majority of whom are not engaged in any local activities. Starting in September 2008, Community Board members visited youth centres in neighbouring areas, talked to young people and met youth workers. This reinforced the view that Emsworth teenagers do not have adequate leisure facilities, and led us to seek wider consultation and specifically to ask:

- should additional facilities be provided for Emsworth teenagers?
- what facilities should these be and how can they be funded?

Martyn Griffiths of Guinness Hermitage and Tracy Vear, Youth Participation Officer at HBC, have supported the project from an early stage and they held a brainstorming session with the children at Emsworth Primary School which generated many ideas for new youth activities. This was followed by an Open Morning public consultation held by the Community Board on 28th February at International Hall in St Peter's Square.

Our initial activity has clearly validated the assertions made in the Emsworth Town Action Plan and the Emsworth Design Statement about lack of youth provision and that action needs to be taken.

The next stage of the project will involve:

- Forming a management team including both young people and adults
- Identifying major needs that can be met in the short and longer term
- Forming a time-scaled plan to meet those needs
- Identifying and bidding for funding for both set-up and on-going sustainability.

We hope to describe our plans in the next issue of The EMS.

Meanwhile, if you would like to join or support this worthwhile project, or have any suggestions to offer, please email us at boredinemsworth@gmail.com or phone me on 01243 378470.

Jean Tier



Come and Join Emsworth Community Board

Would you like to know what's going on in Emsworth? Would you like to be involved in community projects? Would you like to have your say on the services provided by Havant Borough Council (HBC) and Hampshire County Council (HCC)? If so, we would like you to join us as a member of Emsworth Community Board (ECB).

The ECB comprises 15 people who work in small groups to review specific areas of interest, take positive action where possible, and liaise with council officers to seek improvement. It holds monthly public meeting in the Emsworth Community Centre to report and review local issues. It also holds Open Mornings periodically on Saturdays to highlight topical matters and seek residents' views. Recent subjects have included local Rights of Way and the redevelopment proposed for South Street and the Emsworth Centre. The most recent Open Morning focused on the ECB Youth Recreation Project described in the article on this page.

The ECB has conducted a Community Street Audit of the main access routes for cyclists and pedestrians in Emsworth and produced a schedule of 50 prioritised improvements. This data is being used by HBC in the development of its Sustainable Transport Strategy and has influenced HCC's Transport Team in their planning of recent cycleway improvements in Emsworth. Another ECB group has been instrumental in improving the cleanliness and facilities in our parks by making regularly surveys of local hotspots for litter and graffiti and liaising with HBC to gain improvements.

Emsworth Community Board is seeking new members to be elected at its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 30th April at 7.30pm in the Emsworth Community Centre. If you would like to make a contribution to community life, please contact me to learn more about our work.

All Emsworth residents are cordially invited to attend the AGM on 30th April to find out what is going on in the town, to learn about the work of the Community Board and to give their views on local affairs. After the AGM, come and have a glass of wine with us and get to know the board members.

Steve Pearce, Chairman, Emsworth Community Board Telephone 01243 431615 or email steve.pearce@btinternet.com

Planning Roundup

Major planning applications are still virtually non-existent although a company, 'Banner Homes' are expressing an interest in the Oak Tree Drive site. See Chairman page 6.

New Planning Application Rules - When a proposed alterations or extension is to a single dwelling, an application for planning permission can be made using a simplified 'Householder application form'. These works often look innocuous on the application form but can sometimes be significant, for example the alterations to 41 New Brighton Road, which was approved last July. By the new rules, only properties immediately adjacent to or directly opposite the site are notified of this kind of application, and public notices will not be placed on lampposts.

This means that you need to check the weekly list regularly. The ERA helps with this by displaying this list on the notice board outside the Co-Op and on our website. The ERA planning sub-committee will be monitoring such applications carefully. Please note: these new rules do not apply in a Conservation Area or to Listed Buildings.

Appeals - The application for vehicular access to 46 North Street, destroying a flint wall in front of one of the oldest buildings in Emsworth, has gone to appeal, as have the applications to re-build 7 and 8 Western Parade. The ERA has written to the planning inspectorate opposing the latter.

An application to build a house in the front garden of 9 Park Crescent has been objected to on the grounds of unacceptable density and the risk of damaging a 150 year old Holm Oak with a TPO which is an important part of the street scene.

Changes to Shops - Welcome to The Barbers Arch, 13B High Street. A new 'no appointments' barbers with a separate, specially equipped children's hairdressing salon within it. To follow shortly will be St Wilfrid's Hospice Shop which will replace Flowers Gallery.

These two changes mean that once again there were no empty shops in Emsworth at the time of going to press; something of an achievement in these times of recession.

Richard Jannaway

Emsworth Centre - South Street

A consultation organised by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) called the Market Town Initiative provided a comprehensive 'health check' for many of our local facilities and services. It identified strengths and weaknesses of our town. Two of the items identified as needing attention were better public conveniences in South Street and an under use of the Emsworth Centre.

Havant Borough Council developed an innovative scheme to meet both these needs within one project. Following various public meetings organised by the Emsworth Town Partnership, a project team consisting of fourteen local volunteers developed a business plan for the Emsworth Centre.

Comprehensive investigation involving all members of the team has been undertaken, including visits to other similar venues in the county. They found that a rebuild of the existing centre was the only option which would meet their objectives: It must meet community concerns, be financially viable, allow access to all users, meet modern environmental standards, and meet current health and safety standards. On top of all this it must enhance the architectural importance of South Street Conservation Area.

The project team's business plan was presented to an HBC officer in early March. It has now been passed to HCC and will eventually be viewed by SEEDA who we believe may be able to give some financial support.

It is hoped that within the next few months HBC's plans for the wider South Street car park area, including the Emsworth Centre, will be announced to the community for consultation.

Emsworth Centre Project Team

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