

Meeting Write-up Sheet

- Meeting:** Environment Action Group (EAG)
- Date:** 26th February 2007
- Location:** Romsey British Legion
- Aims:** To introduce and discuss the future of the EAG. To raise awareness of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). To determine the aim and outcomes of the group and contribute to the Environment Chapter of the Community Plan.
- Outcomes:**
- Aim of the group:
- The two aims that had previously been written for the Environment Template were seen as too vague and idealistic.
 - The first was from the existing Environment Chapter in the Community Plan:

'For everyone in the local community to take personal responsibility for maintaining the environment and keeping Test Valley a beautiful place to live in'
 - The second was suggested by the Environment Centre (TEC) after consultation:

'To enable all members of the local community to fully contribute to the environmental agenda and to take responsibility for ensuring that Test Valley is a truly sustainable Borough'
 - There is a need to engage local people so the aim needs to be overarching, inspirational and unthreatening.
 - It was suggested that the term 'sustainable' be dropped from the aim altogether as the word is used often and in a variety of contexts. However as the term is so closely linked with the environment, and is high on the government agenda the word should stay with some explanation.
 - Using simple terminology such as 'future generations' will help make the aim more understandable.
 - Using the U.N Bruntland Commission definition of Sustainable Development was suggested 'Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.
 - Some attendees believed the second aim to have more merit than the original.
- Outcomes from the group:
- The Environment Centre had already identified a number of outcomes, these were:

1. People understand the importance of buying locally and thinking globally.
 2. Less households suffer fuel poverty.
 3. Recycling rates are increased (more recycling, Local Area Agreement).
 4. The community understand how climate change is affecting their lives and take preventative action
- Outcomes/ideas discussed during the meeting:
 1. The amount of CO2 produced and Climate change.
 - Test Valley needs a Climate Change Agenda policy and/or sign up to the Nottingham Declaration or Carbon Trust Management Programme, but it was viewed as up to national government to implement major changes.
 2. Local food programmes and more local producers within the region.
 3. Sustainable water management. Engage the community in water catchment management.
 4. Use empty housing. Currently in the borough the level of empty homes is 2-3%. The council is reviewing their empty homes strategy.
 5. Insulation of houses.
 6. More eco-homes.
 7. Raise awareness of Bio-fuels.

Issues to consider:

- Need to focus the group. The Environment is a large subject to address.
- Consider the requirements of businesses; they enable and contribute to a prosperous economy.
- There needs to be a balancing process to accommodate future business growth while supporting them to be more 'green'.
- People need to accept personal responsibility for the environment.
- The concerns and opinions of local residents are very important and should be recognised.
- Community engagement was seen as very important in allowing the group to progress and understand the wider sustainability agenda.
- Need to have measurable outcomes and clear deliverables; such as the amount of people who become involved in the group and who are aware of the issues the EAG are dealing with.
- Environmental issues are wider ranging and cut across a number of other thematic group areas. One remit for the group could be to ensure that all other thematic plans address these issues.

Other points:

- The water festival in Andover was suggested as a forum that the EAG could use to promote the group and environmental awareness.

- The Artists Way Development in Andover was referred to as an exemplar project.
- Holding a 'Green Fair' was suggested to raise awareness of environmental issues.
- Will this influence Local Development Plans?

Feedback:

- A more thorough history of the EAG would have been appreciated.
- The introduction to the LSP was very in-depth.
- Need to engage community and move towards sustainability.
- Realistic targets should develop as the group progresses.
- Get other charities and organisations involved, such as BTCV and HCC.
- Need to find a way to get Test Valley residents interested and committed to the EAG's aims and objectives.
- Find a way to reduce the amount of drive to school families.
- The group should be facilitated by someone with an environmental background.
- The group needs to be broken down after aims are defined as members bring in different skills and interests.
- Promote the future aims of the partnership through existing mediums, such as the water festival, TVBC wood fair and Hw7 event programme.

Actions:

- Circulate the aims discussed to the group for their input.
- Complete EAG Template.
- Organise the next EAG meeting.