

A Report of the Corsham Shadow Community Operations Board (COB)

To the Corsham Area Board. 18th July 2013

Progress to date

Midas Construction, the Wiltshire Council appointed contractors for the build programme are now well established on site at Springfield and have begun the preparatory works that will shortly result in the major part of the construction phase.

There is a Midas Newsletter that will be distributed locally to those people most likely to be affected by the construction works, and a first meeting of the Construction Liaison Group has met, with representatives of the Fire Service, School, Porch Surgery, Green Square, Leisure Centre, the Town and Wiltshire Councils and the COB.

Some work has been undertaken on the Community Centre and Leisure Centre to facilitate new build, and there will shortly be temporary closures to both the squash courts and sports hall, which will be announced in advance to prospective users of both facilities.

Groundwork on site has included the laying of drainage and preparatory work for the new build foundations.

Work is on schedule to deliver the fully completed and landscaped community campus site by October 2014. The all-weather pitch, that will host hockey and five-a-side football for both the Corsham School during school hours and for community use outside of these hours, has an accelerated development programme to ensure that it is in use during the first term of the 2013/2014 school year.

And now the real work starts

The community campus is, and always was, much more than a building. There are many aspects to the development that will see a greater integration of service delivery; Wiltshire Council and others working together to resolve shared community ambition.

And the clue to the extent of that ambition is in the title.

Whilst the Corsham Community Campus is being constructed in the market town at the heart of the Community Area, the intention is for the campus to reach the whole of the community area and to provide a service and deliver benefit for the people of Colerne, Box and Lacock as well as Corsham. This is a genuine effort by Wiltshire Council to re-enforce the Community structure that they are putting place across the County.

The evidence for that is at one level, the Area Boards; at another it is a campus programme for the County.

Springfield

corsham community campus

To explore the role of the campus for the whole community is uppermost in the list of priorities that will be undertaken by the COB and others over the coming months so that the Campus not only provides a valuable community commodity at the heart of the Community Area, but that activity from the Campus reaches out to the whole of the Community.

As Chair of the COB I have attended meetings at Box and Colerne Parish Councils. The same invitation has always been extended to Lacock. And because of the natural proximity of Biddestone to Corsham, I have also visited their Parish Council.

Now, supported by Wiltshire Council, the COB will be working with the Royal Society of Arts, which has a reputation for investigating, understanding and supporting the delivery of community development projects, in order to ensure that the Campus works for Corsham, Lacock, Colerne and Box.

We understand the concerns of many people in the parishes surrounding Corsham from the early stages of consultation. Transport figures high on their list of concerns that would prevent the Campus fully realising its potential. In recognition of this the COB have a dedicated working group looking at all of the travel and transport issues associated with the Campus development.

It is also important that the relationship between local communities and the Campus is two-way. Whilst there will of course be a great deal happening at the Campus itself, from Library Services to provision for youth, community facilities to a neighbourhood policing presence, our aim is to make sure that activity that does take place at the Campus reaches to the whole community.

This might be directly the result of an outreach attitude; it might also encompass the use of digital connection to extend managed activity to local village halls.

How can you get involved?

There are many aspects to the next stages of Campus development, all of which would benefit from the insight and understanding of many more people across the Community Area. And this is exactly the right time to get involved, with some 15 months before we anticipate that it will be up and running. For example, we are currently forming groups that will look, in addition to Travel and Transport, mentioned above;

- Developing the Campus Culture
- Engagement and Capacity Building
- Legacy – the history of the site
- Catering – what the offer at the Campus should be.

You can offer your help at www.springfieldccc.com , through the Area Board, via Parish Councils or directly to members of the COB

Allan Bosley: Chair, Community Operations Board