

Bradford on Avon Area Board, 23 May 2018

A Working Town for Young People

Councillors Alex Kay and Jim Lynch introduced the thematic event entitled “A Working Town for Young People”; this was aimed at highlighting the issues facing those who may have grown up and attended schools locally but who find it difficult to stay in their home town or village as young adults due to a lack of affordable housing and/or employment opportunities in the local area.

The format of the event was scene-setting presentations followed by roundtable discussions on the key themes of living, working and playing in Bradford on Avon.

Participants

Key organisations and individuals were invited to help inform the discussions, including:

Wiltshire Council
Bradford on Avon Town Council
BoA Business
Wiltshire College
Career Directed Solutions
Community First
Selwood Housing
Wiltshire Music Centre
Wiltshire Mighty Girls
Girl Guides Association
Fresh Start Films
The Avon Works
Elected councillors
Young people

Speakers

- A Youth Strategy for Bradford on Avon - Councillor Dom Newton, Bradford on Avon Town Council
- Community Land Trusts and Affordable Housing – Alex Neale, Community First and Vicky Bodman, Wiltshire Council
- Work Opportunities for Young People – Gerald Milward-Oliver, BoA Business
- Supporting people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities into employment and internships – Sam Buchanan, Wiltshire Council

The speakers presentations are appended separately.

Workshop Notes (i) Living in Bradford on Avon

What do we want..?

“A community that has a long term future”

“Deliver something relevant to our area”

“The vibrancy of Bradford is crucial- how do we grow a more vibrant, inclusive community for 20-29 year olds?”

Work to incorporate all the hard work from the neighbourhood plan to work out what is needed.

Something came out very clearly from the table's participants was that they put in motion a steering / forum group to start a community land trust. People suggested a citizen owned group and someone also suggested that the housing association could lease the housing from CLT.

People felt that there were many things working against a sustainable town and this prompted the question; **“What do we need for Bradford”**

Suggestions were that young people were consulted and engaged with.

Some people said that a core vision should be that ‘Everybody must be provided with equal opportunity’

“People want a decent home- everyone deserves a decent home!”

RECRUITMENT- this was a hot topic and people felt that people should be recruited locally, especially when it comes to building new properties and staffing them.

WHERE; People mentioned finding pockets that the bigger developers aren't interested in.

WHO; People felt it was important to find a community that want to live there. An idea was to utilise university researchers from the three surrounding unis for this. Identify how many people the CLT would help. How many are needed, include all diversity groups; disabled, etc...

‘WHO are we aiming this at?’ Quantify thorough research to obtain the correct needs and demographic.

‘Look at the economic benefits from bringing more young people into Bradford’

“Look at want vs need- The need to be here vs wanting to be here”

We need to support those that are currently choosing to stay here. We need to ask ourselves the question “What do we actually have to offer young people here? Do they actually want to be here?”

‘Are we relevant to young people here in BonA?’

‘The young people who are staying are working in the trades and we should be supporting them by hiring them

WHERE; Bradford town and surrounding parishes.

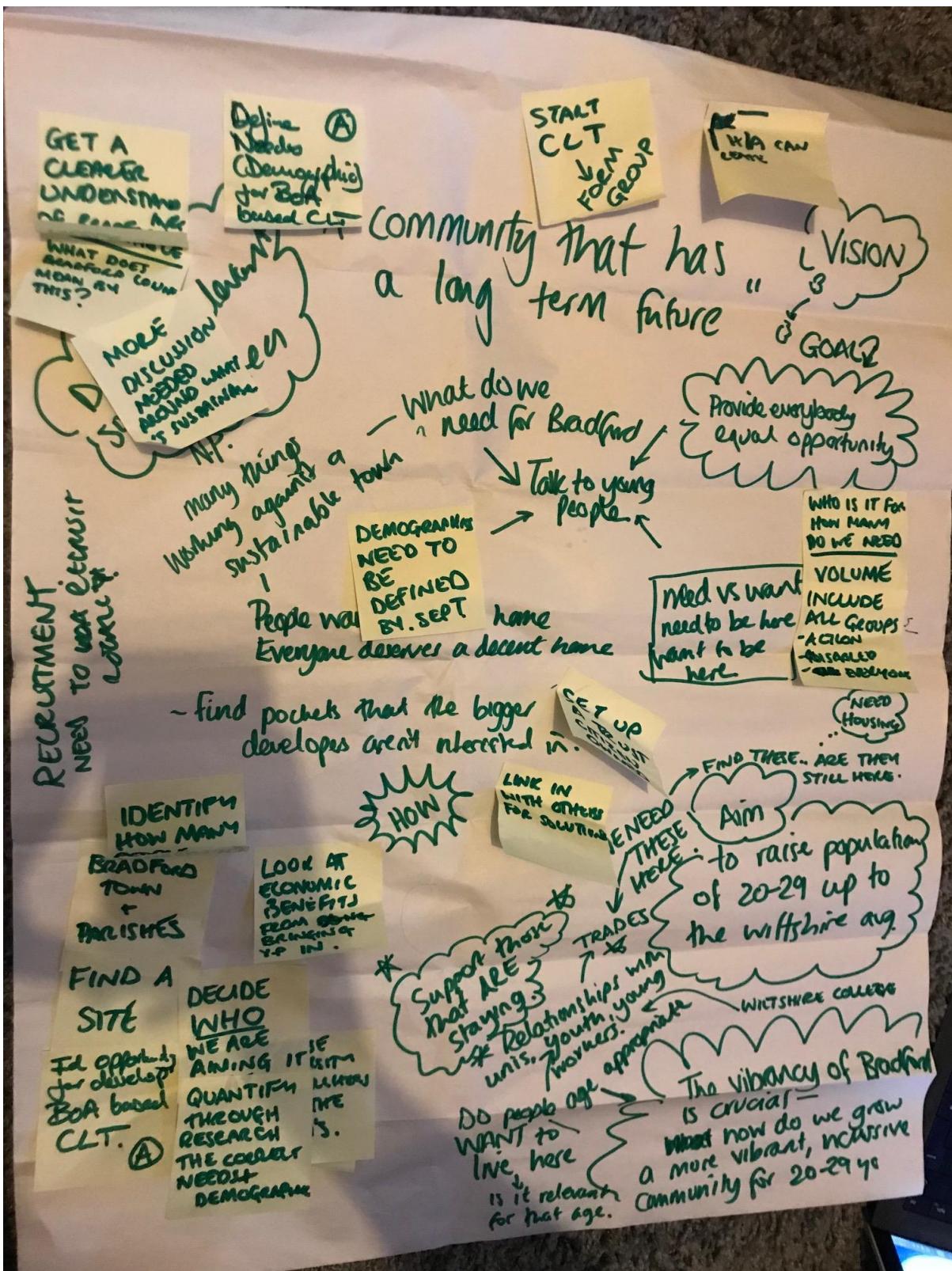
An objective should be to find a site.

How; Link with others for solutions, use NP work.

We should aim to raise the population of 20-29 year olds up to the Wiltshire average.

Someone else wanted me to add to the notes this comment in addition to everything else that had been written;

“Define needs (demographic for BonA based CLT & Identify opportunity for develop BonA based CLT”



Workshop Notes (ii) Working in Bradford on Avon

1. **Connectivity** – including for the villages. In the town centre, perhaps more important than fixed line internet access is mobile connectivity in the town centre. There also needs to be some strategic thinking about ensuring the villages have high-speed connectivity. We should perhaps be looking as a community at the example of communities that have created their own network independent of BT and Virgin, where gigabit speeds (i.e. 10-15 times the speed currently available in the town) are the norm, without contention and synchronous (i.e. same speed up as down). Current offerings are not geared to businesses (which need fast up as well as down) but to consumers as targets for streaming and downloading. If we are going to make the town technology friendly, we have to address these issues as a matter of urgency.
2. **Transport** – the usual stories about parking, public transport etc. But this does not necessarily mean more and more space/space for private cars. Trains are exceptionally important to the town. But so are regular, comfortable, well-priced and convenient means of getting from the village into BoA/the station etc.
3. **Keep BoA successful**. We need to build on the undoubted successes that there are in the town. We need more workspace. We need to encourage inward investment from established companies in the region. But that depends on the right infrastructure.
4. **Apprenticeships**. We need to ensure students and young adults are informed of the opportunities perhaps offered by apprenticeships, but also to ensure businesses make the most of the opportunity to train the skilled talent of the future.
5. **Schools**. We need stronger links between the schools in the Area Board and the business community. This needs to start at primary school, when some are already setting their sights on potential direction of employment. Certainly not just sixth forms.

Help for returning graduates. We need to consider how/whether we can help graduates finishing university get meaningful employment, in the town and villages, or in the neighbourhood. Look after our own, so that they will look after us in the future. Building a stronger community across generations.

Workshop Notes (iii) Playing in Bradford on Avon

Yearly invites to residents from different groups in the town – to inform about clubs, membership etc.

We need some “litfassaulen” the cylindrical structures found in France and Germany with adverts and notices for local events and opportunities

Improve facilities at Avon club for football etc.

Youth Council – we need to have one but it fizzled out, it should be resurrected

Desperate need for social opportunities and communication

St Laurence School have many activities after school. Sports, gym, performing arts, drama clubs, music, Duke of Edinburgh, Wiltshire Music Centre – jazz band, choir, West Wilts Young Musicians

Skate Park – rebuild a concrete skate park in a central location, with shelter, “safe to skate” area in Station car park?

More things to do for the youth, more activities, accessible, free of charge

Places to meet people, festival and parties

Teenage girls to be involved in more activities such as sport – needs advertisement and work with the school

Involve schools in researching the history of the town/place, create a walk, an app
Work experience opportunities, volunteering, help with stage production, learning about music, rehearsal space with facilities free for under 25 year olds, see local bands, musicals, workshops

Make a film to show the change in womens lives in the last century

More to do in town with your own age group, a place to meet and hang out

Food and drink is too expensive

200 girl guides want get involved to get work experience and volunteering opportunities

Youth centre is an amazing facility but is underused and not popular – with a youth club on Tuesdays only – needs more volunteers of different ages to help out e.g providing guidance and volunteering opportunities

Need to find these people and ask them what they want and need – not adults telling children

Communication routes – with young people, with parents, with young adults

Wiltshire Music Centre - a safe space?

Actions

Amongst the actions arising, a clear priority is the opportunity to develop community led housing and to establish a Community Land Trust in the area. Volunteers for a Steering Group to take this forward will now be sought.

This event is the first of two on the theme of young people; the second being a meeting on 12 September 2018 at St Laurence School which will include discussion of facilities, funding and services for teenage children in our town and villages.

Thank you for your contribution to what I thought was a very stimulating discussion.

Councillor Jim Lynch