

WEST DORSET PARTNERSHIP

Notes of a meeting of the West Dorset Partnership held on 22nd April 2004.

Present:

Organisation	Name
Chairman	June Salt
Bridport Area Partnership	Susan Anders
Connexions	Martin Jewell
Dorset Community Action	Steve Place
Dorset County Council	Dugald Lockhart
Dorchester Area Partnership	Lynn Saunders
Dorset Police	Sergeant Steve Young
Federation of Small Businesses	Wayne Bradbury
Lyme Regis Development Trust	Margaret Rose
Magna Housing Association	Debby Wheatley
West Dorset Heritage Joint Advisory Committee	Tony Alford
North Dorset Primary Care Trust	Fenella Barnes
South West Dorset Primary Care Trust	Janet Goom
West Dorset District Council	Robert Gould
West Dorset District Council Officers	David Evans (Director of Planning and Environment) Hilary Jordan (Environmental Policy & Regeneration Manager) Sarah Ward (Community & Economic Regeneration Manager) Joanne Witherden (Environmental Regeneration Team Leader) Colin Wood (Communications Team Leader) Kate Critchel (Clerk)

Apologies	
Age Concern	Wendy Hilton
Dorset Wildlife Trust	Peter Scupholme
DEFRA	David Sissions
Western Area Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership	Ron Coatsworth

1. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 5th February 2004 were received and agreed as a correct record.

In response to a question it was noted that the report on parish plans would be presented to the next meeting of the partnership in July, following a successful meeting to discuss this issue on 16 March. In addition, it was agreed that the Partnership should write to the Countryside Agency expressing its disappointment at the loss of the funding support for parish plans (though not objecting to the Agency's rationalisation proposals).

2. BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY IN WEST DORSET

The Chairman welcomed two guest speakers to the meeting, Dr Hazel Lacohee of British Telecom and Tim Snape from West Dorset Internet, an independent Internet provider.

On addressing the partnership Dr Lacohee advised partners of the exchanges status and availability of ADSL in West Dorset. She informed the partnership that in order for ADSL to be available in the local area of West Dorset certain trigger levels had to be met. This could be achieved by registering your interest with BT Broadband. Partners were further advised that it was not necessary for an individual to own a computer to register with BT Broadband.

Dr Lacohee also informed partners that the company would help areas build a successful campaign. To find out local trigger levels and register with BT, individuals could log on to the web address at www.bt.com/broadband, click on UK map, click on the SW region and follow the link to the list of campaign groups.

The partnership was further advised that BT would upgrade every exchange where there was sufficient demand, seek public sector support to stimulate awareness and demand, and encourage external involvement and explore other technologies such as wireless.

Dr Lacohee informed the partnership that BT was committed to 100% broadband coverage by 2005. Partners noted that currently 965 of homes and businesses connected to broadband-enabled exchanges were within range of ADSL services. Technological restrictions left some out of reach of ADSL services, but advances continued to be made.

It was noted that take-up of ADSL in Dorset was only 8.1% and some partners felt that this was likely to be due to the cost of the package.

Tim Snape of West Dorset Internet advised the partnership of the company's achievements to date. He highlighted the main difficulties that he had experienced, which were, in his view, high BT tariffs and poor service from the BT provider.

Tim Snape advised the partnership that his solution had been to use wireless to connect to broadband. He expressed concern that the area in which he lived was unlikely to meet its BT trigger level of 200, as there were only 100 residences in the locality.

Lynn Saunders, Dorchester Area Partnership, advised partners that the Countryside Agency had produced a booklet on broadband, which also detailed what options were available.

Partners agreed that the issues relating to broadband connectivity needed to be discussed in more detail. Sarah Ward, Community & Economic Regeneration Manager (WDDC) suggested that she put together a report, with other partner contributions, to be considered at the next meeting of the partnership in July.

The Chairman thanked Dr Lacohee and Mr Snape for their informative presentations. She suggested that West Dorset Partnership's main concern was the costs of BT Broadband and lack of connectivity in rural areas for rural businesses to remain competitive.

3. WEST DORSET COMMUNITY PLAN: IMPLEMENTATION

Hilary Jordan, Environmental Policy and Regeneration Manager (WDDC) advised that further to the last meeting 'lead partners' were asked to draft a brief position statement for the various topics within the community plan. Partners discussed the topics in detail and suggested a number of changes including:

Activities and Opportunities for the Community

Other groups that might be added included Outspace 2, which aimed to provide play opportunities across Dorset, the Children's and Young People's Strategic Partnership, and the Dorset AONB Partnership Board.

Health and Wellbeing

Partners were advised that the district council had been invited to send a representative to attend future meetings of the South West and North health Promotion Group. Dorset Surestart and the Children's & Young People's Strategic Partnership were also mentioned.

Housing

Look to improve the link with the Dorset Affordable Housing Task Group. Explore and develop contacts in the business sector. Address ways to attract funding for affordable housing aimed at young people living in the area.

Local Prosperity

Dorset Chamber of Commerce be added to the list of contacts. Develop links with Dorset Economic Sub Group of the Dorset Strategic Partnership. There was a need for organisations to work together to lobby for the specific needs of the West Dorset area.

Our Environment

The partnership was generally happy with partnership organisations listed. The Heritage Committee could be a significant sub-group on this topic, and it was agreed that its draft 'Framework for Action' be sent out to Partnership members. FWAG (Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group) was suggested to be added.

Safe Communities

It was agreed that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership was the main sub-group dealing with this theme. Add Crime Prevention Panels and Watch Groups to the list of organisations.

Transport and Accessibility

Partners were happy overall with the organisations listed. DART (Dorset Area Rural Transport group) could be added to the list. Dorset County Council to take the lead when the topic is discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

It was agreed that the partnership would review each topic in detail over the next few meetings addressing the theme, looking at relevant partnerships that exist, and how to take forward the implementation of the action within the community plan.

It was agreed that Debby Wheatley of Magna Housing Group report to the next meeting addressing the housing theme, identifying the greatest need, funding opportunities, and who to lobby for such funding by developing a plan for the best way forward.

Decision

- (a) That the existing partnerships, identified in the report and notes of this meeting be considered appropriate for taking forward the actions identified in the community plan.
- (b) That the relevant lead partners on each theme make contact with these partnerships, to find out their views on this involvement.
- (c) That the outcome of (a) and (b) above be reported to future meetings of the partnership when each of the themes/topics is to be considered in detail.
- (d) A forward plan, of when each theme is to come to the partnership for consideration, be agreed at the next meeting.
- (e) That housing be the topic for detailed consideration at the next meeting in July.

4. CHOOSING HEALTH CONSULTATION

Janet Goom, of the South West Dorset PCT advised the partnership that the Secretary of State for Health had recently launched an extensive national consultation on improving the nation's health. Primary care trusts and local authorities had the lead role to undertake local consultation, working within the framework of their local strategic partnerships.

The consultation aimed to improve health through:

- Interactions with the public, employees and society
- Creating and maintaining a healthy environment
- Helping people deal with the stresses of life
- Working together to support healthy choices.

The Chairman agreed that it was important to take the time to respond to the questionnaire and looked forward to receiving a feedback on the consultation.

5. UPDATE ON THE DORSET STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Dougald Lockhart (DCC) updated partners on the current position of the Dorset Strategic Partnership and the final strategy was almost agreed and would be officially launched at the Dorset Strategic Partnership Conference on 15th May 2004.

6. COMMUNICATING THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Colin Wood, Communications, team leader (WDDC) advised partners that the new web pages on the West Dorset District Council site were now up and running. Partners were asked to view the site and pass any comments or amendments to Colin direct.

Sarah Ward, (WDDC) advised the partners that the West Dorset Partnership would have a stall at the Dorset Strategic Partnership conference on 15th May 2004.

7. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- Thursday 15th July 2004– 10.30 a.m.

If you are unable to attend the meeting it would be very helpful if you would identify a substitute who could attend in your place.