

LESBURY PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM FOCUS MEETING ON LEISURE, EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENT HELD ON 23rd JUNE 2018

Leisure and Sport – hardly surprisingly there was strong support for a multipurpose sports facility located near the school with a possible all weather surface pitch for hockey and football, to be used by both the school and the local community. This was the top of most people's wish list but then there were many more mid and low cost ideas put forward too. Many of the points made fit into more than one category eg good sports and leisure facilities were seen as a way of keeping young people in the area as well as attracting new young families (if there was suitable housing available). Ideas put forward included:

- Greater use of Hipsburn Primary School hall for community sports including badminton
- Reopening the old tennis court in School Lane (though this was never a full-sized court)
- Concrete outdoor table tennis tables
- Possible water-based activities on the Aln near Steppey Lane bridge. Access for skiffs, sailing, canoeing, and fishing by the picnic area.

On the more leisurely side of life, ideas included:

- Village Café (other than the one already active on Sat. mornings in the Parish Room and the Shepherd's Hut and outside table at the shop)
- Positive support for the pub
- Youth Club/Scout or explorer club
- Cookery classes for men
- A walking group
- Clear well-marked footpaths on both sides of the Aln from Steppey Lane bridge to the estuary
- Footpath from the road bridge on A1068 along the river to Alnwick
- Better advertising of what already happens in the village especially in the village hall
- Expand creative arts opportunities eg pantomime and shows.
- Pondfield Play area needs more swings for 8+ age group and metal monkey bars (wooden ones give splinters!)
- Re-install the Stepping Stones at Steppey Lane bridge.

Access was an area much noted, both physical access which centred on the need for ramps on either side of the present Steppey Lane bridge and access to information relating to what

already happens in the villages. (Noted here should be the oft used comment that there should be closer links between Hipsburn and Lesbury). A ramped access to the bridge would make it much easier for parents with pushchairs and those with bikes and scooters (both two-wheeled and mobility). Other particular points made under this heading included:

- Problem of signage of the National Cycle route at the roundabout at Hipsburn causing cyclists to end up on the main road. The cycle path should be accessed from the roundabout itself.
- Existing footpaths need to be clear and cut back.
- Support the cycle path to Alnwick along the Aln railway route
- Public toilet in the village (though there is one for public use behind the church, with a key available at the shop).

Education – Hipsburn Primary School was seen as the obvious focus in this section and there was wholehearted agreement that the school needs support. One possible way of doing this would be to find out what skills are available in the parish and to this end, the PTA (which struggles at the moment for man-power and is in the process of drafting a survey to go out to parents on Skills/Talent/Time) could usefully send this out to everyone in the parish. This would allow older people who may have recently moved into the area, to find out that the school could use their time and skills.) Volunteers could be very useful in many ways, both in the classroom and at fundraising events. *Volunteers actually would be needed as part of many of the ideas put forward!* Again, ideas put forward included:

- Links to local cricket, and rugby clubs to teach these sports in the local school.
- HPS could give a clear idea of what could be offered by the school in the way of sports etc.
- HPS could list the skills that they would like help with from the community.
- Forest skills using local woodland (could include orienteering)
- Encourage school children to participate in existing village clubs eg croquet, bridge, bowls, crochet etc in lunchtimes, after school and even in school time.
- Encourage intergeneration links so people recognise each other around the villages.
- Visiting speakers from the local community in school such as has happened with Hearing Dogs and Recorder lessons.
- Timings of present activities need to consider the possible participation of different age groups.
- Messy Church and Holiday clubs