

SURBITON NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMITTEE

COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOPS 4th and 10th March 2010

Participants at the Community Planning workshops (54 on 4th March and 55 on the 10th March) were divided into 5 Groups and asked to identify as many issues as possible which were recorded by Facilitators. They were also encouraged to record other thoughts on individual sheets of paper. Each participant in the Groups was then asked to prioritise three issues which they felt were most important to them and Facilitators gave feedback on the top three priorities for each Group. The top three priorities from each table were listed - totalling 15 - and participants were invited to vote on their top five priorities from this list. These topics were then discussed in more detail by 5 Groups and individuals chose the topic they wanted to discuss and moved between Groups to discuss other topics if they wished. There were 9 key topics discussed (as over the two days some of the topics were duplicated) and a number of more general issues. These are summarised below:

1. Surbiton Hospital Site	
Planning and Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joined up planning approach across all service provision ▪ Preserve features of building if possible ▪ New development should complement existing and co-ordinate/compliment the local area ▪ Need an area Masterplan (infrastructure/parking) ▪ Concern about space on site for all proposed facilities and parking ▪ Is it right place for school? ▪ Consequences such as traffic/parking issues that would flow from school on the site. ▪ Different access points Ewell Road/Southbank/Oakhill
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would like a Polyclinic (i.e. range of health services on one site) but not at the expense of Kingston Hospital ▪ Site should include the doctors' surgeries, minor injuries unit, physiotherapy, NHS dentist, Ophthalmologist ▪ Need honest communication about impact of moving services on Surbiton Tolworth and Kingston Hospitals ▪ Impact of Surbiton Hospital proposals on clinical services at Kingston. Would it free up time and enable more provision? ▪ Easier for people to access services locally – community serving ▪ Concern about losing 9 local pharmacies – damage to local businesses (poss. consortium at Surbiton Hospital site) ▪ Needs to be a hospital site

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern about impact on GP practices/clinics – need engagement ▪ Oakhill already a polyclinic – what will happen to it? ▪ Alpha Road Estate sheltered Housing ▪ Dental practice involvement ▪ Links between school and hospital
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comprehensive and public consultation ▪ Want to know more and influence outcome ▪ Need more clarity as to situation and services to be included ▪ Information sharing ▪ Timescales ▪ Decisions
Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Polyclinic must be open before Oakhill is closed ▪ Opportunities for buildings previously used as GP practices • Conversation/liaison between RBK and KPCT • Development of Hospital Site Could bring about real improvements to the area
2. Information Services Centre	
What is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One stop shop with one main entrance for all (fully accessible) ▪ Parking - essential for disabled access and also for elderly people ▪ Facilities for community groups and advice on benefits etc. as well as classes/taster sessions and general information ▪ Access to reliable on-line information, detailed with lots of information of courses etc. easy to use with good links to relevant RBK and non RBK sites to avoid frustration ▪ Need physical information centre as well as on-line joined up services ▪ Information on Voluntary services, not just Council services – involve Kingston Voluntary Action ▪ Opportunity get feedback/information on projects, consultations etc. ▪ Include and encourage social enterprise and voluntary services ▪ Freebee newspapers and web sites good source of information for many people but also need physical presence ▪ People like to do things for themselves – include web access and reference ‘library’ etc. What’s on. ▪ Central tourist information centre like in Market House, Kingston (but where is central Surbiton – some say by Waitrose some say Library, depends where you live) ▪ Community space like Hook Centre but some rooms are small. Good access to computers ▪ Should have number of sites to provide information etc. with a consistent customer friendly approach ▪ Include computing and printing facilities for voluntary groups to use free or at a reasonable cost

Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cost v facilities ▪ Good design to be attractive and useable - must meet everyone's needs ▪ Part of Surbiton Hospital development ▪ Library is a good source of information – can also provide facilities ▪ Conservation should not go before people when it comes to design i.e. accessibility - old buildings are not accessible only a compromise ▪ People don't know how to access services and may be missing out. Focus on making information widely available ▪ Independence is important especially for disabled people
3. Community Centre	
Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting rooms ▪ Provide facilities for a mixture of ages ▪ Study areas ▪ Safer Neighbourhood Team base ▪ Cafe depends on location ▪ Cater for sports ▪ Drop in Surgeries ▪ Variety of uses ▪ Swimming Pool ▪ More facilities and services for seniors and disabled including volunteering
Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location is key (buses/disabled transport) ▪ Co-ordinated services within other sites ▪ Consulting community on services provided ▪ Extended schools ▪ Use all public buildings for community like USA ▪ Re-open some centres which have closed (Day centres – criteria too rigid) ▪ Community Managed
4. Community Space	
Facilities and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open Victoria Park Pavilion to wider community use – cafe and toilets ▪ RBK and organisations to 'piggy back' on existing provision/opportunities - Council liaison ▪ Encourage more volunteers and voluntary help ▪ Investment and staffing assistance to make existing community spaces useable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-brand existing spaces which are out of date or unattractive and work with private enterprise to use existing space for communities – opportunities for ‘out of hours’ use ▪ Provide central Community Halls as a community focal point ▪ Work with LA Partners and seek subsidies to use existing spaces e.g. health ▪ Better Youth Provision ▪ Provide quality facilities that meet the need/aspirations of the community ▪ Community space dwindled e.g. Assembly rooms now private etc. ▪ Extended schools – promote and expand use of Schools as community space
<p>Consultation, involvement and raising awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a Surbiton Neighbourhood Area action Plan on Community Space ▪ Should be part of Planning considerations ▪ Ascertain what people want and need from a community space and provide justification ▪ Co-ordinate with Partners and RBK provide ‘signposting’ to facilities ▪ Encourage Organisations to lead on creating community space and assist with funding ▪ Make people more aware of support for projects and funding opportunities ▪ Focus grant and other support from RBK for smaller charities ▪ Develop RBK Website to make it more exiting, user friendly and provide up to date information ▪ Include in Planning Guidance ▪ Work in partnership with other authorities such as Elmbridge to share information and facilities ▪ Work with Places of Worship (such as St. Andrew’s and St. Mark’s) to help provide and replace those spaces which are now outdated ▪ Places of worship should be proactively consulted on any local development which includes community services in the Surbiton area
<p>5. Victoria Road and other businesses</p>	
<p>Issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better mix of shops ▪ Specialist/traditional shops such as ironmongers ▪ Independent shops pushed out as cannot compete with chains ▪ Lack of variety in local shops e.g. no local butcher and lack of knowledge they are there ▪ Surbiton shops not disabled friendly/trip hazards at entrances (also applies to library building) ▪ Too much street furniture ▪ Restrict expenditure e.g. Surbiton Town Centre Improvements ▪ Not marketed as a place in its own right (moved on since the ‘Good Life’) ▪ Victoria Road – Poor condition (Range of shops frontages look untidy – have they been informed of conservation area status?)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street Cleansing – Brighton Road ▪ Character should be enhanced ▪ Improve lighting for safety but also to create warmth, welcoming feeling ▪ Train Station access – bridge and lift ▪ Timing of servicing to shops ▪ Empty Shops and their future/high business rates ▪ Victoria Road – Footway width and street furniture • Surbiton Station – Taxi Congestion • Insufficient disabled parking in Town Centres esp. near banks • Reduce street furniture and signage <p>General points about shops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need more independent shops incl. Grocers and butchers (Council influence and guidance) ▪ Reduce rates to help businesses ▪ Empty Shops and their future/rates ▪ Return of Traditional Post Office ▪ Encourage businesses more recycling (all businesses) ▪ Support or and variety of local businesses ▪ Donations to Charity shops (fly-tipping) ▪ Fast food outlets (obesity and health)
Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Re-negotiate rates ▪ Meet with private landlords to discuss issues seek improvements (it is also in their interest) ▪ Create a Traders’ Forum and involve the Chamber of Commerce ▪ Look at other successful shopping areas that have improved e.g. Barnes and Teddington. ▪ Find ways of supporting for independent retailers ▪ Charity shops pay rent not rates – can this be considered to assist small business even temporarily ▪ Marketing Surbiton to independents – including car parking ▪ See what can be done about vacant shops/take an interest ▪ Surbiton card for local discounts (didn’t work before as local of support from traders but might be interested now) ▪ Reduce parking in Victoria Road so that street is less cluttered and more accessible to shoppers but provide signpost to parking elsewhere ▪ Parking at back of station and in other car parks (better utilised/sharing)/information on busy and not so busy times • Beggars and begging – more enforcement

6. Sense of Place/identity	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communities v. Community Spirit ▪ /Breakdown in some communities (know your Neighbour) ▪ Create a different Feeling -“The good Life” ▪ Seek to provide community Facilities ▪ More traders open with more flexible hours and special events such as for over 25s ▪ Encourage residents to return ▪ Information Points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What’s on? ○ IT ○ Notice Boards ▪ Urban Design ▪ Raise awareness of Surbiton as a place e.g. Hold a Surbiton Pageant involving the community and businesses, activities to engender community spirit ▪ Surbiton is a commuter town so much do more to generate a sense of community ▪ Support and encouragement for Farmers’ Market and other events including publicity) which should be encouraged reduce red tape) ▪
7. Public Involvement in new buildings, infill, poor design	
Public Consultation and involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wider catchment area for consultations ▪ Pre-planning application meetings between residents and developers ▪ More involvement of Residents Associations ▪ More community involvement in planning decisions to get more community space etc ▪ Controls over developer planning applications - Council can’t cap development
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Less flats, more houses ▪ Affordable housing for young people ▪ Buildings should be sympathetic to the Surbiton area. Good modern designs. ▪ Tighter controls/guidelines for ‘infill’ development ▪ Protection of front and rear Gardens (restrict crossovers and no backland development) ▪ Poor Aesthetics of new buildings and too much infill.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and design process promotes commercial development, as opposed to community/society needs. Process should be more evenly balanced. ▪ Ewell Road Library, Courts buildings etc. need form a Planning Guidelines for this area ▪ All new buildings to be sustainable ▪ Environmentally Friendly Planning ▪ Planning Processing – refusing beneficial schemes e.g. Red Lion PH site would be beneficial to local economy ▪ Co-ordination of major planning applications in an area ▪ Need to plan for sustainable solutions in planning e.g. cycling, walking (not car based) ▪ Environmentally Friendly Planning
8. Services and Facilities for Young People	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Youth Centre on Alpha Road Estate ▪ Youth cafe for 11-19 year olds – not much for young people to do in Surbiton ▪ Dedicated Youth Halls and other secure and safe spaces for younger people to ‘hang out’ and have the opportunity for social interaction ▪ Better use of existing facilities – Schools, playing fields, Parks, Church halls ▪ More staff and leaders to focus on youth provision -RBK and 3rd Sector ▪ Links with private sector, sponsorship and grants to provide one bespoke high quality Youth Centre ▪ Combined use e.g. Devon Way, Chessington (over 50s and young people facilities on same site) ▪ Range of Youth needs – some would benefit from extra classes and alternative education/skills opportunities ▪ Study rooms with computer access ▪ Counselling and health advice ▪ Free access to young people ▪ Accessible – public transport etc. and feel safe for young people to use ▪ Must be flexible/responsive to need/trends – Young people change move on ▪ Involve young people in planning and providing ▪ Young people friendly hall – suggest Baptist Church where young people get off buses ▪ Get Businesses involved and volunteers from University and Colleges and provide supervision and training opportunities
9. Traffic Calming	
Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review raised tables - lack of clarity over purpose, cause damage to people (esp. with injuries) drainage and cars and confusion as to who has right of way ▪ Remove speed cushions and raised tables in some roads e.g. Switzerland example, took all their speed humps out ▪ More acknowledgement and emphasis on ‘roads for cars’

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic approach - local decisions can have negative impact on strategic roads ▪ Sweden removed street furniture, road markings – undertake pilot in Surbiton ▪ Reduce number of traffic lights or operate part time - traffic flows better ▪ Turn the Traffic lights off in Kingston during the day ▪ More information for pedestrians crossings in appropriate places ▪ Green boxes for cyclist at traffic lights not used by cyclists ▪ Remove subways on Tolworth Broadway ▪ King Charles road Bridge – Congestion ▪ Better consultation
Road Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buses speed, need more training to adhere to limits ▪ More flashing speed signs – deterrent ▪ Safety outside schools and speeds on residential roads ▪ Inappropriate speed levels outside schools (limit should be 20 mph) ▪ Too much speeding in residential roads ▪ More designated cycle routes e.g. Queens Promenade and Maple Road

10. Other issues raised by participants

Crime and Public Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti Social behaviour and Crime levels • More information on crime prevention • Police on the beat rather in cars • Burglary • Increase CCTV • Park safety - Victoria Park Gates • Neighbourhood Watch • Distracted Burglary – elderly people vulnerable
Council and other Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More accountable • Better monitoring and supervision • Statutory Undertakers and Road Works
Residents' Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with Residents' Associations running costs • Forum for Residents Associations • Data sharing for organisations such as Residents' Associations

Waste and Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green boxes sometimes not returned or emptied • Management and appearance of Recycling Centres and fly-tipping • Clarity on what can be put in green boxes • Publicity should be more prominent re: benefits and awareness • Works well generally but issues with communications on housing estates • Extend materials that can be recycled • More litter and dog waste bins • Private Rear Service Roads – Responsibility • Maintain current standards of street cleansing • Fly tipping (Street Scene are excellent in responding but difficult problem) • Dog mess/discarded dog mess bags thrown on Council flower beds
Planning Issues (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolworth Broadway Development and supermarket application • Planning sites remaining un-started
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing – Overcrowding, landlords converting houses to flats • More Green Space especial in Social Housing • Housing Repairs
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YMCA: benefit to community/Police not manning • Highway Maintenance – potholes, tree roots, gritting on pavements and side roads, time taken to repair • Overcrowding in Schools • Growing population and affect on infrastructure and communities e.g. schools • Cost of Public Transport • Too many buses • Parking, especially at the Railway Station • Filterbeds Thames Water site – opportunity for nature reserve etc. (financial constraints) • Raven’s Ait – Clarification of situation • Lack of public conveniences • Station very busy/over capacity • Unemployment of Professionals • Hard to hear Groups • Dangerous Dogs • A say in financial planning and spending

12 April 2010