

Notes of the presentation on 12 October 2016 by David Gentle to report initial findings from the survey

Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Forum

Learning, Leisure and Community Facilities Focus Group

- Recent changes in responsibility (Roger and I assumed new roles) and volume of response leads to tight timescale.
- Many local plans have minimal content to address the provision of community facilities.

Considered important for this area due to size and expectation.

Need to unpick some of the categories (200 pages of comments).

Some one-off comments are useful, others irrelevant.

Vision for the provision of learning, leisure and community facilities

High quality learning, leisure and community facilities will be available to all residents of the area. These facilities will enable the delivery of services that are appropriate to need, accessible and sufficient.

Contextual issues

- Effectively meet needs arising from any increased housing.
- Issue of cross boundary access – both ways - examples
- Financial and practical viability

The above involved conflicting interests and value judgements.

Issue of the extent of our remit.

Dealing with autonomous organisations - certainly shops and businesses but also schools and medical facilities.

Infrastructure for schools and medical facilities more likely with garden city developments that infill.

Considered under the five headings:

1. health and welfare
2. sport, leisure and recreation
3. arts, culture and libraries
4. retail outlets
5. education, lifelong learning and preschool - kept to last to give opportunity to discuss issues around a suggested policy.

Under each heading we will consider:

Objectives – (what we want to achieve).

Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format.

SAMPLE of open-ended responses - nearly 200 pages with approximately 8000 comments - only examined first 10 pages or so.

Model policy for comment on issues/challenges (heading 5, more if time) - expect significant input from those present.

Tick box versus open-ended

Tick box - advantages: easy to analyse and compare. Converts to numbers
disadvantages: all respondents, even if no interest. Leads to numerical analysis even when inappropriate.

Open-ended - advantages: gives picture of views without prompting.
Disadvantages: difficult to analyse.

Note main themes

The big themes are clearly *medical, education and leisure facilities* -refer to number of mentions in priorities for the next five years plus longer term priorities. Medical 568 + 779, education 366 + 790, leisure facilities 657 + 311. Mention short and long-term trends from the above.

Can be deduced that concerns about education and medical are mainly linked to housing:
education: first choice 414, second choice 330;
medical: first choice 495, second choice 227.

Objectives for the provision of health and welfare

- ✓ Improvements, expansion and new build lead to first-class resources.
- ✓ Provision enables local people to access medical support that is timely and appropriate
- ✓ Development of facilities enhances primary care.

- Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format

High level of satisfaction with what we have – 86%.

High number stating that improvement needed over the next five years (363) and beyond (122).

Very high number (495) believe this will be an issue with additional housing.

- SAMPLE of open-ended responses

Indications that there are difficulties in accessing a doctor of choice, this worsening with any additional housing.

The apparent conflict between the high level of satisfaction and concern about the future seems to be explained by good quality of provision but difficulty in accessing it.

Issue to consider: Will more buildings lead to more practitioners?

- Model policy for comment on issues/challenges

Open discussion if time permits.

Objectives for the provision of sport, leisure and recreation

- ✓ Where there is sufficient demand, there are appropriate resources for sport, leisure and recreation that are accessible and cost-effective
- ✓ Local clubs for sport, leisure and recreation have adequate and appropriate venues to meet the demands of membership.
- ✓ Views expressed by residents to retain and enhance parks, open spaces, hedgerows and trees are given due regard.

- ✓ There is provision to cater for the expressed needs of specific groups such as youth and the elderly.

- Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format

High level of satisfaction with provision for the elderly – 81%.

Relatively low level of satisfaction (44%) with provision for the young.

Caution regarding the above as to age profile of respondents.

Low level of satisfaction with sport, leisure, recreation exercise – 38%

Relatively high level of satisfaction with outdoors facilities for sport (70%). Question as to whether those who do not require out facilities indicate that they are satisfied!

A view that facilities for indoor sport need improvement (328 short-term, 215 long-term).

Some indication that facilities for the young need improvement (189 short-term, 95 long-term) - beware response profile!

Only 22 indicate that facilities for the elderly need improvement and only 20 that community facilities need improvement.

More detailed information obtained from youth section - there are 22 named clubs, societies, activities with five or more mentions. Main needs appear to be better spaces and buildings (95) and a requirement for more clubs (49). The youth survey will give far more evidence for this section.

- SAMPLE of open-ended responses

Frequent mention of need for more sports facilities, particularly indoor. Mention that existing access to school facilities seems poor.

- Model policy for comment on issues/challenges

Open discussion if time permits.

Objectives for provision for participation in the arts and culture and for libraries

- ✓ There are venues that encourage the appreciation of and activity in the arts and cultural activities.
- ✓ There are first class facilities for research and the acquisition of knowledge.

- Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format

71% are satisfied with the provision.

43 respondents mentioned the need to improve library provision over the next five years.

27 mentioned the need to improve provision in the arts and culture over the next five years.

- SAMPLE of open-ended responses

Relatively few mentions.

Whilst not specific, some indication of concerns about library provision. Art and culture issue may be about rehearsal facilities?

- Model policy for comment on issues/challenges

Open discussion if time permits.

Objectives for the provision of retail outlets

- ✓ There is a balance of retail outlets that meets the wishes and needs of the community in terms of service offered, size and location.

- Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format

There is a high level of satisfaction (86%) with what we have.

However, a relatively high number of people (121) give a high priority to the short term improvement of retail outlets. This specifically includes a post office (16 mentions), possibly in Dorridge, and restaurants (15 mentions). There are relatively low mentions of public conveniences (3) and greengrocers (4).

This is set as a relatively high priority for development with no clear indication as to what direction this might follow.

- SAMPLE of open-ended responses

A relatively large number of suggestions/mentions but no significant trends as yet.

- Model policy for comment on issues/challenges

Open discussion if time permits.

Objectives for the provision of education, lifelong learning and preschool

- ✓ There are sufficient places in statutory education so that those young people in the area wishing to do so are able to secure places of their choice at the local schools.
- ✓ Local schools have buildings and grounds that are fit for purpose.
- ✓ There are good facilities for lifelong learning that are viable in relation to demand.

- Broad conclusions from 'tick box' format

There is a high level of satisfaction with what we have: primary 95%; secondary 92%; preschool/childcare 89%.

Satisfaction with life-long learning provision, at 57%, is fairly low.

171 respondents rated education provision fairly high in the long-term. As previously mentioned, this can be seen as related to availability of places, particularly at primary level, in the light of any new housing.

52 respondents thought that adult education provision should be improved in the next few years. This is less than the low satisfaction rate might indicate, possibly because respondents perceived a need for community education per se but not for themselves.

21 indicated that childcare facilities need improvement in the future. Although rather low, this figure could be taken as an indicator of need.

- SAMPLE of open-ended responses

There is a wide variety of responses concerning education such as optimum size of school, availability of places at primary level. This requires more detailed analysis.

A model policy for the provision of education, lifelong learning and preschool

New housing proposals will be required to demonstrate that the likely additional statutory educational need of those living in the area can be met by:

current capacity or planned, approved and funded increases in capacity, and/or funding for additional facilities that can be delivered in the required timescales.

This open session is intended to draw out the concerns and challenges that residents have around this particular type of policy. Expected areas for discussion - not revealed at this stage:

1. Is this a policy? If not, what would make it one?
 2. Challenges regarding school admission policies, particularly faith school and academies having autonomy.
 3. To what extent do pupils cross the neighbourhood boundary to access education?
 4. How would funding from new house building be distributed equitably amongst the schools in the area?
 5. What is the current capacity of the schools and their ability to absorb increases?
 6. How much new housing will there be and what type? What is the impact on the population profile?
- ... Others arising from discussion.

Written after the meeting.

Issues listed above as 2 and 3 were raised from the floor. The presentation was curtailed before further discussion could take place.

DRG