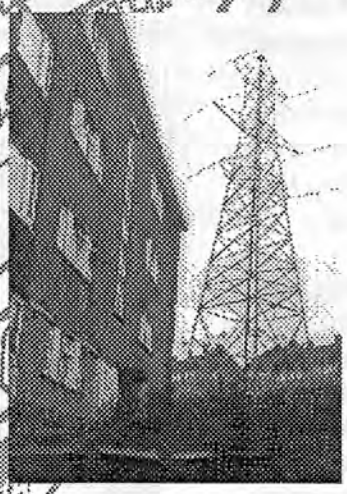
MORE VALLEY

the report of the

Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend

held on 12-15th September 1997 in the Ore Valley, Hastings



Introduction

The Action Planning Weekend brought together experts from the local community, from local organisations, and from outside the town. It took 9 months to plan, and was organised and facilitated by a team of people drawn from these groups.

The "weekend" actually lasted four days:

Friday
Briefings and tours of the area for the "team"

Saturday
Public open day with workshops and Planning for Real exercises

Sunday
Team working day to develop proposals and draft the event report

Monday
Presentation of the proposals and report at an Open Meeting

This report sums up the main themes and proposals that came out of the event and the recommendations of the Action Planning Team. It is hoped that these will help to shape a brighter future for the Ore Valley and that the energy and commitment generated will be kept up over the coming months and years.

Key themes that emerged

Community Participation and Concerns for the Future

There is a strong desire by the local community for real involvement and control over decision-making processes regarding the future of the Ore Valley and the running of local facilities.

Employment and Training

There is a high level of local unemployment made worse by a lack of incentive to work due to low wages and the benefit trap, an absence of affordable child care facilities, limited and expensive public transport and shortage of appropriate training.

Housing Quality

There is concern about the high turnover of residents, the standard of housing and an allocation policy that leads to children being raised in flats.

Community and Social Provision

There is an urgent need for major improvements in community facilities, particularly better and more accessible health services, improved child care and the need for a new flexible Community Centre in the Farley Bank area.

Safety and Security

Safety and security are serious concerns, particularly in connection with play areas for young children, hazards of crossing busy roads and general crime and anti-social behaviour.

Information and Communication

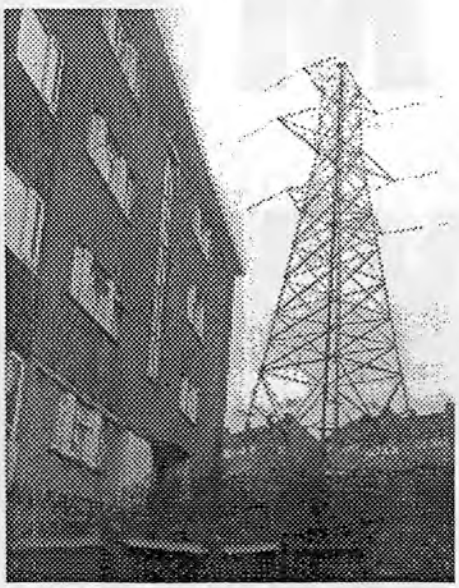
Improved communication is needed between community groups and agencies, including the Police, the Health service, Housing Associations, the Education Authority, the Council, Residents Groups and the residents themselves.

Movement and Transport

There is a strong desire to create a safe, clean, well-lit movement and transport network throughout the area which does not rely on private motorised transportation. Transport links need to be improved both within the area and to other parts of the town.

Ecology and Environment

There is a strong desire to protect and enhance the natural environment and to provide safe havens for existing wildlife. There are also broader environmental concerns such as pollution and the provision of recycling facilities.



Sport and Leisure Facilities

There is concern about the lack of low-cost sport and leisure facilities for adults and young people.

Image

A new positive image and identity for the area is needed to counter the negative perceptions often held by outsiders and portrayed in the media.

Young people

More facilities for young people are urgently needed, particularly in the age range 8 to 16 years. Young people need to be involved in decision making about the future of the area.

Main recommendations

Community Participation

Residents should be at the centre of the regeneration process. The Ore Valley Forum should be revitalised and properly resourced to act as the umbrella body for the projects set out in this report and bring together residents associations and representatives of all other affected parties. An Ore Valley Development Trust could be set up to maximise fundraising opportunities and develop locally-owned projects.

Local Management

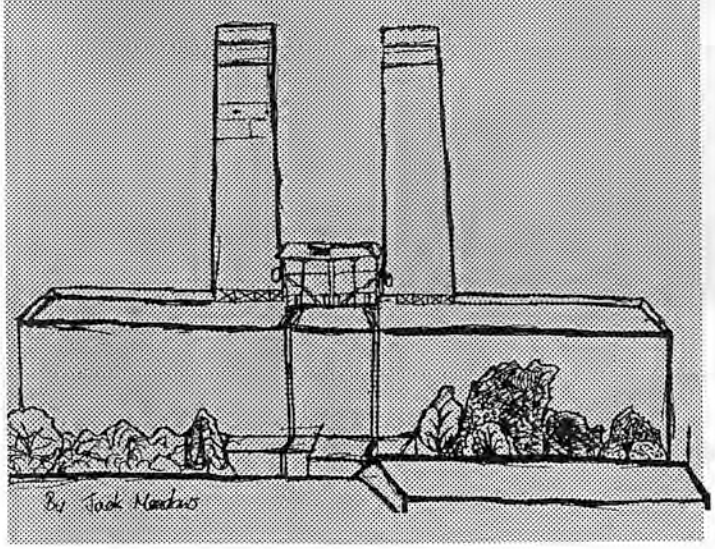
Planning and management for the Ore Valley should take place in the Ore Valley, perhaps based in a new community planning office or resource centre, building on the recently established Oasis centre and community flat. This should start with the consultants undertaking the SRB feasibility study.

Ore Valley Strategy

An Ore Valley Strategy should be drawn up and agreed by all parties before any decisions are taken that affect the layout and design of the area. It should include a three-dimensional urban design strategy, and form the basis for planning guidance to ensure quality development is achieved. The ideas drawn up over the action planning weekend provide a starting point for discussion.

Immediate Action

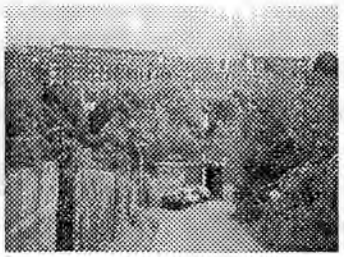
A series of immediate actions should be taken to tackle minor 'eyesores' and other local concerns and create confidence. Such things might include improving Farley Bank football pitch and seeking planning permission for a safe play street at Lower Farley Bank.



Ideas and proposals

Ore Valley Forum

This body, which draws together Residents Associations, community groups and agencies, needs regenerating and resourcing. It should be chaired by a local Councillor and adopted as a formal advisory group to Hastings Borough Council and Hastings Regeneration Partnership.



Resident network and issue groups

Local residents should be recruited to co-convene the Ore Valley Forum's issue groups. They would be paid £10 per week for 2 hours work. Their co-convenor would be a professional working in a relevant agency.

Local Environmental Management Structures

New structures should be established to allow for local management of communal areas such as nature areas, pathways and play areas. Schools and the police could assist with this.

Security

Neighbourhood Watch areas should be promoted and new schemes developed. Footpath networks should be better lit, including areas around housing.

Design and Development brief

Once the overall urban design strategy has been agreed, design and development briefs should be drawn up for critical areas to which developers can respond.

Housing Plan

A comprehensive housing plan should be drawn up in consultation with local residents. It should include an assessment of whether any further housing in the Valley is desirable, which housing needs to be replaced and adapted, and whether there should be a greater tenure mix.

Co-ordination of land owners

The various land owners in the Valley should co-ordinate their activities to ensure a comprehensive approach. It might be helpful for English Partnerships to 'compulsory' purchase certain areas. A seminar for all land owners would be a good starting point.

"Jobs Now"

Led by an organisation with expertise in community enterprise, this project would employ residents to carry out a local skills and economy survey. The project would link with the Job Centre and Sussex University's local work.

New employment uses

Rather than a conventional industrial estate, new employment could include further education, a training centre, combined living and working studio units and a variety of sizes of serviced workspace. In addition, at the Hughenden Road/Parker Road corner, commercial and leisure uses could be introduced as part of a new Station Square.

Road to employment area

There is strong local objection to the proposed new access road to the employment area below Farley Bank. It would significantly detract from the natural environment of the

valley and would be very costly. It is important to encourage employment that can be serviced by the existing network and there are other ways in which road access could be provided from Mount Pleasant Road.

Ore Station Revitalisation

Ore Station should be improved to attract more people to use the rail service and to bring people into the new employment area. This should include more frequent and through services, better access and secure cycle parking .

Community bus service

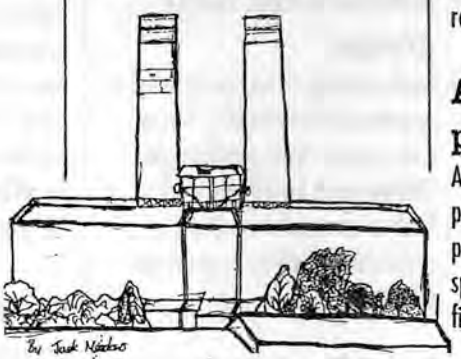
Bus services should be upgraded with new routes, more frequent service and better timetable information. The feasibility of establishing a Community Hopper service should be investigated to access centralised health services and the new station.

Road Safety

Priory Road and Frederick Road urgently require extra pedestrian crossing facilities. Speed reduction on these roads and those within the Ore Valley should be implemented. The possibility of introducing schemes which discourage the use of vehicles within residential areas should be explored.

Greenways and Cycle links

The pedestrian links throughout the Valley should be reinstated and reinforced. These should include links down and across the valley area and into adjacent areas such as Ore Village via Victoria Avenue. Footpaths should be well lit and properly maintained. A cycleway should be established along the valley running from the Ridge in the north to Alexandra Park and the Town Centre in the South.



Power station

There could be enormous potential in reusing the spacious interiors of the power station for sports and leisure purposes and its image could be dramatically transformed. A full feasibility study should be undertaken.

Local Centres

The area as a whole needs a strong community focus uniting Broomgrove and Farley Bank. It should be a lively public space including health services, leisure, sports and recreation, cafes and shops. The new centre should include good access to the upgraded railway station. Existing Local Centres such as Malvern Way should be improved by providing more facilities, better links to footpaths, new planting, seating and lighting. Service and parking areas, should also be carefully considered. A new local centre could be provided as part of the development of the Hospital land north of Farley Bank.

Action for Children

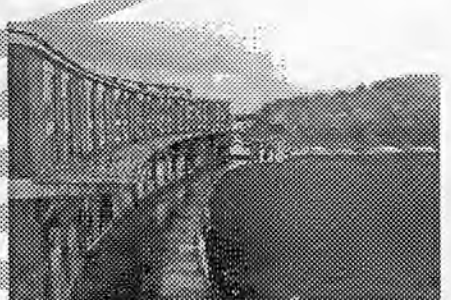
This should include regular maintenance of existing play areas and natural areas used for unstructured play and provision of some supervised play activities and regular organised events. There is a need to establish the principle of safe play streets throughout the Ore Valley with the immediate provision of a Safe Street in lower Farley Bank. The allocation of space for skateboarding and BMX tracks and levelling football pitches, building the adventure playground and kickabout/basketball areas is required.

Action for young people

A Plan of action is required to provide better facilities for young people. There is a need for indoor space for pool tables, loud music, fitness and other leisure pursuits.

Community Newspaper

A regular local newspaper should be established to improve communications within the area, more liaison between the agencies involved in the area and develop local talent. This could be linked with providing a local press officer promoting a positive image in the existing local and regional media.



Open Space

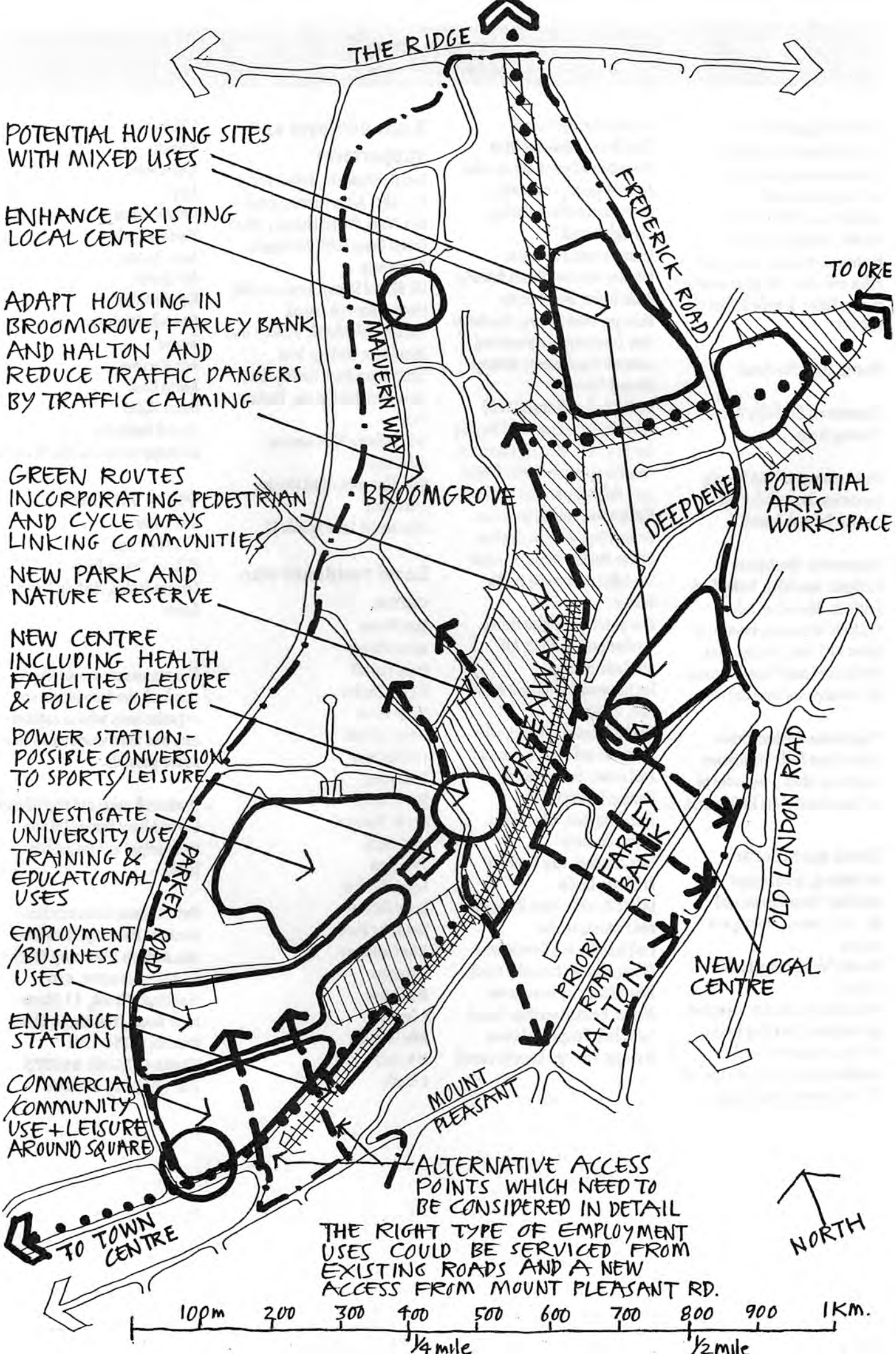
The existing areas of woodland and open space should be protected and linked into a coherent network of linear parks. They should be made accessible and safe and become the focus for new leisure, new nature interpretation facilities and play opportunities. Surface water from surrounding areas should be fed into wetland areas and the lost watercourses re-established. A Nature Reserve should be established to protect wildlife.

Children's ideas

√ Basketball court
√ A football area
√ A ramp for bikes
√ Skateboards and roller blades
√ I think we should have a keep fit gym
√ a street hockey pitch
√ crazy golf
√ running
√ a sports hall
we want them NOW"

"We want: A house where we can decorate it how **we** want and do what we want. We want a different activity in every room like
√ table tennis
√ board games
√ drama
√ music
√ tuck shop
√ art room
√ singing
√ a garden and a basketball net in garden
√ keep fit
√ a room to hang pictures in
We want somewhere in Hastings where we can go to hang out and have some freedom in somewhere cheap and fun. As long as it's in the 10-15 age group.
The ABC Cinema is under new management which means there are no more prizes to win or decent music to listen to. The new cinema is no fun anymore, it is untidy. The films are old and boring. The place is a mess and unruly. They need rules to keep children quiet. They need the staff to watch closely, and not just watch the film"

These presentations were made by the children's group which met during the Saturday open workshops.


THE RIDGE
POTENTIAL HOUSING SITES WITH MIXED USES
ENHANCE EXISTING LOCAL CENTRE
ADAPT HOUSING IN BROOMGROVE, FARLEY BANK AND HALTON AND REDUCE TRAFFIC DANGERS BY TRAFFIC CALMING
GREEN ROUTES INCORPORATING PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE WAYS LINKING COMMUNITIES
NEW PARK AND NATURE RESERVE
NEW CENTRE INCLUDING HEALTH FACILITIES LEISURE & POLICE OFFICE
POWER STATION - POSSIBLE CONVERSION TO SPORTS/LEISURE
INVESTIGATE UNIVERSITY USE TRAINING & EDUCATIONAL USES
EMPLOYMENT /BUSINESS USES
ENHANCE STATION
COMMERCIAL/ COMMUNITY USE + LEISURE AROUND SQUARE
TO TOWN CENTRE
MALVERN WAY
BROOMGROVE
FREDERICK ROAD
TO ORE
DEEPDENE
POTENTIAL ARTS WORKSPACE
GREENWAY
PARKER ROAD
FARLEY BANK
PRIORY ROAD
HALTON
OLD LONDON ROAD
NEW LOCAL CENTRE
MOUNT PLEASANT
ALTERNATIVE ACCESS POINTS WHICH NEED TO BE CONSIDERED IN DETAIL
THE RIGHT TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT USES COULD BE SERVICED FROM EXISTING ROADS AND A NEW ACCESS FROM MOUNT PLEASANT RD.
NORTH
100m 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1KM.
¼ mile
½ mile

CREDITS

The organisers

The Ore Valley Action Planning Weekend was organised by a working group including local residents, Councillors, Council officials, employers and local businesses, voluntary groups, the Police and others with an interest in the Ore Valley. It had a budget of £10,000.

Hosts: Ore Valley Forum

Organisers: Ore Valley Action Planning Group.

Main sponsors: 1066 Housing Association, Sussex Police and Hastings Borough Council.

Supporters: Broomgrove Residents' Association, Farley Bank Residents' Association, Halton Residents' Association, Hastings & Rother NHS Trust, Hastings Trust, East Sussex County Council Community Development Team and others.

Programme Advice: Urban Design Group Public Participation Programme which is supported by the Department of the Environment.

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Ritchie Butterworth, Halton resident
Lyn Meadows, Ore Valley Forum
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Cllr Pam Brown, Council Leader, Hastings Borough Council
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Tony Constantine, Corporate and Economic Development, Hastings Borough Council
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Tony Baker, Priority Estates Project
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Stuart Greenstreet, Hastings Trust
Renate Reuther-Greaves, Hastings Trust
Sally Ballamy, 1066 Housing Association
Mike Thompson, 1066 Housing Association
Mike Turner, Local Agenda 21

Local residents who came:

Mori Werner
Momo Werner
David Funnell
Doreen Coucher
Jackie Gaunt
Lorrie Csobaias
Pauline Jones
Katie Jones
Mrs W Mclean
Mrs M Sherwood
Mrs E Mann
J Vaughan
Valerie Gardner
Nadia Gardner
Samantha Wood
John Cummings
G Vaughan
Alan Pavett
P Crouch
Julie Seabidge
M R Linch
R Nicola
S White
K Norris
A Winchester
Amy
Michelle Brown
Maureen Werle
Jenny Bourne
Tom Bourne
Natasha Culzac
Danniella Winchester
Tamara
Jack Meadows
Aarron Read
Danny Millett
Richard Hardcastle
And many others who did not sign in

Other visitors:

Beth Turner
PC Kit Boorman
PC Rowe, Sussex Police
Caroline Studely, Hastings Voluntary Action

The organisers would like to thank all the individuals and organisations whose enthusiasm and hard work made this event possible.

Thanks to Brooker and How Ltd and Guy and Jones Printers Ltd who kindly helped with the publicity leaflet

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