Spring 1997

Kingswood
Town centre update

Putting the life back into Kingswood

WHAT KIND OF TOWN CENTRE DO YOU WANT?

South Gloucestershire Council has been working with local people to develop new ideas for Kingswood Town Centre. Now it's your chance to have your say.

Please take the opportunity to read through this leaflet and let us know what you think.

A NEW BEGINNING.

Kingswood suffers from heavy traffic and competition from more modern, out-of-town, shopping centres. The Kingswood Revitalisation Project was launched in 1994 to start the process of putting the life back into Kingswood.

The Partners

The Kingswood Revitalisation Project is run by a Steering Group with representatives from

- *South Gloucestershire Council*
- *Kingswood and District Business Partnership*
- *Warmley Clocktower Association*
- *The Police*
- *Kingswood Environmental Forum, and*
- *Local Residents.*

The partners are now ready to discuss their ideas with the people of Kingswood.

The Traffic Problem

Kingswood has developed along a major route into and out of Bristol. The Centre cannot cope with modern large vehicles and heavy volumes of traffic.

In the early 1990s the Councils suggested new ideas to manage the traffic problem but these raised objections from traders and the public.

After further discussion the Councils agreed to work towards a scheme which would route east-bound traffic along Regent Street and westbound traffic via Hanham Road, Cecil Road and Blackhorse Road. Buses would continue to use Moravian Road.
Full details of this scheme are set out at page 6 of this leaflet.

The scheme has not been fully implemented and there is an opportunity to reconsider it.

The Revitalisation Project

Traffic is not the only problem in Kingswood. There has been a lack of significant investment for a number of years and the Centre looks dated.

In 1994 The Kingswood Regeneration Partnership was offered Government money to investigate the Centres' problems and to develop a strategy to improve Kingswood as a shopping and service centre.

The aims of the project are:-

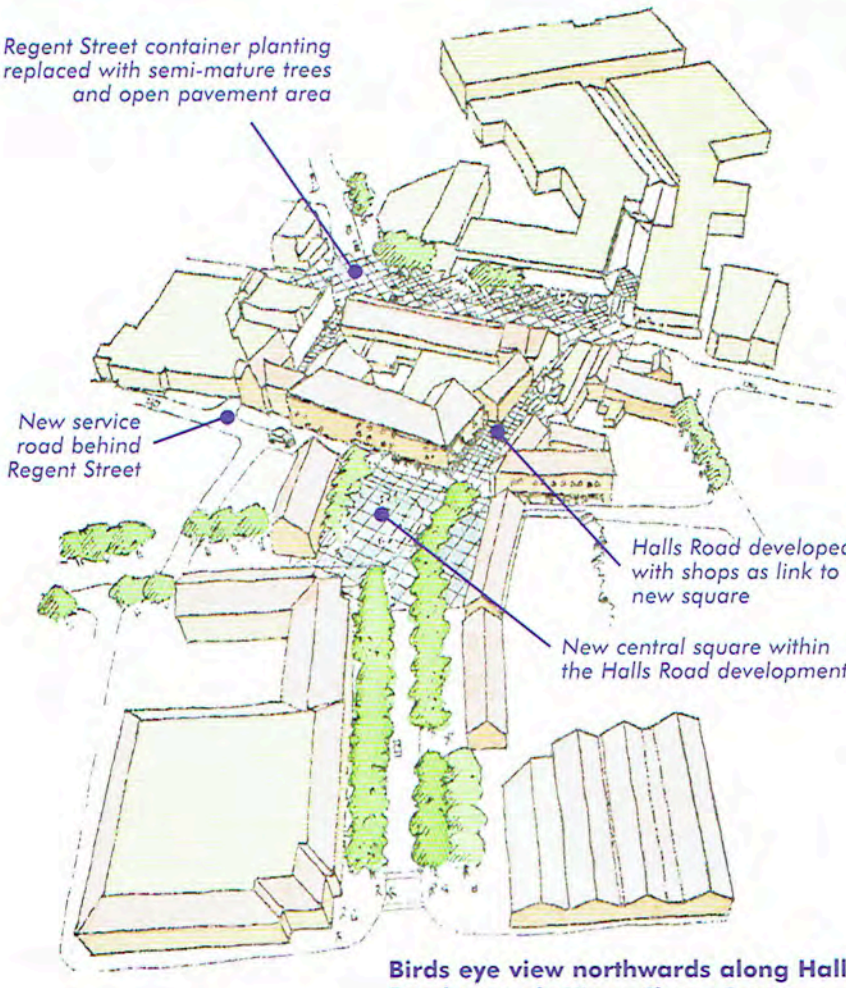
- *To guide re-investment*
- *To bring life back to the Town Centre.*
- *To increase Trade and Services*
- *To increase Leisure and Community Facilities.*
- *To create a better, safer, more user friendly Town Centre.*
- *To ease Traffic Congestion & Parking Problems*

The Single Regeneration Budget

The Government money was provided through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). It has been used to employ specialist consultants to advise on the future of Kingswood.

There have been three main Town Centre studies -

A Strategy Study
A Design study
A Youth Study



Birds eye view northwards along Halls Road towards Kings Chase Centre

The Strategy Study

The Strategy Study was prepared by consultants Drivers Jonas. They looked at the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Centre and confirmed that:-

- Kingswood is currently the strongest suburban shopping centre in the Bristol area.
- Heavy traffic makes the environment unattractive to shoppers.
- There is a real threat of competition from new shops at Longwell Green and Emersons Green.
- There are opportunities to re-invest in Kingswood and to develop shops, other services and leisure facilities.

Possible sites for new investment are:-

- **Kings chase** - *Modernisation*
- **Market site** - *New shop units and offices*
- **Halls Road** - *New foodstore.*
- **Whitfield Church** - *Community Facilities.*

- Car parks are not fully used due to parking charges and poor access. They need to be better signed, more secure and tidier.
- Crime is an issue for traders. There are ways of designing out crime and improving security through better lighting and CCTV. Not all these measures need to be expensive.
- The reversal of traffic flow on Park Road has made access to Kingschase difficult from the east and has put pressure on the Downend Road Junction.
- The Town would benefit from a Partnership approach to Town Centre Management.
- The Council could sell its' land in the centre to help fund re-investment and support a further bid for Government Money.

The Urban Design Study

This was conducted in the Autumn of 1996 by Roger Evans Associates. Their study built on the ideas put forward by Drivers Jonas and suggested:-

- There is no sense of 'arrival' in Kingswood. The creation of 'Gateways' on the main roads would help to welcome visitors.
- Gateways would also help to sign traffic around the Town Centre and relieve pressure on the main shopping Street.
- It is important to allow traffic into Regent Street to keep it 'busy'.
- Car parks need to be improved
- Buses add to current congestion and could be redirected to an outer route with a necklace of bus stops around the centre.
- Pedestrian routes connecting housing areas, car parks, bus stops and parks to the shops need to be improved.
- Improved rear access to shops would help to relieve pressure on the shopping street.
- Reductions in traffic, redesign of the centre, better lighting etc would make the Town Centre more attractive.
- New 'squares' and places to sit-out would help people to enjoy the Centre.
- A young peoples centre would help to bring life to Kingswood.
- A 'flagship' project would help to raise confidence and belief in the Centre.

The Youth Study

The Youth study was researched by the Kingswood Bus Project which met young people on the street and in youth clubs to find out how they view the Town Centre.

The study found that in many respects young people were as concerned about the problems of Kingswood as older people.

- 92% of young people surveyed felt safe in Kingswood in the day time but this fell to 59% in the evening.
- Of about 150 young people interviewed 39% use the centre to meet friends or 'hang out'.
- Young teenagers are aware that they are often thought of as a problem but the majority feel that it is a small minority of older teenagers that cause most problems.
- Alcohol and drugs were considered to be the source of most problems.
- Young people often felt that shop keepers and their staff treated them unfairly.
- Most young people condemned criminal activities such as drug-use, dealing and vandalism.
- Young people would like a local coffee shop/ drop-in advice centre to hang out and meet friends and have help with problems. Youth Clubs were used but did not meet this need.

The total costs of works proposed in the Urban Design study is about £3.5 million. It will take major investment to put the life back into Kingswood.

At public workshops, small groups worked together to discuss issues and develop ideas

Young people made a particularly important contribution to the workshop day

URBAN DESIGN GROUP
Public Participation Programme

The three studies help to provide a picture of needs and opportunities in Kingswood.

What do you think?

This sheet summarises the ideas which the Steering Group is putting up for discussion.

1 New Gateways

Gateways are proposed to help mark arrival at the Centre and to help direct traffic around it and to car parks. Gateways would include new signs, street surfaces and tree planting to mark entrances to the Town Centre.

Four main gateways are proposed:

A. Two Mile Hill Road
B. Downend Road
C. High Street
D. Hanham Road.

2 Traffic Management

The Town Centre needs a strategy for traffic management. The Steering Group is asking for a review of the Councils currently adopted scheme.

3 Re-development

The following sites have been identified for change:-

E. Kingschase - *Modernisation*

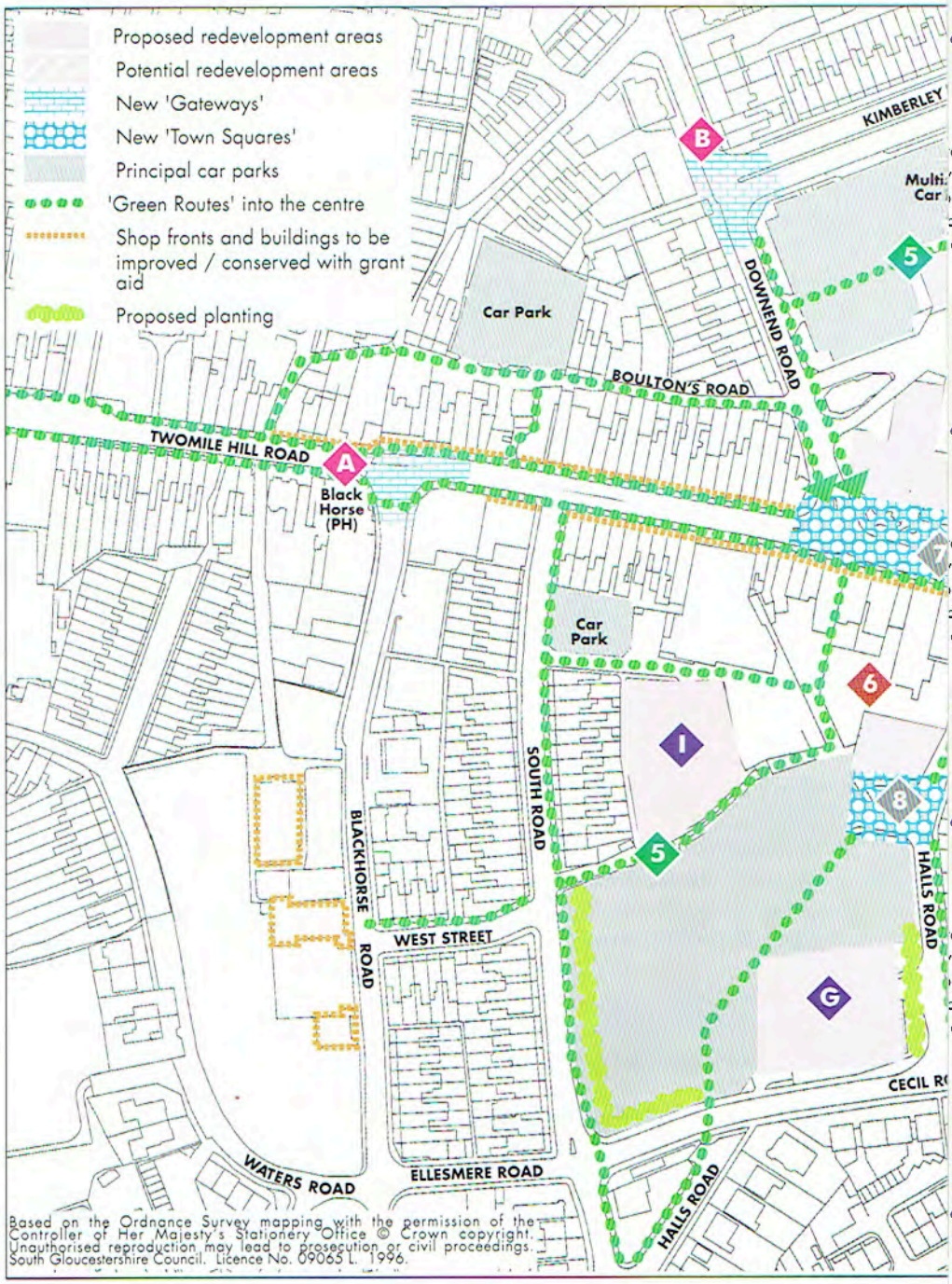
F. Market Site - *new shops or leisure facilities.*

G. Halls Road - *New foodstore or leisure facilities.*

H. Whitfield Tabernacle - *refurbishment for community uses.*

I. Replacement doctors surgery *(already under construction)*

J. Post Office Site - *possible redevelopment.*



4 Bus access

The approach to date has been to provide for buses in Regent Street. The consultants suggest that buses add to congestion and recommend that we look to route buses around the centre and improve walkways to the shops.

5 Pedestrian lanes

The strategy proposes an improved network of pedestrian routes into the centre - safer, wider, brighter etc.

Kingswood *Town centre*

Summary of Proposals

6 Service Access

On street servicing of shops adds to traffic congestion. The alternative is to improve rear access but this will require co-operation and commitment from landowners and traders.

7 Regent Street

The aim is to ease traffic congestion and improve the street scene. An early priority is to create a better 'square' outside Kings Chase. This would be followed by widening of pavements and improved surface treatments.

8 Public places

There is a lack of places to sit comfortably and chat. New 'people places' are proposed as part of redevelopment.

9 Life & Vitality

More can be done to provide for daytime and evening activities which bring people into the centre. One suggestion is for a coffee shop/ drop in advice centre for young people.

10 Parks

The consultants suggest that more could be done to provide better green spaces within the centre and to provide links to Kingswood Park.

11 Crime & Security

Crime is an issue in and around the Centre. One suggestion is to provide better lighting, another is to introduce CCTV to stores and public places.
What would you suggest?

12 Cycle parking

There are few cycle racks at present. Can you suggest locations for cycle racks?

13 Other suggestions

What other things do you think would help to improve Kingswood Town Centre.

Traffic Management

There can be no doubt that traffic is a key problem in the Town Centre. A number of schemes have been considered to ease the traffic problem.

The scheme currently adopted by South Gloucestershire Council (Option 5c) aims to relieve congestion by routing eastbound traffic one way along Regent Street and westbound traffic along Hanham Road, Cecil Road and Blackhorse Road.

Buses would continue to be allowed along Moravian Road and as a contraflow along Regent Street into Two Mile Hill Road and Downend Road.

Traffic Management works implemented and proposed

Previous options considered

Option1

Aimed to take all traffic out of Regent Street from Moravian Road to High Street.
All traffic would have been routed along Moravian Road and Cecil Road.
The scheme was unpopular with traders as it took all passing trade away from the east end of Regent Street, - there were also some technical difficulties with it.

Option 2

Aimed to take all traffic out of Regent Street between Downend Road and High Street.
East bound traffic was routed via Kimberly Road, Gilbert Road and Park Road.
West bound traffic was routed via Cecil Road and Blackhorse Road.
There was also opposition to this scheme because of its' impact on passing trade and residential communities.

Option 3&4

These were 'do nothing' options which allowed for small scale improvement works such as the widening of pavements where possible. These options were rejected because they did nothing to address the problems of traffic impact choking the main shopping street.

Works already implemented

Over the past two or three years the Councils have introduced a number of initial elements of the Option 5c scheme the majority of which have been well received.

1 Cecil Road/Hanham Road roundabout and pedestrian crossings.

These were introduced in 1993/4 and appear to have worked well, improving conditions for drivers and pedestrians. This area could still provide a more distinct 'Gateway' to the Centre.

2 Moravian Road/Regent Street.

The scheme in this area has aimed to increase safety at a site which is on the Councils' accident concentration list. It introduced a one-way system and prohibited right turn movements. In the full traffic management scheme this would be restricted to buses only.

3 Regent Street/Downend Road Junction.

The mini-roundabout was replaced by traffic lights and pelican crossings The aim was to provide for safer pedestrian movements The scheme also involved the widening of the pavement on the south side of Regent Street to provide better pedestrian safety. This required the narrowing of the three vehicle carriageways.

4 Reversal of Traffic Flow on Park Road

The former double mini round-about at the eastern end of Regent Street was reduced to a single and the flow on Park Road was reversed to come uphill.
There was a prohibition of turning movement at Park Road/Regent Street.

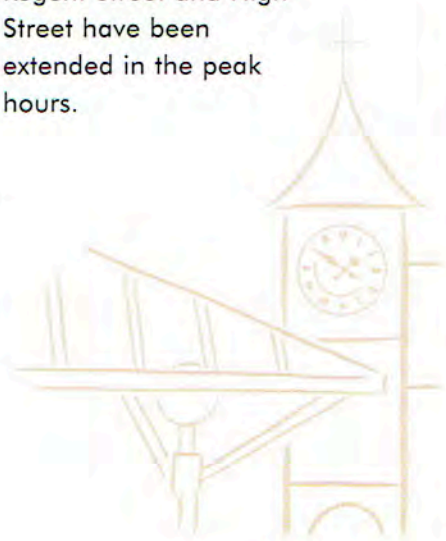
The reversal of traffic flow on Park Road has made the junction safer for vehicles and pedestrians and has improved the street scene. However, it has made access to Kings Chase car park more difficult and has put more pressure on the Downend Road Junction.

The Downend Road problem would be reduced in time if the full scheme is implemented.

In the short term the Council could consider reducing the size of the footway extension on the South side of Regent Street to rewiden the carriageways. This might require the introduction of a safety barrier.

5 No Loading Restrictions.

The no loading restrictions in Regent Street and High Street have been extended in the peak hours.



Future works

6 The closure of London Street.

The Order to close London Street at its' junction with Regent Street and to make London Street two-way again has been formally advertised. There has been no objection. However it cannot be implemented until land is secured to provide a turning head at the end of London Street.

7 Cecil Road/Blackhorse Road.

To become the main route west.

8 Cecil Road - one way

Cecil Road to become one way west between Moravian Road and Halls Road.

9 Blackhorse Road/South Road

Blackhorse Road to be one way north and South road one way south

Where do we go from here?

It is not too late to consider other options both for short-term works and an overall strategy. The Steering Group recommends that the next step is to route west bound traffic via Cecil Road to ease the pressure on Regent Street and the Downend Road Junction.

The Steering Group also recommends that options for traffic management are kept under review.

Crime & Security

Crime and vandalism are a problem in and around the Town Centre. In the year period January to September 1996 there were:-

101 Assaults
248 House burglaries
224 Non - Dwelling burglary
21 Robberies
52 Cycle thefts
350 Thefts from motor vehicles
204 Theft of cars
250 Thefts
230 Reported incidents of criminal damage (vandalism etc).
167 Other

Suggestions include better street lighting, instore CCTV and CCTV in public places. What else could be done locally to reduce crime?

The Clocktower Project

The Single Regeneration Budget also provided funding for a study of the Clocktower building at Warmley to see if that could be developed as an employment and training centre for women.

If you would like more information on any aspect of the Revitalisation Project please contact:
Mike Luton at the Civic Centre, Kingswood **01454 863706**

Action Plan

The strategy summarised in this leaflet will, following public consultation, be used to develop a costed Action Plan to guide improvement in Kingswood over the next four or five years. What do you think are the priorities for action?

Timing of the Bid

We aim to have the costed Action plan for Kingswood agreed by June 1997 to allow us to bid for more Government funding from the Single Regeneration Budget. Your support would be very welcome and help the bidding process.

Exhibition

An exhibition has been arranged for:-

Friday 16th May *12noon-7pm*
Saturday 17th May *9am-3pm*
At the open Air Market, Regent Street.

The Exhibition will be in the Civic Centre, Kingswood in late May and June.

Hanham Road Area

The Steering Group is also looking at the future of the industrial area south of the Town Centre.
Do you have any thoughts on what should happen there?

Key Issues

The Kingswood Revitalisation Project is a vital step forward in bringing life back to Kingswood Town Centre.

We do not expect you to agree with all the proposed changes but we do ask that you help us to find a way forward that is of benefit to all concerned with the Centre - shoppers, traders and local residents.

We want you to have a role in shaping the future of Kingswood. You can help by returning the enclosed comment sheet.

Kingswood & District Business Partnership

Avon & Somerset Constabulary

The Clocktower Association

Kingswood Environmental Forum

South Gloucestershire Council

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Kingswood *Town centre update*

SPRING 1997 QUESTIONNAIRE

Please use this form to tell us how you use Kingswood Town Centre and how you would like it to change for the better.

1. **Your Home Address**

2. **How many people are there in your household aged -**

Under 9 ☐ 10-19 ☐ 20-49 ☐ 50+ ☐

3. **How often do you shop in Kingswood (please tick parts a and b)**

a) For food - *Never* ☐ *Daily* ☐ *Weekly* ☐ *Monthly* ☐

b) For other goods - *Never* ☐ *Daily* ☐ *Weekly* ☐ *Monthly* ☐

4. **Do you use Kingswood for other purposes.**

Banking ☐ Post office ☐ Entertainment ☐ Other ☐

5. **What other shopping centres do you use regularly and why.**
e.g. Broadmead, Bath, Longwell Green?

6. **Do you shop in Kingswood more often or less often than in the past?**

More often ☐ Less often ☐ *Why is this?*

7. **How do you normally get to Kingswood.**

Walk ☐ Cycle ☐ Bus ☐ Car ☐ Other ☐

8. **Do you experience any problems in getting around Kingswood?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ *Please explain*

9. **Do you experience any other problems with Kingswood?** *e.g. Can't find goods you want.*

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Does anything else annoy you about Kingswood Town Centre?

11. Do you agree with the aims for the Strategy

	Agree	Disagree
a) To create a better,safer, more user friendly Town Centre	☐	☐
b) To ease traffic congestion and parking problems	☐	☐
c) To increase trade and services in the Town Centre	☐	☐
d) To increase leisure and community facilities	☐	☐
e) To provide for environmental improvements	☐	☐
f) To bring life back to the Town Centre	☐	☐

Any other aims or comments?

12. With which parts of the Strategy for Kingswood do you agree or disagree?

	Agree.	Disagree.
a) New supermarket in Halls Road	☐	☐
b) New Parking spaces in Halls Road.	☐	☐
c) New uses for Whitfield Churches	☐	☐
d) Refurbish Kings Chase Centre	☐	☐
e) Redevelop the market site	☐	☐
f) Provide new 'gateways' to the Town Centre	☐	☐
g) Sign traffic around the Town	☐	☐
h) Provide a youth facility in the Centre	☐	☐
I) Improve pedestrian routes into the centre	☐	☐
j) Provide closed Circuit television surveillance.	☐	☐
k) Provide grants to improve shop fronts	☐	☐

Any other comments you would wish to make

South Gloucestershire Council

Please return this questionnaire to:
Mike Luton, South Gloucestershire Council, Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood BS15 2TR
By Friday 31st May 1997.