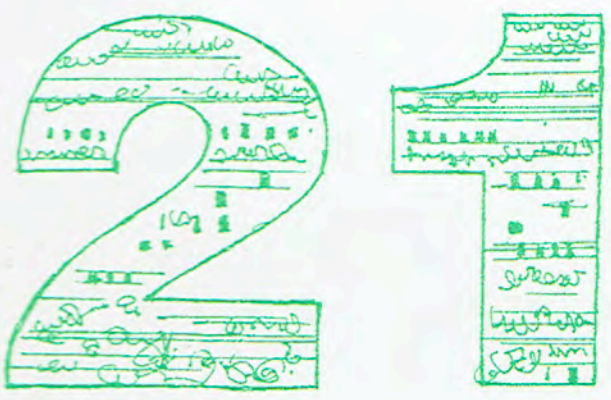
local agenda 21

making it happen

summary report



plans, comments and proposals from
'our future in our hands' action planning day
16th November 1996

hastings local agenda 21 forum
and Hastings Borough Council

design © Roger Gates 1996

Credits

Overall Co-ordination	Jenneth Parker
Co-ordination and administration	Mahin McMcandless
Programme advisor	Nick Wates
Council liaison	Nigel Ray
Facilitator	Rosie Manise

Special thanks to Judy Clark, Val Greenwood, Caroline Kempster, Susie and Ian Lyle, Mike and Mahin McCandless, and Geoffrey Sands for arriving early and setting up the many displays.

URBAN DESIGN GROUP

Public Participation Programme

Background

Agenda 21 is an action agenda for our global future into the 21st century agreed by 178 world governments at the UN 'Earth Summit' at Rio in 1992. Agenda 21 recognises that the scale of human activities threatens the natural systems on which we depend for life: most importantly it unites environment and development issues. Agenda 21 outlines actions we must take now to develop a sustainable way of life for ourselves and our children.

Local Agenda 21 seeks to develop plans and actions using local knowledge for local ownership and commitment to Agenda 21 objectives. Local Agenda 21 has been taken up around the world: in the UK local authorities have been encouraged and supported in the process by the Local Government Management Board (LGMB). Local Agenda 21 will not work as just another policy drawn up by planners: it must be a widespread process involving communities, business, local government, voluntary groups, adult learners, schools and colleges to discuss and develop local plans to improve our quality of life now - and for the future.

Some Local Agenda 21 concerns are:

Over-consumption - reducing energy use, waste and pollution and promoting efficient transport

Nature - looking after the variety of species, habitats and landscapes

Health - ensuring a healthy environment for ourselves and our children

Work - developing economies that meet people's needs

Community - renewing neighbourhoods in our cities, towns and villages

Justice - making sure that costs of the changes we need to make are shared fairly

Future - planning to ensure the well-being of future generations

Initial Local Agenda 21 plans were requested by the UK Government by the end of 1996 but there is now a recognition that the process must continue to be further developed. As we face the challenge of developing sustainable ways of life we must engage the hearts, minds and energies of all our citizens in a continuing creative process.

Hastings Local Agenda 21

The Hastings Local Agenda 21 process started in late 1994 and to date working groups on Energy, Transport, Built Environment, Natural Environment, Waste and Pollution, Work and Economy have produced reports: these have been compiled into Main and Summary Findings Reports (obtainable from Hastings Borough Council). The Reports also contain results of a public survey commissioned by Hastings Borough Council of local opinions on what was best and worst about Hastings, the town's future and the most important issues it faces. Throughout 1996 these reports formed the basis of Standing Conferences which further developed policy and project ideas. The Hastings NGO Forum was formed in 1994 to coordinate the response of the community sector to LA21 and to progress LA21 in whatever ways possible with a particular emphasis on widening participation and public awareness. The Forum has now become the LA21 Forum to include working groups' co-ordinators - it is open to anyone who wishes to attend. Hastings Borough Council has responded to LA21 in many ways - in particular by encouraging greater coordination throughout the Council by creating cross departmental LA21 teams and piloting the local neighbourhood scheme 'Better Braybrooke'. Hastings Borough Council has consistently supported and encouraged LA21 events in partnership with working groups and the LA21 Forum.

Jenneth Parker

Introduction to the Action Planning Day

It was a long day (10am to 6pm) but the energy did not flag.

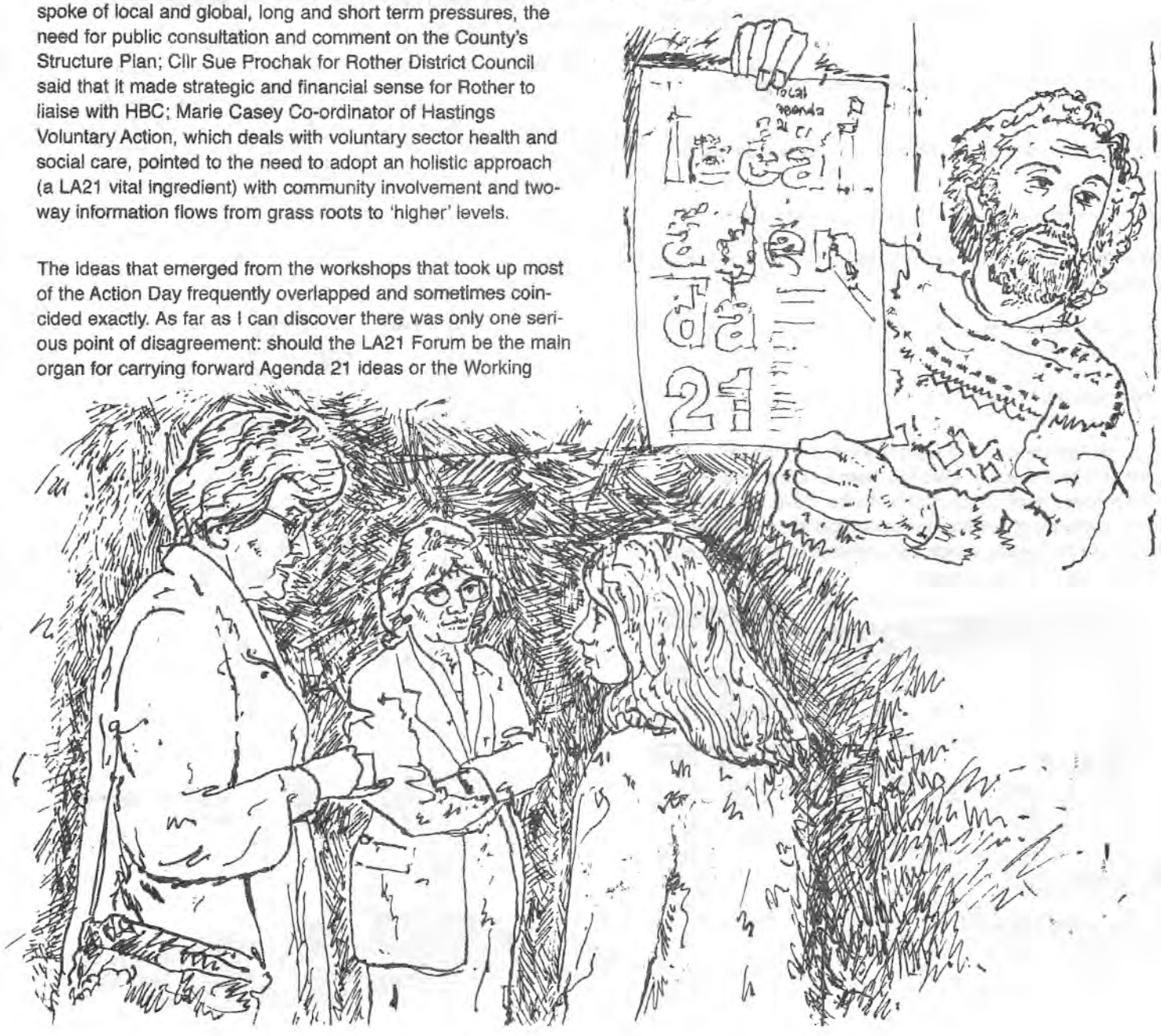
In opening speeches Jenneth Parker of the LA21 Forum put the Day in the global context and history of LA21, Nick Wates of the Urban Design Group explained that the Day was to be featured in the DoE's Public Participation Programme; HBC's Deputy Director of Environmental Services Nigel Ray drew attention to the lack of young people in LA21 (a theme picked up in the workshops); and Kevin Carías argued that LA21 principles were common sense writ large.

The following speakers placed LA21 in the context of other programmes and initiatives in Hastings: Carole Bailey explained the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Partnership and its importance as a vehicle for promoting sustainability; HBC's Chief Planner Paul Lewis outlined the problems for housing, green space and business in a Borough that had reached its boundary limits and referred the audience to the Local Plan Review; Cllr Pam Brown said the aim was to Make Hastings a Better Place to Be, that the Council had set up six panels to involve local expertise, part of a policy of partnership and openness essential to LA21; ESCC's Chief Engineer Bob Wilkins spoke of local and global, long and short term pressures, the need for public consultation and comment on the County's Structure Plan; Cllr Sue Prochak for Rother District Council said that it made strategic and financial sense for Rother to liaise with HBC; Marie Casey Co-ordinator of Hastings Voluntary Action, which deals with voluntary sector health and social care, pointed to the need to adopt an holistic approach (a LA21 vital ingredient) with community involvement and two-way information flows from grass roots to 'higher' levels.

The ideas that emerged from the workshops that took up most of the Action Day frequently overlapped and sometimes coincided exactly. As far as I can discover there was only one serious point of disagreement: should the LA21 Forum be the main organ for carrying forward Agenda 21 ideas or the Working Groups? This in turn is an aspect of the still unclear structure and organisation of planning and participation in the Borough. No-one is to blame for this. The deep change of culture that is needed, despite many varieties of good practice to draw upon, has no ready complete model and pioneering work needs to be done. The openness and good will that the Day expressed is the fuel for that work and the promise of its success. As Cllr Pam Brown said to guests at the 6 o'clock reception, **'You really missed something'.**

In this highly compressed summary (a full report is to come) the principles come first to remind us that proposals are only examples, temporary leaders of a new comprehensive approach to community, environment and development. The LA21 Working Groups proposals come next, then the ideas from the workshops that sometimes build upon the working groups proposals and are sometimes new. Finally there is a list of participants - unlisted will be those who came but did not sign in, apologies to them and gratitude to all, listed and unlisted, who made the day such a positive event.

Kevin Carías



Proposals from the working groups displayed on the day with some comments from Action Day participants

group	proposal	who	when	comments
Work & Economy	**Economic analysis**, including adjacent towns and rural surroundings, to reveal underused local human and financial resources, to cover social and environmental linkages. Aims to maximise local knowledge, skills, incomes, the sustainable use of resources and residents' investment in local economy.	A team with time and skills sponsored by the Regeneration Partnership.	In stages after confirming sponsorship.	Help businesses in new environmental technologies; teach environmental management. Relocate small firms to small now unused sites freeing space for larger to expand.
	1066 Regional Environmental Business Forum: a business-led response to broader environmental issues facing Hastings and the surrounding area.	Establish team or panel to guide formation		
Built Environment	**Strengthen the local economy** through an enabling framework created by the Borough to build and sustain partnerships between business, voluntary and statutory. **Renovate a shopping street and neighbourhood. Create a working neighbourhood** from a dormitory suburb.	Regeneration Partnership and as an umbrella for subsidiary partnerships.		High density and high quality can go together.
Energy	**Energy Forum**	All community sectors.	Early 1997	Leicester Ecohouse occupies a lot of land - feasible here?
	'Adapted' Ecohouse: a converted ordinary house to demonstrate sustainable living to ordinary people.	To be discussed at Energy Forum	Mid-1997	What about average flat dweller?
	Energy Advice Centre for research, networking and information.	HBC applying for funding.	Possibly early 1997	Lobby central government to fund Home Energy Conservation Act.
	Ecohouse/Sustainable Living Centre for educational tourism unique in the South East, to create local jobs, provide local and European educational opportunities.	Develop cross-sector SRB and Millennium funding bids.	1998	
Transport	**Safe Routes to School**: help children to walk or cycle safely to school.	Local schools, Sustrans, ESCC.	Soon	Implement planned cycle route from Cinque Ports Way to Glyne Gap. Close promenade to traffic for a few hours at weekends eg from April to October.
	Go Green: make 'green' commuting easier and more attractive.	Big employers, bus and train companies.	Soon	
	On your bike & on your feet: encourage more cycling and walking.	HBC, local Health authority.	Soon	
Waste & Pollution	**Scrap Store** - local business waste recycled for creative environmental education in local schools.	SKRAPP, HBC, RDC & others.	Immediate	Is the bulky waste project linked to Hastings Furniture Services? Towns in Germany already have door to door collection. Establish competition 'Feel the Heat' (good prizes) to insulate homes, schools, etc. Discover how or if town's big organisations reduce waste.
	Bulky Waste Re-use.	HBC, Onyx, etc.	1-2 years	
	Domestic recycling &waste minimisation, door to door.	DoE, HBC, etc.	2-5 years	
	Commercial recycling stimulated by audits, seminars, presentations, green business network and awards.	DoE, HBC, DTI, SRB, etc.	2-5 years	
	Hastings Environmental Action Response Team (HEART) working in partnership to improve Borough's neglected green spaces.	ESPS, HBC, Hastings Trust, LA21 Forum	Immediate	
	Green waste composting.	HBC & private firm	1-2 years	
	Energy Awareness with Energy Forum & Advice Centre.	HBC, DTI, etc.	1-2 years	
	Sun Safety Awareness through schools, Health Unit, etc.	Various.	1-2 years	
	Smoky Diesels - promote dirty diesel spotting.	HBC, DoT	1-2 years	
	Lift Share Scheme initially through HBC's Sustainable Working Action Team (SWAT).	SWAT & LA21 Forum.	1-2 years	
Natural Environment	**Living Landscape Project - Seeing Nature Whole**: integrating natural history, gardening, food production, & arts and crafts; promoting new ways of thinking about nature; developing a centre to demonstrate possibilities.	Interreg, LIFE, businesses, community partners.		'Brilliant' and 'lovely'. Sites: White Rock Gardens or near Alexandra Park.

Principles:

a checklist proposed by the Hastings Local Agenda 21 Forum, the Local Agenda 21 working groups and endorsed by the ideas that emerged from the Action Day workshops.

'The principles need setting out in an attractive, encouraging document to circulate to businesses and large organisations to encourage them to use the check list in making policy/action decisions.' (Written comment on the principles from the Action Day)

Hastings Local Agenda 21 Forum
Projects or actions should promote sustainability through education and training, public awareness and participation.

Work and Economy Group
Make better use of local resources.
Maximise the employment and skills of local people.
Use local renewable resources.
Provide opportunities for local people to invest in their area.

Built Environment Group
Use unused or underused building possibly by permitting change of use.
Use vacant or redevelop inner-town sites presently occupied by unusable, redundant or derelict buildings.
Involve local community and business in regeneration of run-down neighbourhoods and shopping areas and consider what public works could stimulate investment and activity.

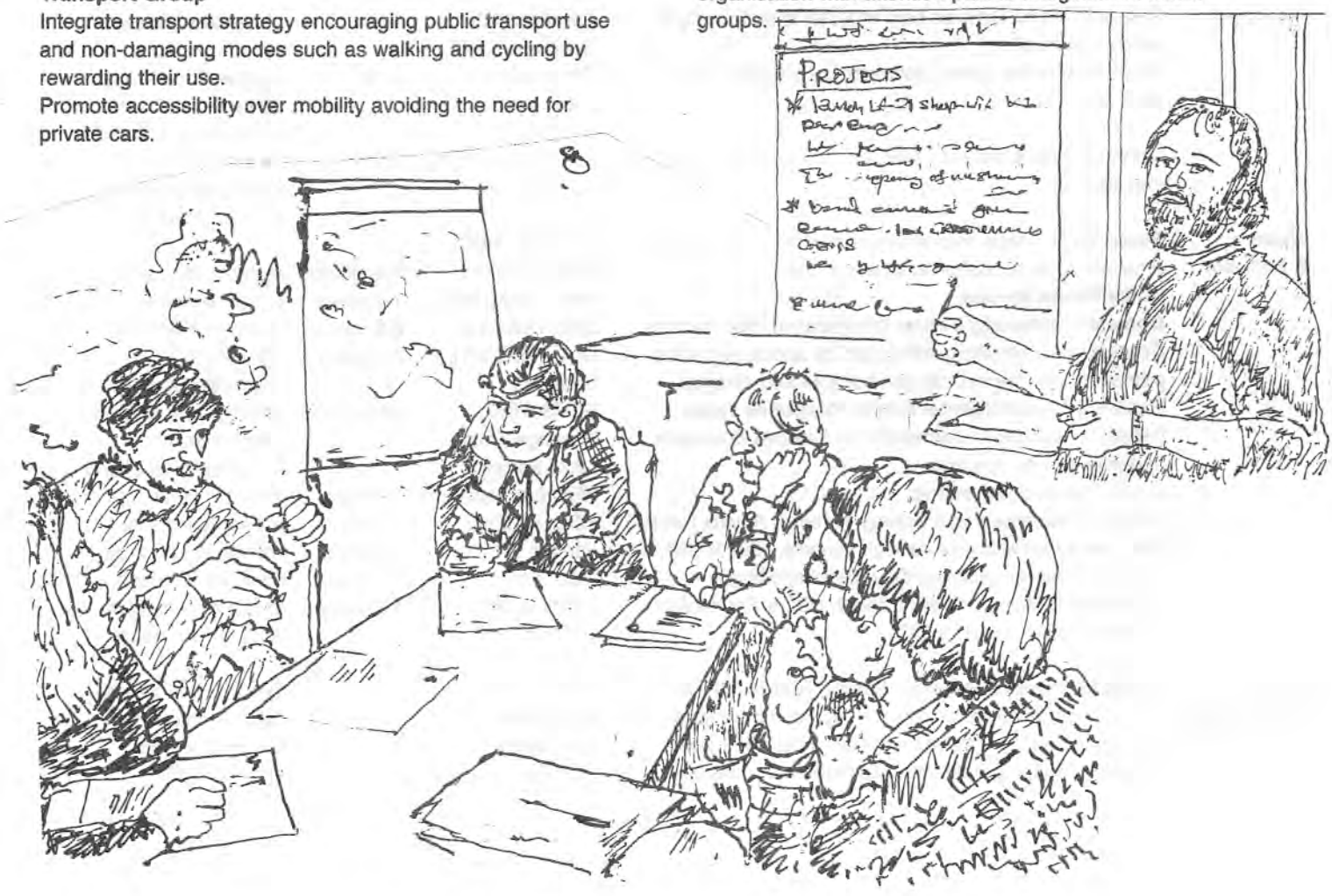
Energy Group
Boost energy efficiency through using best practice.
Use renewables wherever possible (eg Sussex coppiced wood).
Audit energy use, including greenhouse gas emissions.

Transport Group
Integrate transport strategy encouraging public transport use and non-damaging modes such as walking and cycling by rewarding their use.
Promote accessibility over mobility avoiding the need for private cars.

Waste and Pollution Group
Build waste minimisation and recycling into project design.
Minimise pollution investigating and employing best practice.
Use clean production methods rather than 'end-of-pipe' pollution control.

Natural Environment Group
Take the natural environment to be all green and open spaces, not just protected or designated areas, including private gardens, parks, roadside verges, abandoned land, verges, allotments, the beach, sea, etc.
Maintain green space in Borough at 1996 levels at least and preferably increase.
Give all residents easy access to green space (no more than a 10 minute walk away).
Projects to be evaluated for their impact on the natural environment allowing modification or abandonment according to results.
Ensure that local knowledge and values are in dialogue with expert knowledge in evaluating impacts and making decisions on the natural environment.

General Agenda 21 Principles
All projects and actions should promote **equity** at local, regional and global levels, be **democratic** and **inclusive** in organisation with attention paid to marginalised social groups.



Proposals from the Action Day (with the exception of the youth workshop morning workshops so fed into afternoon workshop results that they have been combined)

subjects	proposals	who	when
Communications Strategy	Push the key messages showing how they connect with other news items and daily concerns (eg climate change). Make use of existing networks and media such as community newsletters, Hastings Review, Health Promotion Unit, the arts community, churches, schools and colleges. Attempt to increase coverage by local press, radio and TV. As well as major events there needs to a constant stream of smaller scale LA21 news in the local media. Establish a new local paper. PR techniques can be effective if used carefully and non-cynically. Talk and listen valuing others' ideas - spread the word. Emphasise that 'we're relying on us' making people aware of how to get involved and how this will contribute to making Hastings a better place to live.	All involved. Graham Capper to do communications workshop. A specialist communications group to be set up.	Soon
		LA21 Forum to send a regular piece to *Observer*.	Soon
	Identify and endorse shops selling environmentally sound products.	Councils and LA21 Forum.	On completion of shopping centre.
	Create a public exhibition space with an award scheme (include work done in schools and colleges) perhaps in the new shopping development (a possible place for the suggested town centre map/notice board with locations of useful organisations, etc. indicated through lights).	Boots town centre shops and developers with voluntary sector help.	
Week of Action	A travelling exhibition (possibly on a milk float) with information on alternative energy. Promote domestic energy efficiency, show that LA21 is immediately relevant to people's lives with the long term aim of bringing about new patterns of behaviour. Dispel general ignorance of what LA21 is. Make common cause with all groups. The week could have a main theme or could inaugurate other themed weeks throughout the year, eg Recycle or Compost or Plastic-free or Car-free Week.	LA21 Forum, working groups.	Early 1997
	Create a 'green street'; make a LA21 film; set up a street market with local crafts and food (eg from allotments); close streets to traffic; make a large sculpture of locally collected rubbish.	Various.	1997
	Launch a LA21 shop with help desk and a 'green café'.	Hastings Council and volunteers.	1997
	Launch awareness raising campaign on green economics (credit unions and Local Exchange Trading Systems such as GEMS) through information sent with council tax demands.	Hastings Council, LA21 Forum.	
Future Structure	Develop a strategic approach within the Panel System and coordinated mechanisms for delivery working with both Panels and LA21 groups so that the latter are not marginalised. Establish links with Rother: link local plans; liaise through Rother's LA21 officer; create a joint LA21 team. At grassroots level 'Better Braybrooke' may be a model. Use existing groups and organisations within a new framework of enhanced mutual knowledge and cooperation. Enhanced networking and mutual aid saving reduplication of effort should be natural to the 'organic' structure of LA21. The LA21 Forum should attempt to attract more people to attend meetings, especially, perhaps, those who would not normally be seen to be 'green'. It should ensure that newcomers do not feel excluded with members appointed or taking turns as welcomers. The Forum's constitution could be based on the LA21 principles. The Forum could lobby other organisations to adopt the principles (which, of course, have structural implications). Common centres of communication are needed to strengthen community bonds: the Hastings Trust Community Resource Centre and other Centres and fora still at proposal stage, could be important catalysts as well as vital to the communications strategy.	Hastings & Rother Councils, LA21 Forum and working groups.	1997
		Transport Working Group to research rural transport and its problems for HVA.	1997
		Hastings Trust, SEAT, LA21 Natural Environment Group	Hastings Trust Resource Centre opens April 1997.
	Promote self-sufficiency for Hastings and Rother through local markets for local goods and local financial instruments (eg credit unions and local currencies such as GEMS).	Councils, local producers, GEMS and other LETS, etc.	1997
Young People	Appeal to, influence and involve children and young people to care for their future. Use a two-way non-patronising approach exploiting established groups and networks as well as youth and music festivals.	Hastings International Young People's Festival (?), schools, etc.	Begin 1997
	Build Agenda 21 principles into the training of young people.	Proposed 1066 Business Forum.	1997

Participants	Organisations
Bryan Adams	Coppiced Wood Products
Stephen Atkins	South Eastern Railway Heritage
Jennifer Ayres	Hastings Trades Council
Carol Bailey	Hollington Residents' Association, Tenants Consultative Group, Regeneration Partnership
G A Balamoan	LA21 Transport Group
Ernest Ballard	Hastings Borough Councillor
Jeremy Birch	Hastings Borough Councillor, ESCC Councillor, Wheels Project
Paul Boustead	Hastings Conservation Volunteers
Tony Boyle	Hastings Borough Councillor, ESCC Councillor
Pam Brown OBE	Hastings Borough Councillor, ESCC Councillor
June Cannon	Urban Design Group Public Participation Programme, Department of the Environment
Graham Capper	Hastings Borough Council
Kevin Carías	LA21 Transport Group, Here & Now, GEMS, Hastings Trust
Marie Casey	Hastings Voluntary Action (Chair)
Mick Chantler	LA21 Transport Group
Mike Christopher	Here & Now
Judy Clark	LA21 Natural Environment Group, Hastings Urban Wildlife Group
Eileen Cleary	UNA, LA21 Forum
Liz Coleman	LA21 Built Environment Group
Richard Coppens	Infinite Arts
Sheila Crossett	
Peter Crouch	LA21 Work & Economy Group, Grove Partnership
John Cummings	Green Party, CAAT
Dave Currer	Hastings FoE, Green Party
Robin Deane	1066 Housing Association, Hastings & Rother Childcare Campaign
Linda Dootson	Hastings FoE, Hastings Urban Wildlife Group
Jackie Dowling	Hastings Borough Councillor
Hugh Driscoll	SEAT
Jack Finch	Work & Economy Group, Hastings FoE
Stephen Fitzguy	
Lynda Fletcher	Community Development Team
Ann Foley	Hastings & Rother Childcare Campaign, Hastings Voluntary Action
Brian Gasson	St Leonards Allotments Association
Roger Gates	
Anne Goddard	1066 Housing Association, Hastings FoE, LA21 Transport Group
Dave Goodman	
Andrew Grace	LA21 Natural Environment Group, Hastings Urban Wildlife Group
Shirely Green	
Val Greenwood	LA21 Natural Environment Group, BTCV

Participants	Organisations
Audrey Guy	UNA, LA21 Transport Group
Colin Harmer	Rother Association of Parish Councils
Bob Hart	Hastings Bonfire Society
Christina Harvey	Hastings FoE, SEAT
George Hay	
Jane Jackson	Technical Services, Hastings Borough Council
Tom Johnson	
Caroline Kempster	LA21 Natural Environment Group, LA21 Forum
Chantal Lass	LA21 Waste & Pollution Group, Environmental Services Department, Hastings Borough Council
Terry Leach	Grey Owl Centre
Dennis Leggett	Here & Now
Paul Lewis	Technical Services Department (Chief Planner) Hastings Borough Council
Susie & Ian Lyle	GEMS, Pinehurst Centre
Connie Mager	Alzheimer's Disease Society
Rosie Manise	Community Service Volunteers (UK)
Mahin McCandless	LA21 Forum
Mike McCandless	LA21 Forum
Grace Mitchell	Fairlight Down Conservation Society
Evelyn Modlinger	
Jenneth Parker	LA21 Forum, SEAT
Sally Philips	Green Party
Sue Prochak	Rother District Councillor (Chair of Policy & Resources Committee)
Nigel Ray	Deputy Director of Environmental Services, Hastings Borough Council
Don Richardson	Hastings Trust
Melian Robertson	LA21 Transport Group, Hastings FoE
Stella Rock	Hastings Borough Councillor
Graham Rowland	
Harry Ruis	SEAT, Hastings FoE
Michael Sandaver	Hastings Borough Councillor
Geoffrey W J Sands	SEAT, Hastings FoE
Mark Sewell	Hastings FoE
Geoff Solley	Chief Ranger, Hastings Borough Council
Paul Swabey	Churches Together
Caroline Thomas	Here & Now
May Treu	Volunteer Ranger Group
Alan Turner	Hastings Greenpeace
Mike Turner	LA21 Transport Group, Hastings FoE, Hastings Tramway Company
Nick Wates	Urban Design Group Public Participation Programme, Department of the Environment
Bob Wilkins	Head of Transport & Environment Department, East Sussex County Council