

Presentations and Workshop notes from the

# Faith in the future of Worcestershire Conference 2009

**November 4th**

County Hall Spetchley Road  
Worcester WR5 2NP



An afternoon of Information, Discussions and Networking  
on the place of faith communities in the planning for the  
growth of Worcestershire



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**Eddie Clarke** - Director of Adult and Community Services, Worcestershire County Council

**Jonathan Elmer** - Senior Forward Planning Officer, Wyre Forest District Council

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PowerPoint Presentation - **David Ryan**

PowerPoint presentations - **Planning context** Bromsgrove, Redditch, South Worcestershire and Wyre Forest



## Introduction

**Worcestershire is under pressure to accommodate growth. Growth includes housing and the provision of jobs, schools, shopping outlets, health and recreational facilities and plenty of open spaces to benefit us all. It also means the provision of community infrastructure to support new development.**

The Revd Duncan Ballard and Revd David Ryan in their roles as Inter faith and Ecumenical Officers in the Worcester Diocese approached the County Council planning department in 2009 to discuss the possibility of hosting an event that would bring together faith groups and interested parties to discuss how faith groups could have their say in shaping the future of Worcestershire. The result of this was the Faith in the Future of Worcestershire Conference that took place on the 4th of November 2009. It was an afternoon of information giving, workshops and networking, bringing together district and county planning staff, faith leaders and other interested parties who had an interest in shaping the future development of Worcestershire.

This paper brings together the information provided on the day, including concluding remarks from the Revered David Ryan, in order that it can be imparted to delegates and other interested parties.

Also included, is a list of delegates and their contact details where it was indicated on the evaluation form that they could be included. Lots of interesting points were put forward on the evaluation form and it was thought useful to share them with the rest of the group. As a result this paper also includes a short report on the analysis of the evaluation forms.

We hope you enjoy reading the report and find the content useful.

### **Natasha Friend**

Principal Planner,  
Worcestershire County Council





# Faith in the Future of Worcestershire

A paper by  
Robert Higham, Diocese of Worcester

## Context

1 The scale of new housing to be planned and developed in Worcestershire over the next two decades is expected to be significant and the major expansion in the environs of the City of Worcester is identified in the UK plans as a growth point. (Within the Diocese of Worcester there are three developments of such significance. So, in addition the growth of housing around Worcester there are also the massive expansion of the University of Worcester and, in the north of the diocese, the development of Merry Hill / Brierley Hill as the most important sub-regional centre in the diocese as a whole.)

2 Community infrastructure is vital and it's also important:

that community development is not left to follow housing development but we actually develop new communities. to draw a distinction between developing and sustaining community infrastructure.

3 The spiritual needs of new communities are integral. It will be important for the "faith communities" to work together. In terms of the existing "plant" of the Church of England, all new housing will be within an existing Church of England parish; this is a major opportunity for ecumenical working and wider community use. Recent legislation has made this much easier. There are though major funding issues which will need addressing.

4 The "faith communities" need to be able to work at a pace and with credibility with those responsible for planning and delivering housing growth areas. Local authorities need to be confident and enthusiastic about requiring partnership agreements from developers for community facility development (whether as enhancements to current premises or new ones) and developers to be confident that the "faith communities" will play their part effectively and on a timely basis. (so, for instance we need to find a way of working through the Church of England's diverse polity, including ecumenical dimensions, as otherwise timescales for fundraising and decision taking may not sit easily with housing development timescales.)

## Capacity Building

5 All land lies within a parish with a parish church, but the capacity of that parish church and those parishioners are not, left to their own resources, likely to be up to the task of community development in the 21st century.

6 There is a need to build capacity including:

Gaining local ownership by faith groups (in the case of the Church of England, in diocese, deanery, and crucially in parish) of the opportunities and responsibilities that new housing areas will represent. In some places this will inevitably be in the context of existing communities experiencing difficulty with the range of symptoms of massive environmental, and possibly social, change, including the NIMBY syndrome.



The need to "pump prime" the costs of reinforcing local resources to enable the Church to be engaged from the outset. Towards that end the following heads of expenditure would be relevant:

Housing for additional ministers. Community development work, possibly across a wider area than a single diocese in a development area, to help parishes investigate and develop community engagement opportunities.

Adaptation or construction of new buildings to 21st century standards. Four examples in diverse situations in this diocese of reordering, conversion or extension of church buildings are at the costs of £1.25 million, £320K, £800K and £300K respectively. (The recent extension at the parish church in Norton juxta Kempsey demonstrates what can be done to make such buildings ready for nearby planned housing. However its financing is atypical being only possible because a huge bequest.)

Ministers' housing and premises for worship / community use will need to be well located in relation to new communities and transport networks. (see also section on urban design issues below)

### Financial Implications

7 There are opportunities via Section 106 funding and the Community Infrastructure Levy both in pump-priming work of people who work in community development and with the wider community use of church and other faith group buildings.

8 Over recent months there has been coverage of the very significant cost of roads and railways as upfront investment needed before new housing, or substantial elements of it, can be constructed, for instance in the environs of Worcester. Such costs, indeed sometimes portrayed as almost overwhelming, have to be met from the public purse and private sector, often involving funding by Section 106 Agreements and the like.

9 In this situation there is the risk of squeezing other expenditure which may be funded. The financing of faith groups largely relies on their membership plus some involvement of the wider existing local communities, and the capacity of both faith communities membership and local community to expand local provision in new housing areas is a matter of concern. Significant developer contributions will be vital.

10 It is sometimes thought that the Church of England has huge financial resources available to it. While there are significant assets most are held as operational buildings (notably churches and parsonages) or are, by law, endowment funds prohibiting the capital to be expended. In business terms the CofE can be characterised as "asset rich and cash poor". The funding base has shifted over recent decades from a national provision of income from historic funds and / or major local benefactors to most expenditure being met from church members giving.



11 The housing growth planned in the Diocese of Worcester, while locally very significant with major expansion in the environs of the City of Worcester identified in the UK plans as a growth point, is on the national scale of things not of the substantial nature planned, for example, in the M11 corridor or the Thames Gateway. So for instance national funding streams such as the Church Commissioners' "New Opportunities" Funding" of £6.5 million over three years will not be coming to the Diocese of Worcester. It should also be noted that neither the allocation of national grants (of very modest size in regard to the Diocese of Worcester) towards clergy pay nor allocations of the national share of clergy resources works in a "pump priming" way in situations of mission opportunity. (Within the Church of England the nationally used formulae have inbuilt retrospection that will not deliver where there are shifts in patterns of ministry.)

### **Making the most of Existing Buildings - "a sequential test"**

12 The Regional Spatial Strategy, Heritage Policy places emphasis on re-using existing heritage assets. Church buildings form a very significant proportion of such heritage assets.

13 When new housing developments are being planned great consideration should be given to the community facilities that are necessary, and a sequential test (cf that already in use by planning authorities for other forms of development) of looking at existing community facilities and their adaptation and/or extension for wider use before considering new stand-alone community buildings should be followed.

14 We have worked closely with English Heritage and the Local Strategic Partnerships in the diocese, particularly in this locality, the Worcestershire Partnership, to recently appoint a Heritage Building and Community Development Officer to help parishes adapt buildings. That officer's advice is available for heritage buildings in the diocese on an ecumenical basis.

15 Recent changes in church legislation have enabled a much wider community use of church buildings than used to be the case, and in particular the development of leases for that purpose. That potential is recognised in a paper published by Government at the end of last year, involving five government departments, called "Churches and Faith Buildings - Releasing the Potential", in part to address what was described as the "squeamishness" of government departments and local authorities of working with faith communities, that paper provides a way forward of addressing those concerns.

16 As a cautionary tale to the Church of England, it has can be cited that on the last occasion of major housing expansion of the City of Worcester that reliance on existing parochial structures and buildings has resulted in those areas in one case being served by a not particularly suitable and poorly located church building (but at least ecumenically) and in the other by reliance on existing buildings outside new community.

17 Working ecumenically should be a priority, new church buildings are likely to be of lower priority than people, rather together with other organisations and agencies we should be seeking to get general community buildings constructed or upgraded if necessary.



### Some urban design issues

18 The way in which community buildings relate to new houses is crucial. Residents sense of ownership and belonging relies on the way in which such buildings relate to the main vehicular and pedestrian routes and the urban design implications of community buildings with "kerb appeal", landmark status and being obviously at the heart of the community needs to be part of the planning brief from the outset. "That's our's" should be obvious to new residents from their very first visit to where they will then live.

19 Historic church buildings, by the scale of their towers and spires, are often of landmark quality. The design brief should include the identification and retention of key views from the exterior of overall development.

#### Additional aspects of community cohesion

20 As a further example of work, opportunities for work such as a chaplain to gypsy and traveller communities across Worcestershire, South Warwickshire, Herefordshire and North Gloucestershire. There is a need both to build community cohesion and to seek to ensure that such vulnerable groups are not forgotten within the scene of "housing growth areas".

21 Within housing growth areas there is the need to ensure that new or expanded provision of hospitals and higher education establishments are properly served by chaplaincies. Although the prime financial responsibilities lie within the statutory sector this might involve some ecumenical "pump priming" by the faith groups. At the University of Worcester a very creative partnership between the University, Church of England, Methodist Church and United

Reform Church has resulted in a new full-time Chaplain commencing work in 2009.

### Summary

22 In planning and developing new communities it will be crucial to establish working practices to cover: Planning Authorities to keep the faith communities briefed on the scale and timing of new housing.

Once land is being identified an early audit of existing community infrastructure to be undertaken to identify needs and opportunities, in particular:

- Capacity of "people" and "buildings"
- Sequential test regarding buildings
- To identify capacity building work needed both socially and in buildings, including costs and timescales.

Being clear as to expectations on the Planning Authorities and Faith Group(s) in taking matters forward including:

- Development Briefs
- Developing the local "faith group". (e.g. role of both diocesan and parochial bodies)
- Developer Contributions.

**Robert Higham,**  
Diocesan Secretary -November 2009







## Workshop 1 Principals and ideals

Delegates were split into three groups based on broad geographic areas, covering:

- *South Worcestershire (Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon)*
- *Wyre Forest*
- *Bromsgrove and Redditch*

To discuss the following two questions:  
What are the three priorities that make a good community?

What three resources are essential for new communities?

What follows are the key points that were recorded during those discussions by each group:

### What are the three priorities that make a good community?

#### South Worcestershire Discussion Group:

- Community ... needs a Focus
  - E.g. Church or chapel, pub, school, village green, shop
  - Community ... requires Cohesion
  - Purpose
  - Employment
  - Education
- Community ... has an Identity
  - Uniqueness - what makes us different?
  - Pride in locality and history
  - Shared history
  - Also implies a certain tension ('them' and 'us')?

- Community ... has variety
  - Housing type/ownership
  - Young people/families/single people/retired/elderly
  - Diversity of employment
  - Aspects of urban/suburban/rural
  - Green space
  - Freedom to grow organically

#### Wyre Forest Discussion Group:

- Denser' communities because of ecological concerns - (hsg, walking to work and facilities).
- People! - Social capital, community engagement, "bottom up" activity that builds local pride, facilitated by community leaders/LA.
- Focus for activity/meeting/cohesion - some 'shared' space, some specific, sequential use of space.

\*££ Cash - C Infrastructure Levy

#### Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:

- People- interconnectedness, ownership belonging, cohesion, celebrating diversity and inclusiveness, opportunity to make a contribution.
- Space- healthy environment, physical, mental, emotional. Communal space and facilities.
- Good transport.
- Appropriate size.
- Access to education, employment, communal activities- culture and recreation.



### What three resources are essential for new communities?

#### South Worcestershire Discussion Group:

- Employment opportunities
- Education
- Retail
- Transport links
- Meeting places/public spaces
- Absence of fear
  - Openness
  - Welcoming
  - Social inclusion
  - No 'invisible barriers'
- Neighbourliness
- Opportunities to relate to each other (and therefore to care for each other?)
- 'Human size' - not so large that everyone becomes anonymous
- Sustainable and viable (socially, culturally and financially)
- Span of age groups

#### Wyre Forest Discussion Group:

- Meaningful economic activity.
- Educational activity - schools, critical - extended use of existing schools children's centres.
- Care - for older population.
- Leisure facilities.

#### Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:

- Joint community space
- Community organisations. Community leaders, decision making and governance.
- Funding- which is appropriate and timely.





# Faith in the Future of Worcestershire

A paper by  
Reverend Roger Paul

## **How can the values and principles be translated into action?**

**The strategic importance of** working ecumenically support by church leaders throughout the County having a representative voice which can engage with the planning authorities, and consult with other community and faith groups

**In some parts of the country, it has been found helpful for the Churches to appoint a development worker who would:**

represent the churches in the consultation meetings,  
establish relationships with planners, councillors and other interested parties,  
learn the language of the planning process,  
keep up with the sometimes rapid developments in the planning process and to contribute with knowledge and credibility,  
manage deadlines,  
attend meetings at short notice - it is crucial to attend all meetings, otherwise one quickly goes out of the loop, and liaise with other community and faith groups.

A number of models have been employed to deliver this work:

The churches at county level agree that one church will act as the lead church, who will second a member of staff to take on that role.

The churches at county level agree to fund a new appointment.  
The county ecumenical officer takes a key role.  
A network of more local appointments engages with the issues at local level as an extra piece of work.

## **Engaging on the ground at circuit/deanery and local community level**

At the more local level it has been found essential in areas of the country for local churches to engage together on working out mission strategies within new housing areas on their patch.

However, they cannot do this in isolation as what is done will be restricted or enabled by the flow of resources. Working out together a common vision, and expressing a commitment to work together for that vision, has been found useful in many areas. At the same time, openness to the precise form a project may take has enabled some very creative ideas to flourish.

The strategies adopted locally will depend on a number of factors:

Whether the new housing area is large enough to negotiate for Section 106 funding.

Whether a new church community building is a viable option,

Whether the pattern of development is a patchwork of new housing areas in a larger area,

The balance between different types of housing in the development,

Whether a new school is part of the plan, and if so, whether a new church school is an option.



## A number of models of mission can be explored:

**Community development:** focussing on building community and relationships at the early stages of an area of new housing, often through the deployment of a Church Community Worker.

**Traditional Church Plant:** often done by a church planting team from another parish. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the team leader (possibly a pioneer minister) and others moving to live in the area is a decisive factor.

**Diversity of grass roots initiatives by existing churches:** some new housing areas are an expansion of existing settlements, with their own network of churches, which are encouraged to develop local neighbourhood mission initiatives.

**Cell church:** one approach to model the life of the church in a network of small groups, which may link up from time to time for a large event.

**Network church:** a church which is not so tied in to a local community or neighbourhood.

**Themed work with target groups:** Groups such as youth, young families, retired people or single adults are targeted through specific projects, which may include a number of partnerships, and be focussed in a number of new developments.

**School based:** both church and state schools are recognised as being important hubs of community. In some areas, a schools worker may be deployed to work with all the schools of an area. An important strategy of some dioceses is to establish Church schools in new areas. This could be a fruitful area of ecumenical collaboration: already there are examples of ecumenical schools in some places. These models are not mutually exclusive and many projects combine more than one model.

## Buildings

There is a spectrum of strategies in relation to buildings:

To aim to build a church building from the outset,

To use a secular community space, such as a community centre, school, health centre,

Not to use a building at all: cell church, network church models.

Buildings are a big investment, and it is important to get it right: it is a good idea to investigate what has been done in other areas, to learn from others' successes and mistakes.

There is an assumption that buildings will be multi-use buildings, which are open to all, for a range of activities and purposes which serve the whole community.

Section 106 agreements for dedicated land are often time limited, with a "revert to developer" clause if a church is not built within a certain time.

Mission initiatives which do not feature planning for a building at the beginning, may realise, often too late, that not planning for a building was a mistake.

There may be an imperative for other faith groups to use a community building. It is important at an early stage to establish a dialogue with other potential faith users.

**Much useful material is available from the website of Churches in New Housing Areas: <http://www.cinha.net/>**

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## Workshop 2

### How can we work together to deliver Principals and ideals?

The delegates remained in the same grouping to discuss the following:

What will faith communities and the planning community bring to new communities?

Who else needs to be involved.

Who else are interested parties?

What are the next steps?

What follows are the key points that were recorded during those discussions by each group:

#### What can faith communities bring to new communities?

##### South Worcestershire Discussion Group:

- Shared concerns
- Local leadership
- Volunteers - people 'on the ground'
- Purpose
- Stability
- Vision
- Broad perspective (for the 'common good')
- Balance of tradition and hope for the future
- Partnership with planners
- Spacial, practical vs spiritual, communal
- Expertise - esp. living in community

##### What do we need?

- Communication
- Strong ecumenical partnerships
- Place for Worcestershire Interfaith Forum?
- Inclusion of non-mainstream faiths (JW's, New Age etc.)
- Need for a representative (person or group) to speak on the behalf of faith communities

##### Wyre Forest Discussion Group:

- Dialogue.
- Faith groups can provide leadership - rooted in local communities.
- Trusted intermediary - passionate, engaged but not 'political'.
- Pastoral care - recognising each other's 'professional' dilemmas.

##### Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:

- Collaboration and energy, leadership and vision
- Existing buildings and people. Church activities e.g. worship.
- The glue for community

##### What can planners bring to new communities?

##### South Worcestershire Discussion Group:

- Willingness to listen and engage.
- Face to face dialogue - informal.
- Creativity - new ways of engaging - e.g. Planning for Real.
- Timely requests for involvement/engagement that takes account of church timescales too.

##### Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:

- Collaboration, energy and vision
- Useful contacts
- Understanding of the process



**Who else are interested parties?**

**South Worcestershire Discussion Group:**

- Businesses.
- Transitional towns movement.
- Vulnerable members of the community who can be more difficult to reach.
- Developers.

**Wyre Forest Discussion Group:**

- Widest Partnership Possible!!
- Collective view of community infrastructure requirements.

**Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:**

- Education and health providers
- 3rd Sector, voluntary and community groups
- Businesses and employers
- Transport organisations
- Advantage West Midlands, GOWM- Government Office, English Heritage, environment agencies.



**What are the next steps?**

**South Worcestershire Discussion Group:**

- Coordination is vital
- Some way of sharing of information
- We probably have a 'two year window' for faith communities to get involved
- Need to start to plan and influence land allocation
- Need to commission a needs audit for people moving into new housing areas.

**Wyre Forest Discussion Group:**

- District level engagement.
- at the right level.
- Annual meeting planners/faith communities at district level (WILL, Diocesan/oversight level).
- Are District LSPs the place?
- Real connection between community strategy and core strategies.

**Bromsgrove and Redditch Discussion Group:**

- Churches Together in Worcestershire to resource coordinator
- Identify locations for new communities
- Infrastructure meetings with faith groups.



## Evaluation Form analysis Summary Analysis of Results

All delegates were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their thoughts on the event, the key findings were as follows:

- 19 delegates complete the form
- When asked **'How did you feel about today's event?'** The majority of respondents felt positive and challenged by the event, 63.2% and 47.4% respectively. This is followed by 26.3% who were inspired and 21.1% who felt motivated and supported by the event.
- When asked **'Did the conference meet your expectations?'** 81.3% of respondents said the conference did meet their expectations. 6.3% said it did not, while 12.5% were unsure. 3 respondents did not respond to this question.
- When asked **'Was the conference useful in increasing your knowledge in this area?'** All those who responded to this question said the conference was useful in increasing their knowledge in this area. 2 respondents failed to give an answer.
- Just over two thirds thought the length of the event was about right (70.6%). 23.5% thought the event was too short, while 5.9% thought the event was too long. 2 respondents failed to give an answer.

Finally the delegates were asked for any other comments, what follows is a summary of those comments received:

- The event should have been longer with, more time to network.
- Lots of interesting discussions were taking place with good points made about spiritual needs/community space for new communities.
- Very positive about the potential for future engagement. Now that these links/contact have been made, they need to be built upon to move forward.
- Difficult to assess where the process goes from here - but a very positive event. Thank you to the local government officers for their time and willingness to be involved.

More specific comments included:

- Brethren have their prime focus in South Worcs area (Worcester City and Wychavon). This is an excellent follow up from faith input at WMRSS - both region wide and Worcester sub-area.
- A good start which needs to be followed through with appropriate policy provision in the emerging LDFs. There is a good evidence base which I can provide.
- We are currently considering an appeal for a main hall at Swineshead. Our 15-year Forward Plan envisages a need of five halls in the South Worcestershire area. We currently have two, one of which is life expired.
- I had thought that this version might have started with us trying to get to grips with a wider agenda to start with - what life is likely to be like in 2026 - a very different world where we will be living, I hope, a lot more lightly, less dependent on fossil fuels and is rather more vibrant local environment.



## Some concluding reflections

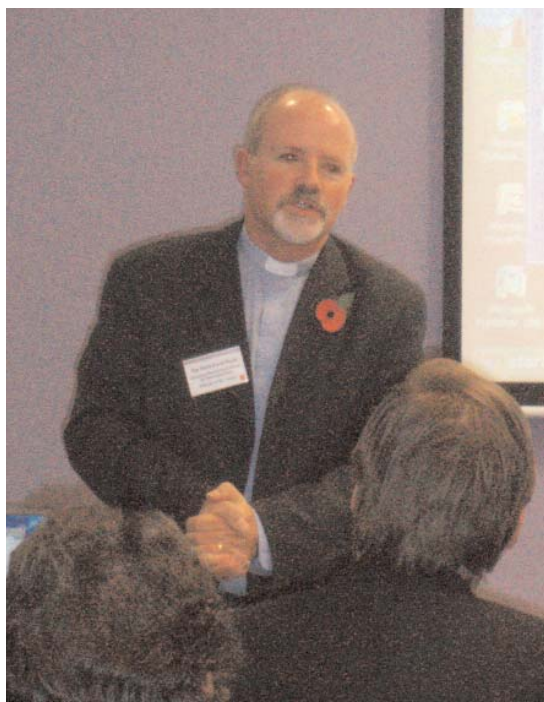
The Conference felt like a valuable and positive occasion for faith groups, for those there with a community remit and planners. The planners contributions gave very valuable information about where and how far we are into the process of areas of new housing being developed. The contribution from Robert Higham and Roger Paul for the Churches indicated something of what faith groups can bring, both in terms of infrastructure and also commitment for the long term. There were useful discussions on defining community and how we can make community, in smaller groups and I think a general feeling that more time for this would have been helpful.

It became apparent that a key level for further discussion and hopefully partnership would be at the District Council level. In a number of local areas there are already working relations between faith leaders and planners which provides a good starting point. It was realised that other bodies with a concern for new communities need to be involved e.g. health and education providers and that early discussions with the developers will be beneficial. A number of next steps were suggested, which indicated an expectation that this Conference is not the end, but hopefully the beginning of long term relationships. To enable this there is a need for faith groups to coordinate themselves, so that engagement with local planners can be coherent. One suggestion was to resource a coordinator who could keep a watching brief with planners on behalf of the faiths in the County.

Another was that local Churches Together groups and Inter Faith forums could be the vehicle for local collaboration, especially with the Districts. It was discerned that while we have an amount of time for these next steps to be realised, there is a degree of urgency. Duncan Ballard and myself would be willing to be an initial focus for this and to help bring to realisation a strong and vibrant faith presence in our new communities.

### The Revd David Ryan

Diocesan Ecumenical Officer for  
Worcestershire





A Powerpoint presentation by  
Revd David Ryan -  
Churches in New Housing Areas

# Churches in New Housing Areas

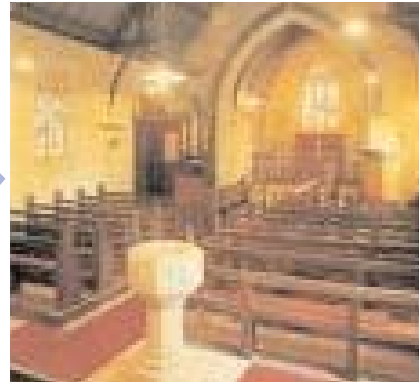


## Models of CINHA

Here are 6 ...

There may be more ...!

### 'Strawberry Plant'



## Mass Centre

### St Mary's Mass Centre (Roman Catholic), St Mary's School, Portslade, Sussex

The former RC Church in Portslade, Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Denis, was demolished, and houses built on the site. St Mary's Junior RC School was attached to the former Church building but now the Church has gone, there is a Mass Centre on the School property used by the local Roman Catholic Community.

The "Church" is called St Mary's Mass Centre and is the single storey building to the left of the white building.



**Pioneer and Cell Group**

**Royal Docks Community Church**

Royal Docks Community Church (RDCC) is a relatively new church established 6 years ago to serve the communities of the Royal Docks. The Church meets weekly on Sunday mornings in Britannia Village Primary School at 10.30am. These services are suitable for all ages.

RDCC has always been committed to helping develop a sense of community, which has resulted in involvement in local fun days, an annual Easter egg hunt, the creation of a lively toddler group and a meeting for the over-50's. They have also recently established the Bridges Community Project, which is based in 'the Hub' in Britannia Village Hall.



Easter Egg Hunt 2005

**Partnership e.g. with School**

South Woodham Ferrers Trinity Church and St Mary's School



## Existing Building

Ex RAF Site with Chapel



## Network Community

Sovereign Harbour Eastbourne

- ASDA Chaplain
- Residents Association
- School events
- RNLI Carol Service
- Prayer meetings
- Nearby churches



# Powerpoint presentations by the Districts

Bromsgrove District Council

Redditch Borough Council

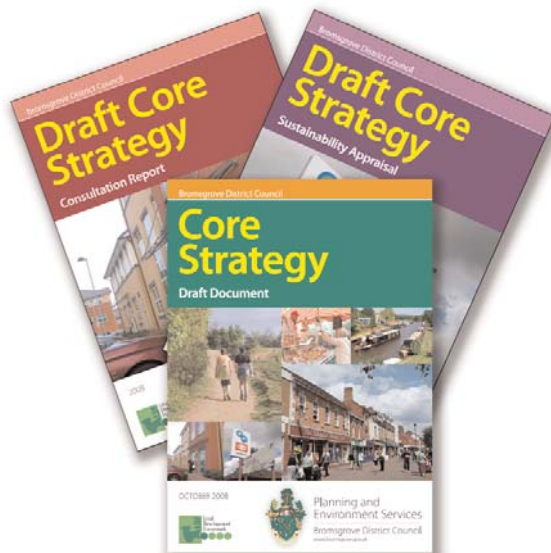
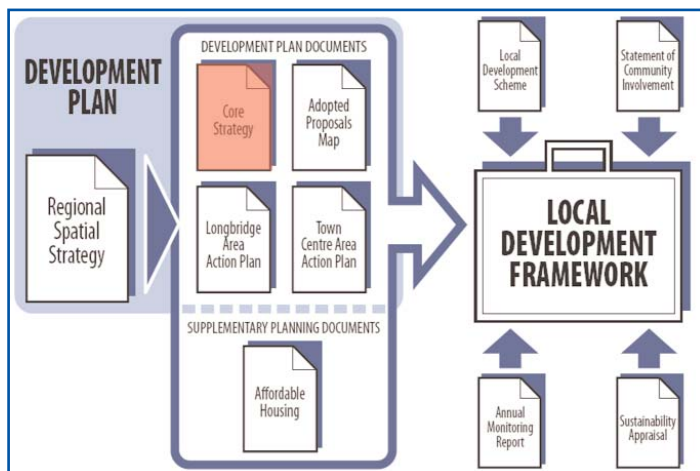
The Joint Core Strategy for South Worcestershire

Wyre Forest District Council

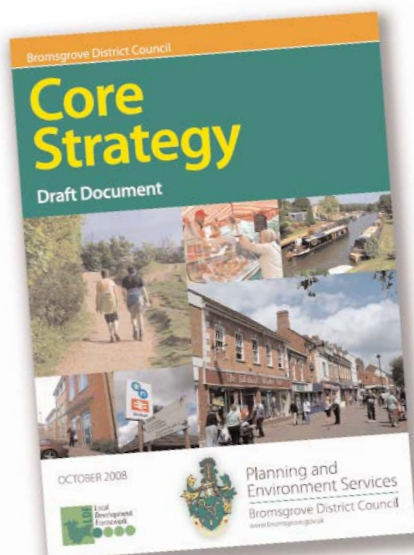
**Rosemary Williams**  
Principal Strategic Planning Officer



**Bromsgrove District Council**  
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**



**5 main components:**

1. Spatial vision
2. 16 Strategic objectives
3. 17 Core policies
4. Key Diagram
5. Monitoring and implementation framework

**Draft Core Strategy Consultation**

31 October 2008 – 16th February 2009  
135 responses  
950 comments  
No site allocations

**Draft Core Strategy Consultation**

Findings: Housing related ;

CP2 Distribution of Housing	118
CP 14 Scale of Housing	39
CP12 Type, Size and Tenure	34
CP15 Cross Boundary growth	30
CP16 Affordable Housing	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

**Draft Core Strategy Consultation**

Findings:

CP1 Climate change	50
CP8 Employment	35

**Draft Core Strategy Consultation**

Next steps:  
Strategic site allocations  
Bromsgrove's needs  
Redditch's needs

**Progressing the Core Strategy**

- Affected by the Regional Spatial Strategy
- Further Consultation - Early 2010?
- Submission - Late 2010?
- Adoption - Early 2011?

**Sharron Williams**

## Key Issues of the Core Strategy

- Need to provide for natural growth in the Borough with additional housing and employment.
- Work skills of residents is mainly manufacturing based.
- Poor work skills, need to diversify / qualifications.
- Redevelopment opportunities in the Borough.
- Obesity.

One of the aims for spatial planning is to produce a vision for the future of places that respond to local challenges.

Spatial vision for Redditch has **8 key strategy areas** that reflect local challenges identified for Redditch.



### 1. Green Strategy

By 2026 Redditch wants to be distinctly green and the Green Strategy will focus on:-

- Climate change mitigation.
- Maintain open space as green spaces – which is a unique feature of Redditch.
- Maintain green buffers and tree lined highways.
- Flood Risk / Water Management.
- Green Belt matters.

### 3. Enterprise and Skills Strategy

- Economic conditions are generally poor in comparison to the rest of Worcestershire, manufacturing work skills clarifies this.
- This Strategy will contain diverse employment areas to:-
  - Support existing business sectors/clusters.
  - Opportunities to diversify the economy.
  - Promote a skilled work force.
  - Ensure a prosperous rural community.
  - Diversification Park.

### 68 hectares required for the Borough

- 31 hectares in Redditch.
- 25 hectares in Bromsgrove District.
- 12 hectares in Stratford District.

Upgrading facilities of NEW College – University campus facilities in improve skills / qualifications.

### 2. Sustainable Settlement Strategy

- This Strategy will support sustainability of Redditch's three main settlements, and new growth will be achieved in a sustainable way.
- Redditch Town will be the main settlement in the Borough.
- Astwood Bank will be a sustainable settlement and Feckenham will cater for local needs.
- A sustainable urban extension to the north of Redditch Borough will need to be developed to accommodate additional housing required as a result of natural growth.

**4,000 houses in Redditch Borough**  
**3,000 Houses in Bromsgrove District**

#### 4. Retail and Centres Strategy

- Redditch Town Centre attracts important shops and facilities. This Strategy will place emphasis on maintaining this attraction.
- Need to regenerate the Town Centre as a vital and vibrant facility.
- District Centres need to be regenerated.
- Regeneration of the Town Centre will improve connectivity to key sites in the Town.
- The requirement for additional housing in and around the Borough will require a new District Centre to the north of the Borough and social infrastructure will need to be provided for potential residents.
- The following will also need to be provided in the Town Centre:-
  - 50,000 sq m Retail floorspace.
  - 45,000 sq m Office floorspace.

#### 5. Balance between Housing and Employment Strategy

- Redditch hasn't been able to bring all designated employment land into use, meaning that local residents have to travel outside the Borough for work.
- This Strategy will concentrate on ensuring a range of commercial opportunities / facilities to improve this balance.

#### 6. Historic Environment Strategy

- Redditch has a special built environment which is based on the Town's transition from a market town with a needle based industry through to a New Town.
- In 2026, Redditch will be an enterprising and successful urban area with other historic settlements.
- Historic assets will be preserved and enhanced.



#### 7. High Quality and Safe Design Strategy

- Redditch will achieve high quality and safe design of its new buildings. There is a poor perception of safety amongst residents which can be down to poor layout and design.
- The uniqueness of Redditch's built environment must be supported.
- New development will be of a high quality and contribute towards creating distinctive, sustainable places and communities, reflecting local character.

#### 8. Attractive Facilities Strategy

- Redditch's tourism, leisure and cultural factors will be improved.
- This Strategy will provide attractive facilities so that communities are sustainable and provided for.
- There will be a focus on new and enhanced leisure provision in the Town Centre and Abbey Stadium.
- New and enhanced leisure provision will achieve healthy communities as well as provision for healthcare facilities.





**Submission date**

In accordance with Local Development Framework the aim date for submission is **February 2011**



**Town Centre Strategy**

Redditch in 2026 will have a vibrant, prosperous and embracing town centre, which is accessible to all, with exceptional recreational, leisure, retail and community facilities that can be utilised and enjoyed by all.



**Town Centre Strategy Priority Projects / Actions**

- Tackling the ring road.
- Improving public spaces and car parking.
- Sense of arrival and signage.
- Improving café and restaurant culture.
- Enhancements to Church Green.
- Tackling the train station area.
- Rejuvenation of Silver Street / Royal Square.
- Improved lighting, safety and security.
- Public Art Programme.
- Encouraging Town Centre living.



**St Stephens Regeneration Project**

- New project developed in line with Town Centre Strategy Priority Actions:-  
New Life on the Green.
  - New Life on the Green. Project evolving at the moment – similar approaches made to St Paul’s Church in Walsall.
  - Will keep as a church but incorporate other facilities / uses.
  - Look beyond the church building for further enhancements to the area such as relocating Bandstand (idea).



**The Crossing at St Paul’s, Walsall**

“The Crossing” is an exemplary and inspiring example of creating a new life and role for this town centre church.

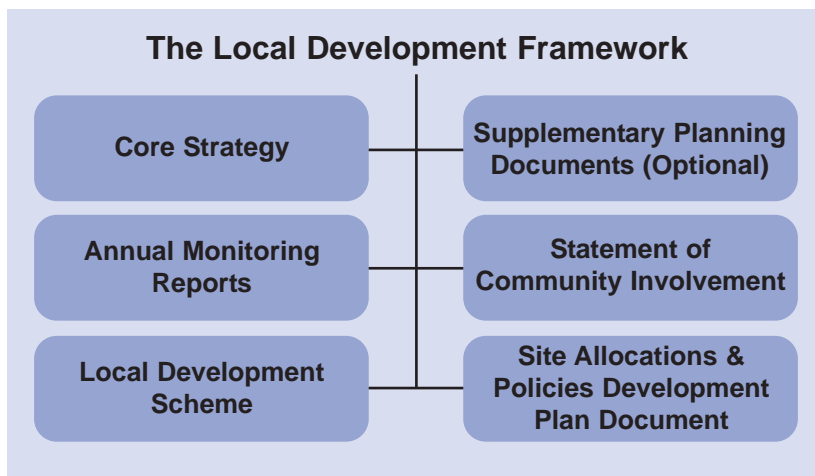


**Sian Griffiths**

Project Manager

## ***'The Plan Setting Out Proposed Development and Policies for Future Development in South Worcestershire to 2026'***

### **The South Worcestershire Development Plan to 2026**



### **A spatial articulation of the Sustainable Community Strategies**

- Clear Vision and Objectives Relating to the SCS' of South Worcestershire (Worcester/Malvern and Wychavon)
- Specific aims: e.g. 'reducing childhood obesity' = Spatial Policy of designing development to encourage walking and cycling
- No repetition of national planning policy – must consider local issues and local distinctiveness: e.g. Malvern AONB; Building Design Vernacular in Worcester City and Market Towns; Archaeology; Socio-Economic Needs; Transport Demands; Educational Performance and Future Needs

### **Justifying Policy: Evidence Base**

- Green Belt Review
- Land for development – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Employment Land Review (ELR)
- Flood Risk and Water Cycle
- Transportation Assessment
- Ecological Assessment (Habitats Directive)
- Sustainability Assessment
- Community Infrastructure Requirements
- Other evidence from other strategies: Economic Development Strategy; Sustainable Community Strategy (LSP); Education Strategy; PCT/ACT Strategies; other community needs assessed by interest groups

### Consultation

- Statements of Community Involvement
- Continuous Consultation
- Hard to Reach Groups: e.g. Gypsy and Traveller Community
- Involving Kids and Young People
- Older People
- Consultation Events on evenings and weekends
- No 'lectures'
- Website and encouraging e-consultation

### Where are we? (The next 12 months)

- Joint Core Strategy Preferred Options (Nov 2008)
- Evidence Gathering for Site Allocations DPD (brought forward) through public consultation, leading to preferred options document Autumn 2010
- Evidence Base: Green Infrastructure Study (Phase II); Employment Land Review 2010; Green Belt Review; Sustainability Appraisal; Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study; Strategic Transportation Study
- Talking to some of the strategic site promoters about a more structured way forward
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople – specific consultation and discussions

### Implementation

Infrastructure Delivery Plan = Community Infrastructure Levy

Co-operation with Infrastructure Providers

Not just 'physical' infrastructure: community development trusts; credit unions; business loan funds; service level agreements with social enterprises (e.g. drugs and alcohol support organisations)

### For further Information:

[www.swjcs.org](http://www.swjcs.org)



## Jon Elmer

Senior Forward Planning Officer  
Wyre Forest District Council

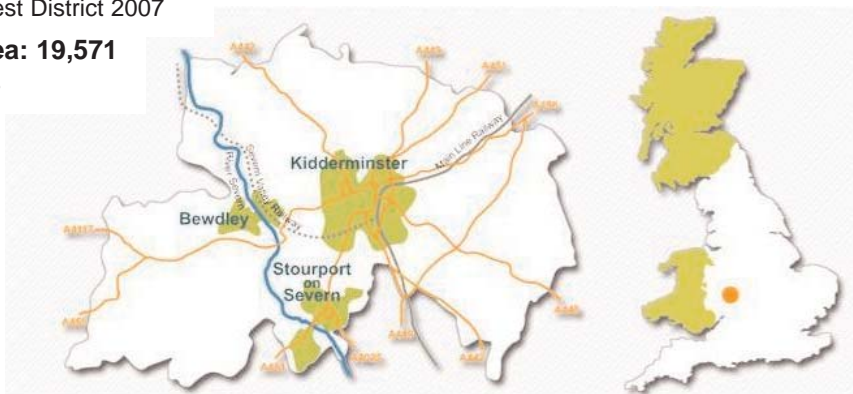
Tel: 01562 732552 [Jonathan.Elmer@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Elmer@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

## Introduction to the Wyre Forest District...

Wyre Forest District is located in North Worcestershire. Covering 75 square miles it has a population of approximately 98,600 and comprises the three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, together with a rural hinterland which includes a number of villages.

Wyre Forest District 2007

**Total Area: 19,571  
hectares**



## Wyre Forest Core Strategy...

The Core Strategy has been produced through a number of consultation phases:

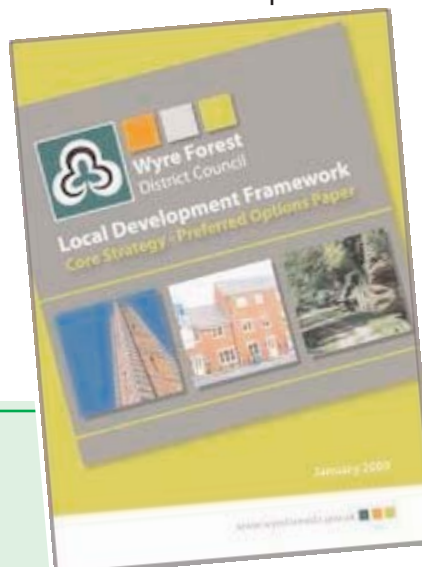
### Stages Complete:

Issues and Options Consultation: July 2007  
Revised Issues and Options Consultation: January 2008  
Preferred Options: January 2009

### Where we are now:

We are currently producing the Publication version of the Core Strategy which has taken into account the responses we received from the first phases of consultation. The document is structured as follows:

- Vision and Objectives
- Development Strategy
- Theme 1: Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change
- Theme 2: A Desirable Place to Live
- Theme 3: A Diverse Local Economy
- Theme 4: A Unique Place



### Upcoming Stages:

Publication: January 2010  
Submission: April 2010  
Adoption: December 2010

**Key Issues for the Core Strategy...**

One of the main influences on the production of the Core Strategy is the Regional Spatial Strategy which sets out the amount of housing, employment, retail and office development the District will have to provide over the plan period (2006 – 2026), for Wyre Forest District the amount is as follows:

- **4,000 dwellings**
- **44 hectares of Employment Land**
- **35,000 sqm of Comparison Retail Floorspace**
- **40,000 sqm of Office Floorspace**

Aside from the numbers outlined in the RSS and guidance in National Policy, the consultation process identified some key issues for consideration in the Core Strategy, which included:

- Focus on climate change and ensuring development is not located in flood risk areas
- Ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing
- Providing sustainable development and improving transport choice
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

**The Strategy for Accommodating Growth...**

The Wyre Forest Core Strategy will seek to ensure development is targeted to the most sustainable locations possible. Development will therefore primarily be focused in Kidderminster, as the strategic centre in the District, with some development targeted to Stourport-on-Severn and more limited development aimed at Bewdley and the surrounding rural areas.

The focus for development will be on previously developed land. Due to the manufacturing legacy of the District there are a number of sites that exist which are considered to be prime regeneration opportunities. This is a key aspect of the Core Strategy – bringing these currently redundant sites back into use. Given the current levels of development which are proposed for the District, the Council is confident that growth can be met through regeneration of existing sites.

The strategy proposed by the Council will mean that Greenfield and Greenbelt sites will not be required for future development.

There are a number of challenges that this strategy poses including possible contamination of sites, viability issues, flood risk and infrastructure implications



**Former British Sugar Site (24ha)**



**Former Romwire Site (5ha)**



**Former Georgian Carpets Site (7ha)**

**The Strategy Continued...**

The following table identifies where development is likely to take place:

	Kidderminster	Stourport-on-Severn	Bewdley	Rural
<b>Residential Dwellings</b>	2,400	1,200	400	
<b>Employment Land (Ha)</b>	33	4	7	
<b>Retail Floorspace (Sqm)</b>	25,000	Local Needs	Local Needs	Safeguard
<b>Office Floorspace (Sqm)</b>	40,000	Local Needs	Local Needs	-

These figures will be phased over the plan period to ensure a sustainable release of land.

Some of the other elements of the Core Strategy include...

- A focus on ensuring that appropriate measures are incorporated to combat climate change, which includes on site renewable energy contributions and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)
- Ensuring appropriate provision is made for Affordable housing
- Directing development to areas located well in terms of sustainable transport options
- Ensuring community facilities are protected and enhanced through the plan period as well as providing suitable opportunities for growth where demand is identified.
- Providing a suitable environment for the local economy to grow and prosper
- Safeguarding and enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity opportunities
- Providing a Green Infrastructure Network

These are the key elements of the Core Strategy and they have been developed in line with the Council's evidence base

**Site Specific Work**

The Core Strategy will provide the necessary strategic aims and objectives for further more detailed, site specific work to be undertaken.

Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, work will continue on the other two Development Plan Documents (DPD) that the Council are producing, these are:

- Site Allocations and Policies DPD
- Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD

These documents have been 'parked up' until a sound Core Strategy is in place. The next formal Preferred Options consultation on these documents is scheduled to take place in 2010 / 2011



**Initial work has begun on these documents...**

There will remain an emphasis on continual engagement with the Local Development Framework and the District Council are keen to receive responses from all interested parties throughout the process so please let us have your views!

**Regeneration in Kidderminster...**

As identified in the Core Strategy a key aim is to undertake regeneration within the principal town of Kidderminster. In order to raise the profile of the town and help to identify opportunities that exist within the area a Regeneration Prospectus has been developed. This project has now been branded the **'Rewyre Initiative'** and more information can be found on the following website: [www.rewyre.org](http://www.rewyre.org)



The following slides provide a quick introduction into some of the work that is currently being undertaken to assess the options that exist within the town...

**Regeneration in Kidderminster...**



**How to stay involved...**

Work will continue on the Local Development Framework over the next few years and we welcome all comments from interested parties. There are a number of ways you can keep involved in what's going on:

Visit our website: [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

Visit our consultation home-page: <http://wyreforestdc-consult.limehouse.co.uk>

Send us an e-mail: [Planning.Policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.Policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

Telephone us on: **01562 732928** and ask to speak to a member of the Policy and Regeneration Team

If you require this document in alternative formats  
please contact: Natasha Friend; Tel: 01905 766719.

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