

**Cittaslow Steering Group paper for Town Forum meeting on 13th October, 6.30.pm
in the Walton Room, Guildhall, Winchester.**

All members of the steering group have read WCC's "Community Strategy - 2004 Onwards."

We seek to explain how the principles of the Cittaslow movement could help WCC to achieve the goals set out in that document.

Those attending will be:-

Graeme Kidd, Mayor of Ludlow and Cittaslow National Convenor

Desmond le Grys, Fair Trade

Kate Macintosh, Chair Architects and Engineers for Social Responsibility

Judith Martin, City of Winchester Trust

P. Patton, CTC Hampshire Cycling

Sue Woodd, Hants Henry Doubleday Assoc.

Health and Well-being, Local Produce & Products - P14

Academic and scientific reports of the connection between a poor environment and ill-health are frequent; in just one recent week, the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution suggested that there should be a 5m buffer zone to protect residents from crop spraying, and the Working Group on the Primary Prevention of Breast Cancer found that environmental pollutants may play a significant role in the disease. These examples follow the summer publicity over school dinners and the government's consequent decision to remove junk-food vending machines from schools.

As an important city with a large rural hinterland, Winchester is well-placed to build on local and national initiatives already in place. The celebrated Farmers' Markets, with the related Hampshire Fare, have brought great benefit and publicity. To build on this by, for example, establishing satellite markets and food co-ops, perhaps in partnership with the allotment societies, in the city's housing estates, and tackling food poverty, would be an enormous social benefit wholly in line with CittaSlow.

CittaSlow's emphasis on the quality of urban fabric and infrastructure policies, from the eradication of faulty burglar alarms to the provision of well-kept green spaces, in terms of the relationship between a poor environment and stress and ill-health, chimes perfectly with much of the work being done by City-supported community groups from Winchester in Bloom to the City of Winchester Trust.

Transport & Access P23.

We congratulate Winchester City Council on the improvements brought about by Park and Ride and the quality of the bus service and residents' parking schemes.

We believe further environmental improvements would result from the implementation of 20mph zone for the entire city centre, which would allow the removal of many signs. In the longer term adopting more radical urban design solutions for a pedestrian friendly environment. This area would then be much safer and more attractive to all users, including cyclists. The emphasis must be on accessibility for all for which Shopmobility is an excellent example.

The uncertain future of cycle hire at the railway station is a matter of concern.

High Quality Environment + Leisure & Recreation P33 & P41

One of the aims set out in the Community Strategy is to reduce the use of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions. This is consistent with Cittaslow's Environmental Aims. We would recommend the sort of practices adopted by Woking BC, the first and (currently only) council to provide private wire power from their Combined Heat and Power (CHP) at a charge to residential customers, 5% below the local supplier.

They also have a good-practice guide for all developers offering the incentive of more economical running costs to stimulate investment in energy-saving measures. They have set an example by reducing their own energy consumption by 44% and their CO2 emissions by 72% between 1990 & 2002.

The implementation of an effective energy policy, demands cross party cooperation.

Woking was awarded an Energy Saving Trust, Community Energy Grant of 25% - £545,000. To get this they needed to demonstrate that they had the finance in place to carry the project through. With the help of this grant, and with all party support, they set up their first Combined Heat and Power generation scheme, in Woking town centre. CPH typically reduces CO2 emissions by 60%. This plant opened in March 2001. Power is supplied by private wire to borough owned housing, to two hotels, a night-club, an entertainment centre, a conference centre an events centre and to Woking Borough Council Offices.

A second Energy Station in Woking Park completed in March 2004, provides heat and power to their leisure centre (the excess of heat in summer is used for cooling and exports surplus electricity to other council owned sites, mainly residential. When combined with cooling, as in this case, CHP can achieve an emissions saving of up to 80%. Our own Riverside Leisure Centre springs to mind.

To achieve this, Woking set up a separate company called Thamesway which cost them £250,000. They were advised by a Danish partner, ESCO International ApS who own 81% of Thamesway Energy Ltd; the remaining 29% of shares are held by Thamesway Ltd, which is a company wholly owned by Woking BC. The Danish energy company has extensive experience of district heating schemes.

High Quality Environment & Waste Management P33 P35

Winchester District Council is operating trial green waste collection in several areas, including Harestock and Sparsholt. These will be assessed in October this year, but early evaluation is very positive and indicates a rise of collected recycled waste (and thus a corresponding reduction in landfill).

City Council employees are unclear as to any policy on the recycling of kitchen waste. Hants composting is an aerobic process (air included). This is unsuitable for large scale composting of kitchen waste and has been prohibited by the Minister for the Environment following the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.

Compost bins for home composting are provided by the Council at reduced rates, with some instruction. The HDRA has considerable expertise in the area of home composting. They take part in shows and open days in Hampshire talking to the public and running demonstration workshops particularly about composting. It would seem that Winchester City Council could work with Hants and HDRA at a local level to reduce costs and benefit the environment.

See also www.cittaslow.org.uk & <enquire@cittaslow.org.uk>

