

ANNUAL REPORT OF HEBDEN BRIDGE PARTNERSHIP 2015-2016.

SUMMARY OF MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS: (expanded below)

- Held the Environment Agency and CMBC to account for work to reduce the risk and impact of further flooding.
- Launched a funded campaign to make Hebden Bridge Accessible for all.
- Encouraged and welcomed visitors to the town with its third Welcome to Hebden Bridge brochure.
- Designed a potential development plan for the Valley Road site and begun to engage CMBC and the owners of the Fire Station site in realising it.
- Supported the work of the Calder Valley Community Land Trust in obtaining land for affordable housing
- Facilitated the further development of the open air market in HB by consulting the town on its move to Lees Yard and by increasing the number of market day

CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2015-2016:

In October 2016 I will have come to the end of my third year as Chair of the Hebden Bridge Partnership. In reporting on our achievements in 2015-2016 I also want to suggest some priorities for 2016-2017. In my view the HBP plays an important role as the "town team" in improving Hebden Bridge as a place to live, work and visit. At the same time it provides annually a focal point at which the town can learn about the activities of its 40 constituent organisations (listed in Appendix).

The HBP Board, elected at its AGM, meets monthly to progress its business and holds public meetings every three months. It works to a number of priorities set out in its Vision 2020 document which was approved after public consultation in 2014. <http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/HB%202020%20revised.pdf> These are set out in the Appendix and in summary are

1. PRIORITY 1 Traffic and the town centre.
2. PRIORITY 2 Making Hebden Bridge accessible for all
3. PRIORITY 3 Development of Hebden Bridge Market
4. PRIORITY 4 The visitor economy
5. PRIORITY 5 Valley Road
6. PRIORITY 6 Housing
7. PRIORITY 7 Public transport
8. PRIORITY 8 Calder Holmes Park and Memorial Gardens
9. PRIORITY 9 Low-carbon Hebden Bridge

In 2015-2016 progress has been achieved in the cases of Priority numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Work on priority 1 within which we hoped to develop a shared space concept for slowing traffic through the town has been stopped because of valid objections to the concept by persons with disabilities. We are still aiming to improve the traffic lights for pedestrians in the town centre and are still holding discussions with both Network Rail and CMBC with regard to increasing car parking options in the town. Work on priority 7 has been dormant but is being progressed by our constituent

Sustainable Transport Group. We have not contributed to work undertaken by the Friends of Calder Holme Park under priority 8 although with the support of Charlie and Kim working with HRTC and CMBC improvements have been made. Priority 9 has slipped off our agenda in 2015-2016.

PRIORITY 10. In addition to these priorities the HBP has of course been very active following the December 26th Floods in the ways described below. *Indeed the majority of public meetings in this year have been devoted to the Floods.* In January 2016 we convened the first meeting to report on the impact of the floods on the town centre and to review and work on how individuals and business would be helped to recover from the Floods.

(<http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/Public%20meeting%20Jan%2016%202016.pdf>). The Water Mark scheme, taken up by the Community Foundation for Calderdale arose from that meeting. The HBP Comprehensive submission to the Flood Commission was developed from this also (<http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/HBP%20SUBMISSION%20TO%20CMBC%20FLOOD%20COMMISSION.pdf>). In April a second public meeting was convened with speakers from the CMBC, Environment Agency, Community Foundation for Calderdale and the Flood Commission. (<http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/Minutes%20Apr%2016%20GM.pdf>). The third public meeting in July 2016 also dealt with the floods with the Environment Agency setting out their plans for the Calder catchment area a whole and for defensive works in Hebden Bridge in particular. The other topic at this meeting was the new northern rail franchise. (<http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/minutes/Minutes%20July%2016%20GM.pdf>)

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN MORE DETAIL.

- Held the Environment Agency and CMBC to account for work to reduce the risk and impact of further flooding.

The HBP has been instrumental in ensuring that both the environment agency and CMBC are more accessible and open to account than in the period following the 2012 floods. In terms of the CMBC/EA Flood Resilience Board, which has overarching authority to work on flood resilience and flood prevention, this board now (since September 2016) meets in public. In terms of the EA Calder Catchment Plan, after a meeting of the Chair with its convenor, Helen Batt, working party meetings involving interested members of the community are now the established way of working. The plan produced in October 2016 reflects this. In terms of the detailed flood defences work for Hebden Bridge the HBP was instrumental in Simon Byrne of the EA setting up a HB Stakeholder Group which has met once and will meet in the future to determine the shape of HB flood built defences.

- Launched a funded campaign to make Hebden Bridge Accessible for all.

At a further public meeting on September 3rd launched this campaign. Visit England will survey both public places in HB and those private businesses that are interested to determine what improvements might be made to enable persons with various access needs to use them. Grants will then be available for businesses from the CFFC towards installing these improvements. The report will also be used to lobby the

CMBC and Canal and Rivers Trust and National Trust etc to make improvements. The cinema steps have been painted white as a first visible outcome of this: a change that helps partially sighted persons. At the same time work is commencing in October to make the old goods lift shafts at the train station ready to accommodate the new lifts which will contribute to making the station fully accessible for the first time. <http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/Press%20release.pdf>

- Encouraged and welcomed visitors to the town with its third Welcome to Hebden Bridge brochure.

For the third year in succession, under my chairmanship, the Welcome to HB leaflet has been produced and distributed in nearby towns to encourage visitors and within the town to help visitors make the most of the town. Its calendar of events is unique. Funding for this comes partially from HRTC and some local business sponsors. <http://www.hbpartnership.org.uk/docs/Hebden%20Bridge%202016%20Guide.pdf> Also this year work was completed by our visitor economy working group which will inform subsequent initiatives.

- Designed a potential development plan for the Valley Road site and begun to engage CMBC and the owners of the Fire Station site in realising it.

The Valley Road task force worked on designs for an alternative to Sainsbury and a plan for the development of the Valley Road site as a whole. The HBP was instrumental in getting the site included as a key development site both in the CMBC “local” plan and the HRTC and other Parishes Neighbourhood Plan. A number of options were considered including a hotel and a multi-story car park but the preference was for a scheme with a public square facing the town hall, the car park moved back towards the Fire Station Site and housing and small enterprises above it and along the sides of the square. The Current Neighbourhood Plan embodies a similar idea. Discussions are ongoing between the HBP, CMBC and the owners of the Fire Station site to progress this. A more detailed town consultation will be scheduled for probably early 2017.

- Supported the work of the Calder Valley Community Land Trust in obtaining land for affordable housing

The CVCLT was established with the help of the HBP and is now taking ownership of its first plots of land in Todmorden and Hebden Bridge with a view to enabling affordable housing to be built on them.

- Facilitated the further development of the open air market in HB by consulting the town on its move to Lees Yard and by increasing the number of market day

The HBP provided a large grant from the funds it obtained from the Porteus Foundation to contribute to the costs of the move of the market. It also surveyed opinion among traders and others regarding the suggested move and development.

FUTURE PRIORITIES IN 2016-2017

In 2016-2017, in my view the HBP priorities should be:

- a) To continue to hold the EA and CMBC to account regarding *flood resilience and defence work*. Importantly plans for any walled defences within HB WILL be laid down and the HBP needs to play a leading role in ensuring these are compatible with the Hebden Water continuing to be an amenity for residents and visitors. Glass walls and/or electronic moveable flood barriers need to be in the mix.
- b) To complete the *accessibility work* so that in 2018 HB can be advertised not only as a Walkers are welcome town but also a disability friendly town.
- c) To expand, with business sponsorship, a *town visitor brochure*. Consideration should be given, in my opinion, to the appointment of a town centre manager.
- d) To work with HRTC, CMBC, and developers to ensure a new development of the *Valley Road site* that HB can be proud of.
- e) To work with CMBC to see the establishment in 2017 of a properly funded *HB Development Board* with representation on it not only on CMBC Councillors and the HRTC but also the HBP and HBCA and the HBBF. CMBC has already agreed in principle after representation by the HBP to such a Board being open to the public with equal status of all members.

In terms of its own working methods I think the HBP needs to strengthen throughout the year the relationship between its elected Board and its 40 constituent membership organisations so that more of the HBP work can *be progressed sensibly through its member organisations*. Good examples of his are the HB Walkers Action Group developing the Pennine Loop and setting up a Welcome to the Heart of the Pennines web site. Similarly the Sustainable transport Group work on Carbon reduction is helpful as of course is the CVCLT work on housing.

On a personal note I am unable to accept the nomination to renew my chairmanship in 2016-2017 partly because of a need for a break but also because I have to undergo medical treatment this autumn. Health permitting I might be able to play a role in the HBP later in 2017 if it would be helpful.

Bob Deacon Chair. HBP October 2016

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APPENDIX:

PRIORITY 1 Traffic and the town centre The Partnership has established a task group to develop further the ideas in this section of the Action Plan. Its remit includes (a) progressing short-term improvements for pedestrians at the main traffic lights (b) researching further possible changes for Hope Street and Crown Street and (c) researching the possibility of a formal shared space scheme in Hebden Bridge.

PRIORITY 2 Making Hebden Bridge accessible for all. The Partnership intends to establish a task group to work to make Hebden Bridge an exemplary town in terms of accessibility. Its remit will include (a) researching and campaigning to change aspects of the built environment which prevent or discourage accessibility (b) developing an online resource dedicated to access information for Hebden Bridge

PRIORITY 3 Development of Hebden Bridge Market The Partnership has established a task group to work towards the development of outdoor markets in Hebden Bridge. Its remit includes (a) working with Calderdale Council and existing market traders towards the successful relocation of the street market, (b) exploring ways of marketing more strongly the open market markets, and (c) exploring ways of developing new open air markets.

PRIORITY 4 The visitor economy The Partnership has established a task group to develop a visitor economy strategy. Its remit includes (a) updating of the 2005 Tourism Action Plan, and (b) working with local people (including retailers, artists, hospitality providers and arts groups), Calderdale Council, the Town Council and other appropriate agencies to improve the strength of the visitor economy.

PRIORITY 5 Valley Road The Partnership intends to establish a task group to monitor developments on this site. Its remit will include (a) discussing with Calderdale Council and the existing owners of the former Fire Station site possible viable solutions and (b) if community use and parking can be maintained, exploring possible funding avenues. Our priorities 23

PRIORITY 6 Housing The Partnership has established a housing task group. Its remit includes (a) to seek proactively to identify brown-field sites for housing (b) to encourage an increase in affordable housing and social housing in Hebden Bridge and (c) to explore possible community-led housing initiatives.

PRIORITY 7 Public transport Good affordable public transport is a necessary requirement for a socially inclusive community and we will encourage and support community-led initiatives to defend and improve our existing public transport. In particular, we welcome the work of Friends of Hebden bridge Station, the newly-formed Hebden Bridger Action Group and the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR) Sustainable Transport Group. We strongly support the proposal to provide further car parking at the station.

PRIORITY 8 Calder Holmes Park and Memorial Gardens The Partnership considers improvements to Calder Holmes Park and Memorial Gardens to be a priority for the town, and it will offer its support to Friends of Calder Holmes Park in their work towards this aim.

PRIORITY 9 Low-carbon Hebden Bridge The Partnership will actively support initiatives in Hebden Bridge which help meet Calderdale Council's wider objective of a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 (2005 base). We also welcome the proposal to develop a community benefit society, Calderdale Community Energy, to fund renewable energy projects and to improve energy efficiency of households.

AND THE NEW PRIORITY 10: Holding EA and CMBC to account with regard to flood resilience and flood defence work.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS.

- [Bridge Rectifier](#)
- [Calder Civic Trust](#)

- Calder and Colne Rivers Trust
- Calder Food Hub
- Calder Future
- Calderdale Local Orchard Group
- Calder Valley CND for Peace and Justice
- Dodnaze Community Association
- The Egg Factory
- The Elmet Trust
- Enabling Theatre
- Fox and Goose (Hebden Bridge) Ltd cooperative
- Friends of Calder Holmes Park
- Friends of Hebden Bridge Station
- Friends of the Picture House
- Geant4 Associates International Ltd
- Growing Futures
- Handmade Parade CIC
- Hebden Bridge Arts Festival
- Hebden Bridge & Mytholmroyd Business Forum
- Hebden Bridge Community Association
- Hebden Bridge Folk Roots Festival
- Hebden Bridge Junior Band
- Hebden Bridge Local History Society
- Hebden Bridge Piano Festival
- Hebden Bridge Quaker Meeting
- Hebden Bridge and Todmorden Community Self Build Housing CIC
- Hebden Bridge Twinning Society
- Hebden Bridge Walkers Action
- Hebden Bridge Women's Institute
- Hebden Bridge Woodcraft Folk
- Hebden Royd Town Council
- Hebveg
- Hepton Singers
- Heptonstall Village Team
- Hope Baptist Church
- Kawa Creative
- Little Theatre
- Millpond Community Alliance Ltd
- Mytholmroyd Scout Group
- National Trust (Hardcastle Crag)
- Northlight Art Studios
- Pennine Heritage
- Rotary Club of Hebden Bridge
- Sustainable Transport Group
- Trades Club
- Treesponsibility
- Waingate Chapel
- West Hollywood Web Studio Ltd
- Wild Rose Heritage and Arts

Calderdale Council, Hebden Royd Town Council, Blackshaw Parish Council, Erringden Parish Council, Heptonstall Parish Council and Wadsworth Parish Council are also represented on the Partnership's Board.

