



AN ACTION PLAN FOR FARINGDON

2008 to 2012



April 2008



OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk



**Vale
of White Horse**



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1 Introduction

In 2002 volunteers within in the town of Faringdon undertook a Market Town Healthcheck to address issues such as unemployment, low monthly earnings, transport and access problems, parking issues etc, in partnership with the Vale of White Horse District Council, Faringdon Town Council and The Countryside Agency.

Five years on the Faringdon Area Project (FAP) who undertook the original Healthcheck decided that a new and concise Action Plan was required. Funding was sought and a co-ordinator employed to undertake a 'mini' Healthcheck in order to discover what the current needs are within Faringdon and to prepare a strategy for 2008 and beyond.

It was decided that the Action Plan that resulted from the mini Healthcheck should be a succinct, accessible document with a clear timescale and actions that can be realistically completed by volunteers. Work to create the new Action Plan started in September 2007 and was completed by March 2008.

This Action Plan is the result of voluntary time by Faringdon residents and generous support and input provided by local businesses. It is hoped that this Action Plan will provide a springboard for those who wish to improve life within the town where they live and work.



2 Background

A market town Healthcheck process is essentially a tool leading to a local action plan that guides and plots regeneration activity. In addition, the Healthcheck process itself aims to involve communities and strengthens relationships between active community groups and local government.

Faringdon Area Project (FAP) are a group of volunteers local to Faringdon. They have undertaken both of the Healthchecks in 2002 and 2007 and put together the Action Plans that have resulted from them. FAP assists in the initiation of projects, locating of funds for projects, updating the Action Plan and communicating the progress of the plan to the people of Faringdon. FAP's underlying aim is to see Faringdon and the villages around it continue to develop into vibrant and thriving rural communities.

The 2002 Faringdon Healthcheck resulted in an ambitious Action Plan containing 52 projects. Volunteers within the FAP were tasked with facilitating or delivering these projects. In many cases projects were a success, although as time went by several projects changed their aim or became unnecessary due to changes in circumstances.

The experience of the first Healthcheck has provided valuable lessons for the development of the 2007 Healthcheck process. In particular, after discussions with members of FAP the Healthcheck consultant felt that the ability of the 2002 Action Plan to deliver tangible results was affected by:

- The capacity of those tasked with delivering projects
- Realistic aims and timescales for the projects
- Management of the project by the most appropriate group or volunteer

These principles have guided the production of this Action Plan.

A methodology for undertaking the 2007 Healthcheck was developed as a result of this experience and, as a result of tighter budgetary constraints, to fit within a much shorter timescale than the 2002 Healthcheck.

3 Methodology

A full Healthcheck is based on the following six stages over twelve months:

1. Developing the Market Town Partnership
2. Gaining Community Commitment
3. Completing the Healthcheck Worksheets
4. Creating a Vision
5. Preparing the Action Plan
6. Putting the Action Plan into Practice

As much of this work has already been completed, for the 2007 Healthcheck these stages were reduced to:

1. Introducing and developing a consensus on the process
2. Completing the Healthcheck Worksheets
 - Undertaking a Market Town 'Snapshot'
 - SWOT analysis
 - Working with Faringdon schools
 - Creating a list of potential projects
 - Project prioritisation
3. Preparing the Action Plan for delivery by FAP

1. Introducing and developing a consensus for the project

This was a meeting of FAP and its partners and supporters during which the new Healthcheck was introduced. Ideas were presented to the Healthcheck Co-ordinator from which the methodology for the new Healthcheck began to be developed.

2. Completing the Healthcheck Worksheets

The Healthcheck process consists of a number of worksheets and questionnaires, each targeted at a different aspect of life in a market town. The worksheets are designed to be completed through individual research (to answer specific questions) and at group and public meetings so that opinion and fact both contribute to the building of the action plan. The result of the worksheets is a list of projects that most appropriately addresses the needs of the town.

Undertaking the Market Town 'Snapshot'

A snapshot is a brief investigation into all aspects of the town, including the local economy, environment, transport and accessibility and social and community issues. In order to economise on time, the snapshot consisted of a review of the 2002 Healthcheck 'snapshots' with updates where necessary. The 'snapshots' were undertaken by FAP volunteers.

SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis is where you identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Using the information gathered from the 'snapshots'. Using information from the Snapshots a profile of the Faringdon's assets and needs was developed.

The conclusions formed the basis for the development of a list of projects to capitalise on the strengths and address the weaknesses. The SWOT analysis was carried out at a public meeting on December 14 2007. Full copies of the completed worksheets are attached (Appendices 1 to 4).

Working with Faringdon schools

As part of the new Faringdon Town Heathcheck, Oxfordshire Town Chamber Network (OTCN) were asked to engage with Faringdon's young people and ask them what needed to be done to improve community, environment, economy and transportation within their town. Two schools were chosen for the work, the Community College and Faringdon Junior School.

Feedback from pupils was primarily encouraged through responses to questionnaires, around 200 of which were returned from each school. Once analyzed these created a detailed picture of how life for young people within Faringdon may be improved. OTCN also held a workshop session with a group of children from each school to explore further the issues that they raised and to investigate how each issue may be resolved. A breakdown of responses to questionnaires and the OTCN report has been attached in Appendices 5 and 6.

The work that OTCN undertook provided a vital springboard for all discussions and public meetings undertaken by the Faringdon Area Project (FAP). It emerged that the young people of Faringdon had very similar aspirations and priorities for the town as the older generations. In particular, the principal project identified by most pupils (to support the building of an entertainment venue for cinema, arts and theatre) was also the ultimate choice for prioritisation and support by the FAP.

Creating a list of potential projects

A second public meeting was held on January 10 2008. This meeting used all of the information gathered so far, from the schools and the worksheets. After a presentation on the findings of the work done so far, the public participants at the meeting were invited to create a long list of potential projects that may be supported by FAP. At the end of the meeting each participant was given 10 yellow dots to put by the projects that they rated of most importance. The result was a 'popularity score' for each of the projects which guided prioritisation for development of this action plan. A full copy of potential projects and the number of votes they received has been attached as Appendix 8.

Project prioritisation

The final stage for the development of this Action Plan was a meeting between FAP and representatives from partner organisations. At the meeting the list of potential projects was put forward for consideration. Notes had been provided by Oxfordshire County Council, the Vale of the White Horse District Council and the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council on ways in which each potential project may be supported. Details of projects to be taken forward can be found in the following section.

4 Projects

33 potential projects were identified at the public meeting held on January 10 (for full details see Appendix 8). On February 26 2008 a meeting of FAP and its partners was held in order to prioritise the projects for action.

At the meeting the selection of projects was made with guidance from the following criteria;

- What work is already being undertaken on each project
- Which organisation or person within Faringdon is best suited to lead on each project
- What should be the role of FAP in supporting or instigating each project

After filtering the projects in this way it was found that some of the potential projects (for example the project to improve the public toilets) were already being undertaken by other organisations and required little or no support. Some of the projects were not considered to be essential to the well-being of Faringdon (for example the renaming of Faringdon as Great Faringdon) so no further work was required. The capacity of FAP as a voluntary organisation was also a key factor when decisions were made so that their time and resources could be targeted in the most effective way.

In all 12 projects were chosen by FAP, eight of which will be targeted in a more specific way. The key project chosen was to help with the development of a Performance, Arts and Conference venue for the town. This has proved to be the most popular of all proposed projects at each stage of the Healthcheck process. A performance and arts venue would address a social and economic need within the town by filling a large gap in current leisure and tourism provision.

The following projects details have been presented in order of the priority they were given at the public meeting on January 10.

PROJECT DETAILS I			
Project Name	Performance and Conference Venue		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	2013
Short description of the Project:			
To fund and build a flagship Performance and Conference Venue for Faringdon. The site will be able to accommodate an audience of 1,000 and will include office suites and a museum exhibition space. With careful development and experienced management, income from the office suites and conference facilities will create a revenue to maintain the building and non-commercial activities planned.			
Why the project is needed:			
<p>Faringdon has a growing population yet there is no venue for the arts within the town or surrounding villages. This lack of facilities was emphasised by the public response to the Healthcheck and the schools surveys. Faringdon has no cinema, theatre or museum, and despite having successful outdoor festivals, it has few indoor facilities for live music.</p> <p>The Healthcheck also identified that there is a need to bring businesses into Faringdon. The business and conference facility will bring new business and employment to the town at the same time as making the performance venue economically viable.</p>			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
FAP will work with Focus on Faringdon by liaising with and encouraging support from partners, by investigating funding opportunities and by promoting the Performance/Arts Venue as the key initiative to emerge from the 2008 Healthcheck.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
The project will required a very large amount of funding over a long period. Part of this may be provided by the SEEDA Oxfordshire Market Towns Fund.			

PROJECT DETAILS 2			
Project Name	A visiting Cinema for Faringdon		
Anticipated Start Date:	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project:	2009 - ongoing
Short description of the Project:			
To organise occasional screenings of new movies at the Junior School in Faringdon in partnership with the school.			
Why the project is needed:			
<p>The students of Faringdon Community College and the Junior School chose evening entertainment as the number one area where they felt that Faringdon was lacking. A cinema was top of the list of ideas that they came up with.</p> <p>Leisure projects were also the most popular area identified through the Healthcheck. A temporary cinema is an ideal way to provide entertainment for young people and families within Faringdon until the proposed leisure and conference complex becomes a reality.</p>			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
James Pavitt will instigate the project before passing it on to a volunteer within Faringdon to organise and run.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
<p>There will be a small amount of funding required to promote screenings and employ 'staff' although it is anticipated that the project will eventually become self-funding after entrance fees have been taken.</p> <p>It was initially hoped that the Oxfordshire Mobile Cinema could undertake the organisation of performances. It has now transpired that this mobile cinema is unavailable in the Vale and that organisation needs to come from within Faringdon. With a small grant, equipment could be purchased for regular film performances. This would provide Faringdon with a permanent resource and occasional income for whoever was willing to organise screenings.</p>			

PROJECT DETAILS 3			
Project Name	Cycle route between Faringdon and Shrivenham		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	2010
Short description of the Project:			
To investigate the potential for improvements (resurfacing and signposting) on existing pathways in order to provide a safe and direct cycle link between Faringdon and Shrivenham, including a safe crossing for the A420. This is intended to be a utility so that people can get to and from work as well as a leisure cycleway.			
Why the project is needed:			
Many Faringdon residents work in Shrivenham but the only road between Faringdon and Shrivenham is the A420 which is a fast and dangerous road. A cycle path would allow people to travel safely and quickly.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Focus on Faringdon with FAP liaising with partners and investigating funding opportunities.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
Options for funding through Oxfordshire County Council will be investigated.			

PROJECT DETAILS 4			
Project Name	Cycle paths in central Faringdon		
Anticipated Start Date:	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project:	-
Short description of the Project:			
To investigate and support developments to promote safe cycling in central Faringdon.			
Why the project is needed:			
This project was identified as important through the Healthcheck process and by the young people of Faringdon.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Initial investigation by Sjoerd Vogt			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
Options for funding through Faringdon Town Council or Oxfordshire County Council should be investigated. Sustrans may be able to provide guidance.			

PROJECT DETAILS 5			
Project Name	Faringdon Carers		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	Ongoing
Short description of the Project:			
To set up a group of volunteers to look after vulnerable people in Faringdon.			
Why the project is needed:			
Faringdon has a need for more support for vulnerable people including those with special needs, the recently bereaved and lone carers. However there is little funding for existing services so this project aims to provide organisational support for a group of local volunteers.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Dee England will investigate the potential for this project with support from FAP.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
Some funding may be necessary in order to establish secretarial support, promotion and costs. Ongoing funding may be obtained through donations.			

PROJECT DETAILS 6			
Project Name	Health concerns for Faringdon		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	-
Short description of the Project:			
Investigate and if necessary facilitate an increase of cancer screening services for those who live in and around Faringdon.			
Why the project is needed:			
The Healthcheck process revealed that some residents have the concern that the area around Faringdon appears to have a high rate of breast (and other) cancer. This has been looked into but the claim could not be substantiated. The project aims to investigate the potential for increasing the availability of screening services for cancer within Faringdon for those who have concerns. At present, breast cancer screening is undertaken once every three years.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Julie Farmer will lead the investigation into the potential for increasing the availability of screening services. FAP will provide support.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
As screening services are only funded at the current rate, addition screening will require more funding. Guidance may be sought from Oxfordshire County Council.			

PROJECT DETAILS 7			
Project Name	Coach Parking		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	-
Short description of the Project:			
To investigate alternative options for coach parking within Faringdon and promote the best option to tour and coach companies.			
Why the project is needed:			
Tourist visits to Faringdon are made extremely problematic because of the lack of coach parking. An easily accessible and available coach park would improve access and assist with making Faringdon a destination town.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Sally Thurston will investigate this project initially with support from FAP			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
A small amount of funding may be required to promote the best parking options. The county council may be able to assist with funding.			

PROJECT DETAILS 8			
Project Name	Saturday Fine Food Market		
Anticipated Start Date	April 2008	Anticipated End Date of Project	-
Short description of the Project:			
The project aims to research the potential for a new regular food market in Faringdon on Saturdays			
Why the project is needed:			
The Faringdon Farmers' Market on the first Tuesday of the month and visiting continental markets are hugely popular. In order to capitalise on this popularity it is hoped that a new Farmers' or Fine Food market may be organised for Saturdays in Central Faringdon. The aim is to attract people into the town at weekends as well as supporting local and artisan food producers.			
PROJECT REQUIREMENTS			
Project Management:			
Rory Souter will undertake investigations on behalf of FAP.			
Funding requirements and possible sources of support for the project:			
There may be some support or funding available through SEEDA or via the Oxfordshire Local Food Group.			

The following projects came out of the Healthcheck process and will be supported by FAP if financial and voluntary resources are available.

Bus Services

The Healthcheck process demonstrated that there is a continuing need to increase the regularity and scope of bus services to towns and villages around Faringdon. Although the Bus service in Faringdon has recently undergone a timetable review, Oxfordshire County Council has said that it will be another four years before another review is undertaken. There is a continuing concern that this issue should be addressed as part of Faringdon's long-term transport strategy in order to support low-paid workers. John Gillman will continue to monitor the situation and report back to FAP if action or support is required.

Affordable Housing

The Healthcheck process identified a desire amongst the local population to encourage affordable housing – particularly regarding the new housing developments within Faringdon. The Local Development Plan (LDP) has a 'Choice-Based Letting System' which provides opportunities for some affordable housing. There is to be a public meeting to discuss the LDP which FAP will help to promote.

Faringdon Folly

The Folly is one of Faringdon's most iconic heritage buildings, set in beautiful countryside and overlooking the town. However, the building is falling into disrepair and urgently requires renovation. As the building will always require maintenance, it has been proposed that income may be generated by adding visitor attractions, for example a sculpture park. Focus on Faringdon is also considering the potential for viable business solutions and FAP will provide support by promoting the project to its partners.

Recycling

During Healthcheck meetings and surveys Faringdon residents (in particular the younger members of the community) demonstrated strong support for recycling schemes. The Community Action Group is dedicated to Re-using, Reducing and Recycling waste and is organising a Swap-Shop in May. FAP wish to be kept informed of this and any other developments that it may be in a position to support.

Focus on Faringdon

Focus on Faringdon (FoF) has been established by Faringdon & District Chamber of Commerce as a Community Interest Company with the aim of providing support for a range of projects around Faringdon. The Chamber of Commerce aim to support fledgling businesses which will have a positive effect on the local community.

FAP wish to support FoF as it may provide practical solutions to many of the concerns raised in the Healthcheck. FoF are currently selling shares and FAP have agreed to support this initiative by subscribing to the scheme and promoting the sale of shares to its partners.

5 Action Plan Delivery

FAP meeting schedule

It is recommended that FAP meet with those volunteers managing the projects on a quarterly basis to review progress towards the aims of their projects. An annual assessment of progress should be undertaken and adjustments made to project aims if necessary.

It is also recommended that an update of the Healthcheck is planned to start in September 2011 for completion by March 2012 if resources are available.

However, it should be noted that this is intended as guidance only. The timing of meetings and outcomes of the projects themselves should remain flexible bearing in mind changes of circumstances that are likely to happen and did happen to the projects in the 2002 Action Plan. The single most important objective of all of the projects continues to be FAPs original vision – to see Faringdon and its hinterland continue to develop into a vibrant and thriving rural community.

Note from the Healthcheck Consultant

Voluntary input and strong partnerships have provided the foundations for everything that FAP have achieved and continue to achieve. FAPs work currently continues on a voluntary basis but would be greatly enhanced by recognition that each project identified within this plan, along with the governance of FAP, requires resources. I hope that the value of the work being done is acknowledged and support and funding allocated in a way that takes advantage of the enthusiasm and generosity exhibited by FAP partners and volunteers.

I have rarely worked with such a committed, enthusiastic and involved community as I have done in Faringdon. FAP and the individuals and groups who contribute to its work remain an example to all of those who are undertaking Market Town Heathchecks and delivering Action Plans.

Appendices

A1 Completed Social and Community SWOT sheets

S1: Population
S2: Housing
S3: Health and Public Safety
S4: Local Government and Community Organisations
S5: Sport, Leisure and Open Space
S6: Culture and Heritage
S7: The Community Legal Service

A2 Completed Economy SWOT sheets

EC1: Employment
EC2: Business Support
EC3: Training and Education
EC4: Learning and Skills Development
EC5: Retail and Town Centre Services
EC6: Commercial and Industrial Property Needs
EC7: Tourism and Visitor Services

A3 Completed Environment SWOT sheets

EN1: Character and Vitality of the Town
EN2: The Town & the Wider Countryside
EN3: The Environment and Quality of Life

A4 Completed Transportation & Access SWOT sheets

T1: Travel To and From the Local Area
T2: Ease of Access to Services
T3: Ease of Movement Around the Town

A5 Faringdon Junior School Survey Response

A6 Faringdon Community College Survey Response

A7 FAP Schools Workshop Report

A8 Potential FAP 2008 – 2011 Action Plan projects

A9 Healthcheck Process Notes

A1 Completed Social and Community SWOT sheets

SOCIAL & COMMUNITY SWOT SHEETS, DECEMBER 2007

WORKSHEET S1: POPULATION

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
How does the population profile of the town and surrounding countryside compare with regional and national profiles?	6187 population. For a rural community Faringdon has a high proportion of social housing	✓					
Is there a growth or decline in numbers or the location of population categories, and what are they?							✓

WORKSHEET S2: HOUSING

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is there sufficient housing available to meet the needs of all sectors of the population? If there are shortfalls, where are they? Do current housing strategies and plans take these areas into account?	There is a shortage of affordable housing						✓
Is the available housing stock in good condition? Where is the poor housing stock? What is being done to improve it?	Poor housing stock is a possibility						✓

WORKSHEET S3: HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is there adequate access to a range of healthcare and social care services? Where could access to, or the quality of provision, be improved?	Very good although there is no minor injuries facility – investigation required Care for the elderly is not good		✓	✓			
Do all areas provide a safe and healthy environment to live in?	Yes – but breast cancer should be investigated		✓	✓			✓

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is a good standard provided by the emergency services?	Fire good Police suspect Ambulance good		✓ ✓	 ✓	 ✓		 ✓
Is there a good strategy to fight crime and is the community protected? What opportunities are there to improve provision?	Drug problem			✓			✓

WORKSHEET S4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threat	Need more info
How easily can local people gain access to local government officials or members?	Easy		✓				
How well is the community represented in, or consulted by, local government?	Good		✓				

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
How well are local issues fully considered in local strategies and community planning?	Good, although small groups may have issues		✓				✓
How active and influential is the community in local decision-making?	Not active enough			✓			
How well is the community encouraged and supported to become involved in decision-making/development issues?	Well encouraged		✓				

WORKSHEET S5: SPORT, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACE

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there sufficient sports, leisure and open space facilities to meet the needs of residents? Where are there any gaps or shortfalls?	There are not enough outdoor areas, a skate park or affordable gyms.			✓			
How well maintained are these areas and facilities? Where is additional management or maintenance needed?	The leisure centre is not well maintained			✓	✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are the facilities accessible and affordable for residents?	Private club accessibility is good Hiring of the leisure centre is difficult		✓	✓	✓		
Are any of these facilities or spaces under threat? What plans are there to ensure that provision is sufficient to meet future demand?							✓

WORKSHEET S6: CULTURE AND HERITAGE

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there are sufficient cultural and heritage venues and facilities to meet the community's needs?	<p>There is no museum</p> <p>No community arts/ leisure centre</p> <p>No live music venue</p> <p>No Theatre</p>			✓	✓		
How well do current events and activities reflect the area's culture, heritage and strong historical or cultural associations? Have any distinctive or famous links been ignored?	<p>We don't make enough of the history of Faringdon nor do we utilise the folly enough</p>			✓	✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are members of the community actively engaged in the area's culture and heritage?	Yes		✓				
Are the local culture and heritage sufficiently promoted?	Yes		✓				

WORKSHEET S7: THE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Does the local CLSP Strategic Plan accurately reflect the need for civil legal service in your town and its hinterland?	[What is CLSP?]						✓
Are there particular issues or priorities regarding access to civil legal services by residents of your town and its hinterland that you think the CLSP has missed?							
How easy is it for people to get access to community legal services and help?	No Citizens Advice Bureau in town				✓	✓	

A2 Completed Economy SWOT sheets

ECONOMY SWOT SHEETS, DECEMBER 2007

WORKSHEET EC1: EMPLOYMENT

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is unemployment a significant issue locally?	Increasing, especially over last 6 months – beware of the future.	✓				✓	✓
Are there are any recent trends in long term unemployment?	Yes, it has almost doubled.	✓				✓	✓
Is the town a dormitory town or has it a significant employment role?	Consensus is that yes, the town is Dormitory	✓		✓			✓
Is local employment particularly dependent on specific industry sectors and /or on a small number of large employers?	Wide variety [of employers]	✓	✓				

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is employment growth within only some industry sectors, or spread more widely?	Spread quite widely		✓				✓
How much confidence is there within the business sector?	No local issues causing concern		✓				✓
Is the number of jobs available locally increasing or decreasing?	Relatively stable				✓		✓
What opportunities are there for job creation from the expansion of existing local firms?	Currently few			✓			✓
How vigorous is the local economy - based on new business start-ups / closures?	Quite vigorous						✓

WORKSHEET EC2: BUSINESS SUPPORT

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there shortfalls in the range of services offered by local bank branches, financial institutions and other business support services? If so, what are they?	No. Well served by financial institutions bearing in mind the size of the town		✓				
Are there any opportunities to expand support for local businesses?	Yes. Closure of Enterprise Gateway is HUGE loss.			✓			
Is there is a need to create, develop and or fund business events?	Yes			✓			

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there are enough business meeting and conference venues locally?	Yes		✓				
To what extent are local businesses making use of Broadband and Internet technologies	A great deal		✓				
Are there are technical or security concerns with remote broadband access to public sector ICT systems?	No		✓				

WORKSHEET EC3: TRAINING AND EDUCATION

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there are sufficient pre-school places in nurseries and playgroups?	No, there is a shortfall			✓			
Is there is a problem in local schools with academic achievements or exclusions?	College has v. good reputation and record		✓				✓
Are there significant vocational or non-vocational training gaps, which could be filled locally?							✓
What proportion of people have access to the Internet?	Percentages not known, but appears to be significant use						✓

WORKSHEET EC4: LEARNING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are industries in the town in the growth sectors of the regional economy? Are the skills needs of these sectors being met?	No. There is little high tech industry.			✓		✓	✓
How does the health of the local economy compare with other towns and the regional economy as a whole?	Comparable				✓		✓
Is there any significant cluster of businesses in the town (for example, tourism, specialist retailing, and engineering) and why is the town attracting these businesses?	JDS, Alsters. Tourism (Close to Cotswolds)			✓			✓
What significant skills shortages or recruitment problems are existing businesses experiencing?	Little availability of technical skills			✓			✓

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
What is the mix of generic and sector-specific skills that local employers most value and most need to help their business?							✓
Can local people access training locally that will improve general skills levels in the community and work to the benefit of local businesses and the local economy?	None available			✓			
What delivery agencies, trainers, and infrastructure bodies are active in the town? What facilities are available in the town that could provide a venue for local delivery of information, skills training, etc?	Council offices Information Centre		✓				
Where are decisions made about the provision of training opportunities within the town? By whom are these decisions made?							✓

WORKSHEET EC5: RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRE SERVICES

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
How much of the local shopping provision is in the town centre, out-of-town centre or in the villages?	Most in town centre		✓				
Are there any obvious gaps or shortages in provision of different types of shops and services?	Clothing			✓	✓		
How effective is the use of retail floorspace?	Very [effective]		✓				

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Has the town centre has become a more or less attractive location for retail development?	It is a listed site – it hasn't changed				✓		
If there is commercial demand for additional retail floorspace?	Yes, another supermarket				✓		
What is retail confidence like?	Fragile			✓			
Are the local provision and/or livestock markets vulnerable to closure	N/A						

WORKSHEET EC6: COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY NEEDS

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
How have vacancy levels for commercial properties changed in the last three years?							✓
Are existing commercial and industrial firms planning to expand?	Yes		✓		✓		
Are there sufficient premises at affordable rents for new small businesses, and for businesses that want to expand?	Office space available/ Workshops in pipeline {SEEDA}				✓		
What is the overall demand for, and gaps in the provision of, different types of commercial and industrial property. Take into consideration size and age of available property.	Demand for more modern buildings			✓	✓		✓

WORKSHEET EC7: TOURISM AND VISITOR SERVICES

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
How important is tourism spending and tourism-related employment to the local economy?	Not important but could be			✓	✓		
How vulnerable is the local economy to seasonal variations in tourism?	Not much			✓	✓		
How do historical employment rates and business stocks in tourism related services, such as hotels and catering, compare with regional and national averages over the last 3-5 years?	Business stocks good, economy of sector is poor.						
Is visitor activity concentrated mainly within the town itself or within the hinterland?	Mainly concentrated within the town itself.		✓		✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threat	Need more info
How good are the transport links into the town and to tourist attractions?	Not good			✓	✓		
What Tourism information sources there are in the area, and how well used are they?	TIC well used		✓				
Do the town and its hinterland have adequate parking facilities for both residents and visitors?	No! Major threat to health of economy in Town Centre			✓		✓	

A3 Completed Environment SWOT sheets

ENVIRONMENT SWOT SHEETS, DECEMBER 2007

WORKSHEET EN1: CHARACTER AND VITALITY OF THE TOWN

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Does the town make the most of its natural environmental features? If there are opportunities for improvements to areas, what/where are they?	The area around the Folly is a attractive, popular and in good condition.		✓				
Does the town have vitality and character, and does it keep its distinctive buildings and streets in good repair and in use? If not, what could be improved?	The look of the town is attractive. Planning is strictly regulated. Park Road could be improved – plans are already underway.		✓				
Are there any major environmental concerns are being addressed and planned for? Are there any gaps?	There are no real environmental concerns regarding the 'vitality of the town'. There are much wider environmental concerns (see EN3: Quality of Life)						

WORKSHEET EN2: THE TOWN & THE WIDER COUNTRYSIDE

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Do the town and its surrounding countryside have established, strong links, and are these being maintained? If the links are weaker than they used to be, why is this?	This question prompted some confusion. The main link between the town and the countryside was identified as the Farmers' Market. Apart from that the links between the countryside and the town are aesthetic and link in with tourism.		✓				
Looking at the quality of the surrounding countryside, its sensitive areas and its potential, are any areas in need of support/strengthening?	A lack of physical links. More facilities, a train line a good cycle network.			✓	✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
What are the changes that are happening in the surrounding countryside and how well these are being managed? How can the market town help with these changes to management practices?	There is less agriculture. New housing developments being well managed.						
What potential is there to increase the extent of community involvement in the management and conservation of the countryside?	Possibly involve the schools.				✓		

WORKSHEET EN3: THE ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
To what extent do people fully consider promoting and supporting environmentally sustainable initiatives? Are there any gaps or opportunities to extend these actions?	This was recognised as the only question with relevance to the term `Environment' as it is currently being used. The Healthcheck as it stands uses the term in a mostly economic sense. There is currently a great deal of support for environmentally sustainable initiatives including a Peak Oil initiative. A low carbon approach to public transport Improved cycle ways Better recycling facilities	✓			✓		
What improvements could be made in amenities such as open spaces, sites, routes and facilities for informal recreation that enhance the quality of life for local people be made? Are there any potential open spaces or sites that could be developed?	There are lots of walks in the area – pathways and crossings (particularly across the A420) could be improved.				✓		

A4 Completed Transportation & Access SWOT sheets

TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS SWOT SHEETS, DECEMBER 2007

WORKSHEET T1: TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE LOCAL AREA

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
To what extent is the car the predominant form of transport to and from the area?	Good Oxford to Swindon bus, but few late busses No long distance busses Can't drop children off at childcare then catch bus The bus timetables may be an issue There are no busses to Abingdon, Lechlade or Highworth	✓		✓ ✓ ✓			
Are there definable user-groups or usage patterns for car-users and for the different public transport services?	Mostly cars – workers leaving the Town Busses are not fully used	✓					
How easy is it to change between train and coach and/or bus services?	Oxford and Swindon is OK Changes are reasonably easy There is no railway anymore, suggest re-opening railway although this may be problematic Wickersham Quarry is a 29 acre site		✓		✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are waiting times for bus/train connecting services acceptable?	NO! Should be every 10 minutes. Usually more than 40 mins wait for a train. There is no connection into Oxford			✓			
Do public transport services meet local needs?	No – apprentice workers have to walk - there are potential customers for bus services			✓	✓		
What plans are there to improve the highway network or public transport services?	No real improvements – no new runways! A late running 66/65 route				✓		
Are there key routes for travel to and from the area?	A417 A420 Highworth Rd Lechlade Rd Faringdon is a cross-road of B-roads. The Lechlade road has some seriously heavy traffic		✓				

WORKSHEET T2: EASE OF ACCESS TO SERVICES

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are bus and train times from outlying villages to the town convenient for people going to/from work and school?	NO! The bus routes are not even defined any more			✓			
Where are the gaps in the rural transport services where demand exists?	Connections to the villages around Faringdon Lack of cycle-paths Late running services to and from work			✓	✓		
Is public transport accessible to the less able?	Better than it was	✓					
Is information on public transport easy to obtain?	Very little available for the public to see			✓	✓		
Do public transport services, including special services such as Dial-A-Ride, need to be more widely advertised or more actively promoted?	Not really			✓			

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Is there a need to relocate bus stops to bring them closer to the town centre?	No		✓				
How easy is it to get to health, education, cultural and retail services from outlying villages by public transport rather than by car?	Community bus service is a very good service – well used		✓				
In which parts of the area is access to services a problem?	Outlying villages and countryside towards the downs			✓			
How easy it is to access electronic information about public services rather than having to physically travel to get it?	Getting better	✓					
Are mobile services able to replace the need for people to travel?	Shopping online is becoming more useful Box schemes are developing on a commercial basis				✓		

WORKSHEET T3: EASE OF MOVEMENT AROUND THE TOWN

You may need to tick more than one column for each question.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
What plans are there to resolve traffic 'hot spots'?	There are no plans	✓					
Are there accident 'black spots' where there is a need to introduce safety measures to protect pedestrians and cyclists?	Yes, crossing the A420 on foot, horse or by bicycle.			✓	✓		
Are there any opportunities to increase bus access and circulation in the town centre?	Parking is a big issue Need a Park and Ride near the A420				✓		

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered.	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weaknesses	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Are there opportunities to extend pedestrian prioritisation in the shopping areas?	Very difficult – not at the moment but could be a long-term strategy			✓			
Is it easy for people, including those with disabilities, to find their way around town?	Reasonably easy – most of town is paved		✓				
How could the network of footpaths and cycle routes be improved for all sectors of the community?	Suggest creating/improving cycle routes is a good project – form a link with Sustrans? Schools train children in cycling proficiency but the children are not using their bikes. Bridleways can be made legally into cycle paths. Suggested routes – the Thames path and the Church path footpath to Littleworth. The A420 is VERY dangerous to cycle on.				✓		
Do the cycle paths and footpaths connect places that people wish to go to?	Some do Badbury Clump The walks are good! (Walking cards were a good idea)		✓				
In what ways could dedicated/segregated cycle routes and footpaths linking residential areas to the town centre and to local schools be improved?	Start walking busses				✓		

A5 Faringdon Junior School Survey Response

Faringdon Junior School Survey Response

	%
Clubs/entertainment	
Need a 'Guides' / more clubs for girls	3.9
Need a cinema	9.4
Skate board park	2.3
Other entertainment centre (bowling, ice rink, theatre, museum, circus)	7
More clubs needed (e.g. archery, cricket, model flying)	3.9
Need a park (for families)	1.6
Bigger pool in leisure centre	0.8
Level of interest	29
Transport/traffic	
Very hard to cross road in town centre	3.9
Need train in Faringdon	7.8
Getting to school is difficult because of parking	0.8
Need bike paths	11.7
Level of interest	24.9
Shops/town centre	
Shops scruffy from outside	2.3
More shops	3.9
Need clothes shop	2.3
More markets	0.8
Bigger/ more car parks	0.8
Shops should open later	0.8
Level of interest	10.9
Recycling facilities	
Need better recycling	5.4
Brown card bins too expensive	3.1
Level of interest	8.6
Street safety	
Needs to be safer to walk in town (at night)	4.6
Need more lights in alleyways	3.1
Level of interest	7.8
Miscellaneous	
Too much litter	4.6
Not enough jobs	1.6
Too many buildings in town could be greener	1.6
Not happy that the cricket pitch is going to be built on	1.6
Support for people in need could be better	2.3
Better Police service	0.8
Folly could be open more	4.7
Need wind turbines	0.8
More cafes/restaurants	0.8
More new houses	0.8
Level of interest	19.4
Total legible/unspoiled responses 256	
Total responses 277	

A6

**Faringdon Community College Survey
Response**

Faringdon Community College Survey Response

Category	Number	Notes
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Clubs/entertainment

More clubs/youth club	23	There were several positive comments about the facilities at the leisure centre but many children (particularly the younger teens) wanted an alternative. "more chill-out places for teens" "more things to do for older kids"
More entertainment [Cinema, theatre/ venue, ice rink, bowling]	42	Cinema was the most frequently mentioned. "more things for teenagers to do" "under 18s need place to just chill-out"
Better facilities for sport	1	
Skate Park	1	"what happened to the skate park we were promised?"
Level of interest	65	

Shops/town centre

Would like better choice of shops	52	Across all age groups. Of note there is a strong desire for more clothes shops, particularly amongst the younger age-groups. "[would be improved by] large shopping centre on outskirts of town" "a better food shop than Budgens" "More healthy food" "Health food shop" "Tesco Express for competitive prices"
More restaurants	2	This comment was from the youngest age group questioned. Other age groups were very positive about the selection of food venues (particularly take-aways) within the Town.
Town centre map would be useful	1	
Level of interest	55	

Busses/rail

More busses	32	There were many independent comments about the lack of timetables in bus shelters and the poor punctuality of the existing service. There were also many comments on the poor state of the school bus "busses should be cleaner" "more late night busses" "poor service to Lechlade" "more busses to surrounding countryside towns" Abingdon, Wantage & Didcot also mentioned
Cheaper busses	6	There was some concern about recent price rises
Need railway	4	The town needs "a railway between Abingdon and Faringdon"
Level of interest	42	

Traffic

Too much traffic through town	24	Most comments came from younger students regarding pollution and danger from traffic "make a pedestrian zone"
More parking	6	
Better taxi service	2	
Speed control entering Faringdon	1	
Road crossing on Park Rd	1	
Speed bumps/traffic lights near school	1	
Level of interest	35	

Litter/dog mess

More bins in countryside/ near folly	15	There were several comments about pollution in the countryside including litter, industrial pollution and dog mess.
Too much litter in town – need more bins	13	The majority of these comments came from younger children that were counterbalanced by positive comments on how clean the town was.
More dog bins	5	"too much dog mess at the Folly"

Fine for dog poo	1	
Level of interest	34	

The look of the town

Smarter appearance	5	The younger age groups tended to feel that the town was a little tatty. “Pet shop could be better” “Town looks really scavy” “the paint work needs redoing” “Budgens car park is poor” “The toilets should be cleaner”
More green spaces/greenery	9	“More trees”
Level of interest	14	

Street safety

Dangerous at night	9	Almost exclusively these comments came from the younger age groups “too many hoodies” “stop chavs doing annoying things”
More lights in alleyways	2	
Level of interest	11	

Recycling facilities

Better recycling facilities	11	Suggestions included separate bins to make it easier to recycle
Level of interest	11	

Student jobs

More jobs/holiday work for students	9	A concern of older students. One student wrote “NOT JUST PAPER ROUNDS!”
Level of interest	9	

Cycles

More/safer cycle lanes	7	“[the existing] cycle lane is unsafe” “need cycle racks near the Community College”
More pathways	1	
Level of interest	8	

Miscellaneous

Improve tourism	3	
Too many houses being built	3	
Need a community centre nearer the town	1	
Improve signal for digital TV	1	
Make sheltered seating across Faringdon	1	
Community officers are “unreasonable”	1	
More young people on the council	1	
Council estates are “run down”	1	
Improve Energy saving	1	
Total legible/unspoiled responses 113		
Total responses 107		

A7 FAP Schools Workshop Report



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FAP Schools Workshop

Introduction

Following a visit to Faringdon Community College (FCC) pre-Xmas, all members of one class in each year were asked to complete the FAP questionnaire. This produced around 120 forms which were then analysed by James Pavitt. I then returned to the school to host two half-hour workshops, one with two members from each of years 7-9 and another with two members from years 10 and 11 and two members of the 6th Form. The purpose was two-fold: to drill down on the issues raised in the questionnaires and to ask for their views on the issues highlighted as priorities for action by those attending a public meeting in the town on January 10.

I had also visited Faringdon Junior School before Xmas. They asked every member of the school (years 3-6) to complete the questionnaire after being briefed by their class representative on the School Council. This produced another 120 or so forms. I returned there to meet again with the School Council members (two from each of the nine classes at the school) and, as at FCC, further explore the issues raised in the questionnaires and ask for their views on the 'adults' priorities'.

What follows is a digest of the discussions. Bearing in mind the small sample and the fact that not all of the children lived in Faringdon, I should stress that this is not scientific but gives a perspective.

I should also at this point like to thank all the young people at the schools who took part, the teachers who gave time in their lessons for the questionnaires to be completed and, in particular, to Joe Winter at FCC and the Head, Paul Turner, at FJC for the time they put into making this initiative such a rewarding one.

I should also note that discussions with Mr Turner following the workshop, threw up potential leads on two of the projects that have been discussed for the town.

Tuesday 15 January FCC

The Public Meeting Top Six

The museum suggestion was not well received. Comments included: "it'd be boring", "it's something you would only go to once", "if you want information about the history you could go to the tourism information centre", "no kids would go". It is worth noting here that the perception of this suggestion was slightly different amongst the younger children at FJC (see below). Re the arts centre the sense was that they'd need more of an idea as to what that would involve before giving a view. Re the music centre there was more enthusiasm: "that'd be quite cool", but one of the group said in very strong terms that the town had had one (at the Corn Exchange) "until one adult complained and they shut it down –so what's the point!"

I then took the opportunity to look at the suggestions from their questionnaires and explore further the issue of what there is/could be to do. The Youth Club ("my brother has been", "I've never been", "is that the one the Church runs?") and the Leisure Centre ("I go swimming there but the water's either too hot or too cold", "I go to the gym but they rip you off") had mixed responses. A cinema would be popular (currently they go to Bristol, Swindon or Oxford) but the number one talking point was the skate park idea.

Again there were some concerns: "there's nowhere to put it", "yes there is...it could go by the health centre/petrol station), "it would just get vandalised", "the 'chavs' would ruin it for everyone else"...but others said "yes lots of people would use it", "if you had supervisors no-one would go...but it'd be okay if the PCSOs or the police walked by sometimes", "you should have cctv there so everyone would know you couldn't mess".

The name change idea was, for them, a non-starter. "what's the point", "it's not GREAT", "that would sound strange".

The Folly was well thought of: "you need to leave it as it is", "it's quite clean", "if you cut stuff down you'd lose all the good places to hide".

Improving toilets was welcomed by all: "they're not nice", "they're horrible", "I wouldn't go in them", "there's only the one near Budgens", "perhaps the Budgens cleaners would take over cleaning them".

Cycle routes: "I feel safe when I'm cycling"... but "there's not much place to cycle apart from the roads, so yes more routes would be good", "lots would use a Faringdon-Shrivenham route".

We then looked at some of the other issue raised in the FCC questionnaires:
Shops "they're pretty rubbish", "you've got Budgens and loads of butchers", "there's not the sort of shops for our age"

I asked what they'd open given the chance: "a gaming shop with consoles" and "a clothes shop".

I asked what they think they could do to improve the town. They started with general suggestions about what was needed e.g. more litter and 'dog poo' bins, cameras on the outside of places where there is rubbish like the garage and the newsagents, more and cleaner toilets:

These ideas developed further with the older age group.

Youth Club: "I think a new one's been build but it's not being used", "that could be the music venue", "I'd rather be at home", "you could have a youth centre but not market it as one, just say it's a place to be, somewhere you could go and sit with no adults".

Cinema: "Faringdon isn't a big enough market to justify one".

Skate park: "you could have it near the folly", "lots of people would go", "if there's graffiti, so what?", "they were talking about that when I was in junior school, now I'm nearly leaving senior school and there still isn't one. They should just get on and build it", "no-one wants it near them", the leisure centre would be a good place but they don't want kids putting off their adults customers".

I asked this group how safe they felt in the town: "I wouldn't go into town on my own at night", "you get weird people yelling at you", "people hang round outside pubs cos there's nothing else to do".

For this group the priority was something to do for young people: "there's no choice, you either go out and just walk around or stay at home", "you could have one venue but use it for different age groups at different times on different days, like a Friday disco club for younger ones like U13s...we (over 13s) could help run that", "you'd have trouble finding volunteers unless you paid them", "you could have adults run it, but stay in the background and have young people to help", "that's what's so great about a skate park, you don't need anyone to run that", "I'd like a gym club and a badminton club, but it relies on someone to run it".

Friday 18 January FJC

Ahead of the meeting with the School Council, I raised with the Head some of the issues I'd discussed at FCC. His comments were interesting.

- a) His view is that the idea of older children running activities for younger ones does have benefits. It is good for self esteem and can prove to work with children who you might not have thought of as potential leaders.
- b) FJC children like activities in the town e.g. Xmas lights and the music festival; 'town events' which bring people together and that they can take part in.
- c) He thinks he may have a potential site for a skate park.
- d) He has a potential venue (his soon-to-be-equipped school hall) for a cinema.

The Public Meeting Top Six

The museum, arts centre, music venue: "it would be good if it was a natural history museum", "we could have trips there", "I'd like a dinosaur museum", "you wouldn't need to go to Oxford then", "a science museum would be good", "most people think a museum is boring, but it's not if it has things to do in it", "...like if it's interactive, there are things to dress up in, or to do." What emerged was a different perception of what a 'museum' would mean. The younger age groups envisaged not a permanent exhibition/display but a space that could be used to host different exhibitions and displays; they could use it themselves sometimes to show things and, above all, it should have a focus on interactive.

On the subject of things to do, other popular ideas were: "places where children can go", "a milkshake bar", "something run by teenagers for us rather than adults".

The name change idea was met with shaking of heads: "we are Faringdon", "you couldn't have the Great Faringdon Folly, that'd be silly", "we'd have to change the name of the school", "it would cost loads to change all the signs, and our school jumpers and everything", "we've been called Faringdon so long it wouldn't be right".

The Folly: "you could cut down some nettles" (this produced a funny diversion into the benefits of nettles, including how nice nettle soup was and how it would go down on the school meals menu!), "leave it as it is", "do some more litter picking", "have some more benches to sit on", "have the tower open a bit more often", "I like it", "it's a really nice place to go".

There was a resounding 'yes' to more public toilets: "you need more", "there's only the ones by Budgens", "I locked myself in there once", "some shops have toilets you can use", "they need to be cleaner", "they need to be monitored".

On cycle routes: "you could pedestrianise the market place like you do for Xmas lights", "you need cycle routes to and from Faringdon", "we need better security

in school for the bikes", "the one-way system needs to be stricter cos people ignore it and that's dangerous",

We then looked at some of the other issue raised in the FJC questionnaires.

Litter: "We have a green team that does recycling", "they could do litter picking as well", "we need more bins", "a class or two could go out to do a litter pick if we had adult help", "there's only one adult litter picker out", "cctv would help catch people", "if we had to go out litter picking that'd stop people our age dropping it in the first place, but it might make teenagers drop even more!", "you need more bins by the leisure centre", "you need bins emptied more often".

Skate Park: this proved popular and a big talking point: "you need two areas, one for older children, one for us", "it's important because skaters ruin other sports like tennis by getting in the way", "it'd mean teenagers would have something to do rather than messing around".

It was suggested that there might be a space at FJC to host a skate park and we asked the group for their thoughts. There were concerns: "I'd be worried about litter", "it might mean more vandalism at the school"...but "I'd use it and so would lots of other people."

Iain Nicholson
January 2008

A8 Potential FAP 2008 – 2011 Action Plan projects

Potential FAP 2008 – 2011 Action Plan projects

The following table is a break-down of results of a Public Meeting held in Faringdon Corn Exchange on Thursday January 10 2008, with the aim of finding potential projects for FAP to support or undertake.

The projects were suggested in repose to background research undertaken by FAP volunteers. They have been grouped by aim so that it is easier to see where a single project may be developed to link similar projects.

Leisure Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
To build/convert an existing building to house a museum, arts centre and music venue	Project is currently under investigation by Nick Elwell from Bordengate Insurance. Survey of young people at community college also showed that their greatest need was for after school leisure/entertainment – in particular a cinema. Links with: TOURISM, SOCIAL, BUISINESS	To provide entertainment/leisure activities for residents of Faringdon and visitors	29

Social Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
To establish a group of 'Faringdon Carers' (potentially volunteers)	Comments from the floor and spoken to facilitator afterwards shoe this to be a great area of need within Faringdon. Potential volunteers came forward at meeting. (Dee England).	To provide social and community support for the residents of Faringdon	19
Improvements to public toilets	Also noted by students at the community college		10
Earmark affordable housing for local people	There will some affordable and social housing as part of new development within Faringdon although the proportion of affordable housing to social housing may be small. Any project would focus on increasing the proportion of affordable housing and earmarking it or promoting it to people who have lived in the town for much of their lives.		9
Needs for retained firefighters at second pump			6
Investigation into health and care provision	There is some concern that Faringdon may have high levels of breast cancer. An investigation may prove or allay these fears.		5
Support for family and children centre	The Family and Children Centre in Faringdon is a valuable, yet under funded initiative.		4
Encourage shops to become pushchair friendly			3
Under-staffing of care services			1
Investigation into making town centre pedestrian and wheelchair friendly	Links with: ENVIRONMENT, BUSINESS		1
Support schools with walking bus initiative			0

Potential FAP projects continued

Tourism Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
Start to use title 'Great Faringdon' again	A 'simple' and popular suggestion.	To attract visitors and encourage a thriving tourist industry within Faringdon	13
Improve appearance of folly tower and woodland area	There is an existing project to support the maintenance of the Folly, but it requires project funding.		11
Examine potential for coach parking	Links with: TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT		7
Faringdon needs a tourist attraction (eg sculpture park)	This could be either a re-vamped Folly and/or a town museum.		5

Transport Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
Cycle route from Faringdon to Shrivenham	Links with: ENVIRONMENT	To encourage healthy, safe and affordable transportation both within the town centre and between the town and surrounding villages	10
Short-term (10 mins) free parking on roadside in centre of town	Links with: ENVIRONMENT		8
Great Coxwell to South Marsdon Cycle route	Links with: ENVIRONMENT		8
Wilts and Berks Towpath and Thames cycle paths	Links with: ENVIRONMENT		8
Focus on long term transport strategy	In particular the potential for car parking and pedestrianisation – neither of which are easy options for the town.		4
Examination of on-street parking	There is currently free on-street parking for short-stay visitors but this is not regulated or enforced. Many drivers currently take advantage of this to park all day.		5
Make Faringdon town centre cycle friendly	Links with: ENVIRONMENT		4
Put pressure on bus companies to provide evening services			3
Community bus improvements to trips and timetables	The community bus is considered to be a valuable resource with potential to grow.		2
Investigate and promote bus services from satellite towns			0

Potential FAP projects continued

Environmental Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
Recycling and re-use with community action group		To encourage recycling and initiatives that will reduce the 'carbon-footprint' of the town.	8
Triple bins for town centre (perhaps children/school project)	Triple bins for recycling. This was also suggested by students at the Community College.		7
Environmental information centre			4

Business Projects	Notes	Aim	Votes
Starting farmers' market at weekends	This has been investigated at length and found to be problematic. Links to: ENVIRONMENT, TOURISM	To support existing businesses, to encourage the development of new businesses and to encourage a thriving economy within Faringdon.	9
Promotion of the town as a good retail and commercial centre	With the aim of encouraging new business (in particular retail) into the town centre.		7
Funded co-ordinator for business facilities/activities			4
Adult education/training to support local businesses			3
Broadband access for rural areas			1

A9 Healthcheck Process Notes

The following notes and observations were made as part of the reporting process work undertaken on the Faringdon Healthcheck. Although not specifically part of the Action Plan, they have been included here to help others who may be undertaking the same process.

Update of Healthcheck process

During the Faringdon public meeting while members of the public were undertaking the SWOT analysis it became apparent that many of the questions for the Healthcheck were duplicated, dated or irrelevant. In particular the 'environment' section was criticised for its focus on the economic and aesthetic environment (bridleways and farms) rather than on wider issues about environmental sustainability. An update of the Healthcheck for the SEEDA region is underway and it is hoped that the experience of Faringdon will assist with the update.

Work undertaken at schools

Oxfordshire Town Chambers Network work consulting with the young people of Faringdon has ensured that the Action Plan is a much more representative document. The process of consultation through the schools has proved to be a success and is recommended as an element of all future Market Town Healthchecks.

Action Group sustainability

Until recently, FAP have been funded by a range of organisations including Faringdon Town Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the Countryside Agency which have paid for its work and its secretariat. Most of these funding streams have now ended which has resulted in the previous secretariat for FAP having to be made redundant.

The FAP now has support from Bordengate Insurance who are generously providing them with a secretariat. Bordengate employ a secretary who has been asked to work part-time for FAP. It is difficult to see how FAP could operate without this arrangement and Bordengate benefit by being seen to be providing a valuable service supporting community projects. This is an outstanding example of a partnership between business and community which may provide a template for sustainable Healthcheck action groups in other areas.