

Pulborough Parish Council Back the Pulborough Partnership resulting from the Market Towns Initiative

At the meeting of Pulborough Parish Council on 16th October 2003, Robin Charter and Rob Aylott, presented the Pulborough Partnership's plans to create a "better future for Pulborough".

The plans are the result of over a year of fact finding and consultations with the people of the village by a group of Pulborough residents under the sponsorship and guidance of the Countryside Agency. This has been facilitated by the Action in Rural Sussex project manager Les Ampstead using the Countryside Agency "Health Check" process.

The Pulborough Partnership is formed of local residents, with the addition of supportive District and Parish Councillors.

At the meeting:

Les Ampstead reviewed the background to the project and the extent of the fact-finding and consultations, which had taken place over the last 12 months. He stated that 14 local residents had been actively involved and that some 400 people attended public events and workshops held.

The plans presented Robin Charter and Rob Aylott were an overview of detailed plans covering five main work stream areas of planned change:

- The village economy
- Social and Community
- Transport and Accessibility
- The look and feel of the village
- The historic and scenic sites

Jan Botting, the Chair of the Parish Council proposed that the Council should support the Pulborough Partnership in their role as a change-agent for the good of Pulborough. The motion was carried and the Parish Council will now work closely with the Partnership.

Work has already started on some of the projects and others will start soon – the plans represent a range of changes some of which will show results next year and others which will have profound long-term effects on Pulborough.

The Village Economy Work Stream has already formed a group of business from within the village to work together to provide the shopping and employment that people want – the group is called PAVE (Pulborough Association of Village Enterprises). They have also started working with other towns in the area to look at new business opportunities. This has a particular focus on tourism to take advantage of the historic and scenic sites of Pulborough and other attractions in the area such as the RSPB and Parham House.

The Social and Community Work Stream has a number of projects that they will be lobbying Horsham District Council for. This includes more affordable housing to support the growth of employment in the planned new Medical Centre and Tesco supermarket. They also have short-term objectives to provide a "swap shop" music discs etc, associated with the monthly farmers market, to meet the needs of some of the younger people within the village.

The Transport Work Stream is focussed on getting transport providers to provide “joined-up” more accessible transport services and fares to get more people to use what is available. Additionally they will be trying to get the businesses in the area to sponsor a regular round the village bus to enable people to get to work, shop and visit health services without using a car and thereby taking the pressure off the roads and the limited parking available.

The Look and Feel of the Village Work Stream is looking at the tidiness of the village and how planning applications should be considered to maintain and develop the village feel of Pulborough. They are already working with the Co-op in Lower Street to reduce litter and other rubbish in Barn House Lane and are working with Horsham Planning Department to develop a Village Design Statement that will inform future planning decisions.

The Historic and Scenic Sites Work Stream is working to restore and conserve some of the historic sites of the village and make them better known and understood with Village Trail leaflets. Work has already started on an overall design for restoring and enhancing the Swan Bridge area to make it, once again, an attractive and well-known feature of the village.

Each of the work streams have a number of projects which Pulborough residents and business’ with special interests or skills are involved with; however, as Rob Aylott said at the meeting, “we want more help to enable us to do more, more quickly”

For more information and any offers of help please contact:

- Les Ampstead (the programme facilitator) on 01798-875402 and lampstea@hotmail.com
- Rob Aylott (the current Chairman of the Partnership) on 01798-872823 and aylott@orbys.co.uk