

Winchester: Thinking Ahead

Summary of the main themes and issues

Winchester will inevitably change – to manage it, we need to address:

- Movement– i.e. how people move about the city, including walking, cycling, public transport, Traffic congestion as well as cars and other vehicles
- Shortage of housing especially housing that people can afford
- Inequalities of wealth, and creating a more inclusive society
- Shortage of large, open-plan offices
- Hitting the carbon reduction target of 80% by 2050 (or even setting our own, 100% by 2050)

Many argued that we need to improve our processes for making decisions about the future development of the town. This included:

- Leadership - which might be from the equivalent of a mayor who is a “benevolent dictator” willing to take risks, or from the Council leader, or from an appointed “Futures Group” of community representatives
- Setting a vision that isn’t just a list of everything – making hard decisions between competing public wishes
- Having a coherent overview (“framework”, “master plan” or “strategy”) that’s more detailed than a vision and more accessible than the Local Plan, and that covers both movement and the built environment
- There were many calls for a coherent plan for movement, including walking, cycling, public transport, and motor vehicles
- Having pilots and experiments that last a day or a year and are evaluated before deciding whether to continue ...
- ... rather than trying to tackle everything at once in one comprehensive development
- Learning from other places, both abroad and in the UK (e.g. Holland)
- Engaging people rather than consulting them – getting them involved from the start
- Consulting with more people, not just the usual interest groups
- Taking advantage of the goodwill and expertise of professionals and returned professionals living in Winchester
- Better communication from the local authorities
- Better collaboration between HCC and WCC, especially on transport

People appreciated these aspects of Winchester:

- History / heritage
- Size – because it is walkable, easy to get out of, and small enough to be friendly (and meet people by chance)
- Friendliness and safety – low crime rates, it feels safe on the streets
- Trees, water, nature, wildlife
- Good trains to London

Improvements that people would like to see included:

- Better bus services
- More green open spaces
- More public social spaces
- An emphasis on small independent shops