

Somer Valley Forum

Annual Report February 2017

Introduction from the Chair and Vice Chair

We would like to firstly thank all the members and participants of the Forum for their contributions and input over the last year. During the year we have had a varied programme of presentations and discussions, including the CCG ‘your care, your way’; the West of England Joint Spatial Plan; Somer Valley Enterprise Zone and Early Years’ Services in the Somer Valley. We were delighted to have two Forum meetings hosted by the communities of Midsomer Norton and Westfield. Their presentations gave us real insight into some of their key projects and we would be delighted to hear from other communities that would like a Forum meeting to be held in their area.

The Forums have previously highlighted a number of priorities for further discussion and development. We want to give you an update on the Forum’s achievements to date and have provided a short summary of the progress made and planned actions for 2017. We want to ensure that the Forum continues to bring forward the issues that matter most to you.

*Lynda Robertson (Chair) and
Karen Walker (Vice Chair)*

You said	We did
“ Engage with young people and explore opportunities to join up and improve services for children and families ”	A presentation on early years’ services was given at the September Forum meeting. The presentation included an overview of the various elements of the service and how each supports young people in the Somer Valley area. Action: The Forum to host a themed meeting on ‘Young people’s issues and the provision of services’ in 2017.
“ Ensure the impact of development maintains the identity of the villages ”	Joint Spatial Plan Consultation launched in November 2015. Initial consultation ran until 29th January 2016 and a joint response was submitted from all Forums. Two working groups involving selected Parish Councils and Ward Councillors were set up in February 2016 to look at the JSP in more detail with Planning Policy. B&NES Planning Policy gave an update to all Forums in April 2016. The forum also commented on the Green Spaces Strategy and received an update on the JSP draft proposals at the November 2016 meeting. Action: The Forums will continue to receive updates.
“ Increase the availability of affordable housing, provide quality housing and home share initiatives ”	Action: The Forum to host a discussion on ‘Affordable Housing’ in 2017.
“ Improve Broadband and mobile phone signals for rural business and residents ”	A Broadband Summit Event will be held in B&NES. Further details will be made available to the Forums. The Vice Chair has raised the issue of the lack of Broadband in some villages at the Joint Chair and Vice Chairs group in October. Action: The Vice Chair will be meeting with WERN to discuss further.

Somer Valley Forum
Annual Report February 2017

You said	We did
<p>“ Economic Development, skills, training and enterprise ”</p>	<p>The Somer Valley has been successful in achieving Enterprise Zone status. A presentation on this was given by the B&NES Economic Development team at the February 2016 meeting. They will continue to engage with the Forum and individual Town and Parish Councils. Action: The Forum to receive an update on progress in 2017.</p>
<p>“ Increase the understanding of the benefits and opportunities for environmental sustainability ”</p>	<p>Information about this was made available at the November Forum Meeting, the Interagency Meetings and Newsletter and at Community Venues across the Somer Valley. Action: The Forum to host a discussion on ‘Environmental, sustainability and climate change’ in 2017.</p>
<p>“ Improve the local leisure facilities to offer more inclusive sports ”</p>	<p>Following discussion between Leonard Cheshire Homes and GLL the new leisure facilities in Bath and Keynsham will include a permanent Boccia Court. Progress has also been made to improve disabled fishing facilities at Tucking Mill, owned by Wessex Water.</p>
<p>“ CCG ‘ your care, your way’ - increase residents health & wellbeing ”</p>	<p>All Forums have hosted two ‘your care, your way’ consultations. Forums have also been asked to put forward representatives to sit on the ‘your health, your voice’ meetings. These are held every two months for members of the public to provide feedback on the CCG’s plans for improving local health services. The representative for Somer Valley is Richard Robertson. Action: The CCG will attend all Forum meetings in 2017 to introduce the new provider for Community Services.</p>
<p>“ Reduce anti-social behaviour ”</p>	<p>The Midsomer Norton Community Alcohol Partnership continues to meet. The Forums had a presentation from the new Chief Inspector, Kevin Thatcher, at their February meetings. Contact details for the Police and PCSOs have been made available to Parish Councils. The Communities team have created a map for each Forum on the police.uk website, so that crime statistics for these areas can be monitored. Action: The police will continue to attend each Forum meeting and will respond to local issues and concerns.</p>
<p>“ Transport Strategy - address issues that affect the Somer Valley ”</p>	<p>An update was given at the February Forum meetings. A public consultation event was held on the 5th May. Transport are liaising with Planning on the Joint Strategic Plan and have access to Neighbourhood Plan documents. The Forums received an update on the JSP draft proposals, which include transport, at the November meeting Action: An update on the Somer Valley Transport Strategy will be given in the 2017.</p>