

News from EPPING FOREST LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

It's been a very busy few months since I last updated you on the work of the LSP here in Epping Forest.

Since that time we have introduced a number of changes designed to improve openness and accountability and help focus activity on key issues for the district. As promised we have now begun to webcast our Board meetings, and all the Boards papers and minutes are available on the council's website www.eppingforest.gov.uk. We are also about to publish an 'introduction to the LSP' leaflet showing how the partnership works, the website has been significantly updated and we are looking at changing the partnerships name to better reflect what it is we are trying to achieve in Epping Forest. An important new idea has been the introduction of '*Partnership Briefing*' which we now produce within a few weeks of Board meetings with details of decisions taken and future areas of work.

A key ambition of the Epping Forest LSP is to 'join up' public services where we can, giving local people a better service and helping to save money for investment in priority areas. Two projects are being taken forward in order to help us do this. The Epping Forest Citizens' Panel, if approved, will see 1,000 residents recruited as a standing panel of consultees to help partners set new priorities and review services. The LSP Magazine project is a similar idea, joint funded and based around the current Forester publication. It would carry information from all the partners directly into all homes in the district. However, both these projects will require the support of the partners, including financial support if they are to proceed.

The LSP Board has also welcomed new members representing schools, the Lea Valley Park Authority, Jobcentre Plus and The Federation of Small Businesses to help us expand our work in the areas of skills, education and business support. The Credit Crunch Task and Finish Team is now working closely with our colleagues in the voluntary sector to put together a plan for responding to the challenges the recession poses in the most effective way. Plans are also being drawn up to make sure all local people and stakeholders get the opportunity to have their say in developing a new Sustainable Community Strategy. We have secured some funding from the County Council to help VAEF to support this process. County is also producing a new statistical profile of the district to identify the factors that will shape the future of our area so that the LSP can intervene effectively.

Finally I would like to again thank all our colleagues from the voluntary and community sector for supporting the LSP with their efforts and expertise.

Di Collins
Chairman Epping Forest LSP