

**Cittaslow Ludlow: Open Meeting Assembly Rooms, 7 pm
19th February 2009**

Chair: Alison Cundall
Attended by 38 people

Notices

Pancake Day events on Saturday 21st, 10.30 Castle Square

Cittaslow UK Spring Clean Week coincides with Ludlow Pride of Place Tidy up, suggest we join forces on the 25th April.

Note, with thanks that Assembly Rooms gave room for this meeting rent free

1. Ludlow Youth Partnership - picking up on issue of age profile of interested people at these meetings, Alison is meeting with the Youth Partnership next week to discuss items of mutual concern, with a view to developing a younger demographic.
2. Developing ideas that were identified last time Peter Cook spoke at greater length on the idea of the Ludlow Pound. Jim Smithers had spoken to people in Lewes, where a similar scheme operates. Some issues identified include the fact that some apparently independent retailers are in fact parts of small chains, also a significant number of businesses have most of their trade going through debit or credit cards. On other side of the coin there could be the chance to get something going though one or more of the festivals, where most of the transactions are in cash. Show of hands after the item indicated limited support in taking it forward.
3. Woolworths building (or other) continuation of discussion that had begun around the Woolworths building, the lease of which has probably been disposed of, but extended to vacant buildings around town. Town could do with accommodation for small, up and coming businesses, it could also do with PR Lead and a "town manager" of some sort. Could all of these ideas come together?

There followed a discussion about the market and the need for any strategy to get to grips with the uninspiring

centre piece to the town that the market represents. Several present expressed their frustration at the delays in improving the market and the money that had been spent but with no outcome as yet to show for it.

From these discussions the idea of a Community Development Trust to take some of these things forward, around the core of community building attracted widespread support, a small group of Karl Thompson, Graeme Perks and Jim Smithers agreed to take the issue on and do some further work on it.

Working Group to engage with Action for Market Towns and with Cittaslow Network, an Town Council, Graeme Perks likened it to the Car park Advisory Group of a few years ago.

3. Town Centre Manager, idea already referred to in previous item, but generally supported particularly if it could also pick up management of any community building

4. Business Guild - Jeanette Rowlatt, described how Ludlow was suffering from an image of "rudderlessness", and despite strong brand image nationally regional trade was declining and before long we would lose the advantage we had enjoyed. Comparisons were made with Shrewsbury and even with Cleobury as examples of local towns that had recognised what was happening and had responded positively. We could do with an honest view of ourselves and what the town offered, and delivered on, through outsiders eyes. General support for Jeanette's analysis would be helpful to feed it into the work of the consultants looking at Cittaslow Ludlow's business plan.

The next meeting was agreed to be 19th March 7pm to discuss Development Trust. Venue to be decided.