

# Developing a Plan for Sustainable Service Provision in the Rural Community of Billingshurst

For:  
Billingshurst Community Partnership  
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## Local Issues Summary Report

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## 1. Purpose and Scope of the Research

In March 2008 Billingshurst Community Partnership commissioned a research study of Billingshurst and its surrounding rural hinterland (the “study area”). The study was funded by South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and Horsham District Community Partnership and had both local, regional and strategic objectives.

The study set out to look at service provision in Billingshurst and its hinterland; investigate how this meets the needs of the local community; and provide a context for proposals to enhance and maintain the vibrancy of the town and villages, and meet local needs. The study also used Billingshurst as a model to help better understand how small rural towns function.

This report presents the main findings, conclusions and recommendations that relate to Billingshurst and the surrounding rural area<sup>1</sup>. There is a glossary at the end of document.

## 2. Service Provision in Billingshurst and its Hinterland

### About the area

Billingshurst rural hinterland includes the villages of Wisborough Green, Plaistow, Ifold, Loxwood, Shipley, Coolham, Rudgwick, Alfold, Slinfold, Itchingfield and Barns Green. These villages, and their surrounding parishes, in combination with Billingshurst Parish form our “study area”, referred to throughout this document. This hinterland is bordered by the service centres of Horsham, Broadbridge Heath, Cranleigh and Pulborough. This means that for about 13,000 people, Billingshurst is the closest larger service centre. One and two car ownership are very high, giving most residents a number of accessible service options other than Billingshurst and the surrounding villages.

The nearest major centres, after Horsham, are Crawley (16 miles to north-east beyond Horsham); Guildford (20 miles to north-west); Worthing (20 miles to south) and then Chichester (23 miles to south-west) and Brighton (26 miles to south-east).

Other small market towns in the area which fulfil a similar service role to Billingshurst include the West Sussex market towns of Henfield, Storrington, Steyning, Petworth, Pulborough and Midhurst; and in Surrey the towns of Cranleigh, Haslemere and Godalming (which tend to be slightly bigger than their West Sussex neighbours).

The surrounding villages all have an infrequent daily (not Sunday) bus service to either Horsham and/or Cranleigh and Guildford. This means that some, but not all the villages (e.g. Plaistow, Ifold, and Loxwood) connect to Billingshurst by public bus. The innovative Billilinks service - which provides pre-booked spaces in a “taxi-bus” on a defined route - has been introduced to address access to the town, linking with villages to the east and west. Billingshurst residents have an hourly bus service to Horsham and Pulborough and train service linking north to Horsham and London, and south to the coast.

<sup>1</sup> There is another, longer summary report which gives more detail about service provision and also covers those elements of the work which relate to modelling the small rural town. A copy can be obtained from BCP.

Because of high car ownership, maintaining a viable, adequate public transport service for those without a car is challenging, and community transport provision thus very important.

## **Billingshurst – Strengths and opportunities**

Billingshurst's key strengths include:

- high quality, well-performing schools, providing a range of after-school opportunities
- proximity to Chichester College at Brinsbury, which provides opportunities for life-long learning, and some courses to meet the needs of local businesses
- a good – and recently improved - range of sports facilities and opportunities
- good general practice medical facilities
- sufficient range of non-retail services including library, post office, hairdressers and banks
- good range of local convenience shopping and household goods
- a few key respected local retailers (e.g like Austens, Jim Hills Sports) who attract trade in from beyond the very local area
- a range of cafes/pubs/restaurants, with some recent higher quality additions to provision
- high quality community space (village hall), and other options provided at schools and churches
- a good and well-supported range of leisure, community and cultural activities at village hall, churches and also using school premises.
- a good range of youth provision with further enhancement proposed
- an attractive location close to high quality countryside for walking etc.
- a range of employment space which houses local firms and attracts into the area; with shops and schools also providing local jobs
- the station, which attracts residents and businesses and provides north-south transport link
- active community organisations who review local needs and have initiated some major projects and important improvements to facilities
- house-building which has bought with it some financial contributions to support enhancement of community facilities.

Important opportunities to enhance provision and access to services include:

- the new Centre for Children, which will boost childcare provision and other support for families and children
- the new pool and sports facilities, which will provide a new and important draw to Billingshurst
- future housing growth may provide opportunities to strengthen local spend/service use and boost local sustainability
- the Billilinks service, which fills an important gap in public transport provision.

## **Billingshurst – Weaknesses and threats**

Billingshurst's key weaknesses with respect to services currently include:

- the need to travel for non-GP health services

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- a poor range of non-food – the retail centre is viewed as ‘functional’ and has little to attract leisure/shopping visits beyond this
- no major food superstore
- no significant historic/tourist attractions in the village centre and a relatively poor quality ‘street scene’ when compared to other small market towns in the area (like Petworth, Midhurst, Steyning)
- difficulty finding a free parking space, or a space adjacent to Budgen’s supermarket
- some gaps in business services provision which mean that local businesses cannot always source support locally
- the by-pass removes some traffic but also reduces ‘passing trade’
- no petrol station
- lack of a direct public bus link between Billingshurst and some surrounding villages

Important potential threats to future provision and access to services include:

- a significant number of empty shop units. which affect perceptions of the town
- the proximity of superstores and Horsham town centre for much of the catchment, with potential further development of retail offer at Broadbridge Heath, and perhaps Pulborough
- future housing growth will need to be supported by development of services, retail offer and employment if sustainable patterns of use are to result
- the need to generate sufficient user demand to support community and local transport options which are essential to a minority of residents

**Services in the hinterland villages**

The hinterland has a number of relatively well served villages, typically with pub(s), shop, post office, village hall and sports facilities, and many with a primary school (Figure 1). Some villages (for example Shipley, Kirdford), however, lack one or more of these services. These services all play an important additional community role, as a social focal point.

**Figure 1: Hinterland Villages: Service summary (Rank1=best served)**

Rank 1 villages	Rank 2 villages	Rank 3 villages	Rank 4 villages
<p><b>What?</b>                      Good shop, daily post-office, doctor, primary school, pre-school/nursery, some other retail, some personal or business services, pubs, village hall and range of clubs and societies, church(es), sports pavillion and pitches/courts, garage</p>	<p><b>What?</b>                      Shop, daily post-office, primary school, pre-school/nursery, some other retail or some personal services, pub, church(es), village hall and range of clubs/societies, sports pitches and pavillion</p>	<p><b>What?</b>                      Shop, post-office (but either not daily or under threat of service reduction), primary school, pre-school/nursery, pub, church, village hall and range of clubs/societies, sports pitches</p>	<p><b>What?</b>                      Lack one or more (and usually two) of primary school, shop and post office, sports facilities, pre-school but all have pub, village hall, church</p>

<b>Where?</b> Rudgwick, Loxwood, Alfold	<b>Where?</b> Wisborough Green	<b>Where?</b> Slinfold, Barns Green, Plaistow	<b>Where?</b> Shipley, Ifold, Kirdford, Coolham, Itchingfield
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Source: WFTT audit of provision

### Desired changes

Study area residents who do not visit Billingshurst frequently were asked what would encourage them to do so. Figure 2 summarises.

**Figure 2: Changes that would prompt use, or more frequent use, of Billingshurst for services**

Change	% non-users and infrequent users who identified
Nothing	25%
Easier or cheaper parking	32%
More or better shopping	31%
More or better restaurants/cafes/pubs	8%
Better public transport	4%

Source: Telephone survey of study area residents.

## 3. Service Use Patterns for Billingshurst and its Hinterland

### Billingshurst's area of influence

Information about services use patterns has been derived from:

- A telephone survey of 350 households resident in the study area
- A survey of 144 pupils attending The Weald secondary school, in Billingshurst
- Interviews with a range of stakeholders involved with service provision.

This research confirms that Billingshurst draws service users from throughout our study area, which includes the parishes of Billingshurst, Wisborough Green, Kirdford, Plaistow & Ifold, Loxwood, Rudgwick, Alfold, Slinfold, Itchingfield and Shipley. The maximum travel distance to Billingshurst within this area is about 9 miles. There is also an element of draw, for non-retail services in particular, from Pulborough parish, which has a direct train link.

Three-quarters of the residents in the study area visit Billingshurst for services more than once a month, about two-thirds visit once a week and about half visit twice a week.

However, analysis of frequent visits for services suggests a core catchment area of

- the parishes of Billingshurst and Wisborough Green
- extending north-west to include Kirdford, Plaistow and Ifold
- extending south-east to include Shipley and Coolham

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Billingshurst is the closest larger centre both distance and time-wise for these locations, with a maximum travel distance of some 8-9 miles, but most residents are within 5 miles.

Service user patterns confirm that the catchment area for Billingshurst services is confined by the main competing centres of Horsham and Cranleigh, as well as food superstores at Broadbridge Heath and Pulborough. Services provided within the other study area villages (and those on the periphery like Southwater) also have an impact, as do higher order, more distant, centres like Guildford and Crawley.

Service use patterns indicate that the key factors influencing decisions about where to source services are proximity and accessibility. Thus residents will choose to use a service in their local village if it is available, and then look to the most accessible alternative. Decisions about where to go are then influenced by accessibility in terms of proximity, travel time and ease of parking. The choice of centres within a fairly similar drive time for many study area residents curtails the share of users captured by Billingshurst's services.

### Catchment area for retail services

Billingshurst's lack of a food superstore coupled with limited comparison goods outlets (particularly clothes/gifts) reflects in the size of retail catchment, and strength of spending draw (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Percentage of resident households who visit Billingshurst to shop (by goods type)**

Parish of residence	Main food shop %	Additional food items %	Locally produced food %	Household items %	Clothes or presents %
Billingshurst	30	84	73	85	35
Wisborough Green	35	90	71	84	58
Kirdford	29	76	48	71	10
Plaistow	10	75	55	70	25
Shipley	23	54	54	62	23
Loxwood	12	54	42	62	17
Itchingfield	3	39	36	30	6
Slinfold	19	56	48	52	11
Rudgwick	3	30	33	39	24
Alfold	25	12	0	12	0
<b>All parishes</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>26</b>

Source: Telephone survey of study area residents.

- Only 20% of study area residents visit the centre for a main food shopping trip, and Billingshurst is 5% is this their only main food destination.
- The core catchment for food shopping is limited to Billingshurst and Wisborough Green and the closer parts of Plaistow & Ifold parish.
- Visits by residents of locations beyond Billingshurst and Wisborough Green to buy clothes/gifts are limited.

However, Billingshurst's retail strengths are apparent in the level of visiting from the outer catchment area to buy household goods (65% study area residents), for local food (54%) and to use shops like Jim Hill Sports, DK Vintners, Burdfields (farm/speciality food shop with cafe) and Austens (hardware and homeware), which attract people in to the centre. Working with such retailers to ensure they continue to trade in the centre should be a priority for any action plan.

### Catchment area for other services

Billingshurst attracts a good proportion of local residents (from within Billingshurst and Wisborough Green parishes) to most of the non-shopping services offered.

Billingshurst's "market share" of users who live outside these two parishes is highest for some commonly accessed services which are not available at the village level (for example waste recycling, banks and the library) and also for restaurants, cafes and takeaways. This reflects in high overall levels of use of Billingshurst by service users in our survey area. Figure 3 illustrates. These services are what might be termed small rural town or market town functions. Their continued provision is vital to Billingshurst continuing to function at this level, but with some decisions (for example about bank branches) made nationally not locally, it can be hard to influence future provision.

**Figure 3: Percentage of service users who access non-retail services in Billingshurst (by service type)**

% survey area residents who use this service and who visit Billingshurst to access the service	Services
More than 70% service users	Waste recycling, library and information services,
60-69%	Training & education classes, restaurants, pubs and cafes
50-59%	Post office, banks
40-49%	Doctor, social clubs and activities, social activities for children, sports and fitness activities, vet
30-39%	Hairdresser, car repair, social activities for older people, , childcare
20-29%	Dentist, business services

Source: Telephone survey of study area residents.

Billingshurst's 'market share' of users who live outside the town tends to lower for what might be termed 'village services' (which are also available in some form in the majority of the other study area villages). These services include social activities and clubs and some sports and fitness activities. Essentially Billingshurst is functioning as 'another village', serving its local residents with respect to the provision of these services, rather than as a higher order market town. Use of these services by Billingshurst parish residents is very high – 56% use Billingshurst for social clubs and activities and 39% for sports and fitness reflecting the good range of opportunities available.

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There are, however, incidences of people travelling to use such services in Billingshurst where there are gaps in other villages – for example by Shipley and Kirdford residents for social activities and clubs and activities for children.

Some services have a scattered provision, with outlets in some villages, in Billingshurst and in the larger centres like Horsham. These services include hairdressers, some business services like accountants and financial advisers (who may be home based and travel to client homes/premises), car repair and servicing, dentists and vets. This reduces the draw to the small rural town and affects the shape of Billingshurst's catchment.

The user patterns show that the higher order centre of Horsham competes most strongly for study area users of accountants/legal services, business services, hairdressers and the dentist. This is likely to be about service differentiation, with a stronger offering in the larger centre. For example the range of accountancy, legal and business service skills is probably greater; and larger 'trendier' salons tend to attract younger clients.

In addition to local service users (from the study area) Billingshurst will attract some visitors living further away. Although this study has not set out to quantify this, it suggests that there is some service use by:

- people working in Billingshurst, but living outside the study area
- 'passing trade' – primarily those driving in an east-west and west-east direction as these people come through the town, rather than using the bypass
- families of The Weald school pupils who live out of catchment
- people drawn by specific services – notably a handful of respected retailers and some social/recreational activities.

However, in all cases the range of retail facilities available and parking issues limit frequency of visits and spend captured from these groups.

## Use of village services

**Figure 4: Use of hinterland villages for services**

Used for:	by % interviewees who identified a nearest village other than Billingshurst
Occasional food purchases	67%
Pub/café	66%
Post office	64%
To buy local produce	56%
Occasional non-food purchases	44%
Main food shopping	35%
Arts and cultural activities; social clubs & activities; sports & fitness clubs & activities	Each between 20 and 30%
Training & education classes	12%

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None of the specified services	13%
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Source: Telephone survey of study area residents.

The survey indicates a good level of use of village services in the hinterland villages, with only 13% residents not using any village service. Figure 4 shows the proportions of hinterland dwellers that use their nearest village for a range of services.

A surprising 35% use their village as a main food shopping destination. This figure is actually higher than the proportion of Billingshurst parish residents who use Billingshurst as a main food destination. This probably reflects the relatively good quality of shopping in the larger villages. It may also indicate a good degree of local loyalty and support for village services.

Village based sports/fitness activities, social activities and arts/cultural activities attract all age groups, although the oldest (75 plus) and youngest (18-24) are less likely to be involved.

### **Influence of work patterns**

The research suggests that where people are working locally, they are more frequent users of their 'small market town' (Billingshurst) for services. Rates of frequent use are higher for both those employed within the study area, and those study area residents who work from home. The local services most affected by out-commuting (rather than working locally) are main food shopping, banks, library, car repair and servicing and sports/fitness activities – with some people electing to use these services near their place of work (Figure 6).

### **Service use by young people**

Whilst a good proportion of young people who attend The Weald school use Billingshurst centre to buy food and drink items, other spending is very limited, although there is evidence that young people living outside Billingshurst who travel in to visit the sports shop.

In general, young people visit the same set of shopping centres as their parents, however the research suggests that Crawley is a more significant shopping location for young people than it is for adults and that their use of the internet for purchases is notably higher. One quarter of our sample of Weald students interviewed buy clothes and presents through the internet, and 59% use the internet to buy CDs, music, electrical equipment or books.

The Weald School plays an important role in providing extra-curricular activities for students, with just under half of the sample attending some form of 'after school' club. Place of residence does not noticeably influence involvement in after school clubs, with late buses running on club nights.

Half of the young people interviewed attend some other form of sports activity outside school clubs. Most commonly young people use their local village, or nearest sports option. Billingshurst is also an important centre, as well as the sports centres in Horsham and Broadbridge Heath. About one-third of our sample attends youth groups or regular social activities for young people. Again the trend is to use the closest facility to home.

The survey suggests that completion of the new swimming pool at The Weald site will be an important draw for young people, with over 70% young people saying that they and/or their family would use the new facility at weekends/evenings. We also asked those who said that they would use the new facility if they thought their families would combine a trip to the pool with a trip to shops, cafes etc in Billingshurst. Whilst many were uncertain about this, 30% said yes, many of whom live in the hinterland villages and are not currently frequent visitors.

The questionnaire sought to establish whether the fact that the young people in a family attended the secondary school in Billingshurst had any impact on the family use of the centre for services. Whilst many respondents were uncertain about this:

- one-third felt that it did cause their families to make some extra visits for services like shopping, bank, post-office and library
- one-quarter felt that it did cause their families to go to Billingshurst, rather than other locations, for sports, social or entertainment activities or clubs sometimes.

It is likely that the high level of bussing to school affects this trend.

## 4. Strategic Context for Service Delivery

Strategic documents affecting the study area, which set out policy and guide public funding, give a strong commitment to enhancing the viability and vitality of rural towns and villages, and of sustainable rural services. In particular these support the concepts of:

- small rural towns and larger villages as hubs for rural enterprise and key services
- provision of affordable local housing
- supporting local businesses, including the retail and tourism sectors – with advice, support services, skills and suitable premises for growth
- encouraging and supporting social and community enterprises
- better physical access to services
- public and other sustainable transport to services, including cycling and walking
- improving access to advice and support services and recreational and social opportunities, so that older people can remain in their own homes and actively participate in their communities
- activities and opportunities for young people to address ‘boredom’, and encourage participation in their communities (including volunteering)
- developing the market and outlets for local food and produce.

In terms of mainstream service delivery by local authorities, opportunities of current interest include:

- changes to the delivery of adult services through West Sussex County Council, which should result in better local delivery of support to older people and carers
- various initiatives under Horsham District Older Peoples Strategy, including raising awareness of services and opportunities through the POPPS project
- the Extended Schools programme, which aims to encourage better access to services (like childcare) for families and provision of community services through school buildings

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- commitment to further develop informal leisure opportunities by Horsham District Council.

Given pressure on local authority funds, external funding sources will continue to be of prime importance. In terms of funding for potential projects the following are particularly important:

- Making use of S106 funds linked with housebuilding in Billingshurst to ensure services develop in tandem with population growth
- the Sussex Downs and Low Weald LEADER programme, which has scope to fund projects relating to the rural economy, rural services, community spaces and service hubs, and local food and produce
- the Rural Access to Services Programme which will particularly support innovative approaches to community transport and developing rural service hubs.

## 5. Sustainable Services in Billingshurst – Towards an Action Plan

### Objectives

Having reviewed the needs identified through our research, the current role that Billingshurst plays and the constraints presented by competing centres, we suggest that a sustainable services action plan for Billingshurst should seek to address some, or all, of the objectives set out below.

A. Increase the use of, and spend on, commercial services (including shops, retail services like hairdressers/travel agents and cafes/restaurants) in Billingshurst village centre by catchment residents and users of non-commercial services in the town.

B. Increase the number of recreational visitors who come to Billingshurst and the surrounding villages, and their spending on commercial services and also improve the use of Billingshurst village centre services by 'passing trade'.

C. Address the challenges that parking in Billingshurst presents, ideally so that visitors feel confident that they will find a convenient short stay parking place.

D. Build local loyalty and commitment to Billingshurst as a thriving centre for services, both from residents, traders and businesses.

E. Support local businesses to grow, source locally and trade with each other.

F. Encourage full use of recreational, social, cultural/entertainment, sport and learning opportunities available in Billingshurst and the surrounding villages.

G. Improve use of community transport across the area as a means of accessing local services.

H. Ensure older people are aware of, and have access to, opportunities in their own, and neighbouring villages

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I. Improve the sustainability of provision for young people, building on the good base which exists in Billingshurst and other village youth clubs, and sharing access to opportunities across the area.

J. Build on the roles that The Weald school and village primary schools play in providing a venue for services and activities to support the whole population.

Annex 2 sets out our suggested actions for local partners to consider in developing a sustainable services action plan for Billingshurst and its hinterland area.

In terms of activity that is targeted at catchment area residents, we suggest that the primary focus should be the parishes of Billingshurst, Wisborough Green, Kirdford, Plaistow & Ifold and Shipley and the northern parts of Pulborough. It would also be advantageous to target residents of Loxwood and Slinfold; then Rudgwick if resources permit.

Given the opportunity over coming years to access funding resources from both the LEADER and RASP funding streams in the area – which align strongly with the needs and options identified - we suggest that any action plan pays particular attention to the opportunities presented by these programmes, and have identified some possibilities in the suggested actions set out in Annex 1.

## Annex 1: Suggested actions for Billingshurst and its hinterland

Action no.	Description	Objectives supported (see page 12)
1	Galvanise support and commitment from traders and landlords to a clear programme of action for the village centre, using this research and emerging Chamber of Commerce and other business groups as a stimulus	A,B,D,E
2	<p>Improve the quality of retail offer, attractiveness of units and business quality through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training, advice and support opportunities with traditional retail and innovative (e.g. web based) services</li> <li>• improved shop windows and shop fronts</li> <li>• better window advertising and on-street advertising (e.g. highlighting local produce)</li> <li>• local competitions/events with publicity to encourage some of the above</li> <li>• target suitable quality independent retailers elsewhere</li> <li>• investigating scope for a community owned/rented shop offering small sales space to local crafts people etc (similar to Steyning example)</li> </ul>	A,B,D,E
3	<p>Market Billingshurst centre to catchment residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail directory, accessed from relevant websites, available in shops etc and distributed to catchment residents</li> <li>• PR/information campaign with “stories” to support launch of above and promote centre strengths – local , traditional service, high quality retailers</li> <li>• PR campaign to use local information channels (parish magazines, website etc) as well as local press</li> <li>• Community shopping nights and promotions linked to events</li> <li>• Possible linked event with other market towns in the area (for example through Five Towns Partnership)</li> </ul>	A,D,E
4	<p>Physical improvements to Billingshurst centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better signage throughout centre – e.g. indicating route to additional parking, promoting retail offer and other facilities</li> <li>• Better signage to centre – ‘welcome’ and information boards from bypass and entry routes, at key attractors (e.g. new sports centre, village hall and Centre for Children)</li> <li>• Street scene and planting – review options to differentiate and create more of an impact, perhaps linked to competitions like Britain in Bloom or eco/water saving planting</li> </ul>	A,B,C,E

5	<p>Address the issue of parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for free (enforced) short stay parking close to shops to enable a turnover of vacant spaces</li> <li>• Clearly signpost to Jengers Mead from library car-park</li> <li>• Marketing campaign – e.g. stressing fuel cost savings of shopping local over minimal charges, Budgen delivery service, carry to car service from retailers</li> <li>• Short term – encourage other retailers to replicate Jim Hill sports 20p back offer</li> </ul>	A,B,D,E
6	<p>Recreational, social, cultural/entertainment and sports opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build, and keep up to date, a listing of opportunities in Billingshurst and the villages, with contact numbers and links to other information sources (e.g. Partnership for Older People telephone access information service) using this survey information as a starting point.</li> <li>• The above could be part of a wider information system maintained for Horsham District</li> <li>• Share above information with catchment residents through village websites, local press, village halls, churches, parish magazines, notice boards, schools, surgeries and at the new swimming pool complex</li> <li>• Link this to information about transport to services – community transport and Billilinks</li> </ul>	F,G,H,I,J
7	<p>Lifelong learning opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with adult education providers to ensure up to date information about all local opportunities is available, with contact numbers for venues etc</li> <li>• Regularly share above information with catchment residents through village websites, local press, village halls, churches, parish magazines, notice boards, schools, surgeries, Centre for Childe etc</li> <li>• Link this to information about transport to services – community transport and Billilinks</li> </ul>	F,G,H,J
8	<p>Young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the Youth Service, bring together providers of youth facilities to investigate ways to use community transport of all forms to improve access within the area and to work with each other to share and plan activities and events</li> <li>• Promote use of community transport, Billilinks and opportunities available to the area's young people through their schools</li> </ul>	F,G,I,J
9	<p>Visitor package</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate opportunities to define/develop a local visitor offer which promotes and links visits to local historic sites (e.g. Shipley), countryside, walking and cycling, hospitality and village centre retail</li> <li>• Above should take account of, and link in with, other promotional initiatives in the area</li> <li>• Promote development of new walking and cycling routes (perhaps linked to local cycle hire and public transport)</li> </ul>	A,B,E,F
10	Local food and produce	A,B,D,E

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate options to promote the area's local food/produce, involving Billingshurst and other village shops, farm shops and producers and crafts people</li> <li>Above should take account of, and link in with, other such promotional initiatives in the area</li> </ul>	
11	<p>Local business networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Chamber of Commerce to bring together local businesses to encourage inter-trading</li> <li>Promote initiatives and opportunities like Horsham DCs Micro-biz to home and small businesses through local communication channels</li> </ul>	E
12	<p>Community spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to improve village halls and community spaces (including LEADER and local authority funding) so that they can continue to offer a range of activities to their communities</li> <li>Take, and make most of, opportunities offered by the Extended Schools initiative to improve role that schools play as providers of activities for young people and their families, and as community space for the wider population</li> <li>Ensure community venues in Billingshurst work together to plan and co-ordinate provision.</li> </ul>	F,H,I
13	<p>Billi-hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate scope to define and develop a "hub" for local service information and resident advice which would meet a number of the needs defined above and which might attract funding from LEADER and RASP programmes.</li> <li>Perhaps incorporate elements of tourist/visitor information with the above.</li> </ul>	A,F,G,H,I,J

## Glossary

**Community transport:** transport organised and managed on a not-for-profit basis by local communities, often using volunteer drivers. Funded by customer payments and often grant subsidy. Includes volunteer car schemes (e.g. transport to hospital appointments for elderly people) and also community minibus hire options.

**Comparison goods:** goods which are bought less frequently and for which shoppers will 'shop around' and compare prices, range and quality. We have used use this term to describe both clothes and gift shopping as well as infrequent purchases like electrical goods.

**Convenience goods:** goods which are bought frequently like food, household cleaning items and like newspapers.

**Extended Schools:** a DFES initiative linked to the Every Child Matters Agenda. Extended schools seeks to improve availability and access to services for young people and their families; develop the delivery of additional non-traditional services through schools and make use of school buildings for community use. Local groups of schools have been set certain targets to reach by 2010.

**Footfall:** number of people passing certain locations in a shopping centre over a particular time period. High footfall suggests more shoppers and higher spend/

## Research

**Higher order centre:** shopping centres providing a greater range of goods, services and retail outlets

**Hinterland:** the area around a service centre (whether town, village or city) to which it provides services

**Multi-service outlets:** locations providing a number of services under one roof/at one place.

**Outreach service:** a service which is periodically taken out, or made available on request, to users in their homes or local communities.

**Service hubs:** clusters of services in a specific location or building which are co-located to save costs and make for more efficient delivery.

**Sessional care:** describes morning or afternoon childcare sessions, usually of about 3 hours. The UK Government funds sessional care for all three/four year olds who are pre-school.

**Small Rural Towns Programme:** programme funded and managed by South East England Development Agency. Supports communities in small towns to come together to identify needs and actions to support the vitality of the town, and funds implementation of some projects. Funding under the programme is now largely committed.

**Study Area:** Our study area includes the parishes of Billingshurst, Wisborough Green, Plaistow & Ifold, Loxwood, Shipley (which includes Coolham), Rudgwick, Alfold, Slinfold and Itchingfield (which includes Barns Green).

**Sussex Downs and Low Weald LEADER programme:** The Sussex Downs and Low Weald area has been allocated funds under the European LEADER programme to support projects related to:

- local food and produce – including supporting retail and local food/produce based businesses and services in rural areas
- supporting micro-business and the services for the visitor economy
- developing community hubs, community spaces and the innovative and sustainable delivery of services to the local community
- connecting rural communities – supporting communities to become involved in developing cultural, built and environmental heritage
- renewable energy

Funding runs from 2008-2013.

**Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP):** This will provide funding for a range of projects to improve access to services. Billingshurst comes under the West Sussex Rural Access to Services Programme.

*For more information about LEADER and RASP, contact Lisa Creaye-Griffin at West Sussex County Council*