

Local Councils' Conference

16th June 2010

Towcester Racecourse

Welcome to Towcester. There are so many good things about Towcester that I would need more than 5 minutes to tell you; so here is a taster.....it's the oldest town in Northamptonshire and a great place to live. We've been here (not personally) since the New Stone Age and still rising to the challenge of change. The current population is around 10,000 and due to double in the next 10-20 years.

These are exciting times for us. Our current challenge is to ensure that Towcester retains its historic charm whilst meeting the expectations of the 21st century so there has never been a more critical time to work with all agencies to deliver a town for the future. So this is where we are now.....

- Currently the SNC together with their partners are progressing towards completion of the development of one of the most historically sensitive sites in the town centre with a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the form of Bury Mount in its midst. The first phase was completed this Spring and Bury Mount was officially opened by the Duke of Gloucester on 12th April. As an added bonus the public now have access to the Watermeadows beyond the Mill Stream which were formerly out of bounds being part of Easton Neston Estate.
- The Towcester Town Partnership is a Not For Profit Company was formed in 2002 through the initiative of the South Northants Council as part of the Countryside Agency's "Action for Market Towns" strategy. The Board members are drawn from a cross section of the community supported by volunteers with a specific expertise in their chosen field. Their first task was to conduct a Healthcheck from which evolved a comprehensive "Vision for Towcester and its hinterland, elements of which have been included in the SNC's own plan.
- Their most high profile current project is "The Bus" for which they will be receiving an award on the 18th July from "Action for Market Towns" in recognition of their success in delivering this project. It is a mobile facility that started last year as a youth project and is now countywide. It would not have been possible without the joint involvement of the Northants County Council, the SNC and the Towcester Town Partnership.

- The Bus was formerly used as a band bus throughout Europe and has been adapted, as you can see from the logo,
 - for Developing Youth Activities and Clubs
 - Minds
 - Bodies and
 - Special Activities.
- It is fully equipped with a kitchenette, privacy space, lounge and PC/games area.
- Cllr Aaronson, SNC Chairman, is pictured here with the members of the Youth Council at its launch. The demand has been so high that last month a business case was presented to the County Council to fund a second bus.
- Other current Partnership projects are –

Towcester Museum – was on our “wish list” in 1988. Some years later the building was made available as planning gain when White Horse Yard was being redeveloped. After several false starts and disappointments with funding the Partnership has been working with the Trustees since the end of 2009 and work started on the interior this month.

St. Lawrence Church – heating and upgrade seating to provide more flexible space

Dilraj restaurant – upgrading the building under the “Shop Fronts and 1st Floors” initiative

To finish....Towcester Town Partnership is succeeding due to the sheer determination, commitment and hard work of its members who believe absolutely in their town’s future. It has not been all plain sailing and there has been several occasions when their own future was under threat so my advice is “always have a Plan B and take nothing for granted”.

Make a point of visiting us in the future to see how we’re doing....you’ll be warmly welcomed.