

HEADINGLEY DEVELOPMENT TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to the first Annual Report of Headingley Development Trust (HDT). As the first such report, it in fact covers a rather longer period, from the time that HDT was set up in July 2005, through to December 2006.

HDT was formed by a group of concerned local residents, who wished to be able to undertake a range of enterprise based interventions that aim to restore sustainability to Headingley as a community. The backdrop to this of course is the extent to which Headingley has been overwhelmed by students, and the impact that this has had not just on the housing market in the area, but also on local businesses in the retail and leisure sectors.

HDT was established to play a role that would be distinct from, but also complementary to, the activities of the many local community groups and organisations, which have undertaken a variety of activities, largely of a campaigning and reactive nature in response to the pressures that Headingley has faced. HDT in contrast was set up with the intention of playing a distinctive and proactive role in the community by undertaking a wide range of enterprise based activities that would contribute to the goal of sustainability; we wanted to be able to do positive things rather than always reacting to negative ones.

This report sets out the great progress that the Trust has made towards achieving these ambitions in the first eighteen months of its existence.

ACTIVITIES

Early in 2006 the Board agreed a statement of Vision, Values and Aims, which set out the goals and values of HDT to pursue social enterprise approaches to deliver community benefit, and identified its place within the community ecology of the Headingley area. This document, which can be found on the HDT website, identified three potential workstreams for the Trust – Projects, Managing Services and Catalyst/Enabler/Broker. Of these, Managing Services was identified as a possible role for future development and has not been explored at all at this stage; Projects covers concrete activities undertaken by the Trust; while the Catalyst/Enabler/Broker role covers a range of interventions, some of which could become HDT projects. The activities described here fall within these two groups.

Café Scientifique

This was HDT's first project to go live, and aims to provide a forum in which people can come together to discuss topics of local and wider interest. It immediately attracted a high level of interest, and with its meetings held at the New Headingley Club it also serves the purpose of supporting a relatively underused but potentially extremely valuable local organisation and facility. Meetings have been held on an approximately monthly basis since July 2006, and a small steering group plans the programme of meetings.

Deli Market

The first Yorkshire Deli Market in Headingley was held on the Rose Garden in September and was opened by Greg Mulholland MP. It was a great success, with all stalls sold out before the advertised finishing time, and some local businesses reporting significantly increased trade that day, replicating experience elsewhere which has shown that farmers' markets are of benefit, and not a threat, to local businesses. The Market is now an established feature of Headingley life and takes place on the second Saturday of every month; it is also HDT's most visible project to date.

The success of the Deli Market clearly demonstrates several aspects of HDT's "distinctive contribution" – firstly, the value of the large membership base, as a number of very committed people came forward to work with two of the Board members to bring the initial idea to fruition, and formed an ongoing steering group for the project; secondly, the value of its enterprise approach and its ability to undertake activities that will become self-sustaining – the Deli Market is projected to break even after 6-8 months operation; and thirdly, the benefit that its activities can bring to the local economy. HDT acknowledges the help received towards covering the start-up and promotional costs for the Market from Leeds Co-operative Society and Headingley ward councillors.

Headingley Primary School (HPS)

The HPS project remains central to the Trust's ambitions, as it was the proposed closure of HPS and the desire to retain the buildings for some form of community use that was the immediate catalyst for its formation, and the initial focus of attention. This is a large project requiring long-term work and significant investment, and a great deal of the Board's efforts have gone into pursuing this over the last 18 months. An initial proposal and business plan for a Headingley Enterprise and Arts Centre (HEART) were submitted to the Council earlier this year, and received the full support of the ward councillors; however the Council's assessment of the proposal was that there were a number of weaknesses in the Business Plan, and in any case it did not offer the capital receipt that the Council was looking for. Subsequently a revised concept and business plan for HEART were developed, centred this time around the establishment of a business hub or Catalyst Centre on the first floor, using a model that has been used successfully elsewhere and that has been adopted as the basis for Leeds' successful Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid. It is considered that the particular characteristics and demography of Headingley mean that this model has the potential to be very successful in this area. The Catalyst is seen as being not only a self-sustaining enterprise, but also as generating surpluses that will help to support the community activities which will take place on the ground floor.

These will be provided through three distinct sections of the ground floor, but a key part of the vision for HEART is that they have the potential to be used together as well as separately. The three sections are an Events and Exhibition area, based around the school hall; Training/Meeting rooms for rent, based in the new block at the front of the school; and a café, based in the old Reception class area, which will serve users of the building, as well as

aiming to draw in trade from the local community. To achieve this there will need to be significant investment in re-modelling the current buildings; it is proposed to add a new entrance and reception area linking the new block to the main building, and extending into a new conservatory at the front of the school which will form an additional area for the café. In bringing the new proposals to this stage, HDT has benefited from the input of a number of local professionals who have undertaken work to date at no cost; in addition, we have secured commitments of support towards the refurbishment and future uses from local partners, including several major businesses and the University of Leeds.

This proposal received the full support of the Council's Area Committee in December, and a major step forward was taken in the following week when the Council's Executive Board rejected a recommendation to sell the school buildings on the open market; instead they agreed to give HDT a six-month exclusivity period in which to develop our business plan and show that we are able to raise necessary funds.

This is a major challenge, as the sums required to acquire and redevelop the building are substantial. The Board believes that these are exciting proposals that have the potential to have a major and positive impact, both socially and economically, on the sustainability of the local community; we are committed to raising the necessary funds by a combination of capital grants, loan funding and a share issue. Pursuing this project will be the Trust's major priority for the coming year.

Housing in Headingley

From the outset one of HDT's key goals has been to explore the possibility of intervening in housing in Headingley. The source of imbalance in Headingley is the distortion of local housing towards the private rented sector. Normally, this comprises about 10% of houses, but in Headingley it is at least 60%. HDT is currently pursuing a three part strategy to pursue this project:

- **HeadingleyHomes** Many residents who have to leave Headingley want to pass on their home to another family. To meet this need, HDT is introducing HeadingleyHomes, a 'family-friendly' option, in association with a local estate agency, Manning Stainton. HeadingleyHomes aims to help maintain a balanced, sustainable community in Headingley, by providing homes for families wanting to move in, and by finding family buyers for those who have to move out.
- **Affordable Homes** The huge demand for private renting in Headingley has priced out a balanced community; affordable housing is essential to redress the balance. HDT is pursuing avenues, with housing associations and other housing agencies, to see if we can make houses available in Headingley which are affordable for long-term residents to buy or rent.
- **Market Research** The future development of housing in Headingley depends on the evolution of the local housing market. Proper understanding of this is essential in order to guide any intervention by

HDT, which has therefore become involved in a research project on housing in Headingley; this is supported by all the stakeholders involved, and carried out by Dr Rachael Unsworth, of Leeds University, an expert on housing in Leeds (she co-authored *Twenty-First Century Leeds* [2004] and wrote *City Living in Leeds* [2005]).

Business Involvement

From the outset HDT has sought to actively engage with local businesses and has already succeeded in attracting a significant number into membership. A first meeting of local businesses was held in the autumn, supported by Salvo's restaurant, and strong interest was expressed in establishing a local Business Forum. The Trust has taken this on as a project and is looking at how best to take it forward on a viable basis, as it has clear links with a number of our other activities.

Publishing

A new project that we have embarked upon is to start a small publishing house, called Shire Oak Publishing, which will begin by publishing locally relevant material such as local history pamphlets or books and information for visitors to Headingley, including a map. This project will also be responsible for a Headingley website which will complement those already existing and provide information and links to those interested in Headingley for whatever reason. This project is still in early stages, but expects to publish its first outputs within about six months.

Neighbourhood Design Statement

Another new project for the Trust is a commission from the Area Committee to prepare a Neighbourhood Design Statement (NDS) for Headingley. A NDS is an analysis of the character of the local environment, carried out by local communities, which then enables the Council to make decisions about future developments in the locality, promote local environmental improvements and to be used in considerations of planning matters. HDT's area of interest extends from Woodhouse Moor out to the Ring Road, and it experiences threats to buildings (by landlords), to open spaces (by developers) and to streets (by traffic). In 2005, Far Headingley Village Society produced a NDS which covers the northern part of our area (beyond Shaw Lane) - HDT's sister Statement will cover the southern part of 'Greater Headingley'. It will be carried out in co-operation with the local community associations, with the advice of a professional consultant.

Local business buy-out

And finally we are in the first stages of leading a community buy-out of a highly successful local business. It is not possible to give more information about this in this report, but the Board considers this to be a very exciting project which exemplifies the distinctive contribution that HDT was set up to make. We will make a formal announcement about this at the AGM.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

The Trust has operated with very little funding so far. We have received the following specific pieces of financial support, for which we are very grateful:

- the costs of setting up the Trust were met by Headingley Network
- Leeds City Council's North West (Inner) Area Committee and Business Link gave grants to employ a consultant to help develop the Trust's first business plan and initial proposals for Headingley Primary School
- the Area Committee has also awarded a couple of small grants from its Wellbeing Budget for specific aspects of the Trust's activity
- Wade's Charity awarded a small grant to help with running costs.

By far the greatest source of income, though, has been the membership subscriptions and donations paid in by members, and these have been absolutely vital in enabling the Trust to achieve all that it has done so far. Details of the Trust's income and expenditure for the financial year ended 30th September 2006 can be found in our Treasurer's report.

Our other main resource also lies in our membership; apart from the Board, a number of members have been actively involved in several of the Trust's activities and projects, and as we move forward we have no doubt that there will be both the opportunity and the necessity for more members to become actively involved.

Having said that, the Board however also recognise that to enable the Trust to fulfil more of its aims and potential, some dedicated resources in the form of a paid worker would be invaluable if not essential, and we have therefore made a couple of grant applications seeking funding for this. Although one of these was unsuccessful, we are hopeful about the outcome of the second one, for which a decision is expected early in the new year.

STRUCTURE, MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

From the start the trust's founders wished to ensure that it would be built on a strong membership base with clear accountability to local residents, but that it would also be able to undertake a wider range of activities than community organisations usually attempt. For these reasons the structure adopted was an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS) for the benefit of the community. The IPS structure allows for greater flexibility and a wider range of activities, including commercial ones, than the more common charitable company structure; one of the aims of HDT is to operate without dependence on ongoing grant funding, and the IPS structure allows not only for enterprise activities to be undertaken, but also for funds to be raised through mechanisms such as share issues. The Trust however has, and will, also apply for appropriate pieces of grant funding in order to support it through its set-up and development phases.

At an early date the Board set itself the target of achieving a membership of 500 by the date of the first AGM, and with a membership of over 435 at the turn of the year we remain optimistic that we will achieve this goal. Membership is open to any individual or organisation that supports the aims of

the Trust, regardless of their place of residence; the majority of the current membership is, naturally, residents of Headingley and adjacent areas, but it also includes a number of local community organisations as well as, particularly pleasingly, a number of local businesses.

The Trust operates according to its governing Rules, and is run by a Board of Directors. The founding members of the Trust form its current board, and they have been responsible for all the activities of HDT to date, with support for specific projects from among the membership. In accordance with the Rules, elections to the Board will be held at the AGM; the current members are all required to stand down but are eligible to stand for re-election. The Board has identified what they consider to be a weakness in the Rules, which at present require the whole Board to stand down every year, and will be proposing changes which we believe will strengthen the Trust by ensuring greater stability to the Board, together with the ability to co-opt to fill any skills gaps within the Board.

Conclusion

This report has set out the tremendous range of work that has been initiated by HDT in the first 18 months of its life. It is more than even the most optimistic of us could have anticipated at the start, and even though we are faced with a huge challenge if we are to bring our big project – Headingley Primary School – to fruition, the range of other initiatives that we have already started fully justifies the decision to establish the trust. Equally the number of members that have joined HDT demonstrates the extent of the support that exists for our ambitions.

Over the next year therefore, we look forward, with a newly-elected Board, to taking all these activities forward, as well as to starting further new ones that will help to develop the sustainability of the community in Headingley.

Further information on the work of HDT can be found at our website www.headingleydevelopmenttrust.org.uk.

Board of Directors
Headingley Development Trust
26th January 2007