



GRAYS TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION Stakeholder Vision Workshops

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS June 2013

Based on;

the output from five workshops with stakeholders and two sessions with students, including the data from five additional events attended by officers, following the initial survey to inform a vision for the regeneration of Grays town centre.

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Introduction

Background

Thurrock Council's Community Regeneration Strategy and Local Development Framework have identified Grays (the largest town centre in Thurrock) as one of five 'Growth Hubs' where regeneration activity is to be concentrated.

Lakeside Shopping Centre and Capital Shopping Centres impact Grays; both have planning permission for further expansion of the centre.

Grays has a limited retail offering compared to other similar centres. It does have a range of facilities including theatre, museum, library, civic offices and a range of local services. There are a number of regeneration initiatives currently being developed by the Council and its partners to regenerate the town centre. These include a new college being built by South Essex College, which will bring 2000 students and staff in to the town centre from when it opens in September 2014.

The Council's vision is: to involve communities in shaping where they live and their quality of life and that Grays should be a place of opportunity, enterprise and excellence where individuals, communities and businesses flourish.

As part of that vision the Council are committed to the consultation process. A series of surveys were completed in March 2013 to gather opinions about Grays town centre as it is and about the possible future role for the town centre.

Independent Review

An independent organisation, Amanda Murrell Associates (AMA) Ltd, was commissioned to develop and design the process to enable stakeholders to inform a vision for regeneration of Grays town centre, via a series of deliberative workshop events based on the findings from the opinion surveys.

The independent team comprised of; Amanda Murrell - Project Manager, Gillian Ormston – Senior Consultant, Brenda Cook – Consultant, Sharon Bult – Consultant; all are experienced and skilled facilitators who work predominantly with stakeholders.

Thurrock Council invited participants who had expressed an interest in attending workshops from the previous survey and set dates in the diary for 3hr sessions.

Attendees at the workshops included stakeholders from the business community, a range of members and residents of Gray's community and students.

Other Engagement

Data was also fed into the overall process from a series of workshops and meetings conducted by local groups and forums and, on occasion, attended by Thurrock Council, see figure 2. The Big Local representative also provided the output from a

workshop they had conducted in April 2013 and have kindly consented to their findings being incorporated into this report. The Seabrooke Rise Residents Association also provided the output from a similar session with the Seabrooke Rise Youth Club in June 2012.

Independent Workshops

AMA Ltd was commissioned to:

- Design the workshops and content in conjunction with the Council's Project Manager
- Facilitate and co-ordinate the workshops
- Design a summary document for stakeholders to use and take away for information
- To report on the findings to identify key issues for inclusion in a regeneration vision for Grays

AMA Ltd has over 20 years experience and expertise in working with key stakeholders, communities and community groups on regeneration, health and community issues.

Throughout the whole process there was regular dialogue between AMA Ltd and Council Officers ensuring that the objectives for these workshops were achieved. AMA Ltd has continued to recognise, draw from, and build on good practice.

Workshop Aims:

- To enable stakeholders to have a say, input and influence the consultation.
- For the Council to understand stakeholder views and concerns for the future of Grays town centre and what improvements they would like to see in the short, middle and long term.
- To ensure that stakeholders remain involved and engaged with the process.
- To bring to life the responses from the survey to enable the Council to get a clear vision of what stakeholders want the town centre to be.

The outputs from all of the workshops will feed into the consultation and form the basis of a regeneration action-plan, to identify the future role and what a new Gray's town centre could look and feel like.

By adopting a deliberative dialogue approach the broad aim was to reach an agreed view or set of recommendations through deliberation, which is set out in this report.

By adhering to the principles of a deliberative engagement process the workshops enabled the facilitators to;

- Encourage open discussion between participants
- Work with a wide range of people and information sources
- Have an understanding of different people's view points
- Have a clear task and purpose
- Listen to other people without bias

April 12 th 2013	Business Men & Women, and representatives from a range of other groups including community forums, Big Local, CVS, Ngage	Grays Town Partnership (an organisation made up of multiple groups)
May 3 rd 2013	Members of the Community	Grays Residents
May 7 th 2013	Members of the Community	Grays Residents
May 10 th 2013	Members of the Community	Grays Residents
May 15 th 2013	Members of the Community	Grays Residents
May 10 th 2013	Students – Graffiti Wall	South East College
May 17 th 2013	Students – Graffiti Wall	South East College

- Allow time for people to have their say

This type of event builds and improves relationships between participants as well as helping to improve the perception of the Council.

Approach and Methodology

Workshop Methodology

Workshops were delivered on:

Figure 1

The workshops were specifically designed to be deliberative. Deliberation is an approach to decision-making that allows participants to consider relevant information, discuss the issue and options and develop their thinking together before coming to a view.

To enable the attendees at the workshops to have the opportunity to fully explain their vision for the regeneration of Grays town centre, each table had a maximum of 10 participants with a facilitator for each table. Every person around the table encouraged to have a voice and to give their views by the facilitators. Output and quality of the workshops was constantly monitored and reviewed, throughout the life of the project, tweaking as required, ensuring at all times that the content was appropriate for the audience.

A presentation was delivered to participants in bite sized pieces during the workshop, with enough information to stimulate discussion and thought within the groups. They were then allowed enough time (thirty minutes) to 'deliberate' and comment on a discussion point, with three in total. All participants' comments were recorded onto flip chart paper by a facilitator and all data fed into a database.

Originally some attendees were sceptical about the process, however they left the workshops feeling more empowered, knowledgeable and hopeful that their vision would become reality. One attendee was heard to say as he was leaving one of the workshops; "I felt very apprehensive before getting here as previously when involved with things with the Council I have always felt it was just a tick box exercise, however having spent three hours being able to really voice my opinion I am really hopeful that this time my vision will turn into a reality".

Workshop Structure

The workshops carried out by AMA Ltd were approximately 3hrs duration with refreshments.

Figure 3

Presentation	Responsible	Time
Intro	AMA Ltd	5 Min
1 st Presentation	Council	15 Min
Discussion 1- Tables	Facilitators	30 Min
2 nd Presentation	Council	15 Min
Discussion 2- Tables	Facilitators	30 Min
Break		10 Min
3 rd Presentation	Council	15 Min
Discussion 3- Tables	Facilitators	25 Min
Q&A	Council	30 Min
Close	AMA Ltd	5 Min
Total		3Hrs

The discussion topics for the workshops were as follows;



Discussion 1

1. What can you do to get involved and help your community to thrive, increase trade for businesses and improve people's experience of Grays?
2. Realistically what are the possibilities?
3. What can the Council do to support you to do this?

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Discussion 2

1. What role(s) should Grays have in the future?
What does this look like, sound like, feel like?
2. On what scale should it be?
Are there community groups/volunteers that can assist with moving this forward? Are they readily available and willing?

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Discussion 3

1. What are the next steps for making your ideas discussed today, a reality?
2. Over the next 3 months
3. Over the next year
4. Over the next 5 years

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Discussion wording was slightly changed dependant on the groups, Business, Communities or Students, but not significantly to change the emphasis of each comment.

Other Engagement Methodology

Thurrock Council ran other workshops and attended other meetings to broaden the scope of engagement with stakeholders. The data that informs this report is also made up from the results of workshops/meetings delivered by other individuals as follows:

Figure 2

June 15th 2012 (workshop)	Members of the Youth Club	Seabrooke Rise Youth Club (carried out by the youth club and provided to the Council by Seabrooke Rise Residents Association)
April 17th 2013 (workshop)	Students	Grays School Arts Media College
April 24th 2013 (workshop)	A representative group of young people	Thurrock Youth Cabinet
April 29th 2013 (workshop)	Members of the Community	Grays Riverside Big Local (carried out by Big Local and provided to the Council courtesy of the Big Local)
May 7th 2013 (meeting)	Members of the Community	Seabrooke Rise Residents Association
May 2013	Members of the Community	Thurrock Over Fifties Forum (attended by Council representatives)

See appendices 3 – 7 for more detail

Report of Findings

This section will cover the data collected and show it in the form of tables and separated into themes. As there were no defined questions the responses from each workshop and the additional data collected were categorised into the themes below. Within each table there is an explanation of those categories that fall into each theme. A summary of themes follows with recommendations.

Data Themes

Accessibility

Appearance/Environment/Welcoming

Safety/Security

Business support/processes and systems

Communication/Marketing/Promotion

Finance/Funding

Food/Drink/Cafe Culture

Shops/Market

Entertainment/Leisure/Events/Nightlife

Beach/Riverfront

Whole community/Meeting the needs of different groups/Future proofing Grays

Summary of all discussion points and groups by theme:

Accessibility

“To make Grays more accessible through better and cheaper public transport”

- More trains would support the whole community, supported by investment in the train station site.
- Access to the town is critical in supporting the other work taking place. The pricing of fares, options for free or cheaper transport, plus the availability of public transport are important and should be reviewed urgently.
- Could public transport be subsidised for certain groups, i.e. students, or at peak times i.e. weekends, to encourage people in?

“Improve road and path ways in and around Grays, supported by better parking”

- Create natural walk-through’s to encourage movement through the town.
- Parking urgently needs to be reviewed.
- Longer term the road network needs reviewing, particularly the one-way system.

Appearance/Environment/Welcoming

“Improve the appearance and environment that people see and experience when in and around Grays”

- Antisocial behaviour, drunks and ‘yobs’ in certain parts of the town are very unwelcome. Take a zero tolerance approach to anti social behaviour.
- All groups agreed the whole town could be improved through – better/unique standard shop frontage and better decor, plus improving empty buildings such as the State Cinema, Gym, WH Smiths; improved green spaces and parks.
- Reducing antisocial behaviour and opening up the town, with bright colours, flowerbeds and no graffiti can be quickly implemented.
- Holding a community clean up/litter pick will support community development too.
- Longer term, the disused buildings need to be revamped or redeveloped.
- Better street lighting is a top priority for both the environment and safety

“Maximise on the history and facilities already in the town, and look at ways to improve and increase them”

- Being recognised as a town which is built on its history and take advantage of this, maximise on key areas – market, river, the new college.
- Introduce new facilities to make the town better and support its future.

Safety/Security

“Increase Police and Security presence around the town”

- Grays should feel safer, supported by a higher level of policing and more open areas to discourage anti social behaviour
- It was also agreed that more police patrols would help improve the environment and appearance issues.
- Increased levels of policing and/or security guards are needed across the town

“Regenerate community spirit and accountability”

- Encourage responsibility throughout the community
- Community felt more accountability by individuals – parents, young people – would improve the environment. There is a need to regenerate community spirit.

“Address the perception of crime that exists”

- The perception of crime levels is worse than crime actually is – people fear things happening that are unlikely to happen and therefore avoid coming into town.
- Improving the environment will improve the safety feel
- Businesses felt the police could do more to manage perceptions and improve visibility, which was supported by the community.

Business support/processes and systems

“The Council to support and improve the business environment”

- Businesses are most interested in this theme, students hardly at all.
- The Council could do a number of things to improve support to businesses, specifically reduce rates, and offer incentives for new businesses.
- The Council needs to improve communication, accountability, visibility and performance.
- More consultation between the community and council would improve the understanding, feeling of inclusion, ability to voice views.
- The Council should take more action to improve business development and put forward a single point of contact.
- Introduce community champions to take forward the work of council to improve Grays.
- Grays is Great campaign – short and long term actions to take this forward

“Develop facilities and offerings to support the town in attracting new business, staff and customers”

- The market has a strong role to play – for potential new businesses, and should be properly managed and controlled.
- Things to support business should be developed – i.e. childcare facilities, a hotel.
- The new college could tailor its offerings to fill gaps in the town – create new vocations.
- Develop a tourist office.
- Being seen as technologically enabling – free high street wifi
- Developing businesses such as trades and training centres to fill the gaps

- Develop an events calendar – help to share what is happening and build involvement.

Communication/Marketing/Promotion

“Promote, market & communicate!”

- Re-launch of Grays was high on the priority list for businesses – supported by different activities for all groups.
 - Business and community both felt more marketing and advertising was needed.
 - Grays need to find ways to promote the town once it has put the changes/improvements in place.
 - Using the town’s history to promote the town and build its image
 - Grays should be supportive of new businesses and provide cheap/free opportunities for them to promote their goods/services during start up
 - Both businesses and community to promote and advertise – get everyone involved.
 - Use the Grays is Great campaign as lever for this
 - Identify key projects to be taken forward and promote them
- Students did not mention this theme at all

Finance/Funding

“Look at ways to secure funding and ensure it is effectively spent to support local events and businesses”

- All agreed that funding needs to be carefully considered and not just ‘thrown’ at Grays
 - Events should be affordable for all – both business and community
- Students did not mention this theme at all.

Food/Drink/Cafe Culture

“More choice of food and drink places to meet all different groups of people”

- Students all wanted more choice of restaurants that were affordable for them i.e. McDonalds, Subway etc.
- All agreed that more restaurants were needed, choice, accessibility and locations were all important.
- More places to eat and drink for all groups of people.

“Location of food and drink outlets is important”

- Longer term this area needs work but in the short term holding community picnics or similar would support many areas of change. With the summer approaching a beach cafe would be worthwhile.
- Long term new food outlets need to be attracted and located in key positions, to support choice, nightlife, leisure and environment.

Shops/Market

“More choice in shops and markets”

- All groups wanted to see a better choice of shops and more of them.
- All groups suggested specialist markets, improving the market choice and to support new business.

- A wider choice of retail is needed this needs to be attracted in.

“Utilise the market/shops to support other areas of the town”

- Long term priorities – utilise the shops and market to support business development and improve the environment.

Entertainment/Leisure/Events/Nightlife

“More different facilities to meet the needs of different groups and make them accessible”

- More facilities are wanted – from restaurants to sports areas.
- Make Grays different – offer something unique to draw in tourists/visitors.
- Look at carnivals/festivals – seasonal activities that people know will take place and will encourage them to diarise and visit.
- Building on community spirit and engagement are key to supporting a better leisure/entertainment environment – get people to visit these places.
- More festivals/carnivals to encourage people into the town.
- Develop more choice and options for leisure and entertainment to appeal to all different groups and ages.
- Keep affordable and free where possible. Encourage all groups to participate in quick events.

“Use the town’s heritage to develop leisure facilities”

- Revamp the town, improve the image and accessibility
- Use the heritage in developing leisure and entertainment.

Beach and Riverfront

“Make better use of the beach and riverfront”

- This area needs to be improved - by tidying up, more businesses and improved access.
- The riverfront could be used to much better effect, with new businesses and facilities to attract people and keep them there.
- This area could also be brought into the focus on heritage and used to promote the town.

“Improve the facilities on offer in this area”

- In the short term, parking and a cafe would help attract people, plus tidy it up. Longer term more businesses are needed there and improved access.

Whole community/Meeting the needs of different groups/Future proofing

Grays

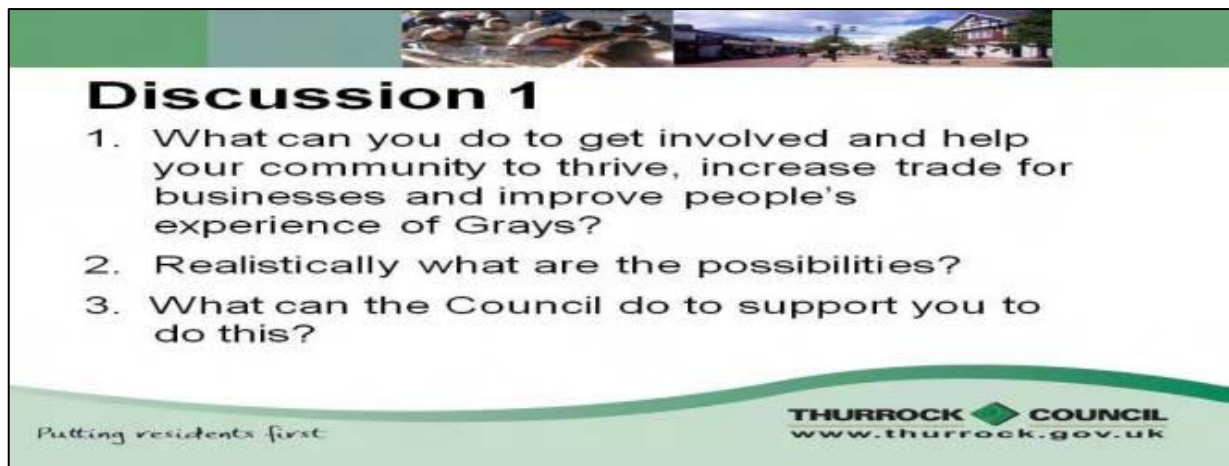
“It is a whole system approach”

- All agreed it is a whole system approach – if the environment, security, leisure industry and shops are all improved this will make the most difference and make Grays a place to be proud of.
- Improving things = more jobs, more people, more visitors, more money spent in the town.
- All agreed what is needed is a cohesive approach.
- Changes need to be affordable to ensure they have longevity.

“Once changes are underway – tell people!”

- When the town is improved it needs to be promoted!
- Create a community to be proud of.

- Engage everyone, get the whole community involved, involvement and opportunities are key.
- Be unique and use this to promote and develop Grays



Discussion 1

1. What can you do to get involved and help your community to thrive, increase trade for businesses and improve people's experience of Grays?
2. Realistically what are the possibilities?
3. What can the Council do to support you to do this?

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Accessibility

The key points raised regarding accessibility in, out and around the town centre related to the transport networks, parking, and ease of access across the town, and the ability for new businesses to come to the town.

Priorities	Business (15 comments)	Students (11 comments)	Community (27 comments)
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free/more parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More affordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free/more parking, especially on Sunday
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at land • Incentives – not just commercial • Restrictions? 		
Railway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the level crossing • Investment needed • Station is an eyesore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More buses/trains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More trains
Road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the one way system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free transport for students • Easy to go to • Review one way system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road layout poor • Improve traffic management • Free bus passes at weekend
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/7 access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner toilets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water front improvements – jetty • Underpass between north and south, and between town and beach

- Parking is an issue for all concerned. Cost and accessibility to parking needs to be addressed.
- The road network is considered limiting – this needs to be reviewed
- More trains would support the whole community, supported by investment in the train station site
- Could public transport be subsidised for certain groups, i.e. students, or at peak times i.e. weekends, to encourage people in?

Appearance/Environment/Welcoming

The key points focused on how Grays is perceived by people coming to the town and what areas of the town required the most improvements.

Priorities	Business (13 comments)	Students (35 comments)	Community (50 comments)
Things to get rid of		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drunks/yobs/tramps • Pigeons/vermin • The car park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drunks • Anti social behaviour in places
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the area more attractive • The shopping area – better shops, better frontage • The marina – vision, pier/jetty for boat trips • The State cinema area • Develop the image through the Council • The railway station area and level crossing • Decorate the town centre • The road network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks/green spaces • Community areas • Places to meet friends • Cleanliness • Appearance – shop fronts • Modernise • Stop digging up the pavements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State Cinema site – needs pulling down or revamping • Revamp empty buildings • Improved frontage – themed – Victorian? • Wall murals/paint areas • More green spaces/improve the park • Specific unpleasant areas – outside job centre, probation office • Meeting spaces/places • Revamp the market area • Individualise the High St. • The beach/riverfront
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-launch Grays • Include activities for all age groups • Restore street lights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better street lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at other towns' appearances – what can be done in Grays • Homes with gardens • Increase opening times of shops/businesses • Town crier? • Street entertainers?

- Antisocial behaviour, drunks and 'yobs' in certain parts of the town are very unwelcome.
- All groups agreed the whole town could be improved through – better/unique shop frontage, improving empty buildings such as the State Cinema, Gym, WH Smiths; improved green spaces and parks.
- Through visiting other towns, best practice could be adopted
- Better street lighting is a top priority for both the environment and safety.

Safety/Security

The key points focused on how the safety and security of people coming to Grays can be improved.

Priorities	Business (13 comments)	Students (7 comments)	Community (24 comments)
Things to get rid of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception that crime is worse than it is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tramps/yobs Vermin by river 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti social behaviour in public places i.e. job centre
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New CCTV Higher police levels, supported by beat surgeries, social media, police presence Lighting Improve security Road and rail network – make safer for users Security in the shopping centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street lighting Hygiene of town More police patrols More security presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parental responsibility for children/youths More police/security guards Evening facilities – give people something to do Perception and image Traffic flow and road network
Other			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve young people, young offenders and offenders through community service to improve area Regenerate community spirit and with that accountability and responsibility

- Increased levels of policing and/or security guards are needed across the town
- Community felt more accountability by individuals – parents, young people – would improve the environment. There is a need to regenerate community spirit.
- The perception of crime levels is worse than crime actually is – people fear things happening that are unlikely to happen and therefore avoid coming into town.

Business support/processes and systems

The key points focused on how the Council/community could support businesses and through which processes and systems

Priorities	Business (50 comments)	Students (1 comments)	Community (44 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract unique/different shops • Improve Council visibility, accountability, performance • Information sharing from Council to business • Central point of contact at the Council • Parking • Council to take more action to support new/existing business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fibre optic broadband 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSR and community responsibility • Use job seekers to complete actions to support businesses • New businesses to support existing businesses
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut business rates • Incentives for retail • How much of this will be acted on? • Develop a committee to focus on business development • Nothing has happened before – will anything happen this time? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Council schools representative to improve communication • Replicate other 'successful' towns

- Businesses are most interested in this theme, students hardly at all.
- The Council could do a number of things to improve support to businesses, specifically reduce rates, and offer incentives for new businesses.
- The Council needs to improve communication, accountability, visibility and performance.
- The Council should take more action to improve business development and put forward a single point of contact

Communication/Marketing/Promotion

Priorities	Business (13 comments)	Students (0 comments)	Community (24 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising through multiple mediums Develop a positive image of Grays Market and promote Grays 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved advertising of opportunities Use shop fronts to promote/posters Billboards to promote community Use social media Use existing networking groups Town promotion Listening to the community
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-launch Grays Give people a reason to come and stay – incentives, motivations Involve the community 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council and community should be promoting the messages Local businesses to sponsor community advertising Think how the Council will attract people in?

- Re-launch of Grays was high on the priority list for businesses – supported by different activities for all groups
- Students did not mention this theme at all
- Business and community both felt more marketing and advertising was needed.

Finance/Funding

Priorities	Business (11 comments)	Students (0 comments)	Community (7 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better deals for new and existing businesses Financial support for new/small businesses 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the price of community events, i.e. T Fest, make more accessible for local groups.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support small business to develop strong plans and incentivise Invest in key areas – railway – but planned Options for raising finances? 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting to Lakeside is expensive so make Grays more affordable/better

- All agreed that funding needs to be carefully considered and not just ‘thrown’ at Grays
- Events should be affordable for all – both business and community
- Students did not mention this theme at all

Food/Drink/Cafe Culture

Priorities	Business (2 comments)	Students (10 comments)	Community (19 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase restaurants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better choice of restaurant/take away New restaurants – Frankie & Bennies, McDonalds, Nandos, Subway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location of restaurants i.e. on the waterfront, with a hotel, More choice of pubs/restaurants Specialist coffee shops The environment – benches & picnic tables
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a cafe culture 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support with food festivals Create a cafe in Grays park Increased opening hours Have a covered area for eating

- Students all wanted more choice of restaurants which were affordable for them i.e. McDonalds, Subway
- All agreed that more restaurants were needed.

Shops/Market

Priorities	Business (7 comments)	Students (13 comments)	Community (13 comments)
Things to get rid of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pound shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pawn shops Gambling shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pound shops
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More unique shops More variety Encourage new businesses Specialist markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the market More choice of shops – specialist such as computer, music, tattoo Improve the look of the shops, signage and design Better shops to those in Lakeside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage in larger/more shops Specialist shops Specialist markets i.e. farmers. Better range on the market Location of shops – riverside? Covered area for the market
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use specialist markets/shops to re-launch Grays 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pop up events in vacant units Promote cheaper rates compared to Lakeside for niche shops Support markets with boot sales

- All groups wanted to see a better choice of shops and more of them
- All groups suggested specialist markets, improving the market choice

Entertainment/Leisure/Events/Nightlife

Priorities	Business (5 comments)	Students (22 comments)	Community (26 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening hours New facilities – pop ups, restaurants, cinema Special events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New facilities – sports areas/equipment, bowling alley, arcades, cinema, music studio, youth club, ice rink, parks, leisure centre, gym, spa, roller skating Places for people to meet and socialise safely More events – festivals, carnivals, venues for events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cinema site New facilities to meet needs of different groups – cinema, bowling alley, theatre, family pubs, outside gyms, sports pitches, restaurants, soft play area More nightlife for young people Multi cultural events Festivals of all types Carnival Workshops
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a football club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs investment Need to make people want to spend leisure time in Grays Encourage local groups – churches, schools etc to get involved – regenerate community spirit and engagement Build on spirit of Olympics - pride

- More facilities are wanted – from restaurants to sports areas.
- Building on community spirit and engagement are key to supporting a better leisure/entertainment environment – get people to visit these places
- More festivals/carnivals to encourage people into the town

Beach/Riverfront

Priorities	Business (1 comments)	Students (1 comments)	Community (8 comments)
Things to get rid of		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vermin/rubbish by the riverfront 	
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marina attraction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The beach area – tidy up and make more of it Join up the town centre and the beach Attract more businesses to the riverfront – shops, cafes, restaurants, leisure activities
Other			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put a jetty on waterfront

- Mainly, this area needs to be improved through tidying up, more businesses and improved access.
- This was not the highest of important to any group.

**Whole community/Meeting the needs of different groups/
Future proofing Grays**

Priorities	Business (15 comments)	Students (15 comments)	Community (50 comments)
Things to improve/increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the environment – somewhere to be proud of • More jobs • More facilities for more groups • More special events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the environment • Improve security • More family orientated places • Youth clubs • More affordability – transport, housing, leisure, shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole system approach – tackling all areas • More affordability – businesses, housing • Improve the environment • More leisure facilities • Improve access to the town, supported with marketing, to get people in
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the opening of the college in 2014 • Look at other towns – take best practice • Maximise on every opportunity • Seek views of all – market holders etc to find best way forward • Re-launch Grays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage community support to the town centre • Recognise different faiths and religions • Build a football stadium • Take views of those who live here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and react to the views of the community • Identify the priorities • Encourage all groups of people to get involved • Get the ingredients of the town right • Community forum to take this forward

- All agreed it is a whole system approach – if the environment, security, leisure industry and shops are all improved this will make the most difference and make Grays a place to be proud of.
- Improving things = more jobs, more people, more visitors, more money spent in the town
- Changes needs to be affordable to ensure they have longevity
- When things are better they need to be promoted!

Discussion 2

1. What role(s) should Grays have in the future?

What does this look like, sound like, feel like?

2. On what scale should it be?

Are there community groups/volunteers that can assist with moving this forward? Are they readily available and willing?

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Accessibility

Priorities	Business (4 comments)	Students (3 comments)	Community (14 comments)
Parking			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrianise parking areas on a Sunday and use for cultural events • More free parking
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review planning permission process 		
Railway			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better and cheaper
Road network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve this! • Better signage 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider removing one-way system to be safer
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the first impression however you come into Grays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create designated smoking areas • Bike hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visually open up Grays to encourage movement • Have a walk-through to take people through the town

- Cost and accessibility to parking needs to be addressed.
- The road network needs reviewing.
- More trains.
- Create natural walk-through's to encourage movement through the town

Appearance/Environment/Welcoming

Priorities	Business (30comments)	Students (18 comments)	Community (80 comments)
Things to get rid of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get rid of the derelict buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drugs 	
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make people proud and responsible Have a positive image A place to come and have fun – more shows, better facilities, cafe culture It should be a place where you feel safe 24/7 Facilities should be affordable and accessible Maximise on what it has – the river Support the opening of the new college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make it cleaner Make it niche – shops Give more options Make the community more positive Make the streets livelier – offer entertainment Become a tourist destination Encourage positive graffiti – remove bad graffiti Keep it decorated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make Grays more appealing to visit Make it safer Become a ‘greener’ place – raised flower beds, parks Become a heritage centre- use the history to promote and shape the town Take a zero tolerance approach to anti social behaviour Promote the fishing port Maximise the market – become a market town Maximise the river space

- Being recognised as a town which is built on its history and take advantage of this
- Take a zero tolerance approach to anti social behaviour
- Maximise on key areas – market, river, the new college
- New facilities to make the town better and support its future

Safety/Security

Priorities	Business (9 comments)	Students (2 comments)	Community (17 comments)
Things to get rid of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large groups/yobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have clear signage Create areas where large groups cannot congregate – be more open Open up communication between police and transport police Create a culture of responsibility Better security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have more police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have a safer feel Improve the environment Zero tolerance to anti social behaviour Have a permanent police presence – enforce street laws Make the centre open so it is safer and more comfortable – people will spend longer there

- Grays should feel safer, supported by a higher level of policing and more open areas to discourage anti social behaviour
- Improving the environment will improve the safety feel
- Encourage responsibility throughout the community

Business support/processes and systems/funding

Priorities	Business (9 comments)	Students (4 comments)	Community (16 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the market work to support market town – uniformity of pitches, charging. Have a market manager • Make market test bed for new businesses • Recognise not the same as Lakeside – find uniqueness to resolve this • Support the new college • Business rates should be negotiable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer child care centres to enable people to work • Build a hotel • More opportunities for more jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use empty shops – offer to pop ups, the community • Encourage involvement – ask for it, be consultative • Consult more on planning requests • Make a tourist office • Different community groups to take small steps • Link into neighbouring towns • Work with college to create courses to fill gaps in markets • High street wifi • More jobs – part time too • Look at how to retain businesses as well as attract new ones

- The market has a strong role to play – for potential new businesses, and should be properly managed and controlled.
- Things to support business should be developed – i.e. child care facilities, a hotel.
- The new college could tailor its offerings to fill gaps in the town – create new vocations
- More consultation between the community and council would improve the understanding, feeling of inclusion, ability to voice views.
- Develop a tourist office
- Being seen as technologically enabling – free high street wifi

Communication/Marketing/Promotion

Priorities	Business (7 comments)	Students (1 comments)	Community (18 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage self promotion of businesses through mapping notice boards A younger generation Keeping advertising local Have a (film) festival and promote it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be supportive of new business - have stalls for people to showcase work and bring in friends and family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and be transparent – on everything! Information points around the town Build on history and promote it Find ways to advertise to the 2.8m commuter journeys Take a consistent approach More communication between the council and community

- Grays need to find ways to promote the town once it has put the changes/improvements in place.
- Using the town's history to promote the town and build its image
- Grays should be supportive of new businesses and provide cheap/free opportunities for them to promote their goods/services during start up

Food/Drink/Cafe Culture

Priorities	Business (7 comments)	Students (12 comments)	Community (17 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating partnerships between food venues and other venues i.e. discounts between theatre and restaurant Create a cafe culture Have a multi-cultural feel Attract new businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have more choice and availability Widen the range of cafe's, food venues, and types of food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have venues where children can be seen from Location is key Different venues for different groups of people Create a cafe culture Create venues that match the history i.e. fish restaurant in the port/riverfront

- Choice, accessibility and location were all important
- More places to eat and drink for all groups of people

Shops/Market

Priorities	Business (9 comments)	Students (18 comments)	Community (16 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less cheap shops • Quirky markets • Quality stores but affordable • Use the market to support new business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More choice of shops – and high end • More market stalls • Create a ‘curiosity’ appeal • Less cheap shops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different markets – cultural, farmers, more days • Link the markets and the shops – better location • Improve the shop choice – more types and niche shops, more to offer • Offer pop up opportunities and support start ups • Promote unique shops/markets

- All groups wanted to see a better choice of shops and more of them to support the town as a shopping venue
- All groups suggested specialist markets, improving the market choice and to support new business

Entertainment/Leisure/Events/Nightlife

Priorities	Business (6 comments)	Students (23 comments)	Community (24 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer regular and seasonal activities • Appeal to different groups – families, young people • Build the night time economy • Revamp the town through introduction of new leisure and entertainment facilities • Link arts/culture to local college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop entertainment centres • More options for students – cinema, leisure centre, bowling, clubbing • Nightclubs for over and under 18’s • Carnivals and parades, festivals and events • Consider a theme park • More youth led events at the theatre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use heritage to develop leisure facilities • Promote the museum • Use festivals/arts/music to bring night life alive • Raise profile of Grays • Hold events for Saint’s days – use the park • Find unique things to make Grays different – i.e. sea shanty’s • Be affordable • Revamp the town, sort empty buildings, Pedestrianise areas • Increase leisure/entertainment available

- Develop more choice and options for leisure and entertainment to appeal to all different groups and ages
- Make Grays different – offer something unique to draw in tourists/visitors
- Look at carnivals/festivals – seasonal activities that people know will take place and will encourage them to diarise and visit
- Revamp the town, improve the image and accessibility
- Use the heritage in developing leisure and entertainment

Beach/Riverfront

Priorities	Business (1 comments)	Students (2 comments)	Community (9 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make more of the river 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the beach more accessible Make the beach family-friendly with better facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the riverfront appeal – encourage businesses, people, entertainment, shops Incorporate into the heritage Make the riverfront prominent in the town

- The riverfront could be used to much better effect, with new businesses and facilities to attract people and keep them there.
- This area could also be brought into the focus on heritage and used to promote the town

Whole community/Meeting the needs of different groups/Future proofing Grays

Priorities	Business (18 comments)	Students (26 comments)	Community (35 comments)
Things to improve/increase for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a community to be proud of Create a new mind set Use the market as business growth strategy Better facilities to attract all types of people The college – support for young and old Be mindful of too much change – don't put off current residents Link all sections together – business with college with shops with leisure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide jobs Tourism – offer different – remember the tourist bus with speakers? Bring in the whole community Reach out to all groups Maximise the market Education centres Social centres Zero tolerance to anti social behaviour Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary community Community engagement Better communication between the council and community Consider location of market, shops, facilities More choices but still affordable Develop uniqueness Facilitate an action orientated environment Link the college and training to commercial opportunities Job opportunities Make sure something for everyone – be diverse

- All agreed it is a whole system, cohesive approach
- Create a community to be proud of
- Engage everyone – involvement and opportunities are key
- Be unique and use this to promote and develop Grays



Discussion 3

1. What are the next steps for making your ideas discussed today, a reality?
2. Over the next 3 months
3. Over the next year
4. Over the next 5 years

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Accessibility

Priorities	Business (2 comments)	Students (0 comments)	Community (18 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower planning barriers = swifter planning • What's happening to the bridge over the lever crossing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with car parking charges immediately • Parking – free in part or all • Look at reasonable road plan – better traffic management • Extend shop opening times
Long term			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer bike hire • Improve train and road networks • Enclose main thoroughfare so you don't get wet • Improve junction 30/31 and town centre 1-way system

- Access to the town is critical in supporting the other work taking place. The pricing of fares, options for free or cheaper transport, plus the availability of public transport are important and should be reviewed urgently. Parking is also urgently needing to be reviewed
- Longer term the road network needs reviewing, particularly the 1-way system

Appearance/Environment/Welcoming

Priorities	Business (9 comments)	Students (3 comments)	Community (53 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in mobile stages, encourage local groups to perform outside New Christmas lights or don't put them up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase law enforcement Clear up the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make things more aesthetically pleasing – phone box to look like a cassette Remove alcoholics Get rid of drugs – zero tolerance Introduce bright colours Flower beds Tidy up shop fronts Paint over graffiti Town spring clean – litter pick Hold a tea in park/picnic
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the State cinema Sort Grays beach and park Market function and location and types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the market Get a new appearance Build a stadium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve lighting Better balance of shops Run advice days to bring people in Clean up streets Community activities Try to rid pigeons – birds of prey? Develop standards for shop fronts/town decor Complete other improvements to generally improve the environment and make it more welcoming

- Reducing antisocial behaviour and opening up the town, with bright colours, flower beds and no graffiti can be quickly implemented.
- Holding a community clean up/litter pick will support community development too.
- Longer term, the disused buildings need to be revamped or redeveloped.
- Standards for shop fronts plus good decor are regularly suggested to improve the environment.

Safety/Security

Priorities	Business (3 comments)	Students (1 comments)	Community (14 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police to liaise with BTP • Police to communicate more, support positive messaging, use social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase law enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero tolerance to anti social behaviour • Improve areas where loitering – outside job centre • Ban alcohol in streets • Police nightlife • Divert money from police helicopter to street patrols
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkabouts to include PCSO's meeting businesses to overcome perception of crime 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in housing growth • Police station more prominent • Improve access to make areas safer • Improve lighting

- Businesses felt the police could do more to manage perceptions and improve visibility, which was supported by the community. It was also agreed that more police patrols would help improve the environment and appearance issues.

Business support/processes and systems

Priorities	Business (15 comments)	Students (0 comments)	Community (25 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects to local businesses • Enable local businesses to showcase themselves • Ensure right people involved in moving forward • Develop a coordinated picture 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue this process • Offer a graduate scheme • Incentives to build quicker or reduce rent/rates • New toilets in mall • Pilot ideas – community shop in town • Review ongoing projects “big local” – are they achieving? • Utilise social media • Create unemployment workshops to access volunteers. Use engage volunteer network • Create a ‘Grays is great’ community group to monitor progress
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town plan to cover all assets and incorporate into Grays vision • Events calendar on how Grays is developing • Big local steering group – mix of sectors • Action plan for Big lottery • Training to get people back to work – lever funding such as Prince’s Trust • Make a true reflection of how business/community see it 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up tourist information • Run advice days • Student work experience in local shops? • Daily update on ‘Grays is Great’ • Encourage local successful businesses to support community development • Apprenticeships/trade training centre • We need trades • Industry at riverside

- The Council could do a lot more to support businesses, supported by community champions to take forward the work of council to improve Grays.
- Grays is Great campaign – short and long term actions to take this forward
- Developing businesses such as trades and training centres to fill the gaps
- Events calendar – help to share what is happening and build involvement

Communication/Marketing/Promotion

Priorities	Business (5 comments)	Students (1 comments)	Community (27 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable local businesses to showcase themselves • Develop a communication plan for public so they know what's happening • Get local people to prioritise issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise cultural things in more places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite communities to take action • Create an app to promote and update on Grays • Get community involved to create ideas • Decide on projects and canvas opinions • Stall in town centre with 'community face' • Pin board in shops to identify new ideas • 'Grays is Great' group to share progress • Regular feedback – mail shots, leaflets • Identify local community champions
Long term			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up tourist information or shop to highlight achievements • Special information days – tax advice, citizen's advice. • Show history, and involve eastern Europeans

- Both businesses and community to promote and advertise – get everyone involved.
- Use the Grays is Great campaign as lever for this
- Identify key projects to be taken forward and promote them

Finance/Funding

Priorities	Business (3 comments)	Students (0 comments)	Community (2 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined up paying between businesses to reduce costs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get councillors involved to approve plans Divert money from police helicopter to police patrols
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use big lottery money for arts/events in town and training 		

- Not seen as a priority as unlikely to be achievable in current economic climate.

Food/Drink/Cafe Culture

Priorities	Business (0 comments)	Students (2 comments)	Community (7 comments)
Short term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beach cafe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a tea in park/picnic
Long term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More restaurants e.g. McDonalds, Nandos, Pizza Hut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify spaces for picnics Hold food festivals Ice cream vans at park, new play area

- Longer term this area needs work but in the short term holding community picnics or similar would support many areas of change. With the summer approaching a beach cafe would be worthwhile.
- Long term new food outlets need to be attracted and located in key positions, to support choice, nightlife, leisure and environment.

Shops/Market

Priorities	Business (4 comments)	Students (7 comments)	Community (9 comments)
Short term			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend shop opening times Create a market/entertainment schedule of events
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link market and shops to support each other – business will benefit from the market Improve market function and location More market types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the market Redevelop empty shops More shops – toy shops, sweet shops, tattoo and piercing shops, music shops More shops = more jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better balance of shops More independent stores Identify shops which can provide workshops Remain affordable Update decor of town Develop standards for shop fronts

- Long term priorities – utilise the shops and market to support business development and improve the environment.
- A wider choice of shops is needed so this needs to be attracted in.

Entertainment/Leisure/Events/Nightlife

Priorities	Business (7 comments)	Students (3 comments)	Community (16 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community fund raising for events Flash events in town/park Mobile stage for group performances Run some affordable events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More entertainment for young people/ more concerts etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street artists Tea in park/picnic Busking Schedule of events for market/entertainment Stage free events – approach charities, farmers market, pop ups, roller blade event, choir band
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelop the State cinema Use lottery money to fund arts/events Events calendar for Grays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build more facilities – stadium, skating rinks, swimming pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sort out State cinema Town centre festivals e.g. feast and fayre Community activities Festivals to coincide with students arriving Play areas for kids Bike hire Small market stalls on church path

- Keep affordable and free where possible. Encourage all groups to participate in quick events.

Beach/Riverfront

Priorities	Business (1 comments)	Students (2 comments)	Community (5 comments)
Short term		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cafe at the beach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolve any parking issues
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve beach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinvent the beach area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry at riverfront Take sporting groups down to the riverside Bars/cafes at the beach Cycle track to the beach

- In the short term, parking and a cafe would help attract people, plus tidy it up. Longer term more businesses are needed there and improved access.

Whole community/Meeting the needs of different groups/Future proofing Grays

Priorities	Business (8 comments)	Students (4 comments)	Community (56 comments)
Short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community involvement in developing events calendar for Grays for the year Grays got talent? Community fund raising Get local people/students to prioritise issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need more for younger generations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thameside – run things for children to encourage parents in Sort infrastructure Involve Thomas Baker Forum Whole community involvement Stage free events Work with different groups – schools, probation service, churches – to make improvements Utilise social media Identify community champions
Long term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link college into council events All points raised in other sections to be carried through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build more facilities i.e. stadium, skating rinks, swimming pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better balance of shops Improve accessibility Improve security Encourage small businesses/traders associations Improve environment

- All agreed it is a whole system approach – if the environment, security, leisure industry and shops are all improved this will make the most difference and make Grays a place to be proud of. Get the whole community involved.
- Improving things = more jobs, more people, more visitors, more money spent in the town
- Changes needs to be affordable to ensure they have longevity
- When things are better they need to be promoted!



Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary of the Business Workshop:

Key Stakeholder (Town Partnership) Workshop 1

The first workshop was attended by 35 key stakeholders and made up of members of the Town Partnership group, consisting of many businesses, community representatives, other forums and community groups in and around Grays.

The general feeling was that they had been asked all of this before so what was different now?

It was apparent that individuals are willing to take ownership and responsibility for some of the issues, but felt that their efforts were not always taken seriously.

There seemed to be a blame culture within the group and the Council being held responsible for everything! Some strong characters challenged those views and suggested that it was in the interest of everyone that individuals took ownership for the improvements and by working in partnership they could help make their vision into reality.

Messages from the workshop:

- No clear process or procedure for feeding back information to those people in authority and vice versa.
- A central point of contact required to co-ordinate the efforts of all concerned, this would help with communication and feedback on all levels.
- More business support was required and not surprisingly for the Council to review business rates.



- Grays should not be in competition with Lakeside shopping centre!



Current Town Centre



A Vision?

- More should be made of the frontage of the existing shops to identify with Grays heritage. Introducing colour would be a distinct advantage and give the town centre a much needed face lift.
- Rail and transport links were good but the station needed urgently revamping, this is the first impression of Grays that most visitors get, it does not reflect a good image.
- Accessibility to the town centre is problematic, the one way system a definite barrier, the cost and lack of parking spaces was also discussed at length.
- The 'pound' shops and betting shops on the High Street should be regulated, as they are not good for the overall vision of the town. There is a lack of choice and variety of retail, specialist shops will encourage shoppers to come to Grays. With an influx of students in 2014 book shops, stationary and types of retail that respond to the needs of students should be actively sought.
- More police presence would send out a clear message and move on large groups of drinkers. (Some businesses have collaborated and set up a security network). It is not enough just to erect signage for zero tolerance - it must be enforced.
- The drinkers on the street have a massive impact to the town centre, they are intimidating and a deterrent for people to want to linger and stay in the town.
- Pressure should be put on the owners of The State Cinema to either re-instate to a cinema or alternatively an entertainment venue, with 2000 students arriving in 2014.
- Many areas within the town centre are derelict and this does not help with the overall perception of the town.

- A cafe culture would be good for Grays -



Outside areas must be monitored so that gangs do not congregate and intimidate other potential customers.

- The Market is important as it helps to generate income for all retail.
- Better utilisation of the market - a good incubator environment to encourage small start-up businesses.
- Introduce a variety of different markets on a regular basis

Businesses were very passionate about Grays and want to see it prosper again, but felt that the community spirit had disappeared. They felt there was a need to try to encourage pride in Grays and to look at incentives for people to take pride in the area.

Short term goals;

- to smarten up the town
- introduce some colour
- increase variety and move the market
- encourage start-up businesses
- enforce the no-alcohol areas in the town
- move or disperse gangs to help to increase footfall
- later opening times for retail
- good quality restaurants that stay open later.





Summary of Community Workshops:

A series of four deliberative workshops with community members. Including data taken from two additional community events.

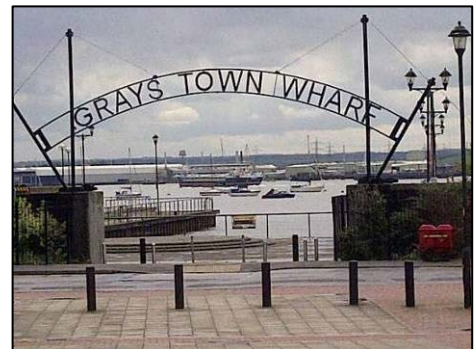
The four deliberative workshops were attended by approximately 45 stakeholders and made up of members of the community of Grays.

Many of the themes identified in the workshops, between the businesses, the community and the students were similar, most residents of Grays are very passionate about the area in which they live and there is a real wish to help in regenerating Gray's town centre to become a positive destination town.

It was felt that some of Gray's heritage had been lost and that areas of interest were not known.

Messages from the workshop:

- A lot of community groups are working in silos and it was realised that if their efforts were combined more could be achieved.
- People shop outside of Grays because of lack of choice.
- Grays feels like a ghost town at night with no reason to stay.
- Restaurants that reflect the diversity of the town would be welcomed by residents and it would encourage more people into the town centre at night.
- Facilities should be joined up between the beach and town centre.
- Grays needs an identity – An old fishing village as it used to be in the past.
- Improve the waterfront and exploit the beach to encourage more people to use it.



- There is a lack of facilities for young children with nowhere for parents with young children to gather socially.
- A family pub would help community cohesion, relationships and restore community spirit.
- The town centre offer must identify the needs of the community and take account of the diverse nature of the area.
- Housing must be affordable for local people to remain near families.
- The increase in students from 2014 is positive.
- Grays must be prepared to meet student's needs, including leisure facilities.
- Offer opportunities for work experience for young people.
- Provide opportunities for young entrepreneurs, and start up businesses to keep the local economy buoyant.
- More variety and frequency of markets, like farmers, continental etc would encourage people into Grays.



Residents were prepared to actively assist in making their vision a reality and had prepared lengthy detail of what that might look like. See Appendix 8.



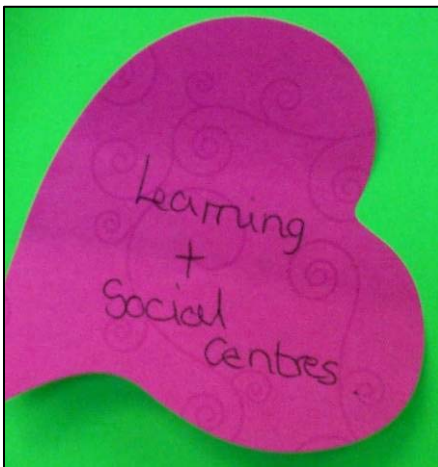
Summary of Student Graffiti Wall:

Including data taken from three additional student events.

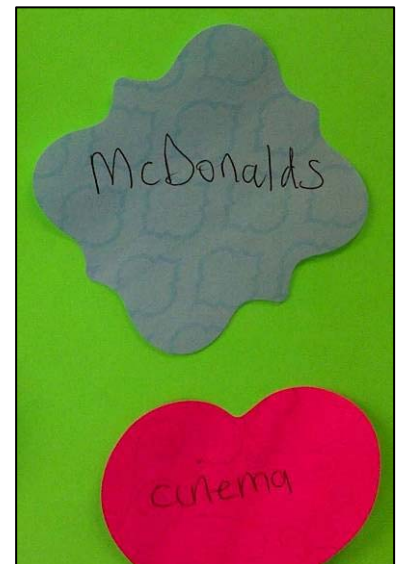
Whilst there were no deliberative workshops with the students, they engaged through two sessions at the college via Graffiti Walls - **Thurrock Campus** and **Thurrock Learning Campus** on the **10th** and **17th** May 2013.

Data was also collected

A graffiti wall was erected at the College on two occasions and students were invited to come and talk about their vision for Grays, and to stick post it notes on the wall of those things that they felt could be; improved, what sort of things they would like to see in Grays and how long some of those things might take.



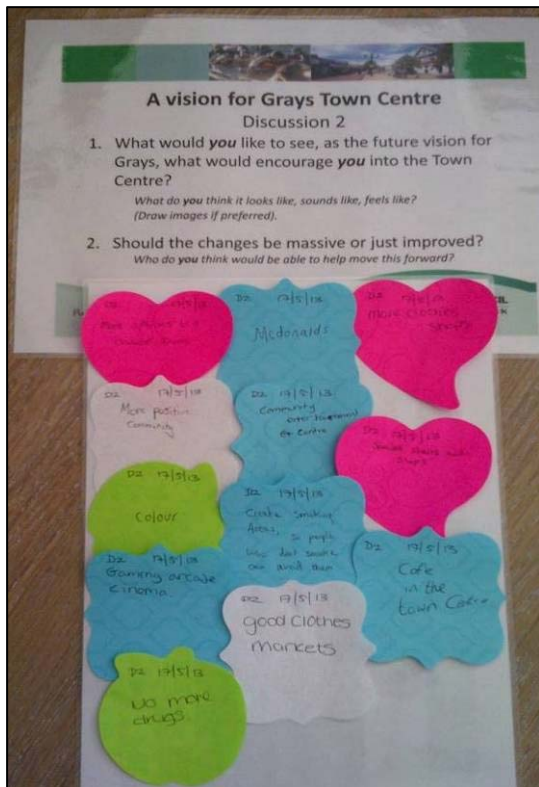
Student suggestions



Students pondering over the Graffiti Wall



Students pondering over the Graffiti Wall



Graffiti Wall



Graffiti Wall

Students highlighted similar issues to the businesses and community, having concerns about, the environment, meeting the needs of different groups, provision for the community, there is a lack of pride in the area, their safety but the main comment was the lack of facilities for young people in Grays.

Messages from the workshop:

- A welcoming environment without feeling intimidated by groups of people drinking on the streets.
- More facilities at the beach and the waterfront with rubbish cleared and rodent deterrents.
- More leisure facilities as Lakeside to expensive.
- More places to socialise that are affordable.
- A variety of shops, affordable and of relevance to their courses.
- Books, stationary memory sticks etc. for computer use not readily available in Grays.
- A cafe culture in Grays with outside seating was something that came up regularly; however there was a feeling that if not managed would very soon turn into an intimidating environment, with groups of people “hanging about”.

Discussions for the Graffiti Wall

A vision for Grays Town Centre
Discussion 1

1. What would **you** do to improve people's experience of Grays?
2. What could **you** do to strengthen community spirit in Grays?
3. Local Businesses need help to survive what can you do to help them?
3. What can the Council do to help with your ideas?

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Putting residents first

Handwritten suggestions on sticky notes include:

- SAFER
- MORE PRESERVE OF THURROCK HISTORY
- Get rid of VERMIN by river
- more seating area at grays beach
- need community support in the town centre
- Booker shop on 20/3/13
- Parking (affordable)
- More Police Patrol to road reckless residence under control
- SLEAFORD TOWN CENTRE
- more clean more funerals

A vision for Grays Town Centre
Discussion 2

1. What would **you** like to see, as the future vision for Grays, what would encourage **you** into the Town Centre?
What do you think it looks like, sounds like, feels like? (Draw images if preferred).
2. Should the changes be massive or just improved?
Who do you think would be able to help move this forward?

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Handwritten suggestions on sticky notes include:

- CLUBBING
- Pictures
- McDonalds
- PIZZA HUT
- Leisure centre
- Cinema
- WH SMITHS (Books)
- Restaurant
- Vintage clothes
- more clean more funerals
- more variety of shops cars

A vision for Grays Town Centre
Discussion 3

What do **you** think are the next steps for making your ideas into a reality?

1. Short term
2. Mid term
3. Long term

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Handwritten suggestions on sticky notes include:

- Stadium Long term
- Cafe at beach Short term
- Short term
- 17/5/13

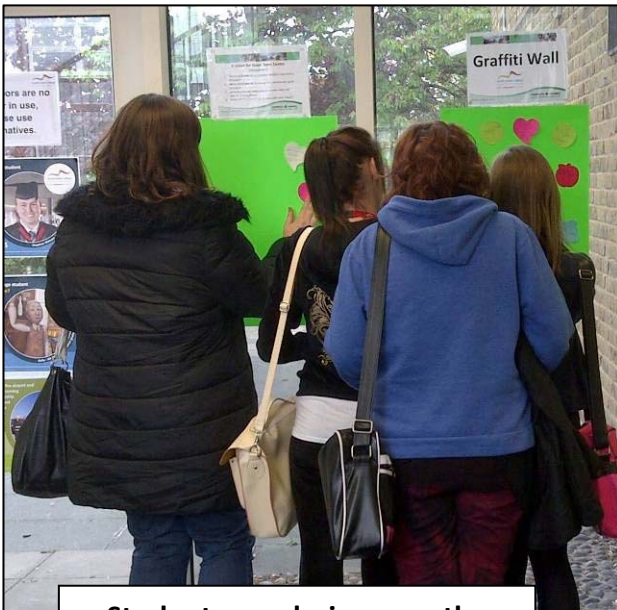


Make more of the Beach

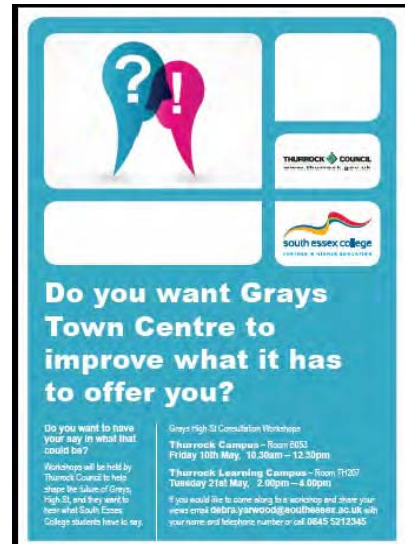


Bowling as part of the vision

- Students still want some high end shops to purchase clothes etc. it is not “cool” to shop in the budget and pound shops.
- More large brands fast food outlets needed.
- Students want to be included in decisions about facilities for young people.



Students pondering over the Graffiti Wall




Posters for the workshops



Incentives for Students for participating in the Graffiti Wall

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Discussion Points




Discussion 1

1. What can you do to get involved and help your community to thrive, increase trade for businesses and improve people's experience of Grays?
2. Realistically what are the possibilities?
3. What can the Council do to support you to do this?

Putting residents first

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Discussion 2

1. What role(s) should Grays have in the future?
What does this look like, sound like, feel like?
2. On what scale should it be?
Are there community groups/volunteers that can assist with moving this forward? Are they readily available and willing?

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Discussion 3

1. What are the next steps for making your ideas discussed today, a reality?
2. Over the next 3 months
3. Over the next year
4. Over the next 5 years

Putting residents first

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Appendix 2 – Leaflet used for the workshop



**Your Views and Vision
for the Future of
Grays Town Centre**
Workshops May 2013

What is today about?

This is one in a series of workshops. Output from this will feed into the consultation and form the basis of a regeneration action-plan to develop the future role around the town centre.

We will not discuss specific detailed issues

What happens today?

- We will give you information in bite sized chunks
- We will follow this with discussion groups
- We will listen, capture your ideas and feedback to the Council

Who are we?

- Independent from the Council
- Taking your insight and feeding it back
- We're here to help



amanda murrell associates

Presented by Amanda Murrell

Director, Amanda Murrell Associates Ltd

Appendix 3 – Seabrooke Rise Youth Club Workshop

15th June 2012

Youth club

June 2012

Seabrooke Rise Youth Club met usual on Friday 15th during this session we had a discussion on your "Do you want a say on the state of Grays town centre"

We divided the discussion into two groups.

Group 1

It was put to the youths that money was no object so what did they want to see happen to the town centre, this is what they said;

- Bring back the cinema
- A music studio open for all
- Ice rink
- Leisure centre with, laser tag, bowling, ice skating, quasar to include access for disabled
- Scooter park
- McDonalds
- Family activities
- Family restaurants (not fast food chains)
- Street entertainment
- Street festivals
- Fountain
- Covered smoking shelters

Group 2

It was put to the youths that there was no money for improvements so what did they want to see happen to the town centre, this is what they said;

- Better clothes shops, including Primark, Punky fish, J.D, Mad House, Prom dress shop, Boys Base, Hot topic
- Music store

- Art and dance suppliers
- A better market
- Nando's
- Indoor play centre
- Child care centre
- Educational centre's for children
- Internet café (they don't like café 4 u)
- Mobile phone shops
- Football shop
- Waterstones
- Gift shops

They felt we had too many £1 shops, nail bars and the markets sold mainly clothes for the older person.

I felt they wanted a mini Lakeside here on their doorstep!

Appendix 4 – Grays Media and Arts School Workshop

17th April 2013

Group 1

Question: What do you enjoy about the town centre now, why do you use the town centre?

Prompts: Most students said Grays was the main town centre they use, why do you think this is?

What's good about the town centre for your age group?

What would improve the town centre for your age group?

Discussion Session:

Enjoy: Transport
Beauty shop
Restaurants/takeaway
Food
Shopping
Barbers/hairdressers

Use of Grays: Food Shopping
Transport
Clothes shopping
Barbers/hairdressers
Meeting friends
Live in the area

Improvements: Leisure Centres – Gyms, Spa!!
Classy restaurants
Hygiene / Cleaner toilets
McDonalds / Pizza Hut / Nandos
Religious people – Mosques / churches / synagogues
Entertainment – Cinema / roller skating / bowling / arcades
Appearance / modernise
Too many pawn shops, hairdressers and cafés
Shops - Baby care / more clothes shops / modern shops / JD Sports / sweet shops / more supermarkets / apple shop / technology shops / tattoo shops / piercing shops / arcades
Park / basketball court / football pitches / beach / Skate Park
More events / festivals / carnivals / halls for parties
Road – one way system / car park (building)
More teenage friendly areas
Houses
More class!

Feedback to the group:

It is good for food shopping. There are different cultural shops that sell food such as Indian or African. These sorts of cultural shops are great at drawing people in to Grays that specifically want to visit these shops.

The group use Grays for transport to get to other places such as Lakeside, Bluewater or Westfield. They also use the town as a place to meet friends.

The group like using the beauty shops, hairdressers and takeaways.

If more people come into Grays that could mean more jobs for people. The group felt that Grays should generate more jobs; local people want to work in Grays as it means less travelling.

The one way system causes a lot of traffic, particularly in the summer when people try to come into Grays to buy food for BBQ's etc.

The hygiene of the centre needs to be improved as it looks dirty.

Group 2

Question: What role or roles should the town centre have, what do you think the town centre should provide?

Prompts: 79% of students wanted more activities for young people, 81% wanted better facilities and 95% wanted a wider range of shops. What do you think all of these should be?

Imagine you are standing in the new town centre, what would this look like, feel like and sound like?

Thinking about the fact that Lakeside, with all its facilities, is going to expand, does this change your opinion on what you would like in Grays town centre?

Discussion session:

Shops: JD Sports / Sports Shops / Primark / Marks & Spencer / Harrods / better
Shoe shops / more bakeries / sweet shops / coffee shops (Starbucks) / Build a Bear / McDonalds
/ Pet shops
Restaurants
Better shops all together / more range of shops / more mainstream shops / variety of shops /
more super stores
Arcades / Football stadium / Football goals / Ice rink / Roller rinks / Cinema
More: activities in Grays Park / use of the precinct / vending machines / toilets
Real things (market)
No Brighthouse
Take away 99p stores!
More police / Better security
More facilities for older and disabled people
Better cleaning scheme / More bins
Tattoo John
Churches

Feedback to the group:

There needs to be more different shops, another superstore. Something more classy, Morrison's is not the best. If we had a shop like M&S it would change Grays as a whole. We only need a few shops to set the standard.

There is no department store in Grays. Lakeside is different to Grays as people go there to specifically to shop and buy something. Grays Town centre is somewhere to go out of necessity.

If we had a shop such as JD Sports people would come to Grays to use it and would then see what else there is in the town.

People want to go to somewhere more local but we need something to draw them in.

We would like arcades and a small community area. More multi-use entertainment, more things in the centre. Not adult only.

Group 3

Question: Imagine yourself in 10 years time, what would you expect the town to be like and what would you expect the town to be like and what would you expect the town centre to provide?

Prompts: What role, or roles would you like the town centre to have, what services and facilities would you want there to be?

Imagine you are standing in the middle of the town centre, what would you want it to look like, feel like and sound like?

Thinking about the fact that Lakeside, with all its facilities, is going to expand, does this change your opinion on what you would like in Grays town centre?

Discussion session:

Rebuild WH Smiths into art and craft shops

Ice skating / better skate park / bowling alley / gym and swimming pool / arcades! / crèche

More entertainment for young people / more concert things

Get a new appearance / new modern look / bigger (expand) / appearance of Grays

Clear up the centre

Less estate agents / too many travel agents, rundown hairdressers, opticians

Get rid of the amount of pound shops / have shops that aren't expensive

Better music shops (like HMV) / get shops that sell band stuff

Have more restaurants e.g. McDonalds / Pizza Hut / Nandos

Toy shops for kids / sweet shops / tattoo shops / piercing shops (please I beg you!)

Reinvent Grays beach

Building more shops will make more opportunities for people to get a job!

Advertise the cultural places more / more cultural things

More popular shops

Need more for younger generations

Feedback to the group:

Improve the shop standards – have more variety.

There is nothing to attract our generation such as ice rink, swimming pool, HMV, Game.

More things for children such as an Easter egg hunt, trolley carts.

Skate parks and better restaurants. Subway is good.

There are lots of cultures living in Grays we need to attract them in to the town such as a church or other cultural place.

Need to change the appearance of the beach and the town centre. We would like to be able to actually sit on the beach like at Southend.

There needs to be more family things to do.

There needs to be more jobs available in Grays as people like to work locally.

Appendix 5 – Thurrock Youth Cabinet Workshop

24th April 2013

Question 1: What's good for young people about the town centre, why do you use the town centre?

Prompt 1: A higher proportion of the under 16 age group (80%) said Grays is the main town centre they use, why do you think this is?

Prompt 2: What's good about the town centre for young people?

Prompt 3: What would improve the town centre for young people?

What's good?

1. Pound Land
2. Subway for food
3. Food choices
4. Thameside-shows and library
5. Buses and trains
6. Easy to get to

Improvements

1. More benches/places to sit
2. Somewhere to hang out-outdoors, away from adults
3. More trees
4. Stop digging up pavements
5. Better street lighting
6. Better shops-shop fronts. Signs poor, uniform/ better design
7. Better food outlets like Subway
8. Remove car park-it looks horrible and no one uses it.
9. Better modern shops, not the ones in Lakeside
10. Football club

Question2: What role or roles should the town centre have, what do you think the town centre should provide?

Prompt 1: 70% of under 16 year olds said they would like to see more activities for young people, 81% wanted better facilities, and 95% wanted a wider range of shops. What do you think all these area?

Prompt 2: Imagine you are standing in the town centre what would this look like/feel like/sound like?

Prompt 3: Thinking about the fact that Lakeside, with all its facilities, is going to expand, how does this affect your view?

1. Grays to serve whole Borough, bring in the community
2. Grays should act as a Community Hub
3. More/better places to eat. Food shops suitable for students.
Use the connexions building

4. State cinema: Leisure hub. Coffee shop. Community films, Lakeside is very expensive and hard to get to.
5. Reintroduce the Grays carnival/parade. Make it the centre of a Thurrock carnival taking place in all the towns
6. Do more with T Fest. It used to be much better. Its current site is not big enough. With all the trees you can't walk around easily to meet your mates so it doesn't have the festival atmosphere.
7. Attract tourists: Remember the tourism bus with speakers.
8. Theme park
9. Hotel
10. Quite a few yobs in the town centre. They aren't dangerous but just put you off. Police aren't noticed-more police and make people aware.
11. Remove the bad graffiti on the sea wall. Brighten it up. Allow good graffiti art
12. Place for Graffiti art in the town centre, Grays Park?
13. Solar panels
14. Bike hire
15. Provide jobs
16. Grays Beach has plenty of space that's wasted, should do more with this including family picnic area, graffiti art.
17. Grays Beach is too far from the town, need these facilities in the town, what about Grays Park
18. More youth led events at the theatre
19. Redecorate-make the town cleaner and greener

Appendix 6 – Grays Riverside Big Local Event

29th April 2013

By: Jan Cole and Sara Ward – 14/05/2013

PARTICIPANTS - Total of 39 people

Male	15
Female	24

Ages:		Connection with the area:	
Under 11	1	Live in the area	13
11 – 17	0	Live on the edge of the area	8
18 – 24	0	Don't live, but work in the area	12
25 – 44	16	Neither live nor work here	6
45 – 59	16		
60 – 74	4		
Over 74	2		

SUMMARY OF TOP PRIORITIES

- 17 Activities / support for teenagers and young people
- 13 The State Cinema
- 10 Support for eastern European community
- 8 Integration between communities / neighbourhoods
- 7 Increased pride in the area
- 7 Increase employability and skills
- 6 Link businesses to the community
- 5 Make more of the riverfront (plus 5 Grays Beach Park votes)

NOTE: It is important to remember that these are the priorities of those present at the Event. Views and opinions of residents across the area will be gathered over the next few months. The information from the event may help to determine the types of surveys that need to be undertaken.

ALL COMMENTS

The number in brackets after the comments indicate the number of votes

HOUSING AND HEALTH

Problems

- Private lets - house not maintained (1)
- Thurrock Council and people working for them - fed up of the way they treat you in relation to housing (2).
- Poor housing stock in places.
- High rise flats
- Why do we need all the GP Surgeries
- Lack of Hospital (2)
- Increasing Obesity
- Too many fast food & take aways (3)
- Lack of health education

Improvements

Health Education

Funding for health and wellbeing classes for older people and vulnerable people (2)

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Special

Feels safe walking through

Happy with police presence

Peaceful

Low crime rate -PCSO interaction with community

Problems

Fear of crime

Feels vulnerable

Youth on street corners

Fear of anti-social behaviour (1)

Racial Harassment and hate crime

Safety (1)

Lighting (1)

Town centre is dangerous

Pavements

Dark & Grim (1)

Town centre does not feel safe after 5pm (1)

Drinking & drugs taking in green spaces

Unhappy to hear of recent killings makes me question safety of town

Improvements

Better Street lighting at night

Safe place to park late (1)

Increase residents pride - get people involved (7)

Reclaim the streets

Better security

Safe place for at risk groups

Listen to people (1)

More police interaction visible (1)

Tailored support for immigrants and large groups

A place to go for kids that is safe (4)

Offenders of light crime to clean the waste on beach and elsewhere (2)

Public education on hate crime & living together, e.g. events, debates, youth education.

LOCAL ECONOMY (Town centre, Employment, Education and Training)

Special

New College / new campus

Town centre Project

Magistrates Court conversion

Lots of Shops

Shopping Centre

A variety of Shops

Access to services

Employment opportunities

Problems

Overcrowded school

Grays Town centre dying

No money to go to town centre. Up to Business

No Parking facilities

Parking and the cost of parking

Where are the representatives of Grays Town centre Regeneration Project.

Lack of unawareness of town centre regeneration.

M25 chaos affects local business

One way system is dire!!!!

Town centre is grim

Lack of permanent home for the Post Office (1)

Lakeside affects Grays

Disused buildings e.g. Dominoes (1)

Needs new stalls for gifts at beach

Feels like there is no entrepreneurship in the town - i.e. Boring old shops no new businesses (1)

Local people does use Grays Town centre

Lack of variety of shops

Alcohol in Town centre

The High Street looks boring - why not Have it sectioned into 2 - 1 area for bars & café, and another area for coffee shops

Improvements

Bring in a retail identity to complement Lakeside (2)

Incentives to get better shops in town centre

Establish a night time economy (5)

Town centre identity

Change one way system

More facilities for families - things to do (2)

Develop tourism (2)

The State Theatre put into use (1)

Increase employability skills (7)

More parking

ENVIRONMENT – Clean and Green

Special

Grays Beach Park (4)

Nice walks - more green space than you think (3)

Riverfront (1)

The river especially on a sunny day (2)

Heritage

Problems

General Maintenance (1)

Dog ownership of dangerous dogs

Quality of Air (3)

Fly tipping

Alleys are dirty rubbish being dumped

Car parking in street

Waste and rubbish on the beach

Car park maintenance

Image of Area

Improvements

Improve access to river/ level crossing (2)

More green space for walking. Too concrete e.g. Grove road utilise the green area there (1)

Low emissions zones and checks

Penalties for dumping etc.

More dog poo bins (2)

Sustaining the facilities that are being put in (2)

General repairs to the local area

Repairs to facilities

Council being responsible for fly tipping

To give the land that constitutes un-owned alleys to each property (currently used for fly-tipping and crime)

The closure of Lowe's scrap metal plant, which is right next to infant and primary schools, next to an old people's home and too close to suburban housing

COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Special

The People

Community house, Seabrooke, Fosters good, community relations

Community itself

Good community relations, "Everybody knows everybody"

Compact, everything available, Shops, School, churches, Civic Offices, pubs, station, bus station.

Strong community (Not all the same but distinct within area)

Access to Council

Good Churches

Opportunities for faith

A diverse number of communities in the area

Diversity and different nationalities living together - Multicultural

Many diverse community groups

Diversity

Grays Beach Park

Good range of ages

Lots of potential

Community House Seabrooke

Voluntary organisations and support centres

Different cultures getting on

Problems

Lack of cohesion

Some lack of integration between communities (6)

People & communities not doing positive things together, not involved

Problem with communication boring old same old news in the newspaper

Isolation

Language barriers

A number of fragmented communities in the big local area

Fed up of the politics - pettiness of where money is spent (1)

Poor communication about what is going on in the area ie. Regeneration plans etc (1)

Lack of community buildings

Not a big enough focal point

Lethargy " Nothing is going to Change"

Improvements

Link business to the community (6)
Co-ordinated group working (1)
More cohesion of people
Community projects
Tailored support for large immigrant groups e.g. for eastern Europeans (10)
Youth clubs (3)
Community spirit
For local authority and statutory partners to do what they say they are going to
St Marys Church Hall upgrade to Community House
Youth Community centre with various projects for different age groups (7)
Creating neighbourhoods (2)
Mothers & toddlers including for different nationalities, e.g. for eastern Europeans.

LEISURE AND RECREATION (Open Space, Sport, Arts)

Special

No nightclubs
Leisure opportunities e.g. Thameside Theatre leisure centre
Grays Beach/ Children's activities
Good History
River / Riverfront
Grays Town Band teaches local youngsters music (1)
We like Riverview
Grays beach
Civic Centre of Thurrock
3 parks

Problems

Leisure facilities (2)
No place for formal sport (1)
Lack of funded fitness opportunities for older people (1)
There seems to be nothing you can do centrally that is both affordable for parents and children.
No nightclubs for the young people
Lack of facilities for the young kids especially teens (4)
Lack of leisure opportunities
Futures of "The State" (5)
Not enough parks, trees and green spaces as such (2)
Seems to be nothing for adults /kids to do
Thurrock laughing club (1)
Lack of funding for local groups (1)

Improvements

Develop youth club and training opportunities
Community Business radio (1)
Develop Grays Riverfront with a landing pier (1)
More social clubs - young & old (1)
Art (3)
Community After School Clubs (4)

Sort out the State Cinema (7)
New seats at Little Thurrock Green
Bowling green at Grays Beach (1)
Outdoor fitness equipment in Elm Open space and Grays Beach
Maybe a cinema in Grays
More Leisure facilities for young people (1)
Support Community House (1)
Grays Town park café (1)
Leisure facilities /facilities for youth
Starting a laughing Club
Support for teenagers (2)
Council to subsidise leisure, access to gyms etc. activities for children & adults (5)

TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC

Special

Good transport
Commuter location
Good train links
C2C trains
Close to London Transport into London
Transport Links
Good transport links

Problems

One way System
Oneway system - forces cars from multi storey into the centre.
Poor parking
Lack of parking in Grays
Parking (2)
Level crossing - splits town in two.
Cost of buses

Improvements

Better parking maybe cheaper
Improved community transport (1)

Jan Cole and Sara Ward – 14/05/2013

Appendix 7 – Seabrooke Rise Residents Association

7th May 2013

The meeting was attended by 5 members of the Association at Community House in Seabrooke Rise, 2 other members of the association joined for part of the session. The meeting was loosely based around;

- 1) Outline of the survey findings
- 2) What does this mean for the future of Grays?
- 3) What links need to be made with local communities?

Notes:

- Many in people living in the area have little money, no car and no computer
- Travel to Lakeside is expensive as are tickets for the cinema, and more so for families.
 - Many people therefore rely on Grays to provide what they need.
- Nothing to do in Grays in the evening, need more to do. Questioned why the Council had not supported Wetherspoons in the Magistrates Court building. Questioned why develop Magistrates Court for business use when so much floorspace in Queensgate Centre is not used.
- Need more evening and weekend jobs for local people
- Need more car parking
- Poor layout of the town centre; Orsett Road, High Street, Queensgate Centre seem separated from each other.
- Need to do something about the The State ("The State is a state"); entertainment, drinks, place for people to meet, community uses. Memories of previous uses. Looks terrible.
- Would be very interested in community pop up uses in vacant units such as unit 21. Know many individuals and local groups that would be interested. Groups that would 'jump at the chance' to use a venue for say a week to promote their group, raise money, and for information sharing and networking
- Pop up events would be popular.
- Don't feel welcome in some shops. Recognition that this was usually unfounded once an individual had made the choice to enter a shop. Need to do more to integrate different cultures. Build on the community spirit built up around the Olympic torch relay.
 - i. Open days in shops e.g. to explain culture, provide demonstrations say of cooking
 - ii. Cultural festival with all cultures from the area represented and involving schools and churches.
 - iii. Street entertainers and demonstrations (skills sharing)-association would happily help

- iv. Food 'is the way forward'-food festivals
- v. All schools have their own glee club-Glee festival, talent shows, street dancers, Nepalese dancers etc
- vi. Re-introduce a Grays Carnival-'massive support', include a food festival and 'slow walking festival' (would have to be slow because of health and safety rules-this was based in frustration about such rules limiting events I think). Reference to other centres in the Borough that have their own festivals e.g. Stanford Le Hope.
- vii. T.Fest is now too expensive and too focussed on getting a star in. Used to be about Thurrock and its communities. Too expensive for local groups to take an information stand at the event. The way it's organised and set out reduces community role.
 - Use existing events such as The Big Lunch to carry out workshops
 - "Give us a venue and a date and we'll fill it"
 - Mixed view about Grays Market. Friday is good. Saturday is not so good, probably because of markets elsewhere on a Saturday e.g. North Weald.
 - Market currently has limited range. Market needs to provide more variety. Clothes stalls tend to be for older people or children, not enough for the mid range.
 - Some support for a Farmers Market on the basis that it would bring different people in to the town centre. Some view that this would be too expensive for local people. Reference to the popularity of the Orsett Show which has farmers market type stalls. Suggested talking to the owner of the Olive Stall in Grays Shopping Centre for views on potential.

① RECREATIONAL PARKS + COMMUNAL GRABBED AREAS.

GRATS + TILBURY POOR ENVIRONMENT FOR TODDLERS + MOMS.
NOT ATTRACTIVE OR APPEALING. - SOMETIMES LIMITED ACCESS. - WHY?
EVIDENCES OF DOG MESS, LITTER, HYPODERMICS.

DO OR CAN PERSONS. ON COMMUNITY SERVICE, TIDY, MAINTAIN + GROOM
THESE AREAS FOR EVERYONES BENEFIT.
POSSIBILITY OF ICE CREAM OR SNACK BURGER BAR AT THESE
LOCATIONS - SEAT + SUN? SKAL THE PITCH.

② HIGH STREET PEDESTRIAN AREA.

THEMED MARKETS THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. MAYBE CULTURAL RELATES
IE FARMERS, FRENCH, POLISH, ETC.
HIGH STREET WOULD DRAW SHOPPERS + TRADE 6 DAYS A WEEK.

③ HIGHER POLICE PRESENCE.

TO GIVE A HIGHER REASSURANCE TO THE MORE IS-DAILY
RESIDENTS
A REINFORCED SENSE OF SECURITY TO STALL HOLDERS PARTICULARLY
TO THEMED MARKETS + 6 DAY MARKET TRADING.

④ TRAINING AND OR APPRENTICESHIPS.

FINANCIAL AN INCENTIVE TO LOCAL BUSINESS TO TAKE ON TRAINEES / APPRENTICE
A REDUCTION OF RENT + RATES. LINKED TO JOB SEEKER ALLOWANCE

CREATING JOB OPPORTUNITIES, REDUCING STREET GANG CULTURE
AND CRIME, REDUCES BOREDOM WITH YOUNGER GENERATION + OFFERS A
FEELING OF WORTH AND PRIDE.

④
CONT

THIS WOULD BENEFIT THE BOROUGH OVERALL. LESS SPENT ON GRAFFITI + VANDALISM REPAIRS, GENERATING FUNDS TO BE SPENT ON OTHER PROJECTS + CAUSES.

POSSIBILITY OF ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO INVEST IN SOME OF THE IDLE PREMISES THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH
FULL CIRCLE.

⑤
PARKING

NORMAN HALL SITE TO REMAIN AS A CAR PARK. BECAUSE

THAMESIDE THEATRE EVENTS REQUIRE PARKING FACILITIES. TO CLOSE IT AND DEVELOPE INCREASES CONGESTION ON RESIDENTIAL PARKING

DELIVERY PROBLEMS FOR THAMESIDE THEATRE AND EXISTING BUSINE
A TOWN WITH 1 PUBLIC CAR PARK ???

NOT A GOOD MOVE

RESIDENT PARKING AND PERMITS NEEDS IMPROVING
HAVE TO PROVE PROOF OF OWNERSHIP OF VEHICLE + PROOF OF ADDRESS. BUT UNABLE TO PARK WHERE I LIVE, BUT IN A ZONE - WHY

COULD

OF NORMAN HALL CAR PARK WILL ONLY MAGNIFY PARKING PROBLEMS FOR RESIDENTS - MORE CONGESTION ON LOCAL ROADS.

⑥
STATE CINEMA

RICHARD BRANSON LOCAL CELEBRITIES

RECOMMISSION + INVEST TO TURN STATE INTO A MINIATURE O2. CREATING JOBS + INTEREST + INCOME.

JOBS

LINKED TO ITEM 4 WITH TRAINERS + APPRENTICES + LOCAL BUSINE
PARKING ARRANGEMENTS WITH MORRISONS - - - ?

6) DRAW MAINSTREAM + TRIBUTES BANDS
CONT. min CREATE WORKSHOP IF TRAINED UP WITH NATIONAL OPERA
SCENES/ BASED AT PURFLEET.

MUSIC CROSSES ALL CULTURAL BARRIERS.
YOUNGSTERS WILL BE PART OF CREATING A LASTING VENUE
WITH PRIDE + A GOAL. -- LASTING LEGACY!!!!

7) GRAY'S BEACH.

CREATE + BUILD A THEMED AREA --
CLINKER BUILT HOUSES / SHOPS / CRAFT BUILDINGS WITH ARCHITECTS
COLLING LATE VICTORIAN STYLE. TO RECAPTURE THE FISHING
VILLAGE ROOTS OF GRAYS, BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE DOCKS,
AGAIN LINKED TO 4) TRAINERS + APPRENTICES + LOCAL BUSINESS
INVOLVEMENT.

8) PARTNERING BUSINESS. (COUNCIL)
WITHIN THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PREVIOUS IDEAS.

8A DERELICT SITE OLIVER ROAD. OPPOSITE ROYAL MAIL (10 ACC. ALLOC.)

125 PERCENT
TRANSPORT LINKS. HGV PARKING AT TITAN TRUCK PARK.
SUITABLE FOR OUTER LONDON MEAT DEPOT / PACKING PLANT.
IN LIASON WITH SMITHFIELD MEAT MARKET. --- ?
REDUCES HEAVY TRANSPORT INTO THE CITY ---
CREATES JOBS. ---
LONGEVITY OF INCOME. ---