



**Waterfront Action**  
*Working for a friendly, thriving and vibrant community*

**Waterfront Community Day**

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

# Report

*Working towards a vibrant, thriving and friendly Waterfront Community*

**Waterfront Action**

Trinity Bungalow – 20 Back Hamlet – Ipswich – IP3 8AJ

[www.WaterFrontAction.co.uk](http://www.WaterFrontAction.co.uk)

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ipswich Waterfront is a unique area, which captures the classic ingredients of regeneration and has the opportunity to transform not only the area itself but also the growth and stature of Ipswich. It is the largest regeneration scheme in the East of England and the pace of development is staggering. This pace will continue and it is essential that both the quality of buildings and the public realm be given real importance.
- 1.2 In order to maximise the benefit to both new and existing communities living, working and visiting the area the Waterfront Community Group was formed in September 2007 with the strapline: - **“Working towards a vibrant, thriving and friendly community”**.
- 1.3 Membership consists of representatives of all sectors (see Appendix) and the group believe that “community” is the key to making the Waterfront successful and are anxious to bring people together to enable this to happen.
- 1.4 The group have identified the need to communicate with the steadily growing community on the Ipswich Waterfront regarding concerns about service provision, economic development, issues relating to social inclusion, education, environment, planning etc
- 1.5 It was decided to organise a “Waterfront Community Day” in April 2008 as an event for residents and businesses within the Ipswich Waterfront Community to provide a first opportunity to get together, meet one another and promote community. One of the main objectives was to use the day as a starting point to pave the way for further consultation and to provide opportunities for continuous engagement with and strengthening of community Full details of this event are in the appendix.
- 1.6 The most notable things about the day are that:
- More than 1000 people attended
  - 61 groups from the Public, Private and Voluntary sectors were represented
  - The event was extremely vibrant and networking was evident
- 1.7 At the event, those attending had the opportunity to complete questionnaires showing both what they liked and did not like about the area, and what changes would be beneficial.
- Whilst over 1000 people attended, only around 1/3 actually completed questionnaires partly because of the lack of room to complete the forms, and because some were filling in one form per family.
- 1.8 Subsequently, further work took place to provide opportunities for additional data to be gathered from other people. This included - Area Forums, UCS Consultation Event, Neptune Marina Development, Eastern Angles Drama Event as well as forms being available at various local facilities and Cliff Lane School.

## 2. Results

- 2.1 In total, views from 538 people have been gathered with 33% of them living in the official Waterfront Area. A considerable number of others came from an area within one mile of this.
- 2.2 When looking at the “Waterfront Area” for clarity the boundaries - as received from IBC have been used – see appendix.
- 2.3 A breakdown by ward, which shows both residents and non-residents is in the appendix
- 2.4 Results have been purposely shown as those of the residents living or working in the area and those people who are visitors to the area. **It seems right to point out though that the Waterfront area is thought of very much as an Ipswich wide resource like the town centre.** However, there are some differences, with residents being more aware of what is happening there than visitors working from perceptions.
- 2.5 It is important to bear in mind that the data has come from **open** rather than closed **questions**, as it was felt this would give a freer picture of people’s thoughts.

### 2.6 What people LIKE best about the Waterfront

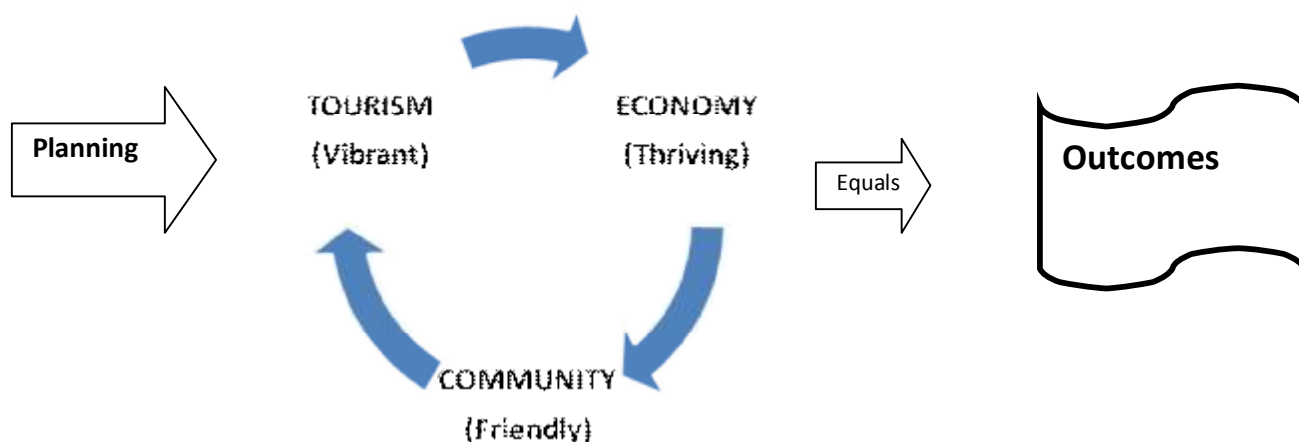
	Residents	Non-Residents	Total
<b>Cafés / Bars / Restaurants</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Ambience / Continental Atmosphere</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Boats / Ships</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Views</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>
Contrasting Old and New	13	28	41
Emerging Vibrant Community	23	17	40
Waterfront	25	12	37
Regeneration / Design of Buildings	15	21	36
Walking / Pedestrian Areas	21	13	34
Historic Buildings / Docks & Vessels	12	22	34
Close to Town / Football Ground / Station	15	11	26
Marina	14	10	24
Clean Buildings and Pavements	21	0	21
UCS / Suffolk New College	12	8	20
Community Event	8	6	14
New Area on the Map	5	8	13
Feel Safe	12	0	12
Wildlife	7	5	12
Contrast of Business & Leisure	6	4	10

## 2.7 The things people would like to see changed on the Waterfront

	Residents	Non-Residents	Total
<b>Pedestrianise Area</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Better Access and Design</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Open Dock / Lock Gates for Pedestrians</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>More Parking</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Clean Water More Regularly</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Install Recycle and More Litter Bins</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Provide more Green Space / Communal Areas</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Stop Overdevelopment inc Tall Buildings</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Provide Toilets</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Finish Building Work</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Provide Traffic Calming / Crossings to Town</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Provide Tourist Office / Attractions</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Provide More Police Presence</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Have Community Events and Associations</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>46</b>
More Varied Shops – Cash Machines – PO Box	16	24	40
Shuttle Bus to Town / Station	9	28	37
Provide more Signposting	11	25	36
AFFORDABLE cafés / bars inc open air facilities	14	22	36
Provide additional seating (wooden)	10	25	35
Provide a Children’s Play Area	3	23	26
Provide a Cycle Route (2 way) & Parking	6	16	22
Provide a Community Centre / Building	0	19	19
More Communications / Newsletter / Consultations	12	2	14
See More Water (too many pleasure boats)	0	12	12
Gated Community / Flats for the rich	0	11	11
Provide Railings around Water	7	4	11
Provide Water Activities / Boat Hire / Ferries etc	10	0	10
Provide better street lighting	10	0	10
More amenities needed for teenagers	0	10	10

### 3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The sheer number of people attending the Waterfront Community Day showed that there was a clear desire for people to meet together and start to build community in the area. There is a great interest in the Waterfront, with people wishing to engage in the process of development, and who are looking for vibrant activity in the area.
- 3.2 The day provided an opportunity to make links in the community and a number of links have continued to be developed as a result of this
- 3.3 Key themes have emerged from the results, which are shown on the diagram below. The inter-relationship between these three aspects should help provide the engine for community development in a holistic fashion.



- 3.4 There is obviously a desire for things to happen on the Waterfront and for this to happen; there is the need to encourage tourism led events that local people can participate in. The recent production by Eastern Angles in the Marquee Theatre on the Waterfront was totally full for all five productions and sold over 1000 tickets. Tourism has a part to play in making the area vibrant.
- 3.5 The existing cafes, bars and hotels are part of the economic community and there is a need for additional facilities, which are affordable and provide opportunities, to sit outside, perhaps undercover where possible. Additional shops are important, as are cash machines and post boxes.
- 3.6 Pedestrianisation of the area is the main issue raised by both residents and non-residents and note therefore needs to be taken of this. Concerns have been shown that when the building work is finished at Cranfield's people will start coming off the roundabout and using the existing road again as a short cut – often at high speeds. The re-opening of the dock/lock gates to once again create the circular walk is apparent as a key request.

- 3.7 A number of people have highlighted that whilst the town centre is very close, there are difficulties in actually getting there with the existing road / crossing system. Additional methods of crossing the road together with clear signposting and good pathways linking the town centre (with signs going in both directions) are necessary
- 3.8 Additional police presence has been requested with perhaps the locating of a Waterfront Office.
- 3.9 Local businesses have made clear their desire to network together and requests to create a Business Forum have been made together with the need to encourage more small businesses to come to the area.
- 3.10 There are a number of groups working in the area, but there seems to be a lack of overall co-ordination or vision, meaning that they are working in isolation.
- 3.11 There is a need to continue to develop a **strong relational community**, which is seen and felt to be a friendly community. Residents feel that an emerging vibrant community is now beginning and that overall they feel safe in the area.
- 3.12 Requests for the following have emerged;
- Events
  - Associations
  - Community Buildings
  - More Communications and Consultation
  - More Green Space
  - More Communal Areas
  - Children's Play Areas
- 3.13 The development of residents' groups would be of great benefit, and should include ways of promoting both Alexandra and Holywells Parks of which many people are unaware, although both are local.
- 3.14 Details have now been obtained of all Managing Agents in the area and contact made to ascertain what information they have available. Unfortunately, there was very little information that could be provided

## 4. Data

Considerable information has been gathered together through the questionnaires but there is a **lack of specific data** of who actually lives in the properties, numbers of owners and tenants, ethnicity, employment etc. Whilst some information can be gathered from electoral registers, council tax, housing benefits etc this information is unlikely to be very conclusive.

## 5. Action Points

The points that have emerged fit under the headings of “Overview”, “Tourism”, “Economy” and “Community”

### Overview

#### 5.1 Obtaining Hard Data

Commission a door-to-door survey this will ensure that this data is obtained. **A suggestion for this data is in the appendix which would then show numbers in each household, age groups, ethnicity, employment etc and provides a substantial quantity of hard data.** Whilst a lot of this work can be undertaken by volunteers from the community - including the five Waterfront Churches - the process would still need to be managed and costs for this are circa £3000.

#### 5.2 Boundaries

IBC to review the existing boundaries of the Waterfront Area which were drawn up in 2003 to ensure all relevant areas are included – The Waterfront Community Group have already submitted proposals (marked in red on the appendix)

#### 5.3 Existing Forums / Groups

There is a need to draw together existing forums / groups which, whilst having different objectives, do cross over and interlink, and there appears to be no method of moving these forward. Key groups would include; Waterfront Education Quarter Group, Waterfront Business Group, Waterfront Community Group, Ipswich Maritime Trust, Neptune Marina Police Surgery, Area Forums.

**5.4** It is unlikely that there is time capacity for these points to be taken forward and it is recommended that a **Waterfront Co-Ordinator be appointed** and employed through the Voluntary Sector.

- The cost (including both on-costs and local office costs) would be circa £40,000
- Funding for post would need to be sought with possibilities including; IBC, Housing Corporations, ABP, UCS, IP Central, Business, Reaching Communities, Community Builders.
- This role could take many of the action points forward including;
  - Managing door-to-door survey to obtain hard data
  - Setting up and developing Residents Groups and Business Forums
  - Setting up and developing Cultural Partnerships
  - Co-Ordinating events and supporting the Waterfront Community Group
  - Co-Ordinating and working to move existing groups forward and together
  - Act as a point of contact for Waterfront Issues and help promote area
  - Developing links with the managing agents of the Waterfront areas
  - Set up and develop ways of consulting and providing communications to both residents and non-residents working with partners as appropriate
  - Work with IBC, Consultants, Business and others with interest in the area

**If a Co-Ordinator were in post**, the additional cost to obtain the additional more focussed data would be circa £500.

## Tourism

### 5.5 Promotion of the Waterfront Area

- The area needs to be made into more of a tourist area and co-ordination is needed between Tourist Information and local groups to see how the area can best be promoted as an attraction and how additional amenities can be promoted in line with this.
- The opening of a Waterfront Tourist Information Office would be very beneficial.
- Additional seating to be placed around the area – preferably wooden as the concrete is always cold and existing ones have become damaged
- Visual attractions ie: Hanging Baskets to be put up and maintained
- The creation of more green space / communal areas
- Signposting:- IBC to provide additional signposting as follows;
  - From the Town Centre and Station to the Waterfront (and in reverse)
  - Alexandra and Holywells Parks
  - Historic Places and Churches

### 5.6 Cultural Partnerships

In order to see more vibrant activities taking place on the Waterfront a Cultural Partnership should be set up. Key partners would include; Eastern Angles, Red Rose Chain, Dance East, Ipswich Hospital Band, Suffolk Concert Band, IP Art, Suffolk New College, UCS.

### 5.7 Traffic

The local authorities to

- Pedestrianise the shared road/pavement/cycle path area along the waterfront and mark out cycle path. *ABP have advised us that the road running along the Wet Dock is leased to IBC and therefore ABP cannot pedestrianise it themselves.*
- Install more crossing links to town centre and look at traffic calming measures
- Set up a shuttle bus with a circuit to include town centre and station
- IBC to develop additional car parking spaces for visitors and residents

### 5.8 Dock / Lock Gates

ABP to enter into talks with IBC and SCC with a view to re-opening these gates and recreating the healthy circular walk

### 5.9 Toilets

IBC to address and resolve the issue of lack of toilet facilities. Consideration should also be given by IBC Planning / Business Rates to look at new commercial units being encouraged to have toilets open to the public in exchange for an annual reduction in rates

## Economy

### **5.10 Business Community**

Draw together details of all business working in the area – including the many home businesses – and form a Business Forum to develop links and economic activity. A Business Fayre would be a good opportunity for these to be promoted not only to residents but also to the whole of Ipswich. Key partners to include; Suffolk Chamber, ISSBA, Business Federation and Ecadamy.

The drawing together of a directory has just started and already some 45 businesses want to be involved, with 80% wanting to join a forum & 85% wishing to attend a local Business Fayre.

### **5.11 Litter**

The authorities to

- Arrange for an Impact Day to clear litter / debris in public areas and car park areas.
- Supply additional litter bins and position strategically at numerous places. Recycling points to be introduced
- Increase the frequency of cleaning the water – and in particular around Stoke Bridge

*This issue has been raised with ABP who have advised that the water is regularly cleaned and the issue of litter in the water has been raised by them to IBC as they believe that floating rubbish in the Wet Dock is directly proportional to the development of pubs, cafes and shops around the wet dock area. They also agree that there are not enough litter or recycle bins around the Wet Dock and have brought this to the attention of IBC and Ipswich Central.*

## Community

### **5.12 Waterfront Organisations / Residents Associations**

Develop in the community a number of residents groups / associations in the different parts of the Waterfront. Once established they can become key in future developments. Develop linkages and networking opportunities between organisations working locally.

### **5.13 Communication**

Set up a newsletter for residents and businesses in the Waterfront area (working with partners ie: Central and Waterfront Community Times who cover parts of this area). Linked to this, setup and develop a website promoting the area / economy / community groups / events etc.

### **5.14 Community Events**

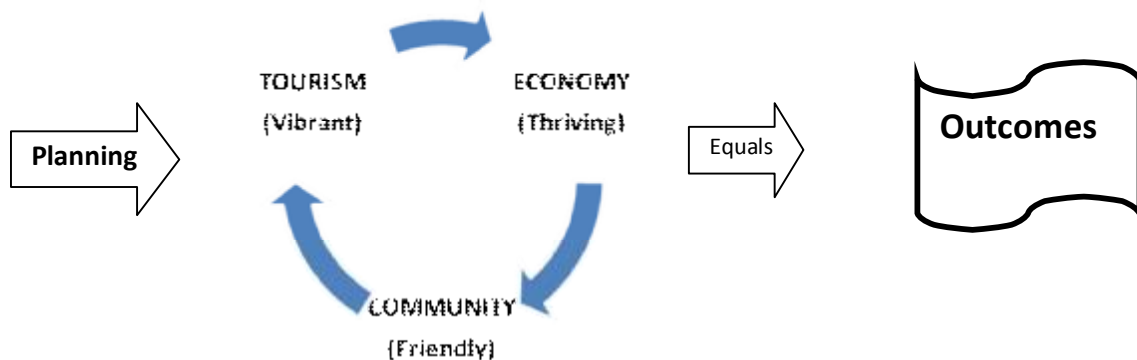
Through the cultural and business partnerships and community groups develop and promote community events.

### **5.15 Police Presence**

IBC to work with PCSO / Suffolk Police to establish a more physical PCSO / Police presence on the waterfront, particularly in the evenings, weekends and after football matches, as well as ensuring that roads are not blocked by lorries from Anglo Norden. The establishing of a police base would be of considerable benefit.

## 6 Summary

- 6.1 The Waterfront Community Group was formed in 2007 as a partnership with all sectors with the strapline of **“Working towards a vibrant, thriving and friendly community”**.
- 6.2 A Waterfront Community Day was held on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at the Old Custom House on the Waterfront and attracted in excess of 1000 people with stands representing 61 organisations
- 6.3 At the Community Day - and at a number of occasions since the event - many hundreds of people completed Questionnaires – with *totally open questions* – showing their likes and things they feel should be changed.
- 6.4 Key themes have emerged from the results of the questionnaire, which have been produced as per the diagram in order to stimulate community engagement and ownership of the area by the community. The inter-relationship between these three aspects should help provide the engine for community development in a holistic fashion.



- 6.5 **Key Action Points have now been drawn as a result of this, which are;**
- Commission a survey to obtain hard data about who is living in the area
  - Adoption of new boundaries of the Waterfront Area
  - Seek funding to employ a Waterfront Co-Ordinator
  - Look at promoting the area as a Tourist Attraction
  - Address the Pedestrianisation and Traffic Issues including the opening of the dock / lock gates
  - Stimulate the development of community / residents groups to own community development
  - Create community space
  - Improve the environment, clean the water, litter bins and regular clean ups, lighting etc
  - Develop cultural and business collaboration and networking

This report was produced on behalf of the Waterfront Action by

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The comments from questionnaires contained in the report are not necessarily the view of either the Waterfront Community Group or the author but are representative of the questionnaires and other information received.

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