

HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM LOCAL AGENDA 21 FORUM

Annual Report 1995-1996

The Future

The millennium appears to accelerate towards us. As it does so, we are stacking up challenges for those who will live in it. Yet, these aren't the challenges they should have to face. The challenges of poverty, exclusion, pollution and unnecessary waste. How might they write our epitaph? Perhaps, *"They knew they were being greedy but seemed not to care"*

Our task is to encourage each one in the local community that a single voice can be heard and, by using our Forum as a platform, it can effect change in the borough; to warn that a decision taken by one of us can impact adversely upon several others, in the borough and elsewhere. And, maybe upon many, some years later; to bring together the many sectors of our community, enabling them to recognise the benefits of consensus decisions; to encourage them to understand and value their particular culture but also to stand outside it and be able and willing to judge it.

Each sector of the community should welcome inquisitiveness about its component minorities, encourage encounter and the sharing of common values. This is not idealism. The challenges we refer to above are not fantasy but too real to ignore. For these reasons, all political parties endorse the Local Agenda 21 process. But our make-up as a Forum needs to broaden and that's why we are seeking to reflect better the local community on our Executive Committee. We recognise this process will take time but we are agreed it is the right course to take. Whatever our status in the community, we will crash into the 21st Century at the same moment, all together. And only together will we surmount its challenges.

The Past Year

Open Space and Future Search

Our first *Open Space* held in the Irish Centre, Hammersmith Broadway on 14 July was a new and valuable experience for all who attended. For this, we must thank Romy Shovelton who directed the event admirably. It set out to ascertain as many views from the wider community as possible; views on current issues and for the future. It was attended by 60 people. 13 discussion sessions led to 45 recommendations. Two further *Open Space* events will be held in 1997, one in the north of the borough and one in the south. We are already preparing for our Future Search exercise which follows on naturally from the Open Space. A separate steering group has been set up.

Working with the Borough

We are working closely with the Housing Energy Action Team and the Recycling Department. The Environment Department has kindly continued to second Richard Adam who works with the Policy & Regeneration Group to assist us.

Co-operation with other bodies

The Forum has contributed to the London Green Guide for the second year, become a member of the London Ecology Centre and also *Connections*, the Video collective that recorded the *Open Space* event.

Indicators

We are determined that the wider community should participate in determining those indicators that will reflect progress towards a more sustainable society and towards raising the perceived *'quality*

of life'. Nevertheless, we have set about identifying a series of 'quick start' indicators intended to interest the community to participate in the programme. These indicators cover transport, recycling, health, the economy and social change. Working with the Urban Studies Centre, a series of 'kids' indicators' will also be chosen.

Progress

Transport: LONDON TRANSPORT statistics will enable us to select, from the bus routes that pass through the borough, a combination of waiting times and punctuality rates that will indicate whether the state of traffic congestion and the consequent impact upon the community.

Recycling: We have proposed to the Council several initiatives to encourage greater public support for the recycling of paper and glass; to undertaking a pilot programme in a borough-run estate; extending the proposed commercial recycling programme to certain targeted groups; and piloting a mini-test identified with an LTE Underground station. Negotiations with the council continue. We are also examining how we can support the wider use of reusable nappies, in place of disposable ones which comprise the largest single non-recyclable contribution to waste in the borough.

Health: Working with the West London Health Promotion Agency, we have now agreed on a series of indicators including air and water quality; people using local authority leisure centres; dental records for 12 year-olds; road accidents; low birth weight rates; screening uptake and the percentage of the population registered with a GP.

Economy: We will be using figures published by the Office of National Statistics, mainly relating to unemployment, to determine some of our indicators here. By measuring the number of electoral wards that compare favourably with London averages, we can assess the unevenness of prosperity in the borough. We hope to measure the take-up of training places, the number of new companies managing to trade after, say, three years can be other indicators of the economy.

Social Change: Working with Hammersmith & Fulham Action for Disability (HAFAD), we have agreed that this indicator should reflect the changing challenges facing the disabled. Our experience with HAFAD will lead us to similar initiatives with those groups representing other minorities. We will continue to seek ways to make our society more inclusive.

Outreach

We published our first newsletter and, at the Festival of Age, distributed an updated issue. At that event, Colin and Anne-Marie Perry undertook a useful survey. *Streetlife* and the *Pensioner* have published articles and two of the three newspapers in the borough have written about the Forum. We have established firm contact with established local amenity organisations in the borough. These have shown enthusiasm for the Forum's programme.

The Constitution and membership of the Forum

We have taken the radical step of challenging the community to identify with the Forum. Our new Constitution ensures that all sectors of the community can be represented on our Executive committee. We recognise that it will take time to bring this to reality but, albeit with the millennium so close, we are preparing for the 21st Century, We are agreed that our organisation will still be gaining strength through its proposed composition after other, more cosmetic approaches to the Local Agenda 21 ethic have outlived their usefulness.