

Burton Business Club News Release

BURTON – 20 YEARS IN THE FUTURE?

The Burton Business Club exists to promote business in the Burton Area and this month, members took part in a lively and interactive presentation on the Council's plans for Burton at their monthly meeting on 11 March 2008 at the Coors Visitor Centre.

Members heard Sandra Ford, Head of Regeneration of East Staffordshire Borough Council present her vision for the next 20 years for Burton as a "Growth Point" for housing in the context of its neighbours, Derby, Nottingham, Tamworth and Stoke. Sandra set the scene by explaining the need to keep Burton different to its neighbours in attracting both visitors to the town as well as businesses and jobs in catering for an extra planned 12,000 households in the next 20 years over and above the existing 48,000 households. Both the Government and the Council recognise that the demographics of modern Britain are changing with people living longer, more single occupancies and more single parent families, all with changing needs that have to be served by the Town.

Members were told that whilst some broad-brush features are established, the Council is engaged in a major consultation exercise with local business and community as to what they would want to see in the 20 year plan. We have all noticed for example, the huge brown field developments along Wellington Road opposite the Marmite factory. With a 25% influx of new people, the Council is seeking to promote the businesses hand in hand with the skills to go with it. Sandra told the members of the need not just for one plan but a number of plans to ensure that the objectives are achieved.

The town centre will continue to develop with 30,000 square feet of retail development although there is and will continue to be, significant competition in the area from Westfields in Derby and the new shopping area in Lichfield. Rather than becoming a clone of any other new retail development, Burton is continuing to look for ways to make visitors want to visit and shop here. The Council is working with the County Council to promote better services to both existing housing areas as well as new ones. However, there are no plans for major road infrastructure development in the area such as a east-west by-pass or a ring road.



It wasn't long before members' concerns came to the fore resulting in a lively discussion. For example, the very attractive Burton Washlands area is almost unknown to many visitors purely because the town's layout doesn't naturally connect to it. Another concern is Arriva, the town's major bus service provider cutting services to some outlying villages that makes it difficult to get home after a night out or even commute to and from work. A member complained that the Market is dying due to lack of parking.

Sandra concluded by asking the members to take part in the consultation exercise and to work together to ensure that Burton continues to be a place where people want to visit and work.

Andy Luffman, the Club Chairman thanked Sandra for her informative presentation, commenting that members should not just criticise from afar but get involved in the consultation process.

The next month's meeting of the Burton Business Club will be at the regular venue, Coor's Visitors' Centre. Meetings start at 7.15 pm on the second Tuesday of each month and new members and guests are always welcome. If you want to eat before you meet, come along at 6.15 pm for an excellent value 2-course meal. At £8, it's good value. The next meeting is the AGM of the Business Club which should take any a few minutes. For light relief, we welcome the return of Martin Clarke, "the Worm Man" who had the members in stitches about his hilarious attempts to build a business providing works for the angling and pet food market when he last visited the Club.

For further information about the club, its activities and how these can add value to your own business, please contact Club Chairman Andy Luffman on 01283 520042 or log onto the Website at www.burtonbusinessclub.co.uk