

# Selby Towns Renaissance

Report on the Visioning Day, 20 November 2004



## **SELBY TOWNS RENAISSANCE: VISIONING DAY REPORT**

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Visioning Day, held at Brayton College Selby on 20 November 2004. This report of the day records ideas that were generated, people who participated and explains what will happen next.

### **1. PURPOSE OF THE VISIONING DAY**

The purpose of the Visioning Day was to investigate, articulate and record local stakeholders' renaissance visions for all three towns – exploring both **what the three towns could become**, and **how those visions could be achieved**.

It was the first opportunity for the consultancy team to work with the wider Towns Team, but invitees were not confined to those who had already expressed an interest in being members of the Towns Team: the event was advertised through the local media and in the three towns to try to ensure that anyone interested in the renaissance of the Selby Towns could participate in the day. Thus the Renaissance project was brought to a much wider audience than it had been previously. The event was also filmed, by a team of filmmakers called 'a sense of place', to provide a resource for the future development of the renaissance work.

The Visioning Day was divided into two sessions. The morning workshop offered a two-and-a-half-hour structured discussion in roundtable groups themed around the individual towns, and allowed the team to get to know the opinions of Towns Team members. Over 40 participants registered to take part in the morning workshop: a full list of participants is included at the end of this report. In the afternoon, many more people visited the exhibition, which did not require the same time commitment from participants but still explored the same questions and often resulted in similarly detailed individual conversations. Many valuable connections were made during the Visioning Day that have resulted in new members joining the Towns Team and identified potential projects to be explored. Comments made by those attending the exhibition in the afternoon are included in the sections below, denoted by an asterisk.

Following the Visioning Day the ideas generated will be analysed by the consultancy team and then discussed, tested and developed within the smaller, focussed working groups of the Towns Team, which will meet early in the New Year. From these working groups the principles and projects for renaissance will be developed further into a 'Charter'; it is important that major local stakeholders can sign up to, support and further champion this Charter. In the autumn some of the individual renaissance projects will then be taken forward by the consultancy team towards detailed design resolution – still working closely with the Towns Team.

### **2. THE CONSULTANCY TEAM**

Yorkshire Forward appointed a team led by **URBED** – a consultancy firm specialising in urban regeneration, local economic development, sustainability and urban design. David Rudlin, the Northern Director based in URBED's Manchester office, directs the project. Further information about URBED can be found on our website: [www.urbed.com](http://www.urbed.com).

Working with URBED are highway engineers and transport planners Alan Baxter & Associates, property consultants Tomlinson Feeley, and landscape architects Camlin Lonsdale.

### 3. THE QUESTIONS WE DISCUSSED

Three main tasks/questions were explored in both the morning and the afternoon sessions:

- i. **What are the current strengths and weaknesses of each town?**
- ii. **What other places are each of the towns like now, and where could they be like?**
- iii. **What is the Vision for 25 years' time, and how should we get there?**

#### 3.1 What are the Strengths and Weaknesses of each town?

(To see the full lists of answers, please see the Appendix)

3.1.1 In SELBY, the list of strengths includes many **attractions**, such as the historic buildings, and local markets, good rail and road **accessibility** and a wide range of **amenities** including the College and schools and the development potential of the river and sites around the new bypass.

The weaknesses include issues of 'attraction', e.g. poor retail experience, lack of quality hotels and the flat landscape, a longer list of poor **accessibility**, particularly between the villages and the town centre, poor interchange between the railway station and buses, poor lighting around the station, lack of parking especially bicycle parking, and bottlenecks. **Amenity** weaknesses include lack of leisure facilities, low-cost housing, diversity in the local population and a lack of trees, as well as flooding, and fear of crime.

3.1.2 In TADCASTER, strengths include the **attraction** of history, as well as 'celebrations' such as Britain in Bloom and the Christmas lights, good road **accessibility** and a good bus station, and a long list of **amenities** focussing on excellent schooling, leisure, health and community facilities.

The weaknesses highlighted threats to Tadcaster's **attractions** through a lack of variety in shops and a dying town centre, and again a long list of threats to **amenity** including an aging population, as younger families are not attracted, a lack of new low-cost housing, no opportunities commercial or employment expansion, a dominant landowner and a local feeling of apathy and helplessness, and a lack of ambition.

3.1.3 In SHERBURN strengths again include the **attractions** of historic buildings, as well as the nearby countryside and a good selection of pubs and restaurants, good road **accessibility** and the potential for a good rail service, and strong **amenity** including employment opportunities, and good community facilities and clubs.

The weaknesses focus on issues of **accessibility**, with the unmet rail and bus potential and poor side roads, and **amenity**, particularly lack of low-cost housing, lack of play areas for children, vandalism, a difficulty for newer residents to integrate and the potential to lose the village feel if it grows too quickly.

#### 3.2 Where is each town like now, and where could it be like?

Responses to this question focussed on other places near to Selby District, and Wetherby was cited as a possible model for Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn.

**Selby is like now...**

Harrogate

Thirsk

King's Lynn

Pickering

Ripon

Stroud

Drifffield

Northallerton

Gainsborough

Boroughbridge

Evesham

**Selby could be like...**

Nowhere else – it is individual  
 Beverley  
 Helmsley  
 Doncaster (flowers and soft landscaping)

Pontefract Town Centre  
 Hebden Bridge  
 Derby/Loughborough (university)  
 Newark (image and tourism)  
 Gainsborough (image and outlook)  
 Wetherby  
 Ashby-de-la-Zouch  
 Newcastle

**Tadcaster is like now...**

Any vibrant town  
 Malton

**Tadcaster could be like...**

Wetherby  
 Thirsk  
 Easingwold  
 Northallerton  
 Bedale  
 \*Knaresborough

**Sherburn is like now...**

Normanton  
 Nuneaton  
 Stanhope  
 Haltwhistle  
 Alderley Edge

**Sherburn could be like...**

Wetherby (except for parking)  
 Henley in Arden  
 Bawtry  
 Boston Spa (except for parking)  
 Cochem (Moselle Valley)

**3.3 What is the Vision for 25 Years' time, and how should we get there?**

This question asked the participants to look 25 years into the future, to identify what a 'Vision' for each town would include, and then explore what the action should be to achieve that vision. Again, the responses that were given can be grouped in issues of 'attractions', 'accessibility' and 'amenity'.

For the full list of responses, please see the Appendix.

**3.3.1 Selby Vision for 25 Years' time...**

**Attraction** priorities include developing a strong, welcoming identity, quality retail, hotels and café culture, and making the most of historic buildings.

**Accessibility** issues focus on safe and coordinated transport networks, including safe cycling and improved rail services

**Amenity** concerns focus on making the most of development opportunities on and around the water, town centre residential opportunities such as living over the shop, increasing employment opportunities in science-based industries and technology, and improved sports, leisure and entertainment facilities, particularly an arts and cultural centre.

**Actions** to achieve this vision include improving pride in Selby and its external image, by giving the town a focus, improving transport and tourism and supporting business opportunities.

### 3.3.2 Tadcaster Vision for 25 Years' time...

**Attraction** priorities include building on the qualities of a historic market town to appeal to visitors as well as locals, developing a regional reputation for a quality activity such as a renowned craft fair making the town, supporting a café society, attracting specialist shops

**Accessibility** issues encompass both an improved pedestrian and cyclist environment and roads – taking advantage of the golden triangle that drives the local economy.

**Amenity** concerns covered a need to attract knowledge workers and increase vibrancy in the town through appealing to a wider range of population ages including both families – to retain the high quality schools – and active older citizens. The area should take a lead in developing clean energy and knowledge industries

**Actions** to achieve this vision focus on the need to try mediation again with the major landlord and agree grounds of commonality to move forward. Projects around the riverfront, heritage and cultural activities for people to be proud of were seen as ways forward but it was stressed that more new housing and amenities for all ages will be necessary to achieve progress. A turbine on the weir was suggested as a way of achieving clean energy.

### 3.3.3 Sherburn Vision for 25 Years' time...

**Attraction** priorities include widening the range of smaller shops and a heritage centre, ensuring that further development is strategic, cohesive and attractive.

**Accessibility** focussed on a new rail link for industry at Gascoigne Wood.

**Amenity** concerns included the need for a park or maintained greenery, better facilities for the young, and opening up the riverbank for cafes etc. It is important to learn from the examples of other places and not over-develop Sherburn.

**Actions** to achieve this vision show a need for a clear vision that follows staged development based on smaller sites, fully integrating a village plan so that the community's needs are understood. A Town Manager or Coordinator, possibly shared between the communities, was seen as a way of achieving this.

## 3. THEMES SUGGESTED BY THE VISIONING DAY

Emerging from these results, therefore, we can identify and developed a number of themes for each town:

### 3.1 SELBY

- Building on heritage attractions and improve image – gateways – tourism/hotels – cultural centre – signage
- Integrating transport – especially around railway station – cyclist and pedestrian links
- Capitalising on the waterfront – waterpark – river
- Diversifying office/business start-up premises/spin offs from York
- Developing clean Energy

### TADCASTER

- Breaking through in relationships with SSOB to improve choice in shops and restaurants – tourism product
- Capitalising on the waterfront – design and revisit flood defence plans

- Connecting town to bypass
- Diversifying amenities to attract families/teenagers/elderly
- Encouraging new population growth
- Making the most of heritage

## **SHERBURN**

- Building community cohesion through plan agreement
- Creating amenities for the young
- Exploring shared facilities between Sherburn and South Milford
- Dealing with population growth
- Making the most of business opportunities

### **3.2 Renaissance themes**

From these, we have identified five ‘renaissance themes’ that could be seen to have some relevance to each of the towns:

- i. Channelling population growth positively**
- ii. Transforming the river and waterways**
- iii. Developing future energy**
- iv. Building on economic spin-offs from York**
- v. Making the most of heritage**

### **3.3 Next steps**

The next steps will be to test and develop these ideas, and others, with the Towns Team early in the New Year. We will work with smaller, more focussed working groups to develop the principles and projects for the Charter. In the autumn, still working closely with the Towns Team, some of the individual renaissance projects will then be taken forward by the consultancy team towards detailed design resolution.

Updated information of the progress of the Selby Towns Renaissance project will appear shortly on the dedicated project website, at <http://selbytowns.urbed.net>

## APPENDIX

### 1. Attendees

\*John Barton, Tadcaster Chamber of Commerce  
Eon Carlyle  
Terrance Clarke, Tadcaster Royal British Legion  
Karen Coates, SDC  
Martin Conor, SDC  
Jack Davie, Southern Area CIP  
John Davies, Selby Coalfield Mission (*Open Spaces – Environment Town Team*)  
Melanie Davis, SDC  
Denise Dodd, North Yorkshire Investment Group  
Dianne Dumbell, Selby Eastern Area  
Bernard Farrall, Eastern CIP  
Nigel Green, Stutton PC  
Keith Groves, Excel Logistics, S Milford Resident  
Amanda Hardy, Selby Library  
Sally Harvey, Outreach Worker, Sherburn Community Education  
Alma Hodgson, Sherburn Community Assoc and Gala Committee  
\*Carole Holleram, Selby Arts Forum  
Christine Kidd, Tadcaster (*Tadcaster*)  
Gary Limbert, SD  
Mrs Lowe, Selby Civic Society  
Barra Mac Ruairi, YF  
Fred Matthew, Selby TC/Corus Group  
\*Janine McFarlane, Selby  
Cllr Chris Metcalfe  
Bobbie Millar  
P E Milsom, Civic Society  
David Morley, S Milford PC  
Gail Morlkey, Chair South Milford PC  
\*Stephanie Morrison, Selby Arts Forum  
Peter Murphy, Groundwork (*Towns Team*)  
Wally Norton, SDC  
John Notley, Tadcaster Civic Society  
\*Brenda Oldfield, Eggborough  
Bob Packham (by email)  
Brian Percival, SD  
Roderic Parker, Tadcaster  
Derrick Potter, Potter Group  
Jenny Prescott, Chair Sherburn Community Association  
Ramon Sans, Tadcaster  
Eileen Scothern, SDC  
John Shepherd, YF  
Neil Skinner, SDC  
David Thompson, SDC  
Jude Thurlow, Mayor Selby  
Alan Townend, Rivendell Lettings  
Jason Watts, Regional External Funding Manager

Barbara Wilson, Sherburn Community Association  
\*Blue Wilson, Selby Arts Forum

**2. Responses to these questions are discussed below by town.** To help evaluate the responses, they have been grouped in Question i. (Strengths and Weaknesses) and the first part of Q. iii. (25 years' vision) by Attractions, Accessibility and Amenity, and for the second part of Question iii (How can we get there?) they can be seen as potential Actions.

\* denotes responses given at the afternoon exhibition session

### **A. SELBY Strengths**

#### **Attractions**

Selby Boat centre  
Historic value and tourist potential  
Abbey  
Attractive unspoilt buildings  
Built heritage  
Market – both Monday and local farmers market  
Market has potential for improvement  
Trans Pennine trail is good – needs better links in Selby  
Car parks are cheap

#### **Accessibility**

Good road network  
M62 and connectivity by road  
Bus and rail stations - good train services

#### **Amenity**

The bypass has brought development potential  
Availability of brownfield land for development  
The river – could be an economic basis for Selby town  
Great potential of water – e.g. a marina  
\*Delightful canal paths  
Selby College  
Good college and schools  
Town is just big enough to still be friendly  
General point: Try and keep the villages as villages – people who live in villages like that life – control development!

### **B. SELBY Weaknesses**

#### **Attractions**

Retail impact from out of town centres  
Poor choice of shops/poor shopping experience  
Too many charity shops  
Abbey (? Not fully integrated into town life?)  
Hotels – lack of quality x 2  
Pub culture  
Flat landscape



Ugly power stations

**Accessibility**

- Transport links into rural areas
- Public transport – poor in villages
- No designated coach park in Selby
- Poor interchange between rail and bus
- River/road bottlenecks
- \*Poor lighting around the railway station
- Lack of parking at Selby station
- Cycle parking facilities in Selby
- Lack of bike parks x 2
- \*Overcrowding on trains, lack of trains in evening (Selby-Leeds)

**Amenity**

- Lack of leisure facilities in Selby and South of the District x 2\*
- Lack of diversity in population
- Lack of low cost housing
- Obtaining planning consent to develop land
- Flooding
- Tidal river
- Not enough trees
- Fear of crime
- Lack of apprenticeships
- Gaps between rich and poor/urban and rural areas is widening

**A. TADCASTER strengths**

**Attractions**

- Attractive buildings
- History – Towton, Marston Moor, Roman remains
- Parking
- Britain in Bloom
- Christmas Lights

**Accessibility**

- Main road network – between York and Leeds for potential employment if land availability
- A64/A1 M1 link
- Immediate access to countryside x 2
- Good access into out of town employment
- High Employment – local travel to work sites
- Good bus station

**Amenities**

- ‘Good housing for less’ (?)
- Good schools – Tadcaster Grammar has Business and Enterprise status and excellent 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- Good primary school (but many people are coming in from outside as Families are not attracted to live here
- Tranquillity
- Sense of Community

Active local businesses working together (Chamber)  
Tadcaster Albion  
Leisure facilities/swimming pool with good swimming club  
Health facilities – medical centre  
Sainsbury's  
Range of local employers  
Potential of Jackdaw Crag Quarry as a community resource, minimising industrial impact, knowledge transfer  
Redundant land at Newton Kyme is an opportunity

## **B. TADCASTER weaknesses**

### **Attractions**

Insufficient breadth and depth of shopping x 2  
Town centre is dying  
Time Warp

### **Accessibility**

Through traffic problematic

### **Amenity**

Town population becoming older (not attracting families, primary school rolls falling)  
Unmet demand for new housing – lack of low-cost housing  
Planned flood defences are a threat (and difficult relations with EA?)  
\*Lengthy negotiations for shop leases  
\*Dominant landowner who does not (can not) listen x 5 (own vision for the future)  
Local apathy/helplessness and a lack of ambition  
Insufficient office capacity  
No land for commercial expansion  
No room for organic growth of existing companies  
Lack of employment in the town  
Lack of good quality employment land  
Loss of amenities – shoe shops, cinema, rugby club, Working Man's Club  
Public houses are mediocre  
Likely insufficient housing when town expands

## **A. SHERBURN Strengths**

### **Attractions**

Historic – church, mentioned in Domesday Book, Roman remains  
Good selection of pubs and restaurants  
Attractive countryside on the edge of the Vale of York

### **Accessibility**

Geographic location – transport/A1 link, etc (though this could be improved)  
Potentially good access to rail network

### **Amenities**

Employment availability – a range of opportunities for local employees – which has a knock-on effect for supporting local businesses  
Village life – community spirit  
Good schools – one has a swimming pool

Good facilities for the elderly, e.g. modern community centre  
Good sports clubs/associations  
Squires Milk Bar!  
Centre has village character, with good selection of 'local' shops  
Health centre  
Recreational areas at Finkle Hill and Eversley Park – flourishing football, cricket and bowls clubs

## **B. SHERBURN Weaknesses**

### **Attractions**

Parking problems

### **Accessibility**

Doesn't make the best use of its location  
Two stations but very few trains  
Poor side roads – responsibility of NYCC not Selby DC  
Lack of buses and trains to anywhere - even Selby

### **Amenities**

Lack of amenities – sports and leisure, play areas for younger children  
Lack of low cost housing for young people  
Building houses doesn't build a community – limited community cohesion – but working on that  
Difficult to integrate without children for newcomers to the area  
Potential to lose the 'village feel' if it grows too quickly  
Too much vandalism, especially parks

### **3.3.1 Selby Vision for 25 Years' time...**

#### **Attractions**

Upgrade shops on Gowthorpe  
Londesborough Hotel to be upgraded  
A museum  
A tourist centre  
Gateway to North Yorkshire  
Abbots Staithe – develop as a heritage attraction  
Make a feature of Westmill Tower  
Strong, welcoming identity  
Strong signage and information  
Vibrant café culture  
Change binge-drinking culture to vibrant bar culture

#### **Accessibility**

\*safe cycling, with protected bike areas  
Coordinated transport network – all modes  
Relocate Arriva depot out of town – use the existing site for parking/visitor attraction  
Station car parking  
\*An excellent rail network to Leeds and York  
Links to the airport  
Link BOCM site to town with footbridge over the river

### **Amenity**

- Trees – a greener town
- \*Clean, litter-free streets
- \*Waterfront development close to town centre
- Make waterfront more attractive – stop the river being tidal
- Attract high earners to live in riverside setting
- Waterfront partnership vision
- Gowthorpe – living over the shop – to encourage the use of the buildings
- Include Barlby Bridge within Selby Town
- Diverse population
- Job creation – light commercial and technology
- Science-based industries
- Good sports facilities
- Better integration and facilities for children
- Better leisure facilities
- Entertainment - cinema, theatre, and dance facilities
- An arts and cultural centre for the district, with open and affordable studio space that gives something back to the community
- More high quality town centre residential accommodation
- Improve the BOCM/Unification? Site – develop BOCM as a recreation site –
- Develop the Holmes area for marina and housing
- Develop redundant mine sites for jobs and a better environment
- Pumping station – new development as a water feature
- Potential for historic link between the 3 towns
- Make Selby more sustainable and less of a dormitory town

### **The strategy for Selby – how will we can there?**

#### **Actions**

- Improve the town centre
- \*Give the town a focus
- \*Improve tourism and pride in the town!
- Improve gateways and the town's external image
- Improve transport and movement links
- \*Better transport links – railway and bus
- \*Create business incubator centres
- Promote road/ rail interface*

### **3.3.2 Tadcaster Vision for 25 Years' time...**

- 'Opportunity and Tranquility on the River Wharfe'
- 'Centre of Excellence in Brewing'
- Historic market town
- Low shop rents
- Good parking
- Affordable space
- Let shops to specialist shops
- Variety of attractions to increase footfall – an attractive place for visitors to stop in as well as serving locals
- Attractive to a mix of ages
- Café culture/boulevard society
- \*Annual, regionally renowned craft fair

### **Accessibility**

River connections with Selby  
Footbridge across to supermarket to relieve main bridge  
Taking advantage of the golden triangle that drives the economy  
\*Pedestrianised Kirkgate with market facilities  
By-pass/ with improved access on slip roads  
Good transport into Tadcaster as well as out  
New traffic scheme  
Sustrans link to York

### **Amenity**

Promenading/vibrancy  
Good community facilities  
Battle Museum  
Designed waterfront  
Waterpark – leisure use of the Wharfe  
Attract knowledge workers  
\*Business park and science park  
Provide jobs for (returning) graduates  
Increase the ‘informed majority’  
Potential for Retirement homes  
Active older citizens – housing with social care available but not a ghetto  
Attract families with children  
Retain high supporting schools  
TGS have specialist status and in Top 10 NYCC schools  
Lead development in clean energy

## **The strategy for Tadcaster – how will we can there?**

### **Actions**

Mediation process – again  
Must reach rapprochement with the major landlord  
Agree grounds of commonality to move forward  
\*Offer SSOB public funds to support and **bring in** some of his schemes (and a ‘seat on the board’)  
Heritage-based strategy  
Rivers and waterways  
Proper slip roads at both ends of town to bypass  
River walk emulating Tivoli gardens – pedestrian lights set into walkways and lights in trees – Millennium walkway  
\*Power station – turbine on the weir  
\*Need more housing – CPOs  
\*Attract more cultural activities for people to take part in and be proud of – e.g. a brass band  
Amenities for young, teenagers and elderly  
Improved policing to address antisocial behaviour

## **3.3.3 Sherburn Vision for 25 Years’ time...**

### **Attractions**

Better range of shops (small, not large supermarkets preferred)  
‘Strategic, cohesive, attractive developments’

Heritage centre

**Accessibility**

\*Rail link for industry at Gascoigne Wood

**Amenity**

Maintain greenery (no park at present)

Better facilities for the young (e.g. café/youth centre)

\*‘Learn from other towns’ mistakes regarding over-development and filling every available space with blocks of flats. Don’t do it.’

\*Open up the river bank for cafes, bars, etc

**The strategy for Sherburn – how will we can there?**

**Actions**

Decide upon a CLEAR vision

Slow, staged development (not fast growth)

Small, strategic development, e.g. WMC site, Sissons site

Review of village/appraisal/plan, and

Integration of the results of the appraisal/plan (i.e. see what community actually wants/needs)

Don’t want to be a dormitory town

Community Leadership – leads to better local representation

Engage ALL local residents, old and new

Employ Shared Town Manager/Coordinator across the whole district