

2020 Vision Hebden Bridge in 2020: A better place for all - Incredible Edible Mytholm's comments on the Draft Action Plan

1. The consultation form effectively allows for yes, no, maybe comments on each proposed element of the Draft Action Plan, but doesn't allow for a critique of the way the Draft has framed the town's problems and proposed solutions. Since Incredible Edible Mytholm feels that such a critique is needed, for reasons outlined below, we are making our comments without using the consultation form. Sorry if this makes it harder for you to collate responses.
2. As a civil society group set up with the aim of creating a community-owned sustainable food business that will help mitigate climate, environmental and social justice problems, Incredible Edible Mytholm sees the need for a Hebden Bridge Action Plan that is more than business-as-usual.

Specifically, we think that any plan for Hebden Bridge needs to adopt a longer time frame than the next 7 years, and it needs to focus on two core principles:

- supporting the transition to a low carbon future
- making Hebden Bridge a living wage town

3. *Supporting the transition to a low-carbon future*

First, we think the Action Plan should be guided by the National Planning Policy Framework para 17, that planning should be a “*creative exercise in...supporting the transition to a low-carbon future...*”

Making the transition to a low-carbon future should underpin and shape the Hebden Royd action plan for transport, a circular economy, food and farming, housing, energy conservation, efficiency and generation.

These principles should inform all the proposals for:

- improving traffic problems
- meeting the projected requirement for new housing
- improving public transport
- developing the local economy
- greening Hebden Royd

(For information in case of unfamiliarity with the idea of the “circular economy”: the key innovation of the circular economy is that the waste products of industrial processes become the feedstock for new products, so waste is virtually eliminated.

The circular economy is an industrial economy that is, by design, restorative. Its material flows are of two types:

- biological, with any “waste” designed to re-enter the biosphere safely
- technical, which are designed to circulate at high quality within the industrial process without entering the biosphere

It is also called the cradle-to-cradle economy.)

4. *We would like to see Hebden Bridge become a living wage town with a strong commitment to green jobs, education and training*

The second core principle that Incredible Edible Mytholm would like to see in the revised Hebden Bridge action plan is the need to reduce economic inequalities within the town - specifically, to make Hebden Bridge a living wage town.

Calderdale Council already aims to reduce inequalities through its *Narrowing the Gap* policy. This commits the Council to working “*to ensure that the differences in health, quality of life and economic prosperity between different communities in Calderdale be reduced*”.

Making Hebden Bridge a Living Wage Town simply extends Calderdale Council’s *Narrowing the Gap* policy so that it also aims to reduce differences in economic prosperity etc within the community - as well as between communities.

Although Calder Ward population data show that the ward is slightly better off than the rest of Calderdale, there are significant income inequalities within Hebden Bridge. Many young people are unable to earn enough to pay rent or a mortgage on houses in the town. As a result, they have to move elsewhere. Making sure that Hebden Royd jobs pay a living wage would help solve this problem.

For these reasons, Incredible Edible Mytholm would like to see the revised Hebden Bridge Action plan adopt a commitment to making Hebden Bridge a [living wage town](#). We think this commitment would lead to a different set of proposals for the local economy, which would include important issues of:

- Training and education - IEM would like to see this as a core element of the HB Action Plan. This issue is already on HR Town Council’s agenda. They recently wrote to Craig Whittaker MP complaining about his support for abolishing the Agricultural Wages Board and noting the need for agricultural education and training so that young people have a way into a farming career. Education and training isn’t just Calderdale MBC Adult Education provision, there are sector-specific skills boards for all industries, not just Lantra. IEM would like the HB Action Plan to consider ways of taking advantage of all

- sources of education and training, including all the sector skills boards.
- the need to develop green jobs across all sectors
 - the importance of trades union representation in local government partnership organisations, particularly the automatic inclusion of Calderdale Trades Council on all local government partnership organisations.

5. *Incredible Edible Mytholm as a partner in the Action Plan*

IEM has applied to become a member of the Hebden Bridge Partnership.

As well as being involved in the kind of big picture rethink of the draft action plan outlined above, IEM would also like to:

- be a partner in Local Economy proposals 12-18, particularly in relation to item 15 and items 12, 16 and 17, all of which relate to Incredible Edible Mytholm's proposed sustainable food business plan
- be a partner in items 26 and 27, which relate to Incredible Edible Mytholm's proposed sustainable food business, Green Food Adventures
- be a partner in proposals for Greening the Valley

The Green Food Adventures draft business plan includes a proposed green visitor attraction and an eco hotel, so we are interested in a town marketing strategy and visitor economy and strategy group. Farmers' market is definitely a central IEM Green Food Adventures concern.

IEM's interest in making the transition to the low carbon economy and making HB a living wage town means we would like to be involved in working on proposals for developing the local economy - in ways that would require a major rethink, as outlined above, with regard to sustainable food and farming, creating a circular economy, the creation of green jobs etc.

IEM appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft HB 2020 Action Plan.