What is the Haslingden Task Force?

The Task Force is aimed at bringing together people who are involved with services or activities in Haslingden to identify key regeneration issues affecting the town and potential projects or activities which could be delivered to help to boost the economy.

An amount of £100,000 has been ring-fenced by Rossendale Borough Council to support the Task Force, and the money may be used solely for the delivery of a project / activities or may be used to bid for extra funding, as some funding providers require applicants to already have some funding in place which they will then match.

The group has been meeting since 2014 and is chaired by Leader of Rossendale Borough Council Cllr Alyson Barnes and meetings are co-ordinated by the Regeneration team of the Council.

What has been delivered so far?

- Car parking signage reviewed and new signs put up
- Proposals developed for changes to on street parking - to improve safety and allow people to shop and residents to park
- New and extra Christmas lights put up and successful Christmas lights switch on and market event held in December 2015
- New CCTV camera installed at the top of Deardengate
Community Clear Up Day held in March 2015 and Clean for The Queen clean up event held on March 2016 in conjunction with Love Haslingden

Haslingden in Bloom – 74 hanging baskets have been installed on businesses and poles throughout the town

**Current priorities**

The Task Force has put together an action plan and identified the following actions as priorities for the regeneration of the town centre:

- Shop Front Improvement Scheme
- Town Centre branding and website
- Chewing gum removal / deep pavement cleanse

**Shop Front Improvement Scheme – grants of up to £2000**

Rossendale Borough Council has provided funding through the Haslingden Task Force for the scheme which aims to encourage town centre shops and businesses to improve the appearance of their shops with a view to supporting the growth of local businesses and promoting the image of the local area and encouraging visitors.

In December and January all shops and businesses in the town centre - on Higher and Lower Deardengate, Manchester Road Blackburn Road - were invited to submit an Expression of Interest in the scheme through which 50% grants would be
provided by Rossendale BC to shop / business owners within a defined boundary of Haslingden Town Centre. The maximum grant available per business is £2,000 with the Balance of monies to be paid by the shop / business owner.

Works to be carried out to shop front and at ground level only and to include new windows, doors, repainting, exterior cleaning, repainting/repairing/improving of shutters (but not new shutters or other external security), canopies, signage, repair of brickwork, re-pointing, lighting.

There has been a great response to the scheme and 27 Expressions of Interest were received by the deadline of 22 January. Works requested include new signage, painting, lighting, new doors and windows. With such a good response, the scheme has the potential to make a real difference to the appearance of the town centre.

We are now going through the expressions of interest and will shortly be getting back to businesses with details of how to move on with the works. Works will need to comply with Rossendale Council’s Shopfront Design Guide and as most will also require planning permission, special drop in sessions are being arranged in Haslingden to provide help and advice on applying for planning permission and building regulations approval.

**Town Centre branding and website**

The Task Force is working with Osprey, the company that worked on the Visit Rossendale visitor guide and website, to develop projects to promote Haslingden town centre. Ideas being discussed include a web style, brand, lamp post banners and town centre trail guide to give Haslingden an identity and position the town as a destination for visitors.

The Task Force is also working with Love Haslingden to support their ideas and plans for promoting Haslingden.

**Chewing gum removal / deep pavement cleanse**

Rossendale firm, Gumblasters, will be deep cleaning the pavements in Haslingden town centre to remove chewing gum etc. from the streets. Work will start on 21 March and will take about 12 days and will make a big difference to the pavements in the town centre.

**What else is the Task Force working on?**

- Victoria Park Outdoor Gym
- Rising Bridge Roundabout
- On Street Parking Proposals
Victoria Park Outdoor Gym

Working with Friends of Victoria Park, funding has been secured to install an outdoor gym in Victoria Park in Haslingden. The gym will be installed at the end of the path opposite the main entrance and will feature 6 pieces of equipment designed to work as a circuit exercising different muscle groups. The outdoor gym is fully inclusive and will include full instructions on how to use the different pieces of equipment as well as QR codes to access a qualified gym instructor via a smart phone.

The equipment will be installed by early April, in time for school holidays and the better Spring weather..

Rising Bridge Roundabout

Haslingden Neighbourhood Forum identified improvements to Rising Bridge roundabout as a key priority for the area, particularly in terms of safety and
It is good news for local communities that Highways England is to begin a comprehensive £4.5 million scheme to provide safe pedestrian crossings and designated cycle routes, linking villages, schools and businesses on either side of the busy A56 Rising Bridge roundabout near Haslingden.

Work to transform the roundabout will take around twelve weeks beginning in February with new lighting. New traffic lights will then be installed, and the carriageway resurfaced and redesigned to include dedicated cycle lanes. New landscaping will follow. The scheme is due for completion in May 2016. A web page has been set up for local people and drivers who use the A56 to access information about the scheme, the work and the traffic management plans.

http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/road-projects/A56-Rising-Bridge-Roundabout

The scheme will feature ‘intelligent’ traffic lights, which will use sensors in the road to monitor traffic approaching from each direction and adjust the lights accordingly. The lights will allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross when it is safest to do so, and will remain on green for longer at the busiest junctions.

Highways England have consulted with local residents groups, businesses and head teachers and it’s been on the agenda for the Task Force.
Rossendale Borough Council Leader and Chair of Haslingden Task Force, Cllr Alyson Barnes, has welcomed the work saying; “We’re really pleased to announce this scheme and planned improvements to the roundabout. This has always been a key priority for Haslingden Neighbourhood Forum and it is credit to the forum to see this confirmation of work. People in the Haslingden area will benefit from the proposals vastly and we’re pleased to be working together with Highways England on the road and pedestrian safety improvements.”

**On Street Parking Proposals**

Following discussions at Task Force meetings, proposals were put forward to Lancashire County Council (LCC) to:

- Extend the parking bays (30 minutes) on Blackburn Rd to nearer the main junction of Blackburn Rd / Manchester Rd / Deardengate

As a result of the proposals, LCC have reviewed on street parking in Haslingden centre and have made the following proposals in addition to those above.
The proposals are aimed at tightening up existing parking restrictions to make it clear that there is no parking where it is necessary to have restrictions in place, but also to create extra parking where possible for residents and shoppers.

**Warner St:**

- Create loading bay by the Health Centre
- Create no loading restrictions at the junction with Manchester Road

**Deardengate:**

- Put double yellow lines on the corner of Warner St and Lower Deardengate, on the right hand side of Lower and Higher Deardengate (opposite the parking bays) – i.e. tighten up existing restrictions to make it clear you can’t park.

**Blackburn Road:**

- Put double yellow lines by the garage and market up to the junction with Deardengate
- Remove restrictions further up Blackburn Road outside numbers 56 – 66
Bank Street:

- Put double yellow lines on both sides – road is too narrow to stop.

These are proposals at this stage – not set in stone. LCC will undertake formal consultation but in the meantime if you have any comments, please send them to alisonwilkins@rossendalebc.gov.uk

If you have any queries regarding LCC Highways / Parking Enforcement issues please contact 0300 123 6780 or enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk


What opportunities are there for me to get involved in the Task Force?

Traders are welcome to be involved in the Haslingden Task Force, directly or indirectly. You can attend meetings or be kept up to date via a Newsletter. If you would like to received information about Task Force meetings, please contact Alison Wilkins – details below.

Haslingden Traders Group is a member of the Task Force.

Next Task Force Meeting - Thursday 17 March, 6pm at Haslingden Community Link.

For more information on any items in this Newsletter please contact alisonwilkins@rossendalebc.gov.uk 01706 252593.