# THE HENFIELD COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP WEBSITE: A DISCUSSION PAPER

## Introduction

In the earlier part of 2018, I was asked to take a look at the existing website for the Henfield Community Partnership, by the chair of the HCP, with a view to making observations and possible recommendations for its purpose and content, format, platform and maintenance. The current website, on the Wordpress platform, had not been updated for some time, and it was felt that a re-evaluation would be worthwhile. I have done as requested, and this paper contains my personal views on the future of the HCP website.

## The current website

The current, formal website can be seen at:

[www.henfieldcp.org](www.henfieldcp.org)

My view is that the website as it stands does not contain as much information about the HCP as it could, in that it does not describe the full range of activities carried out by the HCP. It is also not up to date. I should say most emphatically here that this is *not* a criticism of the person(s) responsible for the initial creation of the website. Maintenance of such an information platform on a regular basis can be a very time-consuming job, as I know from personal experience, and it would be unfair to make negative comments about effort given freely for the community. My intention in this paper, therefore, is to make positive recommendations for the website and, with that in mind, I have created an alternative, temporary website which demonstrates some of those recommendations. This can be found at:

[www.henfield,cp.weebly.com](www.henfield,cp.weebly.com)

## Recommendations

## 1. Purpose and content

The aim of the HCP, as set out in the original website, is:

*to work together on issues and projects of interest and concern to Henfield and its surrounding communities, in order to secure its long term viability as a centre for social, business and cultural activities, and to maintain its particular character and heritage.*

The website, therefore, should contain full and up-to-date information about the activities of the Partnership – project planning, progress and achievements – set out in a clear, logical and accessible way. Basic Committee membership names

and positions should be included as a matter of transparency, as well as HCP documents such as agendas and minutes. Where possible, documents produced under the aegis of the Partnership should also be accessible on the website, either as HTML documents or as downloadable files. It need hardly be said that a "contact" form for basic questions or comments should be included and - in my view - kept as a separate entity from any form for potential membership.

## 2. Format

2.1 The test website has been created broadly in the style of the original website, for simplicity's sake, but with some changes in layout and content – all of which can be altered as required. The large photographs which headed each page have been reduced in size so that there is less need to scroll down the screen to read basic content.

2.2 The original website pages each contained some information about the activities of the Partnership. I have changed the "HCP Events" page to "Activities" and brought together all the activity-style information from other pages on to one page.

2.3 Where possible, I have brought relevant documents produced by, or under the aegis of the HCP, on to the website – mainly by exploring outside links such as the Henfield Hub – downloading or scanning those documents and adding PDFs as links to them on the website. So, for example, the Directory of Services for Older People now sits on the HCP website and can be downloaded as required.

2.4 The HCP Action Plan and its updates are now also available in full on the website.

## 3. Platform

3.1 The original website uses Wordpress as its operational platform. My personal preference, from many possibilities, is to use Weebly as the platform for the HCP website, and this has been used for the test website. I have used Weebly for many other websites, personal and commercial, and my experience is that it is very simple and clear to use – more so than Wordpress. It can cater for members who wish to log on to any confidential papers or discussions that might be hosted on the website, and it can host guest editors, should the main editor be unavailable to update it.

3.2 Using Weebly, or any platform other than Wordpress, necessarily requires a consideration of the website domain and URL. The original website has the registered domain name [www.henfieldcp.org](www.henfieldcp.org). This could obviously not be used

for the test website, so I have used the (free) alternative [www.henfieldcp.weebly.com](http://www.henfieldcp.weebly.com) for the moment. Should the HCP decide to use Weebly as the platform for a new, revised website, then the options for domain naming are as follows:

- Use a new name for the HCP website, e.g. [www.henfieldcp.net](http://www.henfieldcp.net) and "point" the old name (.org) to it. This allows the Partnership to retain the use of the old URL should other platforms be used in future. "Pointing" the .org domain to the new name means that any old links to the original domain get automatically displayed under the new name. This method was used successfully for the Henfield Gardens & Arts website.
- Transfer the original name to Weebly in full.
- Retain the temporary domain name of weebly.com – which is free.

## 4. Maintenance

4.1 Any website needs to be maintained, and it matters little what changes are made to the platform if information about the activities of the Partnership is not kept constantly up-to-date. If the Committee approves, I would be happy to maintain the website for the foreseeable future and would recommend that another member of the Committee be added as an additional website editor.

4.2 Changes and additions to the content would, naturally, be made under the guidance of the Committee.

## Costs

5.1 As stated above, the use of the weebly.com domain name is free.

5.2 Beyond the free facility, there are various domain plans with increasing facilities and higher charges, ranging from "personal" to "pro" to "business". Should we proceed with the updated website, the costs for the "pro" subscription – pro being for Groups & Organizations – is:

- $18 month-to-month
- $144 for an annual subscription (i.e. $12 a month)
- $216 for a 2-year subscription (i.e. $9 a month)

There is also a small charge for the domain name registration.

Mike Ainscough

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