

David Moore: what makes Horsham attractive to shoppers?



All town centres are in continual competition with the attractions or advantages offered by other towns, out of town shopping areas and online shopping.

Horsham is a good example of a town centre that has survived in these challenging times.

This has been achieved by getting a reasonable mix of businesses within the town, the growth of the town's markets and the successful

pedestrianisation of much of the centre.

The large expansion in the number of cafés and restaurants has also played its part in making Horsham a place where people wish to shop.

However, like all success stories, you're only as good as yesterday and continual attention to detail is required to maintain the impetus.

One important consideration in this respect is access to the centre both for local residents and people from outside, who choose to shop in our town.

If our success story continues and numbers grow, ease of access will become more and more important.

For this reason, we have to keep an eye on the four main

ways in which people come into the town, namely by public transport, car, bicycle and of course by foot.

Public transport can always be improved but at least we have a bus station located to bring passengers directly into the town centre.

If we continue to attract people from outside the town, we're bound to see an increase in the number of cars on the roads.

We already have the challenge presented to us by Albion Way, the race track which cuts off part of Horsham from the centre.

We really need to find a solution to this problem as it will only get worse as the traffic numbers increase.

Cycling in most towns is unfinished business and our

town is no different.

We need to have proper cycle routes for cyclists to use so that they are not competing with cars and the like and at the same time not compromising pedestrian safety by cycling on pavements.

Hopefully, we'll see some progress made in this area with the recently announced new cycling initiative for our area.

Finally, we have to consider pedestrian access to the centre.

Many people already put their lives at risk by walking into the town across Albion Way.

There is an alternative route using the subway under Albion Way from the park to Carfax.

This is an obvious route for

people going to and from the nursery and surgery.

It doesn't help when West Sussex County Council allows the subway to flood on a regular basis, forcing pedestrians, who want to avoid wet feet, to cross Albion Way.

There are no such alternatives for people coming from Bishopric into West Street and consideration needs to be given to the possible rerouting of Albion Way if Bishopric is to be successfully redeveloped.

The challenges are there and it's up to us what we decide to do to deal with them.

What we never want to see is the headline story called 'Horsham, The Decline and Fall of a Market Town'.

It's happened to other towns so let's make sure that it

doesn't happen to us.

The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town.


It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces.


Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone, who shares these concerns.


For more information, visit our website www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 263870.

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