



SHARING KNOWLEDGE: Sedgemoor Manor Junior School pupils receiving copies of the Somerset Flood Guide at the Bridgwater Challenge open day

Photo by Ian Beech



MAKING THINGS HAPPEN: From left, Paul Hickson, group manager for economic development at Somerset County Council, Cllr Anne Fraser of Sedgemoor District Council, and Jeff Bishop, consultation manager of BDOR

Photo by Ian Beech



VOICING VIEWS: Don and Pat Harris make their thoughts known

Photo by Ian Beech

Shaping town's future

THE public was invited to a day of ideas and enlightenment focused on making the town centre's future brighter.

The Bridgwater Challenge open day at the old Seconds Ahead store in High Street was designed to give people the opportunity to raise any matters with Sedgemoor District Council and put forward ideas to make the town better in years to come – and more than 200 people voicing their opinions.

The event was part of the Bridgwater Challenge initiative, organised by Sedgemoor and planning and environmental management consultant Jeff Bishop of Bristol firm BDOR as a way of getting people to speak out in a bid to revamp the town.

Cllr Anne Fraser, of the North Petherton ward, was there to give her support.

She said: "I think the Bridgwater Challenge is a wonderful way of enga-

ging with the people of the town and giving them an opportunity to say how they would like to see Bridgwater developed."

Cllr Fraser stood on the street outside the store and enticed people to go in and see what was on display, including plans for the future, pictures drawn by children from schools in the area displaying what they want to see in the future, and information on the flood plans.

She said: "I had such a good time getting out there and speaking to people in the street.

"I was chatting and explaining to people what was going on, and I hope it helped people to realise they could just come in for a peek and get involved with the future of Bridgwater."

Sally Jones, a woman who is very involved in the community, said: "I came to see what the day was all about,



Sally Jones was happy to learn more about the plans

Photo by Ian Beech

and I'm glad I did.

"It meant I could speak to people at the council about my concerns, and sometimes that's the best thing as you know someone is listening to what you are saying.

"I now feel I know a bit more about

what is going on."

Louise Davies, of Wembdon Road, also popped along.

She said: "I have mixed feelings because we've had a lot of things promised to us as residents and we have had nothing back.

"One of the main points I wanted to raise was about the swimming pool, which is a valuable source of fun for everyone, and I want to keep it in the centre of town."

Another Wembdon resident at the event was 24-year-old architect Justin Morris.

He said: "I think it's a good idea to get the people of the area involved in the planning of the town.

"One of the biggest problems in Bridgwater is there are not enough job opportunities, and I'd like to see that rectified."

Further events are planned for the near future.



SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME: Youngsters viewing the exhibition displays

Photo by Ian Beech

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