This chapter records
and summarises the first
CreekTeam workshop

5.1 Purpose of workshop

The first CreekTeam workshop was a two-day event. The objectives were to:

- Inaugurate the Team and introduce collaborative working;
- Get the Team to start thinking generally about the character and quality of the place rather than specific projects;
- Identify a series of strategic objectives that could be used in later workshops to assess emerging options, and
- Start to build consensus around a shared vision.

5.2 Organisation details

The workshop took place at Abbey School, on Friday 13th June 2008 (5.30-7.30pm) and on Saturday 14th June (9.45am-3pm). A list of attendees is presented in Appendix A

5.3 Workshop format & agenda

The two half-day sessions were run to a tight agenda as follows.

Day 1

The first day started with a presentation based around three topics:

- Who are the CreekTeam members?
- Role of Creek Team (examples of Creek Teams in practice); and
- What is an Area Action Plan (AAP)?

This was followed by a 'Placecheck' exercise. This involved groups accompanied by facilitators, who conducted a tour around the Creek to identify positive and negative features, and strengths, constraints and opportunities for development, using a pro-forma checklist.

Day 2

The second day was divided into four sessions:

- Firstly, groups provided feedback on the Placecheck from the previous day.
- This was followed by a PowerPoint presentation by Urban Initiatives on "making successful places" and discussing what could be learned from other places.
- After the presentation, the Team were asked to use the knowledge they had gained from the presentation and work in small groups to generate ideas on what would make Faversham Creek successful. Each group was provided with maps, pens and paper to make notes and facilitate the discussion. A member from each group then provided feedback to the rest of the Team.
- Finally, six themes were identified as strategic issues that may need to be considered for the future of Faversham Creek. The Team was asked to choose workshop groups to join based on these themes and invited to provide feedback from their discussions at the end of the session.

What's our agenda for change?

5.4 Workshop outputs

The Team provided a significant amount of information over the course of the two days.

Day 1

The main points raised from Day 1's Placecheck exercise were as follows:

- The Creek is an important asset to the town, providing a distinct character and a sense of place, scale and cultural identity. However, navigation needs to be improved;
- The cultural and historic assets on the Creekside are associated with the traditional employment uses. Important features include Standard Quay and Iron Wharf and the traditional maritime skills retained in the area;
- There are poor routes and connections. There are no continuous routes around the Creek and paths often pull away from the historic environment. There are also poor physical and visual connections between the town and the creek;
- Piecemeal development around the creek and issues of incompatible uses, such as the oil and bus depots;
- New development does not reflect the traditional character of the area, and many are blocking views to historic buildings;
- Many of the positive features are underused, such as Town Quay and Crab Island;
- There is a need to improve tourist and visitor attractions; and
- There is a need to enhance connections to the countryside.

Day 2

Day 2's first session on "How to make Faversham Creek more successful" highlighted the Team's aspirations for the area. These included:
- Creating a distinctive sense of place through the creation of a unique "Faversham style";
- Making the Creek a vibrant place that is active all year round;
- Providing a mix of uses and introduction of more diverse employment opportunities;
- Improving connections to the town, countryside and local communities;
- Improving green/ public open spaces; and
- Maximising leisure uses of the creek and improving navigability.

In Day 2's final session, the participants agreed a number of themes for further discussion in 'break-out' groups. Below are some of the key points raised during this intensive session. Some of the points raised were similar to those raised on Day 1, to avoid repetition they have not been repeated.

Water and Habitats:

- Retain a tidal creek;
- Improve management of the bridge, to allow more sluicing and access to the basin;
- The basin sluice currently has a minor fault which has reduced the effectiveness of flushing, this should be fixed to reduce the cost of maintaining the Creek in order to reduce silting;
- The allotments and Stonebridge Ponds should be made more accessible, and
- The potential for tourism linked to the local habitats should be explored.

Heritage and Culture, and Communities:

- Historic buildings should be brought back in to use;
- Provide better communication of heritage in the area; and
- Improve the public realm.

Connectivity and Uses and Activities:

- Need to improve accessibility to the creek;
- Many junctions prevent or discourage access to the creek;
- There needs to be improved signage;
- Development potential around the creek should be maximised, and
- There should be more facilities for teenagers around the creek.