



informed solutions

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

Report

Spring 2022



Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

1.1 Introduction & Project Overview

Introduction to The Retail Group

The Retail Group is a specialist management consultancy that provides informed solutions about consumers' future needs for a wide range of retail and property clients. The philosophy of our business is "to improve our clients' business through our understanding of shoppers, their shopping habits, businesses and the skills of retailing".

For retail property clients and local authorities, we offer objective and carefully researched retail strategies based on detailed awareness and analysis of national and local retail markets. We ensure that proposed developments target and satisfy the future needs and aspirations of all local consumers.

Our clients appreciate the down-to-earth approach to researching individual centres and our ability to clearly state the reasons for trading in a particular location. Our retail strategies encompass all town / village centre operators including multiple businesses, independents, service, catering and leisure operators.

We have defined future town centre and place strategies for over 250 locations covering all sizes and types, from market towns like Morpeth and Frome, to sub-regional towns like Ashford and Livingston, to regional destinations such as Birmingham and Bluewater. Our consumer oriented methodology and approach also enables us to work on iconic locations like Wembley, Greenwich Peninsula and Spitalfields.

Since the Covid Pandemic started we have helped over 50 centres as well as over 500 independent businesses plan to recover and thrive.

Locations we have worked in and near Mid Sussex include Crawley, Redhill, Horsham, Brighton, Tonbridge and East Grinstead.

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

1.2 Introduction & Project Overview

Project Overview

Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) clearly set out the objectives and criteria for the Action Plans in the project brief / ITT. The objectives are aligned with the strands and parameters of the HMG Welcome Back Fund, which is funding the development of the individual action plans. While the Action Plans have been commissioned by MSDC utilising Welcome Back Funding they have been prepared for and with the Parish Councils to provide them with research input and suggested future improvement actions for each of the centres.

The requirements of the brief are summarised as:

The action plans will need to identify the challenges for each location, specified with input from the Parish Councils, Ward Councillors and key stakeholders such as businesses. Consideration will need to be given to the individual character and nature of each village centre with action plans required to identify viable, deliverable and realistic short, medium and long term actions, that will provide direction and help to future proof these important village centres.

The outputs will include individual action plans for the five identified villages (noting that two 'villages' will each consist of two small centres), these include Lindfield, Cuckfield, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks & Keymer, and Crawley Down & Copthorne.

For each village centre, the action plan is based on a variety of research streams, including **extensive stakeholder engagement** (through individual surveys and collective workshops), a **comprehensive local business engagement** survey, an **objective review of the village centre** and its appeal, an overview of **current 'place' trends, review of existing information** including the retail health checks completed by Nexus Planning as part of the Retail Study update and detailed analysis.

Each action plan is bespoke to the needs of each village, its residents, customers and existing businesses.

This is a single report for Crawley Down and Copthorne, the actions at the end are mostly applicable to both. In some cases specific actions are identified.

The next steps will be for the Parish Council to review and work together with stakeholders as relevant to help deliver and implement activity in each of the villages. The Action Plans at the end of the report provide columns to be populated as part of this process.

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

2.0 Crawley Down Retail Review

Village Centre Overview; Crawley Down

Crawley Down Village Centre is located away from the main Turners Hill Road (The B2028) which connects East Grinstead to Ardingly and eventually Haywards Heath. It is not visible to the traffic on this busy road.

That said, Crawley Down Village Centre is a clear and identifiable centre. It is concentrated around Station Road, and Old Station Close which indicates the history and set up of the centre being aligned to the former railway line. Now closed and a popular cycling, walking and dog exercise facility.

Aside from the closed pub Royal Oak, about which there is continued ongoing local pressure and hope for re-opening as a pub and / or expanded community facilities, the centre is pretty much occupied and visibly popular / busy.

The centre isn't 'announced' on arrival, however it has visible impact due to the concentration of businesses and parking / wide pavements. The remote signage to the centre can be misleading, to anyone not familiar or new to the area. It could be more consistent and accurate.

The centre has a good range of convenience food offers, from the small Co-op, a popular butchers, pharmacy, bakers, etc. There are also service providers such as hair, beauty, barbers and dentists. The Carriage is a contemporary restaurant, bar, and coffee shop that has expanded and increased its presence in the centre. Having opened and arrived after the closure of the pub (more or less opposite).

There is a small playground close to the shops and the previously mentioned Worth Way visitor attraction / walk / cycle route.

Whilst the offer is good and active, the general condition of the centre feels tired, tatty and a little unloved. Pavements, building exteriors, closed pub and poor message boards all add to this tired positioning. Which is at odds with many of the business shop fronts.

A popular and busy centre, clearly serving a strong local community.

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

2.0 Crawley Down Retail Review cont'd.

Crawley Down Strengths

Crawley Down Village Centre has 'strengths' including the following:

- Readily identifiable centre
- Critical mass of businesses
- Convenience, daily purchases offer
- Choice and variety in convenience
- Additional service provision
- Worth Way passing by
- Good and plentiful parking



Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

2.0 Crawley Down Retail Review cont'd.

Crawley Down Weaknesses

Crawley Down Village Centre has 'weaknesses' including the following:

- Lack of 'arrival' or welcome signage
- Poor first impressions, particularly of the pub and its surrounds and Co-op exterior opposite
- Remote businesses not promoted as part of the centre
- Community facilities not promoted within the centre
- Message boards and notice boards, bins and general facilities
- Remote and directional signage
- Paving and public realm quality
- Disconnect between quality of businesses and public realm
- Long term vacant pub
- Worth Way not really integrated or embraced, signage to and from it



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2.0 Crawley Down Retail Review cont'd.

Crawley Down Opportunities

Crawley Down Village Centre can improve its appeal to local residents and passing visitors / through traffic, and even the many leisure visitors who pass straight by, unaware of its offer and facilities.

It would benefit from clear and relevant branding, much better information, signage and promotion. As per the Cuckfield example shown here top right.

Integrating the remote businesses and the community spaces to attract the users of those busy facilities into the centre and vice versa.

Whilst the Carriage is popular and an asset, there is probably the opportunity for further hospitality offers, café, coffee point and more food offers.

The quality and appeal of the paved areas is poor and could be improved to increase usage by customers.

The centre can feel car dominated as a result of its popularity and mix of offers, as people pop in and out quickly. This is an aspect to be improved.

Crawley Down has many positives to build on. It also has aspects to improve and capitalise on.

Clearly the ongoing vacant / closed pub is a major negative and despite the focussed support of many in the community, remains an eyesore and a missed opportunity.



Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

3.0 Crawley Down Operator Survey: See Appendix 1 for questionnaire. Response dataset of 4 respondents

Results Summary Table, note, due to limited response numbers we have not produced graphs for analysis

Research Area / Question	Findings Summary
Reasons why customers are in Crawley Down	Shop / Live nearby
How often do your customers typically visit Crawley Down?	Daily visit pattern
How has customer behaviour changed since Covid?	Visiting less frequently
How have you changed / adapted?	No changes for many, click and collect
How satisfied are you with long term performance?	4/4 'satisfied'
What are the highest priority recovery actions?	Events, more promotion and community activity
How should the centre improve its offer?	Improved transport, more promotion, more day time food offers
How should the experience improve?	Varied improvements to public realm lighting, pavements, signage, cleaner, tidier
What are the main strengths?	Not many identified, local community, the village atmosphere
What are the weaknesses?	Not many mentioned, lack of policing, irregular buses, small Co-op
Outlook?	4/4 'optimistic'
Further info about MSDC business support	4 no replies

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

3.0 Crawley Down Operator Survey cont'd.

Improvement Needs Summary

Considering the feedback received from the sample of Crawley Down businesses, we have summarised the identified areas for improvement below:

- Improve pavements and lighting
- Improve marketing and promotion for collective offer
- Improve information and signage about the offer and distribution
- More events to attract footfall
- Increase the appeal to visitors and promotion to them
- Improve transport links
- Help businesses to adapt and change

Mostly practical improvements in the main.

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4.0 Crawley Down Stakeholder Survey

Overview of Engagement Process

To capture the input of key local stakeholders in Crawley Down, a bespoke survey was developed for the project. See Appendix 2 for questionnaire.

The list was assembled with the Parish Clerk and contained a mixture of ward and parish councillors, as well as representatives from other bodies, businesses and organisations that have a keen interest in helping Crawley Down Village Centre recover and thrive.

Completed surveys were returned from 6 people.

Stakeholders were contacted and asked to complete and return surveys three times in total.

In addition a virtual workshop was held on 10 March 2022 to further explore local issues, improvement areas needed and potential improvement actions. 14 people took part in this workshop.

The following page contains a summary of the combined results / feedback from the stakeholder survey and the stakeholder workshop.

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

4.0 Crawley Down Stakeholder Survey:

Results Summary Table, note due to limited response numbers we have not produced graphs for analysis

Research Area / Question	Findings Summary
What are the three main strengths?	Defined village centre (3), close to community, Parish Council owned land
What are the three main weaknesses?	Closed pub (eyesore) (4), volume of car movements (3), parking, growth of village, size / look of Co-op, lack of community space
Which are the highest priority ongoing recovery actions?	Community activity (5), events (3), visiting markets (3) promotion (2)
How would you like to see the mix and offer improve?	More evening food (5), more markets, events, daytime food, all (3)
How would you like the customer experience to improve?	Seating, signage and toilets (by 4), trees, green, public realm, pavements (3)
How positive are you about the future trading prospects?	5/6 optimistic, no pessimistic
What are your future aspirations for the centre?	Stronger village centre, community space, more of the same, active pub
Are there any benchmark places for the centre to look to?	None identified
Response to agree / disagree statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Its easy to park - Stakeholders work well together - The centre has lots of reasons to visit it - I would use the centre more if there were more evening offers - The centre is easy to get to and use on foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Middling - Middling - Middling - Agree - Agree
Any other comments?	Restore pub to use! CPO the pub, don't expand into a 'town', improve the paved areas, put shops on Council owned land

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5.0 Crawley Down Conclusions

On many levels Crawley Down appears to be a healthy, vibrant and popular village centre. It has a strong convenience offer, which drives daily visits. It has a popular adjoining visitor attraction / venue that could / should deliver additional consumers.

It has a popular contemporary hospitality venue that is relatively new and growing and it has some strong service providers.

However, in addition to the one very obvious issue (a pub that has been closed for some seven years, casting a shadow over the centre physically and commercially) there are a number of other aspects that need improving.

The community facilities are not immediately obvious or connected to the centre.

Some of the 'basics' as in public realm and customer facilities are below standard and in need of improvement. Despite plentiful parking nearby and visible public transport the view is that the existing set up is not helping the village.

Crawley Down needs to bring the quality of the customer experience up to the standards of its better operators.

- Improve the welcome and visibility of the offer
- Integrate / include existing assets, through shared promotion, signage and customer routing
- Improve pavements, seating, notice boards, bins, cleaning

- Lead by example so that Co-op and other businesses step up to the plate

Crawley Down does have other opportunities to improve its appeal and usage

- Identify opportunities to improve parking availability, access, egress to encourage visits
- Create a location in the village centre for visiting pop-up businesses
- Expand the events calendar, publish and promote it. Can existing stakeholders provide social media support?
- Work with all the venues to promote the range of what already goes on, integrate those venues into the centre, through shared promotion and cross over of users
- Encourage more community activity into the village centre

Address the issue of the redundant pub. Implement short term temporary actions / initiatives, whilst working with the owner / future investors regarding the future role of the site. Diverse organisations / bodies such as Historic England, rural bodies / authorities have been involved in feasibility studies for sites. This may be worth exploring.

- Surround the pub in active meanwhile uses
- Use perimeter hoarding for signage, information and welcome
- Contribute to and support any future dedicated feasibility studies

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6.0 Copthorne Retail Review

Village Centre Overviews – Copthorne

Copthorne Village sits to the north of the A264, which connects East Grinstead to Crawley. Copthorne Village is the most northerly part of the district. The village does not have a singular identifiable centre as such, a comment made frequently by the stakeholders of the village. It offers a pleasant experience with many strong visual features.

On many levels Copthorne feels and looks like a residential street that has a few commercial businesses, the odd cluster of businesses and a cluster of social / community leisure uses on it. The pleasant environment is provided by the housing, green spaces and community facilities throughout Copthorne Bank. The commercial businesses offer an experience at odds with the residential quality, not all of them but many.

The dominant features are the Prince Albert pub at the western end (external views could be improved), the park / playground and Village Hall / Social Club in the middle and the Village Hub at the eastern end, a 10 minute walk between the two ends. The Village Hub includes local Council offices (and parking) and community meeting facilities. It also leads to the lovely church and grounds which are hidden from view being below the level of the road network and behind trees.

The commercial offer is limited to a handful of businesses, Copthorne Village Store, post office, hairdressers, florist, pizza takeaway, estate agents, convenience store and a kitchen design store. Other visible attractions include a visibly popular dance studio and a somewhat visually dilapidated doctors surgery (externally).

The village lacks a focal point, and / or the promotion of the whole offer. The road is busy, parking is limited and certainly poor by the village store and other cluster. The park / playground could be a focal point but is difficult to access. The bus stop blights access to the village store. The village hall and Hub project negative messages through the stringent parking signage. The pub has a vacant plot beside it and a large untidy car park that could be a strong community facility.

Clearly residents care, as demonstrated by tidy homes and gardens. The various community facilities could and probably are a significant draw, however they are not featured or made visibly accessible. There is no clear information about what they are used for regularly or how to access and or hire them.

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6.0 Copthorne Retail Review cont'd.

Copthorne Strengths

Copthorne Village Centre has 'strengths' including the following:

- The Church and Village Hub
- Playground and park
- Community facilities, doctors' surgery and dance studio
- Copthorne Village Stores and post office
- Service businesses and pizza take-away
- Residential homes and gardens



Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

6.0 Copthorne Retail Review cont'd.

Copthorne Weaknesses

Copthorne Village Centre has 'weaknesses' including the following:

- Lack of 'arrival' or welcome signage
- Poor first impressions, particularly of the pub and its surrounds
- Remote businesses not promoted as part of the centre
- The disconnected / limited impact of the church and Village Hub
- Access to and visibility of playground and park
- External views of doctors' surgery
- Lack of available and signposted parking
- Connectivity of all the parts
- Focal point
- Limited offer, limited collective promotion



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6.0 Copthorne Retail Review cont'd.

Copthorne Opportunities

Copthorne Village Centre can improve its appeal to local residents and even passing visitors / through traffic. It has opportunities to improve the welcome and sense of arrival, to create a stronger 'sense of place' and to be easier to use more of its components more often:

- Introduce place and welcome signage, emulate Cuckfield (top right)
- Use similar signs to announce the key and hidden components, reminding people of what is available
- Make the centre easier to use, encourage all assets to 'open up' parking to visitors and residents for the benefit of all residents and businesses
- In the mid term look at creating a village focal point, use the space around the playground / park to create a safer playground, set back from the road, accommodate some short term parking for playground users, village store and other business users. Open up views to Village Hall and Social Club (where there is more parking)
- Create a clearly defined Copthorne Village Centre, through the use of signage and eventual place making. The village centre can be the full run of Copthorne Bank, from the pub at one end to the Parish Hub at the other.

Start with simple / basic signage and promotion of existing assets, then improve ease of use, whilst planning for the structural improvements.



Crawley Down and Cophorne Village Centres Action Plan

7.0 Cophorne Operator Survey: See Appendix 1 for questionnaire. Response dataset of 5 respondents, which equates to circa 50% of active businesses in village during survey

Results Summary Table, note due to limited response numbers we have not produced graphs for analysis

Research Area / Question	Findings Summary
Reasons why customers are in Cophorne	Live nearby, shopping
How often do your customers typically visit Cophorne Village Centre?	Daily or multiple times a week
How has customer behaviour changed since Covid?	Visiting less frequently
How have you changed / adapted?	No changes for many, click and collect, basic website
How satisfied are you with long term performance?	4/5 'satisfied'
What are the highest priority recovery actions?	Events, community activity, promotion of offer / safety
How should the centre improve its offer?	Events, improve visibility, improve variety
How should the experience improve?	Improve lighting, pavements, parking
What are the main strengths?	Not many identified, mentioned by a single business, near Crawley, community, clean, independent businesses
What are the weaknesses?	Not many mentioned, two for parking, single mentions for near Gatwick, lighting, pavements
Outlook?	5/5 'optimistic'
Further info about MSDC business support	2 for newsletter, 3 no replies

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

7.0 Copthorne Operator Survey cont'd.

Improvement Needs Summary

Considering the feedback received from the sample of Copthorne businesses, we have summarised the identified areas for improvement below:

- Making it easier to park in the village
- Improve pavements and lighting
- Improve marketing and promotion for collective offer
- Improve information and signage about the offer and distribution
- Increase the visibility and impact of shops and businesses
- More events to attract footfall
- Increase the appeal to visitors and promotion to them
- Help businesses to adapt and grow

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8.0 Copthorne Stakeholder Survey

Overview of Engagement Process

To capture the input of key local stakeholders in Copthorne, a bespoke survey was developed for the project. See Appendix 2 for questionnaire.

The list was assembled with the Parish Clerk and contained a mixture of ward and parish councillors, as well as representatives from other bodies, businesses and organisations that have a keen interest in helping Copthorne Village Centre recover and thrive.

Completed surveys were returned from 6 people.

Stakeholders were contacted and asked to complete and return surveys three times in total.

In addition a virtual workshop was held on 10 March 2022 to further explore local issues, improvement areas needed and potential improvement actions. 14 people took part in this workshop.

The following page contains a summary of the combined results / feedback from the stakeholder survey and the stakeholder workshop.

Crawley Down and Cophorne Village Centres Action Plan

8.0 Cophorne Stakeholder Survey

Results Summary Table, note due to limited response numbers we have not produced graphs for analysis

Research Area / Question	Findings Summary
What are the three main strengths?	Village green (3), access (2), rec ground, church, school, safe, locals
What are the three main weaknesses?	Parking (3), no retail strip (3), crossing points, traffic, power for green, bus stop location, pinch point
Which are the highest priority ongoing recovery actions?	Community activity (3), markets and events (3) signage / promotion
How would you like to see the mix and offer improve?	More variety (3), events (2), arts / culture (2), market (2), signage, visibility
How would you like the customer experience to improve?	Pavements (3), lighting (3), parking (4), heritage (2), cyclists (2)
How positive are you about the future trading prospects?	Mainly middling, 2 respondents are positive (no pessimists)
What are your future aspirations for the centre?	Stay a 'village'. Improve the pub, more facilities, clearer centre
Are there any benchmark places for the centre to look to?	Lindfield, Turners Hill
Response to agree / disagree statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Its easy to park - Stakeholders work well together - The centre has lots of reasons to visit it - I would use the centre more if there were more evening offers - The centre is easy to get to and use on foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disagree - Middling - Middling to disagree - Agree - Agree, with reservation
Any other comments?	Build on the fantastic events, bonfire, carnival, improve current offer / assets, sort out 'the centre debate'

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

9.0 Copthorne Conclusions

Copthorne is an unusual centre, it doesn't feel like it has a centre. That said it is quite a large centre when the two bookends are considered. The small description is applicable to the number and scale of commercial businesses / premises.

There are a number of quite large assets to build on: the Hub, church, rec and playground, immediate residents, village stores and post office, Village Hall and Social Club. Many of these don't feel integrated or even welcoming to users of the centre.

The opportunity is less about adding new attractions or permanent offers, it is about making the most of what is already in place, making it an easy and desirable centre to use for a variety of reasons. Creating the needed focal point. Adding visiting and occasional events / offers.

Being a welcoming and convenient centre.

Copthorne needs to promote and improve visibility of the various assets / strengths

- Improve the welcome and visibility of the offer
- Integrate / include existing assets, through shared promotion, signage and customer routing.
- Include the park, recreation grounds, church, community venues
- Celebrate the existing offers, including those nearby. Include non permanent offers, markets, events and festivals

Copthorne does have issues to address and improve

- Identify opportunities to improve parking to encourage visits
- Improve the basic pedestrian usage, pavements, crossing points
- Increase the ease of use to drive visits
- Create a location in the village centre for visiting pop-up businesses
- Expand the events calendar, publish and promote it. Can existing stakeholders provide social media support?
- Work with all the venues to promote the range of what already goes on
- Encourage more community activity into the village centre

Address and implement the quick win short term improvements, whilst the fundamental issues are considered as part of a longer term plan

- Signage, information and welcome
- Promotion and additional activity
- Improve the facilities and ease of use
- Develop a focal point that can provide a wealth of improvements and facilities

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan – please note actions are applicable to both villages unless individually specified in the action

Short Term

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
<p>Create a series of information boards at all main arrival points and nodal points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feature 'what's on' this week / month, in the village centre - Promote ongoing events - Include community activity - Include village plan highlighting assets, physical and 'experience' such as Church maze / Worth Way - Include the Worth Way on the Crawley Down information boards and offer maps 			
<p>Develop and expand the existing events programme, identify a single lead local stakeholder such as residents' group, clerk, social club. Their role is to coordinate the events calendar, not to deliver events (except their own). It's not policing or enforcing, but encouraging, facilitating and curating. It could be revenue generating if it can also provide advice and services to events organisers. It can promote 'gaps' in the calendar for new events / activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with all local community and social / activity groups to explore opportunities for individual themed or linked local events - Copthorne has a number of established successful events to build from - Crawley Down stakeholders see events as a strong opportunity area - Exploring events for and by existing local community groups is key 			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Short Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
<p>Develop and promote more local celebrations, themed events, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Captured in Copthorne (to celebrate the variety of the uses) - On the Up in Crawley Down (to promote new activity) - Walking Down to Crawley Down (walks in, to and from the village, using Worth Way, always to / from local F&B) - Springtime in or Summertime in (both centres). Celebrate local seasonal produce, use surrounding agricultural vehicles and businesses as an asset also to balance the Bonfire and Christmas focus. Classic village fetes and fairs <p>These will need specific promotion and to include existing businesses. There may be the opportunity to invite additional operators. Include businesses that may not be operating in the villages, but nearby</p>			
<p>Develop the 'What On in Copthorne and Crawley Down' promotions action groups, a dedicated group that looks to promote each village as a collective, as well as the businesses that operate within it. The group would need resource and budget, this might be available as a pump prime facility via the Council – look at the Discover Malmesbury website as a template. It has become self funding.</p> <p>Include nearby facilities as part of the village offer, hotels, farm shops, golf courses</p>			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Short Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
Test additional themed markets or small clusters of mobile / pop-up businesses, both additional regular themed (complementary, not competing) markets; and irregular themed mini event markets. Work with local businesses and / or producers to create local themes, makers, growers, producers, wholesalers, designers and so on. These can range from individual vehicles or stalls to groups. Crawley Down to lead, Copthorne to follow			
A potential quick win opportunity is to review and replace a number of low quality street furniture items that are out of keeping with the quality of the shops and businesses. This includes, bins, some seating, cycle racks, signage and information points. Also improve planters and green spaces within the centres, support gardens. Crawley Down more than Copthorne, although Copthorne has needs as well			
It is also essential that improved cleaning is provided in Crawley Down			
Publicise the walking guides for visitors and residents. Create specific ones for dog walking, families / young children, and so on. Available as hard copy / downloads			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Short Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
<p>Use visiting and pop-up businesses to increase the daily needs offer of the village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify a specific location for additional mobile retail offers (think busker 'mats' in the London Underground) and promote the availability of the space. It will need to be central to the village, in Copthorne outside the Village Hall, in Crawley Down in front of and around the pub, or on pavement in front of McColl's, possibly replacing on street parking, even on a temporary basis - Spaces could be given priority to established local / Mid Sussex businesses, in time they will need to pay a rental / hire fee. This could go into a dedicated promotional fund. Priority for businesses that add choice and are regularly used 			
Any visiting, pop up or temporary uses need to be promoted as part of the village offer, both in the village, and its assets (community venues) and on its website / social media			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Short Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
In keeping with raising the overall standards of customer experience, introduce minimum standards for external activity of retailers. The exterior of Co-op in Crawley Down needs improved quality delivery, and external impact. Similarly the pub in Copthorne, and its car park (another possible visiting market / activity venue, as in Cuckfield) Are Cuckfield's cluster of market traders able to visit other centres, like Copthorne and Crawley Down on a monthly basis?			
More promotion of the various community venues, particularly those in or near the village centre for Copthorne and those slightly removed in Crawley Down. Then at the venues, more promotion of village businesses both for those attending activities at the community venues and also for those planning events or activities. Not only promoting the venue, attracting more footfall, but also giving the users reasons to go into the village and use the local businesses			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Medium / Long Term

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
<p>Provide support and training to help businesses to optimise their external impact and visibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This may include some form of shop front grant / loan scheme to create more impactful (heritage and conservation zone compliant) branding and external signage (three dimensional signs have been in existence for centuries) - It will also include training on using shop windows / creating impact - It could include working with local arts college / sixth form college to develop a programme of support 			
Develop the 'Welcome to Copthorne and Welcome to Crawley Down' pack for new home owners / arrivals into the villages (Copthorne West). This will detail reasons to use the village centre, events, societies, clubs, community activity and so on			
<p>Develop a short form version for distribution via existing village centre businesses and all attractions and assets, the church etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could both be a printed hard copy and also a soft download copy 			
<p>Create the rolling annual events calendar, include both small events, markets, fairs and community activity as well as the large scale events.</p> <p>Identify gaps in the calendar and look to fill them</p>			

Crawley Down and Copthorne Village Centres Action Plan

10.0 Action Plan

Medium / Long Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
<p>Work with businesses to encourage and facilitate more external impact, maximise visibility of active frontages, to counteract impact of transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External branding - External activity - Appropriate 3D signage, projecting signage - This will benefit both locations - In Copthorne to help generate more impact for intermittent businesses, surrounded by gardens and homes - In Crawley Down to help address issues with Co-op 			
Regarding the Co-op in Crawley Down, it may be worth asking them to consider expanding the store footprint to allow for a better offer. This would need preliminary discussions with the planning team			
Continued promotion and customer information will be key. It is not a short-term fix, but part of the new essential role of all stakeholders			
In Crawley Down there is the need to review and possibly re-allocate some on-street parking away from the shops so as to improve the ease of pedestrian movement and the appearance of overly dominant traffic			

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10.0 Action Plan

Medium / Long Term cont'd.

Action	Responsibility		
	WPC	Other Stakeholders	Local Businesses
The removal of parked cars in Crawley Down during the day from the core narrow area between the pub and shops may also provide further rationale for improved use of the vacant pub's forecourt area, for external catering/seating/useable space			
In Crawley Down, as already stated, given the history of the pub and its ongoing closure, an objective review is needed to identify the optimum future use or uses of the space / building. This would help the existing and any future owners / operators to develop a commercially viable model for the space as a consumer-focused operation. This site-specific approach is being used by diverse organisations / bodies for other long term vacant (and listed buildings)			
<p>Copthorne Village Centre needs a focal point, in the middle rather than the existing bookends. It also needs to provide additional short-term parking (not lots), improve the access to the playground and recreation field, whilst adding more community facilities. An option to address a number of issues throughout the village may be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Move the playground back from the road, add improved crossing points - Use some of the former playground space for drive in parking bays - Have some green space in front of the playground for fetes and events - Introduce tennis courts behind the playground (like Dormans Village) - This would open up views of Village Hall and Social Club 			

Appendix I

Operator Survey Questionnaire

Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Businesses

The Retail Group, a specialist independent consultancy, has been commissioned to prepare individual future action plans for the larger village centres in Mid Sussex. Working with the Parish Councils, and on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council, we are keen that your input is included into the development of the Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan. Please could you take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to us. Your responses and individual views will be completely confidential.

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Please Turn Over

Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Businesses

9 Please identify which of the following are the highest priority **ongoing recovery** initiatives for Crawley Down Village Centre? **Tick all that apply**

<input type="checkbox"/> Events to attract customers	<input type="checkbox"/> More customer information	<input type="checkbox"/> Community activity
<input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of village centre offer	<input type="checkbox"/> Recovery support and advice for businesses	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of Crawley Down being safe	<input type="checkbox"/> More visiting markets	
<input type="checkbox"/> More recycling points	<input type="checkbox"/> More social media activity	
<input type="checkbox"/> A village centre discount scheme		

10 Thinking about the mix and offer of Crawley Down Village Centre, how would you like to see it improve in the mid to long term? **Tick up to three**

<input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops	<input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced targeting of tourists
<input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management	<input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options	<input type="checkbox"/> More appeal / offer for cyclists
<input type="checkbox"/> Regular / improved market	<input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/> More targeting of walkers / hikers
<input type="checkbox"/> More / bigger shops	<input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> More variety	<input type="checkbox"/> Better marketing and promotion	
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved public transport	
<input type="checkbox"/> More events	<input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture attractions	

11 Now thinking specifically about the customer experience, how would you like to see Crawley Down Village Centre improved? **Tick up to three**

<input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved safety and security	<input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion
<input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage	<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier	<input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage
<input type="checkbox"/> Improved pavements	<input type="checkbox"/> More customer seating	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved facilities for cyclists
<input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops	<input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space	e.g. cycle parking
<input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets	<input type="checkbox"/> Public realm improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify below
<input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival	<input type="checkbox"/> More parking	
<input type="checkbox"/> More public art	<input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing	

12 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Crawley Down Village Centre?

Strengths	Weaknesses
_____	_____
_____	_____

13 How positive are you about future trading prospects in Crawley Down Village Centre?

☐ Very optimistic ☐ Quite optimistic ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Quite pessimistic ☐ Very pessimistic

14 Would you like further information about Mid Sussex District Council's support for independent retailers?

☐ Free training via the West Sussex Retail Hub ☐ Signing up to ShopAppy.com ☐ Receiving Quarterly Business Newsletter

15 And finally, are there any other comments about Crawley Down Village Centre you would like to add or make?

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated. Please return the completed survey to the researcher that gave it to you later today. If this is not possible for any reason, then please email the completed survey to paul.frater@theretailgroup.co.uk.

If you would prefer to print, fill in and scan the form back to us, then text or WhatsApp to 07753 824042.

Finally, if you would prefer to post the completed survey back to us, please send to Paul Frater, The Retail Group, Dunning's Oak Offices, Dunning's Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4AT.

Copthorne Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Businesses

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Copthorne Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Businesses

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Tick all that apply
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- 10 Thinking about the mix and offer of Copthorne Village Centre, how would you like to see it improve in the mid to long term? **Tick up to three**
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced targeting of tourists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management | <input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options | <input type="checkbox"/> More appeal / offer for cyclists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular / improved market | <input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> More targeting of walkers / hikers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More / bigger shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More variety | <input type="checkbox"/> Better marketing and promotion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved public transport | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More events | <input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture attractions | |
- 11 Now thinking specifically about the customer experience, how would you like to see Copthorne Village Centre improved? **Tick up to three**
- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved safety and security | <input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier | <input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved pavements | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer seating | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved facilities for cyclists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space | e.g. cycle parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> Public realm improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival | <input type="checkbox"/> More parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More public art | <input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing | |
- 12 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Copthorne Village Centre?
- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Strengths | Weaknesses |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
- 13 How positive are you about future trading prospects in Copthorne Village Centre?
- ☐ Very optimistic ☐ Quite optimistic ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Quite pessimistic ☐ Very pessimistic
- 14 Would you like further information about Mid Sussex District Council's support for independent retailers?
- ☐ Free training via the West Sussex Retail Hub ☐ Signing up to ShopAppy.com ☐ Receiving Quarterly Business Newsletter
- 15 And finally, are there any other comments about Copthorne Village Centre you would like to add or make?
- _____
- _____

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated. Please return the completed survey to the researcher that gave it to you later today. If this is not possible for any reason, then please email the completed survey to paul.frater@theretailgroup.co.uk.

If you would prefer to print, fill in and scan the form back to us, then text or WhatsApp to 07753 824042.

Finally, if you would prefer to post the completed survey back to us, please send to Paul Frater,
The Retail Group, Dunning's Oak Offices, Dunning's Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4AT.

Appendix II

Stakeholder Survey Questionnaire

Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Stakeholders

The Retail Group, a specialist independent consultancy, has been commissioned to prepare individual future action plans for the larger villages in Mid Sussex. Working with the Parish Councils, and on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council, we are keen that your input is included into the development of the Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan. Please could you take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to us. Your responses and individual views will be completely confidential.

Stakeholder Name: _____ Company / Organisation: _____

What is your involvement with Crawley Down Village Centre? _____

1 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Crawley Down Village Centre?

Strengths

Weaknesses

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2 Please identify which of the following are the highest priority **ongoing recovery** initiatives for Crawley Down Village Centre. **Tick all that apply**

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events to attract customers | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer information | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of village centre offer | <input type="checkbox"/> Recovery support and advice for businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of Crawley Down being safe | <input type="checkbox"/> More visiting markets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More recycling points | <input type="checkbox"/> More social media activity | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A village centre discount scheme | | |

3 Thinking about the mix and offer of Crawley Down Village Centre, how would you like to see it improve in the mid to long term? **Tick up to three**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced targeting of tourists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management | <input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options | <input type="checkbox"/> More appeal / offer for cyclists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular / improved market | <input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> More targeting of walkers / hikers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More / bigger shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More variety | <input type="checkbox"/> Better marketing and promotion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved public transport | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More events | <input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture attractions | |

4 Now thinking specifically about the customer experience, how would you like to see Crawley Down Village Centre improved? **Tick up to three**

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved safety and security | <input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier | <input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved pavements | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer seating | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved facilities for cyclists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space | <input type="checkbox"/> e.g. cycle parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> Public realm improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival | <input type="checkbox"/> More parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More public art | <input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing | |

Crawley Down Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Stakeholders

5 How positive are you about future trading prospects of Crawley Down Village Centre?

☐ Very optimistic ☐ Quite optimistic ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Quite pessimistic ☐ Very pessimistic

6 What are your growth / improvement aspirations for Crawley Down Village Centre? What kind of place would you like it to be in five years?

7 Are there any benchmark village centres or locations that Crawley Down Village Centre could learn from? Why?

8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, on a scale of strongly agree through to strongly disagree? ***Tick the boxes that apply***

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It is very easy to find a place to park in Crawley Down Village Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stakeholders in the village centre work well together for the benefit of the centre as a whole	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawley Down Village Centre has lots of reasons for consumers to visit it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would go out in Crawley Down Village Centre more often in the evening, if there were more bars/restaurants open	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crawley Down Village Centre is easy to visit and access by foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9 And finally, are there any other comments about Crawley Down Village Centre you would like to add or make?

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated.

Please return the completed survey by email to paul.frater@theretailgroup.co.uk.

If you would prefer to print, fill in and scan the form back to us, then text or WhatsApp to 07753 824042.

Finally, if you would prefer to post the completed survey back to us, please send to Paul Frater,
The Retail Group, Dunnings Oak Offices, Dunnings Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4AT.

Copthorne Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Stakeholders

The Retail Group, a specialist independent consultancy, has been commissioned to prepare individual future action plans for the larger villages in Mid Sussex. Working with the Parish Councils, and on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council, we are keen that your input is included into the development of the Copthorne Village Centre Action Plan. Please could you take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to us. Your responses and individual views will be completely confidential.

Stakeholder Name: _____ Company / Organisation: _____

What is your involvement with Copthorne Village Centre? _____

1 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Copthorne Village Centre?

Strengths

Weaknesses

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2 Please identify which of the following are the highest priority **ongoing recovery** initiatives for Copthorne Village Centre. **Tick all that apply**

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events to attract customers | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer information | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of village centre offer | <input type="checkbox"/> Recovery support and advice for businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More promotion of Copthorne being safe | <input type="checkbox"/> More visiting markets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More recycling points | <input type="checkbox"/> More social media activity | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A village centre discount scheme | | |

3 Thinking about the mix and offer of Copthorne Village Centre, how would you like to see it improve in the mid to long term? **Tick up to three**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced targeting of tourists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management | <input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options | <input type="checkbox"/> More appeal / offer for cyclists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular / improved market | <input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> More targeting of walkers / hikers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More / bigger shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More variety | <input type="checkbox"/> Better marketing and promotion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved public transport | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More events | <input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture attractions | |

4 Now thinking specifically about the customer experience, how would you like to see Copthorne Village Centre improved? **Tick up to three**

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved safety and security | <input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier | <input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space | e.g. cycle parking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> Public realm improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify below |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival | <input type="checkbox"/> More parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More public art | <input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing | |

Copthorne Village Centre Action Plan: Survey of Stakeholders

5 How positive are you about future trading prospects of Copthorne Village Centre?

☐ Very optimistic ☐ Quite optimistic ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Quite pessimistic ☐ Very pessimistic

6 What are your growth / improvement aspirations for Copthorne Village Centre? What kind of place would you like it to be in five years?

7 Are there any benchmark village centres or locations that Copthorne Village Centre could learn from? Why?

8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements, on a scale of strongly agree through to strongly disagree? ***Tick the boxes that apply***

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither / nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
It is very easy to find a place to park in Copthorne Village Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stakeholders in the village centre work well together for the benefit of the centre as a whole	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copthorne Village Centre has lots of reasons for consumers to visit it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would go out in Copthorne Village Centre more often in the evening, if there were more bars/restaurants open	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copthorne Village Centre is easy to visit and access by foot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9 And finally, are there any other comments about Copthorne Village Centre you would like to add or make?

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated.

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informed solutions

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Informed Solutions

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