

## How best do we work together for the future?

The discussion principles set out in the box on the previous page seek to encourage a positive and healthy approach to discussion.

Here in the box on the right are some principles for healthy discussion developed by a community building organisation in the US. These indeed seem to reflect the way we work at our best in our own village organisations.

During the year, the Queensland Department of Primary Industry published research on why some towns prosper. There are good ideas here too:

1. Encourage the development of a vision for the town and the planning and activity to get there.
2. Encourage diversity in every dimension.
3. Encourage the public celebration of creativity and achievement.
4. Encourage continuing education, formal and informal, for all residents.
5. Encourage the development of home-grown talent.
6. Encourage the development of a town community resource centre.
7. Encourage holders of all civic positions that those positions be held for a short and fixed period and that leadership be rotated as often as possible.
8. Encourage any mechanism that helps build a broad base of civic skills and experience.
9. Encourage the concept of 'leadership' and discourage the concept of 'leaders'.
10. Encourage travel away from the town in order to bring ideas back.
11. Encourage any mechanism that fosters the exchange of ideas.
12. Encourage any mechanism that helps newcomers feel needed and welcome.
13. Encourage every form of investment, financial, commercial, social and civic, back into the town.
14. Foster the development of opportunities for shared relaxation and play.
15. Encourage self-help and discourage dependence upon outside agents or funders.

UNHEALTHY	HEALTHY
cynicism	optimism
focus on division	focus on unification
'Not in my backyard'	'We're in this together'
solution wars	solving problems
hold grudges	reconciliation
polarization	consensus building
narrow interests	broad public interests
parochialism	interdependence
confrontation	collaboration
win-lose solutions	win-win solutions
mean-spiritedness	tolerance and respect
questioning motives	trust
frustration	patience
politics of personality	politics of substance
apathetic citizens	empowered citizens
exclusion	diversity
selfishness	citizenship
challenge people	challenge ideas
blockers and blamers	problem solvers
me-first	individual responsibility
attacking dividers	listening healers
zinger one-liners	community discussions
redebate the past	focus on future
hoarding power	sharing power
gridlock	renewal
'Nothing works'	'We can do it'

Adams, B, (1995),  
*Building Healthy Communities*,  
 Charlottesville, Virginia:  
 Pew Partnership, P28-29

<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/business/14778.html>

## 100% growth prospect ... makes this a turning point

A year ago, according to Council figures, there were about 120 houses in and around Tomerong. Now an additional 100 residential blocks have been applied for or approved *within the main village zone itself*.

This means a doubling of population and all other community, infrastructure and environmental factors.

The Community Forum has made every effort to make the elected Council and city management aware that we are a real village concerned to preserve and enhance community and environment — and concerned to present ourselves to new arrivals as a village community, not just a satellite or dormitory suburb.

Council members and senior staff have visited Tomerong for discussion of development, traffic and community organisation concerns.

We have also emphasised our resourcefulness, that we don't just sit back and wait for help, it is part of our village character that we get on with community development ourselves.

