

Minutes of the RAISE-PLUS Citizens Event in Lefkara, Cyprus, 2-5 October 2007

Raise Group – Participants attending the Lefkara Event

1. Simonas
2. Marika
3. Anastassia
4. Hanne
5. Daniel
6. Andreas
7. Gabriella
8. Cezary
9. Ilze
10. Irina
11. Anthony
12. Hana
13. Afroditi
14. Artwel
15. Matthias
16. Tanguy
17. Eduardo
18. Nuno
19. Claude
20. Linda
21. Anna Maria
22. Evgenii
23. Carlo
24. Yves

First Day: Tuesday 2 October 2007 - Lefkara

Day Topic: Think Globally – Act Locally

Morning Session: Introduction of the RAISE Group to the Lefkara experience

Goals

This first day will be devoted to understanding the local needs and situation in Lefkara and to what extent and how the RAISE citizens declaration may be relevant and used/applied in the local context.

This understanding needs to be theoretical and practical. The understanding of the practical aspects will be facilitated by a “walking tour” within Lefkara, aiming to let the RAISE citizens see the situation of the city directly in relation to mobility, built environment, cultural heritage, etc. Therefore, in the morning the RAISE citizens will be introduced to the Lefkara city life with the help of a general introduction from Andreas and a then a guided walking tour.

The afternoon will be devoted to develop more conceptual feedbacks from the RAISE citizens about how they think the RAISE declaration may be implemented in the local context, separately for the 5 main themes: urban governance, sustainable mobility, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, education to sustainability.

Performance

Visit of two museums, an home in course of refurbishment, a coffee shop owned by an immigrant from South Africa (Adamos, former inhabitant of Lefkara), an EU funded urban landscape restructuring project (one street in traditional facade colours), an orthodox church, and a distant view on the Turkish-Cypriot neighbourhood and mosque.

Lefkara features: 1.000 inhabitants, but former (in the 1930 ?) they were 5.000 and there are dwellings for such amount of population, of which most are still owned by people emigrated in Australia, United States etc.

Discussion with Adamos: why you returned in Lefkara ? What is the best feature here ? Answer: the climate. Importance of sustainable activity as it is to run a coffee shop here.

Afternoon session: How RAISE changed the life of citizens involved ? How it can help to support local sustainable development policy in Lefkara ?

How RAISE changed your life ?

Nuno: I had two cars which I do not use any more.

Linda: I try to use local transport more for long journeys. I have started working for the local councils of my village and a neighbouring village, and I have been involved with a group who carried out a survey of my village to find out what the residents would like to happen in our village in the future

Hanna: I used the RAISE DVD in my teaching sessions. No specific reactions from my students, they found it interesting

Artwell: I showed the DVD to an Alderman but he had no specific feedback. However the national government is in the process of setting up a long term development project to transform 40 neighbourhoods from desolate to vital neighbourhoods. I will be involved in Rotterdam North with one of these projects. It is my intention to use my RAISE experience as a theoretical backdrop for this project. What that will be I cannot say as yet. In the meantime I want to finish my work on my Thesis on "Social mobility of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands" at University of Tilburg, then I will have more time to focus on this matter.

Matthias: I am more conscious and I use more public transport, although I am not sure of the impact (coal electricity production in Germany). I separate the garbage.

Anthony: More awareness of how universal the problems I experience in my small island are in other places of Europe. New opportunities in Malta for me after the RAISE conference: I became the focal point for the Prime Minister on sustainable environment in Malta, and I used a lot the RAISE Declaration.

Irina: I am aware but my municipality doesn't organise separate collection of garbage. I use public transport. I am now taking an University degree in Romania and Rome on International Relationships and European Studies

Edoardo: I am ending my PHD on military policy in Basque countries. I had a lessons showing RAISE in San Sebastian (to whom ?). I bike also when rains, I separate the garbage and save the energy as I can. I participated to an Agenda 21 process for schools as parents (only two parents and I remained alone !). I show the RAISE DVD to a councillor of San Sebastian for citizens participation, and she was very interested

Ilze: I am more aware of sustainable development issues. I have been involved in projects in Latvia and I changed personal choices. I am working on European training programmes in Turin concerning waste and environment. I can judge better what is going on in the city in which I live. In Turin for instance they do not seem to have a comprehensive approach to tackle air pollution. However, in Italy are more active than in Latvia on sustainability agendas

Simonas: I walk 1 hour to and from my job. I work in a consultancy for public authorities in Lithuania. I prepared priorities for regional development, including sustainable transport. Importance of active sustainable communities.

Cezary: not much happend, i have been active inside a little community of my family and there i tryed to implement sustainability with garbage separation included. I try to drive slower and to be more sustainable in every day life. There is no need to speed in the traffic like most Romans do.

Anastassia: I experienced always a traffic jam (I lived in Moscow). I used the metro and I purchased a bike, but it is almost impossible to bike in Moscow. Now I moved to Estonia, the second city after Tallin, where I go to the university by bike. I try to never use plastic bags at the supermarket. Estonians are really environmental friendly people.

Gabriella: I try to be sustainable except smoking !. I presented the RAISE Declaration in an international conference on European active citizenship. I will be involved in the MOVE TOGETHER with CAAG. I work sometime with the EESC on citizens juries.

Eugevni: The RAISE ... I biked in Sofia since 1981 to 1991. But since then cars bosteed everywhere. But I live now in a village circled by 6 larger town that plan to dump their garbage in the river crossing our village: so we protested a lot. The most difficult thing is to bring local policy problems to the national level. I live in two very different places: in the village I recycle the water, but there is no way to live in two places without using the car. We are all more and more mobile, how do we come up with a sustainable solution to continue to move freely (the train takes to 6 hours to sofia, by car is 2 hours). Perhaps biofuels will help to solve ?

Daniel: I am much more conscious in my life: garbage separation, second hand purchases, I do not use the car, but mainly foots and public transport. I had two presentation in the context of my "human ecology" studies of the RAISE Declaration to persons in charge at national and local level. They were interested more on the process more than on the declaration itself.

Tanguy: I bought one bike and I was thinking to RAISE issues. Another experience was a short RAISE-like experience (2 hours) in my small town of questions and answer on sustainable city life issues with the citizens, and after 7 months we had the feedback from the major of my city which apparantly considered all the aspects of sustainable development (however, in the detail he talked only about environment issues, disregarding economic, political, and social issues – then we asked him why and the major responded that "sustainable development" is only to be sees in the narrow "environmentalist" perspective). There was a big debate in the municipal council about their being afraid that the dialogue with the citizens could end with substituting the politician will instead of complementing it).

Hana: In may town (Brno) we separate the garbage thanks to a municipal awareness campaign (also my old traditional mother followed it). Fiscal differentials depending on city dimension and not on environmental friendly behaviour: this is frustrating for people. We are trying to ask politicians to introduce environmental incentives (easy in small villages in Belgium but not in Czech republic).

Marika: I tried to disseminate RAISE Declaration but with no feedback, and this was deceiving. However, I am more sustainable using the energy saving options (a.g. black google), a bike, I separate garbage, sustainable housing products. Also my friends are starting to do this. I influenced also the behaviour of my company.

Afroditi: I didn't used air conditions this summer !

Claude: I am more engaged now on sustainable development studies. I sold my car I am starting a new lifestyle, using public transport. I was free to structure my working time and organisation in a way to make the car no more needed !!! One big issue is the economic issue: how to save money to do things in a sustainable way (e.g. built houses which are more energy efficient, etc.) in the business sector ? The RAISE concept is very difficult to shared by politicians because they fear that the "bottom up" process will go too far in questioning their decisions. Example of public parking decision concerning 60 parking slots in my town of 25.000 inhabitants. Discussion with Andreas of the need of a facilitator to ensure a two-way communication between the major and citizens in order to overcome the problem (people should now what is possible and what is not possible to do based on a better knowledge of how things are/can be arranged). Project organised by Fondation Roi Baldovine of citizens participation which will circulate before the Brussels meeting by e-mail

Yves: 1) I organised citizens schools in France supported by the regional government. 2) I live in Brussels and work in Paris. I met the Ministry of the Walloon Region on the train, and I talked with him about the situation in that region, where their projects are actually disconnected by people. 3) Connection of the RAISE concept with some religious traditions regarding the respect of the nature and sustainable development: this is an important theme for me. 4) I was part of the Al Gore citizens training process related to the “unsustainable true” concept. I was trained and I did 15 conferences of 2 hours based on the Al Gore movie, everywhere in the world (example of Africa). We will speak of this in Brussels

Carlo: I didn't change my commitment in Raise, while all the rest of my life changed. Professional life, the main change is that the experts are useful and have their place, but if urban science become disconnected to the people, it become usefulness. We need to create the connection between scientific projects and the real world. During this time, I did this process of change in my life, I need to behave with my environment. I dropped my car, 90 minutes walk per day. Changing consumption does not mean to lose something, it can mean save money. You can transmit what you know. How to manage the generation gap ?

Andreas: I retired from my government service, and I became major of Lefkara. Now I am in a position of doing more sustainable things for my town. RAISE process can help me to build a continuous information flows with the people in Lefkara. I get phone calls in the middle of the night, but I need also to preserve my personal life, but I hope I will find the right equilibrium.

Questions and answers to Andreas about how the RAISE-PLUS event can help him in his local policy:

Artwell: What is the political story here in Lefkara ?

Andreas: the former major was a professional politician of the socialist party which essentially managed to borrow the money and to spend, without involving citizens at all. I represented better the citizens than national parties do, because I continuously heard and speak with people. My share at the election was 43% against 42% of the adversary.

Yves: who we are going to meet from Cyprus ?

Andreas: Some local people plus national directors, some Members of the Parliament, and some other people from other places around Lefkara.

Claude: Andreas, what do you like we ask to local citizens ?

Andreas: one main question could be: what do you think the major should do ?

Anthony: Did you started to work with the citizens to facilitate information flows on government activities ?

Andreas: I organised discussion groups on environment, social assistance, other voluntary work etc. They organised some lectures from the University of Cyprus. They are active citizens, they put ideas, but they are involved also in doing the work. At the council we are 9 people, the others are reluctant towards this participatory process. They are invited all to the RAISE conference, but only some will come. They have to work, as the other citizens do, and this means that perhaps is better to rearrange the programme (citizens only in the afternoon).

Artwell: For what purpose could you use the RAISE declaration?

Andreas: The Declaration is a policy, we could evaluate with the citizens how things stand over longer periods (5 year from now)

Anthony: we are interested to strategic Declaration issues, not to the local programme details, we need to compare problems and solutions for the Lefkara of future with what we say in the declaration. How far the local debate is in line with the sustainable city of tomorrow perspective and strategy.

Andreas: the local people is not only from Lefkara, but also from other towns and the national level. So we will use Lefkara situation as an example of a more universal system.

Ilze: the citizens should have the opportunity not only to listen to us, but to provide a feedback

Simonas/Hana: first assess RAISE Declaration status of problems in Lefkara, then to show how things are solved in our cities and discuss these with the local citizens

Gabriella: we have to present the declaration and wait for the real feedback from the citizens: the output depends on the citizens reactions (which I think will be wise enough)

Eugnevii: Some shows me the solution/vision of problems that I know to have and we will discuss this. This is the only way to approach local (new) citizens effectively.

Second Day: Wednesday 3 October 2007 - Lefkara

Day Topic: Reflexion on the RAISE vision and process of implementation at local level

Goals

In the second day the RAISE group will review the RAISE vision behind their Citizens Declaration and will discuss the process to adapt and implement the RAISE recommendations at local level, including what could be the concrete achievements of this process.

The discussion will be focused on the possible implementation of the RAISE Declaration in the local context of Lefkara, considered as a pilot test. This discussion will help to frame the key questions and messages to be used the day after to structure the discussion with the local citizens.

The latter will be facilitated by the RAISE group participants themselves, and it is therefore important to have clear messages to communicate to the local citizens, concerning the RAISE vision, implementation aspects and expected achievements.

Performance

Morning session: reflexion with the citizens

Questions of the RAISE citizens to Andreas related to their first experience of Lefkara

Small groups to make questions to Andreas about what you perceived most of the Lefkara experience, based on the themes of the Declaration: sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, urban governance, education to sustainability.

First group questions (Ilze): Built environment – we appreciate how it is handled here with the help of EU funds and using local materials. Sustainable transport – people here drive very fast. Cultural heritage – is remarkable the presence of museums for a community so small: is not death is really a living community. On the living community we have a question: there are community groups (music) ?. Urban governance: sense of security and openness of people:

1st Question: you had several crises in your history, how you did overcome these crises ? (stengths and weakness)

2nd Question: do you use solar energy for other than heating water, given the lot of sun radiation

Second group questions (Matthias): People: there is a strong community life here, and we didn't see young people, where they are ?. Sustainable transport: they drive too fast and there is no bus. Cultural heritage: is strange to have a fvax museum, how much it is sustainable (cooling problems). The built environment is very

nice, there are land use planning codes in action for this. Too electrical wires outside. What about the diversity of the economy.

Third group questions (Anthony): the place has a huge tourism potential, but may be is not fully exploited, although is encouraging to see two museums. The architecture is very beautiful. There is a large number of abandoned houses, which provide opportunities for development. The town is very quiet, but probably this would create problems for younger tourists (too quiet): there are no social activities outside the high season

Fourth group questions (Linda): A number of revaluated buildings and painting in traditional colours. Very narrow streets, which take out big lorries from the town. Are you shifting from agriculture to services and tourism. Sell more local fruits in the local shops, but we don't see the agricultural production to be developed here: where is ? Question about education is related to the people returning from long migration and their relationship with the local situation: how you deal with modernisation and traditional life, especially in relation to the kids that your are raising here and that most probably will emigrate to the large cities in the future.

Specific question to Andreas: for what do you think a person coming the first time in Lefkara will be impressed most ? Answer: First there is good impression from of the city landscape from the main road. Then you appreciate the local architecture, with narrow streets, local stones, flowers. Who arrives see a lot of shops, why the all sell the same thing (but they see also things from Chine). One question could be on the large number of abandoned houses. And finally good climate, indeed.

Andreas answers to the four groups questions:

Young people are at schools during the day, and for the night life they go to other cities which is only 30 minutes from Limassol and Larnaka. There is a gap of university students because they have to live elsewhere in Cyprus or in Europe, and then after their professional life continue in the cities of adoption, and often they return only on the week end, summer or after retirement. There is therefore a summer peak of population, in August there is also a festival which is the occasion for all to meet again. At that peak time there congestion etc.

How to handle the abandoned houses. We can accommodate new people in new houses (2 floors) built away from the centre which will be preserved and developed slowly..

Parking outside the town is a problem for the residents, could be used for tourist, but we do not attract tourist for night life.

There is a problem of brain drain ? I don't think is a problem at town to town level, only at country to country level. We cannot change the fact that business are concentrated in the nearby cities. We could improve however public transport to facilitate commuting between Lefkara and the cities.

Who will renovate the abandoned houses and when ? There is an organisation in Cyprus that could tackle with the houses as "lots" to be purchased and developed, but we need to change the law for this

There is a land use code, which can be suggested by Andreas but is mostly imposed from town planners. However, there should be not risk of tall buildings, but you should enforce the control also of small changes as the bad done wall in front of the fwax museum (said Claude).

We are trying to diversify the local economy, however agriculture production is far from Lefkara. We have a school for handicrafts (lace). You should sell the silver lace culture also to interested tourists (said Hanna). Many does as Adamos, who own a coffe shop in the city and a farm outside, and work on both making enough money and products for his own living.

There is any standard or information about the agro-tourism feature of the town. You need a more "legible" city. You need to develop agro-tourism but also pedestrian paths. (Claude). You do not have any place to buy local fruits here !! We think to develop a new project to have a tourist code including these aspects

It is possible to open some faculty in this area ? (Annamaria) We are too small, we can do at the level of the 20 municipalities surrounding Larnaka.

Local taxes are very low, we have only 850.000 € of running and yearly investment budget, of which 10% from local taxes, the rest from national/regional grants.

Cooperation between local communities. I want to start cooperation and meetings have started, 5 meetings so far; one programme like work on young people and drugs; we are working together: Lefkara is the center, we meet as municipality, community, government, there is no official coordination at that level we have to create it.

Are there common services ? yes, like road cleaning;

Is the architecture a symbol of the way the people live together ? do not know, people are very open, from here you can see a large area, this creates a feeling of opening, this is a plus compared to the people living in the city. In the old time, it was necessary to connect the houses to be protected. The town is built like a castle

What about the survival of craft activities ? people do not want to continue, there is a demand for creation, if tourism grows we need to increase the supply.

Social activity around agriculture ? like the day of one fruit, with a festival (Irina), ... yes, there is a project with a women organisation. The agency of development organised that last Monday.

Marika: It's a very good idea to organise the schools about the handicrafts in Lefkara; it should be good also to organise a Lefkara trade code for agricultural products.

Nuno: you should compete ensuring that authentic Lefkara products are put on the market (no Chinese copies). Andreas, we need to have a local quality programme and control at Lefkara locality level.

Social activities in the community: we have a chorus, made of 35 people, with different twinnings with other towns in Europe. We have a modern stadium, a funding (2/3) from the national government, plus an agreement with an Olympic Cypriot winner to take over the organisation of athletics here, together with hosting football clubs during the summer. We have an active bridge club.

Gender issue: how many women in the Lefkara council: only 1 out of 8. Few women will participate to the citizens conference tomorrow.

About the use of photovoltaic technology this is not diffused because it is still too costly. We cannot push for this.

About energy there is a matter of informing better the people. There is some plan in Cyprus for wind energy.

How you are integrating the "returners" (people coming back from far emigration). There is a group to facilitate the return in Lefkara, with information about what they need to return, summer meetings, etc. Of course, we cannot finance any returner on the municipal budget directly, but we can create opportunities of jobs for older workers to return before retirement and do some financially sustainable activities in Lefkara.

Tourism decreased in the last two years, depending only on silver and lace attractions. We need to tackle a situation of crisis concerning abandoned houses and the need to reconstruct and diversify the local economy.

Why you are in crisis after the entrance in the EU: the problem is that after the opening of the green line the tour operators are bringing tourist flows more to visit North Cyprus.

About the abandoned houses: we do not contact directly the owners, but we have an association aiming to buy the abandoned land/houses and refurbish them.

The RAISE vision

Presentation of slides by Carlo (see attached slides) .

First discussion of the RAISE vision

Afternoon section: what should be shared with the local citizens ? what we should present and discuss with them ? How to organise the sessions with the local citizens ?

Small groups to elaborate on the RAISE vision contents and the questions to be asked to the local citizens, in relation to the Citizens Declaration topics: urban governance, sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, education on sustainability.

Reporting from the small groups

Small groups to elaborate how the presentations and the discussion with the local citizens was to be organised

Reporting and final decisions about the organisation of the conference with the local citizens

Thursday 4 October - The Lefkara European Citizens Conference

Day Topic: The “Lefkara of Tomorrow” – how to achieve a sustainable future for our town ?

Performance

8.30 – 9.20 Arrival and registration

9.20 Speech Andreas

9.30 Speech Carlo

9.40 Speech Afroditi, Simonas, Linda, Edoardo

9.50 RAISE movie

10.15 Matthias’ introduction of the process

10.25 Carlo’s presentation of the Citizens’ Declaration key messages, to be taken as reference for the work with the local citizens

10.30: STEP 1 Definition of issues and stakes related to the vision of the “Lefkara of Tomorrow”

The people of Lefkara has been given 30 minutes to reflect on the most fundamental issues and challenges to be addressed, they wrote their thoughts on POST-ITS and put them on the wall.

RAISE citizens have classified the POST-ITS according to 6 city of tomorrow themes:

1. Urban governance
2. Sustainable transport
3. Sustainable built environment
4. Cultural heritage
5. Education on sustainability
6. Other ?

Based on the number of POST-ITS per theme, it was decided to merge groups 2 and 5 into one, because of the too few numbers of thoughts collected under those two themes. So the final groups were five, and they started to work after lunch

Lunch break: 12.00 – 14.00

5 groups work 14.00 – 15.30

Reporting from the groups:

Group 1. Urban governance

Three issues:

1) volunteers

They are always the same people

Engage schools

2)

Regional cooperation. This is done only with schools. However, we need in other sectors where it doesn't exist: e.g. in transport, on gender issues between men and women, because they have very specialised and different daily activities and time.

3) young people

They would need more opportunities to live in the town as it is today: they do not have almost nothing for young families (e.g transport of children to other places, social activities, ets)

Group 2. Sustainable transport

Issue of parking and communication with other larger cities around (Nicosia, Larnaka).

The main road should be free of car

The delivery of good should be taken early in the morning, before 9

Motorbikes should be not allowed in the centre

Survey to ask people their transport needs

Group 3 Sustainable built environment

We have many abandoned houses, and this create problems. These belong to owners abroad since many years. We would need more money from EU or other to renovate the town.

We need a better local land development plan. There is a too high cost due to architectural duties. There is pollution due to the shops.

We need to register the houses, find the owners, and we need legislation to refurbish the houses

We need more subsidies for the renovation of houses. 28 pounds per square meter, but the cost is double.

Shop sign: we need a specific regulation on neon signs. We need to clean and reform the abandoned land.

Any problem with water shortage

Group 4. Cultural Heritage

Folklore

Traditional art there is that this will disappear. Set up a special centre for folk art and teach it in the primary schools, for many more hours.

We need to use local human resources (women teaching at the school)

Architecture

We have to be very careful with the colour we use (blue here as it is red for Pompei). We need to avoid colours or badly constructed builds. We need to renovate the small churches. We may invite academic in architecture.

Cultural events: we need more events in winter, for example organising lectures also by setting up a free university. At the national level Traditional music in restaurants, with participation of groups from other countries. We need also to organise conferences and related tourism

Group 5 Education on sustainability

Issues related to children

How to educate children to treat animals and nature better, having an impact on their families. There could be an expert in schools

How to promote the young people to become volunteers. Promote activities such as cleaning squares, school projects etc.

How to educate people of old age to be more satisfied with what they have. To have where the people may mix with others. Activities related on lace and silver. The municipality could organise a presentation about best practice in other countries.

Group 6 Other ?

Recycling

How to keep young people not move out of the town

How to protect birds which migrate

Planning development is not good, because people cannot build on their plots and have to move elsewhere. Transportation is a problem.

Creating new jobs for the younger people. Create a coop of women not only to deal with lace but also with food traditions, which may attract people to buy food products. They could this as a part time jobs

For recycling, we need separate bags for the rubbish (glasses, cans, paper)

We have only have collection refuse pick-up only 3 time per peak, we could organise this better to make a differentiated garbage collection, extended to all other surrounding villages to solve the scale problem of the service. Being so small we cannot recycle alone !

Trapping and killing migrating birds: we were used to this through the years, but we would need to change this, although for many of us in not a problem to bother of. It is similar to the bull fights in Spain !

Student could do some community work for the older people and learn from them (good suggestion from a RAISE citizen)

Rent renovate houses to younger couples to run agri-tourism activities, e.g. pooling financial rents with the help of the municipality

Animals issue: the municipality should collect the licence fees from dog owners, because they are doing this.

With the amount of money so collected they should be able to start a programme on animals protection and respect according to EU law.

Lefkara Major (Andreas) feedback

Our work will continue, and we will submit the final results in Brussels in November.

However, we will continue to work at local level on these ideas.

Feedback from local citizens

Please translate and distribute the conclusions to the population of Lefkara !

Good the fact that we are seated with people responsible for other villages to discuss the issues together.

Friday 5 October: Lefkara Conference conclusions – key messages and possible follow up (only morning session)

Performance

Presentation of the “Lefkara of Tomorrow” issues as emerged by the small groups discussion and reports of the day before

Small groups work to elaborate the key messages to the Major in relation to the Citizens Declaration topics: urban governance, sustainable transport, sustainable built environment, cultural heritage, education on sustainability, other.

Reporting from the groups:

Urban governance (first group):

First we need incentives, personal contacts and parents examples needed to educate children

Find ways to attract children

Youth board (council) and youth centre (there was, but now is a coffee shop)

Ask to children themselves if they would like to participate, we need to reward them with a kind of certificate. Not only here, but also in the neighbouring communities

Council was not concerned enough about shops around. There should be a coffee shop restricted to the young

Opportunities to make practices in village activities, especially to improve tourism

Sustainable transport (second group):

We need to organise tourist buses for people which wish to come here.

Delivery of goods: we may use the parking area to collect goods and then distribute with small lorries

We need one way streets left in the centre for cars !

There are plans for two other by-passing roads

Cooperation with the other villages

We need to subsidise public transport to the other cities around

There is a congestion problem in the city. We need to make aware people of this problem. We have a public parking free of charge. Tourists can find easily the parking area thanks to the sign posted on the roads.

Motorbike use is a problem, we are ready to do something to regulate the road use. In order to develop tourist shop activities, we need to organise together (with their financial support) tourist buses and guides that bring the tourist here.

We can prohibit the traffic only in some hours of the day. Pedestrian areas only in the main squares of the town.

Sustainable built environment (third group):

We need a legislation to improve the aesthetics because the shops are very ugly.

The problem of owners abroad: if we have funds from EC we can ask to the owners to cooperate to the expenses of refurbishment

Close the doors of abandoned houses, they are dangerous !

Write signs in Greek

Drinking water is not good, because the aqueduct is obsolete

Suggestion: we take the money from the municipal government, plus EU, we may create a financial pool to help refurbishment and then rent to young couples.

Tax on abandoned houses, to incentivise their refurbishment from the owners or selling out.

Remove the metallic signs, use wood signs and greek

There is a disagreement on the local development plan

Compulsory purchase of the property which the owners don't want to take care of (especially collapsing houses)

Each shop should have its own individuality, more variety, thanks also to more shop competition.

Wires should be arranged, also because they are dangerous

Shop owner: I agree on making better my shop, but this cost a lot of pounds that I do not have, how I can do without subsidies (I would be happy to do if I will have them).

Cultural heritage (fourth group):

Each one of us should take care of your own house quality. I am 45 older crafter and I support strongly the idea of the schools to form people behind me ! We need structures to host events in winter times

We have problem of education of other women, but there is a problem of competition. We do not respect the rules about architecture, because actually there are the rules !

Cultural events for children to learn different musical instruments

Education on sustainability (fifth group):

Some interaction between old and young firstly to learn within families. The mothers which make lace could cooperate with the teachers in the schools. The same for the silver.

About animals, the children they should learn are to take care of them. We need also a veterinary shop
Nature conservation in the town and in the surrounding villages as well. We may recover for instance an
olive oil mill that is now abandoned in a village nearby.

Parents should take first of educating children to respect animals. Pupils should have common activities with
other older students, and we need also occasions to mix more young and old people.

Other (sixth group):

Tourism: organise special leaflet on Lefkara traditions to make the visit to the town a full day experience
(not only visit of centre and shops)

We need better cleaning of the old part of the city.

We have serious problems of flooding which should be tackled in some way. We need also to avoid the
collapse of walls after the storms.

We need to educate by means of lecture on energy saving, recycling etc. supported by the municipality

Recycling should be in principle done, but at the level of Larnaka district, not only the Lefkara town.

Animal protection: I am little skeptic, abandoned dogs are still a problem to take care of.

It is important to interest young in the traditional craft activities.