

# LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

## Summary of meeting held on 10 September 2008 at Troutbeck Institute

Lakes Parish Councillor Leslie Johnson, kindly chaired the Forum, welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked Susan Black for providing refreshments and took apologies from Brian Barton, Elwyn Bradshaw, Vivienne Rees, Tony Ashton, Fiona Sparrow and Harry Allan.

### FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND UPDATES ON LOCAL PROJECTS

#### Troutbeck Village Association

Margaret Lewis reported on a thriving Village Association. The Association has a committee of 12, representing all organisations in the village and is chaired by Tony Ashton. All Troutbeck residents are members. It received a grant from the Parish Plan group in October 2005 and has carried out work identified in the Plan, as well as a lot of fundraising, including a biannual open gardens event.

During the last year the Association has been involved in the provision of better signage and gates for the Garburn track (any illegal use of the track should be reported to the Lake District National Park Authority contact centre or the police), and in successful representation against the closure of Troutbeck Post Office. There has also been some success in controlling the spread of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam. Margaret mentioned two breaches of planning regulations in the village and expressed frustration at the lack of enforcement on light pollution issues. She also mentioned the Association has been unsuccessful in its representation to the Boundary Commission over changes to the District Council wards.

The need for a footpath between Jesus Church and the Queen's Hotel (A592) has been identified: the Parish Handyman has been clearing litter, and there are plans to provide three new seats and a notice board in the village.

The Village Association has a website – [www.troutbeck.org](http://www.troutbeck.org). and would welcome further ideas and material for inclusion.

#### Police

Sergeant John Stephens explained how information is gathered and how this feeds into campaigns to address identified issues. He provided information on operation 'Respect' tackling youth disorder; operation 'Arrowhead' over Hallow'een and bonfire night issues and operation 'Trice' tackling theft of and from vehicles.

Sergeant Stephens provided statistics on the theft of metal; fuel; pedal cycles and outboard motors and other boat paraphernalia from Windermere and Coniston, but said that overall, most crime sectors show a drop in numbers. He responded to queries on staffing levels and to concerns over motor bike use on Kirkstone Pass, particularly at weekends and bank holidays, and will talk to both the Road Policing Unit and the traffic management officer about this.

#### Lakes Parish Council

Leslie Johnson reported that Ambleside had good results in the Cumbria in Bloom competition and suggested Troutbeck consider entering an appropriate class in future competitions. He mentioned the Hayes planning application has been approved and Development Control will make a site visit to the Prince of Wales tomorrow.

Three of the Parish Plan task groups –Environment, Housing and Youth are now under the wing of the Parish Council – anyone wishing to join in should contact the clerk, Michael Johnson on 31656. The Parish Council office at Ambleside Police Station is manned Monday to Wednesday, and Leslie asked that people contact either the Clerk or any Parish Councillor to amend outdated information in the Newsletter. He also mentioned the recycling centre is now an excellent facility, open from 8am – 6pm daily.

#### National Park

Steve Tatlock, National Park Ranger, provided an update on the Local Development Framework and said there will be further consultation on the core strategy next year. Responses to date are available on line. £50K is still available in the LDNPA's Sustainable Development Fund and Steve provided information on projects which had been funded by this. Steve also provided information on current and planned footpath work and mentioned that the LDNPA is entering a team in the Great North Swim. Mr. Westmorland requested clear signing and improvement work to the Garburn Pass.

#### Parking at Brathay Church

Debbie Binch reported that the cycle lane is an advisory marking and as such, parking is still permitted over the top of it. It was accepted this parking would happen and it was considered an acceptable compromise.

#### Westmorland General Hospital

Dr. Earnshaw reminded the meeting that WGH no longer admits acute medical cases. All 999 ambulances go to Lancaster. WGH is now led by specially employed GP's. Dr. Earnshaw asked that if anyone hears of problems about emergency admissions to Lancaster or within the hospital, please report these to him as he is compiling a dossier. All information will be treated in confidence. Tel: 33573.

## WORLD HERITAGE STATUS – A GOOD OR BAD THING FOR THE LAKE DISTRICT?

Mike Clarke, Director of the Lake District World Heritage Project, said the idea of applying for World Heritage status was first talked about twenty years ago, but a Steering Group was not formed until 2005. It is a partnership project involving a wide range of organisations and funders, with Cumbria County Council as the lead partner. Mike explained the criteria for the bid and said that the Lake District can now meet more of this than it actually needs to. Historians would prefer the whole of the National Park to be designated a World Heritage site, but options are still 'on the table'.

Mike explained that World Heritage status could benefit tourism businesses; farmers and the landscape; the environment and public realm; partnership developments; society, culture and education; funding and investment. Possible downsides would be the cost to achieve the status - expected to be between £350,000 - £500,000 over three years. At its worst it could be neutral to Cumbria.

It is hoped to have all documentation ready by the end of 2009 in order for the Government to put the bid forward in 2011 or soon after. Other sites in the UK are ahead of the Lake District in the process. Mike explained how the evaluation process works – two visits, one open, one secret and the continued monitoring of successful projects.

Concerns were expressed over the state of roadside verges and the responsibility for these. Mike confirmed farmers are integral to the landscape and essential to the bid, suggesting the bid for World Heritage status may add weight to NFU and Defra initiatives. He suggested World Heritage Status would not dramatically increase visitor numbers to the Lake District, as the area is already well known. Mike can be contacted on 01539 792633

## DEVELOPING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

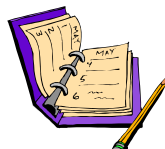
Paul Mountford, South Lakeland District Council, explained the rationale behind the current strategy to develop local partnerships. He explained this arose from statistics which show people feel council services have not improved and a lack of satisfaction with opportunities to participate in decision making, along with the national agenda to empower communities. He listed the potential benefits of partnership working including the need for local services to reflect local needs; greater opportunities for people to be heard and better co-ordinated and joined-up services.

Dianne Whitehead, Cumbria County Council, added the aim of partnership working is to allow the County, District and Parish Councillors of an area to take, or influence, local decisions whenever possible to give increased accountability. Each area will need a dynamic co-ordinator working with local councillors, residents and other agencies to ensure joined up services across the area. Dianne stressed that Neighbourhood Forums will continue and Parish Councils will play a key part in local partnerships. Consultations on the plans will continue to mid-October, including parish summits for each area. The cost and timescale of the consultation exercise was queried, and it was explained that this is cost neutral – the only costs being officers time and printing costs. It is anticipated that co-ordinator posts will be secondments from existing officer posts and whilst different areas will develop at different speeds, co-ordinators will hopefully be appointed early in the next financial year. There will be no implications for council tax.

Dianne suggested many local issues are not the responsibility of the County Council, eg. sewage, water and health issues and confirmed that as members of the Local Strategic Partnership other agencies would increasingly be involved in local partnerships, but initially the concentration was on the three tiers of local government.

### CYCLING

The route through Ambleside is still to be completed. Public consultation will be undertaken before any decisions are made.



### DIARY DATES

**The next Lakes Neighbourhood Forum will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November at Langdale Village Hall. All welcome.**

### COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

The Parish Plan Housing Task Group is holding a public meeting to report on progress to date. Provisional date is either the 18<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> November in Ambleside, to be followed by separate meetings around the parish. Community Land Trusts will be explored at the meeting. Watch out for details!

### TAYLOR REVIEW ON RURAL ECONOMIES & RURAL HOUSING

A fundamental shake up of planning and affordable housing policy is proposed in the review by Matthew Taylor, M.P. Geoff Brown provided a brief report on this review involving the identification and release of land for work and affordable housing. A decision on the 48 recommendations is expected in October. LDNPA has discussed the report and minutes can be found on its website.