

LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of meeting held on 16th March 2009 at Grasmere Village Hall

County Councillor Brian Barton welcomed everyone to the Forum.

SOUTH CUMBRIA RIVERS TRUST

Ben Lamb explained the background to the formation of this new trust in 2006. The Trust works in five main catchment areas – Duddon; Crake; Leven; Kent & Gilpin and Bela, but has plans to encompass all of South Cumbria. It is based at the Cumbria Wildlife offices at Plumgarths, and works with Angling and River Associations to look at problems on water courses in the following practical ways:-

Education

Training for anglers in riverfly and invertebrate recognition (the basis of the food chain) to highlight any issues. Work with schools to tie in with the curriculum (and have fun!)

Survey Work

The use of walkover surveys and electro fishing to build up comprehensive data on the status of salmonid-fry populations, as well as other species.

River & Habitat Rehabilitation

Bankside fencing, tree planting and instream modification to prevent the problems caused by silting up from bankside poaching.

Ben then talked about the 19 non-native invasive plant species which have a high impact on native flora and fauna, specifically Himalayan Balsam, suggesting the future for Grasmere may be balsam bearing rather than rush bearing!!

He stressed dealing with Balsam needs a lot of dedication and focus and highlighted the work of the Rothay Valley group, the Kendal group and the Duddon group. He mentioned that the Trust is hoping to appoint an officer to co-ordinate the work of the different groups and is also looking for volunteers to help with a range of tasks, from balsam pulling to electro fishing to admin. For more info see www.scrf.co.uk or phone Ben on 01539 816311.

COMMUNITY TRAVEL PLAN

On behalf of Cumbria County Council, Dianne Whitehead apologised for the way the Community Travel Plan was dealt with in Grasmere and the abrupt stop. The Council recognised the issues involved – school transport to Keswick and Red Bank – and has met with parents over transport issues. The Community Travel Plan will recommence at Grasmere Village Hall, 7pm on 1st April.

RURAL SERVICES

Julia Wilson, Action for Communities in Cumbria (ACC) (previously Voluntary Action Cumbria) said ACC works with rural communities to help find solutions to issues they want to address. It also works with social enterprise/community businesses, assists with community and parish plans and provides information and support for Village Hall committees.

Based on Rural Services research, Julia suggested that many services can be run by community groups rather than local authorities or private business. Services can be threatened by:-

- government targets leading to services being concentrated centrally.
- falling customer numbers (second homes/holiday lets)
- changes in consumer habits (may find it easier to use facilities elsewhere)

Julia stressed that communities need to be clear about what needs replacing and the time scale it can take. She provided information on three community initiatives:

- Nenthead Community Shop
- Crosthwaite Exchange and Post Office
- Pub at Heskett Newmarket

She stressed that running many services under one roof makes economic sense. Alongside support from ACC, Julia suggested other helpful organisations are:- Pub is the Hub; The Plunkett Foundation; CRISP Programme; Cumbria Fells & Dales RDPE Leader Programme. For further information on any of these contact Julia on 01768 869524.

ACC is currently working with NHS Cumbria to pilot the 'Crosthwaite Exchange' project in three other South Lakeland communities. Any community interested in taking part needs to return an expression of interest form by 1st May.

Julia confirmed ACC would be willing to work with people at Chapel Stile on the post office issue and that ACC had involvement with the Nenthead Community Shop, but that the Crosthwaite Exchange was an independent initiative. Julia also confirmed there are grants businesses can access to support rural services.

European & County Council Elections – 4th June

For information & deadlines contact Debbie on 713181.



DIARY DATE

The next Lakes Neighbourhood Forum will be held at the Kelsick Centre, St. Mary's Lane, Ambleside, 7pm on Monday 22nd June. All welcome.

FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND UPDATES ON LOCAL PROJECTS

National Trust – Dave Almond, part of the property team at High Close, mentioned:-

- > plans to repair the footpath surfaces at Butharlyp Howe with volunteer helpers.
- > the wash-out on the lower section of Grasmere Lake shore will be repaired before Easter.
- > a prospective tenant has been found for Grandy Close. St. Oswald's is waiting for work to be done.
- > volunteers needed to help trap grey squirrels in the Thirlmere buffer zone.
- > A survey is being undertaken to identify veteran trees and pollards to put a management plan in place.
- > Longer term repairs agreed with the National Park Authority for Elterwater roadside. Agreements in place for White Moss and Skaters Tarn.
- > Skeldale Woods – nice oak tree plantation. Jenkins Crag needs some attention.

Dave responded to queries on how the National Trust chooses tenants for its properties, red squirrel friendly woodlands and the control of red deer on Trust land.

Town Centres

Paul Holdsworth, South Lakes Development Trust, mentioned:

- > Street Safe exercise takes place in Ambleside on 18 March.
- > An experimental traffic order changing priority is in place from today at the mini roundabout in Windermere. If successful, the changes will become permanent.
- > the very bright green traffic lights on the A591 at Windermere only change if someone presses the button

In response to a query, Paul explained that it is not possible to undertake small incremental schemes in Ambleside as the North West Development Agency has made it very clear it is only interested in funding transformational projects. He mentioned the District Council has five Waterhead options for consideration, adding the steering group is now working collaboratively.

Fire & Rescue Service

Suzanne Wainwright explained that the Fire & Rescue Service is working with the British Heart Foundation to provide free two hour 'Heart Start' sessions teaching basic life saving skills to groups of 4 to 20 people. She confirmed it would be possible to provide sessions in surrounding villages and sessions could be child focused. Suzanne also mentioned the free Home Safety checks available. Suzanne can be contacted on 01539 797666

On behalf of the Forum, Donald Cook thanked Councillor Barton and wished him a long and happy retirement.

Highways

Debbie Binch said the intention is still to complete the Kendal-Keswick cycle route, though funding is not available at present. Further consultation is needed before it can progress further.

A recommendation for double yellow lines for Pye Lane and Swan Lane needs to go to Local Committee. Seasonal parking restrictions in Grasmere is still on the list of Traffic Regulation Orders to be developed.

Troutbeck and Troutbeck Bridge Community Travel Plan highlighted the need for realignment of the A591/Broadfield junction, relocation of a bus stop, cycleways to the Lakes School and a footpath from the Queens Head to Troutbeck Church. It will now go to Local Committee for consideration. Councillor Barton confirmed Red Bank will be looked at again.

The second of the Grasmere & Rydal Community Travel Plan meetings is to take place on 1st April.

Lakes Parish Council

Leslie Johnson said the ethos of the Council was to provide value for the people of the Lakes parish and he mentioned the council's website and quarterly newsletter. He mentioned the success of the new office at the police station and the excellent work of both the Highway Steward and Parish Highwayman. Any highways issues, including street lights which are not working, should be reported to the **Highways Hotline** on **0845 609 6609**.

Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA)

Vivienne Rees provided an update on the Local Development Framework. Due to a resurgence of interest in water power, Vivienne asked if anyone knew of potential hydro sites to contact Clarissa Lough at the National Park Authority and Councillor Barton provided a brief history of water power in the Lakes. She also mentioned that the LDNPA has a Sustainable Development fund of £180,000 for projects addressing climate change (Grasmere Hall received a grant for Herdwick wool insulation for the ceiling). Vivienne also provided an update on Stock Lane toilets and mentioned that the District Council Council Tax increase is 0.5% and the increase overall is 2.9%.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

25 May – Troutbeck Garden Trail & Teas at the Institute, £5 for adults

6 June – Ambleside Climate Change Forum Open Day (*contact Amy Boud/Jane Durrant on 32222; Anita Payne on 32686 or email amyboud@hotmail.com for more information*)

> NHS needs blood donors in this area

> Warm Home grants available to over 60's and families with children