

LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of meeting held on 21st September 2009 at Troutbeck Institute.

Geoff Brown welcomed everyone to the Forum, gave apologies (including those of County Councillor David Earnshaw) and registered the best wishes from everyone at the Forum for David Vatcher's full recovery.

WATERHEAD – NEXT STEPS

Jayne Kendall, Regeneration Manager for South Lakeland District Council, explained the Waterhead scheme is one of the proposals in the Windermere Waterfront project. Following extensive consultation over the summer months, three design options have been produced which are on display in Ambleside Library from 21st September to 3rd October. Jayne or one of the consultants will be at the library during these two weeks to talk through the options and Jayne urged people to visit and vote on their preferred ideas.

Jayne displayed the three design options and explained how they varied. Ideas include more floating jetties; a jetty for Windermere Lake Cruises waterbus; public jetties over the outfall pipes, an extended promenade; new toilets; additional public space, redesigned car park (and through judicious juggling, extra car parking spaces); additional tree planting; potential cycle way in Borrans Park and a footpath to Lake Road. She stressed a new road into Waterhead (included in one of the options) is unlikely to go ahead because of cost and land ownership issues. Flooding issues at Waterhead car park also need to be addressed.

Jayne explained how people can vote on their preferred option or 'mix and match' - identifying ideas from all three options. She stressed none of the designs on display is the final solution, and that public opinion will form 20% of the overall scoring. When the different elements of the three concepts have been voted on, there is a further stage of consultation when full design details and an artists' impression of the chosen scheme will be on display. When a preferred solution is agreed, Jayne will start to apply for funding.

In response to queries, Jayne confirmed residents will still be able to launch boats. The road will be treated to make it slower and slightly narrower (though still full traffic width.) As mentioned, the provision of a cycle track through Borrans Park is an option, but Jayne did not know how this would link with the proposed cycle track from Bowness to Waterhead. She recognised car parking as a contentious issue, especially for businesses, but confirmed parking will be regulated to stays of 2 – 3 hours, rather than all day as at present. She also confirmed the pedestrian lights remain in all three options, but will check with the Highways Engineer if they will be linked to other traffic lights on the highway. Local materials will be used as far as possible for the chosen scheme. For further information contact Jayne on 01229 588499 or visit www.southlakeland.gov.uk

People at the Forum confirmed they would like more use of the Lake with additional stops and, fares for short and single journeys and discounts for local residents.

FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND UPDATES ON LOCAL PROJECTS

Troutbeck Village Association – Tony Ashton reported a significant reduction in light output since the new management took over at Limefitt Park and progress in planned tree planting suggested by the Village Association. He raised concerns over other tree planting through an English Woodland Grant scheme, especially over the lack of consultation with local residents. Tony highlighted one of the objectives of the Association which is to strengthen community spirit and provided brief details of two recent events organised by the Village Association – Memories of Troutbeck and the Troutbeck Garden Trail, both of which were very successful. The Garden Trail raised about £6K for charity. For photos of the above events and further information on Troutbeck Village Association visit the website www.troutbeck.org

Town Centres – Paul Holdsworth explained that public consultation on potential improvements to Bowness Bay and the Glebe (another part of the Windermere Waterfront project) start in late October and urged people to look at the proposals.

He mentioned village green status for the Glebe is having a detrimental effect and may slow or stop water quality work being undertaken by United Utilities.

Paul reported traffic problems envisaged when 6000+ swimmers took part in the Great North Swim did not materialise, mainly because the Lake itself was used for moving people around (2,000 swimmers and 2,500 supporters travelled this way) Another strand of the Windermere Waterfront project is to make more use of the water for travel and Paul suggested this could have a massive impact.

Further to comments in the press that you cannot buy ladies underwear in the National Park, Paul stressed you can, but urged that if we do not support shops catering for residents' needs, they will disappear. Use it or lose it!

BROCKHOLE – WORLD CLASS VISITOR ATTRACTION

Adam Thomas explained that the Windermere Waterfront project is part of the National Park's Local Development Framework plan to co-ordinate activities around the waterfront so the overall impact is more than individual projects. As part of this, the LDNPA needs to get the entire Brockhole site 'right'. To this end, they are looking at the needs of visitors, the needs of the community and the needs of other attractions. Brockhole currently loses £350K annually and visitor numbers have dropped from 200,000 to 100,000. Amongst other problems, members and stakeholders feel Brockhole has unexploited potential, has lost its clarity of vision and has suffered from a lack of investment.

Whilst still early days, Adam suggested the vision statement could include a bigger jetty to promote lake transport; an improved children's play area; 'Go Monkey' – a high ropes taster course; initial instruction in watersports; concerts and events; the refurbishment of the Grade II listed garden; improved access – a roundabout serving Brockhole and the property next door would be the chosen option; a new build visitor centre near the playground; café/restaurant and retail outlet run by the private sector on licence or lease and the existing house let as business offices (there are already more people wanting space than the house can provide). Income from the house would be used to fund the gardens.

The size of the new visitor centre has been reduced from 60,000 sq.ft to 20,000 and the cost to £12.5m. Bids are currently in for £9.9m. A prospectus will soon be launched to the private sector to deliver catering and retail services and to invest in the project. Income would be raised from boats, watersports, 'Go Monkey', events, catering and retail licences.

Adam responded to concerns on how the National Park Authority responds to its current commitments and confirmed that he has contact with the Eden Project and is learning from their lessons! He confirmed the National Park is keen to consult as widely as possible and that consultation has been taking place for the past two years. Members of the local community are on the new independent consultative group.

Adam suggested increased visitor numbers would have a beneficial effect on other visitor and private sector business around the Lakes and as in 1971 the Visitor Centre's aim would be to encourage people to come and enjoy the special qualities of the National Park.

FEEDBACK FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND UPDATES ON LOCAL PROJECTS

continued

Police – PCSO Sarah Blacow reported that the police had had a good summer. Diversionary tactics ie. activities organised by a variety of organisations throughout the school holidays paid dividends in keeping young people occupied.

Allotments – Jane Durrant said two pieces of land are being considered in Ambleside and 22 people want allotments. She is to arrange a meeting to clarify exactly what people want.

Lakes Parish Council – Leslie Johnson commented the Lakes, Skelwith and Coniston Parish Councils had raised Great North Swim traffic issues early in the year. Skelwith has since commended the organisers.

Three new Lakes Councillors have been appointed, and toilets, tourist information centres and rural post offices continue to be high priority issues. The Lakes PC meets with SLDC on 6th October on the issue of public conveniences.

Leslie mentioned Local Area Partnerships (LAPS) - a scheme to delegate certain services down to Parish Councils. Leslie stressed the need for funding to come with responsibilities!

Lake District National Park Authority – Adam Thomas provided an update on the Local Development Framework. The core strategy has been finalised and the only changes which can now be made are legal corrections. Consultation ends 5pm 30th October after which the document becomes planning law.

Skelwith Bridge – Clappersgate – resurfacing work will start in January/February. Debbie will ask the Area Engineer to contact 'Disgruntled from Skelwith Bridge'!

National Trust – Kelley Sproston Heath provided an update on work at Jenkins Crag and Galava and appealed for volunteer gardeners to work with Lindeth students in the vegetable garden at St. Catherine's. She also mentioned rare carpet moth sightings at St. Catherine's and the success of the joint venture between the NT Footprint project and Trans-Pennine. Ruth Williams provided information on NT properties, footpath repairs and tree surveys in the Grasmere area.



DIARY DATE

The next Lakes Neighbourhood Forum will be held at the Kelsick Centre, Ambleside, 7pm on Wednesday 20th January 2010. All welcome

Brockhole plans to open for a weekend before Christmas for carols, crafts etc.

Contact Adam if you have any suggestions for this event.

GRANTS

Ambleside Cricket Club

Awarded £1,000