

LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of meeting held on Monday 22nd March, 2010 at Langdale Village Hall, Chapel Stile.

Michael Johnson, Clerk to the Lakes Parish Council and chairperson for the evening, welcomed everyone to the Forum.

PRIVATE WATER SUPPLY REGULATIONS – CHANGES ARE ON THEIR WAY

Phil Greenup, Environment & Housing Manager with South Lakeland District Council, explained that with about 3,000 properties, South Lakeland has the largest proportion of people on private supply in the country. It is suggested about 70 deaths and £20m of illness related absence and NHS treatment per year is attributable to some degree to poor water quality and those most at risk from poor water are the under 5's, the elderly or those with underlying health problems.

Those using the same private water supply for many years are likely to build up a level of immunity but this would not apply to visitors to the area. Apart from the risk of e-coli contamination, heavy metals and pesticides can also enter water supplies. The new regulations have been formed from an EU directive and cover all types of supplies, enforcement of the regulations, risk assessments and fee structures. A supply to a single dwelling is unlikely to be affected unless the householder requests water testing and risk assessment, but small domestic supplies (up to 50 people in domestic properties) have to be sampled and risk assessed every 5 years. Larger domestic supplies and those to commercial premises have to be sampled annually and risk assessed every 5 years.

Phil explained that South Lakeland never enforced the old regulations, preferring to work with householders to improve the supply. Under the new legislation the Authority is forced to take action whenever it finds a failure – but will work with property holders before the assessment to reduce the risk of failure. Enforcement will be the last resort. Phil mentioned the need to use kite marked materials if improving supplies and explained the parameters for check and audit sampling.

It is anticipated risk assessments will cost up to £500, sampling £100 each visit and audit sampling for commercial supplies £500. The District Council, which must remain cost neutral, is working with the National Trust, United Utilities, five of the biggest letting agencies in the Lakes and two laboratories to try to cut costs. Phil asked whether people would prefer a flat rate or an hourly rate for assessments and sampling? Questionnaires will be sent to everyone on private supplies and further information on the new regulations is available on the District Council website, and in the press.

In response to queries, Phil listed water treatments available – none, filter, chlorine and ultra violet (UV), and confirmed the new regulations apply only to England. Scotland has its own regulations, including funding for householders who need to improve supplies, but there is no such provision in England. The cost of a UV filter system would be approximately £1,000 - £1,500. It was suggested water from private supplies tastes better than chlorinated mains water and Phil confirmed United Utilities will test for you if you believe there is an issue with your mains water. Phil can be contacted at South Lakeland District Council on 01539 733333.

THE FUTURE FOR THE ARMITT MUSEUM

Marj Waddecar explained her involvement with the Armit Museum over the past 7 - 8 years and the uncertain future it faces. She explained finances were already under strain before water cascaded down Sweden Bridge Lane, through the back of the Armit, flooding the exhibition area and secure store in November last year. The cost of restoring damaged artefacts is substantial. A massive appeal has been launched to keep the Armit open and through the generosity of local people, £15,000 has been raised and another £12,000+ pledged. The two part-time staff will also be concentrating on pulling in funding. Marj warned that if the appeal fails, the Armit collection which includes works by Beatrix Potter, Kurt Witters, Harriet Martineaux and Charlotte Mason will be dispersed throughout the country and a unique social history of Ambleside and Lakeland will be lost.

In response to queries, Marj confirmed the running costs of the Armit are about £12,000 per annum (without wages) and revenue is about £8,000. She encouraged local people to visit and to raise the profile of the Armit with visitors to the Lakes. It was suggested the conifer tree obscuring the Armit be removed so people can see the Museum, but Marj explained that the tree has a preservation order. The Armit will officially reopen at 2pm on 31st March.

GRANTS

Ambleside Allotments Association	Requested a £250 start-up grant	Awarded £250
Langdale Village Hall	Requested £300 to replace double glazed units	Awarded £300
Ambleside Toddlers & Playgroup	Requested £440 towards toys and equipment	Awarded £400



DIARY DATE - The date of the next Forum will be notified as soon as arranged.

FEEDBACK & UPDATES

Town Centres & Community Support

Paul Holdsworth provided the following information:

> South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) has offered a small plot for allotments in Windermere. A Garden Share initiative is also in operation. Anyone interested in a similar scheme in the Lakes, please call Paul on 015394 40021.

Jane Durrant is doing work on allotments in the Lakes parish.

> Waterhead Scheme – no further progress. Design agreed in principle and SLDC is seeking funding to move forward to a detailed design.

> Business Design project – an application is in for funding to look at this in more detail.

Police

Sergeant John Stephens reported only one crime in Grasmere and Langdale was brought to the attention of the police in February and two instances of anti-social behaviour. He warned that the car crime season is almost here (visitors leave valuables on seats and cars get broken into) and asked that anything suspicious be reported to the Police (0845 3300247). He also stressed the need to secure fuel stores on farms.

Sergeant Stephens explained a new initiative starting in April when a mobile police station will visit specific rural locations at specific times. For the Lakes area the date/locations will be well publicised and include:-

29th April: Langdale – Wainwright pub car park at 10.00am

Grasmere – Stock Lane car park at 1.00pm

He also explained the 'smartwater' permanent property marking system, adding that free tubs of 'smartwater' and a poster will be available free at the mobile police station.

Lakes Parish Council

Leslie Johnson commented that Elizabeth Braithwaite's death was an immense loss to the Parish Council and the community.

He highlighted the work of the Langdale Valley Association, adding the new bus shelter is a wonderful example of what a community can achieve, and suggested whilst the potential partial closure of Charlotte Mason College would be a tragedy for the Lakes, the Parish Council is looking proactively at any surplus buildings which may be suitable for affordable housing. Next edition of the Parish newsletter will be out week commencing 29th March.

Highways

Tony Beaty, Senior Engineer with Capita, has prepared a list of ongoing flood related work – Details available from Debbie Binch on 01539 713181. Debbie also provided an update on recent resurfacing and surface dressing work.

Central Lakes Local Area Partnership (LAP)

Fiona Sparrow explained the background to the Central Lakes Local Area Partnership which covers the parishes of Windermere, Lakes and Skelwith.

She said that the three priorities for the Partnership are:-

- > reply to the toilet consultation
- > community resilience planning
- > civic realm improvement

Debbie added that in order for Neighbourhood Forums and Local Area Partnership boundaries to be coterminous, Windermere and Bowness would probably be joining the Lakes to form the Central Lakes Neighbourhood Forum.

National Park Authority

Park Ranger, Steve Gaskell, explained plans for the redevelopment of Brockhole Visitor Centre. Bids for funding are in to the NWDA, Heritage Lottery Fund and Europe and the Park Authority is currently recruiting a new manager to develop and run it. The new adventure playground, designed by the Lakes School, opens on 26th March. More information on the development and events there over Easter on www.lakedistrict.gov.uk

National Trust

James Archer explained the Trust has been working on flood related issues since November and, thanks to a generous grant from DEFRA, has been working as sub contractors to the LDNPA. He listed pitching, coppicing and footpath repairs throughout the area, adding that the Elterwater path saga is ongoing. The Trust's straw bale building at St. Catherine's is open to the public on 13 April; 11 May and 8 June between 6 – 7pm.

Ambleside Climate Change Forum

Jane Durrant explained that the Forum has been concentrating on allotments, has quite a lot of people interested and land options from Hayes and the Kelsick Trust. She provided details of a communal day at Rydal Gardens on 27th March and a climate change event at Ambleside Mountain Rescue base on 19 April when Ashley Cooper will talk and show slides. A clean-up Ambleside day is being planned for June/July.

Flood reduction work behind St. Mary's Church

Phil Greenup explained work done to clean out the stream. He acknowledged there is still a problem at the car park entrance, but hoped this could be resolved soon.

Rothay Park Play Area

It is anticipated the playground will be open by Easter.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

> Debbie queried if the Forum would be happy for the County Council to offer some financial support to the Armitth perhaps from the Lakes Neighbourhood Forum underspend? **Yes.**
> Horrendous potholes at Elterwater reported. Advised to contact Highways Hotline (0845 609 6609) and get a reference number to follow up.

- > Family folk concert at Langdale Village Hall on 1st May.
- > Thanks from Ambleside Cricket Club for the Forum grant.
- > Lakes Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting on 12th May
- > Talk Toilets Consultation extended to 11th April