

CENTRAL LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of the meeting held at Ambleside Parish Centre on Tuesday 8th June 2010

Councillor Dr David Earnshaw welcomed everyone to the Forum, explaining that it was the first meeting of the new Central Lakes Neighbourhood Forum which alongside the Lakes parish now also includes the parishes of Windermere and Skelwith. Donald Cook had kindly agreed to chair the meeting.

FIX THOSE FELLS!

Steve Tatlock from the Lake District National Park Authority explained that the "Fix the Fells" project's aim is to upgrade footpaths which get the heaviest use. Major funding support is received from the National Park, National Trust, Natural England, a number of businesses and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project initially had to train many of its contractors on how to carry out the work required to make effective repairs but now many of the skills acquired are shared to help projects in other similar areas, such as Scotland and France.

Between 60 and 70 major footpath schemes are in the pipeline and there is also a need to identify areas which are starting to suffer and may require remedial work to halt or slow further deterioration. This year stone has already been flown in for work on Red Screes, St Raven's Edge and Gummars How.

The project currently has around 100 lengthsmen, who take on responsibility for specific areas, co-ordinating working parties and checking regularly for drainage problems and loose stones. Acting as an ambassador for the area and enjoyment of working outdoors in all weathers are essential qualities for the role! Any problems with walls, gates, paths and stiles can be notified on the main National Park Authority telephone number, 01539 724555, and will be passed to the relevant Ranger. For more information visit www.lakedistrict.gov.uk.

UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA UPDATE

Dr Sam Twiselton spoke about the current status of plans for the Ambleside Campus of University of Cumbria. As an Associate Dean and an ex-student of Charlotte Mason College the fate of the site is very close to her heart. Education students are being transferred to the Lancaster campus to continue their studies although some may remain living in the

Ambleside area to be able to reach teaching placements more easily. The university will maintain it's links with schools across the county. Outdoor Studies students starting their 2nd or 3rd year in September will remain in Ambleside. First year Outdoor Studies students will start at Newton Rigg and transfer to Ambleside for their second year. This will mean around 100 students on campus next year and then c.150 in subsequent years. Space is being converted to provide lecture, IT and catering facilities for these students in the Library building. Other buildings on site, including Scale How, will be mothballed but investment will be required for security and maintenance to ensure they remain fit for commercial purposes in the future. Dr Twiselton emphasised that keeping students on campus is more costly than closing the whole site, and that the decision to keep at least the Outdoor Studies students based there had been influenced by local feedback.

QUICKFIRE UPDATES AND FEEDBACK

National Trust:

Dave Almond advised that NT Wardens will now be known as Rangers and a new office will open shortly in Grasmere (tel: 015394 63814). United Utilities is being asked to provide alternative parking while they install new catchment tanks at Elterwater car park. Work to open up views is ongoing at Jenkins Crag and Post Knott. Contact the Rangers if you know of other sites which need similar work. Lots of events coming up: full details at www.nationaltrust.org.

Town Centres & Community Support:

Paul Holdsworth of South Lakes Development Trust supports many groups and activities in Windermere and surrounding areas. He also links groups planning events in the area with appropriate contacts in local authorities and other bodies.

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QUICKFIRE UPDATES & FEEDBACK (cont'd)

The Tourist Information Centre at Bowness will provisionally re-open on 21st June. Lots more info at www.sldt.co.uk

Police:

PCSO Laura Jackson reported that from next month ballot style boxes will be placed at locations including Windermere and Ambleside libraries and Police stations for the public to make suggestions under the Safer Stronger communities initiative. For further details go to <http://www.cumbria.police.uk>, call 0845 3300247, or email: lakesNPT@cumbria.police.uk. The Mobile Police station has had a good response on recent visits to rural areas. Cycle Training is currently being given in all local schools. The Police have been involved in helping residents to set up a community group to restore the Kirkfield/Kirkstone Close play area.

Lakes Parish Council:

Leslie Johnson advised that the quarterly newsletter has just gone to press and will be distributed to all households at the beginning of July. This will give full details of the Parish Council's activities and successes in the past year.

Lake District National Park Authority:

£250k has been spent restoring flood damaged bridges and footpaths: bidding is underway for the £1.35m required to finish all repairs. "Partnership's Plan – A Management Plan for the National Park", is a 25 year vision for the Lake District. Comments on the public consultation must be received by 2nd July. A copy of the document can be viewed at Ambleside, Windermere and Kendal libraries. Full details can also be found at www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/partnership

Brockhole:

Leslie Johnson reported that the gardens are to be preserved and restored. The house will remain open for now, but will be let to a commercial organisation to raise income to support future development, such as a new visitor centre. Permission is also being sought for a new, larger jetty to enable all the Lake steamers to stop at the centre.

World Heritage Site:

The Lake District World Heritage project is on schedule to produce a nomination document before 30th August 2010. The UK Government has to allocate the Lake District with a nomination slot and a decision is awaited.

Allotments:

Jane Durrant announced that allotments will be available in Ambleside very soon but other sites are needed to meet demand. The Climate Change Forum is hosting an event at Ambleside Library from 21st – 28th June with a Recycling Roadshow on Sat. 26th.

Ambleside Parish Centre:

Catherine Powloski reported that the Centre has had a very successful first 4 years; funding has now been secured to appoint a Manager. The Centre has a number of regular groups, including a weekly drop-in for migrant women where they can practice English conversation. It also has plans to develop the basement area to create space for a counselling service to be based.

Windermere Town Council:

Councillor Joan Stocker said she was pleased to represent Windermere at the first meeting of the Central Lakes Neighbourhood Forum. The town is working hard on Windermere in Bloom and has also employed a handyman. Their community plan focuses on promoting green issues and a sustainability event will be held on 19th September. She highlighted that Windermere and Ambleside have a lot in common, and can also learn from each other working together on the new Local Area Partnership.

Ambleside Cricket Club:

A representative from the Club thanked the Forum for the grant it received towards refurbishing their clubhouse. Positive feedback shows the upgrade has been a great success. The club now has some of the best facilities of any club in it's league and has also hosted county games.



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