

CENTRAL LAKES NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of the meeting held at Langdale Village Hall on 6th June 2011

Donald Cook kindly agreed to chair the meeting and welcomed everyone.

CENTRAL LAKES LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP

Bill Smith, Chair of the Local Area Partnership, reported to the Forum that for the coming year the Partnership will be focusing its resources on projects covering five priority areas. These are: Young People, Broadband, Emergency Planning, Older Residents and General Health and Wellbeing.

PLAY PREY AND ANCHORS AWEIGH!

Adam Thomas, the Re-Development Director at Brockhole, gave the Forum an overview of what has been happening at the centre.

It is a much loved place that has been the Lake District Visitor Centre for the last 41 years. Set in 30 acres of grounds, the gardens close to the main building are actually Grade II Listed.

Visitor numbers had been dropping steadily from a peak of 200k down to 100k and it was costing the National Park Authority £400k to run on top of receipts from the café, shop and parking.

The target was to improve standards, be cost neutral and environmentally sustainable. This is to be achieved through several projects - building a new jetty for the large lake steamers, developing watersports from the centre, make improvements to all the indoor areas and to the drainage in the gardens and finally, as a second phase of the project, building a brand new Visitor Centre on a site at the end of the car park.

All projects apart from the new Centre are now almost complete. Installation of a bridge will link the new jetty to the shore. As the jetty "floats" it will always be at the correct height for the steamers regardless of water levels in the lake. A planning application has been submitted for a high ropes course, which, if approved, will be installed over the winter months. Lakes Leisure has been providing water sports and activities and they are doubling the number of sessions this year due to their popularity. All these changes have meant that visitor numbers are now on the rise again.

The next stage will be the new visitor centre and decisions on what will happen to the old house. A review is being undertaken and the preferred scheme will be announced in November. It is certain though that the white house will remain. Several other organisations have expressed interest in working with the National Park at Brockhole and there may be scope for holding regular large scale events, such as cycle cross, a comedy festival and musical performances.

TROUTBECK BRIDGE SWIMMING POOL

David Howell from the Hazelwood Wellness Company addressed the Forum about the current status of the pool and plans for the future. The pool opened 37 years ago and in recent years the facilities have become very tired. Mr Howell joined in July 2010, from a background in building health clubs, and quickly realised that new investment in the pool was desperately needed. A business plan was drawn up and a "secret millionaire" contact approached, with the result that a seed fund of up to £1m has been secured for a complete refurbishment, subject to the necessary planning permissions being granted. Not only will the pool be upgraded but a new upper storey extension will create brand new fitness and exercise studios. The pool serves around 750 pupils from local schools as well as visitors to the area and those of all age ranges within the local community. To generate income to support the pool before the gym facilities are built a "600 Club" has been formed which requires 600 members to pledge to pay £25 per month for full use of the facilities and which will keep the pool open during 2011. Once the new gym facilities are open those 600 people will have their membership fee fixed at £25 per month until 2017. To keep costs down opening hours will have to be reduced, and a detailed review of programming will be done to try to accommodate all user groups.

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QUICKFIRE UPDATES

Skelwith & Langdale Community Land Trust

In this area, 80% of properties are holiday cottages or second homes. The trust is trying to source suitable land or property which could be used for homes for local people.

Ambleside Community Enterprise

This group is also a land trust, exploring opportunities for building homes in Ambleside, e.g. at Wanlass Howe and on land currently owned by the University.

Lakes Parish Council

Working in partnership with other local groups the council has been focusing on maintaining public toilet facilities across the Parish, bus shelters (in the Langdale Valley) and seating (Grasmere and Ambleside)

Lake District National Park Authority

Steve Tatlock, ranger for the local area advised that he is working with community-led affordable housing projects, transport, including a network of electric bikes and an extension to Winderclean, part of the Windermere Reflections scheme. Anyone interested in setting up a local litter picking scheme can get equipment from Steve and his team. Contact steve.tatlock@lake-district.gov.uk with any queries.

Cumbria Youth Offending Service

A reminder that the Service is always on the look out for local projects which could benefit from free, supervised labour from young offenders working under the restorative justice scheme. Contact hugh.williams@cumbria.gov.uk for further details

Police

Sgt Ken Jewell from the Ulverston and Lakes Neighbourhood Policing team reported that crime and reports of anti social behaviour are down on the same period last year. Regular updates are given at Parish and Town Council meetings. Recent priorities have been to tackle anti social behaviour, reduce and detect dwelling burglary, violent crime and tackle the supply of drugs. Action taken on these and other important local issues can be viewed at:

www.cumbria.police.uk/neighbourhood-overview/central-lakes

QUICKFIRE UPDATES (cont'd)

Age UK South Lakeland

Tony McMichael is the recently appointed Age UK Village Agent for Grasmere and Ambleside. Village Agents work with older people in the community to enable them to live independently and happily in their own homes by providing help with benefits checks, completing paperwork and promoting social activities across South Lakeland. For advice or to get a message to Tony contact 01539 728180.

Langdale Village Association

This group was formed 2 years ago and has worked closely with the National Trust, United Utilities to bring improvements to the valley, such as bus shelters in Elterwater and Old Dungeon Ghyll, opening/closing and maintaining public toilet facilities with the help of Langdale Timeshare.

Library Consultation

Cumbria County Council's consultation on the future of library services ends on 30th June. There will be a second phase later in the year when proposals based on public feedback will be published.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

* South Lakeland Credit Union Study Group is seeking to set up a new financial co-operative in South Lakeland in the form of a Credit Union, which is owned and directed by its members. To find out more e-mail: info@southlakelandcu.org.uk

* South Lakeland District Council have announced that envelopes can now be put into the blue paper recycling boxes

*Ambleside Summer Flower Produce & Craft Show will be held at the Kelsick Centre on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th August 2011

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications were heard from the following groups for a grant from the Forum:

Troutbeck Village Association: Awarded: £1000

Ladyholme Community Centre: Awarded £1000

If you need to get in touch please call the Area Support (South Lakeland) team on 01539 713419

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