



WINDERMERE & STAVELEY DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Summary of meeting held on Wednesday 2nd December at Staveley Roundhouse

County Councillors Jim Bland and Stan Collins welcomed everyone to the Forum and thanked Iain and Sandra Johnston and Ivy Rigg who kindly provided refreshments.

THE VALUE OF WATCHING

Rebecca Hunter, Community Beat Officer with the Windermere and Bowness Local Policing Team, explained what is involved in setting up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme. Local Policing Teams took over responsibility for overseeing Neighbourhood Watch schemes about 6 months ago and are keen to maintain existing schemes and encourage new ones. Rebecca stressed that as well as being a deterrent to burglars, Neighbourhood Watch is an excellent way of raising awareness within a community – people get to know their neighbours and are alert to anything strange happening in their locality - from milk bottles not being brought in to strange vehicles in the area.

Whilst the initiative to set up a Neighbourhood Watch schemes lies with residents, in South Lakeland further advice on crime prevention and home security can be obtained from Terry Belshaw at Kendal Police Station on 0845 33 00 247. The ideal number of members for a Watch scheme is 12-15, but smaller and larger schemes also work very effectively, as can schemes involving isolated properties. With modern technology, alert and update messages can now be distributed via the Voice Connect system to any scheme members who have signed up with their contact details. A further benefit of being a scheme member is cheaper home insurance. The only cost involved in setting up a scheme is for Neighbourhood Watch signs to be put up within the area, costing about £20. Rebecca highlighted a scenario when a Neighbourhood Watch member provided information which resulted in a very prolific burglar being arrested.

Apart from Neighbourhood Watch, there are also a number of other “Watch” schemes in operation within Cumbria. These include Poacher Watch, Farm Watch, Jewellery Watch, Pub Watch, Shop Watch, Boat Watch, Camp Watch, Church Watch and Hotel Watch. General information about Neighbourhood Watch is available through the Home Office website www.mynhw.co.uk or from the Cumbria Neighbourhood Watch Association, www.cumbria-nhw.org. For anyone considering setting up a new scheme or wishing to revive a scheme that has dwindled or folded, please contact the local neighbourhood Policing Team, whose details can be found on www.cumbria.police.uk or by calling 0845 33 00 247.

QUICKFIRE UPDATES

Staveley with Ings Parish Council

Stan Simpson, Clerk to the Parish Council, explained that following a meeting in late November the Parish Council is hopeful progress has been made on a range of highways issues. Stan asked that people inform the Parish Council of any property which suffered from recent flooding issues. Arthur Capstick, Chair of the Parish Council, provided an update on the development of the Local Area Partnership (LAP) with 12 other parishes in the area and suggested an initial meeting in Burneside produced some positive results.

Brief details of a planning application for the development of a 15ha site at Plantation Bridge were given. A special Parish Council meeting is planned to consider this one issue in January.

A local resident expressed concern over the road surface on Windermere Road. The Parish Council will investigate.

Kentmere Hydro Scheme

Feasibility studies have now been completed and the ecological survey has been accepted. However, the recent floods slightly altered the course of the river so much of the technological data gathered over the last two years will have to be re-assessed. Planning and Environment Agency permissions are still being sought to progress the scheme, as is a contractor willing to take on this medium scale project. Once approvals are given fund raising will begin. Electricity generated will feed into the National Grid, rather than direct to local homes, but United Utilities are obliged to accept this and to pay a standard fee for the power received. As the scheme is a charity any profits generated will initially go back into the community but it is hoped eventually to allocate funds to support other community projects and also to share the expertise gained in establishing the scheme. Find out more at www.kentmerehydro.org

Staveley Environmental Network

Sue Walley explained that 10-20 people of all age groups regularly attend meetings and the Network is about to apply for a Low Carbon Communities Grant to look at providing an integrated programme of measures in Staveley. Priorities for the future include a beehive project and the provision of allotments.

National Trust

Community Learning Officer Kelley Sproston-Heath explained that work to restore and replace fixtures at Fell Foot Park following the recent flooding will take several months. She also provided information on an initiative to install bat boxes in areas where bats are known to roost. See Community Noticeboard for February half-term events.

Age Concern – Village Agent Project

Penny Pullinger, Age Concern, explained the services and benefits the Village Agents scheme will provide, especially for older people in rural areas. Staveley will have a Village Agent in the New Year. Penny also explained the District Council's Programme for Older People which aims to provide a more joined up service for accessing all the agencies and services available to support older people. For information on either scheme, please contact Penny on 01539 72818 or via ppullinger@ageconcernsl.org.uk

National Park Authority

Sue Thompson, Park Ranger, gave an update on measures taken after the recent floods. 144 bridges have been either washed away or damaged and 21 footpaths washed out. Bids have been submitted to DEFRA for funding to aid repair and replacement. It is hoped the Bowness Bay information centre will re-open for Easter 2010, Sue also provided an update on the blocking of the Dalesway footpath where it runs parallel to the Crook Road, adding it may be some time before the issue is fully resolved. A re-application for funding for the Staveley Riverside scheme will be made during January and tenders for construction the footbridge are to be re-issued in a bid to bring costs down. Consultation on Conservation Areas will begin in late Spring 2010 and in Staveley this will relate to an appraisal of the existing areas. For more information on the above issues see www.lakedistrict.gov.uk

Staveley Green Travel Initiative

Sue Walley provided an update on the work of the Green Travel Initiative. 10% of households have committed to replacing at least one car journey a week by public transport and a further 25% are planning to do so. The cost of bus travel continues to be a major issue as is access to the platform at Staveley station.

Town Centres Manager

Paul Holdsworth, Town Centre Manager, reported that:-

- > Windermere Chamber of Trade, South Lakeland District Council, Lakes Hospitality and South Lakes Development Trust are investigating the viability of setting up a Business Improvement District (BID). This would involve taking a levy from all business rate payers and the subsequent pot of money created would be used to fund projects decided on by the members.
- > 80 people interested in having an allotment in Windermere and Bowness. After studying over 30 potential sites in the last year, 3 promising ones have been identified and a proposal is being put to South Lakeland District Council Cabinet.
- > Successful negotiations between United Utilities and a local church for access to a sub-station, have avoided temporary tracking being laid across the Recreation Ground in Windermere.

Rural Broadband

Councillor Collins highlighted this as a major issue in many rural areas and a significant deterrent to businesses. For a link to an item on this issue broadcast on BBC Radio 4, click on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/console/b00npwh0>. Councillor Collins added that the Local Government Association is continuing to lobby BT on this issue and he is also committed to pursuing this through his links with the LGA.

COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Windermere & District Civic Society

A new course entitled "Traditional Buildings of Lakeland" will start on Tuesday 16th February 2010 at the Marchesi Centre in Windermere. The programme will run for 7 evenings from 7.30 – 9.30 pm and there will also be 2 field trips. Cost £50. For further details on this course, please contact Adrian Legge, adrian.legge@hotmail.com

National Trust

February Half Term 2010: - Bird and bat box event. Launch of Family Tracker Packs at Fell Foot (rucksacks filled with an array of fun activities and suggestions about the history of the area and local wildlife) For details of both events phone 015394 46027.

GRANTS

Windermere First Responders requested funding for a defibrillator for the Windermere and Bowness Area.

Requested: £875 Awarded: £850

DIARY DATE - The next Windermere & Staveley District Neighbourhood Forum will be held on Monday 29th March, 7pm at the Ladyholme Centre, Windermere. All welcome.

