

Gatehouse Development Initiative

Meeting Wednesday 25 July 7.30pm Community Centre

Present: D Steel (Chair); P Addison; C Barratt; I Burnie; S Cain; R Dean; L Dent; D Finlay; R Forster; S Harris; J Jameson; W McKie; M McPhearson; R McPhearson; J Russell; K Smyth.

Apologies: T Burnie; J Davidson.

2. Minutes of 30 May meeting. Accepted with the following amendment: Item 6, Garries Park, remove reference to support from the Community Council Path Fund as this had not been pursued.

3. Matters arising

Cally Management Plan. SNH has provided funds to produce a booklet. It is hoped to have this ready by the end of August.

4. TIC

Dumfries and Galloway Council and Visit Scotland have agreed to keep the Centre open throughout August. The GDI have been remitted by the Council and Visit Scotland to look at local options for providing visitor information, either within the current building or at a different location in the town. D Steel has spoken to local businesses some of which have expressed an interest, and they will be invited to a workshop in August organised by Visit Scotland to explore and discuss different models and options. D Steel has also visited or been in touch with other communities operating independent TICs. Surveys of visitors within the TIC and in the town are ongoing. It was noted that once visitors have arrived in the town, it is local information they are looking for. It was also noted that the town's walks leaflet is out of print with no plans for a reprint, and there is no general guide to Gatehouse. It was suggested that other methods of providing the information could be looked at, for example the Town website.

5. Current Projects

Country Market: Running smoothly. Most of the stall holders are now regulars and are pleased to be building a good customer base. The market is very popular with the producers and seems to be well received. Feedback is welcome, including suggestions for any developments people would like to see. L Dent explained that the Friends of the Mill had not held their annual market because of the Country Market, however there is almost certainly room for both and hopefully the Mill market will make a return.

Economic Development: This is essentially awaiting the outcome of the CADISPA survey. It is hoped that there will be an initial report in August/September. John Jameson indicated that he is keen to progress with initial discussions re housing in the meantime, as this is clearly an important issue for the town.

Garries Park: *The Sensory Garden* is complete and an opening will be held on 12 August at 2pm. Thanks were expressed to Michael Wikenden of Cally Gardens who provided plants. The footpath is complete, and a footbridge into the meadow, with thanks to the Volunteers Group. An interpretation board for the meadow will be installed in the second week of August. **Noticeboard.** I Burnie expressed her concern that the chip van is siting their own A-frame board on the plinth in front of the Community Noticeboard. This is restricting access and is not an appropriate location for it. A verbal request to relocate the board will be made to the proprietor of the Chip Van in the first instance.

New Town Hall: John Russell gave a presentation of his plans and ideas to users of the Community Centre on 26 April. He is currently drawing up a specification to allow more precise costings for the project to be worked out.

Port Macadam: A letter has been written to Derek Crichton seeking some modest funding support for general maintenance of the new path. **Quay Wall.** The Council's engineering section who were written to in November and again in January but who had not replied have finally responded to a third enquiry that they are indeed still keen to be involved.

Renewables: Wind Turbine: An official launch has been held. There have been some teething problems re brakes and voltage, both of which are hopefully now sorted. A meeting has taken place between the GDI and Rainton/Cream o' Galloway re finance, responsibilities and insurance. Maintenance and other annual expenses will be paid out of income from the turbine. R Forster asked for more detail re costs, but while reasonable assessments of likely costs had been sought from specialists and formed part of the initial funding proposal, it will be necessary to monitor the turbine over a period of time for precise figures.

Walks: A meeting has been held with the Forestry Commission to clarify arrangements for walks on their land. Walks need to be regularly monitored, but they are happy if this is done by local volunteers. The NTS Volunteers group may be able to carry this out. This will relate to walks within Cally Woods in the meantime. The need for walks info was again noted. There has been no response from Amey re the Anwoth-Cardoness cycle route as yet, and no result from an approach to Sustrans. It was noted that it may be some time before new footpaths appear on OS maps.

Web Site: Running smoothly. Accommodation providers are currently listed on the site free of charge but with the option of their own page if they wish it. This is primarily for the benefit of those without their own website. The GDI

currently charges them £30 a year for this extra page. It was proposed that a charge should now be made for listings on the Accommodation page. This was generally accepted, proposed by Peter Addison and seconded by John Russell. Suzette Harris also suggested that we might look at providing advertising opportunities on the site. This would provide other businesses / visitor attractions etc within range of Gatehouse who do not currently qualify for inclusion on the site with an opportunity to be represented. This will also be looked into.

6. Any Other Business

John Russell drew the meeting's attention to the Gaelforce leaflet for 2007. There are currently no Gatehouse events, although Gatehouse has taken part in various ways in the past. Gatehouse involvement is however dependent on groups/ individuals making a proposal for taking part.

John Russell also indicated that he is happy to give further briefings on the Town Hall project at any time if asked.

6. Dates of future meetings

26 September; 28 November