

Gatehouse Development Initiative

Meeting Wednesday 27 September 7.30pm Community Centre

Present: J Jameson (Chair); F Bruno; I Burnie; T Burnie; J Davidson; R Dean; L Dent; D Finlay; R Forster; R McPhearson; D McIntyre; W McKie; K Smyth; T Vaux.

1. Apologies: P Addison; M Hannay; J Morton; B Napper; J Russell

2. Minutes of 26 July meeting.

Accepted.

3. Matters arising

No matters arising.

4. Current Projects

Economic Development: The sub-group have met and agreed to proceed with a study undertaken by CADISPA who specialise in development and regeneration work with rural communities. David Steel has been in touch with CADISPA about arranging an initial meeting during October to discuss the scope of a study. Willie McKie spoke of the enormous assistance provided by CADISPA in relation to the Drop-in Centre project. The study would provide an in-depth overview of the community as a whole and would provide a framework within which to consider other project proposals such as development of a New Town Hall or the Mill on the Fleet. It was noted that inclusion of the Mill should be with the agreement of the Board of the Mill. Both F Bruno and K Smyth were invited by the Chair to put their proposals on the Mill forward to the meeting. F Bruno explained that a first meeting by Adrenalin Rush had taken place with the Mill Board and that an invitation had been received for a further meeting on 6th October. The proposal was to convert the Mill into a centre for outdoor excellence ie organising outdoor activities aimed at corporate companies, education authorities, youth groups, visitors etc, which would result in the creation of 50 jobs. K Smyth, a Mill Board member, noted that despite the Mill's problems, that with a new lease and with better prospects than for some time, it would be a rash decision to close it and that its loss to the town as a key visitor attraction could be serious.

It was agreed that a special GDI meeting be called to meet with the CADISPA representative, and that representatives of other community groups be invited to allow a broad input of community issues and ideas to assist the development of the study brief.

Garries Park: Sensory Garden: Awaiting the outcome of the current bid for funding. Nothing currently to report on sports equipment. The Wild-flower Meadow has been cut on time this year.

Multipurpose Hall: R Forster reported that John Russell had given a presentation of his ideas to the Community Council. He had received their support to continue the process of developing proposals and for a feasibility study. Dawn MacIntyre reported that the Community Centre Management Committee feel they are being undermined by the impression being given that a decision has already been taken to replace the Community Centre. F Bruno noted that the site was only one of several options which had been mentioned. It was welcomed that the CADISPA survey would be helpful in the process of assessing a need for the hall. In the meantime it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Community Centre assuring them of the GDIs support for their continuing maintenance of the Centre.

Port Macadam: Riverside Walk: The formal opening went well. The next phase of the project, the quayside is being pursued. A revised proposal is awaiting an answer from the Council. Permission would be granted by the relevant authorities for the removal of fallen stones from the riverbed, and some silt removal. T Vaux noted that the local fisheries trusts would also need to be consulted. Otherwise the project will concentrate on replacing stones, timber supports and access ladders. Historic Scotland have no interest unless Planning ask them to become involved.

R Forster has attended a meeting on the Cally Designed Landscape group convened by NSA Officer Anna Johnson. She is working with David Steel on a proposal for funding to SNH to develop a management strategy which if successful would be managed as a GDI project.

Renewables: Solar Panels: M Hannay submitted a written report indicating 11 or 12 properties had taken part in the project. Speaking for himself he had been very pleased with the performance of the panels on his own house. Grants are still available and savings can be achieved through group bulk purchasing.

Geothermal: Nothing to report at present.

Wind Turbine: Mast and turbine are nearing completion. It is hoped that they will arrive during October and be installed by early November to be commissioned before the end of the year.

Walks: No report.

Web Site: Ongoing.

5. Any Other Business

W Mckie reported that he would be making his annual application to the Council for core funding in November.

A monthly Country Market (food market) is being piloted on the first Saturday in October, November and December. If successful it will become a regular fixture next year. It is a voluntary project and will be reported on to the GDI.

6. Dates of future meetings

Special CADISPA meeting, to be confirmed; next ordinary meeting 29 November