

# Gatehouse Development Initiative

## Wednesday 28 January 2009 7.30pm Community Centre

Present: D Steel (Chair); P Addison; I Burnie; M Duffy; D Finlay; R Forster; S Harris; J Jameson; W McKie; D McIntyre; J Morton; H Oxley; K Smyth.

D Steel introduced Harriet Oxley to the meeting. She is a Community Development Worker for the D and G Council and is our new lead officer with the Council.

**1. Apologies:** A Johnson; M McPherson.

**2. Minutes 26 November.** Accepted.

### **3. Matters arising:**

- Ron Forster reported on a meeting which had taken place on 15 January for Tourism providers in the area, part of a series across the region. Organised by the Council's regeneration section and the Area Tourism Partnership it introduced the concept of Destination Management. The model already working elsewhere includes local community tourism committees with a representative from each on a regional committee. The discussion looked at the strengths and weaknesses of the current marketing of the area. The meeting was felt to have been very useful. Ron will continue to represent the GDI at subsequent meetings. There was concern expressed that notification of the meeting to interested local groups/organisations/businesses may not have been as thorough as it should have been.

### **4. Finance**

The Treasurer asked for formal approval to open a second bank account to manage the financial transactions arising from the Cally Boundaries project. The operation of a separate account will facilitate compliance with the rigorous audit-trail requirements of the grant donors. This request was agreed by the meeting.

- Cash balance stands at £9150

- A payment of £2000 has been made to J Finlay & Son in part settlement of outstanding invoices for the wind-turbine. This reduces the balance due to £3044, which will be progressively dealt with from the proceeds of electricity sales.

- Total grant and trading funds held on behalf of the Kiosk now stand at £3460 and on behalf of the Community Centre at £1000.

- Income generated by charges to users of the Gatehouse Web-site now stands at £1750; most of this income stream will be repeated in 12 months time as the charges are based on an annual fee. Reminders have been sent out to the few who have not so far settled their invoices; most have now settled and those who have not done so by the end of this month will, with reluctance, be deleted from the Web-site.

- Accountants Bell Ogilvy have been asked to obtain a professional view on the implications for the GDI of deregistration from VAT .

- A formal agreement between GDI and Cream o'Galloway on rental and other costs for the wind-turbine; and on valuation of the electricity production is still to be completed. A meeting to complete the process will be arranged very shortly.

- A formal agreement between GDI and Visit Scotland, on costs incurred since the Kiosk opened and on future treatment of Community tenure of the Kiosk is still to be established. Visit Scotland have still failed to provide any bill they may wish to place with us for electricity usage, and to set up an 'Occupancy Agreement' which they felt was the best option at present. Without these it is not possible to carry out further development work with the funding that has been obtained for the project. Visit Scotland have been written to by both the GDI and the D and G Council to seek to progress things.

### **5. Motorsport Proposals**

D Steel advised the meeting that first and foremost it is the remit of the Community Council to respond to planning proposals. He drew attention to key findings from the CADISPA survey highlighting job creation, supporting the local economy, protecting the local environment, sustainability. J Jameson felt the GDI as the development initiative must in due course form an opinion but that a lot more information would be required first. It was suggested that a visit to a nearby circuit might be organised to assess local impact should things progress that far. It was felt that a full independent economic and environmental assessment would need to be carried out if the proposal was to be taken seriously.

### **6. Current Projects**

Cally Designed Landscape. A total support package of £66,500 has been awarded by The Heritage Lottery Fund and Leader. The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded a grant of £33,000 and £33,500 has been received from Leader. The

project will progress in stages. Initially it is hoped to rebuild a section of field wall now running adjacent to a path in the Cally Woods. This will allow visitors to watch the dykers at work and will serve as an introduction to the larger project. Examples of the different types of wall have been added to the Gatehouse website. The project will involve and support a number of different groups. The Fleet Valley Volunteers will be involved, but also the Walking Free rehabilitation group from Borgue, and groups of young people organised through Forestry. There will be opportunities for dyking training through the DSWA. From an economic point of view it will enhance the approach to Gatehouse and provide further attractions for visitors to the town. There will also be employment for local dykers. As part of the funding requirements, all volunteer time will be recorded. The project would not be affected by any proposed forest sell-off.

#### Community Centre Work Room

Dawn McIntyre reported that the Centre are very grateful for the funding received from the GDI for the upgrading of the workroom. This is now underway, but is currently awaiting an assessment of some of the cracks by a builder. Storage heaters in the Centre are being removed. An application for lottery funding will be made and it was suggested that the CADISPA survey would provide sufficient evidence of community support for this. One option being considered is a major rearrangement of the interior spaces.

Country Market. Running smoothly. Dawn McIntyre however raised a concern that the GDI appeared to be subletting space to the Drop-in Centre for their coffee morning during the Country Markets. The coffee mornings, which are a fundraiser for the Drop-in have been successful and also help the whole ambience of the Market. The space is not being sublet to the Drop-in Centre and it was felt this use had been agreed in advance, however Dawn was assured that the Centre should bill the GDI for any additional space they felt they were using.

Economic Development. A housing survey for the Housing sub-group of the Community Council has been received and accepted.

[ Harriet Oxley prior to leaving the meeting at this point indicated that Community Services would be interested in supporting local classes in a range of areas if there was a need. Examples of classes include IT/Computers, First Aid, and Food Hygiene. She or her colleagues were happy to be approached to discuss this further. ]

Garries Park. Irene Burnie raised her concern that the entrance to Garries Park from the Car Park is not properly signposted. The Chairman reported that new orientation panels - two in the Car Park and one outside the Murray Arms were hopefully to be renewed soon. The designer at SCVS is currently working up draft designs for the panels and if suitable, funding will be sought to produce and install them.

Port Macadam. Nothing to report.

Stellage Wood. Thirty-five new trees have been planted.

The Kiosk. No further report - see finance report above.

Walks. Cally Woods Horse Trail: Ron Forter has checked the horse trail in Cally Woods and reported that it is indeed dangerous in places. He is trying to locate the original funding application/documents relating to the horse trail.

Core Paths: Local consultations with landowners have been taking place. Plans will be in libraries from 23 February, and open days will be held: 3 March in Kirkcudbright 11am - 7pm; Castle Douglas on the 4th and Newton Stewart on the 10th. The public can attend and make comments. After this process a draft plan will be issued.

Website. Running smoothly.

Wind Turbine. Running smoothly.

#### **7. Any other business**

No further business.

#### **8. Date of next meeting**

25 March, 7.30pm, Community Centre.