

Gatehouse Development Initiative

Meeting Wednesday 30 January 2008 7.30pm Community Centre

Present: D Steel (Chair); P Addison; S Best; F Bruno; I Burnie; I Cain; D Carlisle; G Creyke; R Dean; L Dent; D Finlay; W Finlay; R Forster; S Harris; J Jameson; J Morton; P Murray Usher; D McIntyre; W McKie; M McPhearson; R McPhearson; J Russell; K Smyth; A Steel; T Vaux.

1. **Apologies:** M Hannay; A Mitchell.

2. **Minutes of 28 November 2007 meeting.** 1 spelling mistake noted. Minutes accepted, proposed J Morton; seconded J Jameson.

3. **Matters arising:** None

4. Current Projects

CADISPA: D Steel reported that 379 completed questionnaires had been returned equating to a 33% return rate. CADISPA are looking at the week of 3 March for a presentation of the findings to a public meeting. It is suggested that a 'brainstorming day' could take place on the following day. The key findings will be published as a leaflet to be delivered to every household in advance of the public meeting. The Press and relevant local agencies will also be made aware of the meeting. All groups were encouraged to consider the report so they would be able to take advantage of the CADISPA visit. The findings have been derived from the opinions of the people of Gatehouse and it is hoped that CADISPA will continue to work closely with the community. F Bruno stated that the Community Council should be involved as agreed at their December meeting. D Steel advised that all community groups will be involved with different projects being handled by the appropriate local body. J Jameson was keen that housing be prioritised immediately due to the finding that there is a strong desire for affordable housing and the imminent revision of the Local Plan. Following a short discussion it was agreed that the timetable for the Local Plan be confirmed to ensure any deadline is not missed, but that progressing the issue should wait until after the CADISPA visit. It was suggested that a small working group from the GDI and Community Council be convened re housing. J Jameson will contact the Provost.

Cally Designed Landscape: An application is in for a Small Initiatives Fund grant to carry out survey work relating to the walls of the Cally Estate. With the 40th anniversary of the Dry Stone Walling Association this year it is hoped to seek grants for a range of activities relating to this and including work teams to repair some of the walls. R Dean suggested a new project to establish an arboretum within the Cally Estate. He will make further enquiries of different groups and agencies to explore this idea further. D Steel and R Forster have inspected the thinning works in Cally Woods with a representative of the Forestry Commission. The Forestry Commission are sensitive to the damage being caused and are trying to minimise it. D Steel read out a letter he will send from the GDI requesting that areas of damage, including damage to paths and watercourses are put right. It was noted that some tree material will be left to rot naturally for biodiversity reasons.

Country Market: Running smoothly. S Harris asked if the Horticultural Society could have a stall at the June market. A few other local groups have had a stall which has been set up independently outside the courtyard. This is not the responsibility of the Country Market/GDI, but so long as community stalls are spread throughout the year the Market stall holders are very supportive of community groups taking advantage of the occasion.

Economic Development: Housing issues dealt with under CADISPA above.

Garries Park: *Wild Flower Meadow.* It is hoped to protect the meadow from inappropriate grass-cutting this season. *Noticeboard.* This is needing maintenance; the wood needs weather proofing and some of the felt is damaged, and otherwise a good clean. Mac the Joiner will be approached to advise on any repairs required.

New Town Hall: Results from the CADISPA survey confirm that there is a desire for improvements to the current community centre. S Best advised that the community were unlikely to get any funding for a new building from the Council. Examples of new community buildings and other projects which CADISPA have been involved with in other parts of the country are available on the group's website. J Russell queried the ownership status of the Community Centre. The committee have all the relevant deeds and documents and P Addison has offered to take a look at these. It was suggested that the Community Centre Management Committee and Centre users study the report and consider options to take advantage of the CADISPA visit. It was noted that the Centre is heavily used at present and alternative accommodation would be an issue during any major redevelopment. It was also noted that good communication, and general agreement on the way forward is crucial. The Chairman thanked J Russell and S Best for their work on the project.

Port Macadam: Once a design scheme has been worked out for the Port, major funding will be applied for. The blocked culvert remains a problem. Councillor Jacques has spoken to the Access Officer who is looking for funding to carry out the necessary work.

Walks: Reviewing the Arneil paths audit and considering any new paths is awaiting better weather. With a new walks leaflet likely it is important to be aware of any new walks which should be included. The report on the Core Paths Network is delayed in Dumfries and Galloway and not expected before the end of the year. P Murray Usher suggested some pressure should be applied to avoid the timescale slipping further.

Web Site: Running smoothly. Items of local news/interest are always welcome as well as event information. Updates generally are good for the site, and ideas for additional sections or revisions of current ones are also welcome. GDI minutes are published on the site and are up to date. It was agreed to add the year to the minutes.

Wind Turbine: The turbine has been selected for a Scottish Government ERDF/Leader+ audit which will take place in late February. There are still a number of ongoing issues with the turbine such as the air brakes. An engineer will visit again in the next few weeks. A wireless control unit has been set up. Operation is generally good however and the turbine has produced 35000KwH of electricity so far. Income from the turbine comes into GDI funds and is most likely to be used to match fund or otherwise assist other funding applications.

6. Any Other Business

F Bruno asked if a letter sent by the Community Council to the GDI requesting a meeting had been responded to. D Steel confirmed that it had.

7. Dates of future meetings

26 March; 28 May; 30 July