

Gatehouse Development Initiative  
Meeting Wednesday 31 May 7.30pm Community Centre

**Present:** D Steel (Chair); P Addison; F Bruno; I Burnie; T Burnie; J Davidson; R Forster; J Jameson; D McIntyre; W McKie; J Morton; Keith Muir; P Murray Usher; J Russell; K Smyth; T Vaux;

**1. Apologies:** R Dean; D Finlay; W Finlay; M Hannay; A Johnson; B Napper.

**2. Minutes of 25 January meeting.**

Item 4, last sentence: J Russell asked that the reference to the use of an unofficial letterhead be removed. This was accepted. This point had in fact been raised later in the meeting.

Following on from a discussion regarding the use of the GDI letterhead, it was agreed that it be made clear in correspondence where a personal view was being expressed to avoid difficulties arising from the GDI having attributed to it views which it had not discussed or agreed a position on. It was agreed that only the current letterhead should be used and not previous versions as this can lead to confusion. The letterhead will be made available to anyone wishing to use it for correspondence relating to their particular project.

**3. Matters arising**

Peter Addison has agreed to become Vice-chair of the GDI

**4. Forest Enterprise - plans and projects.**

Keith Muir, head of tourism, recreation and environment at Forest Enterprise in Newton Stewart gave an account of current issues and developments within the Galloway Forest Park particularly with regard to interpretation strategy and signage. A new signage system is being developed and it is intended to site a prototype at the car park in the Cally Woods where its style and presence can be assessed. The Forestry Commission are very keen to gather local opinion on the new signs, and it is intended that some of the new style signs will contain sections highlighting other relevant local non-forestry attractions and information. Keith Muir was keen to emphasise that the promotion of their activities and paths network was a partnership operation and not in any way in competition with other walks. He would be very happy to see other walks and information included where possible and would contribute to efforts to ensure an overview of the paths in the area to achieve as integrated a network as possible.

**5. NSA.**

Philippa Joad has now left and interviews are taking place for her replacement. A leaflet is being produced to accompany the new viewpoints and the information should be made available for inclusion on the town website. A parliamentary visit to the viewpoints had taken place and the importance of continuing funding and marketing of the NSA was emphasised. It is hoped the NSA officer will provide information for the town website as the site is well visited and helps to promote the NSA far and wide.

**6. Current Projects**

Cally Gates: The Area Committee has made available £2000 for improvements to the gates, subject to match funding and clarification of ownership.

Economic Development: A number of meetings have taken place to explore options for the community to purchase the garage site. It has decided that the purchase price and development costs make any progress on the site impossible at present. It is hoped to establish a small group of local businessmen/women to form a subgroup looking at economic development issues and explore ways to move forward on this. A meeting has also taken place with Geoff Fagan of CADISPA who specialise in consultancy work and project development in sparsely populated areas and who have greatly assisted the Drop-in Centre. It is hoped to work with CADISPA on a wider Gatehouse remit.

Garries Park: £2000 in match funding has been made available by the Area Committee for the Sensory Garden. A funding application has been submitted to Lloyds TSB for Play Equipment. The volunteers have surveyed the Wildflower Meadow - 29 flower varieties found, and some planting has been carried out.

Multipurpose Hall: A meeting has taken place with interested parties and a new version of the proposal produced