

# **NORTH WEST COPELAND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM**

**Notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
in Lowca Welfare/Village Hall**

**Meeting started at 7:00pm**

**Forum Chair: Cumbria County Councillor Cam Ross**

**Councillor Apologies: Frank Hollowell**

**Councillors Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interest: None**

**Main Topic: Copeland Coastal Initiative**

**Speakers: Julie Betteridge, Head of Development Strategy  
Diane Ward, Regeneration Project Officer  
Copeland Borough Council**

As we are not making enough environmentally and economically of the coast the vision is "To enhance and celebrate Copeland's Coast". 70% of Copeland is in the Lake District National Park it is a big issue to get people to the West and to the coast and to make it something that the local people who live here and visitors are engaged with.

There is a Five Year Programme under Copeland Regeneration Plan which has money to underpin it and is project based. It is hoped to build a partnership, comprising of Copeland and Allerdale Borough Councils, West Cumbria Tourism Partnership and all businesses to improve links and coordinate what happens along Copeland's coast.

Four key areas:

**1. Partnership and Engagement:**

Copeland Coastal Partnership will meet once a year and a Coastal Community Network with web page information and news updates will be set up. The four main beaches at Haverigg, Silecroft, Seascale and St Bees have Quality Coast Awards and Community Beach Advisory Groups which form a major part of the network.

**2. Sustainable Communities**

To improve the local economy by using local skills, creating jobs and connecting with community led projects to improve health and well being, heritage etc.

**3 Environment and Access**

Each of the beaches receiving a Quality Coast Award has a plan to make further improvements e.g. Silecroft to improve the toilets. To improve access to the coast line work is to be done on paths and cycle ways along with improved signage giving clear information and interpretation; CBC will lead on this Design brief.

**4. Tourism**

By providing quality accommodation, public realm, adventure based activities, events and information it is hoped to increase visitor numbers and accommodation accreditation.

Early priorities to get things moving are to set up a Partnership with stakeholders and a community network; draw up a Coastal Design Brief and Guidance; to produce Information

leaflets to promote the entire coast line and set up a website with dedicated pages for the coast, local events and links to tourism pages.

### **The Coast North of Whitehaven**

- How is the coast used now?
- Is access good?
- What needs to be improved?
- How about the future?

The following contributions were made by those at the forum for this area:

- Beck between Parton and Lowca, looking to build a community bridge; Parton and Lowca are trying to replace a dilapidated bridge over the beck. Could you help with funding? It's currently being costed out.

Action: Diane to find out more information from Rachel Graham

- It's used by dog walkers but there are serious problems with coastal erosion, the path is disintegrating; people will have to walk on the embankment to the railway. The path is not that accessible, it's a walker's path not for pushchairs or wheelchairs. We're losing what is there to the sea.

Marine and Coastal Access Act – CBC will be leading on that and they will be looking at footpaths on the coast.

- Access road to the shore is also used by Network Rail to access the railway for repairs. Can they contribute to funding as they are destroying the road?
- The coast is used by walkers, cyclists and for rock pooling; the scenery viewed from that stretch is interesting from the sea and from the cliffs.
- The Railway breaks the path to the sea.
- Boats in a lockout - there is more activity with boats as they can access the sea from the shore on the slipway. It's reasonably flat at Parton and would be good for trips.
- Paragliding takes place from the cliffs.
- Signage is needed to indicate where the paths are.  
Comment: Signage must be relevant, we don't want to add clutter; need a balance to improve signage, maybe directional saying where to access beach or coast and more interpretation, locally there may be useful information for people to learn about local area, it depends what's needed at what point.
- Original foundations of Parton Harbour are there at low tide.
- Lobster potting - boats use the slipway.
- Roman fort – heritage, need to work with Hadrian's Wall to link the Fort.
- There used to be a railway station in Lowca.

## Questions and Discussion

Q What's happening with the former Marchon site and National Trust?

A The Colourful Coast Project is an initiative being run along the coast between Whitehaven and St Bees, there has been a launch and leaflets are available.

Q Accommodation – Was Mark House not going to be a hotel?

A There's been a lot of toing and froing between the owner and Copeland Borough Council resulting in no accessible scheme on that site. A Design Competition has taken place, which was publicised resulting in 140 applications which were put on display in the offices at Pears House as to how that area could look; this has now been reduced to 5 designs for a facility combining retail and accommodation.

There is interest at the former bus station site for a hotel, information has been sent to the owner there and conversations are currently taking place with the Harbour commissioners for a hotel on the current Quay Street car park.

There is a need to increase hotel accommodation on the Harbour.

Q Is that how you see the coast being promoted for the north of Whitehaven as has been done with the south on the Colourful coast?

Comment: There is a holiday camp at Lowca with access to the shore.

A We are aware of it but don't know what state it is at.

We want minimum intervention to connect the coast line taking in what communities want.

Comment: You should consult with the schools as to what they are doing on the beach, Parton School often take the children down onto the beach for projects; this could be a beach where other schools in the area can come to.

## Community News and Updates

### • Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service – Helen Conway, Development Officer

CVS is a countywide organisation with local officers, there are two covering the Copeland area for advice and guidance with a wide range of free support to community groups and charities. There are four types of support:

1. **Funding** - They can help with funding enquiries such as questions about budgets, carry out detailed searches for a funder for projects or provide feedback on completed grant applications. They also hold Funding Fairs along with Cumbria Community Foundation and the Lottery;
2. The Cumbria CVS run a **Volunteer brokerage service** which matches up volunteers with organisations and promotes volunteering opportunities.
3. They can offer **training programmes** responding to local needs;
4. They also run a free **CRB disclosure service** for an admin cost of £7.50. They can also help groups develop a business plan, set up a new activity, generate revenue etc. Membership is free, there is a reduced cost for training and members receive a monthly newsletter.

- **Council Plan Consultation 2011 – 2014**

Information was given on the first phase of the consultation, 13 September – 11 October for feedback from local people on which services are seen as essential and as extras.

Phase Two (November 1-15) will focus on specific options for changes to service areas when the outcome of the government's Comprehensive Spending Review and its impact upon the council is known.

Phase Three (December 9 – January 10) Stakeholders are invited to comment on the final draft Council Plan and Budget before a final decision will be made by country councillors at Full Council on February 17 2011.

- **West Cumbria Managing Radioactive Waste Safely, Update** - Chris Shaw reported that the first 2 Drop-In meetings have been cancelled; and from 28 October there will be a map available showing areas that are unsuitable.
- **Post Operative Project Enquiry (POPE)** - Chris Shaw reported that he had spoken with the Highways Agency that day, the Team hasn't started work yet, it was supposed to be 12 months after the opening of the new road in March but when the bridges went down after the Flood in November and traffic was using other routes it was felt that it didn't give a true reflection of what traffic would regularly be using this road and it was then going to be put back to the autumn; but Chris has now been told that this work still hasn't started. In the meantime Chris has received, from the four parishes, a Submission about issues relating to the road which will be taken into consideration when the POPE takes place.
- **Distington Rural Safety Group** – Christine Pattinson, Secretary circulated a letter advising that as numbers of those attending meetings had fallen there would be fewer meetings within the year, with the option of calling emergency meetings if needed. Existing and new groups are invited to the next Rural Safety meetings, at Distington Club for Young People on Thursdays 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2011 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm.
- **Feedback from previous meeting:**

**Highways** – the following responses had been received from Karl Melville, Area Engineer, Cumbria Highways:

**Q Flooding issues at Chapel Street, Distington**

A A meeting has now been arranged with the Inspector/contractor and the Parish Council to resolve this issue.

**Q The manhole across the road in Parton is always blocked.**

A The gullies are cleaned September and March each year. Through winter this is increased to monthly. We have added Manhole inspection on to the work carried out through winter to pick up any issues.

**Q C401 Lowca to A595 opposite Moresby Hall gates, the gulley is covered in debris and never gets cleaned. Water runs down the road, into the grass verge by the wall which throws it out onto the road and crosses the carriage way.**

A These gullies are cleaned out January to July. No reports have been received about this gully.

**Q South of the Co-op in Distington the road has been patched and patched and still work needs to be done.**

A This was resurfaced this year but due to budget cuts the scheme was removed. We will continue to keep this area safe.

**Q It would be helpful if Karl could provide dates when the Highway Steward is in the four parishes. There have been changes since the last list was sent round.**

A This is now being replaced by Better Highways in December 2010.

## Bus Focus Group

**Service 22** – Due to the ending of the contract with Sellafield Ltd, Stagecoach has made changes to the Service 22 timetable as from 4 October. Whilst other parts of the route will see fewer journeys the impact on Moresby Park is limited although it does include an extra mid-afternoon journey.

**Service 222** – A suggestion to divert certain journeys on this route from Whitehaven into Moresby Park has been looked into but not thought to be possible without causing disruption to the existing timetable and extra cost.

Stagecoach has not received any complaints about buses speeding through Distington so it is hoped this has been sorted out. Nor have they received any more complaints about the routing of the Service 1 to Lowca and the changes mean that it is now able to operate more reliably.

## Vandalism at the Bus shelter and Memorial

Cllr Cam Ross reported how these two projects had been destroyed by vandalism, he encouraged everyone not to wait to report it to a councillor but to report any incidents to the police immediately, do ask for an incident number, one problem is that people have seen it but not reported it and then the trail goes cold.

## Forum Grants

**Forum Grants Budget £4,346.47 Youth Budget £132.38**

## Grant Applicant Presentations

The grant applicants made their presentations.

**Consideration of applications** (Applicants and their supporters withdrew whilst those remaining, decided the awards).

## Grants Awarded

ORGANISATION	PURPOSE OF GRANT	AMOUNT AWARDED
<b>Parton Village Hall Management Committee</b>	Towards the purchase of paint to decorate the village Hall	£500.00
<b>Distington Club for Young People</b>	Towards the purchase of materials to paint and freshen up the Youth Centre	£500.00

## Topics for Future meetings

- Home Safety – Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
- Wind Turbines – Pica update
- Changes as to how Health services are organised and delivered. White Paper is due out shortly with Spending Review 20<sup>th</sup> October
- Follow up – at the Pelican BP garage and New Road down to Whitehaven water is running across the road – needs to be reported

## Date of Next Meetings

**Tuesdays 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010 at Moresby**  
**15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at Distington**

Meeting finished at 8.30 pm.