

IDEAS & VISION GROUP NOTES OF THE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY 2014

- Present:** Adrienne Davis, Alan Thompson (for Item 2.1 only), Angela Crawford, Charles Jolly, Frieda Willis, Geoffrey Willis, Helen Davison, Helen Haywood, Janet Miller, Janine Morris, John Estruch, John Faulkner, John Moss, Marc Haywood, Philip Barton, Roddie MacLean, Richard Silson
- Visiting:** Duncan Cartridge and Paul Timmins (Buxton Well Dressing Festival, to Item 2.1 only); Joe Perry (Buxton Museum); Netta Christie (Discover Buxton); Natalie Bell (HPBC Pavilion Gardens); Brian Shepherd (Friends of the Pavilion Gardens)
- Apologies:** Caitlin Bisknell, Jean Ball, Linda Baldry, Rachel Hoodith, Richard Lower, Sally Burton, Sarah Rawlinson, Simon Fussell, Tina Heathcote, Trevor Osborne
- Introductions:** The meeting started with a round of introductions.

1. NOTES OF THE MEETING ON 10TH JUNE 2014

The notes of the last meeting were passed as a true record.

2. PROJECTS

2.1 Artisan Market Trials

John reported that the second trial had taken place on Saturday, on the Market Place. Everything had run smoothly with no issues, and Denise was happy about that. Footfall however was disappointing, while some traders had had a good day others reported low sales. Denise had (deliberately) not put out any signs directing people to the market place, so people in the lower town were unaware it was going on; it was noted that there was also a similar event on at the Pavilion Gardens, and that the Farmers' Market had taken place only two days before. The University had interviewed 90 visitors, all the traders and all the shops, and their full report would be ready by early August. The Directors will discuss next steps at their meeting next week.

In the meantime HPBC have approved two further trials, 2nd August on Spring Gardens and 6th September on the Market Place. Denise has asked us to help with promoting these, and also to make it clear that she is recruiting as many local stallholders as possible; John will ask if she would like us to invite Spring Fair traders to apply for a stall. We will need someone to organize the Town Team stall at each of the markets (assuming Denise gives us space).

2.2 Buxton Carnival

The Well Dressing Festival have asked us to assist in recruiting more marshals for Saturday's Carnival Parade. Janet agreed to put out an appeal via the Facebook Page.

2.3 Buxton in Bloom

Janine reported that there had been over 40 entries for the various local competitions, and that judging was taking place this week. Arrangements are being finalised for the judges' visit on Tuesday 15th July, and the portfolio will be going to print at the end of the week. Buxton in Bloom publicity had built on the momentum from the Buxton Spring Clean and other Town Team initiatives, and it was encouraging how much effort people had made to brighten up the town and their own premises. Town Team members had taken on the area behind the Springs Shopping Centre, and fixed troughs and planters as well as clearing the neglected beds and filling them with plants.

2.4 Talking Signposts

The self-managing system of booking shifts via Doodlepoll appears to be working well, although there are occasional gaps, most time slots have been filled. Marc reported that he had done two shifts so far and the team were learning what worked. It was suggested that the comment section of the Doodle Poll could be used as a discussion forum for signposts to share ideas and experiences.

2.5 Beautifying Buxton (Street Art Phase 1)

Helen D reported that the Community School have painted about ten panels at the Cavendish Arcade end of George Street, with a very bright jungle scene, and nine panels painted by Buxton and Leek College have been fixed at The Square end. In addition Trevor Osborne has arranged to paint the panels in between in white, the gardens have been tidied and tubs planted up, and the bins relocated in the grounds of the Crescent behind the hoardings. A Grand Unveiling had been arranged for Tuesday 15th July, with various dignitaries attending. It is hoped that further art work can be added to the central section of panels in the next few weeks.

In addition there have been two further bottle bunting sessions and four of the lamp posts on the Market Place are now adorned with bottle flowers.

2.6 Town Team Merchandise

Philip and Tina are developing ideas for a new project, which could include a tee-towel with the Academy of Urbanism drawing and poem, and possible alternative formats for the Illustrated Map. The meeting agreed that this was a good idea, and asked for a project proposal to be drawn up.

2.7 ATCM Competition

The Best Town team award had gone to Sevenoaks Town Partnership, we (and the other three finalists) had been awarded a Highly Commended certificate.

3. VISITOR ATTRACTIONS PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Joe Perry - Buxton Museum Apps

The Museum had a Development Grant for 'Collections in the Landscape', aimed at bringing the landscape into the Museum and taking the Museum out into the outside world. Part of this was the apps they were developing for

tablet and smart phone based tours. Currently there are four trails, two of which are in Buxton - The Waters and Shopping; there is also one for Arbor Low, and another (low tech version) for Dovedale. The concept is that the user follows the trail on foot and can listen to audio recordings and see images from the Museum's collection at designated stops along the way.

They have only done a 'soft launch' while trials were being carried out, but are about to start publicising the apps more widely. Leaflets are now available, Marc will collect a batch for the Talking Signposts to carry.

One of the problems identified in the trials has been the patchy mobile phone signal, which is frustrating; at present the best solution is to download the whole app onto the device before starting, it was suggested that this could be done conveniently via a QR code.

So far the trails only cover lower Buxton but they are working on a Stage 2 Lottery bid which would enable a further nine tours to be developed covering more of the town.

It was noted that Vision Buxton are developing ideas about installing free wifi through the town centre, which would alleviate the downloading problems.

3.2 Netta Christie - Discover Buxton & Heritage Open Days

As well as operating the tram, Discover Buxton do walking tours, for instance the Food & Heritage Tour taking in Buxton Tap House and other purveyors of local food and drink, and take small (10 max) groups round the Opera House. They are currently developing a special Mary Queen of Scots tour using a re-enactor, and are about to launch a new Natural History Tour which comes in short and long versions, and explores the geology of Buxton. Netta is also working with Accessible Derbyshire as their 'Buxton Ambassador', and will be testing the accessibility of the Geology Tour.

A linkage with the Museum, showing some of their images on a flat screen in the tram, is also being investigated.

They are keen to make more of the Well Dressing as a visitor attraction, particularly the facility to watch the panels being prepared, and have done a time lapse video of this to go on the website.

With permission from Network Rail, Discover Buxton have set up an information point at the Railway Station. Netta stressed that this is for use by any group in the town that has an event to publicise, and would like everyone to take responsibility for keeping it up to date and tidy.

The Heritage Open Days take place on 11th-14th September. The Old Hall have agreed to open Mary's Bower to the public for two days, as well as enabling tours of other parts of the hotel. They are also hoping to arrange to open the Crescent ballroom for visitors during the period, and to run tours round some of the churches.

3.3 Natalie Bell - Family Festival and Buxton Show

The Family Festival was developed with the idea of attracting families to come and stay in Buxton, and replace some of the business lost by the G&S Festival being in Harrogate. Events will take place between 1st and 17th August, and additional events can still be added to the publicity if we come up with anything.

The Grand Finale will be the Buxton Show on the weekend 15th-17th August. There will be events right through the Pavilion Gardens, including on the Bowling Green so that it feeds better into the rest of the town. There is plenty of room for more stands, we are asked to encourage traders, entertainers and other organisations to take part.

We will need to include the leaflets in the Talking Signposts packs nearer the time.

It was suggested that expert master classes might be included in the programme next year.

3.4 Brian Shepherd - Friends of the Pavilion Gardens

Brian updated the meeting on recent improvements, plans and ideas:

- The Carved Tree: this is by the play area near Burlington Rd, and features a Celtic warrior and Roman Centurion, as well as various animals. It is nearly completed now, just needing its preservative (this had to be delayed for a family of nuthatches). They will also be adding a plaque and information board. It was suggested that more detailed information could be made available via QR code, or by hidden Bluetooth beacons.
- Roman Walking Tours: these take place on Saturday mornings, and are run as a fund-raiser for the Friends.
- Restoration of the Spiral Mound: they have applied for Heritage Lottery Funding and are hopeful of success.
- Rebuilding the Romano Temple: this was demolished many years ago, they would like to recreate it, but response from the Heritage Lottery Fund has not been encouraging, they suggested a virtual temple.
- Fountains in the Upper Lake: there is a problem with water quality which aeration via fountains would alleviate.
- Serpentine Wildlife Area: they have created bird, bat, bee and hedgehog houses, but do have a problem with Japanese knotweed that they need to address.
- Geo-physical survey of the Bowling Green: this will take place on 26th July, with real time updates of the findings. It was suggested this could be linked in to the Museum

3.5 General Comment and Discussion

It was noted that way-finding in the town is poor, a lot of the maps are out of date and incorrect, and also difficult to orientate from.

Recent damage to the Pump House, including the theft of stained glass windows, was discussed, and hopes expressed that the building could be better protected, or the development speeded up.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Waitrose have asked us to help promote their Summer Ball, which will take place on Saturday 26th July in the Octagon, in aid of the Alzheimers Society. Tickets are £20, available from Waitrose.

5. FUTURE I&V MEETINGS

The next meeting will be on:

Monday 11th August at 7:30pm in the Buckingham Hotel.