

NOTES OF THE IDEAS MEETING ON MONDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2015

Present: Alan Thompson, Ali Quas-Cohen, Charles Denton, Dave Carlisle, Derek Bodey, Gill Kent, Graham Starkey, Helen Davison, Iain Hawthorn, Janet Miller, Jean Ball, Jean Todd, John Robertson, Lesley Caddy, Mike Badman, Philip Barton, Richard Lower, Richard Silson, Roddie MacLean, Sue Mellor, Tina Heathcote, Veronica Hawthorn, Viv Marriott

Apologies: Claire Millard, Jim Lowe, Jim Marriott, John Fairbrother, John Estruch, John Jansen, Linda Baldry, Mike Monaghan, Simon Fussell, Steve Caddy, Yvonne Huxley

Introductions: Dick Silson chaired the meeting, which started with a round of introductions.

1. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting on 13th August were passed as true record.

2. PROJECTS

2.1 Traffic, Transport and Parking Options for Buxton

The draft proposal had been sent round earlier. The idea had arisen from the conference in February, the idea is to look at all aspects of the movement of people around the town; it was confirmed that movement of pedestrians and cyclists will be included. A meeting has been arranged with Dai Lerner of HPBC early in October, we would aim to talk to DCC Highways soon after. Ideally a major discussion with stakeholders would take place early in the new year, with a view to developing options by June or July, but it is recognized that the rate of progress is heavily dependent on others. The meeting was in support of the project and recommended it go to the next Directors' Meeting for approval.

2.2 Tour of Britain

The race took place on Friday. Town Team volunteers had taken leaflets and posters around town to raise awareness and encourage businesses to participate. They had also at very short notice collected a large number of scrap bikes, painted them up and positioned them around the town, these had attracted a lot of attention and commendation. Over 20 Town Team volunteers had been involved, clocking up at least 156 hours in total. Thanks were due to all of them, as well as to the people who donated the bikes, spray painted them, decorated their own premises and so on.

The Tower of Bikes at St John's Church will be left in place until after the Peak District Punisher race has been through on 27th September.

3 TOWN DEVELOPMENTS

3.1 Station Rd Planning Application

Dick presented a short set of slides - see Appendix 1.

Under the new Local Plan the land to the north of Station Rd is designated for non-retail purposes. The Local Plan went back to the inspector on 3rd September, following its housing needs update, the inspector's report is due later this year and hopefully the Plan will be adopted in the spring. Nestle's previous proposal for the site was withdrawn, the developers CPG issued a press release saying a new and better one was under development but in spite of indicating a willingness to discuss this with us, the latest information is they are awaiting confirmation from Nestle. Peak Rail are key to this. At one time they owned the whole site but sold it to fund the expansion northwards from Matlock. They still own a part of the area, however, but more importantly they still have the statutory right to operate a railway across it. Their express intention is to extend as far as Buxton in the next fifteen years. They have a business plan, they are busy raising the funding, and they are in active discussion with Network Rail who are very keen to see the line re-open as an alternative for freight to relieve congestion on the Hope Valley line.

Given that the development process now appears to have stalled, it is thought that Nestle may be more open to suggested alternative uses for the site than they would have been previously. The Town Team are therefore suggesting organising a meeting of all relevant parties later this year, to try to develop a plan for the site that would bring benefits to all. The meeting supported this idea.

We are also hoping to persuade Peak Rail to re-establish a presence in Buxton sooner rather than later, in parallel with the extension to Bakewell. As well as general information, merchandise and fund-raising, ideally they would establish a shuttle service as far as Blackwell Mill, to link with the cycle trail.

Confirmed that Peak Rail's view is that the railway and the cycle trail can co-exist.

Noted that a Parliamentary Report on heritage railways concluded they were hugely beneficial to the local economy, the North Yorks Moors Railway was estimated to bring some £30 million into the area. The report specifically singled out the Peak National Park for failing to develop a heritage railway.

3.2 Crescent Development

Current understanding is that the redevelopment of the Pump House has been stripped out from the main contract, and work will start on this in November. There is no news as yet on the main contract but Town Team Directors are meeting Trevor Osborne next Monday. We have also met with Liz Mackenzie, who has just started her role as Community and Volunteer Officer, so hopefully there should be better communications from now on.

4. FOCUS ON FOOTPATHS AND CYCLING

4.1 Peak Cycle Links Update

Noted that Cycle England had provided £5million to establish the White Peak Loop cycle trail, linking the Tissington Trail and the Monsal Trail via Buxton and Matlock. £450,000 of this was supposed to be for establishing the sections

of the route outside the Peak Park, including the links into Buxton. Unfortunately the money was all used on the Peak Park sections, and then an agreement with HSE to route through their land fell through. DCC had however stepped in and the route over Staker Hill to link with Parsley Hay is now under construction. The proposed link to the Monsal Trail at Blackwell Mill is via Woodale, but the fact that this is an SSSI has raised issues, plus taking the route up into Fairfield, and then back down Fairfield Road, is not ideal. The possibility of a light rail link between Buxton and Blackwell Mill might help solve the problem.

4.2 Long Distance Footpath: The Boundary Walk - Helen Davison

Helen presented a few slides, included in Appendix 2.

Friends of the Peak District is an offshoot of CPRE, and they recently came up with the idea of a walk around the boundary of the Peak District National Park, starting and finishing in Buxton. It would be 190 miles long, in ten sections - to Hayfield, Saddleworth, Holme, Low Bradfield, Millthorpe, Winster, Thorpe, Upper Hulme, Bollington and back to Buxton. Volunteers have been walking sections of the route making notes over the summer, and hope to have the guide substantially complete by the end of the year to launch in summer 2016.

It has been suggested there should be some sort of sculptural installation at the start of the walk, possibly on the Market Place, and potential funders are being approached for that. They will also be looking for funding for signage along the route. There are also issues such as parking, and locations of food and accommodation to consider, but a lot of these will develop as the route becomes established.

The proposal was met with enthusiasm, though it was suggested that a more interesting name might help.

It was also suggested that links with other long distance routes, and cross routes, could be highlighted in the guide. The group are not looking for any specific help at this stage but would appreciate our help with publicising the walk once it is launched.

4.3 Cycling in Buxton - Gill Kent

Gill runs the 'Bikeability' training in primary schools across the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales, funded by Derbyshire County Council. She also runs bike clubs for children and adults.

She is all in favour of encouraging children, and adults, to cycle, but Buxton is not welcoming to cyclists. A national cycling route comes through the town but it is mostly on busy roads. Safe cycling is largely about confidence, and there is a lot that could be achieved for not much cost; cycle lanes on roads (just paint!); signs warning drivers to give cyclists space; cycle paths eg along Broad Walk, through the Pavilion Gardens, Ashwood Park, Serpentine Park. There could be lots of interesting routes that people would use for instance a separate cycle path alongside the A515, and the A6 to Chapel; cycle routes through Sherwood Woods and Temple Fields, up Gadley Lane and through the golf course to Bishops Lane, a cycle ramp between Morrisons and Fairfield.

DCC are just starting a scheme offering free one to one cycling safety training, County Rider, but initially only for people in Chesterfield, Bolsover, Amber Valley and Erewash. It is possible this might be expanded to the rest of the county, but if not, could funding be obtained from elsewhere? Or could a system of free group rides be set up to boost people's confidence?

Bike to school schemes have also been suggested.

Noted there is far more interest now in cycling than there was just a few years ago. It is known that children cycling to school improves their learning when there, we need to convince parents of this and discourage the school run.

It was agreed that cycling, and pedestrian movements, need to be a key part of the proposed traffic and transport project. It was suggested that a group could set up to cycle round the town, possibly on a once a month basis, and identify suitable routes and potential new ones, and feed the information into the transport scheme. Graham, Viv, Dave and Gill said they would be interested in joining such a group.

Noted that a lot of bridleways in the area stop and cyclists are forced onto main roads; suggested that perhaps some footpaths could be upgraded to form sensible through routes for bikes.

Also noted there used to be a Tour of The Peak Bike race, suggested that we could resurrect it.

Also suggested that it is often just as quick to cycle as to take the car, once finding a parking space is taken into account, and we could perhaps carry out some trials comparing point to point times, and publicise them.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ashwood Park: Sunday 20th September, 10:30am-12:30pm, clearing of the river banks, all are welcome.

Places and Spaces: Buxton Civic Association would like to talk to us about this some time.

Ideas Meeting Survey: Reminder of the Survey Monkey, we need as many people as possibly to complete this, the link is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QR83LRL>

High Peak Access: There is an event on 8th October in the Dome to look at disabled and other access in the town. This also needs to be incorporated into the Traffic Plans, someone from the project team will attend.

6. FUTURE I&V MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on:

Wednesday 14th October 7:30pm in the Railway Hotel - NOTE CHANGE OF DATE.

JCMM

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