

NOTES OF THE IDEAS MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 18TH JANUARY 2017

Present: Claire Farrell, Claire Millard, Deborah Bates, Diane White, Francis Allen, Iain Hawthorn, Janet Miller, Jean Ball, John Anson, John Estruch, John Phillips, John Robertson, John White, Kathryn Barton, Lesley Caddy, Mike Badman, Mike Monaghan, Philip Barton, Richard Lower, Richard Silson, Roddie MacLean, Sally-Ann Booth, Simon Fussell, Steve Bradshaw, Steve Caddy, Suzanne Pearson, Tina Heathcote, Trevor Gilman

Apologies: Dave Carlisle, David Holdway, Elaine Hill, Ellen Wooliscroft, Helen Haywood, Jean Todd, Jim Lowe, Jo Holdway, John Jansen, Karen Beresford, Marc Haywood, Phil Jones, Rosemary Wood, Sue Mellor, Veronica Hawthorn, Viv Marriott

Introductions: Roddie Maclean chaired the meeting, which started with a round of introductions.

1. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The notes of the meeting on 7th December were passed as true record, with one change to the list of those attending. Noted that the venue (Cheshire Cheese) had worked well for the number present, but might be tight with more people.

2. PROJECTS - CLOSING REPORTS, PROPOSALS & UPDATES

2.1 Tour of Britain 2015

A closing report had been circulated, there were no questions.

2.2 Buxton in Bloomin' Winter

A closing report had been circulated. This included a list of the comments we had received, the vast majority of which were hugely positive; concern was raised that some people in the town had not liked the 'home-made' nature of the decorations, even if they had not told us this, and that the report needed to reflect the range of views. Noted that a primary aim had been to get people thinking about the issue of Christmas decorations, and had succeeded in that.

2.3 Merchandise

A closing report had been circulated. Noted that this had been written to reflect the situation at the end of 2015, as all the project objectives had been achieved, but that merchandise was still on sale as an ongoing activity.

2.4 Buxton Spring Fair 2017

At the last meeting there was uncertainty regarding whether we had enough volunteers to take on all the jobs; the project was provisionally approved at the December Directors' meeting. Since then people have stepped forward and Richard is happy to go ahead with the project, though there is still a need for people to join the team and help out. Agreed the proposal should go to the directors for final approval.

2.5 Buxton Railings Clean

A project proposal had been circulated. The aim was for a fun project that will get children involved in volunteering. Students from the University and Buxton & Leek College would be involved in organizing the event, provisionally to be held on Tuesday 25th April. Noted that the algae does growing back again after cleaning, ideas on how to stop this are welcome. Agreed the proposal should go to the directors for approval.

2.6 Open Gardens trail 2017

A project proposal had been circulated. It would be a re-run of last year's project, with slight amendments, to be held on 10-11th June to coincide with the new RHS Show at Chatsworth. Noted Buxton Markets and the Pavilion Gardens are both planning to hold garden markets on the Saturday and Sunday respectively. Agreed the project should go to the directors for approval.

2.7 Peak District Boundary Walk Launch Event

The new circular walk starts and finishes in Buxton, on the Market Place, and Friends of the Peak District have asked the Town Team to organize a launch event for Saturday 17th June. The event would involve VIP visitors and a special market in conjunction with Buxton Markets. Agreed the project should go to the directors for approval.

2.8 Other Proposals

While we would very much like to see Buxton in Bloom go ahead again this year, to date no-one has volunteered to lead the project. In the past Buxton in Bloom (local competitions) and East Midlands in Bloom (RHS competition) have been run as a single project, there was a strong feeling they should be separate as they have very different objectives. People are already asking about this year's colour scheme, and have been told 'very, very vibrant and hot, hot, hot' in hopes that a project leader can be found, at least for the Buxton in Bloom project which involves the community. Suggested that we could approach Burbage Gardening Club and the various U3A gardening groups.

3. TOWN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Crescent: The stakeholders Group had met that morning. James Beresford has been appointed Chair of the Trust, the Executive Director is Louise Cross (currently at Shropshire County Council), Liz MacKenzie has taken on more responsibility as Head of Engagement and Events. More Trustees are being appointed and the Friends scheme will be setting up imminently. Construction is going well now with opening scheduled for early 2019.

Buxton Opera House: Paul Kerrison has taken on the role of Chief Executive.

4. FOCUS ON 'TOWNSKEEPING'

4.1 Background

Roddie explained that the purpose was to look at what needs doing to keep Buxton looking loved, and who needs to do it. A number of our projects have involved us physically doing something about the issue: 2 Spring Cleans, 2 Railings Cleans, a monthly Litter Picking Group, Ashwood Park Regeneration and the Slopes Care Team being the obvious examples. Other organisations in the town were working on this even before the Town Team came into

existence, and Buxton Civic Association also now have their Places & Spaces Project, so it was thought appropriate to get people together. Buxton Town Team has regular meetings with Dai Lerner at HPBC, and have agreed that we devote the next one, on 6th February, to this topic, and invite representatives from other organisations to join us. He stressed that this is not a 'council bashing' session, it is not the council's fault we need a litter picking group, it is the fault of the people who drop the litter. The Town Team's philosophy tends to be to identify the need, get agreement, do it - we enjoy doing it and the public appreciate our efforts. We need to find a balance though as to what we do and don't do. The council officers cover a huge area, two whole boroughs, and most of them don't live in Buxton. They use us as their 'eyes and ears' and when we do bring something to their attention (eg The Slopes lamps, now working for the first time in ages) they invariably respond.

Regarding the Places & Spaces project, Mike explained that this had been a reaction to comments about the state of the town. Everyone is aware that local authorities are facing a huge shortage of resources, and not all the work can be done by volunteers, but he does find it frustrating when proposals which have volunteers willing to do them are rejected by the council.

4.2 Ascertain the scope of the problem

BCA and the Buxton Group had compiled a list of 22 places in need of attention (see Appendix 1 for the full version):

Devonshire Pump House Roof	Leaking roof
Palace Hotel Wall	Damaged in a number of places. Health and Safety risk
Bus Stop Wall Market	Coping stones missing
Market Place	Market Place sign in the cattle market is out of date and shabby
Ashwood Park	Footbridge damaged and unusable.
Poole's Cavern	Derelict Cottage on car park boundary
Palace Hotel footpath	The footpath to the rear is dangerous and needs attention
Morrisons	Litter build up
Viaduct	Trees growing in and on top of the viaduct
Cattle Market Yard	Unightly next to car park due to continued use by HPBC as open storage
Market Place Fountain/Well	Full restoration needed, BCA proposal submitted
Harpur Hill Brown Field site	Site remains unused despite the need for housing.
Fairfield Road	Some houses in a state of near dereliction, the road is a blight on the town
White Lion Pub	Listed building that is now empty
George Hotel and Mansions	In need of major restoration
Water Street	Old toilet site needs to be put to better use, BCA propose sensory garden
Pavilion Gardens buildings	Rotten timbers and poor paint work
Turners Memorial	No water flow
Pavement issues	Eg Duke Street - H&S issue
Fountain Street	Substation boundary wall in state of collapse
Pavements generally	Overhanging branches, numerous examples
A Boards and street furniture	A lot of clutter, particularly Spring Gardens

These were discussed. Noted that a lot of them are not council responsibility. Also noted that several are also being pursued separately by Town Team eg the Ashwood Park Bridge and the viaduct trees.

Dave Carlisle has sent in a separate list, with some overlap. Additional items included:

- Vegetation blocking alleyways
- Unpruned trees
- Steps at the St Ann's Well - take opportunity to install an access ramp?

In discussion the following also noted:

- Museum building - needs overhaul externally as well as internally
- Green Man Gallery - external repair and painting
- The Slopes drains are all blocked
- Serpentine River escape - suggested the Trent River Trust might be able to help with this
- Tactile pavements, many in state of disrepair
- Area of road outside Jo Royles, New Inn etc - land ownership is unclear
- Green area between Water Street and Manchester Road very neglected
- County Council road signs - very cluttered in some places
- Pavilion Gardens railings - lots of tatty looking banners and laminated signs
- Wheelie bins - there are a lot of them and in many areas no sensible place for them to live
- Burbage traffic lights - derelict harris fenced area
- Palace Hotel frontage - rows of tatty banners that have been there for a long time
- Wye Street Car Park - the state of the shopping trolley shelters
- Retail premises generally - many seem to neglect what the outside looks like

4.3 Identify possible solutions

Noted some jobs are 'quick wins' and that H&S issues should be prioritized over the purely cosmetic.

For many of the jobs, suggested people should just get out and do it - we already have a 'phantom sign painter', pruning trees that are blocking pavements could be dealt with in a similar way.

Good practice elsewhere was discussed, eg the Devon Pothole Initiative where the borough council had taken on responsibility for potholes and were repairing them at a tenth the cost compared to Highways. Also noted the Levenshulme Graffiti Grannies, who spray-paint penises on damaged sections of pavement, forcing their local council to take action quickly.

Noted that some stretches of green space are important wildlife corridors.

Agreed we need to share information. Simon will look into setting up a shared data base where issues can be logged, so everyone can be kept updated with what individual groups are doing and any responses we get.

Debbie introduced the Community Payback Scheme that she manages. They are currently working with the Town Team in Ashwood Park once a week, grubbing out shrubs, and hope to start painting the railings at the end of March. They have the necessary tools, but any materials needed have to be supplied. Not all jobs are suitable, they all have to be risk-assessed and they need to be sure they are not displacing paid jobs, but we are all encouraged to contact her with ideas for work they might take on.

Suggested prisoner release schemes might be another possibility, but as our nearest prison is Sudbury this is thought unlikely.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Marks & Spencers: Concern expressed that there may be plans to close the Buxton store, and it may be a choice between that or the Macclesfield one. Agreed that M&S is a key anchor store for Buxton, and suggested that we might encourage members to write in supporting the case for Buxton to stay open. Dick Silson will try and find out more so this can be followed up.

6. FUTURE I&V MEETINGS

Dates for upcoming meeting are:

Wednesday 15th February 7:30pm - Venue tbc - Provisional Topic 'Disability Access'

Tuesday 14th March - Venue and topic tbc

Tuesday 11th April - Buxton Town Team General Meeting, venue tbc

JCMM

24Jan17

IDEAS & ACTION MEETING 18 JANUARY 2017 - APPENDIX 1 - BCA/BG LIST

Ref	Date Notified	Location	Item	Sector	Responsible	Group
1		Devonshire Pump House Roof	Leaking roof	Private	UoD	BG
2	Apr-15	Palace Hotel Wall	Damaged in a number of places. Section on corner of Devonshire Road appears to present a Health and Safety risk. Requires regular inspection and major review in the Spring.	Private	Palace Hotel	BCA / BG
3	Jul-15	Bus Stop Wall Market Place	Coping stones missing	Public	DCC	BCA / BG
4	Jul-15	Market Place	Market Place sign in the cattle market is out of date and shabby. Needs either removal or updating.	Public	HPBC	BG
5		Ashwood Park	Footbridge damaged and unusable. Has been cleared by Friends of Ashwood park. Is the bridge safe to use?	Public	HPBC	BG
6	Apr-15	Poole's Cavern	Derelict Cottage on car park boundary. HPBC to regularly monitor condition and provide a report.	Private	Privately Owned	BCA
7		Palace Hotel footpath	The footpath to the rear is dangerous and needs attention	Private	Palace Hotel	BG
8	Apr-15	Morrisons	Litter build up. Morrisons are aware and have responded to this issue.	Private	Morrisons	BCA / BG
9		Viaduct	Trees growing in and on top of the viaduct	Private	Rail company	BG
10	Jul-15	Cattle Market Yard	Unightly next to car park due to continued use by HPBC as open storage.	Public	HPBC	BCA / BG
11	Ongoing	Market Place	Fountain / Well on Market Place. A listed monument that has been allowed to fall into disrepair by council - despite BCA and the Wells Dressing Committee proposing to fund a restoration scheme.	Public	HPBC	BCA / BG
12	Ongoing	Harpur Hill Brown Field site	Site remains unused despite the need for housing. The risk is that environmentally valuable land will be built on instead	Private	UoD	BG
13		Fairfield Road	No's 36-38 are in a state of near dereliction despite some evidence of work being carried out intermittently. Fairfield road is a blight on the town as it sets the scene for visitors coming from the NW by car.	Private	Private Landlord	BCA / BG
14		White Lion Pub	Listed building that is now empty . It needs monitoring to prevent deterioration	Private	Private Company	BG
15		George Hotel and Mansions	In need of major restoration	Private	Osborne Group	BG
16	Apr-15	Water Street	Old toilet site needs to be put to better use after a decade or more of neglect. BCA have a proposal but it is currently blocked by HPBC. See proposed plan (attached).	Public	HPBC	BCA / BG
17		Pavilion Gardens	Rotten timbers and poor paint work	Public	HPBC	BG
18		Turner's Memorial	No water flows	Public	HPBC	BG
19	Apr-15	Pavement issues	Multiple repairs to pavements e.g. Duke Street presenting Health and Safety issue to pedestrians.	Public	DCC	BCA
20	Apr-15	Fountain Street wall	NORWEB substation wall in a state of collapse. Needs repair to prevent further deterioration.	Private	NORWEB	BCA
21		Overhanging branches obstructing pavements	Numerous examples in and around town	Private / Public		BCA / BG
22		A board signs and Street furniture clutter generally	In particular Spring Gardens	Private / Public		BCA / BG