

Minutes of the Hebden Bridge Partnership
Monday 10th September 2012, 7pm
The Terrace Room, The Town Hall, Hebden Bridge

Present

Robin Dixon (Chair), Amy Leader (Secretary), Polly Webber (Alternative Technology Centre), Lesley Mackay (Sustainable Transport Group), Myra James (Sustainable Transport Group), Diana Monahan (Local History), Jae Campbell (Calderdale Neighbourhood Team), Hannah Merriman (Handmade Parade), Jerry Smith (Hebden Bridge Community Association), Katie Kinsella (Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council), Andrew Bibby (Hebden Bridge Community Association).

1) Apologies

Judith Patrick, Chris Standish, David Fletcher, Rebecca Yorke, Susan Quick, Gerard Liston, Dave Nelson, Bear, Emma Green.

2) Minutes of last meeting

The following amendments need to be made to item 6) planning on the Brown site:

- Change the first sentence to supermarket and hotel
- Add that Hebden Bridge could lose shops to the negative points
- Change that the supermarket on the Brown site will be 1 ½ times the size of the Co-Op.

3) Matters arising

Robin Dixon went to Hebden Royd Town Council to talk about the Neighbourhood Plan, but there wasn't much interest.

Robin Dixon went to see Sam Deakin, the architect for the development on the Brown site opposite the turning circle in Mytholm. The plans have now gone in. There is still no client for the supermarket or the hotel. It was noted that the town council, Partnership and any individual's comments on the plans are taken as equally seriously at the council. It is thought that Calderdale council will release the plans before the next Partnership meeting.

4) Officer's reports

- i) Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council. Katie Kinsella (attached)
- ii) Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council. Jae Campbell

Floods

- Individuals are still approaching the council for help after the floods. The council have supplied cleaning equipment and dehumidifiers to help people affected by the floods.
- There have been many volunteers helping during the clean up. The team organised by the Calder Valley Flood Victims Facebook page are now burned out. Lloyds TSB have recently been supplying volunteers to great success.
- The next stage for Calderdale council is to plan resilience against flooding.

Asset transfers

- The asset transfer of Youth House from Calderdale council to Hebden Bridge Light Opera Society is moving forward. They have had plans drawn up which are available to view in the library and they are currently writing a business plan.
- The land at Sandy Gate is about to be transferred to Hebden Royd Town Council.

5) Update on the Brown site

This was covered in matters arising.

6) Neighbourhood Plan

The update was covered in matters arising. It was agreed to refer to the Neighbourhood Plan as a future action plan from now on.

7) Any Other Business

Robin asked for organisations around the table to give a brief update of what they were currently doing.

Hebden Bridge Women's Institute

The group held a cake stall for fundraising after the first floods and raised over £1500 which is to be split between funds for individuals and businesses. Half of the money will be going to help create a 'pop up Hebden' to promote the independent shops in the town. The group meet the third Monday of every month at The Town Hall, Hebden Bridge.

Alternative Technology Centre (ATC)

The ATC is currently working on a hydro power project, looking at 8 systems in the Upper Valley. They are working closely with Calderdale council on 2 sites they own.

Cycle Recycle is proving to be very popular and needs more space. There's a waiting list for bicycles. The ATC now has electric bike hire and are working the National Trust and Jerusalem Farm to get bicycle hire facilities.

Historical Society

The Historical Society have two performances at The Town Hall coming up, one based on the witches of Pendle and the other on the Luddites. The Historical Society are currently working on a project to transcribe probate documents from the local area. Funding is still in place if people would like to get involved in this project.

Self Builders

The self builders in Hebden Bridge are currently making connections with Mytholmroyd and Todmorden to collaborate and gain momentum in their work.

Handmade Parade

The Handmade Parade has received positive feedback from their decision to postpone the final parade from immediately after the flood to the following weekend. The artists involved in the project have felt an energy shift after this year and feel more part of the town. The Handmade Parade have recently completed the Pollination Parade, 2 events in Halifax and an event in Mytholroyd as part of the Rochdale Canal Festival.

Sustainable Transport

The Sustainable Transport Group are alarmed that the money for rural buses is under assault and they are watching this very closely.

Friends of Hebden Bridge train station

There will be a carol singing event at the station on Tuesday 18th December.

AOB

Robin Dixon announced that he will be standing down as Chair at the AGM.

Next meetings

Monday 8th October in the Terrace Room, The Town Hall, Hebden Bridge at 7pm.

The AGM will take place on Tuesday 16th October in the Waterfront Hall, The Town Hall, Hebden Bridge at 7pm.

Calderdale Tourism Board Update September 2012.

The Tourism Delivery Plan was approved at Cabinet in March 2012 which concentrates on tourism for the next 18 months under identified themes which are considered strengths for Calderdale from emerging trends:

Events and Festivals /The Cultural Offer
The Great Outdoors
Business Support and Growth

The themes are underpinned by the family market and are being developed and strengthened through business support, marketing and promotion, product development and ongoing strategic representation. Below is a taste of some of the work that has taken place since April of this year.

Business Support

We have furthered the aim of linking of tourism small and medium enterprises with the annual tourism conference which took place in April 2012. The event concentrated on 'local distinctiveness' which allowed businesses to explore what they thought was unique about the area and how we work more closely to celebrate and promote this. Nearly 70 separate businesses attended and the feedback from the event was extremely positive with businesses forging links.

As part of the European Regional Development Fund 'Knowledge Transfer' project, In June 2012 the Tourism Team engaged a number of high growth businesses to attend a training session delivered by Leeds Metropolitan University to explore social media development and APP development; the event concentrated on using of social media tools to achieve a loyal customer base as opposed to just a marketing tool. Attendees received a case study from Eureka! - How to approach the market and continually develop the customer base.

One to one support – 58, tourism related businesses have received support since April, seven of which are new and have received business support visits. Three such businesses are accommodation providers in the upper valley.

The team is supporting the Upper Calder Valley by working with Welcome to Yorkshire to get press and PR opportunities post floods, which has resulted in much local publicity from our input and regional/national coverage as a result of Welcome to Yorkshire.

Forward Plan – The Tourism Team has secured funding from Economic Fighting Fund to commission an 'Ambassadorship' training scheme for local taxi drivers. This will allow local taxi drivers, who are often the first point of contact for visitors training to be aware of their area and promote this to visitors. If possible the scheme will be cascaded wider to other businesses.

Marketing and Promotion

The Tourism Team continues to support the profile of the Piece Hall which is particularly important now that the Heritage Lottery Fund bid has been approved. A second brochure has been produced detailing the events in the run up to Xmas, telling the story of four specialist businesses and their journey.

The Visit Calderdale short film which was first presented at the Tourism Conference, sponsored by Grand Central and Northern Rail is now on vimeo and the link has been cascade to over 20 business partners to highlight the beauty of the area on their web pages as well as www.visitcalderdale.com

Market Research – The team have been working with volunteers from the third sector to capture intelligence from visitors to local events and festivals. Currently information has been secured from Hebden Bridge Duck Race and ‘Up the Buttriss’ in Hebden Bridge, with more research to be done at events in Brighouse and Todmorden. This information will help to ascertain visitor type, motivations, spend and repeat visits.

Visitor Information Centre staff have worked with Welcome to Yorkshire to host membership events at Halifax and Hebden Bridge in April and September. A third event in Todmorden will be planned for autumn. As a result of effective ongoing collaboration and awareness raising events, currently there are 70 Calderdale businesses signed up to the Welcome to Yorkshire membership scheme, this has increased by 30 since February of this year.

Forward Plan – Funding has been secured from Economic Fighting Fund to develop a Calderdale Literary Trail. This will be developed throughout the winter months with local experts in the third sector and available for Spring 2013 in advance of the new tourism season.

Web development – work with other Local Authorities and private providers is taking place over the next few months to develop www.visitcalderdale.com further, this will include new pages such as ‘horrible histories’ to target the family market and more heritage links tied into the museums offer. Work with Bradford and Wakefield will be done to identify and build upon good practice.

Product Development

The Visitor Information Centre in Hebden Bridge is going to receive a makeover in the near future which will tie in with the ‘Local Distinctiveness’ theme which will include beautiful artwork of the area by a local artist and will feature on the exterior and interior of the building. This is complemented by an increase in locally sourced products.

'The Great Outdoors' Theme is being developed with an increase in cycling events under the 'Calderdale Festival of Cycling' This year, the event this year hosts 10 cycling events spanning the upper and lower valley, under the banner of the annual two week celebration of the South Pennines Walk and Ride Festival. The signature 'Up the Butress' extreme hill climb challenge has been an overwhelming success for the second year.

Forward Plan - The Tourism Team have secured more Economic Fighting Fund to amend the Traffic Regulation Order in Hebden Bridge to facilitate more coach parking. This has been a long standing issue in the area and developments will allow more visitors to the area and the opportunity to stay longer.

The Team are working closely with Heptonstall Forward to develop Heritage Signage in and around the village to direct visitors appropriately and support their visit with additional heritage information to complement a hard copy heritage trail. This work will likely to be complete this autumn.

There are strategic plans in place to work more closely with Rochdale to develop a heritage trail across the Pennines. Initial meetings will take place with Tourism Officers in autumn to agree common links. Partner organisations including Pennine Prospects will be engaged to support this.

Other Ongoing Activity

The Tourism Team have been heavily involved providing logistical support in the Olympic Torch Relay which took place on 24th June 2012. The relay was an overwhelming success in which 70,000 people celebrated the arrival of the torch in Halifax and Brighouse.

Back le Bid – The campaign to secure the 2016 Tour de France to Yorkshire has been supported locally, raising the profile of the campaign and lobbying for local support. The work to date and a request for future support at a Calderdale level will soon be presented to Cabinet.

Rugby League World Cup 2013 – The Tourism Team are also working to support the marketing campaign for the Rugby League World Cup 2013. Some of this work will involve working with local tourism businesses to develop discount packages tied in with ticket sales. In addition there will be work with transport providers to target those outside the area to come to Calderdale and experience the event.