



**Central Area Forum  
The Royal, Hayfield  
Thursday 18th September 2008**

**Reference: 01 CNL 18/09/08**

**Question:** What is happening about the areas of neglect in the Meadowfield / Whaley Lane, Whaley Bridge neighbourhood? All overgrown etc. Others have had Council tax reduced apparently due to these issues? ..... Why should they pay full Council tax when others are not adhering to our rules?

**Answer:** The case of rubbish and goods stored in a garden at Meadowfield is very long running - and despite previous clearances of the site by the Council, the problem accumulated possessions remains.

As part of the latest round of action, the Council has served notices under s.215 of the Planning Acts. Although there was a degree of progress by the occupier in clearing the site, the problem is now getting worse. The Council has encountered difficulties in securing contractors to clear the site, but that process is now progressing once more. As a precautionary measure, an Environmental Health Officer is arranging to speak to residents about baiting for rodents prior to any items being removed.

We are very conscious of the difficulties that this site is causing other residents. However we consider this site to be quite exceptional - and the problems are very much associated with the personal circumstances of the occupier. This makes this a particularly complex and difficult case to resolve. Elsewhere the Council has used a variety of powers to successfully clear other untidy sites.

In reference to Council Tax reductions, the Council tax bands are set by the Valuation Office. Properties are banded on their open Market value as at 1st April 1991 and it unusual, but not impossible to get a reduction based on changes in the area that are detrimental to the value of a property. Anyone wishing to pursue this should contact -  
Derby Valuation Office  
4th Floor, St Peters House,  
Gower Street,  
Derby  
DE1 1JJ. Telephone: 01332 710800.

High Peak Borough Council's Council Tax office is not aware of reductions to properties in this area relating to problems on this site. If a successful appeal to the Valuation Officer has been obtained, others may wish to apply.

No information has been identified relating to associated problems on Whaley Lane, but HPBC will address any issue brought to our attention.

**Reference: 02 CNL 18/09/08**

**Question:** The next generation of broadband is about to be rolled out. What steps can the Borough and County Council take to ensure that the rural areas of Derbyshire are not (yet again!) left behind?

**Answer:** High Peak Borough Council has been working with partners through Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP) to support digital enhancements for all residents. Broadband is now available across the whole of Derbyshire - including Peak Forest which previously was described as a 'not spot' (an area where broadband connectivity was unavailable) and in Glossop symmetrical broadband service is available. Broadband speeds in Derbyshire are on average faster than in other rural areas in East Midlands (and similar to urban areas) but there is some variation. In specific reference to Mike Crompton's question regarding next generation broadband, we are continuing to work with DDEP's programme called 'WellConnected' which is a support programme, including telephone advice line, dedicated website, events and ict grant funding to support local businesses (including home based business) to support both digital inclusion, e-development and advice/support.

WellConnected is running a free event in Buxton (Wed 24th Sept 8.30am-1.00am including networking lunch & repeated session 1.00-5.00pm) at the Barcelo Palace Hotel where Susan Hallam, one of the regions leading experts is keynote speaker and workshops are available covering web design, selling online, mobile working, ict project planning and improving website engine rankings. Full details are available via <http://www.highpeak.gov.uk/business/econdev/Events/events.asp>

In addition, DDDP are bringing the skills bus to accompany the WellConnected project to High Peak on 15th Oct (Pav Gardens) and 17th Oct (Glossop Norfolk Sq). The former ties in with some Business Link workshops so hopefully create a ready made audience and later ties in with Glossop Business Network.

We would encourage all businesses (including third sector and social enterprises) to contact WellConnected project on 0845 058 6644 for specific advice or visit [www.derbyshire-wellconnected.co.uk](http://www.derbyshire-wellconnected.co.uk) where they can access details of events, grant funding and register for updates.

**Comments:**

1. It would be useful if the Council could make more contact with the parish councils to co-ordinate activities and funding.
2. Despite radio, press, poster, leafleting and mail-shot information it is difficult to attract increased numbers of residents to the Central Forum. This may be due to the dispersed nature of the area, and/or it could be assumed that on the whole residents are in the main satisfied with the services provided.
3. An event in Chapel-en-le-Frith to publicise the Forum may encourage more people to attend.