

**Central Area Forum
Questions and Answers**

This evening meeting was held on **Thursday 7th September 2006** in the New Mills School & 6th Form College. Residents and community organisations from New Mills, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Hayfield, Combs, Whaley Bridge and surrounding districts, had the opportunity to discuss local issues with Officers and Councillors representing High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Constabulary.

Reference: 01CNL 7/09/06 Cost of Public Conveniences in Whaley Bridge

Question: How much does it cost to run, maintain, clean and repair the public conveniences in Whaley Bridge per year?

Would this be better spent installing a modern self-clean unit? (On the Jodrell Car Park) for the following reasons:

- It may be more cost effective
- It would be cleaner and more pleasant to use
- It would be in full view of the CCTV camera to deter vandalism
- Still in a convenient and more prominent location

**Answer from
High Peak BC**

Last year Whaley Bridge public toilets cost £7,170 to maintain.

This included approximately £4,000 for cleaning, £1,500 for the utilities and £1,600 for repairs / maintenance.

A modern, self-clean, accessible single cubicle toilet can cost anything from £35,000 to over £100,000.

Self-clean usually means that the WC itself and floor are cleaned; cleaning operatives are still required to restock the facilities and clean other parts, often via leasing agreements which can cost from around £15,000 per year.

However, as part of the Councils public toilet improvement programme, it is proposed to convert the current disabled facility into a unisex, single use, accessible cubicle, with coin and RADAR entry, similar to those we are providing elsewhere in the borough.

Comment: It is a measure of a civilised society that you should be able to use the toilet without paying.

**Answer from
High Peak BC** If everyone in society were civilised we would have more facilities and they would be better looked after. In reality, public toilets are misused.

Reference: 02CNL 7/09/06 Bridge to Bingswood Industrial Estate, Whaley Bridge

Question: What is the timescale for the construction of the bridge to Bingswood Industrial Estate?

**Answer from
High Peak BC**

This is a high priority for the Council. Significant progress has been made in securing a package of resources from a number of sources and agreeing plans with most of the main land interests in the area. There is a currently an issue in that one of the landowners is not giving permission for the land to be used in the way the Council would like it to be used. The Council is considering a Compulsory Purchase Order. Further negotiations are being conducted to gain agreement on the remaining issues. Council officers are pursuing a number of options to progress the project but because of the state of the negotiations it is not yet possible to publish a timescale.

Supplementary question: Why did the Council not start a Compulsory Process Order earlier?

Answer: Early indications were that we would have agreement from everyone.

Reference: **03CNL 7/09/06 Illegal parking in Whaley Bridge**

Question: What pressure can be put on the police to tackle illegal and dangerous parking which exacerbates the Canal Street congestion problem?

Answer from Police Currently the parking restrictions on Canal Street, Whaley Bridge consist of marked parking bays on one side and double yellow lines on the other. The parking bays are restricted to 30 minutes waiting with return prohibited within one hour. The double yellow lines are in good condition. To combat the congestion problem the Police will actively proceed with enforcement of the parking restrictions. I have tasked the Whaley Bridge beat officer Pc 680 Ratcliffe to regularly patrol Canal Street and to deal positively with any parking offences. I have also informed local officers based at Chapel to be aware of the problem and to deal with any problems they encounter whilst on patrol. A/Sgt 2311 Long

Reference: **04CNL 7/09/06 Whaley Bridge Canal Basin**

Question: What is happening to the Canal Basin (plans for improvement etc)?

Answer from High Peak BC The canal basin is owned and managed by British Waterways. The Council has contacted British Waterways and has achieved some success in ensuring that the access road is repaired. Discussions have also been had with regard to the longer term investment plans. At this stage British Waterways have not developed an investment plan for the area but we are keeping them informed on the progress of the Bingswood bridge scheme.

Reference: **05CNL 7/09/06 Torrs Riverside Park**

Question: Is significant progress being made towards rendering the Torrs Riverside Park especially Millennium Bridge and weir fully accessible for disabled people?

Answer from High Peak BC The Council is raising this issue with the New Mills Town Council, which has responsibility for the Torrs Riverside Park. The Millennium Bridge is accessible for wheelchair use.

Reference: **06CNL 7/09/06 Sett Valley Trail**

Question: What is now being done to improve disabled access onto the Sett Valley Trail? Can anything be done to move forward the recent planning application that has just been passed to change a section of the Sett Valley Trail, between St Georges Road and Church Lane.

Answer from High Peak BC A recent planning application was approved for improvements to enable disabled access. Since the planning application for the residential development to which this was linked was refused, there is no obvious funding to implement the plans and alternative ways to secure improvements will now have to be sought. Sett Valley Trail is the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council.

Reference: **07CNL 7/09/06 Recycling concerns**

Question: Concerns that the planned increase in recycling will increase the number of lorries.

Answer from High Peak BC Derbyshire County Council are the waste authority and are in the early stages of consultation on the Waste Management Strategy. It is important to comment on the possible sites that have been identified in the consultation document. There will be further opportunity to consult again next year with the options.

Reference: 08CNL 7/09/06 Litter and dog fouling

Question: What was the effect of issuing Fixed Penalty Notices?

Answer from High Peak BC Radical improvement, which has broken the culture of young people dropping litter on their way to and from school. Also targeted areas of persistent dog fouling. Want to run campaigns focused on certain hotspot areas. Important that we link it to education campaigns. Let the Council know if there is an area we should focus on. Number of reports of dog fouling has gone down in last 3 years.

Question: How much is a fixed penalty notice for dropping litter?

Answer from High Peak BC £50

Question: How many have been issued?

Answer from High Peak BC 91 Fixed penalty notices have been issued, with no court prosecutions. 1 Successful prosecution has been taken for dog fouling (£324). Under 17 years are cautioned for a first offence.

Question: What happens if they don't pay their fines?

Answer from High Peak BC Most people pay their fines. *(awaiting additional information)*

Reference: 09CNL 7/09/06 'Grot spot' areas

Question: What powers do we have to remove 'grot spots' on privately owned sites, e.g. a site earmarked for housing that has become a site with anti-social behaviour, dog fouling etc?

Answer from High Peak BC This is notoriously difficult to tackle – need to demonstrate impact the land is having on the community, identify the owner which is not always easy, and find alternative uses for the site.

Question: What can be done about the state of empty private shops that look a mess e.g. New Mills?

Answer from High Peak BC They are difficult as they are private, but when they get to a certain state an Untidy Site Notice can be served. Community pressure and persistence to clean up the property can be exerted.

Question: What about Stax? Planning permission was granted 3 years ago but nothing has happened since.

Answer from High Peak BC If planning permission has been granted we cannot chase them to do the work but new powers under the Clean Neighbourhood Act enable us to enter discussions with the owners about the impact on the community.

Reference: 010CNL 7/09/06 Recycling in High Peak

Question: Where does High Peak sit in terms of the league tables nationally for recycling?

Answer from High Peak BC Fairly low in terms of domestic waste. High Peak now has kerbside collection for recycling which has improved our rate. We have piloted alternate week compost and residual waste collection in part of the borough (Glossop) which has generally gone well. Expected to move the recycling rate up to 17% - 20%. In Glossop, we were hitting recycling rates of 35-40% over the summer.

Question: Is it compulsory to recycle in High Peak? If not, why not?

Answer from High Peak BC The policy is to try and roll out the alternative week collection and not make recycling compulsory. Eventually, the Council may consider fining households for putting recyclables in their household waste bin, although education is clearly the preferred route.

Reference: 015CNL 7/09/06 Summer Activities for Young People

Question: How do young people get to New Mills to access to Summer leisure activities if they live outside the area?

Answer from High Peak BC There was a swim bus in Chapel for a while but there was not enough usage of it to make it viable. Young people have access to the B-Line card for reduced transport fares etc. (www.derbyshire.gov.uk/b_line/) Statistics indicate that the free swim scheme had increased uptake (5000 to 12,000 throughout the Borough). Figures are monitored through the till receipts but we do not have the information of where the young people came from. We will consider monitoring this if we do a similar scheme in future.

Reference: 016CNL 7/09/06 Clean Team

Question: Clean Team – refuse, dumping etc. concerns about lack of response to calls for service.

Answer from High Peak BC Keep sending requests through Customer Services on **0845 129 7777**. If any reports are not responded to it is important to register a complaint with Customer Services.

Reference: 017CNL 7/09/06 Area Forum community involvement

Question: The attendance tonight is quite poor. Is this meeting publicised well enough?

Answer from High Peak BC The meetings are advertised in the local papers, radio, posters, flyers etc. Any suggestions to assist and improve would be welcomed.

Reference: 018CNL 7/09/06 Environmental Enforcement Officer Working Hours

Question: What hours does the Enforcement Officer work?

Answer from High Peak BC He is on contract to work flexible hours including weekends, evenings and changing hours. It would be good to have additional officer for greater coverage.

Question: When the Enforcement Officer starts chasing the recycling wagon isn't he going to be very busy.

Answer from High Peak BC Yes, we expect that will be the case at the start.

Reference: 019CNL 7/09/06 Parking in New Mills

Question: It is not the policy of the Police to enforce parking on double yellow lines in New Mills?

Answer from Police There are a few traffic wardens and we target hotspots, but let the police know if you think a certain area is a hotspot. The public have a responsibility not to park on double yellow lines. High Peak Borough Council is undertaking a feasibility study with Derbyshire County Council to consider taking on on-street parking responsibilities but this would cost, even with the income from enforcement fines.

Reference: 020CNL 7/09/06 Environment

Comments: Need to look at the efficiency of cleaning – gulleys, pavements, weeds which are cleaned/removed regularly but block/grow quickly. Are the techniques used appropriate.
The improvements made in the 'Going Local' scheme have been excellent but how will they be maintained?

Answer from High Peak BC There are inherent problems with on-going maintenance, which are the responsibility of Derbyshire County council – many of the gulleys are very old. We need to consider whether they are cleaned frequently enough; the 'safer' and 'environmentally-friendlier' weed-killers require regular application, and pavement surfaces vary in ability to clean in terms of chewing gum. Asphalt pavements are easier and cheaper to maintain, with fewer insurance claims because of trips but it is more difficult to remove chewing gum from them. We need to do more education and enforcement.

Regarding the on-going maintenance costs of the 'Going Local' projects – we take your comments on board.