

The Minutes of Berwick-upon-Tweed Conservation Area Advisory Group Meeting – 17th February 2011

In attendance:

Annette Reeves	NCC Conservation Officer (Berwick)
Alison Cowe	Berwick Civic Society
Margaret Thomas	St Boisil's Resident's Association
Peter Rutherford	NCC Dev Management Manager (North)
Philip Miller	Building Study Group
Chris Burgess	NCC Cons Team Manager (Chair)
John Robertson	Tweedmouth Resident's Association
Dorothy Slater	Spittal Improvement Trust

1. **Apologies:** Tim Kirton, Margaret Shaw, Peter Watts, John Robertson.
2. **Minutes of the 13th January meeting and matters arising.**

The minutes were agreed. No matters arising.

3. **Regeneration Strategy – Protecting and enhancing the heritage asset (Update on THI and Area Partnership Schemes).**

THI – AR progressing development work and surveys/schedules of repair for the critical and vacant buildings within the THI area. These will hopefully form the basis of repair projects/grant applications to be programmed into Year 2.

The THI complementary initiatives: 'Hometime Dark' artist publication of poems/photographs; the public realm detailed designs for Bridge Street car park/Maltings car park/open space; Changemaker Project and Building Study Group record of Bridge Street would form part of a collaborative exhibition and mini launch of the Berwick Historic Area Improvement Schemes at the end of March/beginning of April.

Dewar's Lane Granary (newly opened gallery space) will host the exhibition to make the links with other regeneration projects, as well as provide a suitable venue in a newly restored listed building.

Area Partnership Schemes – Bridge Street; 2 applications being processed/contracted on. 2 further applications expected to be committed before the end of the financial year.

Castlegate; 1 application being processed/contracted on. 2 further applications expected and AR had met with Hutton Stone who is advising on stonework repairs. Castlegate slower although AR had recently met with a couple of landowners who both owned a number of properties in Castlegate, Bridge Street and the THI area. AR encouraging these owners to appoint an agent/surveyor to assist the application process and supporting information required.

AR hopes the exhibition will generate some publicity as well as the Berwick's Future Newsletter (due end of March) that contains articles on the projects, complementary initiatives and Granary opening/exhibition date.

Changemakers – Elizabeth Russell (young advocate) Changemaker Project is nearing completion. Berwick Middle School pupils are finalising their surveys, analyses and designs on a series of A3 posters for their part in the exhibition entitled 'Past, Present and Future'. Elizabeth and AR are presenting the Berwick heritage project to Changemakers Future Cultural Leaders Programme end of year event in London on the 16th March.

Elizabeth also using her project as part of her final year dissertation Planning degree and will present her project/evaluation to the March meeting of CAAG and a future Berwick's Future Steering Group.

4. Berwick Listed Building Surveys (update).

AR reported no new surveys had come through but recommendations on buildings submitted to DCMS awaited.

5. Valuing Places: Good Practice in Conservation Areas (EH launch; Berwick case study).

AR distributed copies of the document to CAAG members present and considered the group should be justly proud of its inclusion as an exemplar model for partnership working. The publication featured Berwick very prominently, as well as on the EH website launching the Good Practice publication. The Berwick Advertiser had written a long positive news piece and Margaret Shaw had contributed as one of the longest serving community members of the Berwick CAAG. The Berwick's Future Newsletter would also be featuring an article on the work of CAAG and its national acknowledgement/recognition.

6. Design Guides – Progress AC/AR/CB

AC had distributed working copies to CB/AR. AR apologised as there had not been time to work through the various topic papers prior to this meeting. CB had also not been able to check the documents or properly research the budget.

Item deferred to the next meeting.

7. **Berwick's Future (update on progress of project groups).**

- **Barracks** – Meeting held of Development Management/Design Team approach with Place First consultants at EH offices. AR/CB/PR all attended. EH were able to convey their corporate concern with the project; specifically any new build element as conveyed in the concept 3D model. EH agreed however, that the project should continue with their input but that this was on a cautious and limited basis. Agreed to undertake soft market testing for the business model with a limited design competition that looked at the whole accommodation; protection of the heritage asset; setting and wider context within the conservation area and not merely the new build element. Next meeting is on the 25th February to discuss and agree an appropriate brief.
- **Public Realm** – document approved and published. Available in limited hard copy, on disc as well as on NCC website for access and download.

No other project group members present for update.

8. **CAAG website.**

CB had been requested to provide a link to Rural Voices but it was not clear this was still active. Minutes had been added. High resolution logo received from Civic Society and awaiting St Boisils and Tweedmouth resident's information. CB asked if any community groups had websites for links to be added. Spittal Improvement Trust has a website and DS to check with Mike Greener.

AC had offered to sponsor the website (so CAAG could have its own url) through her business. The group discussed the issue of sponsorship and agreed there did not appear to be any conflict or problem with having sponsorship. CB thanked AC's company (Scroll LLP) for this offer and agreed to liaise with AC in setting it up.

9. **Current Planning Applications.**

No applications for consideration. Mill Strand had been appealed and would take the form of an Informal Hearing. Objectors could speak if they wished and members of the public/interested parties could attend should they want to observe the discussions and formal process.

10. Any Other Business.

- PM – Building Study Group continuing with Bridge Street. AR and PM are giving a joint presentation/talk in May to Civic Society.
- DS – Memorial and Spa well project – DS pursuing funding to complete improvements to the memorial plinth and enhancement of the memorial green following completion of the HERS funding in 2005/06 as some elements could not be completed and some of the bulb/wild flower planting had failed. DS will be discussing the project with AR after the meeting and was also researching all funding options and external grant schemes. CB suggested speaking to the AONB team as well as NCC as there could be funding through the Lowlands and Coast Leader programme.
- AC – Listed Building Cherith (44 Ravensdowne) had been sold. Open viewing enabled Civic Society to visit and considered it worth recording. PM said Building Study Group member had taken some photographs and he would pass these on to AR.
- PR – North Area Dev Management Committee had recently visited Berwick to look at a number of housing sites in the town centre and on the edge of Berwick. The visit/inspection had been well received; discussion centred round the major issues; the Localism Bill and delivery of services. NCC not yet formed a view of how to address the localism bill. Looking at a delivery toolkit for strategic housing sites that could impact on the 3 conservation areas.
- MT – Little house (former mortuary building) on the Quayside is in poor condition.
- AC –
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XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX CAAG wished to lodge a formal complaint to Development Management Enforcement Team for investigation. AR to complete complaint form on behalf of CAAG.
- CB – Investigating collapse of the access pend from Dewar's Lane Granary out on to the Quayside (which was part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument). EH deciding whether to close it off or undertake repair.
- CB – The Governor's Garden archaeological report and building assessment had been completed and Nick Best had asked whether the

consultant could give a talk to CAAG about the findings. CAAG would welcome a talk. CB to report back.

- CB – Tweedmouth Bowling Club had offered the use of their premises for CAAG meetings but this was at normal hire rates and considered to be too expensive - they were thanked but the offer was declined. It was agreed to use the Trust's meeting room in the William Elder Building (at reduced rate) wherever possible.

10. Date of next meeting.

24th March 2011

Return to **9.00 a.m.** start (The William Elder Building).