

Agenda item 7, Save Ruskin's View – Note on items (a) and (b)

(a) Update on Technical matters

Next stages of work by Fairhurst

In line with the agreed Quotation for Engineering Services with Fairhurst, and following on from the resolution at last month's Town Council meeting, Fairhurst have been instructed to proceed with Stage 2, Outline Design for Tender. The cost of this stage to the Council will be circa £13,000 (plus VAT, recoverable).

This stage involves finalising a remedial design and analysis, producing a set of design drawings (including sections and details), engaging with contractors and seeking a view on budget costs. The timescales for this work will be circulated to councillors when this is received from Fairhurst

Slope Stability Inspection

Commendium have carried out a further slope stability inspection and a report is expected before the Council meeting. If received this will be reported verbally.

Alternative footpath route

At the request of Councillors Muirhead and Ree a site meeting was held on 5 July with Merlin Hibbs (Lay Chair of St Mary's PCC) and Rev. Richard Snow. A number of possible routes were discussed and St Mary's DCC on 7 July gave further consideration to this issue. A formal proposal is awaited from St Mary's and this will be an agenda item in August.

Correspondence from local resident Derek Atkinson

A letter was received by the Council on 27 June and posted on Facebook from this local resident. Whilst the letter was addressed to the County Council it raises some issues that should be addressed by the Town Council, particularly as it appears to refer to the Council's consultant. (A follow up letter has also been sent by Mr Atkinson to all councillors, circulated on 11 July by the Town Clerk)

The contents of the letter of 27 June are as follows:

Re:-The closure of the Ruskin's View footpath at Kirkby Lonsdale.

To:-Whom it may concern.

Dear Sir. (Alexander Denton).

It's now a few weeks ago that there was a walk in public forum informing the general public the options that have been put forward, to go forward to the eventual reopening of the footpath. I was thanked by a number of residents for the informative letter that I sent to you, and during the consultation period that evening I was introduced to the Chief Engineer who thanked me for the information that had been passed to him from the Highways and Byways office. He explained to me that there had been an overreaction, and on his inspection of the so called dangerous and possible land slip of the footpath, he remarked he could not see it happening in the next hundred years. But to comply with what has become a very expensive non health and safety issue, the implementation of a French Drain to reroute the water was being looked at to quell the worries of various people. We discussed the reinforcement of the banking at river level by introducing wire cages filled with stone which will protect the bank from further erosion from high river levels during extreme rainfall. If for any reason the Authorities won't accept they have made a

terrible mistake by the closure, then why haven't they closed the Radical Steps as they are very much in need of very long overdue maintenance, a health and safety risk from elderly people slipping on the worn often damp steps. And there is also a question as to why the stone Gazebo and the Cottage adjacent to the steps has not been included in this so called dangerous banking fiasco.

I and many more residents look to you to remove the expensive gates that have been installed and give the town back its Tourist's Attraction to help the local economy.

Regards Derek Atkinson.

It is **recommended** that the following response is sent to Mr Atkinson...

The Town Council will explore all practical issues around the closure of The Brow, as it is the Council's aim to have the footpath reopened, as soon as possible, and when it is safe to do so.

The reference to 'Chief Engineer' in the letter is assumed to mean Tony Simmons who was the Fairhurst representative at the public drop in session on 25 May. The Council has raised this with Mr Simmons who states that...'I'm not sure that I recognise any of this as a conversation with me'.

The Gazebo area and the Radical Steps are outside of the risk area, although the Council has in its work programme the need to improve the Radical Steps.

It is only the County Council who could take a decision to re-open the footpath. However, as there has been no change in circumstances since the closure, and the advice of Fairhurst remains the same, it is extremely unlikely that a different decision would be taken. But, in view of public concerns about the closure the Town Council has asked the County Council if it will review its closure decision. A reply is awaited.

Fairhurst, understandably, will not give a view on the degree of risk re the Brow collapsing. They have repeated their findings that the slope is unstable with ongoing evidence of degradation and movement. It is not possible to predict a timeframe, but a collapse could be small and localised or large and widespread.

Gazebo viewpoint

St Mary's have been looking at whether the Gazebo could be opened up during daylight hours to enable a partial view of Ruskin's View. It has now been confirmed that the Gazebo is structurally sound and that only some minor internal works are required before it could be opened up for public access. The Town Council will now approach the Yorkshire Dales National Park re minor works to a tree on The Brow to open up the view.

(b) Update on fundraising

Action note from 22 June Fundraising Group meeting

The Fundraising Group is meeting regularly and to give councillors a flavour of discussions, the action note from the meeting on 22 June is attached. The items which follow were discussed at that meeting. The next Fundraising group is on 19 July.

Initiative from Chamber of Trade

In addition to placing collection boxes around shops in the Town, the Chamber have arranged for the making of bags to raise money for the Appeal. They have suggested that a stall be set up during the Thursday market to sell these and other items and to be a focal point for the campaign. The Chamber have agreed to pay for the costs of promotion, signage etc.

Initiative from Royal Barn

Following a suggestion from the Royal Barn, a member of the Fundraising Group met with Stuart Taylor and the company have agreed to produce a Ruskin's View beer, with some of the proceeds going into the Appeal fund. Further details are awaited.

Letter of support from Mrs Claire Hensman, Lord-Lieutenant of Cumbria

A letter of support from the Lord-Lieutenant has been received and a copy is attached.