



**Situated between the coast and lakeland fells, Bootle is a small village in Copeland, West Cumbria. With a population of around 600 the parish includes the settlements of Bootle village and Bootle Station and is recognised as a Rural Service Centre by the Lake District National Park Authority.**

## Background

The village school, Captain Shaw's, was threatened with closure in 2006. This, coupled with the seemingly relentless threat to rural services was the catalyst for action. Responding to the decline in services, employment opportunities, and population, coupled with an appreciation of the outstanding natural beauty and quality of life in Bootle, a group of community activists got together to start a Community Plan.

Following a 2 year campaign of consultation, surveying and presenting, the Bootle Community Action Plan was launched in January 2010 to a packed village hall.

The plan highlighted a number of priorities including:

- Safe path alternatives to the twisting, un-lit, un-marked 60mph road which separates the parish.
- Facilities for young people were recognised as being crucial if families were to be retained and encouraged to choose the Bootle lifestyle.
- Protecting a coastal access road to 30 households and the areas main employer, MoD Eskmeals was highlighted as essential.

However, by far the greatest priority with over 90% of respondents demanding action, involved the development of Wellbank. Following a colourful history, being used as a MoD base and later a holiday camp the 12.5 acre site was previously integral to the social fabric of village life. Wellbank was fondly remembered and dearly missed.



*Bootle Village*

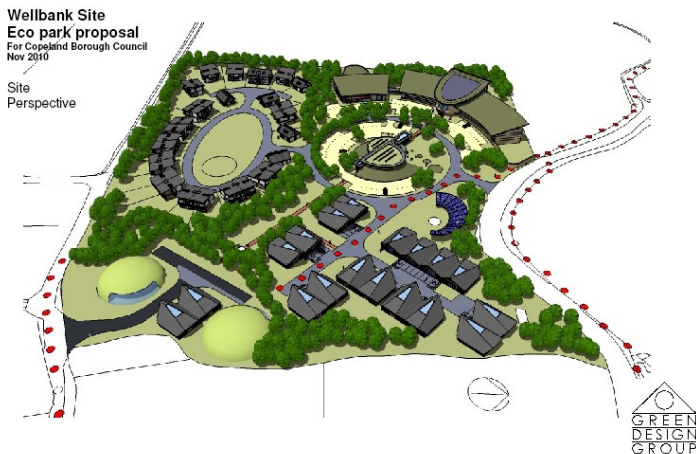
## What has been achieved?

Bootle's Community Action Plan has highlighted and prioritised community led projects and most importantly has helped to secure the funding needed for projects to progress.

The much needed off-road path is now planned, with land-owner consent and part-funding secured. Working with partners such as Sustrans, the two settlements are hopeful to be joined with a cyclist, pedestrian and equestrian 'Trailway' by December 2011.

A group of teenage residents took part in a film, which highlighted the lack of facilities for young people. This led to a BMX track and Multi-use games area (MUGA) proposal being initiated. Funding has now been secured through Community Spaces and a committee has formed to realise the dream.

Bootle Beach Improvers successfully campaigned, using evidence from the Community Action Plan, and changed a Government shoreline decision. The previous option to 'do nothing' became an improved 'managed re-alignment' in the Shoreline Management Plan.



Wellbank Site Eco park proposal

## What has been achieved? (cont.)

This enabled a group of local farmers to implement a coastal management development for just £3900 which now protects the road (previous estimates in excess of £700k).

The most exciting proposal involves a sustainable community development at Wellbank. Housing was recognised as a proven need and the new plans include building 34 architecturally innovative new-build homes, a high quality visitor accommodation provision with adjacent training facilities, and also an enterprise and retail village.

As the Community Action Plan indicated, the residents are keen to harness green technology and have included an anaerobic digester and photovoltaic bank in the proposals.

## The Learning

Residents are defying apathy; the Bootle community is interested and enthusiastic about the future. Partnerships and indeed friendships have been formed with stakeholders such as the LDNPA and Copeland Local Authority.

The process of Community Led Planning has increased the knowledge of residents through research, development and delivery. Confidence has improved, re-enforcing that 'can do' communities can really make a difference.

Captain Shaw's School continues to provide first rate primary education at the heart of the village and is recognised by Ofsted as good with outstanding features. Our aim prevails, to effect positive change and 'breathe new life into Bootle for future generations'.

## Contact Details

To find out more about the work of the Bootle Community Action Planners, please contact members:

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A copy of Bootle's plan is available to view at [www.cumbriaaction.org.uk](http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk)

If you would like more information about starting a Community Led Plan in your area, please contact ACT on Tel: 01228 817 224 or Email: [info@cumbriaaction.org.uk](mailto:info@cumbriaaction.org.uk)

## ACT champions community and rural issues

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