

Community Led Planning is a process that enables local people to work together to consider their needs for the future, and to develop an action plan to help achieve their shared ambitions. The process leads to the production of a Community Led Plan, a document setting out what local people value, and what they would like to change. The changes are detailed in the action plan.

Community led plan: the process

At the Annual Town Meeting in April 2012, the Town Council invited the people of Grange to develop a community plan. After a slow start, the current committee was established in October/November 2012 under the chairmanship of Geoff D'Arcy.

In order to find out what people think about Grange, and how it should develop in the future, we asked visitors, local businesses and Grange residents for their comments and feedback. Visitor questionnaires were available from April to June 2013; local businesses were given a questionnaire in August 2013; and we hand-delivered 2500 questionnaires within Grange in July 2013 to gather information. Pupils at Grange Primary School put together an exhibition which was displayed in the Library during November 2013. They designed and conducted a survey for years 5 and 6, which was then produced as a formal booklet. The youngest created a mobile about things they liked and disliked in Grange. Year 11 students at Cartmel School were encouraged to complete the community questionnaire.

We received 142 completed visitor questionnaires, 24 from Grange businesses, 902 from the Grange community, and 33 from Cartmel School students.

Glossary of acronyms

3P's	Three Parks Group
BT	British Telecom
CCC	Cumbria County Council
GTC	Grange Town Council
SLDC	South Lakeland District Council
TIC	Town Information Centre



The Grange-over-Sands Community Led Plan 2014



The results: visitors

Nearly half had visited Grange up to 5 times before and were day visitors. 20% of people said it was their first visit. 83% came by car. Many praised the amenities and attractiveness of the town, and the helpfulness of local people. The majority said there was “nothing” to dislike, but there was criticism about parking facilities, the derelict lido, and having to pay for toilets. When asked what could be improved, parking and the lido were most frequently mentioned.

The results: the community

Planning & Development: the overwhelming view was that new housing should be affordable, for people connected with the town, and should be 1 or 2-bedroom dwellings (from 80% or more of the returns). A similar percentage said that sheltered housing was important – but people may not be aware of what is already available in Grange. 96% said ‘brown field’ sites should be developed, and 91% were in favour of converting existing buildings. Only a small percentage had a family member who had to move away due to lack of suitable or affordable housing.

Despite the majority being against new development, there does appear to be a middle ground. Residents are not totally opposed to new housing projects e.g. the new Berners project (brown field). They are however opposed to losing all the town’s remaining green field sites. The other concern which comes through is infrastructure, which includes drainage and traffic management. These concerns have been expressed to the Town Council in its advisory capacity and to South Lakeland District Council as the planning authority. There is a view that local opinion does not carry any weight with the latter.

Environment: About half the community thought road/pavement maintenance and dog fouling were major problems; they indicated that litter was a minor problem. Predictably, the lido was the main unsightly feature.

Crime & Safety: There was some concern about safety when out and about at night, but on the whole people feel safe in Grange. Particular types of crime or safety hazards mentioned were speeding and poor driving, vandalism/anti-social behaviour and bad parking in general.

Health & Well-being: The vast majority (86%) had no problem accessing health services, but many referred to the distance to hospitals and the reduced bus service to Westmorland General. Where a need for help was identified, it was for help with general housework, cleaning and shopping, gardening, and personal care. Many residents are already receiving help from relatives and carers/Cumbria Care.

Community Activities & Facilities: Swimming facilities and sports clubs were requested for both adults and young people, together with youth clubs and a community leisure centre. (However, a quarter of the responses indicated that Grange is already well served.) Grange halls are an integral part of community use and the upcoming closure of the Parish Hall has been commented upon, as there is no direct equivalent. There was general agreement with the list of statements about the shops, eating places, the Library and the Post Office – and access does not tend to be difficult. Lack of a local filling station was a frequent comment.

Your Town Council: 41% of people felt that Grange Town Council represents their interests – but a similar percentage said “don’t know”. (Amongst young people, the percentage of “don’t knows” was higher.) Many people felt that Grange Town Council does its best, but struggles due to SLDC restrictions. Positive comments were that the council works extremely hard on our behalf, people always received a prompt response, and the present council seems much more go ahead and inclusive. The introduction of councillor surgeries was welcomed. Negative comments included the lack of feedback regarding major issues and decision-making; the difficulty of obtaining information.

Communication: The vast majority (81%) are satisfied with the provision of information about what is going on in Grange – although the teenagers were less satisfied. Grange Now is the main source of information. The Town Information Centre and the Library were praised. On the negative side, key SLDC policy decisions were often only widely publicised afterwards, and event posters were not always well synchronised. The majority (around 65%) were very satisfied/satisfied with their mobile phone and internet connections; however, poor mobile reception and “dead spots” were frequently mentioned, and broadband width was identified as inadequate.

Employment: Transport difficulties do not hamper people in taking up employment. It was felt that more varied work – not just seasonal shop work – was required. Other suggestions were for small/light industry, with low rent start-up space for business, and small cheap workshops with good access for the self-employed; an annual job fair; training; also more local job information/publicity – in one central location.

Tourism: As expected, there is agreement that visitors are important to the local economy (99%), and hence facilities are important (97%). 98% agree a good quality environment is required – 91% think this applies to Grange.

Traffic, Transport & Roads: For all purposes the most widely used type of transport is the private vehicle: used every day by over 50% of people. Walking is the second most popular in all categories: over half the residents walk every day. Public transport improvements were requested, but are unlikely to happen in the current financial climate. With regard to parking, the overall impression created is that what people want is always to have spaces available outside where they are going (often, but not always, for short periods) without having to pay. Parking for people with disabilities or who cannot carry shopping very far is an element within this issue.

Problems: HGVs and wide loads (over 90%); on-street parking (85%); speeding traffic and congestion (over 80%); parking on pavements (almost 75%).

The results: businesses

By far the most significant factor for businesses was felt to be parking. Businesses would benefit from good transport links and large car parks, making the town very accessible. They also ask for urgent action regarding the lido to improve the appearance and attractiveness of one of the town’s main features. Other requests were for more visitor recreation opportunities, an extended tourist season and improvements to visitor information, including signage. Specific signage requirements were direction signs for Pig Lane toilets; signs for the health centre, Citizens’ Advice Bureau, access to the Promenade, amenities on Kents Bank Road, and a request for visitor notice boards advertising activities/attractions.

Closing comments and next steps

Grange does not stand still. There have obviously been changes since the questionnaire was distributed in the summer of 2013, including: completion of the new health centre and start of building on the Berner’s site; developments with planning applications; changes to parking restrictions in the town; reduced train services/review of bus services; relocation of the Town Council Offices and a much improved website (www.grangeoversandstowncouncil.gov.uk); and the outdoor gallery at the lido.

The detailed CLP Report and Action Plan document is available at the Library and the Information Centre. Copies are also held by the Town Council, SLDC and CCC. Now we need to put the Action Plan into effect, and hope that Grange residents will come forward to help achieve this.

Many thanks from the Committee to everyone who took part, and for the organisations which have supported us through this process.

COMMUNITY LED PLAN – ACTION PLAN

The organisations listed in the right hand column are potential partners and are not arranged in any particular order.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>How to tackle it</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Partners</i>
Planning and Development					
Housing	1	Identify actual current and future housing requirements for Grange-over-Sands, including sheltered accommodation and affordable housing.	Ensure swift production of Neighbourhood Plan, to include results of local housing needs survey.	Produce by end-June 2016	GTC/Neighbourhood Plan Committee/Action with Rural Communities
Impact of Housing Development	2	Assess impact against an agreed level of standards.	Agree acceptable standards and carry out a regular monitoring of traffic volumes, accident statistics, and loss of green space with a view to preventing excessive impact.	Ongoing	GTC/Neighbourhood Plan Committee/CCC/SLDC/Police
Environment					
Litter	3	Maintain and improve current litter picking arrangements.	GTC to recruit, support and retain volunteer litter-pickers, providing equipment and health and safety guidance. Publicise regularly to encourage more people to litter pick.	Ongoing	GTC
Promenade	4	Implement urgent repair works as identified by surveys already carried out.	Obtain commitment from SLDC for a funded repair, maintenance and improvement plan. Communicate the schedule to Grange TC and local partners.	Obtain commitment by March 2015	SLDC/GTC/3Ps/Civic Society
Lido	5	Develop a realistic, achievable and sustainable plan.	Continue to improve the appearance of the Lido in the short term. Select the best feasible and practical option for its future with staged targets.	Ongoing June 2015	SLDC/GTC/3Ps
Pavement maintenance	6	Continue improvements to pavements.	GTC to continue to communicate priorities to CCC. CCC to provide accurate timely information, particularly to local businesses.	Ongoing	GTC/CCC
Dog fouling	7	Raise public awareness on impact of dog fouling, referencing blind people and pushchairs. Reduce instances of fouling.	Liaise with CCC to seek ways to reduce problems in conjunction with the local community.	Summer 2015	Steering Group/SLDC
Crime & Safety					
Clare House Lane bridge	8	Improve safety for young children.	Add safety mesh or similar to the lower section of railings.	March 2015	Steering Group/Network Rail
Speeding	9	Implement initiatives to reduce speeding.	Liaise with police on enhanced driver education and speed detection/reduction.	Ongoing	SLDC/Steering Group/GTC/Police/Instructors
Illegal drugs	10	Improve reporting of drug issues.	Community to be encouraged to report drug related issues. Police to continue to monitor and act on information received.	Ongoing	Police/community
Health and Well-being					
Access to hospital services	11	Maintain and improve access to hospital services and publicise available transport options.	Encourage local community to take part in future campaigns in liaison with other local organisations/parish councils. Make information on transport options available at doctors' surgeries and Information Centre.	Ongoing Spring 2015	Steering Group/GTC/Patient Action Group/Kendal Bus Users' Group Local volunteers
Community Activities and Facilities					
Access to childcare	12	Investigate availability of childcare.	Liaise with CCC Children's Services. Survey to assess needs. Improve publicity. Encourage more child carers if needed.	December 2015	Steering Group/CCC Children's Services
Activities for adults	13	Assess options for improving access to swimming and gym facilities.	Review subsequent to Lido proposals (item 5).	June 2015	SLDC/GTC/3Ps
Recreational/skills development	14	Raise awareness of what is available.	Local organisations/Grange Now/Library/Information Centre to publicise the range of opportunities currently available.	Ongoing	Cartmel Adult Education/Grange Now/local organisations
Promenade	15	Replace Morecambe Bay Panorama boards.	Remove current damaged and dirty boards, and replace with new. Commission a local artist if necessary.	April 2015	SLDC/CCC

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Your Town Council					
Communication	16	Improve access to information about Council activities and achievements.	a) Continue Grange Town Councillor surgeries to give access to local residents. b) Continue to develop website. c) Consider having Facebook page in future. d) Continue Grange Now reports. e) Publicise respective roles of the tiers of local government. f) Take opportunities to communicate with young people.	Ongoing Ongoing Spring 2015 Ongoing Spring 2015 Ongoing	GTC GTC GTC GTC GTC
Communication					
Internet	17	Monitor upgrade to super-fast broadband.	Find out and communicate the Connecting Cumbria timetable to Grange residents.	Quarterly	GTC/CCC/BT
Communication	18	Improve awareness of information about what is available in Grange.	Encourage clubs and societies to use Grange Now 'What's On' page and Westmorland Gazette. Continue to improve promotion of TIC and Library as sources of up-to-date information for local people and visitors.	Ongoing Ongoing	Steering Group/Grange Now GTC/TIC/Steering Group/local organisations
Tourism					
Tourism	19	Improve the visitor experience.	Continue support for TIC and toilets; provide adequate car parking facilities. Improve signs and maintain the quality of the environment.	Summer 2015 and ongoing	GTC/TIC staff & volunteers/ Chamber of Trade
Traffic, Transport and Roads					
Monitoring and enforcement of parking	20	Enforce parking restrictions and deal with illegal parking.	Request an enforcement "blitz" by CCC. Consult with Police as to how illegal parking can be monitored and reduced in partnership with the local community.	Spring 2015 and ongoing	CCC/GTC/SLDC/Steering group/Police
Traffic management and parking	21	Undertake Traffic Management Study.	Conduct feasibility study of one-way system and alteration to on-street parking to provide loading bays, provision for people with disabilities, and more lawful and considerate parking, taking into account the needs of local people (retaining low cost short-term car park charge) and visitors.	By end 2016	GTC/SLDC /CCC
Pedestrian safety	22	Improve road crossings for pedestrians.	Liaise with CCC about the installation of pedestrian crossings at: a) the speed bump Yewbarrow Terrace b) the top end of Main Street near Crown Hill roundabout c) Esplanade/Park Road.	December 2016	CCC
Driver safety	23	Improve driver visibility.	Install traffic mirrors on sharp bend in Carter Lane and Cat Tree Road/Allithwaite Road junction.	Autumn 2015	CCC
Cycling facilities	24	Improve cycle security.	Provide cycle parking facilities at Pig Lane toilets, the Library and Kents Bank Road car park.	December 2015	GTC/SLDC/CCC
Public Transport	25	Strive to maintain and improve public transport services to meet local and visitor needs.	Campaign to protect and improve bus and train services and their interconnection, taking into account study being undertaken by the Community Rail Partnership, re-franchising of train services and CCC policies.	Ongoing	GTC/CCC/Steering Group/local organizations/ Community Rail Partnership/Furness Line Action Group/Kendal Bus Users/bus and train operators
Employment					
Training	26	Assess the need for and type of training required for small businesses.	Encourage and assist the Chamber of Trade to conduct a survey to determine needs.	Summer 2015	Grange Chamber of Trade/Cumbria Business Growth Hub/Cumbria Chamber of Commerce
New job opportunities	27	Explore opportunities for Grange to attract more and better-paid jobs.	Liaise with appropriate bodies to establish ways and means.	Autumn 2015	Steering Group/Grange Chamber of Trade/ Cumbria Business Growth Hub/Cumbria Chamber of Commerce