

### **Longtown Business Development Network**

The economic element of the Arthuret Community Action Plan was drafted in consultation with more than 30 businesses based in the Longtown area. Following on from the Plan initial discussions are to be held with a sample of businesses in the Longtown area to discuss the feasibility and level of interest in starting up a business development network.

The aim is to identify and prioritise key issues that are:

- Impacting on present business performance;
- Regarded as holding back future business development opportunities;
- Identifying outputs that a business network should achieve;
- Required to establish an effective business network suited to Longtown.

### **Broadband meets localism feedback**

The “Broadband meets Localism” conference held on Saturday 15 January at Carlisle Racecourse was very successful with 140 people attending (including staff and speakers). Delegates attending were a mix of people from parish councils, community groups, local residents, elected members from all three tiers of local government, MP’s, local business people, officers from a range of statutory and third sector organisations and technical specialists. The event was funded by North West Together We Can (NWTWC) with sponsorship from BT. Carlisle Parish Councils Association (CPCA) led the event together with partners Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Action with Communities in Cumbria and Cumbria CVS.

Following the conference, CPCA will work with partners to create new guidance to help communities with their Community Led Plans. One theme that came out of the conference was that all parishes will need to appoint a Broadband Champion and should include the issue of Broadband in the Community Led Plan.

All the resources provided on the day in the delegate packs, the speakers presentations from both morning and afternoon sessions and links to videos and You

Tube footage from the day are available on the City Council's web site  
[http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/business/rural\\_communities/broadband\\_meets\\_localism.aspx](http://www.carlisle.gov.uk/business/rural_communities/broadband_meets_localism.aspx)

### **Shop Doctor in the Urban Area**

The Shop Doctor programme is a bespoke package of consultancy support to retail businesses that aims to provide specialist advice on how to maximise the impact of overall shop presentation, its goods; and how to enhance sales and customer service.

The programme has already successfully provided support to retail businesses in rural Carlisle and in the Market Hall. The next targets are shops within a number of local communities in the urban area. A package will be designed from a portfolio of assistance including retail surgeries, workshops and 'one to one' appointments to enable businesses to maximise the benefit and address their individual and collective needs.

### **Old Town Hall**

Further intrusive investigations are currently being progressed to more accurately determine the costs of necessary repairs/restoration currently estimated at £399K by James F Stephen Architects.

### **Carlisle Tourism Partnership**

- Working on a variety of small and large scale events for 2011, including Lakes Alive, Spring Show and early planning for Christmas 2011.
- The 2011 Holiday Guide and Places to Visit is now complete and in distribution.
- A BRAND new heritage map for Carlisle is in final stages of design to be launched in March.
- Hadrian's Wall Heritage Ltd are planning Carlisle focused supplements in the Telegraph, Times and Guardian.
- Britains Heritage Cities promoting Carlisle as "new" offer and familiarisation from journalists and travel operators from North America and Canada.
- Visitor numbers to the Tourist Information Centre have increased for the year, and we have secured a contract with Superbreaks which will create extra income and footfall.

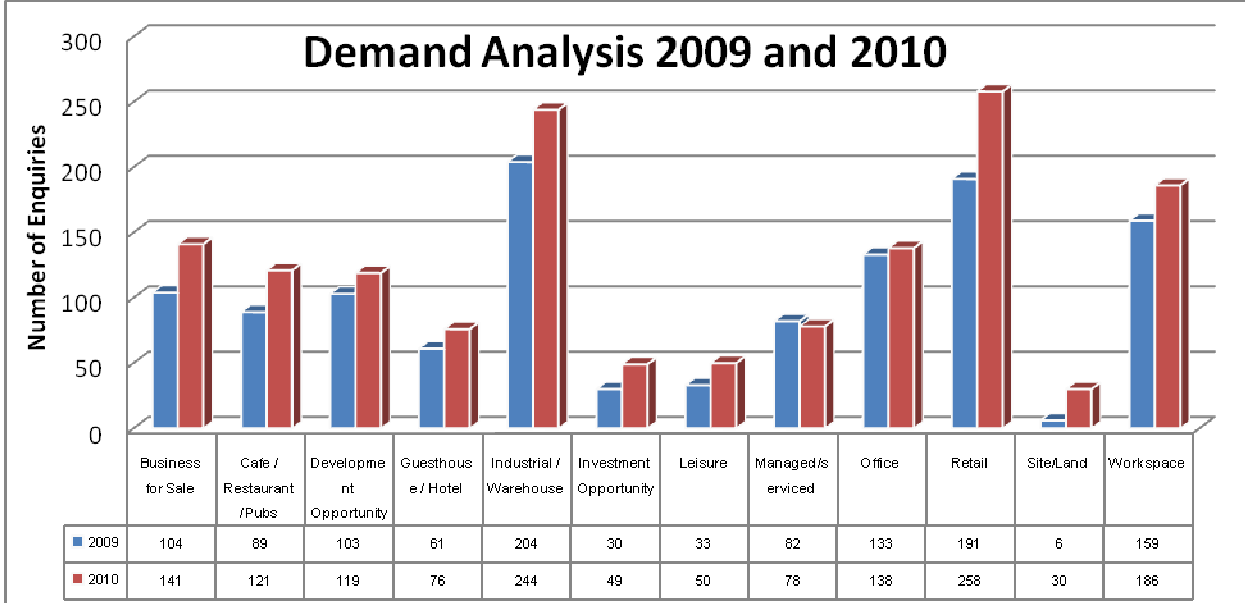
### **Roman Gateway Public Realm**

Appointed contractor English Landscapes commenced works on Castle Street 4th January 2011 and Bitts Park w/c 31st January 2011. Completion date remains 31st March 2011 other than for the installation of information boards programmed for April 2011.

### **Online Vacant Commercial Property System**

Through the Economic Development Directorate a comprehensive register is maintained of all industrial/commercial premises and land for sale or lease in the District. This information is mainly provided through the Council's website and

received 459 new enquiries in 2010, a 22% increase over 2009. The requirement for retail as well as Industrial/Warehousing still seem to be the main type of premises being searched for. Overall, searches of all individual property types also increased with the exception of serviced workspace. (See chart below).



**Councillor Mrs M Bowman  
Economic Development Portfolio Holder**