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Community Asset Transfer Proposal

Business Plan Template Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch Site

If you have any queries contact:

Tony Featherstone, Strategic Asset Manager, Herefordshire Council on 01432-383368.

Please complete the Business Plan Template either using **Microsoft Word**, or by hand using **black ink** and **BLOCK CAPITALS**. This will ensure that when we photocopy your form we can still read your response.

Answer all the questions. 'See attached paperwork' is **not acceptable** an answer to a question. You must use the space provided to summarise the most important points. We will refer to supporting paperwork as required. Please remember to tick circles where requested and ensure that all relevant documentation is attached to your application. Send copied of documents as we will retain them.

Remember to sign and date your Business Plan before returning it with the required supporting documentation to:

**Mr A Featherstone
Strategic Asset Manager
Herefordshire Council
Plough Lane Offices
HEREFORD
HR4 0LE**

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• EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Date organisation was formed
Area covered by organisation (geographical and thematic)
Status of organisation
Number of staff/employees
Number of volunteers
Brief history of organisation
Brief background to work to be undertaken

(NB To be completed after the rest of the business plan is written)

The Kerne Bridge canoe launch site is said to be one the busiest on the River Wye. The river itself was voted the most popular river in England in 2010. The site is being developed to make it more accessible. It is logical to assume that this development will lead to even more demand.

There have been problems of accessibility and parking, particularly impacting upon Bishopswood Village Hall (BVH). Without a different approach to the management of the site these problems, with increasing numbers of visitors, are likely to get worse.

The layout of the site and traffic movements at a difficult part of the B4234 cause concerns which ideally should be addressed in any new business configuration.

Herefordshire Council (HC) has responsibility for managing the site and has historically been responsible for the maintenance of the toilet facilities at the Village Hall. They have concluded that a more local management approach may help to secure a better way of operating in the future and have asked Walford Parish Council (WPC) to consider being more proactive in this management. Appendix 1 is an extract of the minutes of WPC in October 2010 when HC explained their wishes.

There has been 'dialogue' with HC and their answers to questions relevant to this project are shown at Appendix 4.

In February 2011 a meeting took place involving councillors and representatives of interested parties. The notes of this meeting are shown at Appendix 3.

The unanimous conclusion drawn from this meeting was that the site did need a management regime and that this would require an income stream in order to pay for it. There was general agreement that the income stream could involve car parking charges, and licensing charges for canoe operators. There was discussion about canoe movement charges (on and off the river). The view of HC on this matter is shown in their answer to Question 8. There was also conjecture about the legality of trying to restrict the rights of individuals to access the river.

There are several potential legal issues involved and attention is drawn to the answer to Question 7.

It should also be noted that Guy Smith of Wye Valley Pursuits has expressed an interest in providing the management resource for WPC.

Bishopswood Village Hall Committee remains very concerned that the final outcome should be empathetic with their activities.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The organisation's aims and objectives

Lying 2 miles south of the Herefordshire market town of Ross-on-Wye, the parish of Walford is one of the largest in south Herefordshire.

Partly located in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and adjoining the Royal Forest of Dean, the settlements of Bishopswood, Walford, Hom Green, Coughton and Deep Dean comprise to form Walford Parish which is framed by the River Wye to the west and the slopes of Chase Wood, Penyard Park, Howle, Leys and Bulls Hills to the east.

In the Parish we have a well attended primary school with around 175 pupils, a busy locally supported shop which was also previously the Post Office located at Bishopswood, one public house (The Mill Race), one hotel (The Inn on the Wye) near the Kerne Bridge and several bed and breakfast establishments. There are also a number of rural leisure facilities available which attract numerous visitors each year; the Wye Valley Walk passes through the parish with over 25 miles of footpaths and bridleways, fishing and shooting are also available. The public canoe launch near Bishopswood Village Hall is the subject of this application.

In 2006 after extensive consultation, The Parish Council published a Parish Plan. The full text of this can be seen at...

http://www.walford-pc.org.uk/DRAFT_F_WALFORD_PARISH_PLAN-1.pdf

One of the conclusions stated in the plan was...

"Walford Parish Council is mindful of the tremendous economic potential deriving from its position in the Wye Valley AONB. In order to further exploit that potential, and to enhance the attractiveness and ambience of both Coughton and Walford, the Parish Council will seek every opportunity to encourage sympathetic improvements to the design of property and shape of the village."

It is felt that this Canoe Launch project will enable improvements to the activities in the village and will enhance the economic benefits which tourism brings.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING PREMISES:

Location: Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch Site
Description: An area of land to the south of Bishopswood Village Hall, providing parking and an access ramp down to the edge of the River Wye in order to enable the safe and efficient launching of canoes.
Tenure: Freehold <input type="checkbox"/> Leasehold for 25 years + <input type="checkbox"/> Add description
The proposal is for Walford PC to acquire the freehold of the site. It is possible that a short term lease (perhaps one year) will be the first step before the transfer of ownership from HC.

History:
Up until now the site has offered open access with no restrictions placed upon users. The close proximity to the Bishopswood Village Hall causes obstruction on occasion, when canoeists' vehicles are parked without consideration.
Current situation:
The recent refurbishment of the canoe launch and the improved access are designed to facilitate increased use. The potential for increased disruption caused by unmanaged expansion is at the heart of this proposal. A well managed site will serve to enhance the experience of all users which should serve the economic needs of the Parish.
Summary of any dilapidations and estimated cost of remedial works:
The canoe launch itself, having just been refurbished, needs no further attention. The car park, access roads and surrounding vegetation are currently in need of modest attention.
Brief summary of proposals for redevelopment and estimated costs:
It is proposed to cut back and remove excessive vegetation in order to enhance the image of the site. Information signs will be erected and some attention will be given to the car park surface if funding allows. The surface is suitable for use in its current state. After consultation with the Highway Authority consideration will be given to altering the traffic flows on the site and to making the layout more compatible with the needs of the Bishopswood Village Hall. Above all a system of management will be installed in order to regulate the use of the site.
Pay and display car parking controls will be put in place.
Brief summary description of proposed resultant facility:
A well managed popular tourist facility aimed at providing the best possible user experience.

(Attach drawings, plans and schedules as appropriate)

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXISTING COMMUNITY ORGANISATION:

Name: Walford Parish Council
Registration:
Title and number of the applicant organisation's bank account:

Patron: Not applicable
Committee/Board members: Name Position
For details of all councillors and their committee involvement, see http://www.walford-pc.org.uk/councillors.html

Address:			
Walford Parish Clerk, Rose Cottage, Coughton,			
City/Town	Ross on Wye	Postcode	HR9 5SF
Phone Number	01989 562476	Fax Number	
Website:			

Principle contact:			
Full Name:			
Frank Myers			
Position in organisation			
Chairman			
Address			
Wythall, Walford,			
City/Town		Postcode	
Ross on Wye		HR9 5SD	
E-mail Address			
frank.myers@mcp.co.uk			
Phone Number	Day	Mobile Phone	07785 252273
	Eve/Weekend	Fax Number	

Type of organisation:	
Charity <input type="checkbox"/> Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Parish Council	
Description	
Incorporated/Limited liability?	
Company limited by shares <input type="checkbox"/>	Company number
Company limited by guarantee <input type="checkbox"/>	Company number
Is the organisation a registered charity?	

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Charity number
Date organisation formed		
VAT registered? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please give VAT number		
If No, will organisation register for VAT once the project has commenced? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Does the constitution, memorandum and articles, or trust deed offer the powers needed to undertake the business? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please explain in the box below		
The Parish Plan is explicit in its instructions to engage in activities which will enhance tourism.		
Is a copy of the constitution, memorandum and articles, or trust deed attached?		
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Description		
Not applicable		

NATURE OF ORGANISATION:

Date formed:
Function:
Geographic coverage:
Brief history:
Long-term objective:

STRUCTURE OF ORGANISATION:

<p>Details of how you monitor your achievements Management structure and committee arrangements Diagram of management structure How often does the management committee of the organisation meet? Is there a steering committee for the project? How do staff and volunteers and users report to the committees and how often? Do you use questionnaires, verbal feedback, surveys or other means to check on progress? How do you use this information to modify the project (if necessary)? Staff and volunteer grievance procedures</p>

Management Name	Position	Salary
Hierarchy:		
Committee Members: Name	Position	Function
Committee Members: Name	Position	Function
Frequency of Committee meetings:		
Monthly		
Realm of decision-making of Committee:		
Those normally associated with a Parish Council		

Negotiations are continuing with representatives of Bishopswood Village Hall as integrating their car park may enhance the operation and enable better management of the user interface.

The following is an overall summary of the anticipated expenditure

Expenditure	£	£	£
Hours of supervision at £10 per hour	8:00am to 5:00pm; 1456 hours	8:00am to 4:00pm 1274 hours	8:00am to 3:00pm 1092 hours
Staff costs	14,560	12,740	10,920
Car park charging costs supplied by HC (Q9)	3,880	3,880	3,880
General administration say	1,000	1,000	1,000
Capital Depreciation £5000 over 5 years ²	1,000	1,000	1,000
Insurance	TBC ³		
Total	20,440	18,620	16,800

It can be seen that a break even position can be achieved using realistic assumptions. We are proposing to optimise the revenue position by inviting the canoe operators to engage in a tendering process.
(Where possible provide relevant documentation and correspondence)

NEED FOR COMMUNITY BUILDING:

An analysis of the need and demand with evidence of numbers of people to benefit

Confirm the need and demand for your project and the services, benefits it will provide, supported by evidence and professional advice. You will need to demonstrate how you have engaged the local community which you intend to serve and taken their views into account. You will also need to demonstrate how you have involved relevant stakeholders whose support you may need to deliver the identified needs and demand. Then set out how your project will meet this demand and how you will manage the activities involved.

- * List any reports with dates and results that support this, including
- * surveys or questionnaires carried out by your own or other organisations to identify need; figures giving population of area to be targeted and possible beneficiaries
- * sort of people to benefit from the project, eg young people, older people, people with disabilities options analysis to demonstrate why you have gone for this option

SUMMARY:

²This cost may be avoidable depending upon the arrangements agreed with HC but we may wish to factor in ongoing maintenance costs.

³ It is possible that existing WPC Public Liability cover will suffice, this is being checked.

The need for this management regime is self evident given the existing demand and the anticipated increase in demand following the recent investment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED COMMUNITY ORGANISATION:

(Where no change is proposed from existing organisation please comment "as above")

Name: As above
Registration:
Title and number of the applicant organisation's bank account:

Patron:		
Committee/Board members:	Name	Position

Registered address:	
Address	
City/Town	Postcode
Phone Number	Fax Number
Website:	

Principle contact:	
Full Name	
Position in organisation	
Address	
City/Town	Postcode

E-mail Address		
Phone Number	Day	Mobile Phone
	Eve/Weekend	Fax Number

Type of organisation:
Charity <input type="checkbox"/> Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Description

STRUCTURE OF PROPOSED ORGANISATION

<p>Details of how you will monitor your achievements</p> <p>Management structure and committee arrangements</p> <p>Diagram of management structure</p> <p>How often will the management committee of the organisation meet?</p> <p>Will there be a steering committee for the project?</p> <p>How will staff and volunteers and users report to the committees and how often?</p> <p>Will you be using questionnaires, verbal feedback, surveys or other means to check on progress?</p> <p>How will you use this information to modify the project (if necessary)?</p> <p>Staff and volunteer grievance procedures</p>
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Management Name	Position	Salary
Hierarchy:		

<p>Make sure you have the people to do the fundraising required and mention their skills and experience Take advice on funding sources from appropriate people Be certain that you have enough money to cover any problems or difficulties such as having to re-recruit, extra training costs, etc. What will you do once the grants have run out?</p>
Not applicable
Total amount needed:
Amount available from external funding as above:
Balance:
Proposed fundraising sources, plans, dates, etc., to find this balance:

SUMMARY OF MARKETING PROGRAMME:

<p>A Marketing plan with key dates Make sure the publicity for the work ties in with the activities planned Use the resources available locally wherever possible and list these, eg, radio, newspaper, newsletters Ensure that the marketing plan will enable you to reach your target group of people</p>

<p>Marketing activity (<i>Description, timing, target group, targeted outcome</i>):</p>
<p>No marketing plan will be needed. The tendering process will engage with the canoe hire operators and the process thereafter will have a significant element of self regulation and publicity. We will however engage in a publicity exercise in order to inform potential users that a management regime is in place and that access times will need to be pre-booked.</p>

APPENDIX I

ANALYSIS OF NEED AND DEMAND

Demand already exists.

<p>Survey results: No quantitative surveys have been done.</p>
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APPENDIX II

ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

<p>Building, mechanical and engineering surveys and drawings Asbestos, legionella surveys</p>
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Other relevant surveys (soil surveys, flood risk assessments, etc)
Architects plans and drawings
Estimated Timelines
Projected costs

APPENDIX III

EXISTING AND PROPOSED BUDGETS

Anticipated sources of income
Projected income and outgoings
Accountant prepared profit & loss accounts
Accountant prepared balance sheets

APPENDIX IV

SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS

Policy documents
Options appraisals
Committee members, staff and volunteers' CVs
Job descriptions and person specifications
Survey or consultation results
Questionnaires
Procedural documents

Appendix 1

Extract from the minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 13th October 2010 in Walford Village Hall

To receive a verbal report from Rob Hemblade on proposals for the Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch:

Rob Hemblade introduced himself and explained the ownership and management of the site as well as the plans to improve the site, including to make access easier for disabled people and to help ease pressure on the site and infrastructure, i.e.: the car park and the Village Hall. The pressure of use was also causing environmental problems further down the river, caused by litter etc. He said that H.C. visited the site every couple of weeks to keep it tidy and that they were looking at a number of management options. H.C is working with AONB and a Company called Opus, to oversee the project. They are looking at ways to generate income to cover maintenance and operation of the site. One way is to manage the commercial canoe launching companies by charging them and allocating time slots to prevent congestion. Signage and promotion of the site will go along with it. He spoke of the possibility of the P.C. taking on the site and having a say in how the site is managed and developed. A contract could be established between WPC and HC, who would manage all maintenance. There were various questions about how income would be generated, whether it would be enough to cover the cost of a warden, what legal rights were for charging, and concern expressed that other sites would be overloaded if this one started charging, an enquiry was made asking if rough costings had been done, but Rob said they had not. Rob explained that private users would only pay for car parking – he suggested that a machine could be installed for payment and a warden would be

responsible for emptying it, a catering opportunity was also discussed, as was the possible involvement of Bishopswood Village hall. The Chairman read out a list of questions e mailed by Christine Puzey to be put to Rob, the Clerk agreed to forward these questions to Rob. <<**Action Clerk**>> it was agreed that something had to be done as the congestion at the site would continue to worsen, but that the finances should balance. The Chairman suggested setting up a sub-committee to put together a formal list of questions to put to HC. It was resolved that Cllr Myers and Thomas would take on this task and report back to Council with the list of questions. <<**Action Cllrs Myers and Thomas**>> The Clerk was asked to write to Rob asking for a business plan. <<**Action Clerk**>

Appendix 2

Extract from the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 12th January 2011 in Walford Village Hall

To receive an update on progress regarding the Kerne Bridge Canoe launch site: Cllr Myers suggested considering the Questions put to and Answers received from H.C. and moving forward after the elections in May. There was a general discussion about the merits and disadvantages of the scheme, Cllr Downey emphasised that due to an increase in use, the site did need to be managed properly. Cllr Myers said that all aspects need reviewing and that Bishopswood Village stores should be invited to be involved in the process, Cllr Vine said that the scheme needed community support behind it. It was decided that WPC should continue with information gathering and Cllr Heath suggested inviting Guy Smith – an ex Cllr - to come and speak to the council about it at an appropriate time in the future.

Appendix 3

Notes from the Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch working group meeting held at Bishopswood Village Hall on Wednesday 23rd February at 3.30pm.

Present: Frank Myers, Luke Freeman, Michael Downey, Simeon Cole.

In attendance: Clerk – Catherine Murray.

Rob Hemblade and Spencer Grogan from Herefordshire Council.

Monica Edmunds and Heather Roberts from Bishopswood Village Stores, Christine Puzey from Bishopswood Village Hall, Guy Smith and Sonie Woodington from Wye Pursuits.

Key to abbreviations: F.M. Frank Myers / L.F Luke Freeman / M.D Michael Downey / S.C Simeon Cole. R.H Rob Hemblade / S.G Spencer Grogan.

M.E Monica Edmunds / H.R Heather Roberts / G.S Guy Smith / S.W Sonie Woodington

H.C Herefordshire Council / P.C. Parish Council / W.P.C Walford Parish council / K.B Kerne Bridge / BVH Bishopswood Village Hall / BVS Bishopswood Village Stores.

Initial conversation at the launch site: **R.H:** Explained that the proposal is to have controlled access at the entrance to the site, the existing access to the river will go and be replaced by access which is more disabled friendly, with a zig zag path leading to the river. MD suggested that a zig zag path might be difficult to negotiate carrying a canoe. RH replied that there would also be a slipway.

The meeting convened at 3.40pm in Bishopswood Village Hall.

F.M: Explained the background to the project, the proposal by Herefordshire Council that the canoe launch site be managed, in order to control the numbers of canoes launched, by introducing a charged scheduled launch programme and fees for parking at the site. Herefordshire Council are suggesting that W.P.C consider taking on the management of the site.

The meeting is intended to gather information and points of view.

R.H: Explained that H.C. own the canoe launch site and up to the boundary, and that the Parks and Countryside department look after it. The work that is due to be carried out at the site to improve access is being funded by a local access grant. Of concern at the Kerne Bridge site is the number of people using it and their impact. H.C. get lots of reports of congestion at the site and are looking at improving the access and looking at managing access to the site, but do not intend to make the site busier.

To manage access to the site will require someone to attend full time during the busy season, H.C. consider that it would be easiest for the Parish Council to do this, or someone else locally.

The proposals include:

- 1) Introduction of Car Parking Charges.
- 2) Charging canoe launch companies to access the site.
- 3) Possible retail opportunities.

Community asset transfer is one approach, H.C. transfer the asset to the Parish council.

MD: Asked if there was a legal right of access to the Public?

RH: Replied that as H.C. owns the site they therefore 'allow' access.

MD: Suggested that the Public do have a right of legal access and asked what could be done to cope with this, as they cannot be stopped from accessing the river if they have always had a historical right of access.

RH: Suggested that there is a legal right of access along the river – but not necessarily to the banks and said that he would consult H.Cs legal team.

G.S: Mentioned that access at Lydbrook had been stopped and asked why this had been successful.

MD: Said that it was because no one had challenged it.

FM: Said that there will be regular activity at the site and someone has to manage it, WPC are being offered the opportunity by H.C. for Car Parking control and charging and for a retail opportunity.

F.M: Asked what thoughts BVH have on the proposal.

C.P: Said that when the BVH car park is open it gets used by others, gets completely blocked by people parking on their access, under licensing laws this access should be kept clear. BVH are in favour of putting some kind of management scheme together, but locals using the Wye Valley Walk shouldn't be charged for using the car park.

FM: Suggested permits for local people and asked for any views on using BVH car park to get revenue for the Hall.

C.P: Said yes it might be possible when the Hall is not in use, but it is complicated as when the Hall is in use BVH do not know how many people will be using the car park.

FM: Suggested that permits could be issued with hire of the hall.

S.C: Asked if the congestion was caused by canoe launch companies, or individuals with boats.

G.S: Said that it was all sorts, businesses, schools, individuals. He suggested that if the field was opened up, it could be sued.

F.M: Asked what would be an 'ideal' situation?

S.W: Suggested restricting the boat numbers.

G.S: Suggested that 35 boats is a reasonable number.

F.M: Asked if it was reasonable to assume that all were in favour of a management scheme of some sort?

It was unanimously agreed that some kind of management scheme would be a good thing.

S.C: Asked if the timetable for access would be managed?

M.D: Said that if there was controlled timing it would work, if there were timed slots and no trailers or vehicles parked / left on site.

F.M: Asked if there was any view on a retail outlet.

G.S: Said that there is already one on his land and that he sends those he can't cater for to BVS. He suggested that there was not enough of a market for a proper outlet as the public tends to bring their own provisions to the site.

F.M: Asked that if no other income was made from a retail outlet, do the figures add up?

G.S: Said that too many people on the river are a nightmare and it needs to be timed and managed. He carries out around 20 rescues from the river per annum as a result of bad practice.

S.C: Asked if the site would be fenced off?

R.H: Said no, as it would be managed by the person on site.

L.F: Asked how many users there were per annum?

S.G: Replied that it was about 40,000.

F.M: Asked what might be a financial spin off, as a way has to be found of funding the project.

L.F: Suggested that Car parking charges were the best way.

M.D: Said that cars already park the other side of Kerne Bridge and take their canoes down to the river from there.

G.S: Said that the professional companies would co-operate with any restrictions, as it was in the interests of their businesses.

F.M: Said that the idea was to make the experience better for the Public.

R.H: Said that there commercial opportunities to be gained from 40,000 people a year, who want refreshments.

F.M: Asked G.S. what he provided in his outlet.

G.S: Said that they provide equipment, refreshments, coffee and tea etc.

L.F: Asked if it was private Clients or canoe operators who cause problems?

G.S: Replied that it was the commercial operators who set up and don't think about the impact, the majority are commercial operators. He said that Symonds Yat operators are very professional, but that others are not at all.

F.M: Suggested that a license to use K.B. could have conditions attached, to control behaviour.

M.D: Said that around 4,000 a day can be made from canoe rental and said that pressure on the site is only going to increase.

G.S: Said that he has 25 boats, which is enough to manage and control safely.

S.C: Asked G.S. how he deals with canoe users who are drunk?

G.S: Said they cannot go on the river in his boats if they are drunk. The big problem at the site is the numbers of users.

F.M: Said that a rigorous process would have to be gone through to ensure adherence to the conditions of a license.

S.C: Asked what would happen if someone did not comply?

M.D: Said that they would lose their license.

L.F: Asked about what about other sites for access to the river?

R.H: Said that there had been planning objections to the expansion of sites such as Backney Bridge.

S.C: Asked if anyone can apply to put in access to the river?

R.H: Replied that they would have to get planning permission to do so.

G.S: Stated that K.B. is a canoe launch 'honey pot' at the moment and said that Ross on Wye site is now very busy in season.

S.C: Asked if it was managed, could WPC charge around £2 for 'in' and 'out' of the river?

F.M: Asked what canoe hire costs?

G.S: Said around £25 per day plus refreshments.

F.M: commented that the total therefore was around £30 per day all in.

G.S: Said that the shop was value added.

L.F: Asked what other sites charged for launching and exiting the river?

G.S: Said that Ross on Wye is free, that Symonds Yat charge around £1.50 and Hereford £2.

S.C: Asked how do they collect the money at Symonds Yat?

G.S: Said that someone in the shop takes the money. He added that people do not mind paying for this.

S.C: Suggested that a single group on/off river fee would be best.

M.D: Said that sometimes stag parties all come in individual cars, with individual canoes, so sometimes there are lots of vehicles in a group.

G.S: Agreed that some canoe clubs have lots of members with individual cars. He also explained that a lot of people stop to visit the Inn on the Wye.

F.M: Said that we should be concentrating on the benefits of restriction, rather than so much at revenue.

S.C: Asked how locals would get access without paying?

F.M: Suggested that the local permit might come with payment of the precept.

G.S: Said that the site already has to deal with more than it is able to cope with.

R.H: Suggested that someone should be on site from April to September from around 8am, and that a barrier could be put on the car park to stop trailers accessing it, the barrier could restrict height to the main car park as well as the launch site. He said that H.C. were not aiming to regulate or restrict individual users.

G.S: Said that the turn round for a trailer and canoes was approximately 30 minutes.

M.D: Explained the capacity required for trailers to turn round. He asked if there could be a mooring site separate from the launching site?

R.H: Said that he thought it was a bit late for this to be included.

M.D: Explained that it was simply a matter of driving a stake into the ground and tying boats up to it.

F.M: Suggested that a management regime would be necessary, in case someone objected to the charges and restrictions.

S.C: Asked if the boats could be traced back to their operators?

G.S: Replied that yes, all boats should have registration marks on them for identification purposes.

R.H: Explained that H.C. would like all boats on the river to be identifiable. He also asked BVH what the impact was on the W.Cs at BVH?

C.P: Said that the W.Cs are already open from dawn till dusk and that the council come and clean them. She said that walkers come and use the W.Cs at BVH.

R.H: Said that this arrangement might be affected.

F.M: Asked if there was a clear agreement that a managed arrangement can be agreed, with a seasonal attendant and during daylight hours?

M.D: Said that night time canoeing was popular.

L.F: Said that there should be a time restriction in deference to the neighbours. Say from 8am.

M.D: Asked about it being managed at weekends in July and August, with a restriction on access to BVH car park during the week and at other times.

F.M: Gave a personal commitment that any consideration of a retail operation on site would include all those whose businesses would be affected by it. Although the consensus was that at the moment there seemed to be no appetite for it. He suggested that if the P.C. voted against the scheme, local enterprise should be encouraged.

L.F: Asked what the timescales were?

R.H: Suggested that work might start on 15th May.

S.W: Asked if the work could be done off season, as it would affect business.

R.H: Explained that the river had to be low in order to carry out the work.

M.D: Asked if the field on the other side could be used to leave canoes (Mr Chinns' field)?

R.H: Said that it would be down to the land owner and would involve planning and change of use.

G.S: Said that if the work was done at that time of year, it would put people out of business, including himself.

R.H: Said that there were 2 windows of time, April/May and Sept/Oct and that there were also restrictions for environmental reasons and for AONB. He said that the completion date for work was 30th September, so there was some flexibility. He also said that in terms of setting up a micro business the target date would be December 2011.

M.D: Asked about setting up a temporary launch site whilst the work was being done.

G.S: Suggested that if this was done, when operations reverted to the original site, people would still use the temporary site.

C.P: Asked where the barrier would be?

R.H: Explained that it would be as you turn left down to the slipway.

S.C: Asked about the possibility of moving the gate.

It was agreed to look at this on the way out of the meeting.

M.D: Asked if there was anything to stop the commencement of managing the site before the work is done on the launch and asked if management could be started sooner?

R.H: Replied that there was nothing to stop the transfer of the asset at any time to the P.C. He also asked if the cleaning of the W.Cs could be included as part of the management of the site.

M.D: Asked if the P.C. would get funding from H.C. for the W.C. cleaning?

G.S: Said that an adjustment of the turning point for mini-buses is important.

R.H: Said that he could arrange for the transportation department to come and have a look, if there is a view to have an 'in' and 'out' system for vehicles.

C.P: Said that waste disposal was an issue at the site, the skip contract had been cancelled by H.C. and black bags and building rubble is now being left in the car park by other parties. It was suggested that a fly tipping sign should be installed (W.P.C responsibility?)

F.M: Asked C.P if BVH could explore the benefits of a permit system

C.P: Responded that she did not think the committee would go for it.

M.D: Asked C.P if it could be managed by numbers, but C.P. said she did not think it was a practical suggestion.

R.H: Said that W.P.C should put together a business case in order to get the license to manage the site.

M.D: Asked if the P.C. did not endorse it what could be done?

F.M: Said that social enterprise or a consortium of local businesspeople was the way forward if that was the outcome.

S.C: Asked if the asset could still be transferred to the P.C. if the council voted against the scheme?

F.M: Replied no, that it could not.

F.M: Close the meeting and thanked everyone for attending, then asked for any further queries to be sent to the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm. Those present who were interested then went to look at the entrance with a view to considering the possibility of moving the gate and altering the access.

Appendix 4

The questions posed to Herefordshire Council and their responses

1. Who owns the site?

A. Herefordshire Council, managed by Countryside Team

2. Who will be responsible for the ongoing costs of its upkeep?

A. A community asset transfer would require the organisation to whom the asset is transferred to keep the site maintained. Any major capital works would be borne by herefordshire Council.

3. What is likely to be the attitude towards planning consents?

A. It would depend on what the application was for. The introduction of a retail kiosk would probably be acceptable and major developments may be more problematic. Being a HC owned site there are works that can be carried out under permitted development guidelines.

4. Do the Council envisage sanctioning a business on the site?

A. Again dependent on what that business is, there would be support from Herefordshire Council.

5. What thought has been given to traffic issues and in particular the perception that the roadway is dangerous there? Have any traffic surveys been done, if so what were the results?

A. Not aware of any traffic survey but any proposals to develop the site that are likely to impact on vehicle numbers or flow would need input from the transportation planning section.

AONB A. the known traffic issues relating to the site were considered at the time of planning the improved canoe launch facilities. It was felt that two key improvements entailed:

1) Regulating the number of canoes launching from the site (by charging commercial operators to use the site per canoe/person and limiting the number they can launch perhaps per day/week/year) thus reducing traffic volume.

2) Designing better through-flow at the canoe launch which will enable groups to launch faster, thus reducing the amount of time each vehicle is at the site - backing up onto the main road etc.

6. Is there any knowledge of similar business models elsewhere?

A recent community asset transfer of a community building was carried out recently in Ross on Wye. (Tudorville).

7. Do the Council propose to assist with the legalities or is this expected to be an expense associated with the project?

A. HC will assist with legalities as a formal agreement will need to be agreed and signed. However any legal input the parish Council decides it would need to seek would be at their expense.

Canoe Licensing

8. How does the Council envisage this working? Is there a similar model elsewhere from which details can be made available?

A. Potentially there are up to 6 commercial operators who have the capacity of launching 500+ canoes from Kerne Bridge per season. Operators would have to apply to be licensed to use this site for which they would be charged per season. Rates would have to be agreed (approx £750 per season per contractor). Doing this you would be able to manage the contractors giving them specific timeslots to enable better through-flow on the site and reduce potential conflicts and over use at peak times.

We would not envisage charging individuals to launch personal canoes. We would however expect said users to pay parking charges.

If the asset transferred to Walford Parish Council or leased they would be responsible for enforcing the commercial canoe contractors.

Car Parking

9. Will the Council make available a blueprint for car parking control, together with an indication of the income and expenditure profile to be expected?

A. Start up costs including a Meter/Signage/Official Orders approx £5,000 (**this expenditure has been costed as part of a Countryside parking project including other Countryside sites. Herefordshire Council will fund these start up costs for Walford Parish Council**). Ongoing cost include approx £2,000 per annum enforcement, collection costs £1,000 per annum, utility costs £80 pa, maintenance £400 and potential vandalism up to £400 pa.

Without an up to date survey of vehicles per year it is difficult to identify potential income from car parking. But given the number of parking spaces a maximum of up to £10-11,000 would be a reasonable baseline. If the additional spaces adjacent to the village hall were utilised during the summer season the income could increase by an additional 25%.

Funding

For any activity to be funded at the site there will need to be a revenue stream.

10. What information exists on likely demand and footfall both now and in the future?

AONB A. We did some research with the canoe hire operators that suggest a conservative approximation of 60,000 trippers by canoe/kayak per year within the AONB (Hereford to Chepstow). These trippers need both an access and an egress point (i.e. two facilities are used per person per trip - 120,000 uses per year in the AONB) Although we didn't research the exact footfall at Kerne Bridge canoe launch, it is by far the most popular facility (probably on the whole river) and as such it is reasonable to assume that it receives a third of this use. Considering future use - we are still experiencing rapid growth. I think demand for use of the site will exceed its capacity for a considerable time to come.

11. What revenue stream is envisaged?

A. Potential car parking charges up to £11,000 (cost approx £4,000 per annum), potential income from Licensing commercial canoe operators up to £4,500. With approx 40,000 users accessing the site through car park and river throughout the year a kiosk serving refreshments etc would be viable with the required consents.

12. Are there likely to be any grants available?

AONB A. Possibly. The AONB SDF fund can support community led entrepreneurial activity, other funding streams could be investigated.

13. Do the Council anticipate restricting charges to commercial operators or extending these to include private users?

It is the desire of the Environment Agency to retain it as a free facility to the general public (Paul Senior to confirm?) which accounts for approx. 20% of use. However, this extends just to the use of the canoe launch and not the car park for which private individuals could be charged.

Herefordshire Council would support the EA with only charging commercial operators and not casual users of the site. Parking charges would still apply.

Costs

14. Are any charges envisaged from the Environment Agency?

15. Depending upon ownership, are there likely to be any charges for the use of the site?

A. Herefordshire Council would expect Walford Parish Council to pay for all the maintenance and costs associated to the site including the car park. Currently Herefordshire Council Parks and Countryside Service pay £700 per month for the cleaning of the toilets and locking of the site. The hours of grounds maintenance work provided at Kerne Bridge are approximately 2 hours per week provided by the Parks and Countryside Service which include litter picking, ground maintenance and repair of furniture. Once transferred or leased Walford Council would be able to bring work in house or renegotiate with external contractors to ensure the required standards are kept on site.

16. What information can the Council share on the operating costs of Pay and Display car parking regimes?

Please see car parking section.

Appendix 5

Relevant extracts from the WPC Parish Plan

3. Walford Parish Council recognises that a hazardous situation exists in an area within approximately 300 metres of Kerne Bridge and around the bottom of Leys Hill. The
13. Walford Parish Council is mindful of the tremendous economic potential deriving from its position in the Wye Valley AONB. In order to further exploit that potential, and to enhance the attractiveness and ambience of both Coughton and Walford, the Parish Council will seek every opportunity to encourage sympathetic improvements to the design of property and shape of the village

This Application Form was submitted in September 2011 to:

**Mr A Featherstone, Strategic Asset Manager, Asset Management and Property Services,
Plough Lane Offices, HEREFORD, HR4 0LE**