

**Briefing Paper: *Lookout*, Ivison Lane, off Pow Street
A new town clock for Workington**

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This briefing paper has been put together for Allerdale Borough Council members. The document follows discussions with Catherine Coulthard (Allerdale Borough Council), Cathy Newbery (Working pArts consultants), Carol Grey (Workington Regeneration), John Reynolds (Allerdale Borough Council) and Cllr Mike Davidson. The paper takes the form of a review of the current situation regarding the new town clock, *Lookout*.

The clock will be installed in the town centre on Sunday 18th June 2006. The official switch on will take place at 12 o'clock on Saturday 1st July 2006.



1.0 **Background**

The public realm improvements in Workington town centre have been funded by a grant of £2.74m from the Northwest Development Agency. This funding was the result of a successful bid by a group of representatives including Rob Rimmer of Workington Regeneration, Tony Cunningham MP and Mike Phillips, Allerdale Borough Council's acting Chief Executive at the time.

The money was earmarked specifically for public realm improvements, and if Workington's bid had been unsuccessful, would have been awarded to another area in the North West instead.

Lookout is only one part of the series of improvements, alongside others such as *Coast Line* on Washington Street.

2.0 Consultation

The initial consultation for the public realm improvements in Workington town centre began in 2004. A briefing paper detailing the suggested areas for improvement and proposed artists was sent to all Councillors for comment. This document included images of suggested designs for the clock. In addition, Councillors representing wards in the town centre area of Workington were invited to a briefing session.

The consultation invited Council members to feed back on the proposal for all of the public realm improvements in the town centre. Representatives from YouthTastic, Age Concern, the Civic Trust, Allerdale Disability Association and Workington Youth Theatre were consulted by Workington Regeneration in smaller groups.

During Architecture Week in June 2005 an empty shop unit was used to display in public the designs for the town clock, along with details about the other public realm projects. These designs were also published in the local paper.

3.0 The Design Brief

The artist's brief was to design a fun, integrated space to engage families and include seating. One of the reasons a clock was chosen was that historically there used to be a clock in that area. 'Mandale's clock' hung from the nearby building of Mandale's jewellers. The clock was well known as a meeting place, particularly for courting couples.

The design chosen for the new clock has a very modern feel, appropriate for Workington, as a modern, forward-thinking, developing town. However, other elements of the clock are closely linked to the town's history, particularly in heavy industry such as steel-making. For example, the main sphere of the clock is made of steel. The clock's half-hourly chimes set recordings of interviews with local people to specially composed music. The chimes also include music performed by local groups Dearham Brass Band and Stainburn Steel Band.

The budget for the upgrade to the space included the cost of the design, manufacture and installation of the clock as well as new seating, high quality granite paving, trees and all labour costs involved.

4.0 Security

Consideration has been made for the security of the clock. *Lookout* has been manufactured using heavy duty materials such as 6mm thick steel, and designed with its open aspect and public siting in mind. The area is covered by two of the town centre's CCTV cameras. Although there is always a risk attached to publicly sited works, the design incorporates safety devices to prevent operation if weight is applied to the rotating arm. Also, the minute hand arm will be fixed in a vertical position at night to reduce the temptation of late night revellers.

Northwest Development Agency funding is aimed at improving the public realm, and instilling a sense of place or ownership through the work. The clock is a unique landmark for Workington.

Information about the clock, and a copy of this briefing paper, is publicly available online at www.allerdale.gov.uk/lookout

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Photographs showing the clock and new public space under construction.



paving at the site of the clock



the 'ring' showing the hour of day



a section of the new seating



the main sphere of the clock
showing electronics hidden inside



the clock assembled, but still
covered in black protective material