

LEVENS PARISH NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016

SUMMER EDITION

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

At the recent Annual Meeting of the Parish Council I was re-elected as Chairman. I take this opportunity to thank all my fellow councillors for their endeavours on behalf of our village during the last 12 months. The next 12 months should hopefully prove to be a very exciting time for Levens now that the wording of the Section 106 Agreement has been agreed by all parties. The signing of same is complete.

I wish to welcome Stephen Hargreaves as a new Councillor and feel sure he will quickly settle in. We look forward to having a complete Parish Council in the near future. An election was not needed in May as the number of people wishing to be on the Parish Council was less than 8.

As you may be aware the Levens W.I. has very generously donated to the Parish the land on which their building used to stand. Solicitors are currently working on the transfer to Levens Charity and this will ensure the village retains control of the land – something which the Parish Council considered to be essential. So, on behalf of the village, “Thank You” to Levens W.I.

Thanks are also due to Sheila Watson for organising a litter pick in the village in April. The first thing Wendy and I noticed when we came to the village 20 plus years ago to look at buying the shop was the lack of litter and I am sure you will agree, a clean environment improves our enjoyment and the attractiveness of our village.

Finally, with the School Holidays about to start, can I please ask all you drivers to slow down and respect the 20mph limit outside the School and outside the Playing Field entrance especially. No-one wants an accident to happen. Thanks.

Roger Atfield, Chairman

LEVENS COMMUNITY PROJECT

We are delighted to report that the Levens Community Project has achieved a major step forward recently. The objectives of the Project are to provide affordable housing for the benefit of residents of Levens and a new and larger village hall to replace the current Village Institute.

These schemes, which will be achieved through the sale and development of land owned by the Parish Council, received planning consent from South Lakeland District Council in April

2015, subject to the signing of an agreement between the various parties committing them to the plans (a Section 106 Agreement). The Parish Council has been waiting for the terms of the Section 106 to be agreed since planning consent was granted and was pleased to receive the final version from SLDC recently. This has now been signed by Levens Village Institute and the Parish Council and enables the Community Project to commence implementation of its plans as follows:

- The two sites at Sizergh Fell Quarry and Cotes can now be marketed and sold. Local agents Michael CL Hodgson have been given the job of selling these plots and the sale boards will be going up shortly.
- In addition to the S106 Agreement recently signed, a Tripartite Agreement between Levens Charity, Levens Village Institute and the Parish Council is required which will confirm the respective roles of the key partners on the Project. Our solicitors, (Milnemoser, Kendal) are working with the Levens Institute Committee through its Chair, Stephen Read, to develop this in anticipation of the sale of land at Sizergh Fell and Cotes.
- A limited company is to be set up to manage the Project with representatives of the three organisations involved as Members. This mechanism limits the personal liability of the Members if for any reason the Project accrues liabilities.
- Tony Hills, the Project architect from Damson Consultancy, is working alongside a quantity surveyor and structural engineer to obtain a more detailed cost for the new Village Hall. This work is funded from the sale of the parking space and garage at Wayside Cottage and the results are expected shortly. Tony is also drawing up detailed plans for the two houses that are to be built on Church Hill allotments. These have outline planning, but still require detailed planning permission.
- Allotments on Parish Council land in the village have had to be moved to enable the Project to proceed. To make up for this, ten allotments have been created on the field next to the walled Kitchen Gardens at Levens Hall. These have been ploughed and rotavated and paths put between each allotment to divide them. A new water supply with a tap to each allotment has been put in; rabbit fencing has been added to the boundary fence and the track around the walled garden has been excavated to make access to a newly made car park at the top of the allotments. The new allotments are not only physically better, but have also created a strong sense of community spirit. At present there is one left, but this is likely to be let by the time this Newsletter is printed. The allotments are £35+vat +water per year. However for the first year they are half price and the PC can reclaim the vat.
- On the basis of quotes received, Dean Johnston, a partner at Dodd and Co has been appointed as accountant for the Project. Mike Dyer, Helen Burrow and I were very impressed with him; their quote was the most competitive and was supported by excellent recommendation.

All in all, this has been a very significant period for the implementation of the Levens Community Project and we look forward to delivering more good news as the Project develops.

Roger M Mason (Chair of Project Working Group)

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