

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – JULY 2018

Chairman's Comments

At the May meeting of the Parish Council I was re-elected as Chairman for the next year. As I said at the Annual Parish Meeting back in March, I thank my fellow Councillors for their ongoing support.

As I am sure some of you will know, long serving Councillor John Thacker died in April and as a Parish Council we will greatly miss his local knowledge and heart felt contributions to our discussions. Our thoughts are with his wife Dorothy and family.

At his last Parish Council meeting in March, Councillor Thacker was the lead in discussions about the de-commissioning of the recycling site on Lowgate. This has now taken place and on behalf of the Council I would like to thank the villagers for their efforts to make this decision a success.

We have also lost the services of Councillor Stephen Hargraves who has reluctantly resigned as his job, with unsocial hours, has become more time consuming and he feels he cannot do justice to the work of the Parish Council. We thank Stephen for his service.

As mentioned later in the Newsletter we now have two vacancies on the Parish Council and if you feel you could give something to the village please contact our Clerk – Martin Curry on 07388 920410.

I am sure you noticed the Speed Indicating Device that was recently temporarily sited on the road out of the village by the Playing Fields / School entrance. What a revelation that turned out to be! And I am sure it surprised you as well. The Parish Council hopes the beneficial effect will continue and that we all drive that stretch of road at no more than 20mph. With the school holidays about to start shortly, appropriate speed should be the norm.

Roger Atfield

The Annual Parish Meeting – held on 20 March 2018

As we said in the last edition of the Newsletter, the Parish Council always welcomes its duty to host the annual meeting for Parishioners and this year was no exception. The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all the contributors from local societies and clubs who enlightened the meeting with details of their recent activities and events. It is fitting to use this Newsletter as a means to thank and congratulate all those who organise and participate in the numerous and varied activities that add such vibrancy to our local community.

Woodland Management

Since the last newsletter, the Parish Council is pleased to report that it has appointed two very experienced woodland practitioners - David Preston and Kerry Milligan of Underbarrow, to survey and review the management of the numerous plots of woodlands owned by it in and around the village. Our woodlands add an important dimension to the attractiveness of the village, maintaining green areas within its built environment, providing important niches for a variety of wildlife and affording valuable amenity space. To retain their value, however, woodlands need to be managed and at present there is no structured management plan in existence. This can lead to sites which are diminished in amenity and wildlife value and a failure to identify individual trees that need attention, for example on roadside edges. The amount of woodland currently registered to the Parish Council is just short of the threshold at which the Forestry Commission will offer grant aid for the preparation of a management plan, but in recognition of the importance of this work, the Parish Council has commissioned David and Kerry to produce a plan which will identify essential management work required and which, once produced, may enable grant aid to be secured.

The Parish Council is aware that some properties are in proximity or adjacent to its woodlands and that in some places work has been undertaken to Parish land without its knowledge. The Council requests that if anyone has concerns about Parish woodland, they report this to the Clerk who will pass the information on to our surveyors.

In the meantime, work should not be undertaken on Parish land without consent.

Verges, Drains and Roads

In the same vein as woodland management, the Council has been considering how best to manage roadside matters in the village. As the Chairman mentioned in the February Newsletter, there are some verges that the Parish Council owns, some for which SLDC takes responsibility and yet others that the County Council cuts. And of course there are also verges that are owned by adjoining properties or simply cut by residents - for which the Parish Council is grateful. The Council would like to more fully understand its own responsibilities and those of the other local authorities for verge maintenance and also gutters and drains. To this end it is seeking meetings with both SLDC and the County Council in order to draw up a long-term maintenance plan.

On its recent tour of the village, Councillors once again noted the deterioration of road markings and the road surface in a number of locations. The Council has had some success in liaison with County Highways on individual pot-holes, but will continue its efforts to secure attention to the worst examples.

Village Benches

And still on the theme of maintenance matters - and the Parish Council firmly believes that maintenance does matter - there is money set aside in the Council budget for the renovation of the numerous benches located in and around the village. Many of these enjoy far-reaching and spectacular views and are an asset to the community which the Council wishes to enhance this summer. An advert for a contractor to undertake this and other work appears later in this Newsletter.

The Review of the Lake District National Park Local Plan

Since the boundary re-organisation in 2017, much of Levens Parish, excluding the village, is now within the Lake District National Park. The Park Authority (LDNPA) is the local planning authority for the whole of the Lake District National Park and has a statutory responsibility to keep up-to-date local development documents, and to decide on planning applications in the area.

It does this through a set of policies used to inform decisions on planning applications and appeals contained in a Local Plan. A local planning authority generally reviews its Local Plan every five years and LDNPA is currently in the process of reviewing the plan for the National Park. This review will help shape the Lake District as an inspirational example of sustainable development in action. With the Lake District National Park's new World Heritage status, the LDNPA wants more than ever to protect this exceptional place.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planning/local-plan-review>

Levens Community Project

The Project continues to make progress and having established itself as eligible for support from the Government-backed Community Led Housing Fund administered by SLDC, the Parish Council is working very closely with officers from the District Council to secure significant funding for the next stage of work. In the meantime, negotiations for the sale of Sizergh Fell Quarry to a developer are at an advanced stage and work is also underway to commission site clearance at Cotes and the new Village Hall site once the main bird nesting season is over.

B4RN (Broadband for the Rural North – high speed internet connection for the village)

On behalf of the B4RN initiative, the Parish Council was pleased to hear that its bid for funding from SLDCs Locally Important Projects (LIPs) fund for the central control and distribution cabinet was successful with an award of £15,000. For further updates on progress:

Follow / Like: <https://www.facebook.com/LevensB4RN/>.

Levens Village Community Website

The Village Webteam works together to keep our website and Facebook pages up to date, current and relevant. The Team is always looking for news, events and pictures to post so please feel free to send items or post yourself (the Team will monitor contributions) or join in by commenting, liking and sharing some of our news. Contact details are:

Website.....<http://www.levens.org.uk/>

Facebook.....<https://www.facebook.com/levens.org.uk/>

Current Details for Levens Parish Council 2018/19

Councillor	Address	Tel.	Email
Roger Atfield (Chair)	The Old Court, Church Rd, Levens, LA8 8PU	015395- 61574	rogeratfield@btinternet.com
David Rogerson (Vice-Chair)	10, Beathwaite Gardens, Levens LA8 8NG	015395- 61628	davelouise@btinternet.com
Susan Bagot	School House, Church Road Levens, LA8 8PU	015395- 60588	sbagot@schoolhse.co.uk
Helen Burrow	Davlen Fold, Brigsteer Rd, Levens, LA8 8NT	015395- 61082	helenburrow20@gmail.com
Kevin Holmes	Field Place, Levens LA8 8EJ	015395- 52063	kevin.holmes6@btinternet.com
Roger Mason	Heaves Farm, Levens, LA8 8DU	015395- 60200	roger@heavesfarm.co.uk
Clerk	Address	Tel.	Email
Martin Curry	18 Barn Holme, Kendal, LA9 5LP	07388- 920410	levens.parish@gmail.com

County Councillor: Jim Bland, Oakridge, Underbarrow LA8 8BL. Tel: 015395 68576
Email: james.bland@cumbriacc.gov.uk

District Councillor: Cllr. Kevin Holmes, Field Place, Levens LA8 8EJ. Tel: 015395-52063
Email: kevin.holmes6@btinternet.com

Police: PCSO 5233 Jayne Park Email: jayne.park@cumbria.police.uk

Website: www.levens.org.uk

VACANCIES FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS

Levens Parish Council has two vacancies for new Councillors and has completed the process that enables it to co-opt candidates. If you are interested in becoming a Councillor for Levens Parish, please advise the Parish Clerk in writing, together with a note of your reasons for wishing to fill the role and what you can contribute to Levens Parish if successful. Expressions of interest should be submitted to the Clerk by 31 July, following which informal interviews will be arranged.

VACANCY FOR A GENERAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR

Levens Parish Council is considering the selection of a suitably qualified person to undertake general maintenance work as a contractor as and when required. The successful candidate will be selected on the basis of a proposed hourly rate and evidence of relevant skills and experience in a range of general maintenance work e.g. basic joinery (such as the repair and maintenance of village benches and noticeboards), grass cutting, walling and basic woodland work. As a contractor the candidate will provide necessary tools and machinery, evidence of competency in the use of such and evidence of appropriate insurance cover.

The contract will be on a call-off basis as and when required and the appointment will be reviewed annually.

For further information and submission of applications contact The Clerk, Levens Parish Council at levens.parish@gmail.com