

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – July 2019

Chairman's Cogitations

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 you will read later in this Newsletter the Levens Community Project and the new Village Hall have had major developments over the last few months. Councillors Roger Mason and Helen Burrow continue to provide the lead force behind these undertakings and as the Chair of the Parish Council I am very appreciative of their energy and enthusiasm.

On a different tack, I was recently wandering through our village accompanied by Wendy and our two dogs and on one short stretch of verge there were no less than five piles of dog excrement. It is our village and surely our responsibility to keep it clean and attractive – that is why we live here is it not? As has been mentioned before SLDC rules state that dog poo must be picked up/bagged and disposed of properly. This applies everywhere the public have access, not just 'in the village'.

The details of members of the Parish Council are on the back of this Newsletter and please do not hesitate to contact any one of us if you have any thoughts / questions / suggestions about our village.

Roger Atfield
Chair, Levens Parish Council

Cold Calling

Many Parishioners will be aware that Levens is a No Cold Calling Zone (NCCZ) designated by Cumbria County Council. In addition to the fact that by law any trader must have a Peddler's Licence showing their identity and issuing authority, NCCZ status is clearly identified by signs around the village visibly promoting the message that cold callers are not welcome.

The aim is to discourage doorstep callers from visiting a particular area and to reduce the overall incidents of rogue trading and distraction burglary throughout Cumbria. NCCZs provide residents and communities with the confidence to say "No" to uninvited sales people and to warn them that they are not welcome in an area. Traders are urged to respect residents' wishes and not to cold call within the clearly defined area.

Despite this there has been an unwelcome increase in cold calling in the village recently. The police are aware of this and will follow-up complaints – they encourage any Parishioner who may have cause for concern as a result of cold calling to phone 101 to report the incident (or 999 if an incident is felt to be threatening or intimidating) or to contact Trading Standards, County Offices, Stricklandgate, Kendal, LA9 4RQ - Telephone: 01539 713594

Highways and Traffic Management

Your Parish Council is much concerned about and involved in matters to do with road safety and the condition of our local roads. On a monthly basis, it is now monitoring the progress of Cumbria Highways in dealing with highway and footway defects within the Parish that are reported on their on-line system. This should help us to identify particular problem areas or issues which we may subsequently follow up with them if problems persist. Anyone can report a defect on the on-line system at www.cumbria.gov.uk/roads (search for reporting-problem-on-highway).

In the last edition of this Newsletter we reported on the establishment of the Levens Traffic Management Project. Following observations on traffic, parking and pedestrian issues, particularly at school times, the Working Group (consisting of the police, the School, Highways, Parish Council and the County Council) met at school drop-off time on 3 May. It monitored traffic volume, speeds, parking issues, parking violations, road safety issues and the level of foot-fall. Proposals noted for consideration included a pedestrian crossing of some sort, extra pavement installations, flashing lights at school times, road marking improvements (Levens is one of the few Primary Schools in South Lakes, where there are no zig-zag lines), rumble strips and parking on Levens Lane. Highways are now investigating what improvements might be made and will report back to the Group with recommendations.

Cllr Helen Burrow and District Cllr Kevin Holmes also attend meetings of the A590 Working Group, which includes representatives from a number of neighbouring Parish Councils, our County Councillor Jim Bland and senior officers from Highways England. Highways England has recorded issues and concerns relevant to our area from Brettargh Holt to Meathop roundabout. Much consultation has taken place; problems have been highlighted and solutions sought, taking into account financial implications. Findings were shared at a public information event arranged by Highways England on June 27th at the Gilpin Inn, Levens when people were able to see plans for short- and longer-term improvements. Outcomes will be reported when Highways England has reviewed.

Levens Community Project

Once again, the Project can report good progress. Full planning permission for the development of Sizergh Fell Quarry was granted by the Lake District National Park Authority in April. Subject to the completion of a new Section 106 Agreement, this enables the developer to exercise his Option to Purchase and significant funding to the Project will result. Positive discussions have been held with prospective funding partners which will lead to the submission of a major bid to Homes England. We are also pleased to report that SLDC has awarded £40,000 from its Locally Important Projects fund for enabling works on the new Village Hall site. Tenders for this work are under consideration and work should commence very soon. Applications for full planning consent have also been submitted to SLDC which, once approved, will enable groundworks to commence at Underhill and the plots at Cotes. Given the significant amount of funding now flowing into the Project, the Parish Council has approved the creation of a Project Management Committee to broaden the scope of expertise available to the Project and make recommendations on next steps.

Miscellany

Parishioners may be interested to know that Parish Councillors take on a variety of roles representing the interests of the Parish. These include attendance at the meetings of other village organisations, representing the Parish on outside bodies or as members of local working groups. Representatives for 2019-20 were confirmed at the Annual Meeting in May and a full list may be found on the Parish Council web-page at www.levens.org.uk.

The Parish Council, working through its District Councillor and with SLDC has had some success in tidying up unauthorised roadside advertising recently, particularly in the area around Levens Bridge. The random siting of semi-permanent advertising hoardings amounts to an eyesore akin to fly-tipping and Councillors will continue to work hard to reduce the occurrence of this activity.

Work on preparing the annual finances for the 2018-19 audit has now been completed. A satisfactory internal audit has been received from an independent local auditor and the Annual Return will now be sent to our external auditors. Full details of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2018-19 may be found on the Parish Council website.

We have found a company that will supply an appropriate replacement for the wall-mounted noticeboard at Cotes which has deteriorated beyond repair. Costs for this are largely covered by a grant from Cllr. Kevin Holmes acting in his capacity as District Councillor and we are looking into acquiring a low-maintenance frame of re-cycled plastic which should be in situ later in the summer. Parishioners may also have noticed the re-furbishment of benches in and around the village. The Parish Council thanks SLDC for funding this work and Andy Banks for completing it.

AND, on a recurring theme - as highlighted by the Chairman.....

The Parish Council thanks all those responsible local dog owners who are clearly doing their bit to tidy up after their pets around the village, BUT dog fouling continues to be a great problem! A reminder that SLDC has altered its policy on dog fouling across the whole of the South Lakeland District and owners can now be fined for not clearing up after their dogs anywhere where the public has access including not only public footpaths, roads and verges, but also open country and farm-land. There is a misconception that leaving dog faeces in open country is somehow acceptable – but as well as being unpleasant to others, it can be lethal to livestock. *Neosporum caninum* is a parasite that can be ingested by dogs where, once inside, it lays its eggs; these are then passed out in dog faeces onto pasture where they in turn may be eaten by cattle. Once in the bloodstream of a pregnant cow the parasite infects the heart, lungs and other tissues of the developing foetus, usually resulting in its death and abortion – which can lead to the death of the cow.

So do please bag-up and take home with you. And on that subject, we, like many other places still suffer from that remarkable characteristic whereby some dog owners do go to the trouble of taking dog bags with them and collect the waste – only then to hang it in an adjacent tree or on a gate post etc. This is at least as unpleasant, if not more so, than leaving it in situ – for the sake of the village and residents, please do neither!

Current Details for Levens Parish Council 2019/20

Councillor	Address	Tel.	Email
Roger Atfield (Chair)	The Old Court, Church Rd, Levens, LA8 8PU	015395-61574	rogeratfield@btinternet.com
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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
John Fitch	Woodpeckers, Brigsteer Road, Levens LA8 8NU	015395-61361	johnfitch@aol.com
Kevin Holmes	Field Place, Levens, LA8 8EJ	015395-52063	kevin.holmes6@btinternet.com
Rachael Johnston	Tudor Cottage, Main Street, Levens LA8 8NB	015395-60115	rachael79@yahoo.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@cumbria.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

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/>