

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2020

Chairman's Comments

It is four months since our last newsletter - and a significant four months it has turned out to be. Firstly, as I am sure you know (or where have you been?!), Sizergh Fell Quarry has been sold. This is a key major step in progressing the Levens Community Project to build a new village hall and affordable houses. The site of the new hall has been steadily worked on and hundreds of tons of stone have been removed for use on the hall in the future.

For the first time last Christmas the Parish Council took the lead in arranging for the village to have our own Christmas Tree and an event to celebrate the 'switch on'. I wish to thank all the people who came to the event – and we were delighted that so many of you came – and to all the children who created decorations for the tree. We felt it was so well received that this year the celebration will be on Saturday 5th December – a note in your diary or on your smart phone would be a good move!

Items regularly brought to the attention of the Parish Council are pot-holes, dog mess and the old carpet shop. In so far as the latter is concerned, I thank all the villagers who came to a drop-in session in November in the Institute and gave us your thoughts. Pot-holes can be reported by anyone and this is mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. Also mentioned elsewhere is the ongoing issue of owners/walkers not clearing up after their dogs. A £1000 fine is the penalty so may I please ask the few irresponsible owners/walkers to clean up their act if you will excuse the pun. One Thousand Pounds is a lot of money.....

Roger Atfield, Chairman, Levens Parish Council

Levens Community Project

In the last issue, we anticipated the imminent sale of Sizergh Fell Quarry and are delighted to report that this was completed on 8th November - resulting in a major funding boost to the Project which is currently being held for its planned developments. In addition to that milestone, a Locally Important Projects Grant of £40,000 from SLDC has funded the preparation of the site of the intended new village hall where work is currently underway. Full planning consent was recently secured for the four affordable houses to be built at the Underhill site. We are currently finalising details of an approved Scheme Grant of £350,000 from the Community-Led Housing Fund and new bids from the same source for infrastructure work are also underway. Full planning consent is now in place for the proposed market-value houses on the plots at Cotes. Initial groundworks there will improve the attractiveness of these sites to potential purchasers which are to be sold for self-build houses. This work will start as soon as the Scheme Grant from SLDC is finalised. Full planning consent for the Church Hill plots is close to approval. The Project Management Committee, which brings a wealth of experience to the table, is meeting monthly to guide progress and make recommendations to the Parish Council on how the Project should proceed. The months ahead will see exciting and further tangible progress with several aspects of this inspirational Project.

Levens Christmas Tree

The Parish Council is pleased to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped with and attended the 2019 Christmas tree switch-on last December. Not only was it a great success as a community event, but it also paid for itself and generated a surplus, enabling donations of £40 each to be made to three local organisations. And so.....we are planning to do it all again on: **Saturday December 5th 2020!** For this to happen, we need volunteers to join us! If you are interested in helping by sponsoring, or helping to organise the event, or by actually helping on Dec 5th then **please get in touch with us now via email to: Rachael Johnston: rachael79@yahoo.com.**

We would really appreciate sponsors and helpers! Thank you.

B4RN (Broadband for the Rural North)

The Community Project to bring B4RN to Levens has seen a major step forward recently with the installation and connection of the distribution cabinet at the junction of Lowgate and Levens Lane – funded by a grant from SLDC. The cabinet is now live and delivering a 1000mbps hyperfast internet connection to the Institute – the venue for a series of open events during February and into March. Do pop-in and try it out.

The Project has days left to recruit enough people to a free Government voucher scheme which will unlock sufficient funding to enable B4RN to FAST-TRACK Levens and connect the whole village in 2020. This will accelerate the Project and provide a first example of urban construction for B4RN. With close to 40% of Levens signed-up, we are well on the way to reaching our target of nearly 60% - which will give us the go-ahead for fast-track connection future-proofing Levens with the fastest internet in the UK.

PLEASE DON'T DELAY: CLAIM YOUR FREE GOVERNMENT VOUCHER NOW – this does not commit you to taking B4RN - but will enable cheaper connection costs overall if sufficient residents claim the voucher.

- Go to <https://b4rn.org.uk/postcode-checker/> and fill in the form.
- Get in touch via levensb4rnproject@gmail.com for advice or help if needed.

Residential Connection is £30pm inc VAT, plus £150 connection - but Voucher holders will get £150 refund from B4RN as a grant.

Business connection is £25pm + VAT, free of connection charge and a £300 refund.

For investors - B4RN shares give 5% interest and if £1500+ is invested the £150 connection fee is waived. For investment, go to <https://b4rn.org.uk/community/investors>.

Noticeboard at Cotes - A new noticeboard at Cotes is now in place and available for use by village organisations. We are grateful to SLDC's District Cllr. Kevin Holmes for a grant to cover the majority of the cost and Cllr Roger Mason for organising its fixing.

LEVENS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 17 MARCH 2020

The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held at 7.30 p.m. on 17 March at the Institute. The Parish Council will give reports on its work and village organisations will provide updates on their activities. The guest speaker will be Emma Loveridge CCBI of NatWest who will give a presentation entitled 'Friends Against Scams' covering the main types of scams (doorstep, online, postal & telephone). **All are invited - Refreshments are provided!**

Neighbourhood Watch

The Parish Council hosted a "Security Drop In" at the Village Institute on 22 November and a number of people indicated that they would be in favour of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in Levens. The only way in which such a scheme could work is if there are sufficient people willing to give a little of their time to co-ordinate the two-way flow of information within their part of the village. Such duties are unlikely to be too onerous or time consuming – it is just really acting as a local contact point. If you are willing to become involved in a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme please pass on your name, address and contact details to the Parish Clerk, Martin Curry, at levens.parish@gmail.com. If there are sufficient people interested the Parish Council will endeavour to move things forward.

Transport Matters

Cumbria County Council has approved a revised lining scheme for Greengate to clarify priorities following the increase of traffic from the Meadow Wood estate. Following the installation of speed indicator devices funded by Levens Charity, The Parish Council is now pressing highway authorities once again for further improvements around the School, Playing Fields and village generally. This work has been on-going now for several years and a number of initiatives will be discussed in the coming months.

In the last Newsletter, we reported on considerable anxiety about the closure of the 530 bus service from Cartmel to Kendal, via Levens village. We were pleased therefore to hear that, following representations by District and County Councillors and residents, Kirkby Lonsdale Coaches have provided a new service thus maintaining important public transport links for the village.

Reporting of Pot Holes and Other Defects on Roads and Footways

There continues to be a number of complaints about the poor state of the roads and footways in the area. It is easy to report a problem or concern to Cumbria Highways using either their on- line system (www.cumbria.gov.uk/highways-pavements) or by telephone on 0300 303 2992. The more complaints that they receive about a problem the greater is the chance that we will get something done about it - if you are able to send them a photograph of the problem so much the better (this facility is easy to use on-line). The Parish Council monitors progress on resolving the complaints on the system each month.

Dog Fouling

Unfortunately, the frequency of dog fouling around the village and in the wider countryside continues to raise concerns, many of which have been reported to the Parish Council. It was appalled recently to hear that a score of used poo-bags had been dumped on a footpath in the village. The Council is continuing to work with SLDC - whose policy is now that owners can be fined up to £1,000 for not clearing up after their dogs anywhere where the public has access. This includes not only pavements, roads and verges, but also on public footpaths, open country and farm-land - where dog faeces can have fatal effects on grazing animals. Signs have been placed at key points in the Parish and as reported in the last Newsletter, new waste bins (which can be used for poo-bags) are to be provided at the bottom of Whitegate Hill and by the Hare and Hounds noticeboard. Sadly, signs and noticeboards will not cure the problem, which is fundamentally down to responsible behaviour on the part of dog owners exercising proper consideration for others.

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
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
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/>