

LEVENS PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2018

Chairman's Comments

Since our last Newsletter in July a number of events have taken place in what is a relatively short time and some of them are obvious to us all.

You may recall that in the last Newsletter we appealed for two new councillors. Well I am delighted to say that at our September meeting Rachael Johnston and John Fitch joined the Council and I duly welcome them.

In August you cannot fail to have noticed the appearance of two 'smiley face' Speed Indicator Devices at the 20mph zone by the School/Playing Fields entrance. They are capable being moved to other locations (albeit not easily) if circumstances so dictate. They also store data that can be analysed. Organised by the Parish Council and funded by Levens Charity, I hope you consider them to be a valuable asset to safety in our village.

During the summer the Parish Council signed an Option Agreement with PARTI, the prospective purchasers of Sizergh Fell Quarry. Submission of a request for planning permission is detailed below.

The removal of the two non-SLDC recycling cabinets from the old recycling site has taken place and the Salvation Army cabinet which takes both clothes and shoes is now located at St John's Church, so recycling of these items in the village is still available. We are grateful to the Church for providing this facility.

Another event we cannot fail to have noticed is the display of large poppies and bunting by the bus stop. To commemorate the end of World War 1, a hundred years ago, the poppies are annotated (thanks to Mr Hal Bagot) with details taken from the War Memorial at St John's Church. This display has been well received and is part of a number of events; details of which are elsewhere in this Newsletter.

I, along with other Councillors, attend meetings outside of our own Council Meetings, and it is becoming increasingly obvious that services previously provided by other bodies are being dropped or withdrawn at an increasing rate. At the end of the day it is obvious that all services have to be paid for by someone and that 'that someone' is each and every one of us – in some shape or form. As a Parish Council we have decided to appoint a maintenance contractor on a call-off basis to attend to matters over which we as the Parish Council have control.

Finally, as usual, if you have any queries or concerns about our village please do not hesitate to contact me or any other Councillor.

Roger Atfield
Chairman

Woodland Management

The Parish Council owns a number of plots of land in and around the village and since our last Newsletter, Dave Preston and Kerry Milligan have produced a comprehensive management plan for 14 individual sites. Six of these are primarily woodland in character and the rest are a combination of woodland and species-rich grassland or land which has been managed as allotments in the recent past. Whilst each of these is relatively small, not one is isolated in the context of the wider environment and each plays a significant role in linking many of the semi-natural habitats throughout the Parish.

During their survey, Dave and Kerry identified many of the sites as important wildlife refuges with features of interest including species-rich limestone grassland, native broadleaved woodland, the rare occurrence of tufa or hard water springs and a number of uncommon or rare species. These valuable assets to the village do face threats, however, including the spread of non-native invasive plant species, the dumping of garden and building waste, threats from climate change and tree diseases and the unauthorised felling of trees.

The Parish Council considered the Report at its meeting in September and was pleased to endorse it and its vision that the woodlands and other areas of Parish owned land should be positively managed for wildlife and public enjoyment. Recommended work will include tree health and safety inspections, the eradication of non-native invasive plant species, the monitoring and repair of boundaries, management regimes that will protect and maintain populations of rare plants and animals and the development of opportunities for community involvement and appreciation.

The woodland management plan will be posted on the village website and is available by request from the Clerk. Through this Newsletter, the Parish Council repeats its plea that no unauthorised work, including the removal of timber or the dumping of garden waste should take place on Parish Council land.

Village Maintenance

Associated with progress on woodland management, and as mentioned in the Chairman's comments, the Parish Council is pleased to have appointed Andy Banks as maintenance contractor. This contractual arrangement goes hand-in-hand with the preparation of an annual maintenance plan by Parish Councillors which identifies priority and cyclical tasks with a view to improving the environment of the village. This will include hedge and verge maintenance and some specific work previously identified such as the refurbishment of village benches. The maintenance plan however also identifies work that is the responsibility of other local authorities and agencies and enables the Parish Council to lobby more effectively for issues to be addressed.

The Levens Tribute 1914-18

In addition to the touching display of poppies in the village mentioned by the Chairman, the Parish Council has ensured that Levens will join a nationwide commemoration when, on 11 November at 7.00, its own Beacon will be one of over 1000 beacons to be lit throughout the United Kingdom. The event, which will be preceded by a roll-call for the fallen at 6.55 p.m., will take place on the field in front of Hyning House; as part of a wider tribute, the bell of St. John's Church, Levens will be rung at 7.05 p.m. **Please note that there is no parking close to the site and pedestrian access only via Hyning Lane near the junction of Whitegate and Brigsteer Road. Subject to conditions and demand, transport to the site for less able Parishioners might be available by prior arrangement. Please phone the Clerk (07388-920410) before 7 November to discuss.**

In addition, Levens Local History Group is holding an exhibition 'Levens in World War One' in both the Institute and St. John's over the 10th & 11th November. The exhibition in the church will be relatively small and tell the story of the men who are named on the War Memorial. The same information will appear in the Institute, together with the story of those men and women who left the village to serve and who survived to return. This will be a mainly paper exhibition, though it is hoped that several artefacts as well as film and music will feature. The exhibition will provide a history of the W.I. (formed in 1917), the school's war effort, the agricultural drive, the hospital at Hyning, Lady Bagot's Hospital of Friendship and some individual stories of people from or connected to Levens.

Levens Community Project

A meeting of the Project Working Group, to which all members of the Parish Council and the Levens Institute Management Committee were invited, was held on 18 September. Members received an update on progress with the Project including financial forecasts and timescales.

Following a display and consultation with local residents held at the Strickland Arms on 19 September, the development company PARTI, which has an option to purchase Sizergh Fell Quarry, has now submitted an application for full planning consent to the Lake District National Park. This can be viewed on the National Park planning portal at www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/planningsearch under reference 7/2018/5610.

A major application for funding has now been submitted to the Government's Community Led Housing Fund which is administered locally by SLDC. Very positive discussions have also been held with Homes England about the provision of affordable housing as part of the Project. As a result, a formal application for a similarly significant funding package is to be submitted soon.

In the meantime, preliminary work on the new Village Hall site has been undertaken with the clearance of trees and understorey; similar work will be undertaken on the plots at Cotes in due course.

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
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	rachael179@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@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

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/>