

CALDBECK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Parish Hall on Monday 22nd May 2006.

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| PRESENT | Mr W R Cowx (Chairman) | Mr H Little |
| | Mrs A Cartmell | Mrs A D R Noble |
| | Mr H Hellon | Mr C Smithson |
| | Mr W R Knowles | Mr A Tyson |

Mrs E Auld (Clerk)

Mr D S Fairbairn (County/Borough Councillor)

Mrs Elsa Brailey, Home Housing, Mr John Thornthwaite, Cumbria Police Neighbourhood Watch, Ms Sarah Mitchell (VAC) and seventeen Parishioners were present.

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs A L Ryan (holiday) and B Long (LDNPA Planning Officer). Mr A Savage was absent.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2005 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman, Mr William Cowx, welcomed parishioners and other attendees to the meeting. The Council met nine times during the year with two Councillors attending every meeting, three attending eight times, three being at seven meetings, one at six and one at five meetings. Eighteen planning applications were considered during the year. The upheld planning appeal against the refusal of planning permission for holiday use of the premises at Ostler's Barn, Howbeck, Hesket Newmarket was vigorously contested by the Parish Council, but the Lake District National Park did not take it further with the Planning Inspectorate despite much effort being put into a Case against the Decision. The Parish Council responded to the Cumbria CC and Lake District NPA consultation on Rights of Way Improvement Planning, as well as the Allerdale BC Traffic Regulation Order Review and the LDNPA draft New Vision 2006-2030. The Straits resurfacing and improved footpath to Priests Mill for wheelchair and limited access users was completed. Thanks were due to the Lake District National Park Authority for grants from the Sustainable Development and Access Improvement funds and to the Friends of the Lake District for financial support of the project. Some money from the Geddling bequest was also utilised to pay for the scheme. The sudden high river levels in October 2005 eroded a section of the riverbank adjacent to the path, but remedial solutions were being investigated. The Parish Plan was successfully produced and distributed to all Parishioners. The team involved in its compilation put in a great deal of time and effort and were to be congratulated. The Plan identified several matters and projects for consideration and work was started on some of these. The Parish Council was following up the identified need for some affordable housing, with several site meetings being held and as evidenced by the plans on display for pre-application consultation at the meeting. Both Hesket Newmarket and Caldbeck entered the Cumbria in Bloom and Tidy Village Competitions and were respectively runners up. The relocation of the Hesket Newmarket recycling bins, which belong to Allerdale Borough Council, had caused problems and despite a public site meeting having been held, the matter was still not resolved. The Parish Council responded to consultation on Cumbria Constabulary re-structuring and was against a merger with another Police Force. Some liaison with and reports from the local Policing team took place during the year, but more Police presence and enforcement of speed restrictions would be welcomed in the Parish. The Parish Council, in conjunction with other Parishes in the North Allerdale Area, invested in two Speed Indication Devices, which will be positioned in Caldbeck on a periodic basis in the very near future. A seat in memory of the late Mrs Marjorie Jones was being donated to the Parish and is to be positioned near the pond in Hesket Newmarket. A more recent bequest of £5,000 had been received from the late Dr Kathleen Rigg to be spent on environmental improvements in Hesket Newmarket. Some drainage works were carried out under a Licence on part of the Back Green in Hesket Newmarket, but again this has caused some contention and much deliberation for the Parish Council and the LDNPA, whose land it is. Once the sward has been re-established it is proposed that the area will be managed by cutting the vegetation twice annually to enable this formerly rough ground to be used for informal recreational purposes. Numerous Parish maintenance matters were raised, reported or attended to during the year. The assistance of the Lake District NPA Ranger, Graham Standring was much appreciated. The attendance and interest of Parishioners at meetings was most welcome and in particular Councillor Fairbairn, County and District Councillor, was thanked for his support and input. The Parish Councillors and the Clerk also deserved thanks for their hard work for the benefit of the whole community during the year.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Receipts for the year totalled £15,489.24 with payments of £17,474.09 creating a deficit of £1,984.84. The account balance at 31st March 2006 was £5,302.77. Grants were received from Cumbria CC and Allerdale BC towards maintenance of Caldbeck pond area and Hesket Newmarket open spaces respectively. £4,710 financial support was received for the limited access footpath improvement works in Caldbeck. A payment of £500 was made to the Northern Fells Group for the new minibus. Parish Plan expenditure utilised income from grants received in the previous financial year. The Straits/Priests Mill project cost £6,940.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Mr John Thornthwaite, Neighbourhood Watch Development Officer spoke about his work through the Crime and Disorder Partnership to create better communication with coordinators, via a message relay system using telephone voice, text or email. There was currently a database of 2000 Neighbourhood Watch coordinators. Caldbeck was in a low crime area, but through coordinators being forewarned of dangers, members of the public felt more reassured.

Mrs Elsa Brailey, Home Housing indicated that of the units in the proposed Caldbeck development, four would be available for rent and six for shared ownership. Current Housing Corporation rental figures were £72 and £68 per week for a 3 and 2 bedroom property respectively. The market value of the properties would be in the region of £120-140,000. Home Housing would monitor any resale, with valuation at open market prices, but with a very tight s106 local occupancy condition to reduce the figure. Initially, 50% purchase of a dwelling was permitted, but the equity could be increased in time to 80%. The Housing Association had the first option to purchase. All the proposed units had decent storage space available. The landowner agrees to sell a site for development at a discounted price to enable affordable housing to be built.

Both speakers were thanked for their attendance.

PARISH PLAN

The Red Squirrel Group was in the process of being set up, with eight people having expressed an interest in being members of it.

A community website was being discussed by the Parish Council.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – OPEN DISCUSSION

Literature was made available on the Connexions ‘Wheels2Work’ scooter scheme

It was suggested that as several of the village shops sold Fair Trade goods, the Parish should consider registering for Fair Trade status.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm and was followed by refreshments provided with Parish Plan funding.