

**CALDBECK PARISH COUNCIL**

**Simon Smith - Clerk**  
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**2 April 2018**

**Ms Katherine Fairclough**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Cumbria County Council**

Dear Ms Fairclough

I am writing on behalf of Caldbeck Parish Council to request a copy of Dan Barton's report on the Caldbeck Hesket Newmarket footpath.

I wrote to you on 10 December 2017 asking if you would intervene in Caldbeck Parish Council's request for County Council support for establishing a footpath between Caldbeck and Hesket Newmarket. The request followed Allerdale Local Committee's meeting where Caldbeck Parish Council asked a question under the County Council's public participation scheme. The prepared reply stated that you or a Corporate Director would review the officer decision not to provide the support the Parish Council sought.

The County Council decided to treat my letter as a complaint and instigated its complaints procedures. The original timetable for a reply was 8 January. The Parish Council recognised this was unrealistic given the Christmas New Year break which was confirmed by the County Council. We therefore expected the investigation to be concluded early in the new year, ideally by 31 January which would have given an extra 3 weeks, more than covering the holiday period.

Given pressure of work at the County Council, 5 February was the first opportunity to meet Dan Barton and the Parish Council submitted its case prior to the meeting. The Parish Council believed it received a fair hearing and was encouraged by the reception extended to it by Dan Barton and the work he had done to get up to speed, including his informed understanding of the Parish Council's case. Dan Barton thought we would receive a copy of his report but that he would need to clear releasing the report to us.

Since then we have responded promptly to follow up questions. We have asked for a copy of Dan Barton's report and the County Council's conclusions in response but have received nothing, despite numerous reminders.

Given the criticisms made of the County Council's handling of the entire footpath issue, the Parish Council is somewhat surprised that there seems to be such a lack of urgency to resolve matters where we simply have no idea of timescales and intentions. Your complaints procedure states that a written response is expected within 15 working days of triggering the review stage. It is now 9 weeks since we met Dan Barton and 12 weeks since the original date for a reply set by the County Council under your procedures.

The Parish Council therefore asks you directly for a copy of Dan Barton's report and for the County Council's conclusions in response to the report. Please take this request as being under the Freedom of Information Act.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

**Simon Smith**

*S. S. Smith*