

## Caldbeck Parish Plan update - Consultation November 2019

The Parish Council is asking all parishioners for their opinions on a number of important issues. Allerdale Borough Council (Allerdale) is to end providing certain services: street lighting and public toilets. The Parish Council can choose to provide these services. If it does not, the services will not be delivered. The National Park and County Council are also seeking economies and again the Parish Council could take on additional functions: ownership of Hesket Newmarket Green and the car parks in Caldbeck and Hesket Newmarket and undertaking local highways work. The Parish Council will have to fund any new services taken on by increasing the precept. Your responses will help shape the Parish Council's decisions in developing the Parish Plan and budget, so please complete and return the two sided response page at the end of this consultation paper. **Please would you reply to this consultation before 6 December 2019. At the end of the paper you will find all the questions, with space for your response.**

The paper goes to all households, together with blank questionnaires where there is more than one adult. Replies can be taken to the village stores in either Caldbeck or Hesket Newmarket. The paper and questionnaire are on the website. If easier, download the questionnaire and email your responses to the Clerk. If you would like your questionnaire collected, please let the Clerk know.

The Parish Council will hold an **extraordinary meeting on 16 December 2019** when the results of the consultation will be discussed, together with the draft budget. The **final budget meeting** is scheduled for **13 January 2020** when the precept will be set. All are very welcome to attend.

### 1. Street Lighting

There are some 50 street lights in the Parish currently owned and maintained by Allerdale Borough Council. Allerdale had planned to pass all responsibility for street lights to Town and Parish Councils from 1 April 2020, but it has now had a re-think. It is to charge Councils for electricity for street lighting from April 2021 but will continue to maintain and repair the street lights. The annual electricity charge is estimated at £30 per light: if we keep all the lights the annual cost is some £1,500. We can say 'No' in which case the lights will go unlit and we can ask for some lights to be removed if thought unnecessary. The Parish Council has already made a budget provision for street lighting as Allerdale's changes have been mooted for some time. Our first questions, to which please reply on the two sided response page:

Q.1.1 Do you wish to keep all the present street lights with the Parish Council paying for the electricity used?
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Q.1.2 If you do not wish to keep all the present street lights, which one(s) do you want to see removed?
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Q.1.3 Would you prefer to see all the street lights removed?
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### 2. Public Toilets

The Public Toilets in Caldbeck are owned and maintained by Allerdale. Allerdale is to cease the service and has offered to transfer the toilets to the Parish Council. Allerdale will upgrade the facilities prior to transfer. The Parish Council would be responsible for the cleaning/running of the facilities and general maintenance. The alternative is the public toilets are closed. The present cleaning and maintenance costs are estimated at £1,500 a year which is not in the budget and would have to be added to the Parish precept, part of your Council Tax bill.

Q.2.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council taking over the provision of the Public Toilets in Caldbeck?
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Q.2.2 Would you like the Parish Council to explore further the provision of public toilets in Hesket Newmarket which would need funding?
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### 3. Caldbeck Green

Cumbria County Council owns Caldbeck Green and pond but the Parish Council maintains them. It manages a grass cutting contract, the current 3 year contract running from 2018 to the end of 2020. The annual cost is £2,000 and the County Council contributes £860.

Representations have been made to the Parish Council about the timing of the cuts, with changes proposed to promote biodiversity. The Parish Council decided that the current arrangements should continue, in part because representations were made that the area from the car park and around the pond should be kept tidy and accessible for people to enjoy, and in part because delaying the cut as requested would also necessitate heavier machinery which could damage the Green as has happened in the past.

But there may be scope to consider leaving some smaller areas of the Green for a later cut (with grass collection) to promote biodiversity. Such areas would need to be small enough to be strimmed, avoiding the need for heavier machinery and the risk of damage. There may be extra costs if the contractor's time increases.

Q.3.1 Are you in favour of keeping the current arrangements for cutting Caldbeck Green?
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Q3.2 Would you like to see some areas away from the pond/car park left for a later cut to promote greater biodiversity?
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#### **4. Hesket Green.**

The Parish Council maintains Hesket Newmarket main village green and carries out some maintenance of grounds around the car park. The land all belongs to the Lake District National Park Authority (National Park). The main green is cut some 12 times a year at a cost of £900.

Q.4.1 Do you think the current grass cutting arrangements for Hesket Newmarket Green and car park area are satisfactory?
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Q.4.2 If No, please explain why?
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#### **5. Caldbeck/Hesket Newmarket Lonning Footpath**

The main community wish in the Parish Plan 2005-2015 was to provide a direct footpath alongside Caldbeck/Hesket Newmarket Lonning, linking the two villages. This attracted the most support at the time of the original Plan but has proved very difficult to progress.

As a result of a generous donation, the costs of constructing a footpath are available, including the cost of land purchase at £10,000 per acre. The donation is expressly for the footpath and does not cover any legal costs relating to a Footpath Creation Order and any disputes arising.

The ongoing costs of maintaining the footpath and cutting hedges are not covered by the donation. A budget provision of £300 was made in 2015-16 and sums transferred to an earmarked reserve. On establishment of the footpath, the reserve would be used in the first instance but a budget would be required longer term, reinstating the £300 earlier budget.

A new route was agreed in 2016 but there have been changes in minds. Mediation by Mike Johnson, County Councillor, has not succeeded.

The National Park and County Council have visited Caldbeck and looked at alternatives, including upgrading the existing footpaths via Matthew Rudding. Whilst possible, both the National Park and the County Council saw drawbacks with any upgrade: the footpath crosses some fields rather than sticks to field boundaries and an improved surface might well interfere with farming operations, upgrades would be costly, and there was a concern that the extra length would prove unattractive compared with the direct Caldbeck/Hesket Newmarket Lonning route. They both recognised the advantages of the original design, aiming to follow the Lonning, and expressed a preference for a direct footpath along the full length of the Lonning, keeping to one side of the lane.

But such a footpath requires the consent of all landowners which we do not have, and the County Council is unwilling to use its powers and issue a Footpath Creation Order without worst case legal costs being covered, estimated at £30,000. The Parish Council would have to raise funds to meet worst case legal funds and work closely with other organisations - Allerdale has offered support.

The original intention was to establish a footpath that would be used by pedestrians, be wheel chair friendly, and bicycles would also be allowed by licence. If a Footpath Creation Order is required, the footpath would be designated as either a footpath or a bridleway, the latter would allow bicycles and horses as of right.

Given the difficulties experienced and the time that has gone since the original Parish Plan consultation, the Parish Council would like to know your views.

Q.5.1 Do you want a direct footpath, which can also be used by wheelchairs, along Caldbeck/Hesket Newmarket Lanning?
Q.5.1.1 Do you want bicycles to be permitted to use the footpath?
Q.5.1.2 Do you want the footpath created as a bridleway which would allow horses as well as bicycles?
Q.5.2 Do you at present walk along Caldbeck/Hesket Newmarket Lanning between the two villages?
If Yes how often?
If not why not?
Q.5.3 Would you use the footpath if it were created?
If Yes how often?
Q.5.4 Would you be in favour of the Parish Council lobbying the County Council to use its powers to issue a Footpath Creation Order?
Q.5.5 Would you be willing to support the legal costs involved with a Footpath Creation Order?
Q.5.6 If establishing the full length direct footpath were not possible, would you use alternatives, eg:
Putting in a part path where landowners are in agreement;
Other options?
Q.5.7 Do you wish the Parish Council to abandon pursuit of the footpath and return the donation?

## 6. Purchase of National Park land - Hesket Newmarket Green and the village car parks

The Parish Council has offered to buy the land in the two villages which belongs to the National Park, including the car parks in each village and Hesket Newmarket Green, so as to protect the assets for the benefit of all parishioners for generations to come. Following completion of the land purchase, the Parish Council would take over responsibility for the full maintenance of the car parks. Currently voluntary contributions are collected at Caldbeck car park which forms part of the National Park's general income and which is not necessarily used in the Parish. The Parish Council would continue to request voluntary contributions in Caldbeck and would propose to introduce similar arrangements at Hesket Newmarket car park. We expect that monies raised from voluntary contributions would cover the costs of maintaining the car parks. The land purchase price is £10,000 plus costs, reflecting the fact that most of the land is registered common land. The Parish Council will need to finance the purchase through grants and other fund raising activities.

Q.6.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council purchasing the National Park land?
Q.6.2 Do you support the proposed arrangements for voluntary contributions for using the car parks?
Q.6.3 Do you support extending the Hesket Newmarket car park if planning and other arrangements were possible and funds were available?

## 7. Employment of a part time Parish Lengthsman

Parish Councils are encouraged to take more direct steps to look after local verges, drains and gullies. Some Parish Councils employ part time lengthsman to undertake this work, which gives more immediate direct control over routine maintenance of verges and the roadside. Lengthsmen can readily report more significant problems to Highways authorities. The annual costs for employing a lengthsman one day a week are estimated at £4,000 a year.

Q.7 Are you in favour of the Parish Council employing a part time lengthsman?
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## 8. Budget Implications

The Parish Council has already made a provision in its budget for some of these services and is planning a 5% increase in its precept in 2020-21 and 2021-22. But these increases leave the Parish Council some £5,000 short a year if all these services are to be provided - no provision has been made to date for any lengthsman. Funding the shortfall is equivalent to an additional 40% increase on the precept. A Band D property in the Parish presently is charged £37.34 a year towards the Parish Council precept. So if a 50% increase were applied by the Parish Council, the rate on that Band D property would rise by £18.67 to £56.01.

Q.8.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for street lighting?
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Q.8.2 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for public toilets?
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Q.8.3 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for a lengthsman?
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## 9. Concluding Comments

Please feel free to highlight any issues you would like to draw to the attention of the Parish Council. This is an opportunity for you to raise any additional issues not covered in the paper or your thoughts about how the Parish Council operates and might best represent parishioners.

## 10. Names and address

We have asked you to add your name and address to help ensure the integrity and robustness of the consultation. Individual responses will not be available to Parish Councillors. Only the Clerk will see responses in order to collate results.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read and respond to this consultation.

**Tim Cartmell**  
**Chairman**  
**Caldbeck Parish Council**

For further information please contact  
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## Questions and space for recording responses

Q.1.1 Do you wish to keep all the present street lights with the Parish Council paying for the electricity used?	Yes/No
Q.1.2 If you do not wish to keep all the present street lights, which one(s) do you want to see removed?	List lights you would like to see removed
Q.1.3 Would you prefer to see all the street lights removed?	Yes/No
Q.2.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council taking over the provision of the Public Toilets in Caldbeck?	Yes/No
Q.2.2 Would you like the Parish Council to explore further the provision of public toilets in Heskett Newmarket which would need funding?	Yes/No
Q.3.1 Are you in favour of keeping the current arrangements for cutting Caldbeck Green	Yes/No
Q.3.2 Would you like to see some areas away from the pond/car park left for a later cut to promote greater biodiversity?	Yes/No
Q.4.1 Do you think the current grass cutting arrangements for Heskett Newmarket Green and car park area are satisfactory?	Yes/No
Q.4.2 If No, please explain why?	
Q.5.1 Do you want a direct footpath, which can also be used by wheelchairs, along Caldbeck/Heskett Newmarket Lonning?	Yes/No
Q.5.1.1 Do you want bicycles to be permitted to use the footpath?	Yes/No
Q.5.1.2 Do you want the footpath created as a bridleway which would allow horses as well as bicycles?	Yes/No
Q.5.2 Do you at present walk along Caldbeck/Heskett Newmarket Lonning between the two villages?	Yes/No
If Yes how often?	Say how often
If not why not?	Please specify
Q.5.3 Would you use the footpath if it were created?	Yes/No
If Yes how often?	Say how often
Q.5.4 Would you be in favour of the Parish Council lobbying the County Council to use its powers to issue a Footpath Creation Order?	Yes/No
Q.5.5 Would you be willing to support the legal costs involved with a Footpath Creation Order?	Yes/No Indicate contribution

Q.5.6 If establishing the full length direct footpath were not possible, would you use alternatives, eg:	
Putting in a part path where landowners are in agreement;	Yes/No
Other options?	Please specify
Q.5.7 Do you wish the Parish Council to abandon pursuit of the footpath and return the donation?	Yes/No.
Q.6.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council purchasing the National Park land?	Yes/No
Q.6.2 Do you support the proposed arrangements for voluntary contributions for using the car parks?	Yes/No
Q.6.3 Do you support extending the Hesket Newmarket car park if planning and other arrangements were possible and funds were available?	Yes/No
Q.7 Are you in favour of the Parish Council employing a part time lengthsman?	Yes/No
Q.8.1 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for street lighting?	Yes/No
Q.8.2 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for public toilets?	Yes/No
Q.8.3 Are you in favour of the Parish Council increasing the precept to pay for a lengthsman?	Yes/No
9. Please feel free to highlight any issues you would like to draw to the attention of the Parish Council.	
10. Name and address (required for checking eligibility to record responses). If responding as a second home owner, please use your Caldbeck address.	

The questionnaire is available to download at:

<http://www.caldbeck.org.uk/parish-council/key-documents/> Budget Consultation November 2019

Responses can be emailed to the Clerk: [caldbeckparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:caldbeckparishclerk@gmail.com)

If you need your questionnaire collected, please contact the Clerk:

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