

# **Lorton Parish Council**

## **Annual Parish Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th May 2014

**Present:** Cllrs. Poate (Chair), Postlethwaite, Irlam, Aitken, Sloan, Armstrong and Deeks.

**Apologies:** There were no apologies

**Also present:** Cllr. Alan Bowness (CCC), Anne Roberts (LWI), Robert Baird (YTHC), Derek Poate (YTHC), Leslie Webb (First Responders), Derek Denman (L &DFHS), Lois Suckling (Lorton Gardening Club) & Olivia Harrison (Lorton School).

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish meeting.

### **30.14: Minutes of the previous Parish Meeting:**

The Chair asked if all the councillors present were content with the minutes of the 2013 Annual meeting held on May 1st. There were no matters or issues arising. The councillors present agreed that they were an accurate record.

### **31.14 Election of Chair:**

Cllr. Poate stood down and nominations were sought for the position of Chair.

Cllr. Irlam nominated Cllr. Poate.

Cllr. Postlethwaite seconded the nomination.

All those present agreed and Cllr. Poate accepted the nomination.

### **32.14 Election of Vice Chair:**

Cllr. Irlam nominated Cllr. Postlethwaite.

Cllr. Sloan seconded the nomination.

All those present agreed and Cllr. Postlethwaite accepted the nomination.

### **33.14 Chairman's Report:**

Cllr. Poate presented her report to the meeting.

After such a long wet winter I am sure we have all enjoyed the recent spells of good weather, the blue bells in Butter Bowl Wood are even more prolific this year, perhaps following the woodland management described by Glenis in our Spring Newsletter last year ?

Marian Sloan joined the council in September 2013, you may will have read more about her in our Spring News letter this year and noticed her request for amusing photographs .. not sure if we have had an

overwhelming response to this, but we will be producing another News Letter later in the Summer so it's not too late to get snapping !

On the subject of the News Letter, we are a small community, but there may well be items of interest that we could include, so please get in touch with us if you think might be of interest to other residents.

The Council continues to meet every 2 months, at the Yew Tree Hall, at 7.30 pm. Additional meetings are arranged when necessary, usually for specific planning matters. Agendas for all meetings are published in advance and posted on the Parish Council Notice Board at Low Lorton, and on the Notice Board at Yew Tree Hall. Agendas and minutes of meetings are also published on the Melbreak Communities website.

We welcome attendance and participation by residents of the community and if there is an item you would like on the agenda, please get in touch with Dave Smith, our clerk, to discuss.

Last year the council received Notification of 14 planning applications.

Of these, the response to 10 applications was 'No Objection', 3 applications were 'supported', and one application was opposed.

The application that was opposed, a new Minor Material Amendment (Land south of Lime Tree House, Low Lorton) remains in the hands of the LNDP Compliance Team, and regular updates are sent to the Parish Council and nearby residents.

Some of the Issues that concern residents are the state of the highways, the potholes and road edges, blocked culverts, localised flooding, and the general appearance of the village. As a council we have limited powers and finances, but we hope we do our best to make representation to the relevant authorities to address these issues.

Over the year the clerk and councillors have met on several occasions with representatives from Highways, and we have seen some maintenance taking place in recent months. As mentioned previously, we urge residents to report matters themselves, using the Hotline numbers advertised.

The provision of purple bags to each household, for recycling, will I hope result in less use of the bottle bank, and avoiding the overflow onto the pavement area.

With regard to the grass verges, The Pound and other open areas, we are pleased to say that Richard Mc Cree continues to do an excellent job in keeping things tidy. Several of the benches in the village have also been refurbished, as part of ongoing maintenance.

The daffodils and planters (thanks to the Garden Club) were a delight in the spring, and the Millennium Yew Tree planted at Crossgates seems to be growing well.

Under discussion at present is The Pound Wall... Many of you will have noticed that once again part of the wall has been hit by an unidentified vehicle, and some of the stone work has had to be pushed onto the grass as it was in danger of falling into the road. We have already been considering the possibility of moving the part of the wall on the bend adjacent to Mark Tyson's house, as this wall is leaning, gradually being pushed in as vehicles negotiate the bend. Planning permission has been obtained to move the wall, but considerable expense will be incurred as the highway will have to be reinstated to the required standard, and the council does not have funds to cover this cost. An application for funding has been submitted to the Lottery. The Pound is such a lovely area, enjoyed by children, residents and visitors alike, so it is important that we maintain it as a safe place to be.

Three Lorton parish councillors attend regular meetings of the Melbreak Communities Steering Group, which provides an overarching body covering a range of activities in the valley. Promotion of social networks, hosting the Annual Flood Management meeting, and taking responsibility for the development of an Emergency plan are a few of its activities. The council was fortunate to receive a generous donation from the MBC towards the cost of the new Parish and Community notice board.

The Shop at the Wheatsheaf has now be open over a year, and continues to provide daily newspapers, essentials and specialist local food items, a service that many a rural village does not have, so it is hoped that the community will continue to support this valuable asset to the village.

On behalf of the community I would like to express my thanks to all the councillors who give up their time to participate in meetings and to undertake different responsibilities within the council.

I would also like to thank Dave Smith for his excellent work as our Clerk, keeping us up to date with all necessary matters, and ensuring we fulfil our roles and responsibilities as your representatives.

We look forward to your attendance and participation in future meetings.

#### **34.14 The End of Year Accounts:**

The Clerk presented the End of Year Accounts (see attached) and talked those present through the figures. Total income during the year was £5,784.00p. Total expenditure was £4,921.01p. Together with the balance brought forward from the previous financial year, the balance of the Parish Council account on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2013 was £5,165.78p. However, due to an early payment of the first tranche of the 14/15 Precept (£2,750.00p), the actual balance at the end of March was £7,915.78p. The figures had been audited and agreed by Mr. J. Hankin, the internal auditor. There were no questions from those present. The End of Year accounts were formally agreed by the councillors present together with the annual governance statement contained within the external audit form as completed by the Chair and the Clerk.

There were no issues raised by Mr. Hankin who has stated that he is happy to undertake the internal audit next year.

#### **35.14: Presentations from Community Groups:**

1. Lorton WI: Anne Roberts reported that the group meet on the second Tuesday of every month and currently have 22 members. There are a wide variety of activities undertaken and during the last year these have included a games night, a darts match at Aspatria, a rum butter tasting session, attendance at the Spring Council in Carlisle, a buffet supper at Middle Ruddings and various fund-raising activities including the Federation Coffee Morning in Booths at Keswick. The WI Centenary Batten contains needlework panels from Lorton WI, one of which depicts the Lorton Yew Tree. The group has also undertaken visits to Embleton, Lamplugh and Dean WI's as well as taking part in the Great Food Debate at Reghed at which the use of local produce was promoted. Members of the WI were key to the provision of refreshments at the Lorton School 10k run.
2. Bob Baird from the Yew Tree Hall Committee explained that the group were in the middle of undertaking a review on the future use of the Yew Tree Hall. There is a recognition that it would be difficult to see how much benefit could be gained by spending a lot of money on the building and that the restrictions in terms of parking and disabled access have led to the Committee deciding to look at alternative venues and sites. The only alternative that is being considered at present is Lorton

Church. The idea would be to convert the body of the church into the main room of a new village hall, as has been done elsewhere, with removable pews etc that would be put back in place for church services. A small extension would be built on the side of the church to provide a meeting room of about the same size as the current meeting room within the Yew Tree Hall. There would be no issue with building over graves. Should this proposal go ahead there would be an issue regarding parking but enquiries were being made of local land-owners to try and address this concern. The Church Council is supportive of the idea if it is what the village wants. Consultations are ongoing though it would appear that there is an even split between the various options, though only the church option has been worked up. The sale of the Yew Tree Hall will be key to the development of a new facility and planning permission for change of use might be problematic because of the parking issues.

3. Lorton Vale Community First Responders, represented by Les Webb, has now been in existence for ten years and during that time has built up a good working relationship with the NW Ambulance Service. There are currently 16 responders covering the four parishes of Buttermere, Blindbothel, Lorton and Loweswater. It is a big patch to cover but the number of responders seems to be about right. In 2012 there were 20 call-outs, in 2013 there were 31 call-outs and, to date, in 2014 there have been 6 call-outs. The call-outs are predominately for local residents rather than visitors and have involved chest pains, difficulty with breathing and strokes. The group currently has 12 sets of kit and is in a relatively healthy financial position. There is always a need for new volunteers and the training that all the responders receive is fairly intensive.
4. Olivia Harrison, the Head Teacher from Lorton School provided the meeting with a comprehensive rundown of activities undertaken by the school during the last twelve months. These included participation in the village Scarecrow Festival, the annual Rounders Evening, the Sports Day and Summer Fair, the Christmas Fair and the successful 10k race. The friends of Lorton School continue with their fund-raising efforts and the Lorton Lunches are proving to be as popular as ever. Pupils from the school have been very successful in the Cumbria Games and helped Allerdale become the Games Champions. Work continues on the new Adventure Playground project and there will be regular updates provided for the Parish council as this project progresses. The number of pupils on the role is currently 68 and this is expected to rise to 75 in September.
5. Derek Denman from Lorton and Derwent Fells History Society explained that they have over 180 members, though during the last year they have lost two people, Ted Gilbertson and Michael Greives, who were both prominent members of the group. There are six meetings held per year and during 2013 there was a public exhibition held in the Yew Tree Hall which attracted over 400 people. The Society has met in Lorton for over 20 years and is happy to continue doing so though parking is a significant problem when meetings are held.
6. Lois Suckling from Lorton Gardening Club informed the meeting that they now had 80 members and had been in existence for 15 years. There is a monthly programme of meetings during the winter months and during the summer there are monthly visits to gardens in Cumbria and beyond. The annual coach trip will be visiting Tatton Park this year. Currently there are spring flowers in the village tubs and summer bedding will be planted out shortly. New members are always welcome.
7. Ian Aitken, from the Melbreak Communities Committee, explained that Penny Poole, the Co-ordinator of the group, sent her apologies and had asked him to speak to her report. Highlights of the last year include the Monthly 'Coffee and Cake' events at Yew Tree Hall which have raised more than £500 for local causes, including £200 given to LPC towards the cost of replacing the notice-board at Lorton village crossroads. The Emergency Plan, incorporating a telephone tree to enable people to be alerted quickly in the event of an emergency, is now being coordinated by Steve Irlam.

Leaflets containing useful information about what to do in emergency situations were distributed by members of the MC Steering Group to households throughout the Valley. In March, a guided walk at Whitbeck, supported by West Cumbria Rivers Trust, generated an encouraging level of interest among local residents and members of the farming community. A funding application submitted to Age UK West Cumbria in December was successful and the MC Steering Group is currently reviewing options for a project that will benefit older people in the valley. Finally, the Melbreak Communities' AGM will be held at Yew Tree Hall on Wednesday 11 June at 7.30pm and all are welcome.

The Chair thanked all the speakers for their presentation.

The Annual Parish Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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