

KENTMERE PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Kentmere Parish Meeting held on Monday, 7th November, 2011, in Kentmere Institute at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Iain Johnston (chairman), Jackie Bettess, Pete Bettess, Patricia Broomby, Simon Corfield, Clare Courtier, Robert Courtier, Hilary Fry, Kathie Fry, Christopher Gregory, Shirley Gregory, Steve Haywood, Tom Howarth (PCSO 5265 Cumbria Constabulary), Carol Lansberry, Peter Lansberry, Jack Pennell, Robert Ridley, Rosamund Ridley, Jim Stilling, Jackie Strickland, Jean Sturgis, Tim Sturgis, Andrew Williams, Anne Williams. (23 residents)

- 1. Apologies for absence** were received from Maureen Baldwin, Maggie Biden, Max Biden, Christine Booth, Mick Booth, Hazel Brownlow, Christine Cohen, Hannah Dickinson, Ivan Dickinson, Margaret Dickinson, Christine Haywood, Christine Hevey, Jan Hinchliffe, Richard Hinchliffe, Sandra Johnston, Eve Pennell, Steven Raven and Gay Talbot. (18 residents)
- 2. People of Kentmere** The chairman said that he was pleased to see Carol Lansberry at the meeting after she had broken her leg earlier in the year. The Lansberrys thanked the Parish Meeting for its good wishes for a speedy recovery at the previous meeting. The chairman was pleased to announce that Jan Booth would be getting married to Gary Mason on 14th July, 2012.
- 3. Minutes of Parish Meeting held on 8th August, 2011.** These had already been circulated and several residents had submitted corrections. A second unapproved version of the minutes had then been circulated. Copies were also available at this meeting. The chairman asked if there were any further corrections. None were forthcoming. Robert Courtier proposed that the minutes be approved and this was seconded by Robert Ridley and ***agreed by the meeting.***
- 4. Additional person in team.** The chairman wanted to add Christine Hevey to the team doing work for the Parish Meeting. He stated that she knows the valley very well and has lived here all her life. The adoption of Christine Hevey was proposed by Anne Williams and seconded by Shirley Gregory and ***the adoption of Christine Hevey was agreed by the meeting.***
- 5. Matters arising from the minutes.** The chairman stated that the pictures used to illustrate the slides of agenda items were from his collection of early photographs of Kentmere. (The chairman had the agenda and specific items as a slide show.)
- 6. Neighbourhood Watch.** PCSO 5265 Tom Haworth outlined the system for Neighbourhood Watch schemes in Cumbria. He said that the existing software is cumbersome but a new simpler system was being introduced. He said that it requires a fair amount of work from whoever takes on the rôle of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator. The system should send out email or text messages about incidents to participants. So for example they might be told that some farm equipment had been stolen from some location. The scheme has to be looked after by the membership, though the police can give guidance. The co-ordinator is free to co-opt other people or to form a committee if wished. Peter Lansberry asked if we could be given an idea of the volume of messages to be expected. Several agencies can send out messages, including Fire and Rescue. The chairman said that the messages received can be tailored to the community. Jack Pennell said that the scheme was intended principally for urban areas. An advantage is the possibility of discounts on some home insurance. Tom Haworth said that Neighbourhood Watch acts as a great deterrent to criminals, second only to a barking dog! Jack Pennell asked if we have to pay anything. Tom Haworth said that the only thing that the Parish would need to pay for are metal signs,

but these are optional. He added that we can take part in different kinds of 'Watch'. There are neighbourhood watches, farm watches and other varieties. Rosamund Ridley said that she had signed up for the Neighbourhood Watch and had received messages about, for example, some stolen slates. The chairman pointed out that a scheme like this could be of benefit to farmers, and it was a pity that Jackie Strickland was the only farmer present. The watch schemes can supply useful information. There was some discussion of thefts of heating oil in the area, which had occurred in Troutbeck and Longsleddale. The thefts from Scales some years ago were also mentioned. The chairman asked for a volunteer to take the scheme forward, but no volunteers were forthcoming. The chairman said that he would consult round the parish to try to find someone who would take on the rôle of co-ordinator. The meeting was reminded of the police number, **0845 33 00 247** and also that from 5th December there would be a number for non-emergencies: **101**. Rosamund Ridley said that she had had a number of messages from the Cumbria Community Message Service. Tom Howarth then gave an update on crime in the area. There been no crime since the meeting on 8th August. He had been visiting and talking to communities. There had been some anecdotal evidence of wild life crimes such as deer poaching and interference with badger setts. He asked residents to call the non-emergency telephone number if they see any untoward activity at night. Anyone carrying out legitimate lamping is supposed to notify the police who will log it. So the police should be able to check out any incidents. The chairman thanked Tom Haworth for his contribution. **Action: Any resident interested in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme to contact the chairman. Action: Any resident seeing suspicious activity should telephone the police.**

7. **Standing Orders and Constitution** The standing orders had been modified following the last meeting and circulated to residents. They seemed to have reached a satisfactory state. Hilary Fry proposed that they be adopted. This was seconded by Jim Stilling. **The meeting adopted the Standing Orders and Constitution unanimously.**
8. **Financial Regulations** These had been circulated to residents prior to the meeting. The chairman reminded the meeting that section 5 of the Financial Regulations had already been adopted by the Parish. Peter Lansberry remarked that the regulations were very short compared with those of large organisations. Jean Sturgis proposed that the Financial Regulations be adopted. This was seconded by Robert Ridley. **The meeting adopted the Financial Regulations unanimously.**
9. **Proposed Budget for 2012** This had been circulated to residents prior to the meeting. It was the first budget of the Kentmere Parish Meeting. The deputy chairman, Peter Lansberry, went through the budget. Because the expenditure is above a limit we have to pay the auditors. We need to pay the Kentmere Institute for the use of the hall because it is an independent charity. The total budget is for £1,900. If a Neighbourhood Watch scheme is started we may need to pay for metal signs. Peter Lansberry asked if there were any more items to go into the budget. Hilary Fry mentioned the costs of photocopying the historic minute book. The chairman said that this would only cost Kentmere a minimal amount which should not concern us. Tim asked if we could see the budget for last year at the same time as this year; also the actual expenditure against this last year's budget. Peter Lansberry said that this would be good practice, and he would hope to do it in future, but previously there had been no pre-planned budget. Jackie Bettess asked if the Upper Kent Local Area Partnership (UKLAP) would pay for snow clearance. The chairman said that they would not. The acceptance of the budget was proposed by Peter Lansberry and it was seconded by Tim Sturgis. **The meeting adopted the budget unanimously. The budget will go forward as a precept request.**
10. **Appointment of Auditor.** Peter Lansberry reported that for some years our auditors had been BDO. He added that we have to declare that we have been audited internally. **The meeting agreed that we should keep BDO as our auditors.**

11. Reports

- 11.1. *Highways including snow clearance – Chairman's introduction* The chairman stated that the Cumbria County Council (CCC) highways system is in a chaotic state. Amey's contract was being terminated by CCC (end of March 2012) and the work returned back 'in house', to the council. At the moment staff are having to re-apply for their posts. The chairman stated that we could apply for a small gritting machine through the UKLAP. It would only be small enough to fit on a quad bike. Robert had done a considerable amount of investigation into snow clearance and it had been concluded that we should stay with Stephen Raven's services. The chairman had thus returned to Steven Raven with a view to using him for snow clearance. However there will be a ceiling on the spending. Steven will take it upon himself to clear the road. **The chairman stated that any special requests or problems relating to snow clearance must go through the chairman and not directly to Steven.**
- 11.2. *Snow Clearance* Robert Courtier gave an oral report. He noted that residents might have seen in the Westmorland Gazette a piece about Troutbeck's snow clearance equipment. Troutbeck had gone their own way on snow clearance and had raised the necessary funds from a range of sources. Robert had investigated the prices of snow clearing equipment. The smallest snow blower would cost about £4,000. The larger snow ploughs and gritters cost £12,500, which was the order of costs that Troutbeck had incurred. Robert summarised the present state of the salt bins saga, which is a priority for Kentmere. Originally Kentmere had asked for 7 salt bins through the UKLAP. This request was cut back to 2 bins. After a struggle with the bureaucracy he managed to track down the responsible person in CCC. He was informed that 63 bins had been ordered for the South Lakes and that all the 7 requested had been earmarked for Kentmere. They were due to be delivered this week or next (i.e. by Friday, 18th November, 2011) The bins will be green in colour. The salt will be provided by a different contractor but he had been assured that the bins would be filled with salt. Jackie Strickland reported that salt had already been dumped beside her house for a salt bin which was not yet installed. Robert Courtier has sprayed markings on the road at the locations where the salt bins are to be placed. The programme of salt deliveries started two weeks ago and they will deliver salt until the end of November. Off the record he added that CCC seem overloaded and not very competent. (Post meeting note: Seven salt bins have been delivered and filled. Most are in the designated locations.)
- 11.3. *Road matters* Robert Courtier gave an oral report. He stated that unfortunately virtually nothing had been done on the roads by CCC. He explained that the CCC 'system' (for want of a better word) is that the region is divided into eleven areas, each of which has a week of work and then the programme starts again as a three month cycle. In the last programme in August, during the Kentmere week it rained almost the entire time, and so virtually nothing was done except a little side-drain cutting. The workers then moved elsewhere. He explained that the system which is called 'Better Highways' (sic) is reactive, not proactive. Although Robert has issued to CCC a long list of 'problem' areas, and thoroughly discussed this with the area engineer, he urged residents to write to complain if they had suffered any damage from the road or passing places. He thought that specific complaints, like suffering a puncture in a passing place, could be very helpful. Residents should write to 'Better Highways' CCC, Kendal. It is planned by the South Lakes Area of CCC to use the entire roads budget of £20million on repairing pot holes. This is mainly because problems caused by pot holes can lead to litigation by the people affected. Robert Courtier will continue to do what he can. Robert is currently investigating the flood under Pool Scar. He has traced people who know something about the drain. (Since the meeting Robert has issued a report to CCC.)

Jackie Strickland said that it had definitely got worse recently. Robert apologised for the lack of progress on this issue, but the chairman refused to accept the apology and remarked that Robert had been working very hard on these issues. Robert reported that the CCC should be re-organised by Spring 2012. Jackie Strickland also said that the road sweeper had been out this week, but had done very little. Gordon Strickland had cut back the hedge at Fell Foot. The chairman reported that Stan Simpson parish clerk of Staveley and Ings was pleased that we are interested in the road. The general view of the meeting was that the flood at Pool Scar was a result of a lack of maintenance. It was also felt that some of the ash trees in the verges should be removed. The meeting was asked if it supported the removal of trees in the verges in general. Andrew Williams commented that trees have caused problems in the past, and **the meeting agreed that where appropriate trees should be cut.** The meeting was informed that everything between the walls was the responsibility of CCC. Peter Lansberry asked what the white line painting machine had been doing in the valley recently, as there are few, if any white lines. The chairman remarked that there used to be a plough which was used by CCC to keep the verges clear, as otherwise these encroach on the road and reduce the effective width of tarmac, but its use appears to have been discontinued. The chairman also reported that Staveley had asked for the 30 mph speed limit signs to be moved up the valley to the Kentmere side of Fell Foot. **Action: Residents with concerns about road issues should write to 'Better Highways', CCC, Kendal.**

11.4. *Broadband* A report from Jackie Bettess had been circulated which she spoke to. The Broadband project is large and slow moving. The procurement process has now been delayed, because CCC are hoping to obtain funds from the European Rural Development Fund (ERDF). At the moment they are awaiting clarification of the position. She commented that most people in the valley have some sort of broadband, even if it is poor. It is unlikely that many people would wish to spend large sums of money to improve their broadband service. If we did a scheme for the entire valley this would almost certainly be very expensive and she did not feel that there is the will to pay for it. The chairman remarked that it was very frustrating that broadband speeds in Kendal were generally very good and those in Kentmere were very poor. He remarked that Staveley school used a broadband scheme based on four copper cables. Peter Lansberry remarked that the ERDF money was for business. He asked if people running a business, including farmers, could make a case for broadband. Jackie responded that the ERDF money was to put broadband within the reach of businesses, not to assist an individual business. It was remarked that farmers need broadband for various returns to government and were being pushed increasingly in that direction. Jackie Strickland said that some returns would have to be done electronically from April 2012. **Action for Jackie Bettess: to find out how businesses could feed-in to the broadband project.**

12. Planning Application: The chairman made available on the table a copy of the planning application for *Conversion of storage building into games room and store at Low Fold, Kentmere, Kendal, LA8 9JP.* LDNPA reference number: [7/2011/5435](#). The chairman displayed on old photograph of the location.

13. Jubilee Celebrations - 2012 The chairman had not received any suggestions from residents about this item. The chairman repeated his previous request for ideas on how Kentmere might celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012. The chairman suggested that we might plant trees. (Though not presumably ash trees on the valley road?) He said that at the Queen's Golden Jubilee the pound had been refurbished and a bench put in place. (Note from Clerk – according to David Starkey Queen Elizabeth is only the second British monarch ever to celebrate a Diamond Jubilee!) **Action (all residents): Ideas for Diamond Jubilee to chairman.**

14. Proposed Boundary Changes for Parliamentary Constituencies The chairman introduced this item and said that there would be changes to the wards in the electoral review of Cumbria. The ward that Kentmere is in 'Upper Kent' would be staying the same. It was proposed to reduce the number of MPs in Cumbria by one and to have roughly 75,000 voters in each constituency. The Boundary Commission proposal for the North-west was criticized by the meeting. One proposed constituency runs down the west coast of Cumbria and round in a loop to include Kentmere. The chairman felt that the proposals did not take account of the realities of travel in Cumbria and told an anecdote about a ministerial stretch limousine being stuck on Honister Pass because of a flock of sheep, by way of illustration. A counter proposal had been formulated by Max Biden and this had been circulated to residents who had requested a copy. (Copies are available on application to the clerk.) The chairman displayed the map of constituency boundaries on the screen. There was considerable interest in the topic in the meeting and in Max's suggestions. The meeting felt that they were a considerable improvement on the ideas of the Boundary Commission but that more work needed to be done. Jean Sturgis was in favour of Max's constituencies, but felt that the Eden valley, with which she had long standing connections, should not be divided up. She felt that the Eden valley ought to be in the Northern Rural constituency and that the Southern Rural constituency should be that of the Kent and the Lune valleys, and include Windermere, Kendal and Sedbergh. Both Jean's and Max's suggestions were designed to reflect the cultures of the two communities. Tim Sturgis pointed out that the NFU thought that two rural constituencies would be desirable in Cumbria. The chairman pointed out that individuals could make representations to the Boundary Commission and urged residents to take this opportunity. The meeting also decided that it would be desirable if the Kentmere Parish Meeting could take a view. ***It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged between the chairman, Max Biden and Jean Sturgis to see if they could arrive at a consensus which Kentmere could submit to the Boundary Commission.***
Action: Interested residents to submit their views to the Boundary Commission.

15. Any other business

15.1. *Septic Tanks* The concern that all residents might have to register septic tanks was apparently misplaced. The article in the Farmers Guardian on this topic had 'jumped the gun'.

15.2. *Fire Control Office movement* The fire control office is being moved to Winsford in Cheshire, which would be approximately 105 miles away from Kentmere. Concerns had been expressed by a number of organisations including the Fire Brigades Union. The chairman reported that Merseyside have voted against the move, which would make it less likely to take place. The FBU are campaigning against the move. The chairman suggested that residents might write as individuals if they had concerns. The general feeling of the meeting was that emergency vehicles go astray in Kentmere, due to lack of local knowledge. Peter Lansberry pointed out that postcodes are not sufficiently precise and of course there is no mobile phone coverage. It was felt that having the fire control office so far away, who would have less understanding of the geography of Kentmere would be a retrograde step. ***Action (residents who were concerned) to write and make their views known.***

15.3. *Television for Kentmere (TfK)* Jim Stilling reminded residents who had not paid that subscriptions to TfK were due. . ***Action (residents using TfK): Pay annual subscription, if not already paid.***

16. The meeting closed at 8.50 pm and many residents remained for teas, coffees, biscuits and a chat.

Date of next meeting: February, 2012: this will only take place if there are items to be dealt with, date to be announced, 7.30 pm, Kentmere Institute.