

Robert continues to act as coordinator for the Upper Kent LAP's initiative to establish a more effective system of reporting and monitoring of highway defects with Cumbria Highways South Lakeland Area 'Better Highways' group. Kentmere is not the only parish with highways issues!

Communications remain the principal problem, but in complete contrast, in terms of work carried out and planned, the position is surprisingly good. Much work has actually been done in Kentmere, and a modicum of communication has also been achieved as the result of Better Highways responding to the Parish Priority Request Schedule - the agreed means of communication. Progress made, and the responses of Better Highways to the next priorities, can all be seen on the current edition of the Schedule (issue 5) which can be viewed on the Kentmere Parish web-site. [Note: As it is a working document containing much information, the Schedule is best viewed via the enlargement buttons on the PDF screen – 150% to 200% is suggested.]

More remarkable, and perversely so in view of the lack of communications, is the fact that the whole length of Kentmere Road from Scroggs Bridge to St Cuthbert's Church (and maybe to Crag Quarter, also) is planned to receive 'surface dressing' and 'underlay' repairs this year. The 104 yellow markings, still just about visible even though they are a good month old now, are the sites of the proposed underlay repairs. A total of £40,000 has been budgeted for this work this year. If this work is done, and done properly, we should have very few problems for 10 years at least.

Regrettably, that is about as far as the good news goes, as further re-organisations, shortfalls in staff and voluntary redundancies appear to have paralysed the Better Highways staff. A good example is the work on the flooding problem at Pool Scar, where no work has taken place for three months. Every effort is being made to create a communication channel, but contacts with those Council Officers with closer links than we have to the Highways Department, such as our local Councillor, the Community Engagement Officer and the LAP Coordinator, together with the experiences of other parishes, give little hope of improvement in the immediate future – this situation will sorely test our faith in public services.

Robert Courtier  
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