

KENTMERE PARISH MEETING

Minutes of Kentmere Parish Meeting held on Wednesday, 23rd April, 2014, in Kentmere Institute at 7.30 p.m.

Preliminary: As before the chairman showed the Agenda and other information on a projector. As requested at an earlier parish meeting, a microphone and loudspeakers were in use to assist residents in hearing speakers.

Present: Iain Johnston (chairman), Jackie Bettess, Pete Bettess, Maureen Baldwin, Maggie Biden, Max Biden, Clara Black, Stan Collins (Councillor, SLDC & CCC), Simon Corfield, Clare Courtier, Robert Courtier, Kathie Fry, Jackie Green, Edward Harrison, Margaret Harrison, Sandra Johnston, Carol Lansberry, Peter Lansberry, Jim Sharp, Jean Sturgis, Tim Sturgis, Jim Stilling and Jackie Strickland. (23 residents)

- 1. Welcome** The chairman welcomed residents and councillor Stan Collins to the meeting.
- 2. Apologies for absence** were received from: Linda Bolton, Tim Bolton, Hazel Brownlow, Christine Cohen, Hilary Fry, Christopher Gregory, Shirley Gregory, Christina Haywood, Steve Haywood, Christine Hevey, Robert Ridley, Rosamund Ridley, Andrew Williams and Anne Williams. (14 residents).
- 3. Election of Parish Officers** A list of nominations and seconds had been circulated before the meeting and the details are available. The chairman explained the standing orders relating to the election of Parish Officers. (The normal term of office is not more than three years, but if there are no other nominations a term can be an absolute maximum of five years – Clerk). It was thought desirable not to change all officers at one annual meeting. The current clerk is not standing for re-election. The chairman asked the meeting if any more nominations were forthcoming. As there were no more nominations none of the posts were contested. The elections were as follows: *Parish Chairman* – Iain Johnston, *Vice Chairman* – Peter Lansberry, *Parish Clerk* – Jackie Green, *Support Officers* – Christine Hevey, Robert Courtier, Jackie Bettess and *Internal Auditor* – Jackie Strickland. These were all elected *en bloc*, as proposed by Max Biden. It was agreed that Jackie Green would replace Pete Bettess as a signatory for the bank along with Iain and Peter Lansberry. (All these Jackies is a prima facie case of pro-Jackie prejudice – Clerk)
- 4. Neighbourhood Policing Team** No PCSO was available to attend the meeting, but during the proceedings a PCSO entered the hall and left a written report entitled Community Engagement Report – Kentmere Annual Parish Meeting – Report Time Scale May 2013 to April 2014. There was no opportunity for questions. The report is available from the Parish Clerk and has been placed on the residents section of the [Kentmere Parish web site](#). The Key Crime section of the report reads:

“South Lakeland crimes are down by 5.6% - 200 less crimes, 390 incidents within Kentmere beat code, 19 of which related to Kentmere, resulting in two crimes.
5th Sept report of criminal damage to 2 locks and a gatepost
8th April report of fraudulent use of bank account

Six suspicious incidents brought to police attention mostly involving vehicles. One of which related to a large group of Muslim males at the bunkhouse/hostel checks were made but no offences identified.”
- 5.** The chairman then invited Maggie Biden to give a brief account of the incident at the “bunkhouse/hostel” mentioned above. She had been walking near the barracks in mid-February when she saw a large group of men of Asian-appearance who seemed to be in residence. Her concern was raised because their vehicles and clothing (some of Asian

tribal nature) did not suggest the sort of outdoor education activity one would expect. She then met a mountain biker who was very worried because he had seen some of the same group posing with a rifle and pistol and being photographed by the others. Although anxious about these goings-on, she managed to note some car number plates and the biker obtained photos of the group. On returning home, Maggie telephoned the police and was subsequently requested to make a statement at Kendal police station. It transpired that five separate reports about this group had been received and the police were treating the incident very seriously. They had been to both the barracks and the Blackburn-with-Darwin education authority and were following up information received. The chairman said that the parish should be aware of what has happened and advise the police via the 101 number if they notice anything untoward in the future. Simon Corfield asked how they had got past the locked Hartrigg gate. He was told that it was an official booking from Blackburn and as such they were given a key for access. (Note: after the meeting, Max and Maggie had received a telephone call from the police playing down the event and advising that they were now satisfied no suspicious activity had been involved. See email circulated which is given below as Appendix A)

6. **People of Kentmere** The chairman said that in 2013 we welcomed a new vicar for Kentmere (and Ings and Staveley), the Rev. Santhi Thompson. In this connection he remarked that no fewer than 26 people attended the new sunrise service in St. Cuthbert's at 6 am on Easter Sunday.
7. **Minutes of Parish Meeting held on Monday, 11th November, 2013.** These had already been circulated and corrections had been made. 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 Jean Sturgis and **agreed by the meeting**. Electronic versions of the minutes ([KPM20131111-M.pdf](#)) are also available from the clerk and on the web site: www.kentmere.org.
8. **Matters arising from the minutes.**
 - 8.1. **Community Governance Review** – The proposal to alter the parish boundary to include Boundary Beck, Millriggs, Croft Head and Ulthwaite Fold will be implemented in 2015. Clara Black said that she was still very much opposed to any change in the parish boundaries. There was a discussion. It was pointed out that changes in the parish boundaries might cause residents of additional properties to be disadvantaged because they could not access the Jopson fund. However it was pointed out that the terms of the fund may relate to the ecclesiastical parish boundaries, which are not going to be changed. The chairman pointed out that the original parish boundaries were taken from the ecclesiastical parish boundaries in the mid to late nineteenth century, and given changes in transport and roads they were no longer logical. This was contested by Clara Black. Jim Sharp asked if this boundary change had been enforced from above. The chairman stated that it had not. The majority of the residents living at the properties involved (Millriggs, Boundary Beck, Croft Head and Ulthwaite Fold) had written in favour of the change and no-one had written opposing it. Stan Collins explained that this was a programme of rationalisation instigated by the District Council. He gave some other examples of anomalies and said that they are essentially decided by local opinion. (There were no votes against the change when it was debated at a previous Kentmere Parish Meeting. [KPM20131111-M.pdf](#) – Clerk.)
9. **Annual Reports**
 - 8.1 **Finance** Peter Lansberry spoke to this. The accounts had previously been circulated to residents as KPM20140423-D1.pdf. The financial situation is now more comfortable. We have up with the costs of snow clearance, because of the December coffee morning and a mild winter. We are holding some funds for expenditure next year. Peter asked if there were any questions from those attending,

but none were forthcoming. The 2013/14 bill for snow ploughing had just come in and it was £910. Clara Black proposed that the accounts be accepted and Jackie Bettess seconded the proposal, which was passed by the meeting. Jim Sharp asked about the budget. The chairman said that the budget was prepared for the November meeting and after being approved was sent to the district auditor for vetting.

8.2 Broadband Jackie Bettess gave an oral report and said that progress on broadband is painfully slow. The *Connecting Cumbria* project team had been officially told that there would be no superfast broad band in Kentmere. It was hoped to supply a minimum of 2 Mega bits per second (Mbps) but when BT were asked how they would supply 2Mbps to Kentmere they had given no answer. In theory everybody should get 2Mbps by 2015. The chairman commented that speeds were at least ten times as fast in Kendal. *Mobile telephones.* Jackie Bettess reported that the mobile infill project which is partly government funded is in disarray. It has been subcontracted to some organisation who have subcontracted it again. Jim Sharp asked if we have contacted the B4RN project. Iain said that we have looked at the B4RN project. Jackie Bettess said that their experience was not directly applicable to Kentmere. Jim Sharp said that some of the places in the B4RN project were very remote, like Kentmere. The chairman said that the Kentmere Parish had written to the Prime Minister, but had been told that the letter had been passed to the Culture Secretary. Given the resignation of that minister, an early response is not expected. Peter Lansberry reported that he would shortly be attending a rural business meeting and rural broadband is likely to be a most important topic. He wished to influence discussion and would welcome information from farmers about problems. Jackie Strickland said that returns relating to farm payments, VAT and cattle movements were among the matters that had to be dealt with electronically. Max and Maggie Biden reported that their line speed had dropped to 90kbps (kbps is kilo bits per second). They reported that BT were supposed to be guaranteeing 250kbps, but every time they tinker with the lines things seem to get worse. Essential programs cannot be downloaded. Jackie said that they had had a representative from B4RN at a previous LAP meeting. It is a very large project and their experience is not directly applicable to Kentmere. Stan Collins commented on the nationwide broadband project. He said that all councils were unhappy with it. In effect half a billion pounds were being given to an ex-government monopoly, to suppress competition and increase its power. Stan went on to suggest laying a duct down the road which could then be rented out to telecoms companies. He said that once a duct was in place, inserting the fibre was cheap and fast. He said that this would introduce competition into the market. Stan also recounted his poor experience with BT Openreach. They give a poor service and it is getting poorer. Jackie Strickland asked what Hollingsworth and Vose do? Jackie Bettess replied that they have their own equipment in the Staveley telephone exchange. Apparently there is not a fibre connection to the factory. Stan seemed to think that he could obtain funding for ducting. He said that individual farms and houses could then be attached. He also commented that in his view Bowness was not rural.

8.3 Highways – Robert Courtier gave an oral report and notes were passed to the clerk which summarise the achievements of the past three years. These are shown in Appendix B. Other matters came up as follows:

8.3.1 **Errant vehicles** Despite the new signs at Hollingsworth and Vose at least one vehicle had gone past the factory entrance. Robert had spoken to one driver who thought that he needed to turn right at the factory. This was due to the sat-nav, and if not corrected he would have ended up at Calflay. The new Single Track Road signs are on order according to Cumbria Highways.

- 8.3.2 **Drain Cover** The drain cover on the bend near Ulthwaite bridge has been raised so that it is no longer a hazard to drive over, and drivers are encouraged to make use of the better road surface here (going south) so they stop coming round the corner in the middle of the road.
- 8.3.3 **Access for logging** Robert expressed concern about the planned access for logging which was proposed where there is a gate (with a tyre on it) on the left in a dip shortly after H & V's factory, going south. There would need to be a traffic management scheme and visibility is not good. A better access to the woods had been pointed out, but this had been rejected. The planning application was likely to get approval. (Post meeting note: It has been approved – see later in these minutes.)
- 8.3.4 **Leaning tree on valley road** In response to some concerns of residents, a leaning tree just before Ulthwaite Bridge has been raised with Cumbria Highways. It has been accepted as a 'Highway's tree' but their tree expert had reported that there is only a very small chance of it falling, so no action is to be taken. Robert has measured the clearance of the main low branch at 4.85 m which is less than the required 5.1 m. The tree has moved slightly over the last few years. It will be monitored.
- 8.3.5 **Cone on valley road** There is a collapsed drain at the location of the cone and it is planned by Cumbria Highways to repair this.
- 8.3.6 **Signs** It has been suggested by some residents that there should be a sign at Green Quarter telling drivers the direction of Hallow Bank because there is no indication at present. This sometimes leads to drivers bound for Hallow Bank, and in particular Brockstones, going up towards Maggs Howe. There was extensive discussion of suitable signs. Max felt that if there were a sign, a white line should also be painted across the top of Hellwell Lane, otherwise vehicles could turn down the lane by mistake. Clara pointed out that there were two short wooden signs for footpaths. It was felt that these were not helpful for vehicles. Several residents liked the idea of finger posts, similar to that at Cross Howe. Max Biden asked if the Highways Authority were responsible for signs. Robert Courtier said that it was difficult to get them to pay for signs. Jackie Green said that she did not want there to be too many signs. Robert will investigate possibilities further.
- 8.3.7 **Speed Indicating Device (SID)** It was reported that we had had good results from the SID placed in Staveley near the new 30 mph speed limit sign at Ravens Garth. Generally vehicles were not exceeding the speed limit of 30 mph. Stan Collins pointed out that he had provided the money for the device.
- 8.3.8 **Pool Scar** Tim Sturgis asked about a blue panel that had been left covering a gap in the wall after the work on the drain had been completed. He thought it looked ugly and if the wall were mended it could be removed. Robert pointed out that the wall had fallen down before the drain was mended and it would be necessary to deal with the landowner but he might not take action. Tim said if it were removed the farmer might repair the wall, to keep his stock in; a bedstead would be preferable to the blue panel. Robert will investigate the position further.

8.4 Kentmere Institute Christine Hevey had informed the chairman that there was nothing new to report concerning the Institute.

8.5 Upper Kent Local Area Partnership (LAP) This organisation is often mentioned at our Parish Meetings and the chairman explained its function. The Upper Kent Local

Area Partnership is made up of a set of local parishes (displayed on screen). It took a while before Kentmere took a significant role in UKLAP. As a result we missed out on some of the early funding but over the last three years a significant amount of money has been available through the LAP to fund locally identified needs. Here in Kentmere we have benefitted from the grit bins and the Institute had a grant towards external painting. Kentmere has been instrumental in driving forward other initiatives notably drawing attention, through Jackie Bettess and John Farmer (Longsledale), to the limitations of broadband and mobile phone reception in rural areas and the needs for improved highway maintenance. Robert Courtier along with Arthur Capstick (Staveley) has led a successful campaign to improve the management of highway maintenance across the LAP - a scheme which has subsequently been adopted by other LAPs across South Lakeland. The difficulty has always been to convince the Highways officer that we are trying to help rather than criticise. The chairman has just retired as Chairman of the Upper Kent LAP. This has been an interesting time learning and understanding the similar and different needs of other LAPs. The role of Chair has now been taken over by Mary Chapman of Skelsmergh and Scalthwaiterigg. But the LAP is going to have to change. It is assumed that local authority finance will be even more constrained in the future so it is vitally important that it is used wisely and effectively. There will be no more allocation of funding to the LAP but the LAP will be the body to identify needs of its area and put forward the case for funding. The LAP will become a very important and powerful tier of local government informing the authorities of needs much more accurately - along the same lines as those set up by Robert for Highways. It is also hinted that Cumbria might lose a tier of government so it will be even more important that the voices of the parishes should be heard. To this end it is increasingly important that parish needs and wishes are properly identified with sound evidence and that requires a good community plan. Again Kentmere lags behind some parishes in not having one of these. That, then is our target for this year - watch this space!

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Leaning Tree - Tim Sturgis asked if there was no way that we could get a local farmer to cut off the low branch of the tree, since everyone seemed to agree that this should be done. Could the L.A.P not find money to do this now, rather than for us to wait for the Council. In the long run this might be cheaper. Stan Collins said that he would look into it. Robert Courtier replied that he had explored this issue with Cumbria Highways and had received a reply specifically about felling the tree. They saw no need to fell the tree - because of the report by the tree expert. The problem is not the actual felling, but the conditions imposed for working close to the road, which would require a permit, and stopping the traffic.

9.2 Mobile Telephone Reception in houses - It had been mentioned at the previous meeting by Andrew Yeats that it was possible to get a 'magic box' to enable mobile 'phone reception in and around a house, by using the broadband connection. Jackie Bettess had a system working and she had circulated information to residents. Anyone needing more information or assistance should contact her.

9.3 Planning Applications

9.3.1 (CUM146) - Upgrade Works to existing public safety services telecommunications site CUM0146 - BROW TOP FARM, KENTMERE, KENDALL, CUMBRIA, LA8 9JL : NGR - 345726,504274 – An email with attachments had been sent to all Kentmere residents concerning this proposal. (This appears to be a prior consultation before an application for planning permission – Clerk.)

- 9.3.2 [Planning Application 7/2014/5085](#) , Proposed Road, for removal of trees. This was approved with conditions on 17 April 2014. One of the conditions is:

'Prior to the commencement of development, a Traffic Management Plan shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The works shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with approved details.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of highway safety.'

Post meeting note. Robert has informed the clerk that this was signed on the Thursday afternoon before Good Friday, under delegated powers, not as the result of a planning committee meeting.

9.4 .Television for Kentmere (TfK) Max Biden said that the TfK committee had circulated copies of the 2012 Accounts and Report to residents in December 2013. He would be grateful if those who had not yet paid the £30 contribution covering the two years 2013/2014 could do so as soon as possible - either to him or another committee member. There had been an incident with the aerial at Brockstones which extends coverage up the valley. It had been blown down, in the high winds during the winter, but very luckily it had not been damaged. The pole had fallen between two metal cabinets and the top of it had been stopped by a wire fence in such a way that the actual aerial did not hit the ground. It had been temporarily mended by Max with assistance from the Booths and Andrew Brass was going to effect a permanent repair.

9.5 DVD of life in Kentmere The chairman reported that a DVD had been made entitled "A Year in the Life of the Kentmere Valley". It was initiated as a farewell present to Rev. Geoff Watson, our out-going vicar. It had been made by Jim Bowness. He suggested that we might show it in the Kentmere Institute one evening, with coffee. Clara Black said that wine and cheese would be better. The feeling of the meeting was that this was a good idea.

9.6 Kentmere First Responders Jim Stilling reported that we currently have 9 qualified, active Community First Responders. More volunteers would always be welcome. We now have a single new pager on the Airwave system which gives good coverage in the valley. (This is in addition to the Vodaphone which do not always receive the signal.) Police, Fire and Ambulance services are all now using the Airwave system.

9.7 Staveley Coffee Morning The chairman drew residents attention to the W.I. Coffee Morning at Staveley Institute at 10 am on Saturday, 26th April, 2014.

9.8 Jigsaw Charity Auction Evening The chairman drew residents' attention to the Jigsaw, Cumbria Children's Hospice, *Charity Auction Evening* to be held at the Stonecross Manor Hotel, Milnthorpe Road, Kendal, on Wednesday, April 30th, 7 for 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm. Residents viewed the documents which were available on a side table. These included photographs of four by four vehicles using the Garburn Pass illegally. The clerk burst into tears at the thought of having no more minutes to take, but was consoled with a custard cream. Residents stayed for refreshments and a chat.

Appendix A

Email about activity at the Outdoor Centre sent to all Kentmere residents on 25th April, 2014 by Max and Maggie

Dear Residents

Those present at the Parish Meeting on Wednesday will be aware of concerns about suspicious activity observed at the Barracks in February by Maggie Biden. This involved a group of men of Asian appearance whose presence did not seem to relate to outdoor activities but whose conduct prompted a total of 5 different telephone calls to both the local police and the terrorist hotline. These reports were taken very seriously by the police, statements taken and the site visited. Their subsequent advice at the time was to keep matters in low profile but to watch for any further similar activity.

By convenient coincidence, the police have telephoned Maggie today with an update of the situation and to advise that they have now fully investigated and spoken with the group involved. As a result, they are satisfied that there were no suspicious circumstances or activities. The officer wished to assure us that we need not be concerned by any future visits by this group, particularly as a party of 6 to 10 are expected to be at the Barracks this coming weekend.

We are informed that the guns involved were an air rifle and archery equipment, archery apparently being a popular sport amongst the Asian community. The group enjoy coming to the Lakes regularly and like walking in the hills. So if you come across a group of men this weekend, some in the sort of traditional clothing and headdress seen on television reports from Afghanistan and Pakistan, there should be no need for concern - instead, ask if they have had a good day's walking and where have they been!

Regards

Max and Maggie Biden

Appendix B

List of highway activities in last three years

- Under LAP umbrella:-
- Obtained 7 grit bins
- Obtained funding for new signs
- Formed group to lobby Cumbria Highways

As a result of lobbying Cumbria Highways

- A new system of communications set up
- 104 patches of underlay repairs carried out on Kentmere Road between Scroggs Bridge and Crag Quarter
- Kentmere Road surface-dressed from Scroggs Bridge to the Church
- New deep drain constructed at Pool Scar
- Culvert repaired at Hallow Bank
- Stretches of repair to Hartrigg Road
- New advisory signage procured (but not yet erected), including assisting H&V to get a new direction sign
- Various emergency pothole filling and drainage improvements