

Langwathby Parish Council - Chairmans Report 2013/2014

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chairman of your Parish Council over the last year. I feel we have continued to make some significant improvements to village services, thanks to the hard work of many local people.

The Parish Council are thankful to William Mounsey for his dedication and hard work in his role as Chairman - which he held for four years.

As in all other years, the condition of our local roads has been paramount and we have an on-going dialogue with Cumbria County Council's Highway Services Team about numerous poor road surfaces. We have also worked together on a proposal to improve the junction of the U3063 and A686 at Edenhall - the proposal aims to improve visibility by removal of a section of hedge and rebuilding some retaining wall whilst also improving the approach angle to prevent the need for drivers to look over their shoulder. We expect these efforts to continue in the forthcoming year.

The Council has made comments on 14 planning applications during the year. Following the receipt of a draft outline planning application from Storey Homes for 45 dwellings adjacent Eden View/Salkeld Road, Langwathby, the Parish Council consulted all residents to canvas opinion on the merits of the application. The Parish Council received a good response to the consultation with a 50% return. 85% of respondents were strongly opposed to the development of this site. These findings were forwarded to both Eden District Council and Storey Homes. We expect to continue to represent the Parish's views and in addition we are to consider the development of a Neighbourhood Plan at our next meeting on Thursday 15 May. This new optional planning format was introduced through the Localism Act in 2011 and works alongside the district-wide statutory plan making process. Decisions on planning applications would be made only after taking the policies of both the district's local plan and any adopted neighbourhood plan into account.

"It is a unique opportunity for communities to decide how they want their landscape to look, what kind of houses they need, and how they want the community and parish to develop. It takes power from the centre, and gives it back to local people – who know and care so much for their own community and area." - Rory Stewart MP for Penrith and the Borders

If you feel you would like to contribute or have any skills/experience which would be helpful in the development of a neighbourhood plan then please let us know.

The Village Hall continues to be a well used facility contributing a great deal to the local community and the Council are thankful to its Committee Members for their continued hard work - Jennifer Baker, Keith Laker, Brian Thornton, Gordon Edgar, Mandy Truman, Dave Fuller and Margaret Pearson. Mandy Truman has a series of fundraising musical events planned for the summer/autumn. It is now six years since the Village Hall was refurbished and the Committee are now looking at a new five year plan to take the Village Hall forward. Two options have been discussed - Option A to demolish the existing building and rebuild to modern-day standards. Option B to maintain existing building and extensively upgrade it. The Committee would greatly welcome the views of residents and new members to support the Committee in the running of this valuable community building.

Thank you to all who help keep our villages looking attractive, whether it is looking after the recycling centre, the cemetery, the Memorial Garden, the village greens and seats, the sports ground or the bus shelters. Also, to those who give their time to organising the May Day and the many clubs and activities that are held for the benefit of the community. A lot of quiet work goes on behind the scenes and helps make the community of Langwathby and Edenhall what it is.

The Council have agreed to improve the cemetery frontage this year by removing existing trees and replanting.

The Council expect to continue to represent the Parish's views and invite residents' views and suggestions for village improvements.

Finance

The Parish "precept" (the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax) was set at £12,417 for 2013/14.

The following is a summary of the Council's accounts for the year to 31 March 2014 (previous year's figures in blue type):-

RECEIPTS	£	£
Precept	11,500	13,000
VAT recovered	634	273
Cemetery fees	900	700
Recycling credits	925	988
Other income	1670	150
Total Receipts	23,846	31,702

PAYMENTS	£	£
Insurance	1,020	1,032
Administration	2,968	2,750
Village maintenance	2,812	1,375
Grants made	900	900
Cemetery	211	51
Loan repayment	7,452	7,452
S.137	20	43
VAT	558	495
Total Payments	22,374	28,907

The balance carried forward at the yearend is £9,545.

We are grateful to Mrs Sandra Harrison for undertaking the internal audit of the Council's accounts. The external auditor is BDO LLP.

Parish Councillors 2013/14

Edenhall:

Mrs P Williams, Edenhall Country Hotel; Mr W. H. Benn, 1 The Courtyard; Mr I.S. Harrington, 20 Salkeld Road, Langwathby; Mr W.F. Mounsey, The Luham.

Langwathby:

Mr D.H.Banks (Chairman), The New Mill; Mr J.M.Holliday (District Councillor), Townhead Farm; Mr P.M.Jackson, Powley's Farm; Mr G.C.Little, Auchenbrae, Salkeld Road; Mrs C.Merrie, Caroline Cottage, Back Lane; Mr S.J. Peet, Keystones.

Parish Clerk:

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