

Langwathby Parish Council - Chairmans Report 2014/15

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 amenities and services, thanks to the hard work of many local people.

The Parish Council are thankful to Campbell Little for his dedication and hard work in his role as Councillor - which he held for over 20 years.

Also, our thanks to Michael Holliday who has retired from his position as District Councillor which he has held for 24 years.

The Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan was distributed to every household in the Parish over the weekend of 18/19th October to give everyone the opportunity to comment on the proposed plan. The plan is aimed at making the Community of Langwathby Parish more sustainable by managing the supply and type of housing to be built in the parish; encouraging more energy efficient building, protecting employment lands and the distinctive character of the area.

Comments have been received and consequential amendments to the draft NDP have been made and authorised by Langwathby Parish Council. In the next stage the plan will be sent to Eden District Council together with statements to show how the NDP complies with the regulations. It will be published for a further 6 weeks; after which time it will be Examined by an Independent person to make sure it does comply with the rules. It will then be the subject of a local referendum in which the electors of Langwathby Parish will say if this NDP should be made.

The Council have improved the cemetery frontage this year by felling existing trees and replanting with shrubs and trees. The Parish Council are very grateful to Sheila Ripper who designed the planting scheme and carried out the planting with help from myself and Edna. Dents and Jenkinsons have kindly donated a quantity of bark to enhance the landscape for which we are grateful.

The Parish Council have been concerned about the problem of irresponsible dog owners not picking up after their dogs in the parish and it is a problem that is raised most frequently at our Parish Meetings. The Parish Council and the children of Langwathby School joined together with Becky Duckworth, Senior Community Warden, Eden District Council, to tackle the problem; campaign posters designed by the school children have been displayed around the village to raise awareness. Eden District Council's Community Wardens have increased their surveillance and will issue fines to people who fail to pick up after their dogs.

In its budget the Parish Council committed £5500 to refurbish the tennis court in Langwathby and hope to achieve the rest of the cost of the works through grant money from the Cumbria County Council's Community Fund and Eden District Council's Community Fund. The project is to refurbish and resurface the single tennis court - this includes purchase and installation of tennis sockets, posts and net; supply and installation of kerb edging to retain the new surface; laying of tarmac surface; application of tennis court line markings and anti slip coating.

The Parish of Langwathby & Edenhall has a strong sense of community which is established through events such as its annual May Day celebrations and sports day. For many years the parish held an annual tennis competition which was open to all ages and was well supported but has unfortunately dispaned due to the poor condition of the tennis court. This annual competition will hopefully be started again - these are great community events that encourage people together whether tennis sport or spectating. It is intended that the tennis court will be used by the village school children for after school tennis coaching. The Parish Council aim to encourage healthy living through the provision of the tennis court refurbishment and access to exercise for young families and maturer residents (65+). It is anticipated that with investment and improvement participation levels will increase significantly for all age groups. The maintenance of this small facility is important in maintaining the vitality of the local community and sustaining access to recreational facilities in a sparse rural area.

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. The planned improvements to the junction of the U3063 and A686 at Edenhall have still

not been completed but we are continually pushing the County Council. The work should improve the approach angle to prevent the need for drivers to look over their shoulder.

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 - Charlotte Hope, Tracey Sweeney, Claire Burne, Jennifer Baker, Brian Thornton, Gordon Edgar, Mandy Truman, Dave Fuller and Margaret Pearson.

Our thanks also goes to the committee of the Memo who produce a magazine of high quality with invaluable local information distributed to every household in all eight parishes of the Benefice. Particular thanks to Bridget Davey and Kathleen Doidge-Harrison who are retiring after having been part of the committee since 2004.

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 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 £13,000 for 2014/15. The balance carried forward at the yearend is £9,668.

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 2015/167

Edenhall: I Harrington, B Benn and W Mounsey

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