

CULGAITH PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Report 2012/13

2012 will be remembered for the very wet summer but despite that people across the parish celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee with village events and a beacon lit on Cross Fell, one of many which could be seen across Cumbria. No sooner was that over and we were all enthralled with the London Olympics and Paralympics. It was also a busy year for the Parish Council and I would like to thank everyone who supported the development of the Community Led Plan.

*Jill Hay
Chairman, Culgaith Parish Council*

COMMUNITY LED PLAN

The Parish Council published its Community Led Plan in January 2013. A big thank you to all involved and to everyone who responded to the questionnaire in May 2012 and through the public forum meetings in the Autumn. The resulting Plan will help direct the Parish Council's activities over the next 4 years. Financial support and advice was received from Eden District Council and from ACTION with Communities. The main issues which emerged were the need for affordable housing, transport issues such as winter gritting, potholes and speeding, the need for continued support for the village halls, village greens, and Culgaith School. And not surprisingly poor Broadband speeds.

Work has already begun on some of the action points identified. The Council is working with Cumbria County Council to see if it would be possible to restrict HGVs travelling down The Pea in Culgaith. A wide range of potholes and flooding problems have been reported to the Highways Hotline. Feedback has been given about the kinds of activities people would like to see the Village halls used for in future. Consultation has begun on the future maintenance of Skirwith Village Green. The Ousby Oil Syndicate Scheme has been promoted through the village notice boards and website. The Council is working with Eden District Council and Rory Stewart M. P. on the affordable housing issue.

BROADBAND

In November 2012 Cumbria County Council announced that fast, affordable fibre broadband is set to become available to around 93 per cent of Cumbria homes and businesses by the end of 2015 under the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme - as a result of a multi-million pound project between Cumbria County Council and BT. Unfortunately it looks as if Culgaith Parish will be one of the six Cumbrian communities identified as 'hard to reach' areas and are unlikely to receive superfast broadband through the main Cumbria project. In support of a bid to DEFRA's Rural Community Broadband Fund the Parish Council organised a questionnaire to identify potential needs across the parish. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. We are still waiting to see if the bid was successful and the Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation and lobby the appropriate bodies in the coming months.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

To mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, a new bench was purchased for Blencarn Village Green. The Parish Council donated a total of £1,538 to local organisations. £200 was given to Culgaith Victoria Institute for new flooring for the disabled toilet, £408 to the Fellrunner, £220 to the Memo, £500 to Skirwith Village Hall for improvements to the kitchen and £200 to the Kirkland and Blencarn Recreation Rooms for general maintenance. A legacy of £300 was passed on to Skirwith Village Hall.

ROADS

The problem with water running down Station Road into the Culgaith level crossing has been sorted out with a new drain. It is hoped that flooding by Millrigg in Culgaith and at Broats Farm between Blencarn and Skirwith will be addressed in the coming year. Three of the traditional highways signs are to be repaired. Reporting of potholes has continued to be an on going process.

FOOTWAY LIGHTING

A response has been made to Eden District Council's in the light of the Review of Footway Lighting. One of the criteria for retaining a light is that it should illuminate a footpath which causes huge problems for many rural communities with no footpaths. In Blencarn the Parish Council has recommended that 2 out of the 4 lights are retained, at Skirwith 7 out of the 16 are retained and at Culgaith 20 out of the 25 lights are retained. An outcome is expected during the Summer.

FINANCE

The Parish "precept" (The Parish Council's share of the Council Tax) remained at £8000 for 2012/13. The balance carried forward at the end of the year was £6556. The accounts are audited externally by BDO.

The following is a summary of the Parish Council's accounts for the year to 31 March 2013 with the previous year's figures given as a comparison. The main difference which affected both income and expenditure in 2012/13 was the Community Led Plan. Grants were received from Eden District Council and ACTion for Communities totalling £800.

Income	2011/12	2012/13
Carried forward	6,410	6,818
Precept	8,000	8,000
Grants	1,753	800
VAT recovered	474	454
Other income	250	372
Total receipts	16,887	16,444

Expenditure	2011/12	2012/13
Administration	4,105	5,106
Village Greens	1,594	1,634
Play areas	152	135
Repairs	235	0
Bench	0	387
Donations	3,318	1,538
Election expenses	210	0
Community Led Plan	0	555
VAT	454	532
Total payments	10,068	9,889

PLANNING

During the year the Parish Council was consulted over 8 planning applications in Culgaith, 3 in Skirwith and 5 in Blencarn.

RECYCLING

The new Kerbside Bag and Box scheme was introduced in July 2012 which has meant glass, cans, paper and plastics are now collected from the doorstep of all 4 villages. This was one of the issues highlighted in the Community Led Plan. The Parish Council has successfully lobbied to have the Skirwith garden waste skip scheme reintroduced for the summer of 2013.

PARISH COUNCILLORS 2012/13

Culgaith

Jill Hay (Chairman), 1 Chestnut Close
Pam Jago, 17 Chestnut Close
Andy King, 1 Otters Holt
John Slann, Elm Tree House
Pauline Toppin, Glenmara

Skirwith

Laura Wilson, Skirwith Hall
Joe Ravetz, Gin Cottage

Blencarn and Kirkland

Marjorie Helm, Rigg End, Blencarn
Ken Philipson, Glebe Farm, Kirkland
Caroline Richardson (Vice Chairman), Smithy House, Blencarn

Parish Clerk from April 2013

Christine Callery, Beech House, Long Marton, CA16 6BJ
Tel: 017683 61886
Email: culgaithpc@btinternet.com

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

July 1st - Skirwith
September 2nd - Blencarn
November 4th - Culgaith
January 13th - Skirwith
March 3rd - Blencarn
May 12th (AGM) - Culgaith
April 29th 2014 Annual Parish Meeting – Blencarn

The meetings start at 7.30pm and members of the public are always welcome.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

More information on the work of the Parish Council including copies of the Minutes are available on the village website at www.culgaith.org.uk.