

Chairman's Report for Plumbland A. G. M.

7th May 2024

It's been 12 months since last year's AGM and yet again it's been interesting times for the Parish, Parishioners, Councillors and the Working Group.

We're now under new management regarding the County & Allerdale Councils; the original Cumbria was split last May to Cumberland Council and Westmorland & Furness Council.

High Close Proposed Quarry: has dominated the last year again with ongoing extensions for the revised Environment Statement etc.

The active Working Group are continuing to fight this resurrection on a number of fronts and with everything we can gather from our resources of committed and experienced personnel in the Group plus our solicitor Frank Orr.

During the past 7 years the threat of Thomas Armstrongs reopening the quarry at High Close has continued to hang over us and last year we all received a resubmission ROMP document regarding the planning application for the 'blue area' which was going to be followed by a new vehicular access. These were subsequently withdrawn in Sept 2023 after the Working Group & our Solicitor submitted a legal challenge advising the Council of the unlawfulness of the application and ironically the council agreed, therefore they could not determine this application.

Then earlier this year we were advised that another ROMP submission with another vehicular access will be forthcoming from the applicant for the reduced 'green area' within the confines of CA49.

Again, our Solicitor and Working Group submitted a five page letter on the 27th March 2024 to the County solicitor with the reasoning as to why the green area cannot also be quarried which is due to a legal challenge concerning the absence of a relevant planning permission at High Close.

Incidentally, the original county solicitor Mr Blinko has been replaced with Ms Emma Priest (who we are now dealing with) and we've also been advised that the Lead Planner Paul Haggin of the Minerals, Development dept etc has quit his job and moved to Scotland where he's self-employed working for Scottish government on appeals. enjoying cycling and playing his guitar..... Our contact now is back with Rachel Brophy.

Planning Casework Unit (Secretary of State) has been kept up to date with the Council's decision not to determine the initial application.

Additionally, several members of the Working Group (with the groups support) have been extremely proactive researching and continuously challenging Cumberland Councils Mineral Developments dept, escalating complaints due to their mishandling of information and last year communicated with the office of the Secretary of State (Michael Gove).

Clints Quarry: Ros Berry (Chairperson Blindcrake Parish Council) is on cloud nine after receiving the following correspondence recently from the lake District Planners: "We have just received the decision by the National Park on Clints Quarry. As we hoped, they have declined to determine the application for modern conditions. They seem to draw pretty heavily on the work done in the Parish. The applicant has 6 months to appeal from the end of the 16 week period - we assume they will. Battle won but probably not the war! Regards Ros.

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7th May 2024

Moota Quarry: we've been advised that Breedon's (current owners of Moota quarry) will shortly be applying for another 10 year extension to their previous planning application extension which expires in Dec 2024.

B5301: after a failed and amateur attempt to repair the road surface by a Cumberland Council contractor in August of last year on the stretch of road opposite Arkleby Hall and bull park corner, I reported the road surface defects again online to Cumberland Councils website (with photos) and to Amber Sykes (Highways Manager). I received a reply from Highways stating resurfacing repairs would be undertaken within 4-6 weeks.

And as you're probably aware, the resurfacing works were completed last week; Cumberland Council workers took two weeks to complete the job and they have done an adequate job which includes the painting of the white lines. The remaining damaged section from Ellen bank to Arkleby Mill bridge will be addressed shortly at a later date (so I was informed by one of the resurfacing supervisors). I'll chase this up with Amber Sykes along with Stoops Lane safety barriers.

Parish Newsletter: unfortunately, Rebecca Watson has stepped down from her position and I'd like to thank her for all her sterling work she's achieved to date. Craig Williamson has agreed to take over from her; Craig is also the editor for the Binsey Link.

Speed Indicating Devices (three): still in operation and hopefully reducing potential speeders.

Speed Camera visits Parsonby once a month on the B5301 and I'm advised he's still catching the speeding motorists.

Community Speed Watch: the speed indicating devices & police camera van is currently being backed-up with an active community speed watch group. As I've previously advised the councillors, we are now self-sufficient after purchasing our own refurbished Laser Pro III with a grant from Tallentire Windfarm Fund. It's in use on the B5301 with the small team of volunteers. Earlier this year it received its annual recalibration from the manufacturer in Surrey.

Light No.12 in Parsonby: LED 'Hybrid' type (Wind turbine plus Solar panel) is still operational in Parsonby.

Road Sweeping: vehicle is not on a routine visit timetable; we need to request its attendance via email to Cumberland Council or go online to their new website. I requested the attendance of a road sweeper initially through Allerdale website (yes, they're still in existence) and then latterly via Cumberland County online reporting system; road sweeper did eventually attend a few weeks ago and did a relatively good job within the Parish.

Grass Cutting: this year we have retained our grass cutting contractors (Mike Dowling Ltd). His team have started this season and hopefully there will be no mishaps like last year especially after as I've provided them with a map of the Parish which identified the grass cutting area plus the location of the wildflowers.

Litter picking / Parish Spring Clean: unfortunately, last year's village clean-up day was abandoned due to storm Betty unleashing her wrath on Cumbria (gusts of over 60mph). This year scheduled for the spring clean date is Saturday 1st June 2024. Looking forward to seeing you all.

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7th May 2024

Bus shelter: in the square has gone from strength to strength and is popular for plants swops, book exchange, donations of kindling, plants, potatoes etc. and the dazzling eye-catching gallery of pictures / drawings from the children at Plumland C of E Primary School.

Highways: A595 – Bothel's original crossroads junction has been upgraded to a staggered junction and was completed last year but I've yet to see a vehicle on the Torpenhow side waiting to join the A595!

Blocked drains and gullies: are constantly being reported on-line to Cumberland Council and the latest on the blocked drain at the junction of the road to Prospect from Arkleby (this is after I requested Jill Perry to become involved as I was getting no positive feedback from Highways)

- Jill, Thanks for your email. I have looked at the background information on this. Firstly, it's worth noting that we prioritise our drainage defects based on whether property or homes are being flooded as the first priority. This issue was first visited on the 16th of November 2023, when the team were able to get this gully running. But it's noted that the carrier pipe is partially blocked by roots. Following this it has been visited again, but any work we carry out to get it running is only a short term fix before it clogs up again. After speaking with Scott Armstrong, he is sending someone from the team to investigate this with a remote camera and measure up what is needed to repair this system permanently. Kind regards **Martyn Taylor**. Local Area Network Manager, Highways and Transport | Place Sustainable Growth and Transport Cumberland Council | Highways Depot
- My reply to Jill: can I just say that if Highways had kept me updated with their findings when I made my series of online requests over 6 months to have the drain unblocked, then I wouldn't have pestered them continuously!!

D-Day 80th Anniversary: we've also purchased two D-Day commemorative flags: 6' x 4' from parish funds; one for the school flagpole and the other for the village hall's flagpole. These will be flown a week before and several weeks after the 6th June 2024.

Kings Portrait: the accession of His Majesty The King marked a new chapter in our national story. A new Reign means new national symbols as the face on our stamps, coins and banknotes gradually changes from Queen Elizabeth II to King Charles III. Portraits of our past Monarchs also hang in public buildings across the United Kingdom. ... from local council offices right up to 10 Downing Street. They are a visible reminder of the institutions that tie our United Kingdom together.

To celebrate the new reign of His Majesty The King, the Cabinet Office announced a government funded voluntary scheme throughout the United Kingdom to allow public authorities to apply for a free framed portrait. We subsequently applied and have received the impressive portrait which can now be viewed in the Village Hall.

It's worth a mention that Cumbria Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) elections were held on 2 May and David Allen was the successful candidate. Not too sure what happened to the previous commissioner Peter McCall. Anyway, Mike Johnson was second.

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7th May 2024

Jill Perry: I'd personally like to thank Jill for her invaluable support & encouragement throughout this past year. Long may you continue to assist and represent this parish for years to come. Thank you.

The Future: so, what does the future hold us: good question. Naturally the Working Group will be persevering with pulling out all the stops to prevent the quarry from reopening at High Close.

Potholes: please continue to bombard Cumberland Councils website Highways – Road Maintenance with information on our parishes and county potholes. We all need to be reporting these road surface deficiencies otherwise they will not be addressed.

Additionally, I'd like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their ongoing support and contribution for the community throughout the last 12 months.

Finally, our Clerk (Trevor Gear) has been a tremendous pillar of support & understanding to not only me but the Parish Council as well throughout this past year; thank you Trevor and I sincerely hope you'll be with us for many years to come.

Thank you.

Tony Rutherford
Chairperson
Plumbland Parish Council.