

# NATLAND PARISH COUNCIL

## REPORT for the year ending 31 March 2018 and invitation to the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING on Thursday 10 May 2018 in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm

**Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting (APM)** The annual assembly is an opportunity for all parishioners and those interested in the welfare of the community to come and air their views about Natland. Natland Civil Parish has an adult population of about 810, all of whom have the right to submit motions for discussion at this meeting. These must be with the Clerk, Kevin Price (01539 821596 or [kevtherev7@hotmail.com](mailto:kevtherev7@hotmail.com) or home address – see notice board or website), seven clear days before the meeting, so that they can be publicised on the Parish Council's notice board outside Natland Post Office and Shop, and on the website. This year there is no single, obvious issue for the APM to focus on, but there are several matters of ongoing concern that electors may seek to influence through an APM resolution. You may find them in this report. Natland's County Councillor Brenda Gray, its three newly-elected (on 3 May) District Councillors and a member of Cumbria Police have been invited to speak and answer any questions.

**Invitation to Village Organisations** All village organisations within the Parish are invited to send representatives to the APM to give a brief report on their group's membership and activities during the year. Ten reported in 2017. There is always a section of the meeting allocated for this important exchange of information; please ensure your organisation is represented or send a written report.

### REPORT FOR THE YEAR

In the text CCC is Cumbria County Council, SLDC is South Lakeland District Council and "the Council" is Natland Parish Council.

The Council has held ten meetings, of which the County and District Councillor has attended four and the Police three (but sending written crime reports to eight). Council meetings are normally held on the final Monday of each month (excluding August and December) at 7.00pm in the Village Hall, to which all parishioners are cordially invited. The Council has a procedure for electors to raise matters in person at council meetings under 'public participation'; details are publicised on the notice board and website.

**Natland Post Office, Shop and Tea Room** At last year's APM James McCall-Harkness told us of his plans to maintain the post office service but reduce the shopping offer while creating a tea room to attract residents and passing cyclists/walkers. Extensive internal alterations were duly made during the Summer. Now we hope the Summer 2018 visitors will come. The Tea Room already hosts PCSO Marion (Maz) Jeffery's regular 'cuppa with a copper' drop-ins.

**Helm Common** Following the announcement at the 2017 APM that Henry Hornyold-Strickland would be putting it up for sale, there has been no real progress towards interested bodies coming together to influence the future management of the Common. The Council and Kendal Town Council are keeping in touch, however. The Helm is ungrazed and becoming wilder, the paths more eroded, but it is a valued and well-used amenity. The road was partly re-surfaced and re-opened after its lengthy post-Storm Desmond (December 2015) closure. The Council was disappointed when Brenda Gray stated she did not at present support the Council's request that the road be stopped up to through motor vehicles.

**Natland Community Website** *natlandnews.blogspot.com* continues to provide an excellent and nowadays vital service under the care of Elspeth Jayne with technical advice from Don Shore. You are all encouraged to visit the site and see what is available, which includes information about village institutions and organisations, forthcoming events and the Parish Directory. There is now a link to the “Natland Past and Present” group on Facebook, run by Nigel Heap and Steve Sharpe. The Council relies on the website to meet its legal obligation to publish its minutes, agenda papers and some other documents online.

**Volunteering** The Parish Plan 2014 vision of organised volunteering to benefit the fabric and appearance of the Parish has faded somewhat, although some public-spirited individuals still act when they see something that needs doing or when requested – such as repairing lorry collision damage around the picnic bench on the Green. There was a good turnout for the thirteenth annual Spring Litter Hunt, but the litter keeps on arriving. David Peters has a stock of bags, gloves, high visibility jackets and picking tongs if anyone wants to ‘have a go’.

**Defibrillator** Following Pam Mansfield’s announcement to the 2017 APM, a working group was formed, funds raised, and the defibrillator installed beside the village hall entrance in December. The Council made the actual purchase in order to recover the VAT.

**Highway matters** The main event was much-needed resurfacing work in June on Sedgwick Road, through ‘the narrows’ by Park Cottages, around the Green and onto Oxenholme Lane by the School. But the worst example was again ignored – Helm Lane from High House Farm to the Green. Elsewhere the problems of potholes and blocked or inadequate drains (in particular the east side of the Green and several sites along Natland Road and Sedgwick Road) still remain. They can be reported by the public on CCC’s much-improved website, along with other defects such as faulty street lights. For the less ‘tech savvy’ the ‘highways hotline’ 0300 303 2992 is still available.

SLDC’s light attached to Natland Abbey was replaced by a lighting column. Improvements in lighting technology are creating an interesting variety in the look (and colours) of the village’s footway lighting. The purchase of new batteries (shared with two other parish councils) enabled the SID (speed indicator device) to continue its appearances at two sites on Natland Road – thanks again to Guy Weller. After much chasing of Story Homes over the years – first to fill the gaps in the wall and then to remove the resulting rubble – the Dilly Bridges parking area is about to be cleared (late April); and the litter bin has been returned by SLDC.

The Council gratefully accepted Tony and Sandra Heap’s offer to provide and maintain a planter in front of the village name sign on Natland Road; it was installed in mid-April 2018.

**Canal Towpath Trail** The Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership (LCRP) project to improve access for cyclists and wheelchairs along the Lancaster to Kendal canal, starting at the (de-watered) Kendal end and progressing through Natland, has gone a bit quiet, presumably while grants are sought, designs and contracts drawn up, land agents appointed and land owners negotiated with. The Project Officer, Helen Moriarty, has been invited to give the APM an update.

**Planning and Development** The Council was consulted on 11 planning applications during the year (compared with eight in the previous year and 14 in 2015-16) and passed its comments to SLDC as the Local Planning Authority. Three were for significant housing developments, two of which had been flagged up in last year’s Report.

SLDC again refused Oakmere Homes’s application for up to 26 dwellings and an adjoining amenity area on land north of Natland Mill Beck Lane (partly in Kendal but accessed from the Lane) despite obtaining CCC’s approval of a revised layout of the Lane.

Closer to the village, Oakmere's application for 55 houses on land east of Long Meadow Lane was opposed by the Council, by the 2017 APM and by many residents. It was unanimously refused by SLDC's Planning Committee in June 2017. Oakmere then appealed that decision so the matter will be decided by a planning inspector at an eight-day public inquiry starting 19 June 2018.

An application for extra care residential development (80 apartments and 24 bungalows) on land allocated for housing in the Local Plan, south of Fell Close, Oxenholme, was held back following strong objections (including the Council's) to its proposals for surface water drainage and for connecting to A65 Burton Road. Re-submitted with alterations acceptable to CCC, the application was approved by SLDC in March 2018 despite a last-minute threat of legal challenge on behalf of supporters of the Long Meadow Lane application. This development will strengthen the reasoning for the 'green gap' separation of Natland from Oxenholme afforded by the land east of Long Meadow Lane.

Oakmere's 17-dwelling "Helm Gardens" development on land overlooking A65 Burton Road south of the filling station is nearing completion, with some houses already occupied. The southernmost seven dwellings are in Natland parish. The street will be named "Rochester Gardens" as suggested by the Council.

The Council received a payment of £657.10 as its share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) paid in respect of the extension of Hawes Bank. There will be further CIL payments for "Helm Gardens" in due course. Parish councils must spend CIL payments on infrastructure to meet the needs of new developments; the Council is minded to use it towards its top priority – a footway along Natland Road.

**North West Coast Connections** Nugen is currently undertaking a strategic review of the proposed nuclear power station at Moorside and as a result National Grid is "pausing" the NWCC project until the outcome of Nugen's review is known. So the major planning application that might include changes to the substation on Sedgwick Road is also on hold.

**Finances** The Council's accounts for 2017-18 are on the back of this report. The Council has raised its precept for 2018-19 from £9500 to £10000, partly to cover raising the Clerk's salary in the light of increased workload and responsibilities mostly coming from central government. Implementing the new General Data Protection Regulation in May 2018 is a cause of concern for smaller parish councils such as Natland. The Council's thanks go again to Marion Thornton who acts as the Council's independent internal auditor.

**Natland Parish Council and Clerk 2017-18** During the year councillors Joan Lind and Ian Ellison resigned and the Council failed to replace them by co-option, which left John Bateson, John Fisher, David Peters (Chair), Rhian Peters and Sarah Roberts.

The four-yearly parish elections will be on 3 May 2018, but it is already known there are only four nominations for the seven seats (the quorum is three), so their elections will be uncontested and the Council will be seeking three co-optees. Details of how to contact councillors are on the notice board, website and parish directory, or they can be contacted via the Clerk.

David Peters – Chair of Natland Parish Council – 16 April 2018

# NATLAND PARISH COUNCIL

## Interim Receipts and Payment Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2018

	£	£	£
<b>Balances at 01.04.17</b>			
Community (current) Account		745.39	
Business Bonus (deposit) Account		<u>3401.35</u>	4146.74
<b>Receipts</b>			
Precept - SLDC		9500.00	
Interest		2.44	
HMRC – VAT reclaimed		216.00	
K M Price – refund		2.02	
Donation		20.00	
SID – contribution from other parishes for batteries		62.88	
Defibrillator contributions		997.00	
Community Infrastructure Levy		<u>657.10</u>	<u>11457.44</u>
			<b><u>15604.18</u></b>
<b>Payments</b>			
Clerk's salary & PAYE (including holiday pay)		3924.46	
Street lighting		886.09	
Grass cutting		990.00	
Donations			
North West Air Ambulance	100.00		
Great North Air Ambulance	100.00		
Kendal Mountain Rescue Team	100.00		
St Mark's PCC - churchyard	500.00		
Village Green Christmas Tree	<u>66.00</u>	866.00	
Internal Auditor remuneration		50.00	
Insurance		688.89	
Subscriptions			
Cumbria Assn of Local Councils	218.28		
Society of Local Council Clerks	21.92		
Open Spaces Society (2)	90.00		
KADBUS	<u>10.00</u>	340.20	
Meetings		139.00	
Councillor training		150.00	
Clerk's expenses		281.95	
Clerk – use of office		216.00	
SID – batteries		94.32	
Defibrillator equipment		997.00	
Payroll administration		75.00	
VAT paid		<u>416.27</u>	10115.18
<b>Balances at 31.03.18</b>			
Community (current) Account		1785.21	
Business Bonus (deposit) Account		<u>3703.79</u>	<u>5489.00</u>
			<b><u>15604.18</u></b>

Kevin M. Price – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer