

NATLAND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING AND PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Thursday 9th April 2026 at 7:00pm in the Village Hall

The Annual Parish Meeting provides an opportunity for all residents of Natland and those interested in the welfare of the community to share their views about Natland. It also provides an opportunity for village institutions and groups to report their activities to the community.

Everyone has a right to submit a motion for discussion at this meeting. These must be with the Parish Clerk Kevin Price (kevtherev7@hotmail.com) seven clear days before the meeting, so that they can be publicised on the Parish Council's notice board outside the Village Hall and on the website. However, there will also be an open forum session at which any resident can raise any matter they wish to discuss.

Our Westmorland and Furness Councillors have been invited to speak or submit reports. All village organisations within the Parish are invited to send representatives to the meeting to give a brief report on their group's membership and activities during the year. There is always a section of the meeting allocated for this important exchange of information; please ensure your organisation is represented or sends a written report.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT FOR THE YEAR

Council meetings are normally held on the final Monday of each month (excluding August and December) at 7.00pm in the Village Hall. All residents are cordially invited, indeed have a legal right, to attend. The Council has a procedure for electors to raise matters in person at council meetings under 'public participation'.

This year Philip Ball retired from the Council. Philip as Vice Chair of the Council, brought great knowledge and experience as a Councillor. I am grateful to him for his advice and guidance to the council. On behalf of the Council and residents I should like to thank him for his contribution to the village.

Philip was replaced by Carol Catnach. Otherwise, the Council has been stable with Mike Clark, Mike Harkness, Stuart Ibbs, Jenny Kelly, Philip Wilson and Peter Smith continuing to volunteer as Councillors. And of course we have been guided and supported throughout the year by our ever-reliable Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, Kevin Price. As the Council year ends, Stuart Ibbs has resigned on moving away from the village. Stuart was a valuable member of the team and he will be sorely missed. So now as always there is [the opportunity for volunteers to join the Council](#).

As in previous years much of the Council's work this year has focussed on traffic issues. Councillor Mike Clark has led this work. His formal application for a 20mph speed limit through the village and extended speed limits on the A65, which he prepared for the

Council, was accepted by Westmorland and Furness Council and the new speed limits have at last been implemented. Siting of the council owned Speed [Indicator Device and](#) enforcement of the speed limits has been delayed on Highways advice, to allow drivers to become familiar with the new limits.

There remains the pressing issue of pedestrian safety on Natland Road and while crossing the A65 at Helm Lane, at Castlesteads View, and at Helmside Road. The Council will continue to press for these to be addressed. In this and other aspects of the Council's work, we have been grateful for the support and advice of our Westmorland and Furness Councillors, Jonathan Brook and Doug Rathbone.

School traffic and parking also remains an unresolved issue. This year has seen an increase in school traffic problems exacerbated by road works on Oxenholme Lane. We are grateful to the School for their attempts to control traffic flow during this trying period. The frustration caused by the road works may have led to examples of a few, very few, people driving over the edges of The Green. This is particularly noticeable opposite the exit from the car park by the Village Hall and along Helm Lane up from the junction with Robby Lea. Everyone is encouraged to treat The Green and all the grass areas in the village with the respect that such areas deserve. The flood at the edge of the Green by the Church has been a major frustration. Despite repeated requests over five months, the drain has not been cleared nor has any longer-term solution been agreed. [We asked W&F Councillor Rathbone to emphasize the considerable inconvenience of this](#) problem and to ask Highways to treat it as a priority. The water has not completely receded since before November, the road and pavement surfaces have deteriorated to the point where the pavement is dangerous. Repair of the road and pavement have also been requested. All residents are requested to report potholes and other road problems to Westmorland and Furness Highways through their website which is a relatively user-friendly process.

Turning to planning: W&F are preparing a new Land Allocations document. The process has started with a call for sites. This is where landowners can propose sites for development. [These are then assessed by W&F before being put out for consultation.](#) [We are expecting that to happen very soon.](#) This could be a challenging time for us all as several sites in Natland have been proposed which will be contentious. These include the field above Long Meadow Lane, the field behind Charnley Fold, the land at Watercrook, and of course the proposed Story Homes development between Natland Road and Burton Road. We do not as yet know which of these will be accepted by W&F and included in the next consultation. However, if you are affected by these proposals, I recommend that you familiarise yourself with the plan.

Natland is also affected by a Community Governance Review which, amongst other things, looks at the borders of the civil parish. The Parish Council saw no need for any changes. However, Kendal proposed to extend their boundary to include the Beeches and the proposed Story Homes development. This was rejected by the review as their

policy is to wait until a development is completed so that the new residents can be consulted. At the previous review about 5 years ago it had been agreed that Castlesteads View, and all of Fell Close and Rochester Gardens would be transferred to Kendal. However, this was not implemented. This now means that a fresh decision must be made. The Parish Council will request that a full consultation with the affected residents be undertaken by the review.

If you look at the Council's accounts on the back page, you will see that the Council holds a significant amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (this is a payment levied on developers to allow communities to make small improvements to the village infrastructure.) The Council has been retaining the bulk of this money with a view to improving Natland Road pedestrian safety. However, the Council welcomes suggestions from residents on how the money should be spent. This year we provided a grant to the school to help with the purchase of new play equipment which is available for its use by village children when the school is not in use.

The Canal Towpath through the parish is to be upgraded as an all weather accessible path. We will hear details of the project in a few minutes.

There is no doubting the importance of volunteering to benefit the fabric and appearance of the Parish and importantly the welfare of the residents. There are too many examples of residents volunteering to list them all but one voluntary activity the Council depends on is the Natland Community Website natlandnews.blogspot.com which continues to provide an excellent and nowadays vital service. Unfortunately, Parish Councils are now required to have a website which complies with government standards and we are therefore in the process of setting up a new stand-alone website.

I am fortunate to Chair a Council made up of hardworking, imaginative and committed volunteer councillors and on behalf of the whole village I should like to thank them for their voluntary service to the community.

Peter Smith – Chair of Natland Parish Council – 6 April 2026

NATLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Interim Receipts and Payment Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2026

	£	£	£
Balances at 01.04.25			
Community (current) Account		6058.03	
Business Bonus (deposit) Account		5982.25	
Restricted Funds (CIL)		<u>21159.30</u>	<u>33199.58</u>

Receipts

Precept – Westmorland & Furness		11000.00	
Interest		162.74	
CIL – Westmorland & Furness Council		7173.45	
		18336.19	<u>18336.19</u>

Payments1

Clerk's salary & PAYE (including holiday pay)		5510.79	
Grass cutting		2150.00	
Donations			
North West Air Ambulance	100.00		
Great North Air Ambulance	100.00		
Kendal Mountain Rescue Team	100.00		
South Lakes CAB	100.00		
Cumbria Foundation	100.00		
RBL Poppy Appeal	100.00		
Church – Natland – Grasscutting			
	600.00		
Christmas tree – Village Green	<u>70.00</u>		
St Mark's School – playground (from CIL)			
	5000.00	6270.00	
Internal Auditor remuneration	70.00		
Insurance	1000.99		
Maintenance	80.00		
Subscriptions			
Cumbria Assn of Local Councils	301.78		
Information Commissioner's Office	47.00		
Open Spaces Society	<u>45.00</u>	<u>405.30</u>	
Projects (work on trees)		685.00	
Meetings		127.26	
New website		425.00	
Clerk's expenses		293.13	
Clerk – use of office		312.00	
Payroll administration		100.00	
VAT paid		<u>101.00</u>	<u>17530.47</u>

St Mark's

Balances at 31.03.26

Community (current) Account		7560.31	
Business Bonus (deposit) Account		26444.99	
Total		<u>34005.30</u>	<u>34005.30</u>
(including restricted funds (CIL))		<u>(23332.75)</u>	

Kevin M. Price – Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer