

Know your Parish Council

Chairman	John Bull	Garshill Farmhouse,	Ravenstonedale
Vice Chairman	Caroline Morris	Manor House,	Ravenstonedale
Councillors	Janet Brownrigg	Lane Farm,	Newbiggin on Lune
	Paul Capstick	High Lane,	Newbiggin on Lune
	Fanny Jackson	Weasdale Farm,	Newbiggin on Lune
	Ernest Leach	Street, Fell End,	Ravenstonedale
	Hilary Mirrey	The Bield,	Ravenstonedale
Clerk to the Parish Council	Chris Elphick	Nether House,	Garsdale, Sedbergh Cumbria LA10 5NS

Phone 015396 20605
Email chriselphick@aol.com

Meetings

Normally held on the second Thursday each month except for August and December.

Alternate venues in Ravenstonedale and Newbiggin-on-Lune .

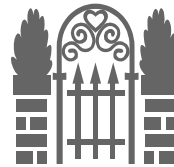
Members of the public and press are welcome to attend any meeting.

Public Participation

You are reminded that a period is set aside for members of the public to address the council at its meetings on matters of local interest or concern. It helps if those wishing to speak would notify the Clerk prior to the meeting.



Scandal Beck before the Bowling Green



Ravenstonedale Parish Council

Four Years in the life of Ravenstonedale Parish Council

May 3rd 2007 is the date set for the next Local Council Election for seven Parish Councillors and one Eden District Councillor.

What has your Parish Council been doing in the four years since its election in May 2003?

There have been forty normal council meetings as well as the Annual Parish Meetings plus Public Meetings to discuss particular items. Issues ranged from the instigation of a Public Inquiry to establish whether a public highway existed over Ravenstonedale Moor and, if so, what was its status, the provision of children's play areas and the future of Ravenstonedale High Chapel. Along the way your council also acquired Quality Parish status. Of the seventy-two parish councils & meetings in Eden District only Ravenstonedale and Orton have received this nationally recognised accolade.

Most councillors have attended one or more training courses which has helped them to appreciate what parish councils can do and promoted more informed decision making.

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QUALITY
PARISH
COUNCIL

Footpath Public Inquiry

In March 2003 there was an ongoing Public Inquiry into the status of public footpath no FP355011 which started at Sunbiggin Tarn in Orton Parish and finished at the parish boundary at Mereslack Gate on the edge of Ravenstonedale Moor. Cumbria County Council maintained that the footpath should have continued right across Ravenstonedale Moor although this had never been recorded on the Definitive Rights of Way map. The matter was further complicated by the insistence of the "Off-Road" groups that the route should be designated a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). In the event it was determined that, because at some time in the past someone had driven a horse and cart over the route, it must be kept open to wheeled vehicles. Local feelings were expressed at length and prompted one poetic response.

WHO WANTS A BOAT* ACROSS RISSENDEL MOOR?

Who wants a BOAT across Rissendel Moor?

Not us, say the locals, just what is it for? We've choices of roads from Newbiggin to Orton and no crying need for the distance to shorten.

The Inspector believes it is part of our past and so as a BOAT that the path should be classed and where long ago you saw horse, cart or sled people now have a right to drive motors instead.

It's only the past use that matters today and subsequent changes are ruled out of play -
You simply can't prove that a horse, sled or cart
NEVER went across your bit: you've lost at the start.

We don't want a BOAT, we can see where it leads;
there'll be vehicles everywhere if it succeeds.
There's not enough room in this England of ours
for the free space that's left to be ruined by cars.

The Parish Council has subsequently lobbied Parliament during the passage of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 which has the effect of modifying the rights of mechanically propelled vehicles on public rights of way. A new category of right of way has been created, known as a Restricted Byway This is between a footpath and a BOAT but without rights for mechanically propelled vehicles.

Appleby New Fair

The council has continued to monitor the activities of travellers attending Appleby New Fair. Members have attended information sessions and briefings at Appleby as well as having representatives of the New Fair Committee, Eden District Council Environmental Health Department and Cumbria Police attend its meetings. There is little positive action that can

improving the property, for which grants would be available, would be allowed against a notional rent of £2,000 per year.

Sources of funding for start-up costs are being investigated. The parish council will shortly be making a decision on whether this project is viable and desirable. The building is blessed with excellent acoustic qualities. Dick Barlow has been holding informal sessions for local musicians. If you play an instrument and would like to make music of any kind contact Dick on 015396 23601.

Possible Change of status to National Park or AONB

The proposed alteration of our area's status to be included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park has again been put on hold as the government rearranges its agencies.

The plans were being surveyed by the Countryside Agency. From 1st October 2006 the Countryside Agency has ceased to exist and its functions have been included within the remit of a new agency, Natural England.

There has been no communication, as yet, from the new agency.

Local Council Elections

Parish and District Council elections will take place on 3rd May 2007. Nomination Papers and relevant information for the Parish Council Election will be available from the Clerk to the Parish Council (contact

details on back page).

Nomination Papers for Eden District Council may be obtained from the Town Hall, Penrith.

Why should you become a councillor?

Parish or Town councils represent voters at parish level; they are our first, formal tier of local government. Parish or Town councillors are elected from people who live in those communities. Their work, as part of the council team, is about serving the interests of local people. A councillor's role is that of representative, listener and decision-taker. Councillors are usually unpaid.

Local councillors care about where they live and what goes on there. They use council meetings to listen to public opinion, to understand different points of view, to achieve reasonable solutions to problems and make decisions. Workload varies but all Parish and Town councils must sit at least four times per year; many meet more often. It is a satisfying and rewarding way to help your community.

All candidates for election must follow standard rules and be able to qualify against requirements set in law. For further information or an informal chat contact the clerk, Chris Elphick on 015396 20605. chrishelpick@aol.com or visit the CALC website calc.org.uk.

Despite long negotiations with Eden District Council officers agreeing a preferred site for a re-cycling facility this was blocked by Cumbria Highways . The only compromise to date is the fortnightly garden waste skip outside the school. Suggestions for a suitable re-cycling site would be welcomed.

Upper Eden Community Plan (UECP)

Your parish council has joined together with Kirkby Stephen Town Council and sixteen other parishes within the CA17 postcode to put together a cohesive plan for the future of our communities. It is felt that together our voice stands a greater chance of being heard in relation to district and county plans. Initially a survey form was distributed to every household in the area. The information gathered is being analysed both in relation to the overall area and to individual communities.

Studies are ongoing under the various headings of housing, employment, transport, health care, the environment etc.

Meetings of the committee have been addressed by senior members of Eden District Council's area planning teams and Cumbria Health Authority. The exchange of information and interaction has been very rewarding. The UECP has brought together a number of communities, many of which have similar problems and aspirations, as well as highlighting individual needs.

An overall action plan is due to be published shortly.

Village Shrubbery

The shrubbery had been suffering from neglect for some years. Following consultation with EDC's Conservation Officer, one or two trees were felled, which has increased the light and allowed the shrubs below to flourish. Thanks are due to the local volunteers who have kept the shrubs trimmed.

Ravenstonedale High Chapel

Following the closure of High Chapel



as a place of worship in April 2006 consideration was given to possible future uses for this Grade II listed building in the heart of the Ravenstonedale conservation area. It was suggested that it might make an ideal community and heritage centre. A crowded public meeting in November resulted in an advisory committee to look into the feasibility of the building becoming self-sufficient by generating income from suitable activities.

The North-West Synod of the United Reformed Church has now offered the Parish Council a twenty year lease with an initial two year period rent free. Thereafter, any money spent on

be taken by the council to alleviate the stresses that occur during the annual influx of visitors but awareness of the actions and policies of the other agencies helps our understanding of the problems which may arise.

Planning Applications

During the four-year period your council has considered the merits of more than one hundred planning applications in the parish and responded to consultations from Eden District Council.

Eden District Housing Policy

The council responded to the Eden District Housing Policy consultation document making recommendations on items which could particularly affect Ravenstonedale Parish.

Whinash Windfarm Inquiry

Ravenstonedale joined with Orton, Tebay and Shap parish councils to be represented at the Public Inquiry. The result was that the Whinash Windfarm planning application was refused as being too damaging to the environment.

Street Light

A new street light, paid for by the parish, was erected in Newbiggin-on-Lune after protracted negotiations regarding wayleaves.

BT Payphones

Representations to BT have resulted in the retention of the payphones at Fell End and Newbiggin-on-Lune which had been threatened with closure.

Quality Parish Status

Ravenstonedale continues as one of only two Quality Parishes in Eden District. Benefits to date may appear to be somewhat intangible but it is often noted at meetings with other bodies and definitely adds weight to opinions expressed. It has also been used to good effect when making applications for grant funding.

A further spin-off has been the publication of this quarterly newsletter (admittedly sometimes late due to pressure of work) whereby your council tries to keep you all informed of its activities and encourage your involvement in parish matters.

Parish Council Website

Details of council minutes, agendas, meetings, members details and current activities are now regularly updated on the website www.ravenstonedale.org

A685 Road Safety

The council continues to communicate, in conjunction with Orton and Tebay parish councils, with County Highways and the Police in the hope of reducing accidents and incidents on the section from Tebay to Ravenstonedale.

Neighbourhood Watch

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been set up with contacts in Ravenstonedale and Newbiggin-on-Lune.

Children's Play Areas

A need for safe children's play areas was identified by a parish survey carried out in 1982.

In June 2004 a public meeting resulted in the formation of a playground committee. The committee has, to date, raised well over £10,000 towards the cost of providing the facilities.

Fundraising events have involved a wide section of the community and include personal efforts and sponsorship, donations from local organisations and businesses, variety shows involving schoolchildren to pensioners, barn dances and barbecues. In addition to the local events we have received more than £22,000 in grant funding from outside bodies.

In Ravenstonedale, plans for the Scandal Beck site are developing. Following consultations with the schoolchildren and several other bodies a plan has been produced for the land surrounding the play area and tennis court. This includes the provision of a new wooden bridge across the beck opposite the school a trail round the whole site and a wildflower meadow. A copy of the plan has been given to the school.

Cllr Morris and the Clerk have attended a Funding Fair at Shap Memorial Hall. It was felt that useful contacts with potential funding bodies for these and other council projects have been established. As a direct result of this meeting, application for funding up to £10,000 has been made to the BBC's "Breathing Places" project involving Bill Oddie, Kate

Humble and Simon King. We have just received the news that Friends of the Lake District have made a grant of £10,000 which will enable the becksides wall to be rebuilt and bridge foundations to be installed. Construction and landscaping of the two sites will begin very shortly, as soon as weather permits.

St Oswald's Church

A s survey of gravestones in St Oswald's churchyard revealed that a number of memorials were potentially unsafe. The council paid to have these made safe. An annual grant assists with the cost of graveyard maintenance and grasscutting.



Newbiggin-on-Lune Public Hall

Annual grants from the council have helped with maintenance and improvements.

Cycleway

Plans are ongoing for the provision of a footpath/cycleway alongside the A685 from Ravenstonedale to Newbiggin-on-Lune. Some funding has been set aside to initiate this scheme. Watch this space!!

