

## Ennerdale and Kinniside Parish Council

### Chairman's report to the

### **Annual Parish Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

I would like welcome you to the Annual Parish meeting Ennerdale and Kinniside. My name is Ric Outhwaite, I became chair of the Parish Council in January of this year and I would like to offer a report for the previous year. Prior to becoming Chair, I was a serving councillor as I have been for a number of years.

I would like to mention two people who have resigned as councillors during the year firstly Liz Coverley who among her contributions edited the newsletter and secondly, I mention Sarah Sharpe who was the previous chair. We were joined by a new councillor Julian Thursz.

Local government reorganisation has meant we have lost our borough council representatives Steve Morgan and Gwyneth Everett who regularly attended meetings and contributed as and when they could. It is also to note that following his sad and early death county councillor Arthur Lamb will be missed at our meetings. Arthur was a regular attendee at meetings and was always willing to offer help and assistance when asked. Copeland Borough Council no longer exists, and we look forward to what might come from our relationship with the new Cumberland Council and our local councillor Linda Jones-Bulman.

The village had a successful celebration of the Queens jubilee (thanks to the work of councillors and residents) including the planting of a tree in what was Bridge Park which had been tidied by volunteer residents and councillors. It was with sadness that later in the year we were to mourn the Queens passing away, a book of remembrance was placed in the church.

Next month the village has the opportunity to celebrate the crowning of the new monarch, King Charles III.

I mentioned earlier the tidying of Bridge Park, this was just one of the tasks guided by the Village Enhancement Group that saw the placing of flower filled planters and new benches in the village and a general tidying up. Again, thanks are due to local residents and councillors.

Also, during the year, we saw the completion of the off-road path from the village to the lake and which has become known as the Jubilee way. This came about because of work led by the Parish Council with the Lake District National Park Authority and the landowners Forestry England and United Utilities and funding from the Rural Payments Agency. The trail now forms part of the recently designated Coast to Coast National Trail.

As I understand it the parish council had, in the past, financial reserves which over a number of years have been reduced by subsidising the annual budget and therefore reducing the contribution made through the rates paid by residents. The reserves are now reduced to an accepted level and so the council tax is no longer subsidised. There are no plans for any significant expenditure in the coming year, so the amount requested has been reduced, which you will have seen reflected in your annual council tax.

The parish is fortunate to currently have 2 defibrillators, one funded by the parish and located at the Shepherds Arms and the other located at The Gather. Given the ongoing work of residents and councillors it is intended to have a third defibrillator located at Croasdale, contributions from monies raised in memory of the late David Vickers are helping make this possible.

During the year the parish council have continued to comment on planning applications and planning policies to both the Lake District National Park Authority and Copeland Borough Council. In addition, we have continued to work with other partners such as Wild Ennerdale.

There are ongoing pieces of work that remain for the parish council to respond to; there is a review of internal policies such as standing orders, the re-erection of the viewing lectern on the track down off Cold Fell, to consider the future of the Winston Churchill Memorial bus shelter that the Council owns and to consider the future of the small areas of common land that the Council own. There is a need to be alert to any consultations that may come forward in respect of the introduction of wild animals in the valley, of particular note is the possible introduction of Beavers.

As well as the ongoing work there is a need to be aware of emerging tasks. There is the need to consider how best to take forward a review of the Community Led Plan. At a recent meeting of Wild Ennerdale, the partners agreed with parish council representatives, in principle, to the need for a visitor management and parking strategy for the wider parish. Separately parking within the village does at times present a challenge. All these matters require a big input to ensure that the voices of parish residents are heard and taken account of.

During the year resident's perception of the parish council will have been affected by some adverse publicity and the stories that caused it. This is regrettable but it is a matter of fact, and we must all try to do better, the parish council needs to be providing the standard of service that residents deserve. With this point in mind, I find it refreshing that 13 candidates came forward to contest for the 8 seats available on the parish council. I cannot remember a contested election for seats on the parish council. I hope that as many residents as possible exercise their right and vote on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May. (Don't forget people will need photo ID this year!)

Thank you for attending this Parish meeting. Any questions?