

NATLAND ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Draft Minutes of the meeting in Natland Village Hall

Wednesday May 23rd 2007 at 7.30 pm

1. The Chair, Cllr Peters, welcomed about 34 parishioners or other members of the public and introduced the invited speakers - Judith Derbyshire of the Cumbria Rural Housing Trust, County Councillor Alan Bobbett, District Councillor Brenda Gray and the Parish Councillors, who were all present.
Apologies were received from John Chandler, Enid Holmes, Alison Donnelly and Peter Barfoot.

2. The **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of May 3rd 2006** (*available in the Hall*) were taken as read. They were approved and signed.

3. **The Proposed Village Housing Needs Survey**

Judith Derbyshire explained the make-up of Cumbria Rural Housing Trust, an independent body funded by DEFRA and local Councils. Their aims were:

1. To survey housing needs;
2. To work with the community to enable affordable rural housing;
3. To lobby for a more flexible approach to affordable housing.

She hoped a questionnaire would be delivered to all households in the parish, preferably with an opportunity to explain its value to householders - a few were available in the Hall for perusal.

The meeting confirmed that July/August/September would be a good time for such a delivery. Publicity for the project should be on the web site, Cumbria Radio and possibly the Parish Magazine. Three weeks are allowed for the completion of the questionnaire. It was pointed out that the questionnaire was acceptable without an identifying name. Judith had distributed explanatory leaflets in the Hall.

It was left to the Parish council to decide whether to support and assist the survey.

4. **Natland Community Web Site**

Webmaster Don Shore ascertained how many in the Hall visited Natland.info regularly. He listed the regular contributors to the site and thanked those who provide information; the school is now sending weekly information and is the latest regular contributor. Future pages would include a report on Appletree and Flower Show information.

He asked all groups and societies to provide him with details of events with photographs; anything relevant to Natland was welcome. He e-mails about 100 members of the community with automatic updates and would like to increase that number.

5. **The Parish Council Annual Report 2006/07 (*available in the Hall*)**

This had been delivered to all households in the civil parish. The Chair spoke of more recent developments: an update on the Sedgwick Road footway (Nick Raymond, the County Highways Area Engineer, has offered to attend the June Meeting when the footway will be an Agenda item); some progress again with the Local Development Framework (LDF); there is concern about the future of the shop and Post Office; there will be Parish Council elections in 2008.

He spoke of the "volunteer spirit" in the village, litter picking and general attention to the upkeep of the village. He thanked the Clerk, who was resigning after the Parish Meeting - it was hoped that a new clerk would be appointed soon.

Carol Catnach asked if Natland is now a Local Service Centre. The Chair said that Natland is a potential LSC until the LDF is finalised, and that her concern, expressed at the 2006 Parish Meeting, had been discussed at the Parish Council Meeting of 26 June 2006 when the Council confirmed that it had sufficiently understood the meaning of the term "local service centre" to be able to respond to the consultation about the first part of the LDF. Cllr Parnham explained that by becoming a Local Service Centre we aim to secure continued community services (bus, school, etc) Cllr Outhwaite spoke of the Endmoor meeting she had attended that stressed that any future building developments in villages will not be on the edge of such settlements. Cllr Dickinson supported Cllr Outhwaite in this.

The Annual Report was received by the Meeting.

6. **Statement of the Parish Council's Accounts 2006/07**

These accounts, delivered to all households and available in the Hall, were received by the Meeting.

7. **Parish Council's Finances 2007/08**

The Chair explained that the continued underspend for the last two years had resulted in a precept of £5,500, the same as 2006/07. However, the planned budget would maintain the same provision for donations and expenditure on the Parish Plan, so he hoped the Council would find things worth spending the money on.

8. **County Councillor Alan Bobbett** spoke of his responsibilities within Cumbria County Council and of the County Council's plan for a single Council for Cumbria. There were pilot schemes for Community Boards in place, the nearest being Grange and Cartmel. He spoke of a saving of £22.2M and gave assurances that Parish Councils need not feel threatened.

9. **District Councillor Brenda Gray** spoke of the District Council's disappointment that there had been no co-operation with the County Council over the unitary authority bid. The consultation would continue until June 22nd and she encouraged members of the public to send off their views. Affordable housing, she said, was a priority, as is land for employment use. She also mentioned the new ward boundary changes which, at present, would link Natland with Oxenholme and South Kendal.

10. **Reports from Village Societies and Groups**

- a. The Indoor Bowling Club Mr Ridgway explained that the club restricts membership numbers to 60 who meet during the six winter months on Monday and Friday afternoons. For five years they have participated in the Burneside Bowling League and this year were 4th, with the team captain, Maureen Holmes, scoring the most points in the League. £400 from the Parish Council had helped establish the club in 2001.
- b. The Monday Club Margaret Cummins told the meeting that the club meets monthly on the third Monday of the month and caters for retired people, all of whom are young at heart. There are invited speakers followed by an hour of social conversation.
- c. Table Tennis David Ratcliffe reported on the success of the club which now has Premier Club status - one of only 64 in the United Kingdom. There are well qualified coaches for Juniors - the season is September to April. In August a "Try it out" evening encourages new members.
- d. St. Mark's Church Pam Mansfield outlined important future events, including the Garden Fete on June 16th and an outdoor Songs of Praise on the Village Green on June 17th. A new more versatile sound system has been installed in church; a memorial garden for the interment of cremated remains is to be established as the present dedicated area is almost full and church rules state that the present system cannot continue. A plot where ashes will be interred loose into the ground will be situated by the church door and there will be a memorial tablet on the wall of the church.
- e. St. Mark's School Di Outhwaite reported a school roll of 165, and the school will run seven classes again in 2007/08. She detailed changes of use for the Staff room - now a class room - and an expanded library. An outside area for the Reception class is planned. Sporting achievements have been outstanding this year.
- f. Craft Group Rosemary Usher spoke of the variety of crafts undertaken by this group of 22 who meet each Wednesday afternoon. New members are always welcome. There is a charge of £1 per session.
- g. Women's Institute Kirsten Canon spoke of a membership of 45, meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. During the summer, a weekly walk is organised on Mondays at 1.30 p.m. from the Village Green. The 2006 Apple Day raised £500. A Birthday Party for the Group's 85th birthday had seen many former members joining in a splendid celebration of the history of Natland W.I.
- h. Village Hall The Chairman, Ray Richardson, spoke of the popularity of the Hall as a letting venue. Constant fund raising ensured new facilities - grants received would provide new tables and chairs. The Committee was looking for new members, there were three vacancies at present.

- i. Pre-School A report from the Group's Manager, Jane Faulkner, was read by Carol Catnach, covering the year's events. The early introduction of the Early Years Foundation Stage topics had proved valuable. The installation of a new area of all weather safety flooring behind the Village Hall and the acquisition of a new specially designed computer had widened the children's horizons. Two visits had been made to Abbot Hall and one to Booths. Travis Perkins had donated timber for the new Castle and Simon and Carol Catnach had done some fund raising. This would be an exciting addition to the Pre-School equipment next term.
- j. Natland Guides The Clerk read a report from Joyce Watkinson, the Unit Guider. The Group is young and enthusiastic and had enjoyed visits to Kendal Climbing Wall and Ski Club, Waddow Hall for Medieval Mischief and indoor and outdoor camping trips. Most Guides attained their yearly challenge badge and five were awarded their Baden Powell Challenge Badge. Christmas brought the Brewery panto trip and chime bell ringing. The Group meets on Tuesdays in the Village Hall from 7.15 to 8.45 p.m.
- k. University of the Third Age (U3A) A report was read from their leader, Pat Macdougall, inviting people to join their group of 12 who play singles table tennis each Wednesday afternoon. She praised the excellent facilities they used.

11. **Any Other Business**

A query was raised about the use of Oxenholme Lane (which has a 6'6" width restriction) by heavy and wide vehicles. This runs from the Post Office to the A65. Traffic may use it for access to adjoining premises. Complaints are dealt with by the Police.

The Chair thanked people for attending and closed the meeting at 9.40 p.m.

(This version of draft minutes approved by Natland Parish Council 30 July 2007)