

BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
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Councillors (East Ward)

Mr K Blenkharn 015395-63877
Mr D B Clark 015395-63341
Mr W S Yates 015395-62384
Mr D Crayston 01535 62695

Councillors (West Ward)

Dr B C Meakin (Chair) 015395-65722
Mrs J M Knowles 015395-64457
Mr C H Noble 01524-762427
Mr R K Pickup 01524-761740
Mr P C Greifenberg 015395-63391

Clerk

Mr J R Scargill 01524-782811

Website

www.beethampc.co.uk

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Flooding and its consequences occupied much of our December 2018 Newsletter. It is a topic of particular concern to those parish residents seriously affected over the last couple of years, mainly in Beetham village. You will recall the advice we received to encourage the setting up of a local and parishioner-led Flood Resilience Forum and the reference to this in the Newsletter. Such action requires a leader – to provide impetus in both setting up and motivating the community - and we asked for volunteers. Sadly we have had no response whatever to this invitation. It is hoped that someone will step forward and get this project started in time to respond when the next flooding crisis arises - as it surely will.

After months, indeed years, of talk and red tape our defibrillator project for Beetham village seems to be in its final stages. The Stanley Street phone box has at last been signed over to us by BT and the defibrillator equipment ordered, funded by a community grant. Local First Responders are ready to swing into action. Of course, we all hope this will never be necessary and we all hope it will never be us who needs this life-saving service but, if it saves one life, it will all have been worth it. There is every reason to expect this service to be fully operational before the next Newsletter.

Plans have been revealed for a significant expansion of the Lakeland Wildlife Oasis at Hale and, also at Hale, recent resurfacing of the highway is much welcomed. Traffic congestion on the A6 at Beetham Hall has emerged as a problem when two funerals overlap and parking space at the crematorium is stretched. A meeting with Fishwicks has been arranged for the end of March to try to find a solution. Carr Bank Road continues to be reported as a black spot for speeding motorists but, at least, speeding along the Promenade at Sandside appears to have reduced by the new ‘smiley’ speed indicator equipment. In the same general area, traffic controls around the collapsing wall near Heron Brack on the B5282, have tested the patience of road users. The reason for repair delays is that, although the wall is owned by Dallam Tower Estate, it borders a public highway and Cumbria Highways insist on doing the work themselves to ensure the highest standards. This work should be completed by, or soon after, the end of March. Finally, on the question of roads, surface water flowing across Leighton Beck Road from neighbouring fields has long been a problem for road users, particularly in winter when it can, and does, freeze. Experts are currently in talks with nearby land-owners to try to trace, and divert, the source of the water. Active tree management in Sandside Cutting is now in process, organised and overseen by Cllr Bob Pickup. The parish Annual Assembly was held on 14 March at the Heron Theatre, Beetham, when Susannah Bleakley, CEO of Morecambe Bay Partnership, gave an interesting and informative presentation.

The Parish Council budget for 2019/20 has been lodged with SLDC and keeps the parish precept element of council tax at slightly below last year’s level. Parish elections will be held in May 2019, when most of your parish councillors will be standing for re-election. Even so, there are likely to be vacancies which will need to be filled so please consider how you may be able to get involved in this valuable and rewarding work. David Crayston is already making a very useful contribution and Peter Greifenberg of Storth has recently been appointed to fill the West Ward vacancy left by Ian Stewart’s tragic death in October last. His background suggests he will provide valuable input to Parish Council business.