

BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
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Councillors (East Ward)

Mr D B Clark 015395-63341
Mr D Crayston 015395-62695
Mr B Dean 07710-538257
Mr W S Yates 015395-62384

Councillors (West Ward)

Dr B C Meakin (Chair) 015395-65722
Mrs R M Dewar 07961 100044
Mr P Greifenberg 015395-64182
Mrs J M Knowles 015395 64457
Mr R K Pickup 01524-761740

Clerk

Mr J R Scargill 01524-782811

Website

www.beethampc.co.uk

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We have all been affected by the terrible coronavirus pandemic and its devastating consequences. Life has changed beyond all recognition and may remain so for many months to come. Thankfully Beetham parish seems to have escaped the worst incidence of cases but everyone's daily routine will have been hard-hit. The Parish Annual Assembly was first to suffer. A great deal of work by members to better publicise this event, in the hope of attracting more local interest (and higher attendance), all came to nought when the inevitable decision had to be taken to cancel the event. Next to suffer was the April parish council meeting. In the absence of a traditional face-to-face meeting members exchanged views via email so that urgent matters could be progressed, with minutes of decisions taken being published. However, this procedure was ruled not to comply with central government guidelines and has since been replaced by 'virtual' online meetings. Despite widespread unfamiliarity with the new procedure, members are to be commended on their determination to make this work and these virtual meetings have now become the norm. One disadvantage has been the absence of members of the public; although few took advantage of live PC meetings to express their views, they were always welcome. They can continue to do this by joining the new online meetings – please contact the Clerk for details of the procedure.

The Parish Council continues to work at resolving day-to-day issues to keep the parish an attractive place to live. As was done with the underused BT phone kiosk in Stanley Street, Beetham, the similarly underused Carr Bank Road BT phone kiosk has now been taken over by the Parish Council and a defibrillator purchased and installed. Thanks to Sue Cox (First Responders) for her determination and practical advice in bringing this about. The new convex mirror at the B5282/Storth Road junction has been repositioned to provide better sight lines. A new outdoor seat has been ordered to replace a badly damaged one on Sandside promenade and forewarning of possible flooding in that area is to be provided by an electronic signal on the approaches. However, the problem of inconsiderate recreational anglers along the promenade remains, with pedestrians at times being forced to walk in the road in order to bypass fishing tackle blocking the footway.

Further traffic problems are foreseen with the imminent and long-awaited repairs to Park Road, Milnthorpe. A restricted traffic system will cause further delays at the Milnthorpe traffic lights, with no easily-accessed alternative routes. Traffic on the A6 in Beetham will also be affected by a new 30mph restriction where it crosses the River Bela whilst serious repairs are carried out to the bridge. New ways of controlling traffic speeds in this area are also being looked at.

Signage is often a problem – either too little or too much. The attraction of Fairy Steps to the general public is one such example. The provision of an incorrect postcode in the Google Maps software has led to drivers seeking Fairy Steps from a location where there is no Public Right of Way, resulting in walkers seeking the delights of this very special place trying to gain unauthorised and unwelcome entry via private property. An additional problem is that many walkers wish to park their cars within reasonable distance of their objective, which highlights the notable absence of suitable parking spaces in the area. After extended discussion and considering all aspects of this problem the Parish Council is hoping to reach a compromise solution that will go some way to meeting this need.