

Chairmans Report

Lorton Annual Parish Meeting. 18th May 2011

- It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all here this evening, and to report on the activities of your Parish Council for the last year.
- We have had our regular Parish meetings every 2 months, and in addition have had a number of planning meetings, attended by councillors.
- This year the council has considered 13 planning applications.
- 11 of these have been granted.
- 1 has been withdrawn
- 1 remains with no decision as at 31st March.
- 1 Resident lodged an appeal against an Enforcement Order, and this appeal was rejected.

- The Parish Council continues to represent Lorton in a number of areas, sending representatives to the Cockermouth Flood Action Group, and participating in the Melbreak Communities.
- Recently three councillors attend a meeting at the Whinlatter Visitor Centre, to participate in discussions about the problems caused by the growing numbers of visitors and cyclists using the centre.
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- Perhaps the most memorable and significant event of this last year, was the opening of Lorton Low Bridge on the 27th of January. The intended date of completion was continually revised due to a range of difficulties, including the severe weather.
- The official opening was followed by the 'surprise visit' of Prince Charles, who is becoming a 'regular' at Swinside End Farm.
- Residents will have noted the erection of the Long Awaited Bus Shelter, which we hope the young people of Lorton are enjoying in the wet weather.
- The LDNPA again organised Parish Tours, giving councillors the opportunity to visit other Parishes and see what schemes and developments are under way. Your Chairman participated in a visit to Ullswater in September last year, and visited a successful local housing scheme, in Glenridding, participated in

discussions about management of the lake, including safety, the impact of tourism, and the impact on the environment. We also had the opportunity of looking at the restoration work that has been undertaken on the areas of the lake shore that were badly affected by flood damage in Nov.09.

- At last years Annual meeting, an outline plan had been suggested, for Loweswater and Lorton to hold a joint Parish Council meeting to explore the feasibility of joint meetings. Information from CALC advised us that any process of 'grouping councils together', changing the existing councils, can only be taken forward by Allerdale Borough Council, and electors would have to demonstrate that this is what they want.
- We did hold a joint meeting on July 15th, but this was in fact the two Parish Council's meeting, 'in Tandem' so although some may feel we have many issues in common, the situation remains as it is.
- The Melbreak Communities, however, does provide an overarching Steering Group, and with the dynamic leadership of the Co-ordinator, Penny Poole, representatives from the Parishes of Blind Bothel, Buttermere, Loweswater and Lorton, and others, continue to meet regularly. The Melbreak Website is ever expanding, and we hope will be a growing force in improving communication within the valley, take a look at the website if you have not done so already !
- The Highway Steward Scheme , providing a local response to many highways matters in our parish has recently been amended, but our Clerk, Carol, continues to regular report matters to the Highways, in an attempt to ensure that matters requiring immediate attention are dealt with. As we all know, the roads are subject to weather damage, and we remain concerned about the problems caused by pot holes and poor road surfaces in many areas. Not all problems are the responsibility of the Highways, so landowners in some areas have to take account of their share of the problems.
- I would like to thank all the councillors for their continued efforts, attending meetings and giving up their time to read documents, and to respond to issues.
- In particular, our thanks go to Carol, who continues to fulfil the role of Clerk, with enthusiasm and efficiency, taking calls from residents at all hours of the day.

