

*Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year from*

## The Yew Tree Hall. Garden and Wall. Bike Banner.

If you had been able to pop into this delightful haven, adjacent to the Yew Tree hall, you would have seen the Queens Jubilee rose in full flower. With such a wonderful spell of fine weather this summer, The Pound, and the Yew Tree Hall garden were well used, with children ( and adults) cooling off in the waters of Whitbeck.

However, traffic remains a constant problem throughout the village, with many drivers apparently unaware of the size of their vehicles. At some stage in recent months the stone wall to the left of the Yew Tree hall garden has been badly damaged and will now need repair. As no one has come forward to own up to this damage, the repair costs will fall on the Yew Tree Hall.

This is disappointing, the Hall committee have been working hard since the refurbishment of the kitchen and are now planning to replace some of the hall chairs that are no longer fit for purpose, so they could do without an additional expense that is actually someone else's responsibility.



Summer also saw for two days the Tour de Britain pass through our village. One day we were part of the time trial another just part of the day's route. As you can see Lorton went to great lengths to embrace the spirit of the event.

### Some early diary dates for your 2019 diary

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> January** Lorton Parish Council meeting see page 2

The Melbreak Communities will be holding a 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coffee Morning on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January** between 10am–12.30pm at the Yew Tree Hall, High Lorton Melbreak Communities comprises the parishes of Buttermere, Blind Bothel, Lorton, and Loweswater which developed a Community Plan that has since evolved to include Emergency Planning, monthly coffee mornings, Lorton school projects, Make and Mend workshops and many other activities.

Come along for a great cup of coffee and see what's going on in the valley.

Film night at Yew Tree Hall. **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January.** "Funny Cow"  
Doors open at 7pm film commences 7.30pm. Wine & soft drinks available.

## **"Delivering The Goods"**

So, starts Chapter 4 of "The Good Councillors Guide", an earnest handbook encouraging Parish Councils "to foster vibrant and flourishing communities to improve the quality of life for people living in their local area". And where does the money for that come from then? Well on each household's council tax is a precept which in total gives Lorton £5,500 a year. In recent times this has largely been spent on a range of maintenance tasks around the village, but a small reserve has also been built up that can now be used for Projects. If the scope for good works exceeds the modest amount available, then other sources of funding could also be available such as the United Utilities Legacy fund which is open for grant applications from villages such as ours affected by the new water infrastructure works.

The question now then is what do we as a community agree are the priorities for Projects? Suggestions heard so far in a non-representative trawl of opinion have included:

- Improved landscaping and signage to amenities at the entrances to the village
- Play equipment on the Parish field
- Supporting redecoration of Yew Tree Hall
- Installation of security cameras at strategic locations

No doubt not all suggestions will meet with universal approval and there are many more good suggestions out there just waiting to be put forward. Therefore, don't just run through your own thoughts in private but put thumb to keypad or quill to parchment and let us know them through email, letter or suggestion box at the shop or pub. If a consistent theme or a straightforward good idea comes in quickly, we can include it in the plan for the coming year, otherwise we can build up a list for consideration and further consultation to take forward into the future. Lorton is a great place to live but it can be improved further if we use our imagination and resources well.

*Julian Cruickshank, Lorton Parish Councillor*

### **Lorton Parish Council Contacts**

Cllr Chris Poate (chair)	Yew Tree View, High Lorton, CA13 9UJ.	01900 85265
Cllr Glenis Postlethwaite (V.Chair)	Armaside Farm, Lorton, CA13 9TL	01900 85616
Cllr Peter Deeks	Lime Tree Cottage, Low Lorton CA13 9UW	01900 85753
Cllr Steve Irlam	Beckside House, Low Lorton, CA13 9UW	01900 85336
Cllr Nick Young	Whinfell View, Low Lorton, CA13 9UW	01900 85058
Cllr Julian Cruickshank	Haresfield, High Lorton, CA13 9UL	01900 85725
Cllr Pam Jaques	Fairfield, High Lorton, CA13 9TX	01900 85051

Mike Milner (Parish Clerk) 54, Wentworth Park, Stainburn Workington. CA14 1XP  
01900 66040, 07709765005, email [lortonparishclerk@gmail.com](mailto:lortonparishclerk@gmail.com)

Parish Council meetings for 2019. Wednesday January 9<sup>th</sup>.

Wednesday March 6<sup>th</sup> plus Annual Parish Meeting, including local group reports.

Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> including parish council Annual General Meeting.

Wednesday July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Wednesday September 4<sup>th</sup>. Wednesday November 6<sup>th</sup>

All meetings in Yew Tree Hall and commence 7.30pm January 9<sup>th</sup>

The Warthog photograph in the last edition of our newsletter is to be found in Dover Meadow. Directions are: - head towards the River Cocker following the bridle way sign post at Cass How. He lurks at the bottom of the first field! No one identified the location.

## *Lorton Parish Council started in December 1894*

The Official Lorton Parish Council Minute Book , from December 4th 1894 to April 1st 1935, has recently been given to the parish council. The legal procedures to be followed, as to how a Parish Council meeting is to be organised is laid out, time and place of meetings. Amongst the obvious places one might expect a parish council to meet, ( vestry, school room perhaps) they could also meet at 'any portion of any public baths provided under the Baths and Washhouses Acts, when not required by others', but definitely prohibited from meeting in premises licensed for the selling of intoxicating liquor !

Beautifully hand written it makes for fascinating reading and surprisingly many of the issues facing us today, such as the state of the lanes and footpaths, the trimming of hedgerows, and who was liable for repairs on the roads, were being discuss right from the beginning of the formation of Parish Councils.

The first meeting took place on Dec 4th, 1894, at the Lorton General School, with the purpose of electing Parish Councillors.

There was considerable interest in undertaking this role, (unlike today ?) and 22 residents put themselves forward. A poll was demanded and the acting chairman, Mr. Clemitson duly made arguments for the proper authorities (the Rural District Council) to organise an election.

The following were elected, note the obvious involvement of the community, given the number of votes cast for each candidate. Mr. L Alexander 64. Mr. A .Dixon. 41. Wilkinson Jennings 47. Joseph Lennox 41  
William Mackereth 49. John Rudd 43. Thomas Strong 38. John Wilson 58.

As the Minute Book came into our possession this year, I was interested to see what role the Parish Council may have played, during the First World War. Those of you who were able to attend the Lorton Arts Festival held on 9th and 10th of November will have been able to enjoy reading the many interesting displays that had been put together by various residents.

With regard to the First World War, a Lorton District War Relief Committee was formed initially by the parish councillors. The Parish Council itself only met for the Annual General meeting each year for the duration of the War. Money was collected from many households, and at the end of the war, the balance of £20, was given to a war widow, Mrs. Walker, of Low Lorton.

A War Memorial Committee was set up in January 1919, and lively discussions took place at meetings, where the suggestions included the erection of a Marble monument in the church yard, a brass tablet in the church, the provision of electric lighting for the village, and a District `Nursing Association. In addition, some favoured the provision of a Lychgate into the Church yard, or the purchase of the Yew Tree Hall.

However, The Brass tablet in the church gained the majority of votes and can be seen in St Cuthbert's today.

Reflecting the 100th anniversary of the War, The Lorton Arts Festival was a very successful community event. The Hall was decked out with flags and bunting and creating an appropriate atmosphere. Apart from the films shown, the wonderful art work depicting aspects of the War, and the information provided on the displays boards, was much appreciated by all those attending. Personal stories affecting those who now live in the valley helped to commemorate this significant event in our history.

An amazing array of sandwiches ,cakes and scones was provided by residents, and the village tea enjoyed by all. It was truly a wonderful reflection of the commitment of the many volunteers who prepared and hosted the days and considerable positive feedback has been received by many who attended from the valley, and further afield.

If anyone has a particular interest in looking further into the Parish Minutes between 1894- 1935, please get in touch with me.

*Chris Poate . Chair.*

## Melbreak Communities hydro scheme

The drive to have a hydro scheme in the area stems back to the Melbreak Communities Action Plan formulated in 2010, one of our priorities in the plan was to develop local renewable energy projects owned by the community.

Consultation since then showed that one hundred per cent of local respondents supported the idea of exploring community energy schemes and 88 per cent supported hydro specifically.

The Melbreak Communities project group started off with a desktop study, which identified 10 potential sites on the largest water courses flowing down the sides of our valleys. They were then able to narrow the list down to three with the best potential, Mill Beck in Buttermere, Mosedale Beck in Loweswater and Whit Beck in Lorton. We have been in contact with all the land owners involved and are pleased to report that they were all supportive in general terms.

To see if any of them would be suitable for a community hydro scheme The Melbreak Communities, has obtained funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF) to carry out a feasibility study on the three sites, Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAFS) made the successful application for funding and will manage the contract for the feasibility study on behalf of the Melbreak Communities.

Teesdale Environmental Consulting Ltd has been appointed to carry out the feasibility study, after a competitive tendering process. The research will take about six months to complete and it will clarify whether any of the sites is suitable for a small-scale hydro scheme and how it can be delivered. RCEF is a £15 million programme, delivered by WRAP and jointly funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (DBEIS). It supports rural communities in England to develop renewable energy projects which provide economic and social benefits to the community.

*Steve Irlam, Councillor*

## Shaggy hedge story from Armaside Farm.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September this year I picked blackberries for jam and rosehips for my gin from our field hedgerows. I could also see there was a good supply of sloes and crab apples. On this same date farmers can start to trim their hedges under Condition 7a of DEFRA's Code of Good Agricultural Practice. Whilst I appreciate that some roadside hedges may need trimming to improve visibility, I cannot think of any other good reason to trim a hedge at this time of year.

Hedgerows do provide shelter for our farmed livestock but for me there is an even better reason to leave well alone and delay trimming. Wildlife finds a good source of food in hedgerows and even without leaves hedgerows create their own micro-climate keeping birds and other species warm during the cold winter.

Condition 7a tends to focus too much on landscape which really is for people's benefit whereas we focus on the local fauna and what gives it the best chance to survive the winter. Some hedges we leave, cutting only every two or three years. Over the past few years we have put a lot of effort into the shape of our hedges. We are starting to succeed in having hedges with wide bottoms and gently sloping sides and a narrow top; in profile they assume an 'A' shape. The 'A' shape offers the best opportunity for light to reach the lower leaves encouraging growth. Hedges cut in a square box profile tend to end up with little or no growth in the hedge bottom and provide no great benefit to anything not landscape, farm stock or wildlife.

There are other measures we take to maintain our hedgerows, but I hope in essence this explains why we still have shaggy hedges until at least after the New Year. I look forward to seeing the surviving birds nesting in the spring and watching the hedgerow harvest blossom. My rosehip gin is amazing and maybe next year I'll try a different hedgerow fruit.

*Glenis Postlethwaite, Councillor*