

Buttermere Parish Council, Minutes of the Buttermere Annual Parish Meeting immediately followed by the ordinary parish council meeting held on Tuesday 4th March 2025 in The Old School Room at 7.30pm.

The chairman declared the parish meeting open at 7.32pm

Present: H Fear Davies (chair), L Kyle, K Beard, A McGuire, G Medd, Y Kahane.

Cumberland Unitary Councillor. Not present.

Clerk: Mike Milner.

Apologies for absence: E Beard (BPC), J Perry Cumberland Cllr.

484.00 Apologies. As noted above.

485.00 The chair had circulated her annual report prior to the meeting and it was taken as read. No other organisation in attendance to make a report, chair closed the Parish meeting. (The Chair's report can be found after these minutes.)

Parish meeting closed at 7.34pm.

486.00 The chair declared the parish council meeting open at 7.34pm.

Cumberland Councillor. Not present.

487.00 Apologies for absence, E Beard (v-chair), J Perry Cumberland Councillor

488.00 Declaration of Interest. None.

489.00 To approve and accept the minutes of the last Buttermere parish council meeting held on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 as a true record.

489.01 Minutes were approved by councillors present and duly signed.

490.00 Public participation, no members of the public present.

491.00 Police Matters. As normal clerk had circulated the relevant police e newsletter, when he received it. Discussion about invitation to put forward two councillor's names to attend twice yearly virtual neighbourhood policing meetings with Cumbria Constabulary. Clerk to respond to CALC saying HFD and YK will participate.

492.00 Applications for development.

492.01 No applications to consider but clerk was aware that on following day LDNP Planning were to consider the Honister Zip Wire application, and on the website the planning officer's submission to committee was indicating the officer's approval. (Since the meeting planning department have advised Planning Committee supported the Planning Officer's report and approved the application)

493.00 Matters concerning Cumberland Councillor.

493.01 Chair advised that she had noted a Neighbourhood Police Platform was to be organised, held via Zoom meetings, she was happy to take part, Cllr YK also keen to participate and clerk advised he would attend and represent Buttermere, Lorton and Loweswater parishes as clerk.

493.03 part of Cllr JP's report covered the proposal for Cumberland to be fast tracked for Combined Authority Mayoral elections with Westmoorland and Furness in 2026.

493.04 Cumberland Council to bring all bin collection arrangements into line, not as present where bins were mixed with box and bag systems, all to be wheelie bins.

494.00 Crummock Water, UU Weir removal planning, latest position.

494.01 clerk had received confirmation that the planning application to cover the removal of the weir from Crummock Water would be presented to LDNP Planning department Mid-March 2025. No further information.

495.00 Resolve to update HSBC banking signature.

495.01 It was resolved that the HSBC Bank mandate document would be updated, three signatures, any two to sign, those elected were Chair HFD, vice chair EB and Cllr YK. Clerk to circulate an email to the three individuals asking the personal details requested by HSBC and then he would make the appropriate representation to the HSBC system to obtain authorisation.

496.00 LDNP, visitor management changes and National Trust Bluebell Parking arrangements for this season's Rannerdale visitors.

496.01 chair HFD advised that Head of Visitor Management at LDNP, Tony Watson, was leaving post at the end of March, moving to a similar position at North Yorks National Park. He was not to be directly replaced.

496.02 LDNP have assured all parties that cover provided under the schemes set up over the past few years will not be reduced. There was still to be a visit by police and NT personal to see the work undertaken on the ground in busy visitor areas. The summer circular bus route will be retained and Cllrs noted the morning one way bus from Cockermouth to Buttermere would also be retained. No late day journey in the opposite way, that was the same schedule as last year.

496.03 council to write directly to Police and Crime Commissioner, chair to draft.

496.04 meetings later in the week between LDNP and NT to discuss Public Space Protection order. This was to discuss wild camping issues in particular and the resources to organise such an embracing policy across the National Park.

496.05 confirmed that the public toilets in Buttermere were charging 50p and there was still a turnstile in the entrance for users to negotiate. Chair request clerk to ensure the toilet issue was retained as an agenda item for foreseeable future.

497.00 Buttermere "Emergency Plan."

497.01 this agenda item at chair's request. For Buttermere to adopt its own plan, considering the size of the community, would not be appropriate. Melbreak Communities had a community plan, with various safe havens in the event of a real emergency. Was the telephone tree communication system up to date? Many folk no longer on a landline. After discussion on what and where emergency items were available the conclusion was Buttermere people would volunteer to assist and community spirit would be a driving force.

498.00 Update on telecommunication issues, landline and mobile.

498.01 No real advance over the past few months. Fibrus still doing installation and only when they have finished could the no service areas be challenged.

498.02 clerk still awaiting promised further details of Burtness Wood South Mast, Buttermere, the proposed mast by Mitie on behalf of EE at that location.

499.00 Progress Reports, clerk.

- 499.01 Precept request duly submitted and acknowledged by Cumberland Council.
- 499.02 reported the tree at B5289 as mentioned by Cllr AM. E1/226732.
- 499.03 Thanked Croft House Café thanking for use of the premises for December meeting.
- 499.04 circulated the traffic regulations about order changes to yellow double lines in the parish, especially through Gatesgarth towards Honister Slate mine.
- 499.05 email received about road condition towards Lorton/Loweswater junction. Highways chased and on 13th Jan' saw Highways filling potholes in the area. E1/229803.
- 499.06 chair had put article in LINK magazine about Crummock Water current position.

500.00 Councillors Reports. NONE.

501.00 Correspondence.

- 501.01 circulated Peter Walter's North Area newsletters.
- 501.02 an Architectural Student at Loughborough Uni was doing a dissertation about National Parks and their status, chair kindly agreed to be interviewed.
- 501.03 concerns raised about the Litter Issue in the Lake District in News and Star. No worse than 10 years ago. Clerk on 5th Feb' emailed LDNP Head of Visitor Services and Peter Walter's with comments from chair and clerk report not factual.
- 501.04 email received from Melbreak Communities requesting £50 annual web hosting fee. An agreed charge.
- 501.05 an invoice received from Old School Room for 2024 room hire charge, total £120.
- 501.06 phone call then email from individual non-resident requesting to place a memorial seat on Buttermere Lake side. Clerk has referred the individual to the appropriate contact at NT, their decision not parish council's.
- 501.07 circulated the Cumberland Council waste bin email.

502.00 Payments for approval.

- Intpay139, M Milner, £128.80, salary Jan' £128.80. No expenses.
- Intpay140, HMRC, PAYE, £32.20 Jan'.
- Intpay141, M Milner, £128.80, Feb' salary £128.80 No expenses
- Intpay 142, HMRC PAYE, £32.20 February.
- Jan' & Feb's clerk's payments made to confirm with HMRC submission time limits
- Intpay 143, M Milner, £164.37, March salary £128.80 expenses £35.57
- Intpay 144, HMRC PAYE, £32.20 December.
- Intpay 145, Old School Room, £120.00 room hire 2024.
- Intpay 146, Melbreak Communities £50.00, Web Hosting 2025
- HSBC account charge £8.00 per month for Jan', Feb' and March. £24 total.
- All approved

503.00 Date and time of the next meeting. Tuesday 27th May 2025, 7.30pm, at Old School Room, Buttermere.

Meeting closed 20.23

BUTTERMERE PARISH COUNCIL – CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT
MARCH 2025

I start this annual report by recording the parish's loss in the passing of Raymond Beard last month. Raymond was a parish councillor for 40 years or so, and chairman for 19 of those, standing down as chair in May 2020. In that time there will have been many changes in the valley, and we are all grateful to him for steering the parish council through them. He will be missed not only by his family, but also by parish councillors and the wider community.

I am told that when Raymond first joined as a councillor, there was competition for the vacancy and an election was held – a marked contrast to the current situation in which we often struggle to find people willing to join us, due in part no doubt to our ever diminishing resident numbers and the large proportion of second homes and holiday lets in the parish. A report by Friends of the Lake District published last November recorded that 29.9% of residential properties in Buttermere are not used for permanent occupation (higher than other parishes in the Melbreak Communities area). This in turn has an impact on the parish council precept – although our costs are low because we do not own or maintain any facilities, we still have the operating costs of the parish council itself. Those are split across relatively few council-tax paying properties. This may be something which needs further thought in the next few years.

In terms of what the parish council does (and how we try and provide value for money), we have continued to work with the LDNPA to understand what steps are being taken to address the ever more challenging tourism issues, and to report problems as we see them here on the ground. One particularly notable incident from 2024 was the wild encampment on the shores of Buttermere lake which received national press coverage. Camping equipment and clothing was abandoned (costing the National Trust a large sum of money to clean-up), trees were chopped down, and there were various patches of scorched earth from fires. Sadly, this was not a one-off incident except perhaps in size. Unfortunately, not only did the Crown

Prosecution Service decline to bring charges, but this fact was also publicised, so any hopes that the reports that Cumbria Police were investigating might deter future behaviour of this type were dashed. We will be engaging with the Police and Crime Commissioner this year to express our concern about such an approach.

Challenges caused by the ever-growing number of visitors to the valley continue, and as I noted last year, are no longer isolated to the summer months. Gatesgarth has become a parking hot spot because of the promotion of the so-called 'infinity pools' nearby – we did have more support from parking enforcement officers this year (for which we are grateful), but there is only so much they can do. Throughout the valley there are parking issues, litter problems (including human excrement), scorched earth from fires, trees chopped down (usually pointlessly as they are too green to burn) and eroded verges due to the volume of traffic. Nevertheless, I will record, as I did last year, that we are also blessed by visits from many who care about the landscape as much as we do, respect it, and leave no trace.

Visitors of that nature will always be welcome.

The Lake District National Park Authority has a new Chief Executive – Gavin Capstick. Councillor Katherine Beard and I went to a 'meet and greet' event in November, and discussed Buttermere's challenges with him and Chair Tiffany Hunt. We are hoping he will visit the village himself this summer to see first-hand the issues.

The past year has been quiet in planning permission terms. We await a decision on the amended proposals for the Honister zip wire, which is going to the planning committee this week (we considered it at our meeting in March 2023 and objected to the proposals). The highly anticipated application in relation to Crummock Water has still not been submitted –

United Utilities has moved its own deadline several times, the current target apparently being mid-March.

Unfortunately, we have made no progress in establishing what is to be done to address broadband provision to those properties which are not included in the Fibrus installation, despite that installation causing considerable inconvenience to all, including temporarily severing the line serving several properties in December. Many residents (and councillors) have opted to use the StarLink service, which we understand is also now enabling a mobile phone signal in the village and up to Gatesgarth. The mobile signal has also notably improved around Rannerdale and Crummock lake shore, possibly as a result of a new installation at Fang's Brow although we have not had any official confirmation of this.

The vacancy for a councillor caused by the departure of John Temple was filled in May 2024 by Geoff Medd who we all welcomed to the council.

I will end, as last year, by thanking our Clerk, Mike Milner, for his work and guidance throughout the year, and by thanking all councillors for their efforts and good humour.

HARRIET FEAR DAVIES

2 March 2025