BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
ISSUE No 32 OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2017

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The SLDC/AONB Development Plan Document (DPD), referred to in our September newsletter has now been approved by Lancaster City Council and SLDC. The plan will now go forward to a planning inspector whose decision is expected in Jan/Feb 2018. Importantly, the two sites B79 and B116, discussed in detail at BPC's July meeting, are not being proposed for development in the current version of the plan.

Another important planning issue concerns the field known as the Sports Field at Beetham. This field has recently been purchased by a local resident with the stated object of safeguarding its future from development. The purchaser's intention is to offer the lower half of the field to the diocese at cost for use as a playing/sports field for Beetham School and to provide much needed extra space for a wider range of school-related activities in the long term. The top half of the field is to remain accessible for occasional use by the school. The prospect of an eventual pedestrian/cycle path from the top to the bottom of the entire field, as a safer alternative to Leighton Beck Road, now seems more realistic. These exciting plans are fully supported by the school and by the parish council.

The damage to the bus shelter on the south side of the B5282 at Carr Bank Road end, the result of a car accident on 2 October, proved fatal and the shelter's remains were removed shortly after for safety reasons. The intention is to replace the old shelter as soon as possible with a more modern and substantial equivalent. Permission from BPC's insurers to proceed is now awaited, with the cost expected to be borne by the third party's insurers.

As owners of Sandside Cutting, BPC is responsible for significant stretches of (mostly dry-stone) boundary walling. Although remarkably durable, such walls do eventually deteriorate and need to be repaired. These walls are often perched at the top of steep banking, with dislodged stones in danger of falling into the cutting below. Sections in need of repair have recently been identified and repair work will begin in the very near future, but the cost of this operation could be substantial. Local residents seem well pleased with the newly refurbished historically-important sign post at the Slackhead road junction – thanks to all who were involved with this restoration.

There is disappointment locally with Natural England's proposal to route its coastal path across the bay, from Arnside to Grange, using the railway as a 'ferry', thereby totally bypassing a number of parishes higher up the estuary, including Beetham. It is hoped that Natural England can be persuaded to reconsider this decision.

The year 2018 will be historically important in the UK for a number of reasons. One of these is that it marks the centenary of the end of hostilities in World War 1. The parish council is anxious that this anniversary is properly commemorated and not overlooked or minimised in the light of more current European events. Any parish group or organisation that has suggestions for how such commemoration might best be done, either individually or collectively, and whether independently of or in conjunction with the parish council, is asked to forward their ideas to the parish council, care of the Clerk.

JRS 17/12/17