BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER
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Street lamps owned by Beetham Parish Council featured prominently in the last Newsletter, in particular the thirty or so mounted on service company poles. It seems likely to remain a cause for concern as these companies proceed to identify poles which no longer meet their current operating standards and need to be removed or replaced. Where such poles carry lighting equipment, this equipment will need to be resited. If new poles are the only resiting option, then this would involve significant cost to the parish council – and, ultimately, parish residents, via the Council Tax. Unless these lamps are resited, the light they give will be lost. As previously reported, central government has been alerted to the serious cost implications and agreed to discuss the matter with the service companies involved but, as yet, no solution to the problem is in sight. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and hope an answer can be found before the next batch of defective or surplus poles is removed.

On a more encouraging note, a volunteer has been found to take the lead in setting up a community transport scheme in those parts of the parish not presently served by the Storth scheme. Volunteer drivers will, of course, be required and you are asked to consider offering your time and vehicle as part of this valuable service. Volunteer drivers for the Storth scheme find that they are more than adequately rewarded by the satisfaction of being able to help the many needy and interesting people they meet.

The parish council continues to be pro-active in local land matters. Despite its current financial difficulties, Cumbria County Council responded positively to our request to replace the badly damaged footbridge over Peasey and Stainton Becks, at Overthwaite, and recently completed work on an impressive new structure. Also the footpath through Burntbarrow Woods at Storth has now been granted full public right-of-way status, so preserving its availability for both residents and visitors. A recent tree survey of Sandside Cutting identified work needed to keep this parish asset at its best. The necessary work will be carried out over the coming months. Additionally, the parish council has agreed to take responsibility for some parish amenity work where it is not regarded as a priority by higher authorities. A schedule of such work, identifying sites, will be published shortly.

It has been agreed to proceed with a new format for the Annual Parish Assembly. Although no local groups have yet expressed interest in participating, invitations are to be sent to those which might find it a useful platform for their activities. Such groups may also find it helpful to be mentioned on the parish council's website, which is due to be refreshed to broaden its appeal. Please contact the Clerk in this connection. A suitable rock, for carrying the long-awaited Hale interpretation panel, has now been donated by Sandside Quarry and it is hoped this project will be finally be completed before the coming winter.

Beetham continues to be a relatively crime-free zone, but recent break-ins to inadequately secured outbuildings and the increasing prevalence of metal theft mean that residents should always be alert to this problem. The recent theft of a large amount of lead from the roof of Beetham Church, and the high cost of replacing it, brought this home to everyone.

JRS 05/09/13