

NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2009

UNDERSKIDDAW PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

All parish residents are cordially invited to the Annual Parish Meeting which is to be held at Millbeck Village Hall on Wednesday 22 April at 7.30. Kathie Murphy from the National Trust will speak about "The National Trust in Borrowdale and Millbeck". Geoff Brown will also be there to answer any questions you may have about the changeover in this area to Digital TV. The Chairman of the Council, Jim Wilson, will give his annual report, and there will be refreshments afterwards. The Minutes of the last meeting are with this Newsletter.

FOOTPATHS

The Council is pleased that some long-term nagging has suddenly borne fruit. There was disappointment that nothing was going to be done in the Parish following the long drawn consultations about the community travel plan. However some money was left over from another project, and this enabled the County Council to agree to our requests relating to the footpath near the bus stop at Applethwaite Lane End. The National Park also found some money and the Council is very grateful to Pete Barron for directing this to renovating the footpath from Applethwaite to Thrushwood, known as Stoneacre Lane.

HUTS AND HOUSES

Concerns have been expressed to the Council about a matter which they were already considering, namely the appearance of a hut with a chimney, toilet hut, smoke and washing, in a field near Crosthwaite Church, which is just within the parish boundary. Inquiry of the Planners reveal that they have no concerns about this, which they consider to be purely a farming operation, within the rules of permitted development for agricultural land. If you have any concerns or observations please contact the Clerk to discuss these.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

In the unlikely event of an emergency situation occurring, how prepared are we in The Parish of Underskiddaw?

Such an event could be the result of :- Flooding, Fire, Extreme weather, Failure of electricity supply, Failure of water supply, Failure of telephone services(including mobiles) chemical spillage, disease or Major incident e.g. Road accident, Aircraft accident or Landslide.

Services that we rely on from Keswick or Allerdale may be exhausted and we may have to fend for ourselves. We need to identify local risks and any vulnerable residents.

Do you know the neighbours close to where you live?

Do they have any mobility problems?

Do you know how to contact them?

If the houses close to you are holiday homes or lets do you know who the owner is and how to contact them ?

Do you have any skills that would be useful in an emergency?

e.g. Doctor, Nurse, Engineer, Farmer Builder, Plumber, Electrician, etc?

Do you have access to any useful equipment e.g. Chainsaw, Lifting gear, All terrain vehicle etc?

We are hoping to formulate a plan, with your help, and your willingness to be part of this community effort in the event of such a problem would be appreciated.

Please confirm your interest by contacting the parish clerk or any member of the Parish Council, preferably in writing so that we can know how to contact you.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

As no doubt you know the Planning Authority for this area is the National Park, whose development committee takes decisions on planning applications, which outside the National Park are taken at District Council level. Parish Councils do not have any decision making powers in relation to applications, but they do have a right to be consulted and express a view. Objections will only be valid if they are made on "relevant issues" – i.e. ones which raise a proper planning issue. These "material considerations" are not well defined, although there are many examples of individual things which are material, or are not. Even if material objections are raised, the Planners can still decide not to attach weight to them. Most planning decisions now are made by the planning officers, rather than by the Development Committee (to save time). If the Parish Council puts forward a material objection it is more likely that it will be referred to the Committee.

Since Parish Council have only a limited time to respond to consultations, and there may be no meeting within that timescale, we have been

advised that we should set up a planning committee to deal with planning matters in between meetings, if necessary. The procedure will be more streamlined, but the public will still be fully entitled to attend these committee meetings, and notice will be given of them in the same way as of normal meetings.

HIGHWAY STEWARDS

The Highways Steward system seems to be working very well, and all parish councils are hoping it will be continued. It is apparently expensive, but in the long run it should save money. But the long run seems to have little appeal for those who decide these things. Our Steward's next visit is imminent, and he has been asked to look particularly at the drainage problems downhill from Underscar, and the high hedge along the A591 near Applethwaite Lane end.

Parish Website address <www.underskiddaw.org.uk>