

NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2009

UNDERSKIDDAW PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on 22 April 2009. There was a rather disappointingly small attendance, but those who came were greatly interested in the two talks, one on the switchover to digital TV and the other on the National Trust in Borrowdale and Underskiddaw.

The Minutes of the Meeting, the Chairman's report to the Parish, and the Financial Statement are all included in the Annual Report which is available to all parish residents or interested parties. It will be accessible on the Parish Website, or a paper copy maybe obtained from the Clerk. The Council felt that it was wasteful to distribute paper copies to every household but will be very glad to make copies available to all who are interested to read it. Some copies will be left in the Village Hall.

OPEN DAY AT THE TOWERS

In her talk on the National Trust the Property Manager, Kathie Murphy, expressed a wish to have an open day at the Towers to hear what local people thought about the garden, in particular. An Open Day was arranged in June, at rather short notice, and was well attended by an interested group of people. The Trust is taking advice from specialist, and it is hoped more will be heard of the plans in due course.

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### PLANNING MATTERS

The story of the Hut at "Crosthwaite Meadow" has reached the end, at any rate of Chapter 1. The land itself has agricultural use, and this would include a smallholding type of activity. Since it was agricultural land, notice of any development on the land should have been given to the planning authority. First a tent and then a large hut appeared on the field. A number of people contacted the Parish Council about this, concern being expressed in particular that no specifically

farming activity appeared to be going on. The Council therefore wrote to the National Park to ask what was happening, and to question whether the use being made of the land was in fact domestic.

The Planning Officers appeared to be satisfied with the explanation they had received from the occupant, namely that the post box on the gate was to receive bills for agricultural supplies, that the Hut was required to store agricultural supplies, and that the stove in the Hut was necessary to keep the agricultural supplies warm and dry. However, since no prior notice had been given of the construction of the Hut the planners required a retrospective application to be made for planning consent to it. When the application was lodged this gave the Parish Council an opportunity to comment. By this time an unprecedented amount of interest had been shown, from inside and well beyond the boundaries of the parish. All of the comment made known to the Parish council was highly adverse, and this was reflected in the Council's response to the application.

Because a point of principle was involved – whether this kind of isolated development had an adverse effect on the landscape character of the area – and because of the number of objections, the case was considered by the Development Committee of the NPA, rather than by a planning officer under delegated powers.

The application was turned down and the Hut ordered to be removed. The reason for refusal was that the development infringed several of the National Park's landscape policies, and was out of keeping with its surroundings.

Chapter 2 may well be an Appeal, but the Council hopes that the grounds for the refusal are such as to make an Appeal rather difficult to mount. However, time will tell.

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EMERGENCY PLANNING

The last Newsletter contained an appeal to residents to let the Clerk or the Chairman know if you had any equipment or skills which would be useful in an emergency. There has been one extremely useful and comprehensive offer of both skills (including First Aid) and equipment and this would certainly be of great assistance in an emergency. We will keep a list so that such help could be called upon if necessary, so if anyone else has anything similar to offer please notify the Clerk.

PARISH WEBSITE

The parish website www.underskiddaw.org.uk is now fully launched on the Internet. At the moment it displays mainly the Council's official papers, details of Village Hall events and services at the Church Room. However it would be good to have ideas from people in the Community about other things that could be put there, and if you would like to suggest anything, please contact Jan Boniface, or the Clerk.

Parish Clerk Pauline Soulsby Coledale Edge Braithwaite CA12 5TN 78141

Email address pauline@hollytrees.fslife.co.uk

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