

WETHERAL PARISH COUNCIL BI-ANNUAL REPORT 2019-21



Wetheral Parish Council
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The Chairman's Report

This is the first ever bi-annual report, due to the sudden viral pandemic of COVID-19 in February 2019, which is still active. At the AGM on 8th May 2019, just one day after my retirement following 16 years as a City Councillor, I became Parish Council Chairman for the sixth time. I have served as a Parish Councillor since 1975.

Initially, Coronavirus caused multiple significant challenges, principally the day-to-day running of the Parish Council, with the Clerks having to work from home, projects being delayed or put on hold and regular Council meetings being disrupted. However, the Council has shown great ability to adapt to these difficult times, and while it is not quite yet business as usual, it is certainly much closer to it. Parish Council meetings are taking place virtually via Zoom, which the Councillors have all been able to master, and the Clerks have returned to the office for most of their working week.

Members of the public are welcome to attend virtual meetings. The login details can be obtained by contacting the Clerk, and questions or comments should be received at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Agendas and minutes are available on the Parish Council's website.

Despite the pandemic, several projects have taken place, notably the building of a new pavilion on the Hartley Trust Playing Field, Scotby, which is now almost complete and should be open in late Spring. The Wetheral Playing Field is to have a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), subject to planning permission, which will be financed by Section 106 money from the Priory Grange development. The Parish Council has secured grant funding for improving the pond area at The Strand in Aglionby. So far, the area has been weeded and cleared of Himalayan Balsam and the pond has been cleared of vegetation. Some tree work has been carried out to improve light. The area will be replanted with pollenating and fruit-bearing plants to help attract birds, bees and insects, and paths will be laid to make a pleasant communal area.

The Parish Council's Planning Committee scrutinises all Ward planning applications submitted to the City Council, as well as applications for tree work in Conservation Areas and trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on them. Over the last two years we have had multiple applications for gypsy pitches off Broomfallen Road, Scotby, which, though objected to by the Parish Council and refused by the City Council Development Control, have been approved by the Government Planning Inspectorate.

Another contentious application was for some 90 properties at "Rookery Close", made by Gladman. This was rejected by the Parish Council and refused by the City Council, with around 750 objections from the local community. Gladman re-applied and were again refused, with a similar number of objections, and refusals once again from both the Parish and City Councils. At the time of writing, Gladman have submitted an appeal to the Secretary of State.

I wish to express my gratitude to Sue and Lynsey, my two Clerks, and Mick, the Cemetery Groundsman. I would also like to thank the committee Chairmen, namely Councillor Pattinson - finance, Councillor Evans - Rights of Way, Councillor Hughes - Cemetery, and Councillor Oliver, my Vice Chair, as well as all my fellow Councillors who dedicate their time and commitment to the Parish.

Councillor Barry Ogilvie Earp
Chairman, Wetheral Parish Council

Current members of the Parish Council (May 2021)

Warwick on Eden & Aglionby Ward (3)

Hazel Hughes 01228 561687

Vacant

Vacant

Great Corby Ward (3)

Barry Earp 01228 810010

Julia Dobson 07879 462228

Ivor Evans 01228 562778

Wetheral Ward (3)

David Pattinson 01228 561571

Stephen Higgs 01228 560815

Caroline Oliver 07811 216286

Scotby Ward (2)

Mark Somers 07814476327

Dave Hughes 07903 864780

Cumwhinton & Cotehill Ward (3)

Mike Higginbotham 01228 560266

Geoff Round 01228 560336

Sara Mossop 01228 561687

Durranhill Ward (1)

Vacant

Councillor Vacancies

If you live or work in the Parish, you could stand as a Parish Councillor. It is not a requirement to live in the ward you represent, but Councillors must live within a 3-mile radius of the Wetheral Parish boundary.

If you would like more information about the role of a Parish Councillor or would be interested in applying, please contact the Clerk on clerk@wetheralparishcouncil.org.uk / 01228 561687.



Multi-Use Games Area, Wetheral

A MUGA is due to be installed on Wetheral Playing Fields in 2021 (subject to planning permission), using Section 106 funds from the housing development at Priory Grange. The facility will be provided to allow free access to an all-weather surface for sports and recreation, predominantly for children and young adults from the village.



Summary of Accounts for Financial Year 2019-20

	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19
Precept (collected through council tax)	150,000	148,000	145,176
Income			
Grants/Agency	49,500	18,000	12,959
Cemetery Income	17,395	11,580	14,982
Sundries	823	1,208	589
VAT reimbursement	4470	10,379	7,742
Bank interest	1,116	409	952
Total income	223,205	189,595	182,404
Balance brought forward	200,347	146,207	116,174
Expenditure	65,952	61,457	58,690
Establishment, inc. salaries	20,166	18,138	16,849
Grass cutting	13,535	5,714	5,175
Open space/rights of way	177,780	29,398	28,719
Projects	1,388	2,100	22,442
Grants & Donations	7,336	5,585	8,152
Cemetery Expenditure	2,846	2,007	1,150
Cemetery Projects		11,063	10,470
VAT	300,490	135,455	152,371
Total Expenditure	123,063	200,347	146,207

Bank Balances at 31st March

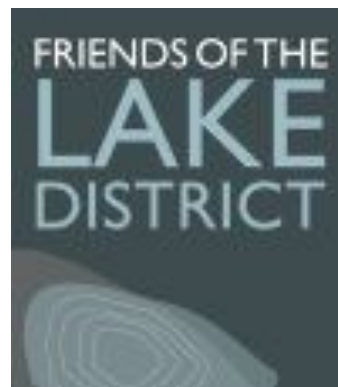
Amounts will be rounded up, and include cheques not yet cleared.

High balance due to underspend on the planned Scotby Pavilion project. This project commenced September 2020.

Projects for 2020-21

Aglionby Pond Restoration Project

In 2019, the Parish Council obtained grant funding to restore the pond and small woodland area in Aglionby, with the intention of turning this under-utilised area into an attractive place for residents to enjoy and for wildlife to thrive. Although the planned schedule of work suffered a lengthy delay due to Covid, the project is now underway thanks to our contractors from Cumbria Wildflowers, as well as work from some of our Councillors and a small team of volunteers from the village. The pond and surrounding area have been cleared of litter and debris, a strimming and spraying programme has started, and some tree work has been done as part of the woodland management plan. There has been a lot of hard work involved in removing invasive plants, most notably Himalayan Balsam, but there's plenty more to do!



Future phases will involve improving drainage to the pond and putting measures in place to improve the water quality and prevent pollution from traffic run-off. There will be an extensive planting programme of native shrubs, grasses and flowers, and habitats will be installed for wildlife.

If you would like to join the action group and volunteer on the pond project, please contact the Parish Council office on 01228 561687 or clerk@wetheralparishcouncil.org.uk

Wetheral Parish Council gratefully acknowledges funding received from Friends of the Lake District and Carlisle City Council.



Scotby Pavilion

The long-awaited rebuild of the pavilion on the Hartley Trust Playing Fields is now well underway. The rendering is complete, the glazing is in and the internal plastering has been finished. This impressive, modern building with its upgraded facilities will provide an excellent home for the sports teams based in Scotby and



a valuable facility for the wider community. Using the pavilion as a base, local clubs will be able to grow and develop. The pavilion will be a positive environment and a focus to encourage active, healthy lifestyles for the people of Scotby and beyond. The setting will also make it a great venue for parties, christenings and family events.

The pavilion has been funded through grants and donations.

Local business sponsorship

If you are a local businessperson and your business would like to sponsor the pavilion to help complete the build, please contact **Cllr Dave Hughes on 07903864780**. Donations in kind (especially carpentry and painting & decorating) would also be greatly appreciated. Your business will be acknowledged by way of a permanent plaque inside the building.



Speed Watch

The local Speed Watch group, a band of volunteers led by Parish Councillor Geoff Round in conjunction with Cumbria Police, is ongoing. Speed Watch is based in Cumwhinton and began some three years ago, when Cllr. Round took part in an exercise with the police to make motorists more aware of the dangers of speeding in villages. A particular problem was identified in Cumwhinton, and the police asked Cllr. Round to organise a Speed Watch group in the village.

Although some locals did have initial reservations, it was gradually acknowledged that the Speed Watch group was necessary and that speeding in Cumwhinton was posing a serious risk to horses, cyclists and pedestrians, including school children. Support in the village increased to such an extent that one resident purchased a speed gun, which was presented to the Parish Council to enable Speed Watch to be carried out more regularly. The group also extended its operations to Wetheral, where a second group of volunteers was set up.

Since the Speed Watch group started, hundreds of instances of speeding have been recorded in Cumwhinton. Many of the cases involved vehicles travelling at almost 60mph, nearly twice the 30mph speed limit. COVID-19 restrictions have resulted in a temporary suspension of the group's activities, but it is hoped that the vaccination programme and gradual lifting of lockdown will mean that additional training can take place and operations can resume in the coming months.

The Speed Watch group is always looking for volunteers. The Parish Council receives frequent complaints about speeding from residents in various villages, but does not have the resources to cover them.

If you would like to volunteer (training will be provided when COVID restrictions allow) or would like more information about the Speed Watch group, please contact Cllr. Geoff Round on 01228 560336 / geoffreyround82@gmail.com

Other News

The Parish Council was able to make use of a grant to fund the purchase of a supply of spring bulbs for each village. These were planted by volunteers at various spots on the road verges. Volunteers have also been out and about throughout the year picking litter from the hedgerows. Unfortunately, litter and occasional fly-tipping remain problems for the community, but the Parish Council is grateful for the support of the City Council in backing up its efforts.

A group has started work on tidying the car park at Wetheral station. Network Rail has now replaced the fence, which has made a great improvement.



The Parish Council was able to give assistance to the SSWATCH (Scotby, Warwick, Wetheral and the Cooperative Hearts) community support group, which helped almost 200 people in the area during COVID-19, mostly during the first lockdown. 30 volunteers carried out more than 500 tasks, including collecting medication and delivering food and other essentials.



New play equipment, a train and trampoline, was provided for the play area at Turnmire Common in Wetheral.

Milk vending machine for Wetheral?

A dairy farmer from Wetheral would like to site a milk vending machine in the village. The machine would provide locally-produced milk and milkshakes in reusable bottles, providing fresh, high-quality products with almost no food miles.



The Parish Council would like to hear residents' views.

Please contact us on
clerk@wetheralparishcouncil.org.uk
01228 561687, or online at
[www.wetheralparishcouncil.org/
contact](http://www.wetheralparishcouncil.org/contact)

Congratulations and good luck to all
the local businesses in the Parish that
are reopening after lockdown!



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