

# LOWICK NEWS



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Published by Lowick Parish Council

**Website:** Our parish website includes everything you need to know about the Parish Council and other local groups within Lowick, such as Lowick Community Hall and Lowick Agricultural Show.

[lowick.org.uk](http://lowick.org.uk)

## PC Harris Update

Over the past few months we have had an increase in the number of Quad bikes stolen across the area, most recently at Finsthwaite. The thefts are generally evenings and we believe the perpetrators are loitering around the area prior to the thefts.

If you do notice any suspicious vehicles hanging around the area please call it in on 101 or email [101emails@cumbria.police.uk](mailto:101emails@cumbria.police.uk) with a registration number if possible.

At this time of year we all know that pretty much the only vehicles around of an evening are either Supermarket deliveries or locals so the odd ones will stand out. Naturally if it is an emergency call 999.

## Lowick Common update from Pete at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust

After cutting areas of bracken this summer, the Dalesfoot compost team spent time in September rolling it into bales. These will then be transported off site and taken away to be made into peat-free compost. As the weather has started to be a bit wetter, the contractors have left bales on site until conditions mean they can remove the bales with as little impact on the ground as possible.

This winter, also look out for the start of a new mapping project on the reserve, getting local people to send in sightings, records, and all manner of interesting things. These will be recorded by the Trust and will help towards future management of the reserve. Several events will be held over the winter, where people can come along and see how to get involved. Dates for these events will be confirmed shortly and will be put out through various channels in the local area.



**Cumbria**  
Wildlife Trust

## Lowick Community Hall

Your Community Hall is emerging from lockdown and restrictions placed on its use by the ongoing pandemic. However, while there is optimism there must also be an element of caution as we go forward, but we are pleased to be back in action!

A reminder as to work completed and on going. New opening windows installed, porch re rendered and painted, new window ledge internal, rear outside reveals rendered, porch barge boards replaced with plastic, radiators installed to replace the old fan heaters and both toilets repainted. New outside security lights to be fitted and a new outside store for plastic chairs installed. The lawn mower shed has been painted and some work needs to be done to the guttering on the kitchen. The heat pump has been checked and is now on!

The Lowick WI after many years has reluctantly decided due to much reduced membership to disband. As a token of gratitude, they have agreed to donate £50 towards the installation of a new outside porch light. It goes without saying we are pleased to be so honoured. As far as bookings are concerned, we now have a replacement class for the Monday night Pilates which is discontinued. Yoga replaces that popular class and is already full. Parent and Toddlers are on Wednesday morning as usual and Tai chi on Friday mornings when the weather is too wet for The Green venue. The Parish Council is Thursday evenings, and a junior monthly Herbalist class has started on Saturdays. The Farmers arms are also keen to use the Hall on occasional Saturdays. The Young Farmers have met recently, and we have hosted two children's parties. The Keswick to Barrow charity walk used the hall in September good to see them back.

So if you need a venue check the online calendar on the [LOWICK.ORG](http://LOWICK.ORG) website or phone 01229 885647. Follow us on Facebook.

*Rob Dove*  
Chairman

Do you have anything you would like to put in the newsletter? Something interesting happening in or around the Parish? Anything you would like us to include more of? Let us know and we'll pop it in the next issue.

Email: [lowickpc@outlook.com](mailto:lowickpc@outlook.com)

## **Grizedale Arts: Updates from The Valley and The Farmer's Arms**

The Farmer's Arms renovation programme continues at a good pace and in October, we opened phase 2, our new tearoom which was the old Lounge Bar. A great space for families and friends to gather during the day, we serve a variety of home-baked cakes from our kitchen and others in our Consortium of Crake Cake Makers (a grand title for their very delicious cakes) and great variety of tea (including blends we make ourselves) and coffee. Pop-on down and try for yourself!

Over the month of November there's lots for you to get involved with. Our Wednesday Volunteer days continue each week with a bunch of friendly and dedicated locals who have all contributed hugely to our renovation programme. For those not able to graft through the grime with us, we've now expanded the offer to include a Wednesday Community lunch at 1.00pm in The Stable Bar. Open to anyone in the Crake Valley community (or surrounding areas) and passing visitors, we ask for a contribution of £5.00 per person for two-courses. Our lunches are a great chance to hear more about the project and enjoy lively conversation with friendly locals and staff.

On Friday 5 November, we invite you all to join us as we celebrate a traditional Guy Fawkes evening with baked potatoes, Crake Valley hotdogs, baked apples, homemade parkin and other winter warming treats from our wood-fired oven. There'll be sparklers, family activities and a fire to keep you warm and the Stable Bar will be open until late. Later in the month, we'll host our first Winter Fair when we'll celebrate everything that's special about the Crake Valley - the people, the produce, the local independent businesses. There'll be lots of stalls showcasing local food and drink, fresh produce, baked goods and preserves, crafts, bric-a-brac and everything in-between. The Farmer's Workshops will host drop-in making sessions for you to create personalised gifts and The Stable Bar will be serving a special warming winter menu until late. Following the Fair, we'll host our first in-person auction which will be ticketed and include a hearty hotpot supper and your bidding paddle. Expect minor beauties, pictures we can't find space for, surplus ceramics and experiences money cannot (usually) buy. If you've something you'd like us to auction on your behalf, we take a 30% commission and handle all the rest for you. Of course, donations to support our renovation programme are also very welcome too.

As always, if you are interested in learning more about Grizedale Arts and/or The Valley and Farmer's Arms projects, please contact Project Manager, Emma Sumner ([emma@grizedale.org](mailto:emma@grizedale.org) | 015394 41050) who is always happy to hear from you.

## **Lowick Parish Councillors are...**

Chairperson: Graham Sanderson  
Vice Chairperson: Joanna Edmondson (Newsletter editor)  
Councillor: Simon Bailey  
Councillor: Les Ingham  
Councillor: John Townsend

**Parish Clerk:** Christine Adams

**Email Lowick Parish Council:** [lowickpc@outlook.com](mailto:lowickpc@outlook.com)

## **South Lakeland District**

### **Councillor for Coniston and Crake Valley:**

Ian Wharton

Email: [Ian.Wharton@southlakeland.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Wharton@southlakeland.gov.uk)

### **Cumbria County Councillor for High Furness:**

Matt Brereton

Email: [matt.brereton@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:matt.brereton@cumbria.gov.uk)

Telephone: 07795 426437

## **Simon Fell**

As I write this my team and I have taken a day out to plan for the year ahead at Keppleway.

We discussed opening up my weekly surgeries further. After a year of doing them by Zoom, we're back to face-to-face. We're trialling a 'Pub Tour' and have held open surgeries in Lowick and Broughton so far, but we talked about going further and expanding this. Only an hour later, the news came through that Sir David Amess, the MP for Southend, had been stabbed during a surgery and died.

I can't say that I knew David well. But I can say that he was a very kind man who always had a smile and an offer of help for those of us 'newbies' who looked a bit lost. I am certainly very grateful for the time I spent with him and the advice he gave me. He relished his job and cared very deeply for his constituency. His death is absolutely heart-breaking and I find myself walking a little heavier than I did this morning. Politics and debate needs to be free and open and we must resist the impulse to build walls that might make us feel safer, but in fact build distance between us.

For me that means retaining surgeries - one of the most important parts of an MP's job - and continuing to hold open forums, like the climate summit we just held in Barrow, or the events we have planned across schools in support of Parliament Week. Politics works when people are engaged with it and have faith that their voices will be heard and listened too - we can't lose that link.

To that end, my office is (almost) always open and my team and I are here to help you. Don't be backwards in coming forwards:

[Simon.fell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Simon.fell.mp@parliament.uk) or  
01229 314 220.



# PARISH PLAN SURVEY 2021– A BRIEF SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

## INTRODUCTION

A very big thank you to all who completed and submitted our Parish Plan Questionnaire. We wanted the results of this survey to guide the writing of the Parish Plan, taking into account as far as possible the views, ambitions and concerns of our residents.

A little fewer than one third of homes submitted a return but nevertheless we believe it has been possible to identify the main community wide issues which should be a focus for future planning.

This report sets down our analysis of the survey results to give you the opportunity to comment before we embark on producing the Parish Plan.

Lowick is a small rural parish, currently part of the wider South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council. We are now in the process of establishing a new unitary council to supercede these two levels.

Whatever its name is finally chosen to be, it will be the authority which directly governs our lives locally. We mention this because of the many ambitions and concerns you have raised, some are very specific to our parish and should be managed locally through the Parish Council and community action, while others lead to actions which should rightly be addressed by the new unitary council. We have tried to make clear in this report where responsibility would lie.

The Questionnaire was divided into seven sections

- Housing
- Environment
- Transport and Highways
- Community Groups
- Communications
- Emergency Planning
- Extension of LDNPA Southern Boundary

The analysis of and conclusions for each of these areas is presented in the following sections. It is important to say that this analysis has only tried to reflect the views expressed in the responses. It has not tried to assess the likely impact, practicality or effectiveness of any of the measures identified in the survey.

## HOUSING

Housing strategy will clearly be a responsibility of the new unitary council. However, in Lowick we have our own views which should be input to the overall strategy.

Principal amongst the responses is the belief that there is nowhere within the parish in need of or suitable for significant new construction and that the wider strategy of the new council is not yet understood (or even developed). From this we would assume that in so far as residents are concerned, development is more likely to be through conversions and extensions/additions with some change of use.

The survey strongly supports the principle of local and affordable housing for local workers together with high standards of environmental performance. There is no wish to see the proliferation of second and holiday homes which have adversely impacted many other small parishes in the area.

We asked what further infrastructure would be needed to support any further housing development and an interesting number of ideas were raised the most significant of which was better public transport (see later). Other suggestions included

- children's play facilities
- support to the Farmers Arms as a community hub
- EV charging points (we judged charging from home would become more significant but a few rapid charging points close to community centres could be sensible)
- only a modest response for local shops, surgery etc. perhaps recognising viability in a small community is difficult. Nevertheless, recognising that there could be better outreach to Lowick from surrounding facilities to reduce travelling and support the less mobile residents.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

Perhaps unsurprisingly this section probably generated the most interest. Ambitions and concerns ranged from the very local to much wider unitary council and national issues. There is a determined concern for our environment, in particular the challenging issue of climate change. While local initiatives help and people want to be active this is an opportunity to convey our concern and challenge county and national government. Key amongst the issues raised in this context were

- subsidies, support and information on solar power, heat pumps (ground and air), transport (public transport and electric vehicle infrastructure), home insulation and energy efficiency.

In respect of issues with more strictly local impact and solutions, there is general agreement that the current recycling arrangements are quite good but a number of possible improvements should be considered

- better information on how to consign waste and extend the range of waste that can be recycled
- provide more robust and larger recycling containers (bags and boxes)
- on line parish freecycling scheme
- construct compost bins for the allotments
- establish a local monthly village skip for unusual and occasional wastes to avoid many individual trips to (not so) nearby recycling centres and help more elderly residents.

Many issues were raised concerning the provision and maintenance of footpaths. Although specific mention was made of those from the Farmers Arm to Lowick Green, from Lowick Green to Woodgate and from Lowick Bridge to Blawith, a more general footpath survey seems to be needed together with a longer term plan for improvement and maintenance. Encouraging walking for local journeys is seen as both a health and environmental benefit. Issues ranging from overgrown vegetation, damage from illegal off roaders, poor access for children's buggies and even lack of a suitable path are evident.

Road side litter, both from passing cars and lorries and also from cyclists (energy bar wrappers, energy drinks and gels packaging) is seen as a problem. While more litter bins are suggested others judge this would not stop those who simply throw away litter and anyway bins would need regular emptying. Education (through county and national schemes) was offered as one solution together with a focus on event organisers (running, walking and cycling events being seen as a significant source of litter). Generally residents already do and appear willing to volunteer to take part in organised litter picking.

There appear to be a number of locations impacted by flooding during periods of heavy rain. Specifically mentioned are Beck Bottom, Woodgate and the fell road to Broughton Beck. A key need is the planned and regular cleaning/maintenance of drains along roadsides, recognising the seasonal nature of some flooding. This could involve the parish lengthsman but needs to be integrated with Highways.

A number of concerns were raised about road signs becoming unreadable with degradation and/or obscured by vegetation. Although raised under the 'Environment' heading this is also clearly a 'Highways' issue and again should involve both the parish lengthsman and Highways.

Questions on group purchase schemes for energy and environment facilities generated considerable interest and should be followed up with some vigour. In particular these included group purchase schemes for

-oil

-LNG (calor etc)

-electricity (particularly renewable)

-septic tank emptying

-water quality testing

-log delivery

Finally, broadband registered in a number of responses as a community asset with environmental benefits (see later in Communications)

## TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

This section of the questionnaire raised key safety issues with very evident concerns about speed and driving standards on our local roads. When asked if the present 40mph speed limits on the A5092 from Silver Lane to the Old School and the A5084 through Lowick Green were effective or not the responses were fairly evenly balanced between yes and no. Most responses believed these sections should be extended to cover the A5092 south towards Penny Bridge and north towards Woodgate and the A5084 through to Lowick Bridge. There was minimal interest for local volunteer speed monitors along any sections of the roads.

In addition to speed limits, suggestions for automatically displaying speed measurements to oncoming vehicles were made for several locations. In particular, responses from residents close to Lowick Bridge made several observations about the speed of traffic on the A5084, the slight bends reducing forward visibility and the blind junction down to the bridge. Suggestions were made for additional measures such as double white lines either side of the junction.

A particular stretch of road between the Red Lion and the Community Hall was suggested for a 20mph limit. It is narrow, has many bends, is used as something of a 'rat run' between Woodgate and Lowick Bridge for Coniston and has many walkers.

All of these issues can only be taken forward through the new council and Highways England but the parish has a responsibility to make recommendations and pursue changes.

In respect of the state of the roads response varied between 'OK' at best to 'poor'. Damaged surfaces, poor drainage, potholes were highlighted in a number of areas. There is now a new on line reporting system for defects and part of the solution must be to utilise this to maximum extent. From individuals through to the Parish Council we need to press the new unitary council and Highways England on their response to issues raised and establishing an effective monitoring and maintenance strategy.

The state of footpaths alongside the roads was also considered 'OK' at best to 'poor' at worst. Responses were fairly evenly balanced between wanting more verge and hedge trimming for road and pedestrian safety or less trimming for bio-diversity reasons. We conclude it will always be a question of looking at individual sites and times and finding the best balance.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

We believe that in a parish like ours the encouragement of local groups for leisure, health, entertainment, information, skill development and sharing, meeting and discussion are important. We asked people to tell us what community groups there were aware of or involved in. and this is what we found, in no particular order:

-Lowick Show

-Parish Council

-Lowick Green Committee

-Fitness Groups, Tai Chi, Pilates

-Allotment Association

-First Responders

- Farmers Arms and Grizedale Arts
- Lowick Fest
- Young Farmers
- Lowick Toddlers

In addition, responses suggested groups for more social gatherings such as 'meet the neighbours', walking groups, litter picking etc. Interestingly although many judged the facilities offered by the Community Hall were excellent, its location was considered a little too remote from the centre of the parish.

Clearly although the Parish Council does not exist to organise and run community groups it does have a role in supporting and encouraging them.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Most responses indicated a generally satisfactory level of communication through the Coniston and Crake Valley Newsletter. However, there was a significant number of responses who preferred a paper copy or did not access material on line. Although broadly welcomed, some responses felt the newsletter was, perhaps inevitably, biased towards the larger population of Coniston with insufficient news concerning Lowick. Responses point towards the need for a careful assessment of the ability to reach all parishioners with meaningful local content through email, the parish website, Facebook, community Whatsapp group, parish notice boards and paper through the door if preferred.

In respect of content responses demonstrated a wish to be informed of, for example

- road works and closures
- planning applications
- local politics
- local events

Several responses judged more specific Lowick news including for example celebrating individual achievements of parishioners.

Clearly, the results indicate a need to review of the current approaches.

We asked about the adequacy of local broadband recognising this has a key part to play in communication for both information, leisure and business. Many responses were 'adequate' or 'satisfactory' but some recognised that a step change in improvement was possible with fibre straight to each home. B4RN is a local business most involved in making this possible in north western rural communities. The parish council is supportive of their Initiative. The current system provided by Openreach of fibre to substations (green cabinets) and copper wire to each home seems to be considered adequate by some people. For others who live some distance from the substation(s) with long length copper wire, the system is currently less than adequate and the concern is that the system is simply not future proof.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING

Road accidents resulting in serious injury and damage to property and infrastructure are among the most mentioned hazards. Speed limits, clear signage and road /junction line painting are seen as the main defences.

In respect of natural hazards floods predominate in the survey. Beck Bottom and Bark House in particular are mentioned as increasing sources of concern but generally failing to keep gullies clear is another. River flooding, in particular by the Crake and Langholm Beck at Lowick Bridge is a specific risk for nearby households.

High winds and snow fall are both mentioned. Loss of electrical power either through a system fault or damage to overhead lines can be a problem as some key utilities for individual properties, e.g. water supply, do need electrical power. In addition to the main roads, more gritting of minor roads, particularly where there are exposed sections such as the Fell Road to Broughton Beck, is believed to be needed

Overall there was no strong feeling for a register of vulnerable households. We might assume this reflects the independent nature of parishioners taking responsibility for their individual circumstances.

The point was made that we should look to learn lessons from the pandemic which resulted in significantly increased isolation in an already sparsely populated community. Measures taken to maintain contact and ensure needs were kept satisfied might have a future purpose.

Overall, responses indicate that a simple emergency plan identifying a central contact person(s), a community evacuation centre (eg Lowick Community Hall), links to district and county councils and national authorities, contact telephone numbers and internet addresses for key utilities and services should be provided for all households.

## EXTENSION OF THE LDNPA SOUTHERN BOUNDARY

At the time of preparing the Questionnaire, Friends of the Lake District supported by a number of Cumbrian parish councils submitted to Government a proposal to extend the boundary of the National Park in a southerly direction which would include the whole of Lowick as well as much of the south of Copeland, Furness north of Barrow and the Cartmel/Grange peninsula.

We thought it would be useful to take the opportunity to ask how Lowick residents felt about such a proposal. About 2/3 of the returns were broadly in favour of the proposed extension with around 1/3 evenly split between undecided and broadly against. Many registered that little information was available to better understand the potential advantages or disadvantages.

**NEXT PHASE FOR THE PARISH PLAN:** Lowick Parish Council have taken advise on how best to create an achievable Parish Plan for Lowick based on your survey responses.

During a consultation it became apparent that we should divide your responses into three categories.

1. Items we could do and get on with ourselves.
2. Items which need input from working parties.
3. Issues we should be lobbying County and District for.

We are still looking for more ideas from parishioners about how we can implement the ideas they have produced. We will ask for help to do this from those who have similar ideas by setting up a working party. Alternatively we will have a public meeting to discuss setting up these working parties perhaps working with other neighbouring Parishes.

If you would like to help in anyway towards creating this plan for our parish, then please contact one of your councillors or email [lowickpc@outlook.com](mailto:lowickpc@outlook.com)

The Parish Plan will be on our next meeting agenda which will be held at Lowick Community Hall, 18th November at 7:30pm. All are welcome. Remember this plan is for YOUR PARISH, so it's YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS that matter.