BEETHAM PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER **ISSUE No 39 OCTOBER 2019 - MARCH 2020**

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Flooding in Beetham parish is a constant worry. Apart from Parsonage Fold in Beetham, which has so far been spared the worst consequences of recent heavy winter rains, the wider area of the East Ward has been shown to be vulnerable. In the West Ward the flood risks along the B5282 at Sandside are well-known, especially when combined with local high tides, on-shore winds and heavy rains on the nearby fells - some of which find their way into the Kent Estuary via the River Bela. All these areas hold risks for people and property. Beetham resident Linda Dean is determined to tackle her local problem by mobilising volunteers and forming a Beetham Flood Resilience Group with the aim of keeping the issue in the spotlight for higher local authorities and environmental bodies, fully supported by the parish council.

The junction at Storth Road/B5282 is also a traffic hazard. A site meeting between parish council members and a senior Highways engineer concluded that a major redesign of the junction might be the only way to reduce the problem significantly, although this would be expensive and so was unlikely to happen any time soon. The convex mirror has now been tested at a trial location on site and should help, but distances and sight-lines are such that its effectiveness is limited.

The parish council continues to progress a structured plan for tree management on its two sites – at Sandside Cutting and 'Plot 4' at Slackhead, despite the high ongoing cost of this work. It has also lodged representations to the Secretary of State in support of groups challenging proposals for the North West England Coastal Path project, which currently seek to bypass Beetham parish in favour of using the train service across the estuary from Arnside to Grange. This important issue was the subject of a special presentation at the Parish Annual Assembly held on 19 March at Heron Hall, Storth. Additionally, the parish council will be closely involved in the plan to enter the parish in Cumbria in Bloom 2020 – another project spear-headed by Linda Dean.

Apart from some finishing touches, the defibrillator now located in the decommissioned Stanley Street, Beetham phone box is up and running, although it has not yet been called into action – and, of course, we hope it never will. But this facility is of such importance to the community that it is planned to replicate it at the Carr Bank Road phone box, which is similarly to be decommissioned by BT. Funding for this project is already secured, with a major contribution coming from the Storth Community Group, which runs the Storth Post Office and shop.

More good news regarding the new Arnside-Milnthorpe/Kendal community bus service, which took over responsibility following the withdrawal of Stagecoach. The new service has been so popular that its continued existence now seems assured and, indeed, current plans are to extend coverage to Kirkby Lonsdale and Silverdale/Morecambe.

Finally, welcome to BPC's latest new councillor – Mrs Becky Dewar of Storth, whom is already making a valuable contribution at parish council meetings. The council is now at full strength.

JRS 05/03/20