

COMMUNITY UPDATE FROM NEWCASTLETON & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL, NOVEMBER 2020

Under current coronavirus restrictions the CC is not able to meet openly, this update covers key issues and explains the process we will use to keep you informed as well as how you can participate in community issues going forward. The CC is acutely aware that community engagement on issues has been hugely frustrating, but we are required to follow guidelines, please continue to be patient and work with us to overcome these challenges.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL VACANCIES

Many of you will be aware Laura Paterson stepped down as our Chair in October, we thank her for the tireless hours she spent supporting the community. Greg Cuthbert, in his role as vice chair, leads the CC in the interim until a new chair is appointed following the AGM.

There are two vacancies which need to be filled for the CC to function at its best; many of us have taken on extra workloads since February to support the community through Covid and post flood. If you can spare a few hours per month, have access to digital platforms, care passionately about where we live and our community then please consider joining us, the nomination form can be found on the website. www.visitnewcastleton.com/community

VIRTUAL AGM Tuesday 8th December at 7PM The CC is hosting a virtual AGM this year, due to Covid-19 restrictions, agenda below.

AGM 2020 AGENDA Tuesday 8th December 2020 at 7pm on Zoom.

A waiting room will be in operation, the host will admit you. Everyone is welcome to join. If you wish to raise a question or make a point about any of the issues in this newsletter or anything else, please advise the secretary via email with a note of your questions. secretary@newcastletoncommunitytrust.co.uk. You will be invited to speak when the meeting is opened for questions. Subject to numbers of requests subjects might be grouped so that as many issues can be raised as possible.

1. Welcome & Apologies
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Report from the Vice Chair
4. Report from the Treasurer ref Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020
5. Flood defence update and CCTV in the community (see the following briefing)
6. Questions/public forum
7. Close

CC meetings going forward – will continue to be on zoom, anyone is welcome to attend.

Links, agenda, minutes of the previous meeting and relevant papers and correspondence will be uploaded to www.visitnewcastleton.com/community monthly. They take place on the 2nd Tuesday of every month and will commence as usual from Jan 2021. Minutes & Agendas will be displayed on the pagoda and an abbreviated version published in the Clatter. If you wish to raise an issue or comment on the work, we are doing please do via email contacts for members on the website or pop a note into Buccleuch House.

FLOODING UPDATE

Many of you report frustration about lack of progress and follow up post Storm Dennis with which the CC and Resilience Group concur, but actions are slowly beginning to be taken.

Given our increasing workload the CC is prioritising actions as follows:

1. Work with SBC to devise a better early warning system; the combination of rainfall and snow melt created the unprecedented levels of water, SEPA measures do not capture snow melt.
2. Make the riverside as safe as possible given the erosion issues and exposed cables
3. Support Newcastleton Resilience Group helping them secure the training and support they need.
4. Create a community flood defence group who have capacity to liaise frequently with SBC and D&G, who manage the SEPA relationship for the River Liddel, as well as apply pressures to influencers to bring forward the flood scheme.
5. Encourage all residents to subscribe to the SEPA flood alert service and to purchase flood defences for their property to protect better themselves. Adopt the actions recommended by the Resilient Group in their recent newsletter.
6. Consider how the community can undertake gravel extraction itself and use the spoils to support other community projects, path networks etc. and how this might be funded.
7. Work with the public sector agencies to bring forward the planned flood defence program as soon as possible.

NDCC is asking again for volunteers to help create a community flood group (3 above) to help support the work of the CC in driving solutions forward. The community has a very strong chance of pushing forward the flood development proposals given the overwhelming level of support these got following the consultation/local study undertaken during 2019. We need support to keep this momentum going, please consider giving up some time to help us achieve this.

Local Erosion on the riverside, as part of remedial work ref points 1&2 above the CC has met with the Community Trust, SBC engineering and SPEN to discuss works to the riverside. SPEN have surveyed the banking and will relocate the exposed power supply cable and some of the poles. The Community Trust has signed the wayleaves granting permissions to commence the work. The CC and Community Trust have agreed to adopt the recommendation of SBC officers and for safety reasons the fence, which was washed away during the flood, will now need to be moved forward significantly when it is reinstated. The fence line will be replaced near to the pathway to enable a safe space around the telegraph pole, which will in time be relocated as the line supports are unstable on the riverside. This means that much of the grass verge below Whithaugh Bridge will now be fenced off limiting access to the riverside. A new fence will be erected as soon as funds allow.

COMMUNITY CCTV

This has been on the CC agenda for some time and was originally considered following the spate of break-ins and thefts the community suffered in 2018 which culminated in a violent break-in, but fortunately no one was injured. The CCTV on the fuel forecourt has helped to provide police insight on several occasions capturing images of vehicles using the village as a throughway for fly-tipping as well as suspicious vehicles travelling through.

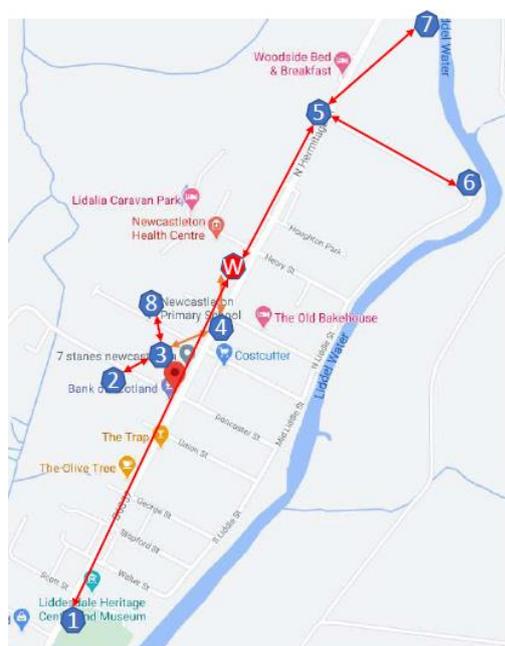
Many of you report feeling insecure at night and want a more visible police presence. The CC continues to request police support when this is warranted but increasing pressures and diminishing police resources coupled with our rurality mean we are very much at the end of the line when seeking help. This became very apparent during lockdown when the

community suffered unwanted 'visitors' on many occasions and we were left to deal with issues ourselves.

The CC continues to advise that if you are ever feeling vulnerable and need police assistance do not hesitate to call 999 in an emergency. If you see petty crime or feel threatened by anything, please report any issues to the police. You do not need to do this formally; you can always use crime stoppers which is completely anonymous. Much of our petty crime goes unreported which does little to support our case for police support so please report matters if instances occur.

Initially the CCTV plan was to sight cameras at entrance/exits of the village and this continues to be the CC's main ambition, however, our plans have become more developed and technology more sophisticated so we are able to do more; cameras work by line of sight so it is relatively easy to add to the system once the 'network' is established. In addition to the in/out routes we are also considering a request by the primary school to add cameras to support deterrent efforts to stop petty crime. Finally, and critically, we plan to add 'eye's for the SBC emergency bunker and Newcastleton Resilience Group to monitor water levels on the Liddel as part of a better early warning system for flood measures. The master eye at Whithaugh pool (camera 6) will 'see' as far northward as possible (7), where a further will be added upstream (8, not shown).

The layout reflects current thinking, but what we can achieve will be dependant on funding raised through grants, local donations, and community support. Following community feedback, a planning application will commence, final budgets confirmed, and funding drive commenced. Donations to support this effort are very much welcomed.



-  CCTV locations in **BLUE**
 -  Possible location for NVR & Internet connection
 -  Very high speed radio links
 -  High speed radio link
- 1 = South Entrance, 1 x fixed (bullet) on mast
 - 2 = Fire Station, 1 x fixed (wide angle), 1 x 180
 - 3 = Grapes Hotel, 1 x 180
 - 4 = Spar, no cameras – a wide angle would give great coverage
 - 5 = North Entrance, 2 x fixed (wide angle + bullet) on mast
 - 6 = Whithaugh Pool, 2 x fixed (wide angle + bullet) on mast
 - 7 = Upper water camera, 1 x bullet on mast
NOTE location & radio link TBC
 - 8 = School, 2 x bullets on building covering playgrounds.
NOTE cameras & radio link locations TBC

Many of you have already made your views known to us and continue to ask when CCTV will be here, IF and it is a big if, then we hope by Spring 2021. The more of you who make your views known the stronger our plan will be, and the best solution found to solve any issues raised.

We have prepared some **Frequently Asked Questions** in order to give you some insight into how CCTV will work operationally under the CC's control:

Who will get access to the footage? Only nominated members of the CC, school and police for all cameras sited within the village. Those sited for flood will be available to SBC and the Resilience Team Leader on a live dial-in facility to review footage when it is relevant.

Can the cameras see in the dark? Yes, they all have infra-red sight capacity and provide extremely clear day and night images on high resolution film.

How long will images be stored for? 30 rolling days but specific images maybe stored for police use. All images for flood prevention measures will be captured continuously so an ongoing picture of water levels can be assessed over time and the river captured so its behaviour can be assessed in differing weather circumstances.

What images will be captured? Only external images, any property with windows in the sight lines will be blacked so that no one can ever see anything within properties. The exception to this will be business premises if they wish their premises to be monitored, where appropriate signage will be displayed.

What signage will be displayed so everyone knows about it? Relevant signage will be displayed on entrances into the village and in prominent public places stating the presence of CCTV.

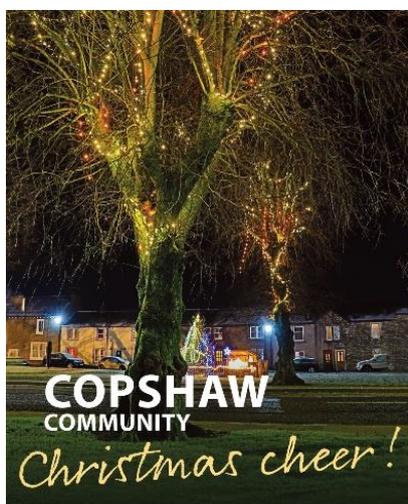
How will it be maintained? Each premise that hosts a mast/camera is kindly paying for the power supply. The system is flexible so each element can, if damaged, be replaced individually. Ongoing maintenance is not expected to exceed £200/£300 pa. A fundraising coffee morning will cover this plus any insurance and signage costs.

WHAT WE NEED YOU TO DO

Please consider two things to help continue to drive progress on issues that impact all of us:

1. Please take time to comment back to us by December 11th on the CCTV proposals and take the opportunity to ask any questions at the AGM on the 8th December
2. Please consider joining the flood working group to support the CC overcome the challenges ahead or joining the CC as a member, we really need all the support we can get. Feedback links and Co-opted CC membership forms are available on the web site.

You can respond online or pop a note into Buccleuch House if you prefer. Thank you.



COPSHAW CHRISTMAS CHEER the CC, along with the village Christmas elves are all working to make our community a vibrant buzzy place for the festive season ahead. Please keep abreast of things on the social media pages and we hope that you all enjoy the efforts of many to make this as memorable a Christmas as any other.

We hope to meet with you 'virtually' on December the 8th to answer any issues you have and to meet you all again in 2021.

Best wishes for the coming festive season from us all.

Stay safe.

