



Colton Parish Council

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COLTON PARISH COUNCIL: GREEN ROADS WORKING GROUP (GRWG)

Minutes of 1st Meeting: 17th November 2009

Present: Cllr Colin Barr, Cllr Brenda Fishwick, Cllr Rod Wilson (CCC), Mr Bobbie Dobson (Chair, Bethacar Moor Commoners ESA Association), Ms M Lane (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Anne Robinson, Mr John Atkinson, Mr John Milburn

2. Green Roads Working Group: Purpose and Membership

The GRWG had been set up to follow up actions from the Additional Parish Council meeting on Colton's unsealed Unclassified Country Roads in July 2009 addressing the issues of i) maintenance and ii) behaviour and illegal activity of off-road vehicle users.

Membership was as follows: Cllr Colin Barr, Cllr Brenda Fishwick, Cllr Anne Robinson, Cllr Rod Wilson (CCC), Mr Bobbie Dobson (Chair, Bethacar Moor Commoners), Mr John Atkinson (Farmer and Fix-the-Fells officer, National Trust), Mr John Milburn (Farmer, Bethacar) Secretary: (Ms M Lane, Clerk)

It was agreed that Cllr Barr would Chair the Working Group.

3. Actions from Parish Council Meetings, Progress and Next Steps

i. Highways and Maintenance - Cllr Wilson:

Cllr Wilson had submitted a briefing paper to the South Lakeland Local Committee's Highways and Transportation Working Group held on 20th September (Item 19 of minutes of that meeting; Local Committee meeting papers are available via www.cumbria.gov.uk/councilmeetings/committees/local.asp). The Working Group had recommended that a 'small task and finish' group be set up to comprise members (incl. Cllr Wilson), an officer, a representative from the National Park and one from Colton Parish Council. This had been accepted by the Local Committee on 21st October. The new group would fall under the auspices of the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership (CCAP) and be chaired by Mr Steve Pighills (also Chair of the CCAP Motor-propelled Vehicle (MPV) sub-group). The GRWG expressed some concern that Mr Pighills might have a partial interest, being trail rider and a member of the Trail Riders' Fellowship, but Mr David Gibson (CCC officer) had assured Cllr Wilson that a fair balance of interests would be represented. **Agreed:** that Cllr Barr would be the representative of Colton PC on this group.

The Local Committee had also agreed that a route in Colton would be selected and analysed to provide an understanding of the issues; Colton PC would like this to be the worst-case route, namely UCR 5051 - High Nibthwaite to Parkamoor.

The Local Committee had also suggested that some funds might be set aside next year for Green Road maintenance. A survey of routes would be necessary. Various surveys had been carried out on UCR 5051 (Nibthwaite-to-Parkamoor) route: a) a general CCAP survey (Feb 09) giving the route the highest classification in relation to damage and maintenance need, and b) a detailed work specification carried out by the LDNPA in 2006 identifying 3 options for maintenance (cost then up to £15K); this had been forwarded as part of a letter received from Bob Cartwright, LDNPA Director of Park Services (see below). However, nothing had been done, and the further deterioration of this route might require another survey, with the repair cost likely to be significantly higher now. Cumbria Highways had told Cllr Wilson that there were no funds this year, even for a survey. Cllr Wilson had contacted Friends of the Lake District to see if they could help and they had been to inspect UCR 5051 and were discussing the issue with the CCAP MPV sub-group.

It was agreed that pressure of use and drainage problems were the main reasons for route deterioration.

ACTIONS:

- a) Cllr Wilson to contact David Gibson (CCAP) group giving Cllr Barr's name as Colton PC member, and to find out the date of the first meeting.
 - b) Cllr Wilson to follow up with Highways (John Robinson) the need for a survey of UCR 5051 and to ask about the detailed 2006 survey.
 - c) Cllr Wilson was asked if he could get an idea of the central government view of the desirability of motorised access to the countryside.
- ii. **Colton PC's correspondence with County via Tim Farron MP:** Colton PC had sent a second letter to County in May 2009 in an attempt to get questions answered. The response again failed to answer Colton's questions and simply referred to recent Local Committee considerations initiated by Cllr Wilson (see above).

ACTIONS:

- a) Clerk to find out about Highway Maintenance Protocols
 - b) Clerk to ask again for survey reports on UCR 5051 (Nibthwaite-Parkamoor) and UCR 5064 (Ickenthaite-Nibthwaite).
- iii. **Tony Hill (LDNPA Ranger) and John Robinson (Highways) to discuss 'Fix the Fells' type initiative in Colton:** Tony Hill had advised the Clerk that he had arranged a meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to ask Tony Hill for an update.

- iv. **Letter to LDNPA asking for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on UCR5051 and**
- v. **a Fix-the-Fells-type initiative for other UCRs:** The Council had written to Richard Leafe (Chief Exec. LDNPA) asking for a temporary TRO on UCR 5051 until satisfactory repairs could be made. Bob Cartwright, Director of Park Services, had replied that they would support this only if County could be persuaded to undertake repairs. He referred to a detailed survey of the route carried out in 2006 and provided a useful summary of this, suggesting that Colton use this as the basis for discussions with Cumbria Highways. This information was passed to Cllr Wilson. The idea of a cooperative 'Fix-the-Fells' type approach was welcomed, supported through the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership (CCAP). The meeting was disappointed that stopping further damage to this severely damaged track and fell-sides was not considered sufficient reason for a TRO.

ACTIONS:

- a) The Clerk to write back to the LDNPA responding to the suggestions raised.
- b) The Clerk to compile a set of correspondence for all GRWG members and to maintain the Colton webpage of correspondence (www.coltonparishcouncil.org.uk/Off-Road.htm).

Note: Colton PC had copied its letter to the LDNPA to those agencies present at the Colton PC Additional meeting in July (the CCAP and Highways); the Clerk was surprised to find that the letter had been sent on to the Trail Rider's Fellowship who had immediately written to the Park asking that a TRO should NOT be placed on the track. This raised further concern about possible conflicts of interest.

- vi. **The Strands, Rusland - possible dredging:** Tony Hill had met with the Environment Agency and PC Baldwin. The EA would not be dredging because of fish spawning grounds and the policy of letting the river take a more natural course. The seasonal TRO was working well. It was agreed that no further action was required.
- vii. **Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership (CCAP) activities:** Mr Steve Pighills had forwarded a copy of the minutes of the MPV sub-group meeting held on 17th September. In reference to Colton, this group acknowledged the importance of maintaining the Parkamoor route and had asked David Robinson (LDNPA) to seek estimates of costs of work.
- viii. **CCAP: Representation for local communities and Parish Councils:** The Clerk had recently written to Andrew Coleman (Chair of the Cumbria Countryside Access Team) asking

about the lack of information on the activities of the CCAP on the internet (no web presence, no minutes of meetings, etc.) and how the local community was represented on the CCAP.

ACTIONS:

- a) Cllr Fishwick offered to ask the LDNPA if they could provide administrative support in collating information on Colton's UCRs
- b) The Clerk to report back any response from Mr Coleman at the next GRWG meeting.

- ix. **Police to be asked about increasing presence at times of high off-road traffic:** The Council had not formally written yet, but had held informal talks with PCs Baldwin and Wilcock. The Clerk had been contacted by a local organisation called CAMARM operating on Blawith and Subberthwaite Commons to record evidence of illegal behaviour of motor-cyclists. They worked closely with PC Baldwin and had had some success. They were encouraging other areas to do the same.

ACTION: The Clerk to ask PC Baldwin for his views on this approach.

- x. **Damage to Fellsides:** It was noted that the issue of fell-side damage and the threat to ESA status had not been specifically responded to in correspondence.

ACTION: The Clerk to contact Theresa Morris (Natural England) about tackling this problem.

- xi. **Communication with Bethacar Moor Commoners' Association:**

ACTION: Mr Dobson would report on any items of interest on Green Roads from the Association minutes.

4. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed to date-ballot for a meeting in late January or early February.