

SPOTLIGHT ON ARNSIDE PARISH COUNCIL

Over the next few editions we hope to profile some of Arnside's Parish Councillors and start with Dave Willacy, Chairman.

Dave is a native of Arnside and has served on the Parish Council for nine years. He is now in his second year as Chairman. A retired Aircraft Chief Engineer, Dave joined the Parish Council because he wanted to see a tidier village.

He admits that he wanted to see Arnside as it was in his youth but sadly agrees that he does not always see the success he hoped for. The Parish Council meets monthly and obviously there is a lot of paperwork to get through. Dave is pleased that the website has been so popular and that more people are using it for it is a valuable way of keeping residents informed about what is going on.

His vision is to see affordable housing as the only development but not at the expense of green space. He hopes that sites can be found which will be the least intrusive but is emphatic that there is a need to help the young people of the village who may want to stay here.

Over the last few years he has noticed that a lot more people are taking an interest in the village. "I find the job of a Parish Councillor rewarding" he says, "a lot more people come up to me now and ask me questions and want to discuss things. We have to work to a tight budget but we are successfully managing a number of projects." Projects such as the Cemetery Chapel, which he would like to see being used by and for the village.

He wishes all residents of Arnside a Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year and hopes that 2006 will bring less



Dave Willacy

disruption to the village and a return to the more tranquil place that we all know and love.

LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE IMPORTANT TO RESIDENTS

Arnside Parish Plan Trust has received a donation of two hundred pounds from the Furness Building Society to support one of its projects - the development of a strategy for open spaces.

The Parish Plan Survey showed that the quality of the surrounding countryside was of major importance to Arnside residents. This suggests the need for an Open Spaces Strategy to chart areas of natural beauty or importance in the village and record their value in consultation with local people.

Seen as a long-term project, it is anticipated that the initial process will start in Spring 2006. It is hoped that finally a strategy will be developed with advice from public authorities and consultation with local people. Dr John Quinton, of Lancaster University's Environmental Sciences Department, will supervise the work of the strategy. On completion the strategy of open spaces will join a list of other successful projects of the Parish Plan Trust.

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ARNSIDE MESSENGER

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DROPPED KERB CAMPAIGN

A SUCCESS

Have you noticed that Arnside now has 11 dropped kerbs to allow people, particularly wheelchair users and those pushing youngsters in prams and pushchairs, access to essential parts of the village previously denied to them?

Cumbria County Council (CCC) has provided the kerbs as part of a two year plan to ensure that people have access to shops, Chemist, Doctor, Dentist, Church, the Promenade and to the disabled toilets.

Arnside Parish Plan identified the need to investigate the possibility of dropped kerbs, in particular locations, for users of wheelchairs/pushchairs. The Environment Safety & Security Action group of Arnside Parish Plan Trust have worked since December 2003 to research and gain agreement of the Parish Council and CCC to the need for such access.

Having identified a route for access to essential facilities in the village they negotiated with Martin Elson, Cumbria Highways Department to ensure that Arnside was allocated finance in the 2005/6 financial year. Finance for South Lakeland area is limited and the group were extremely happy to hear that Arnside would benefit from funding. We expect that in the next financial year the plan will be completed.



Members of Environment, Safety & Security Action Group of the APPT



Best wishes to all our readers for a Happy Christmas and a healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year from the Editor and Messenger Team

A special thank you to our Sponsor of this edition, **The Neighbourhood Forum, Cumbria County Council**. Thanks to everyone who has supported the APPT during the year, Messenger deliverers, and contributors and to the anonymous lady who sent a donation. If you would like to contribute towards the cost of producing the Messenger please contact Rachel Dutfield on 762573. To contact the editor Sandy Felton please email messenger.arnside@tesco.net

ASHMEADOW RENAISSANCE

Abbeyfield Arnside Society opened its first residential home in the village almost 22 years ago. This was made possible by the generosity of Miriam Crossfield. When her husband Robin, former High Sheriff of Westmorland, died she gave her home Crossfield House in Redhills Road to the newly formed society.

The house was converted into 6 residential units. As demand for accommodation grew, Mrs Crossfield continued as benefactor enabling 8 bungalows to be built in the grounds as well as a large conservatory extension to the main house. On her death in 2001 Mrs Crossfield left £2.9m to the Society. After negotiations with the John Barnes Trust the society purchased Ashmeadow in December 2004.

Throughout 2005 Ashmeadow and its grounds has been a giant building site. Work by United Utilities on the new underground pumping station has progressed.

Land, conveniently located near the shore, was donated by the society to the Coastguard Service.

Ashmeadow, which is a Grade II listed building and subject to strict planning regulations, has been sympathetically renovated and converted into 10 residential units at a cost of over £2m. The units, each different in design, all have a bedroom, sitting room, bathroom and mini-kitchen. A tripartite opening of all three facilities is planned for early summer 2006.

Abbeyfield Arnside Society, which has always been financially independent, has now become the Crossfield Housing (Arnside) Society Ltd. Kay Perrot, chair of the Association, said "Crossfield Housing Society will be run on the same lines as Abbeyfield but our independence will enable the Crossfield name to be remembered in perpetuity."



Ashmeadow in transformation

ARNSIDE HIGHLIGHTS

Arnside was invited to join the rural touring scheme in Spring this year. Under the umbrella of the National Rural Touring Forum the aim is to bring professional arts and entertainment to smaller village venues with subsidised prices.

There have been two productions - 'At the drop of a hippopotamus' featured songs and sketches of Flanders and Swann playing to an enthusiastic sell out crowd at the E.I in March. In October 'Black Diamonds', an incredibly powerful drama about the slave trade was riveting. Hardly surprising then that 'Fireside Tales' featuring nationally renowned story teller Taffy Thomas and musician friends is set to be another success. Arnside Highlights is a non-profit making organisation and money made from the drama events will be used to self fund an extra live arts event. Arnside Highlights has organised regular big screen cinema nights featuring recently released blockbusters. There have been five films so far and these are also popular with most

a sell out. Refreshments are available at performances but for many visitors the events have become a regular social occasion where they bring their own wine to enjoy whilst watching the film.

'Wallace and Gromit and the curse of the Were Rabbit' are the next to be screened on 7th January and productions for the spring could be anything from opera or jazz to dance or children's theatre. The scheme has been fantastically supported by the E.I. committee and the village. For more details contact Gina Murphy (762333) or Sue Hayward (762254.)

FUTURE OPTIMISTIC FOR ARNSIDE SCHOOL

Arnside National School achieved the highest grade "excellent" at its last Ofsted inspection in January 2004.

The strength of its reputation has enabled a stable roll of 140 pupils with some children coming from outside the catchment area - even as far away as Carnforth.

Alan Cook, the headteacher, engenders a happy atmosphere based on an ethos of respect for each other, high standards of behaviour and a good work ethic enabling each child to achieve maximum potential. Alan is supported by staff with high level teaching ability who are continuously upgrading their skills. He said "I cannot give enough credit to the staff, morale is high and they are all dedicated - no one is ever off sick"

The school hall and kitchens have been refurbished this year and plans for 2006 include upgrading the school's 25 computers. The school has fully embraced technology and is ahead of most schools having interactive whiteboards in every class. The children are busy preparing for

their Christmas activities including a carol service and nativity play but they can also look forward to the New Year when an Arts Week is planned for mid February. The week will include working with textiles and a drama group will assist the children in putting on their own drama productions.

The school has an active and thriving Parents Teachers Association who support the school by subsidising trips, visits and the purchase of equipment. The next PTA event is a ceilidh on 25th February. Everyone is welcome and tickets are available from Penny Attwood on 761408.

ARNSIDE CEMETERY CHAPEL

The building work to redevelop the cemetery chapel started in September. The first phase is to install water, electricity and a sewerage system. The project has recently been awarded a grant of £12,500 from the AONB Sustainable Development Fund. The total amount of funds raised for the project is in excess of £40,000. This money should cover the cost of the installation of services and the external building works. The chapel should be usable from Spring 2006 and it is hoped to start a programme of events in June 2006. These events will focus on raising the money that is needed to complete the project. For more information please visit www.arnside.co.uk

NEED TO IMPROVE YOUR IT SKILLS?

Adopt-a-Computer novice scheme, organised by the Education & Communication Group of the Arnside Parish Plan Trust, has vacancies for new members - if you need help with IT skills contact the co-ordinator, Maureen McQueen on 761798.