



Beetham Parish Council

www.beetham-pc.gov.uk

Celebrating the Heron Theatre's 25th Anniversary, but what's the History?

It is 25 years since Princess Alexandra officially opened what we know and love as the Heron Theatre.

The original building was a two room Grammar School which opened in 1841. A further room was added 30 years later. But by 1901 it was found to be inadequate for modern schooling, it was sold and the school we see today in Beetham was built. The now disused building fell into disrepair until Col. Charles Nickell took possession. He encouraged the local Beetham Players to stage plays there with audiences sitting on benches.

Founded in 1948, the South Westmorland Stage & Screen Society began using the building and 25 years later Charles Nickell (who was one of the players) sold it to the players for just one penny! However, they needed to undertake major renovations – there was no stage and only basic lighting, toilets were outside! SWSSS continued to produce some fantastic shows for some 50 years.

A stage play licence was granted in 1985. At that time there was seating for 45, and the programme grew to include concert evenings, carol

concerts and films. Fundraising never stopped, from local support, loans and grants. In the '80's more improvements were made and visiting companies were brought to the theatre, increasing interest and audience numbers. A Lottery grant meant that substantial improvements could be made to make the theatre into what we see today. The work on the auditorium was completed in 1995 and the remainder in 2000.

To bring this story up to date, some well known names in folk – Gordon Giltrap, Bella Hardy and Jez Lowe have played the theatre in recent years. Jazz and classical are also firm favourites, recently Kedu, a six piece group, played fusion of West African music and jazz. Screening of film and live performance add to the repertoire, not forgetting top professional theatre companies and local Warton Drama Group. A Literature Festival, book events and workshops have resulted in a new monthly writers group.

Local talent is also important to the theatre, Jess Gillam a local (Ulverston) saxophonist who has played in Beetham has now gone on to have a regular BBC radio 3 show!

Check what's on at your local venues

www.theherontheatre.com

www.heronmill.org

www.storthvillagehall.org.uk

www.heronhall.co.uk



This intimate and perfectly formed theatre relies on full houses and membership, £10 a year for 20% ticket reduction. The whole theatre, from management to lighting/sound, bar and box office is run by volunteers, which is a unique operational model. Check out the web site for more information.

What Is Bio-diversity and what does it mean for me?

The parish council has recently formed a Biodiversity Committee. One of the first questions to ask is, 'what is it all about?' In its simplest terms, biodiversity is the range and mixture of plants, animals and organisms in an environment. Nature is wonderful and manages, generally, to keep this in balance. However, nature isn't allowed to get on with it in isolation. We all impact the balance through our day-to-day lives. This is why managing biodiversity is so important.

We can allow deadwood to rot naturally providing habitat for bugs and insects and consequently increasing available food sources for birds etc.

We can all be mindful of the impact our actions have on where we live. For most of us, it is in our own gardens that we can have the most direct effect on biodiversity in our environment. Perhaps we can learn to embrace wilder areas in our gardens. Do we have to remove all those weeds or can we learn to integrate wildflowers into our borders.

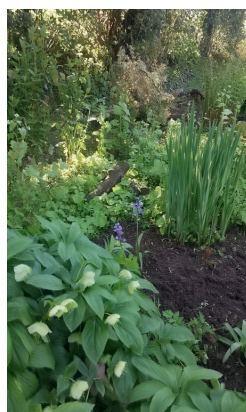


By allowing and encouraging natural predators such as ladybirds and bluetits by using bug-hotels and nest boxes, we don't need to rely on chemical control of aphids and the like. We can also consider making homemade compost, both reducing waste sent to council sites and returning the nutrients from our garden waste back to our garden – true recycling!

For more info please contact Cllr Joseph Clark, chair of the newly formed BPC Biodiversity Committee – j.clark@beetham-pc.gov.uk



We should think about how, when or if we use weedkillers and pesticides. Do we have to have a pristine lawn, or can we celebrate the daisies, self-heal, dandelions, speedwell and clover which naturally grow and provide such a feast for our pollinating insects



New benches – enjoy the view



The Parish Council has replaced two wooden benches that had deteriorated pretty badly with ones made from recycled plastics – 'enjoy the view'.

You can try them out at the end of Storth Road/Park Road and at St John's Cross.

Are you ready for analogue landline switch off in 2027?

What the phase-out of analogue phone lines, also known as the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), means for you and what you need to think about:

- don't wait for a letter
- find out your switch-off date
- test your old corded phone
- check medical & fall alarms
- check your burglar alarm
- plan for power & internet outages
- ask for emergency call back up
- write down key phone numbers
- ask for help sooner not later

You can get more information from your current provider or download a handy checklist at

www.phonely.co.uk/uk-digital-landline-switchover



The Community Showcase event

The Showcase event in March was the first time the parish council moved away from a single-topic speaker and a council-focused agenda, instead creating a more inclusive and interactive social event. Community groups and organisations had the chance to showcase what they offer and celebrate the fantastic variety of social, educational, sporting, and fun activities available to residents of all ages. All groups were invited to bring information about their work, photos, examples of activities like artwork, crafts, or models, and a short description of what they do and have achieved over the past year. There was a fantastic response with 17 different groups and organisations being present and more than 60 residents attending. *If you want to know more about the contributors please contact: Lynda Duff at chair@beetham-pc.gov.uk*



Next year (2027) the event is booked at Heron Corn Mill on 22nd April. We would welcome all groups and organisations who want to showcase what they offer to the villages in the parish council area, it's a great way of finding out what's available to our communities. *Please contact Jessica our clerk for more info: clerk@beetham-pc.gov.uk*



What's next for Burntbarrow Plantation?

A great turn out of 39 people came to a community meeting in May at Storth Village Hall to find out the next steps for Burntbarrow Plantation – the Woods. Rachael Jepson from Forestry England (FE) gave a very comprehensive and interesting overview of Arnside & Silverdale Woodlands which is made up of 4 woodlands –Hagg Wood 19 ha; Middlebarrow 22 ha; Underlaid 132 ha; Marble Quarry 58 ha totalling: 221 ha (ha = hectares). The freehold of all these woodlands is held by the neighbouring Dallam Tower Estate. In 1962, the Forestry Commission acquired them on a 199 year lease. One of the main points that a number of residents raised was around access and paths. Rachael informed the meeting that as leaseholders FE have no powers over access issues, that sits with Dallam Tower Estates.

Another question was about the use of large heavy machines that were used to fell the trees last winter. Rachael's response was that if horses were used it would have resulted in more trips, and churned mud, as they can't carry such heavy loads. FE would have preferred to do the work during the summer months, reducing the muddy tracks etc but that would have disturbed nesting birds and red squirrels. There has to be balance and compromise.

Where did the timber go? It went to Irving Timber at Hutton Roof, the income comes back to FE for spend on other unproductive woods and recreation – they only receive 20% funding from Central Government.

So, what's going to happen to making good the paths? In summer the small digger will return, with no path closures, to tidy up the brash and later in the year replant in designated areas, leave others for natural regeneration. The 'new' trees will be native species. It was noted that we import 80% of timber needed.

There is no more work planned for the Woods. However, Marble Quarry will be having similar work done to Burntbarrow Plantation – not sure when.

More information can be found at

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/forest-planning/arnside-and-silverdale-forest-plan>



Community raises over £2000 for St John's Hospice

Storth WI held a fantastic Coffee Morning in April in aid of St John's Hospice 40th anniversary, raising £1145. Residents enjoyed a range of stalls; plants, raffle, cakes, jigsaws, refreshments, tombola. Also in April resident Les Elbourne hosted an afternoon tea in memory of his wife, Margaret, who had been cared for by St John's, this raised another £1000.

The Shipwreck – Keeping Village Conversation Afloat

When The Ship on the edge of Storth and Sandside closed its doors five years ago, we lost more than a place to grab a drink and a bite to eat – we lost our living room. The spot where newcomers became neighbours, neighbours became friends, birthdays were toasted, anniversaries celebrated and condolences shared over a quiet drink. That's why a small group of volunteers launched The Shipwreck in the village hall. Every six months, we roll out the barrel, set up the tables, and for one evening the heart of the village beats a little louder. We believe the art of conversation is not dead – it just needs the right setting. The Shipwreck provides exactly that: a relaxed, welcoming space where phones go in pockets and people actually talk. No background TV, no rush for last orders, just good company and unhurried chat – and more often than not loud bursts of laughter. The benefits reach far beyond the drinks. For all our residents, young or old, it's a chance to socialise close to home and to enjoy an affordable night out. For everyone, it's a reminder we're part of something larger than our own four walls.



See you at the next one on
Saturday 14th November.
thank you Grant Ritchie

Would you like to receive
the newsletter digitally?
If so, please go to our
website where you find
the 'contact us' link.

Keep safe in the water

If you get into difficulties:

float to live

- 1 tilt you head back, submerge your ears
- 2 relax & control your breathing
- 3 move your hands & legs to help stay afloat
- 4 don't worry if your legs sink, we all float differently
- 5 practice floating in a swimming pool

If you see someone struggling

phone – float – throw

- 1 phone 999 to get help
- 2 tell them to stay calm & float on their back
- 3 throw them something that floats

DO NOT ENTER THE WATER

Contact Your Councillors - we welcome 4 new councillors



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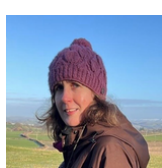
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Clerk

Do you know who owns this
bench in Beetham? BPC
would like to replace it as it's
in a poor state.

Contact
Jessica our
clerk if you
have any
info

