

Buttermere Parish Council

Minutes of the annual general meeting of Buttermere Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th May 2026 at The Old School Room, Buttermere followed by May parish council meeting.

The chair declared the meeting open at 7.35pm and councillors only present and therefore the meeting would commence with the presentation by Bethany Berry-Henshaw of West Cumbria Rivers Trust.

577.00 Presentation by Bethany Berry-Henshaw, Project Officer, West Cumbria's River Trust. "The Buttermere nutrients project."

577.01 Bethany handed out to all present a double sided A4 summary sheet of her talk and proceeded to work her way through the various headings. The talk revolved around Buttermere Lake failing to meet the standards of below 0.005 mg/L total phosphorous and Natural England's assessment that the lake was therefore assessed as Unfavourable and Declining. There were detailed explanations of test undertaken and the involvement of properties who engaged with the with the project. The test took place between April and September 2025 and the results and graphs clearly indicated that high visitor number in April, June, July and August created the results. Councillors discovered that there was now in place an operational footfall counter mechanism, and highlighted the visitor number spikes. The survey which was carried out also clearly highlighted the high number of dogs, an average of 1.5 dogs per visitor.

577.02 after the talk, in a general Q&A session, it was confirmed that inefficient septic tanks were one of the main contributory factors to the problem. However, when the team leading the survey engaged with folk, local owners of septic tanks were keen to engage and attempt to improve the situation. Installed footfall counter indicated that on a low day only 450 visitors would be recorded, but at peak times this would exceed 2000. Bethany's parting gift was to leave a copy of the, not yet approved for general circulation, 28-page Buttermere Nutrient Investigations Project.

577.03 the chair thanked Bethany for her attendance and presentation, she was invited to stay, but declined the invitation.

The chair then at 8.04pm returned to the agenda for the meeting commencing with the Buttermere AGM.

Present: Cllrs H Fear Davies (chair), A McGuire, K Beard, L Kyle, Y Kahane, J Barton

Cumberland Councillor: Jill Perry.

Clerk: Mike Milner.

Apologies for absence: v. chair Cllr E Beard.

578.00 to appoint a chair and vice-chair for the coming year.

578.01 Cllr L.K on hearing the current chair state she was happy to continue in the role, proposed Cllr H F-D, promptly seconded by Cllr Y.K, no other proposals, Cllr H F.D elected.

578.02 the chair conformed that Cllr K.B was happy to take on the role of vice-chair and take on some of the chair's events task responsibility, Cllr E.B was happy to stand aside, therefore Cllr H F.D proposed Cllr K.B for v. chair seconded by Cllr L.K, elected unanimously.

578.03 chair and v. chair signed their respective acceptance of office declarations. Cllr J.B had also signed his acceptance of office declaration, following his co-option at the last parish council meeting.

Chair closed the AGM meeting 8.09pm.

Buttermere Parish Council meeting 26th May 2026

The chair opened the regular parish council meeting at 8.10pm.

Present: As above

Cumberland Councillor: Jill Perry.

Clerk: Mike Milner.

Apologies for absence: Cllr E.B

579.00 Declaration of Interest.

579.01 Cllr J.B declared an interest in Environmental issues as E A employee and also on this occasion an interest in planning as he had a planning application which was current in the parish.

580.00 To approve and accept the minutes of the last Buttermere parish council meeting held on Tuesday 4th March 2025 as a true record.

580.01 Minutes were approved by councillors present and duly signed.

581.00 Public participation, no member of public present, no outstanding reports.

582.00 Police Matters.

582.01 Clerk had circulated the police e newsletters as they were issued. Reminded Cllrs that there was another Police Teams meeting on 5th August 2026 at 6pm. Cllr J.B requested he had the link and wished to attend. Clerk to provide, he attends Cockermouth meeting as they seem to have more involvement than Keswick office, although there is apparent cross over.

583.00 Visitor Management – updates on recent communications with LDNPA and other agencies. Rannerdale Bluebell parking and Gatesgarth double yellow lines.

This was then combined with agenda item 13, **Chair's report on local enquiry.** 583.01 chair commenced the discussion and as she was keen for CC Jill Perry to hear and contribute included the ACTs enquiry report at item 13.

583.02 on 5th May there had been a meeting of the LDNP North Area parishes, chair Cllr H F-D was one of the co-ordinators, but she felt that their complaints are not properly dealt with or considered by the agencies involved. She sited various examples just locally about traffic issues experienced over the bluebell period, the recent bank holiday and even an email exchange that day with the local police sergeant over a social media post by the police, on the face of it approving of illegal camping broadcast as a PSA. The police had changed the post. The conclusion was that all issued should be reported by Cllrs to PSPO@cumberland.gov.uk so that those running the visitor management could see a true picture of the issues.

583.03 the chair then discussed the ACTs local enquiry and engaged with Cllr J.P as this enquiry was just not as advertised or portrayed.

However, with no parish councillor involvement, or parish chair it could not really provide accurate across the board information. Chair had made it clear it was not good use of her time. Other parish chairs were also following the Buttermere chair's approach about involvement, because to attend meetings and have no input was a pointless exercise.

584.00 Matters concerning Cumberland Councillor.

584.01 Cllr J.P confirmed that the local government Boundary Commission plan had been completed and that Melbreak would remain as was, with the 4 original parishes remaining in the same community ward. She was delighted to hear that there were no issues with the local bin collection. A brief discussion on emptying of local public waste bins. Cllr L.K to enquire of the man he knows, who actually he works for.

585.00 Applications for development, to include update on Crummock Water weir removal.

585.01 clerk confirmed that United Utilities have advised that they have withdrawn the current weir removal application for Crummock Water. There are on-going discussions with various agencies, one being with EA and their flood model review. Earliest time for holding further community engagement sessions is now autumn 2026.

585.02 clerk had received application for a replacement forward operating station at Gatesgarth, 7/2026/2082. Clerk had circulated plans and appropriate statements for the development, prior to the meeting. All councillors approved the application, clerk to advise planning accordingly.

585.03 Craggfoot, Buttermere, demolition of existing living room and addition of new 2 storey extension, 7/2026/2053 had been approved.

586.00 Receive and approve the parish council accounts for the financial year 2025/26. Consider and approve the signature of 2025/26 Certificate of Exemption, Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26, Accounting Statement 2025/26, Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 plus receive the bank reconciliation and variance report for 25/26. Draft documents circulated prior to meeting to all councillors.

586.01 Clerk went through the various documents he had circulated and he and the chair signed where necessary once they had been approved by the councillors.

586.02 Certificate of Exemption, AGAR 2025/26 Part 2. This confirms that the parish has neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25k. Inspected by councillors and signed by clerk and chair.

586.03 Clerk had circulated the signed Annual Internal Audit Report. Internal audit had taken place 03/11/25 and 24/04/26. All boxes correctly ticked, and no issues or recommendations raised by the auditor.

586.04 Annual Governance Statement. Clerk read the content of the 9 boxes on the form and at each statement to be ticked Yes box with Cllrs approval. Document signed by clerk and chair.

586.05 Finally the accounting statement, which had been circulated was approved by councillors and again was duly signed by RFO and chair.

586.06 Once minutes written up minute reference numbers will be inserted and accounts submitted to external auditor and made available for public inspection and on the website.

587.00 Resolve to accept Zurich Parish Council Ins' renewal, 2026/27, premium £179.72.

587.01 cllrs unanimously resolved to accept the insurance premium and payment.

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588.00 Bus stop in Buttermere. Its relocation.

588.01 clerk confirmed that he had been told email exchanges to resolve the location. A new member of the bus team has been introduced into the equation, but the individual seems enthusiastic. Clerk will keep chasing and keep Croft House Farm Café involved. Advised a sign has appeared opposite the official pole and flag. Clerk to investigate and report accordingly.

589.00 Councillors' observations on flooding land by Mill Beck and 2 PROWs and adjoining land.

589.01 clerk had been advised of an issue on NT land which was meaning Mill Beck was changing its course, flooding immediate area making it difficult for residents and visitors from using two PROW paths and also the flooding was making pasture unavailable for adjoining landowner to allow cattle to graze the area.

589.02 clerk had been in contact with LDNP Rights of Way officer, who had a supplied a length history of the situation.

589.03 It transpires that Cllr L.K has a meeting with E.A on 3rd June at 11am about the issue and Cllr J.B has volunteered to attend that meeting, as did chair Cllr H F-D if needs be. Clerk to take no further action until Cllrs come back and advise what has transpired at the agreed meeting. Once the clerk has feedback from that meeting, he will email NT's Neil Winder.

590.00 Clerk and other councillors to report on TEAMS meeting with Karl Melville on 20th May, Highways 2026/27 projects and use of HIAMS system.

590.01 clerk advised that he and Cllrs Y.K and K.B had sat through a 100-minutes Highways TEAMS presentation on Wednesday 20th May. There were probably 20 Cumberland Parishes represented. Clerk had screenshot the relevant slides from the presentation. In a nutshell the Highways team have insufficient funding, the quality of material is just not of the standard that it used to be, that being due to potential harm to the environment. Highways are arguing with government that the payment they receive based on total road mileage responsible for, 3623km of carriageway (2174m) they as a holiday destination get a far higher percentage of cars per year than the carriageway figure indicates.

590.02 There is supposed to be available a superior pothole repair machine, a much-promoted JCB machine, however it was acknowledged that Highways employees do not like using it. A machine equivalent of AI? Highways developing a new updated HIAMS system over the next 18 months and that will come linked to "Fix My Street". Cllr K.B advised cllrs that one comment was that a proper repair used to have a life span of 20 years, **and now some after 7 years show signs of wear and tear.** Cllr L.K wondered why they never repair a section of road and then tar and chip. The final comment from the team on the night was "That they could do better."

591.00 Consider offer of £1500 by Kantana Films Ltd, for a suitable project/cause in Buttermere Parish. Company using Buttermere as film location May/June 2026.

591.00 clerk read out the offer from the film company's Location Manager of £1500 to a parish cause/project. Cllrs all finally agreed that The Old School Room, the building the parish council used for its meetings, would be an ideal recipient for such a donation. Cllrs remarked on state of decoration and heating. A visual make over internally, now the roof has been done would be perfect. Clerk will contact the PCC who are responsible, asking if they could ring fence the monies, and undertake such a venture, something that was visible to the eye, not just accept the money as a retrospective roof donation.

592.00 Clerk to update on Buttermere Parish Council's compliance with Assertion 10, plus current position with possible merger with Loweswater Parish Council.

592.01 clerk had discovered that Melbreak Communities is actually www.melbreakcommunities.org.uk so using that as the published website address is perfect for all the Melbreak Parishes. Buttermere has not registered a gov.uk email because back in Nov' 2025 it was considering and still is a merger with Loweswater. To undertake the merger there needs to be a Community Governance Review (CGR) to look at the merging and that takes approximately 12 months. Due to the extension of the Boundary Comision Review, there is now no possibility of starting a CGR until after the May 2027 elections. That would make earliest for a merger May 2028? Clerk currently battling with Calc about gov.uk for email.

593.00 Progress reports, clerk.

593.01 clerk has had various exchanges with the lady running Lakeland 100 and has been assured there will be no noisy supporters or clapping in Buttermere on the late evening or early hours of the morning of the event. Clerk to circulate the phone number to all Cllrs so they can call, as requested if there are issues.

593.02 clerk emailed Highways about possible closure of B5289 from Beck House up to Lisa Beck. Clerk advised Highways will communicate directly with the parish as plans for closure are put in place. Clerk to keep contact with Highways to ensure it does involve the parish and all its employers.

593.03 public convenience sign referred in minute 572.05 is actually LDNP handiwork. LDNP's Neil Leadbetter confirmed.

593.04 missing Heritage sign, "Buttermere" reported E1/291659, it is officially on Highways "future Works" list.

594.00 Councillors reports.

594.01, chair confirmed she had attended a Cocker Catchment meeting and that Cllr K.B was going to be responsible for looking out for events that may involve Buttermere and its immediate surrounding area.

595.00 Correspondence.

595.01 clerk forwarded Cllr Peter Walter e newsletters.

595.02 clerk had received an email from Cllr G Medd advising of his immediate resignation. Clerk had put a notification in the noticeboard outside The Old School Room that night and chair confirmed vacancy in the next edition of The Link.

595.03 Moore, government auditor had provided all the relevant forms and instructions for year end audit.

595.04 Calc had provided their subscription request letter. £117.90 for 2026/27 year, 81 registered voters in Buttermere parish.

595.05 clerk advised latest government legislation his mileage figure has increased to 55p/m from 45p/m first increase since 2011.

595.06 invoice received from Simone Morgan for year end audit fee, £30.

596.00 Payments for approval.

Intpay166, M Milner, £133.00, salary April £133. No expenses.

Intpay167, HMRC, PAYE, £33.20 April.

Intpay 168, Melbreak Communities, £50.00 web hosting charge for 2026

April clerk's payments made to confirm with HMRC submission and payment time limits

Intpay169, M Milner, £170.40, May salary £133.00 expenses £37.40

Intpay170, HMRC PAYE, £33.20 May

Intpay 171, Calc annual subscription, £117.90.

Intpay 172, Zurich, £179.72, annual parish insurance premium 2026/27

Intpay 173, Simone Morgan, £30.00 2025/26 end of year audit fee.

All approved

**597.00 Date and time of the next meeting. Tuesday 1st September 2026, 7.30pm,
at Old School Room, Buttermere.**

Meeting closed 9.32

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