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Little Clifton Parish Plan 2005



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With Compliments

Little Clifton Parish Plan

A community consultation published by Little Clifton Parish Council 2005

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Contents

Background to the Parish Plan	2
The geography of Little Clifton	3
A little history of Little Clifton	3
Children and young people	7
Communication	9
Crime, nuisance and policing	9
Education	10
Employment and local business	11
Environment	12
Health	18
Housing	19
Local services	20
Planning	23
Transport and traffic	26
The Village Hall	28
Action Plan	30

Background to the Parish Plan

Who are the Parish Council?

Little Clifton Parish Council is made up of local people and is the lowest, and most local form of government and is only concerned with our Parish. Like all Parish Councils, it has some modest powers of its own, including the power to "precept" for funds to be used within the Parish. This money is collected as part of the Council Tax and is shown on the annual Council Tax bill issued to each house by Allerdale Borough Council. The Parish Council can make up for what it may lack in power, by being an effective voice for the community; on issues such as traffic, planning and policing.

Little Clifton Parish Council is made up of nine councillors. As there were fewer than nine candidates at the last election no election was held, and, when necessary the Parish Council can co-opt new members to keep up numbers. Parish Councillors are unpaid and no qualifications are required, although the Government expects increasingly high standards of representation from Parish Councils. These days it is necessary to employ a part-time Clerk of some expertise to cope with the administrative workload. The Clerk is not one of the Councillors, and the post requires a fair salary.

The Parish Council meets at the Village Hall every month, usually the second Wednesday at 7pm. Members of the public are welcome to attend any meeting and there is always an opportunity for members of the public to speak.

What is the Parish Plan?

Little Clifton Parish Council has consulted the community over the last two years and drawn up this "Parish Plan" document as a review of the community as it is now, and to set out what the community can do in the future. The Parish Plan is intended to discuss:

- issues that are important to our community, that are also

- issues that can be responded to as a community.

At the same time, it was also hoped that the Parish Plan exercise itself would contribute to the community spirit and encourage more folk to become involved in the life of Little Clifton.

The Parish Plan began with a drop-in day at the Village Hall in May 2003 when a lot of comments and ideas came in. A questionnaire was sent to every household in Little Clifton Parish, and also in Nepgill and the part of Bridgefoot which is actually in Greysouthen Parish but is part of the same community. In October 2003, 59 completed forms were collected - a response rate of just under one-third; a summary of the results was then distributed to every household. Further public meetings were held in May 2004 and in April 2005. These consultations have helped the Parish Council to produce this Parish Plan, which in turn will help to tackle the issues identified over the next few years.

The last local survey along the lines of the Parish Plan resulted in a report called "Your village and you - Little Clifton and District", which was published in 1981. Since then, the total population of the Parish is virtually unchanged. Some of the same concerns remain - the condition of footpaths, the need for local policing, dissatisfaction with bus services. There are some visible changes in the last quarter century. The conversions of the school at Chapel Brow and the Greyhound pub in Little Clifton into private houses; the expansion of the Melbreak Hotel; the Stainburn bypass ending at the roundabout at the A66/A595 junction. A quarter of a century ago the report authors noted the rising oil prices and worried that the lack of employment in the Parish would mean that families would leave the community to move nearer to jobs in Workington and Whitehaven. However, with our ever-greater reliance on travel by car and with 26 new houses under construction in Little Clifton in 2005, this fear has not been realised and almost the opposite is true - at least for now.

The Geography of Little Clifton

Little Clifton is a small parish in area, the largest part lying between Lostrigg Beck to the west and the River Marron, which the eastern Parish boundary closely follows. The Parish extends south towards Stargill and a short reach of the River Derwent forms the northern boundary. Although we have our rivers and riverbanks, the high ground in the Parish draws the eye across open country to the lakeland fells.

Although the two Cliftons are combined in one ecclesiastical parish, Great Clifton is a separate civil parish. Little Clifton Parish is also small in population, recorded as 391 in the 2001 census, which is lower than the census figures for the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The residents of part of Bridgefoot (principally

Bridgefoot west of the Marron), Chapel Brow, Crossbarrow as well as Little Clifton itself are all within Little Clifton Parish, plus a very few out-lying homes towards Oldfield (hump back) Bridge.

The part of Bridgefoot that is east of the old railway line and the community of Nepgill both lie in Greysouthen Parish, but are socially and geographically more closely linked to Little Clifton Parish. It was therefore agreed to deal with this part of Greysouthen Parish in the Little Clifton Parish Plan. The Parish has no clearly defined village, and perhaps local poet Derwent Pickering got it about right when he described the community as "cluster'd hamlets".

A little history of Little Clifton

St. Luke's Church overlooks much of the community. The Church has more history than its Victorian stone walls might suggest. Inside St. Luke's there are beasts, with a naked human rider. This is an image on the upper part of the shaft of a sandstone cross. This stone was found when the current Church was rebuilt in 1900, after serving for centuries as a door lintel. Two more interlaced beasts with another rider dominate the lower carving, with another figure with halo or long hair bound by interlaced animals, that may represent Christ, but could also be interpreted as one of several characters from Scandinavian mythology. This work reflects the "Jellinge" style of long and reptile-like animals, curling among the twists of their own tails, named after Jellinge in Denmark, where it was the common style after about 930AD. The stone surviving at St. Luke's in the 21st century was probably quarried from the banks of the Derwent, then carved with symbolism, as an elaborate Norse gravestone, and set up at the site of St. Luke's in the tenth century. It is surely the oldest manmade thing in the Parish.



St Lukes Church

Reverend Richard J.S. Watson researched and wrote a local history called "Cumberland's Clifton" when he was vicar of St. Luke's in 1970. On the origins of the Church, Rev'd Watson explained that "the present church houses a doorway made up in 1778 of an ancient church, now vanished...it is of Norman origin and shows us that a Chapel stood here in Norman times. Another mark of Norman origin is to be seen in the small cross on the east end of the roof. This is the cross that stood on the Norman church." Rev'd Watson's research found ecclesiastical and tax records for Clifton from as early as the 12th century and he hoped his efforts might perhaps inspire other local historians.

The great change in the life of Little Clifton began in the late 17th and early 18th century as the land-owning Curwens and Lowthers began to exploit what would become the West Cumberland coalfield. At different times various pits were sunk including near the Marron, and at Chapel Brow, to reach the local coal seams. Mining was eventually the most significant local employment in what had been an agricultural community. The last mine engineering in the Parish was a drift access to the underground workings at Clifton Pit (William Pit at Great Clifton) opened up near Cinderbanks, Little Clifton. This drift was only used for few years before 1960, when Clifton Pit closed.

Robinson - Rob - Dixon was born in 1934, at Marron Lane, where he still lives. He recollects a very close community spirit in the days of Clifton Pit, linked to so many working lives being spent together down the pit and on the pit top. This meant that everybody knew each other, that people walked in and out of houses, and folk knew who to rely on and who, perhaps, not to rely on. The legacy left by generations of miners is mainly hidden underground, but can resurface. The resident of number 30 Nepgill once came out to find a deep hole had appeared next to his caravan. It was an old pit shaft and the National Coal Board had to come and fill it in.

By the mid-1700s effective iron production needed coke made from coal and Cookson's Brigfoot ironworks at Little Clifton was possibly the earliest commercial iron-making site in

Cumberland, joined in 1754 by a nearby furnace opened by the Senhouses of Netherhall. Cookson's & Co mined local coal and processed it into coke and also had reasonable access to high grade Cumberland iron ore. However early blast furnaces, like Cookson's, had quality control problems. Although the resulting brittle iron could be used to make domestic items, like flatirons and pots, and for iron goods for the coal mines, local iron production moved on to Workington to be followed by steel making. The names Furnace House and Cinderbanks recall this former industry.

Isaac Wilkinson was a foundryman at Brigfoot ironworks who farmed in his spare time. His first son John was born in 1728. Legend has it that John's mother gave birth to him in the cart on the way to market to sell her produce. Local sages felt that surviving birth in such difficult circumstances was a good omen and said, "T'lad sum tyme wod bee a girt man." They were right, the baby grew up to be the self-proclaimed "Ironmaster" John Wilkinson. John Wilkinson appears to have spent the first seven years of his life in Little Clifton, but then moved on. By 1748 he had built his first blast furnace near Wolverhampton. After developing a cannon-boring machine he adapted his invention for use in making cylinders for Boulton & Watt's steam engines. He was involved in the world's first Iron Bridge in 1779 at Telford, and in 1787 launched the first iron barge. He died in Staffordshire in 1808 and was buried in an iron coffin marked by an iron obelisk, his eventual resting place being at Lindale Church, near Grange over Sands.



Clifton Green Farm

Railways were built to serve other industries, but also became an important employer. Whilst the route of the Cockermouth & Workington Railway of 1847 stuck close to the Derwent, from Marron Junction just north of Bridgefoot, a line ran South following the Marron, via a modest station in Bridgefoot, on to Rowrah and Egremont. This was built by the Whitehaven, Cleator & Egremont Railway to transport iron ore to the blast furnaces at Workington and Whitehaven. The track was lifted in 1955, the goods traffic having dwindled away, but some of the formation and bridges remain. By then, road travel had become dominant and the line from Workington to Cockermouth itself closed in 1966.

Local agriculture also changed with the industrial age, and has continued to change. The fine stone barns at Clifton Green Farm dating from 1852 and due to be converted to houses still contained in 2005 a threshing machine once driven by a shaft from the adjoining engine house. Local agricultural activity has greatly diminished. Ivy Sloan, now in her eighties, has lived in Little Clifton most of her life and remembers many farms, and some of the families associated with them, including Mason's Farm (Collister, Wedgewood, Berry), Scot's Croft (Crow, Minshaw), Home Farm (Marshall, Saul), Clifton Green Farm (Walker), Furnace House (Brown) and Punderland (Bradshaw, Bowerbank). Only Punderland is still a working farm within the Parish.

With industrialisation and a growing population social changes also came to Little Clifton in schooling, recreation, religious non-conformism and shopping. For over 120 years the school at Chapel Brow educated generations from Little Clifton and Great Clifton. Mary Wilkinson lived in one of the old pit houses that backed directly onto the school. Mary recalls that she and her sister could see their mother with the washing in their yard from the schoolroom window and, through the same window, their mother passed them their bait. Ivy Sloan also went to school at Chapel Brow and remembers Sunday School walks round the village, across the Lostrigg via Dolly Styles and up to Crossbarrow. Before closure in the 1980s, a replacement school had been planned in Little Clifton. Rob Dixon feels rather sad that there was some

determination to close the school, but he acknowledges that more pupils came from Great Clifton.



The Stone

As well as the Duke's Head, there were two other pubs; the Horseshoe and Sickie in Bridgefoot near the railway, run by Mrs Barnes and the Greyhound at Little Clifton opposite the village green. Ivy Sloan recalls that the Greyhound's closure gave rise to complaints about having to walk all the way to Bridgefoot and back! Possibly the earliest public hall, now long gone, was a first floor reading room next to White House, Little Clifton. Downstairs was an early chip shop. Later, in the 1920s, a wooden hut was put up on the village green, officially as a Reading Room, although billiards, snooker, cards and dominoes were preferred to literature. At Chapel Brow there was a Miners Welfare hall built, of stone, onto the end of one of the now-demolished terraces, again featuring a billiard table. An Old Folks Committee was set up in the 1920s, a tradition that survives to this day with the Christmas party.

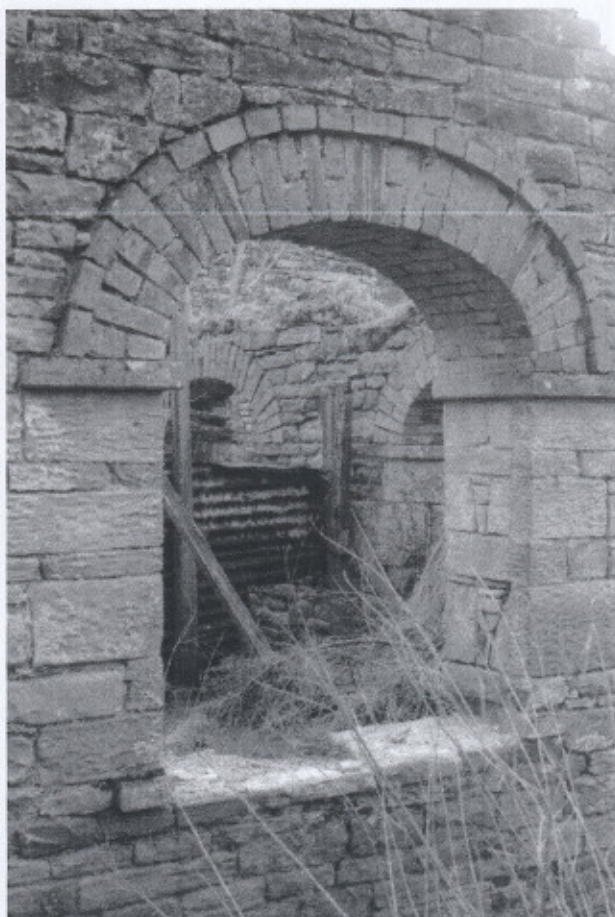
Between 1887 and 1965 Methodist worshippers could use the Wesleyan Chapel at Bridgefoot, now a private house. Bridgefoot had a Co-op as well as a little shop with a Post Office. The Post Office moved to Chapel Terrace and then Cat Bank. At one point there were plans to make the Co-op into a supermarket but instead it closed.

Rob Dixon's earliest recollection of an event in the Parish is the excavation of a 20-yard long air raid shelter next to Chapel Brow School in 1940. The excavated soil was heaped on top and the interior of the shelter lined with corrugated tin sheets. This was entirely cut by hand and caused some cut hands in the process. Later during the war the Policeman stationed at Great Clifton reprimanded Rob for riding his bicycle with lights ON during black-out. Rob remembers that the German prisoners of war put to work digging drains were very friendly, and still wonders why they were allowed so close to Marron Junction where live ammunition was being stored in railway wagons!

In the years after the second world war an annual highlight was carnival horse-drawn decorated floats starting at Chapel Brow ending at Home Farm where the village Sports was held. Rob Dixon recalls how in his youth the youngsters used to knock around in groups, making their own entertainment. Sometimes mischief

was made; a favourite was "fire the spouts". This involved stuffing three downspouts on a terrace of houses with newspapers, then lighting the paper causing a short, loud roar of air. Rob says he cannot remember being bored, there was always help to offer on the farms, particularly at tatie picking time. Rob Dixon reflects as to how many local "characters" remain. There was, for example, Lizzie Brown who habitually sat with a pipe on a chair at her front door on Lostrigg Terrace wearing cap and clogs. Rob says that Lizzie would always shout as the children passed on their way home from school at Chapel Brow "Come here, I want tha! Who are ya and what do they call ya?"

So, the last sixty years or so in the Parish has seen many of the things that came with the industrial age disappear; Bridgefoot and Chapel Brow have been bypassed by the "new" A66; and there has been considerable construction of new housing, some replacing older housing. What then does the future have in store.....?



Clifton Green Barn - soon to be developed into houses

Children and young people

The Parish Council is keen to help support the provision of facilities for children and young people. In the survey, questions were raised to find out what is needed. The answers received did not give a clear picture, so the Parish Plan group arranged to meet the children at an event in the Village Hall with the help of the Reef project from Cockermouth. The Reef Youth Café in Cockermouth is run by a charitable company, (www.the-reef.org.uk), with a proven track record of reaching 200 young people a week, so they are experts at what they do. A three hour session was run by a team from the Reef at the Village Hall on 30th April 2005 aimed at young people aged 11+. With big-screen computer games, DJ mixing decks, and a mini menu of food and soft drinks on offer, it was well attended, and is a model that can be repeated. The young people were asked what they would like to see in the village as facilities for themselves. They wanted similar events to be repeated in the Village Hall and they wanted an area to meet and play.

This is not an unreasonable request, and the Parish Council will support future youth activities, which could include similar events or could mean ensuring that there is transport available for young people to reach places such as the Reef Youth Café. However, a commitment from adults and parents from within the community is essential in order for regular activities for our young people to happen. The Parish Council have also agreed to support a project which will involve the children and youths and look at possible locations for a play area in the village.

There are currently no facilities within the parish for children or young people. In the past, play equipment was available on the village green and adjacent to the village hall. However, both sets of equipment became unsafe due to vandalism and the Parish Council was advised to remove the unsafe play equipment.

The Parish Council regularly receives complaints about nuisance behaviour by young people, and recognise there is no facilities for youngsters, nor anywhere for them to go.



*The Reef event at the Village Hall
April 2005*

It would be sensible to plan separate provision of facilities for different age groups, and there may be advantages to play equipment being in a different location to a sports area. Although one respondent to the survey feared a sports field could become a place of both anti-social behaviour and vandalism, and certainly this concern must be taken into account. There is no ideal location in the Parish. But compared to the unsafe situation where ball games are

played in the road, any location that is off-road and off private property is desirable. The Parish Council suggest considering the following sites:

- The village green - not ideal for ball games. Immediate residents are opposed to replacement play equipment on the green due to previous noise and vandalism. But there may be opportunities for quiet play and recreation.
- Land at Scots Croft - centrally located near to family homes, and an area for ball games could be created. Cumbria County Council, the landowner, has in the past offered part of the remaining field. However, at the time the Parish Council refused the offer as it was linked to an agreement for more new houses.
- Field behind Valley View - near to where many of the young people live, has not recently been used for livestock. However, the owner of the field did not respond positively to the Parish Council's enquiries in 2004 for lease or acquisition as a sports field. This enquiry could be revisited.
- Land adjacent to the Village Hall - may become available for the Parish and is a good sized area. However from a safety viewpoint, it is isolated from family residences and near to the main road. The Parish Council has previously written to the landowner to acquire this site.

Funding for such facilities would need to be raised. A few years ago some funds were awarded to the community but were returned when no play field site could be found.

These issues have been discussed by the Parish Plan group. The addition of new households in Little Clifton will further highlight the lack of play equipment or a sports field. These new homes are marketed as family homes and will introduce more children to the parish.

If this very important issue was run as a project by the community a successful result is possible. This may kick off with a targeted survey followed by a meeting for residents, parents and children and by researching the types of play equipment and sports equipment available. This will only happen if people are willing to volunteer their time to drive this as a project.



*The Reef event at the Village Hall
April 2005*

Communications

The household survey found that most people would read a Parish magazine, whereas few were interested in being involved in producing one. In recent years there has been no regular local circular since the church parochial magazine distributed in Great Clifton and Little Clifton ceased. In spring 2005 the Parish Clerk put together a Parish Council newsletter, delivered by volunteers to every household. If this is well received, the plan is to produce a newsletter on a quarterly basis, and to welcome contributions

of items of local interest. Although half of the households responding to the survey did not have internet access, and although no-one has yet volunteered to set up a community website, the internet is ever-growing, and even at a village or parish level this will surely become an increasingly important means of communication. Currently, the agenda for meetings of Little Clifton Parish Council are published every month at www.calc.org.uk.

Crime, nuisance and policing

Fortunately Little Clifton is not a high crime area, however, vandalism and nuisance behaviour has been a local problem for several years. Over two-thirds of people responding to the survey wished for a more visible Police presence in the Parish, with eight people stating that crime or nuisance was a significant worry for them. Seventeen respondents had reported an incident to the police in 2002 or 2003, with six doing so more than once.

Recently there has been a rise in the number of incidents of disorder reported to the police - in the first quarter of 2004 there was one complaint, rising to nine in the second quarter. Likewise, four crimes were reported in the first quarter and six in the second quarter. This does not necessarily indicate a crime wave and may in fact reflect increased awareness of the importance of reporting problems to the Police. Hopefully, now that the Parish has a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, a reduction in nuisance and crime will be felt. Neighbourhood Watch schemes are a crime prevention initiative that works by local people getting together to cut local crime and reduce the opportunities for crime and to reassure those people who live in fear of crime. Neighbourhood Watch schemes

also keep in close touch with local police to share information and advice. In practice, a Neighbourhood Watch should also reduce nuisance behaviour.

During the Parish Plan process, quite a few people showed an interest in starting a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the Parish and also for Neppill. The Neighbourhood Watch idea has been taken up by residents, following the Parish Plan public meeting in March 2004, and a number of volunteers have come forward to act as co-ordinators for the small patches in which they live. So far, there are six co-ordinators covering their own areas, but there is not yet full coverage, the biggest "gap" being Valley View. Each coordinator takes responsibility for Neighbourhood Watch publicity and communication on their patch. The Parish Council has funded the cost of erecting Neighbourhood Watch signs at strategic locations in the Parish. There have been several local meetings which have been well-attended by residents and also by Home Housing Association and the community police officer and it is anticipated that further public meetings will take place from time to time.

Neighbourhood Watch activity in the Workington area is co-ordinated by a full time development officer, John Thornthwaite. He can be contacted at the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), The Oval Centre, Salterbeck Drive, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 5HA. Telephone (01946) 833353. The link between the Neighbourhood Watch and Little Clifton Parish Council is maintained by Parish Councillor Jean McCartney.

Perhaps the most important message from Neighbourhood Watch is that making prompt and detailed reports of incidents or crimes is essential in order that the police can give the community a sufficient year-round police presence and respond effectively to incidents when they happen.

Community Police Officer

The majority of the community has welcomed our Community Police Officer, Scott Adams. At present there will be no change to his position and the community relationship should carry on for at least two years.

PC Scott Adams of Cumbria Constabulary writes: In February 2004 I became a Community Police officer and was asked to perform this duty in Little Clifton among others. From day one I was given the help needed to bring to justice a number of offenders and also calm the local sometimes "unruly kids". I am glad to say that I believe that my time in the village has been a success and I am looking forward to more success in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank every one for their respective help and also the very successful Neighbourhood Watch scheme, which is now up and running in the area.

PC1662 Adams, Workington Police Station. Telephone (01900) 602422.

Education

Primary Schools

Little Clifton is in the catchment area of Derwent Vale Primary and Nursery School, Great Clifton. The purpose-built school replaced the former school at Chapel Brow, which served a similar area. In 2004/2005 Derwent Vale has 70 children on the roll, divided into four classes, compared to 117 children at Chapel Brow in 1980/1981. Derwent Vale also has a baby and toddler group.

The Head Teacher, Mrs. Emma Watson, believes that the School benefits from good links to the community, small class sizes, high standards of teaching and of classroom support, and a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.

The "Positive Behaviour" strategies used at Derwent Vale have, Mrs. Watson points out, been praised by the Local Education Authority. Derwent Vale has recently celebrated a national league table placing higher than all other schools in the Workington and Brigham areas and sporting success with its football, netball, rugby and cross-country teams. There are after-school clubs for drama, football, guitar, gymnastics, and netball, reflecting Derwent Vale's emphasis on sport and the arts.

Parental selection of schools is now part of the landscape nationally. The effect is clear in the Parish, as although a large proportion of children do attend Derwent Vale, others attend Dean School, Eaglesfield Paddle School and St. Bridget's School, Brigham.

Secondary Schools

Our community straddles the boundary between the catchment areas of Stainburn School in Workington and Cockermouth School - the Marron River forming part of the boundary. The eastern part of Bridgefoot is therefore in the Cockermouth School catchment area, while the rest of Bridgefoot, Chapel Brow and Little Clifton, are in the Stainburn catchment area. There is also St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School in Workington. Children from the Parish attend these schools as well as Keswick School, which draws from well beyond its own catchment area.

Choice of school is important to many parents. Different educational choices mean that many youngsters of the same age from our community are already having an entirely separate education from one another. As the common ground between children and between parents through school life gives way to more diversity, the obvious prospect is a less close-knit, less cohesive community. It remains to be seen what the long-term effect in the Parish will be, but this is something that we should all be alert to.

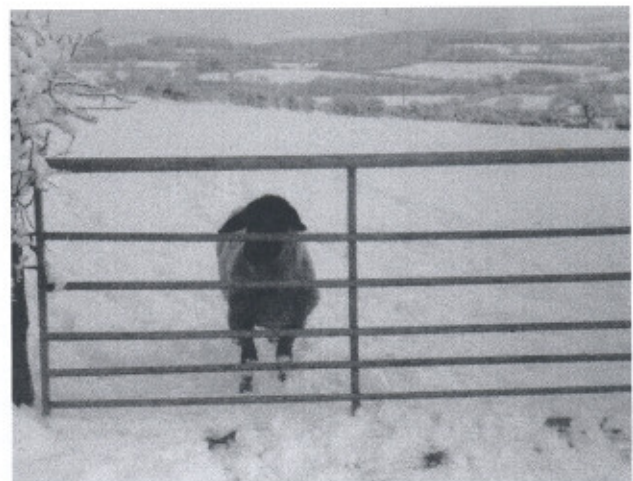
School Transport

Children attending their catchment area school are provided with transport by the Local Education Authority. Buses run to Derwent Vale, Stainburn and Cockermouth Schools, though pupils who do not live in the catchment area of the school they attend must pay for bus travel or find alternative means of transport if there are no spare places on the bus. For Keswick School, the out of catchment buses are organised and paid for by parents and one such bus runs through Bridgefoot.

Employment and local business

It is fair to say that for a long time now the community has been in economic terms a dormitory for most residents. Mining is long gone and agriculture employs very few, and like so many rural communities no real replacement employment appeared within the community itself.

The Post Office provides part-time employment for the subpostmistress. The Dukes Head at Bridgefoot and the expanding Melbreak Hotel at Crossbarrow also provide employment. Although fields



within the parish are farmed as part of units outside the parish boundary, the Parish has one working farm at Punderland, which received unfortunate publicity during agriculture's foot and mouth disaster of 2001. A highways contractor is based at Furnace House, where vehicles are stored controversially. There is a livery stables at Cinder Banks, and just outside the Parish boundary of Bridgefoot is a farrier's business, and a little further east a cattery.

It is beyond the scope of this Parish Plan to identify employment opportunities yet it is difficult to foresee new employment being created within the parish, other than perhaps the trend of home working, usually as single person businesses. One exception to this may be the proposed development of a holiday chalet centre at the Melbreak Hotel.

Environment

The natural environment

As well as Bridgefoot's signposted ducks, the Parish is home to a good diversity of fauna: Red Squirrels, Grey Heron, Slow Worms are all resident, for example. The native flora of the dykes provides the ingredients for herb pudding in the spring and blackites in September. The River Derwent and Tributaries SSSI is one of four Cumbrian river Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and so is a nationally important habitat. As well as the aquatic life, riparian habitats such as woodland, grassland, and marsh significantly contribute to the nature conservation interest of these Cumbrian rivers. Lostrigg Beck is recognised as a County Wildlife Site but, unlike an SSSI, there are no legal obligations and its conservation is reliant upon the voluntary co-operation of landowners and managers. County Wildlife Sites like the Lostrigg are a priority for environment grants such as DEFRA's Countryside Stewardship Scheme and are also recognised within the local planning system. In the south of the Parish is one area of land identified in the English Nature Lowland Grassland Inventory as "Priority Habitat: Purple moor grass and rush pasture." The River Derwent and Tributaries SSSI is divided into small "units", four of which lie in the Parish; one unit is the section of the Derwent within the Parish, the others are

sections of the Marron. The SSSI boundary takes in varying widths of riverbank, including a swathe of the wood at Cat Bank. These four SSSI units were last assessed by English Nature in October 2002 when the condition was summarised as "unfavourable - no change". English Nature blamed the condition of the Derwent upon the presence of the very invasive weed Himalayan Balsam. However, additional reasons were given for the adverse condition of the SSSI units of the Marron: bank erosion due to overgrazing, water abstraction, water pollution - agriculture/run off, water pollution - discharge, and the flow regime. English Nature also identified that action is required, and there is an English Nature SSSI management agreement over the part of the Derwent unit and the northernmost part of the Marron unit. The River Derwent and Tributaries SSSI is also a "candidate Special Area of Conservation", which is a European designation.



Entry from Jimmy Parker's Field Notes

April 21st 1953

On walking up the hill from Pastures to Punderland I saw a rook either chase or follow a bird which was uttering a harsh note. Later the bird flew over my head, very high. It then went towards the Lostrigg. I continued my walk and saw it, in the distance dive. Every time it did so, one could hear a bleating 'a-a-aer'. I was with Granda at the time so I went home, got out my bicycle and went back up to see it. The snipe, as it turned out to be, was flying high round and round Camerton Moor, every now and then diving to one side and making a bleating sound. I have read snipes do this in the breeding season, using their tail feathers to make the sound.

April 23rd 1953

Whilst standing at the lamp-cabin door with Dad, two wagtails flew up Wedgewood's field with a looping flight and settled on the pit roof. Dad said they nested in the powder store last year -they may this.

Jim was born in 1940 in Little Clifton, 'Pastures' and 'Camerton Moor' are field names.

Drainage and flooding

Local rainfall requires no explanation, but the volume of runoff in parts of the Parish give some cause for concern for property as well as for river habitats, particularly in light of new developments. When the Stainburn bypass was built road surface drainage was routed through large tanks buried at the roadside, discharging into the Lostrigg beck. Water levels in the Lostrigg are much higher after periods of rain than prior to the bypass works. This higher water level has resulted in flooding, sometimes repeated, of a number of properties in Bridgefoot. Riverbank erosion and damage to the ford have occurred in the same timescale. A planning application for the Melbreak Hotel has proposed discharging surface water and outfall from an independent sewerage plant into the Lostrigg.

Footpaths

The great majority of respondents to the household survey agreed that an annual footpath inspection walk and maintenance day was worthwhile, with 27 people interested in taking part. Over half of respondents thought that opening up more local routes for walking would be worthwhile, with 12 interested in joining a working group. Given this response, a paths and environment working group was formed, which met several times during 2004 and

walked the footpaths in the Parish in April that year. There are two good walking routes in the Parish using public footpaths.



The Ford, Bridgefoot

Furnace House and Cinderbanks

This is a short circular route of approximately 1.5 miles taking 30-40 minutes. The route follows New Road, Little Clifton past Punderland Farm up to Furnace House then a public footpath across farm fields to Cinderbanks, where taking a left turn will return you by road to Little Clifton after passing the third, second, and first lonnings (all public footpaths that dead-end) on the right. At Furnace House it appears that the exact footpath route may have been diverted and is enclosed behind a poor quality net fence with overhanging vegetation. There are two stiles in good repair but the presence of horses in two of the fields can make the route a little intimidating, and agricultural traffic has churned the route to mud at the Cinderbanks end.

**Little Clifton - Lostrigg Beck - cross A595 - Crossbarrow - cross A66 Stainburn bypass
- Great Clifton - recross A66 - Cat Bank to Bridgefoot**

This is an attractive long route of approximately 4 miles, taking 2-3 hours to complete. Most of the route in the Parish is well marked and passable, and there has been some recent investment by Cumbria County Council. From New Road Little Clifton a new wooden fingerpost points the route across fields to the Lostrigg. (The right of way actually continues a short distance in the opposite direction through the yard of the former Clifton Green Farm, joining Oldfield Road opposite Valley View, but is indistinct.) Care is needed with some stiles and barbed fencing; the most difficult section is the steep and slippery sides of the Lostrigg. The route would benefit from steps and possibly a handrail on the west bank, which would complement the investment in the new wooden footbridge over the Lostrigg.

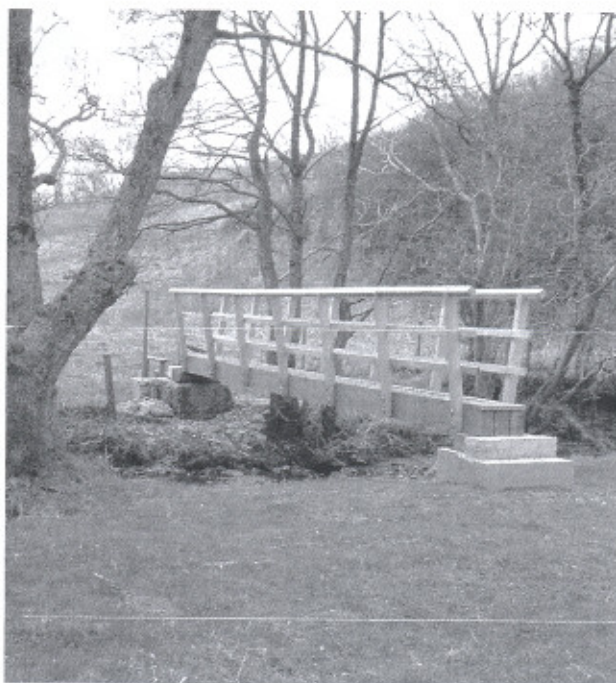
There are other walking routes that were used by local folk as recreational walks, but after the closure of railway that ran alongside the Marron and the reversion to agriculture these paths were not formalised. The following sections have great potential for improved accessibility on foot:

- Part of the former railway from south of Cinderbanks towards Branthwaite; ideally all the way to Branthwaite.
- The route from Furnace House to Stargill, and then on to Gale Brow on the A595 on Windscales Moor.
- The route using the Pack Horse Bridge connecting these two running north from Calva Hall (just outside the Parish).

Although it might add expense, these routes could also be made accessible for bicycles and pushchairs as well as walkers. The C2C route that re-uses other sections of West Cumberland's former rail network is a good example of this.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act is effective from May 2005 and creates new public access to certain parcels of privately owned open land. This is not a green light for irresponsible behaviour; instead people will be able to appreciate areas that may previously have been

inaccessible. In the southern part of the Parish there are two fields near Stargill, which have been designated with this status. There is currently no public right of way that reaches these fields, however Cumbria County Council has the power to negotiate public right of way creation agreements and orders with landowners to establish public access to or across land adjacent to inaccessible islands of open country.



Dolly Styles Bridge

A memorable walk

Marron Bridge



A chat with a neighbour who grew up in Bridgefoot made me aware of a walk he used to do back in his courting days. He talked of how, after a few pints at The Star in Branthwaite, he used to walk back to Bridgefoot following the railway line. The railway being long gone, I wondered whether it was still possible to walk his route. So the following Sunday my wife, daughter and our two small dogs set out to see if we could re-trace his steps, but in the opposite direction with our objective being the pub, now known as the Riverside. We first following the path that passes under the bridge opposite to the railway cottages in Bridgefoot, through a small wood as it follows the bank of the River Marron.

It was not very long before we came across our first difficulty. We had to cross the Marron, but none of the bridges were intact. This meant taking off boots and socks and wading across. Being first I thought I might make the task easier for the others by placing a couple of rocks as stepping stones. I asked my daughter to pass me some large stones, only to find one landing three feet away, soaking me from head to foot. As we covered every terrain you can think of, it became clear that this route was not for the faint hearted. We found stretches of the railway embankment still intact, and from the views of the river and the distant fells this must have been a beautiful journey to make by train.

After going through a gate about an hour into the walk, a herd of young bulls appeared. They seemed very interested in our two small dogs. Hotly pursued, we three and the dogs managed to get over a wire fence next to a stream. However we were pinned in for an hour while we figured out a strategy. Just when it could not get any worse, the heavens opened. In desperation I split from the others and, acting the part of a rodeo clown, I stood in the middle of the field, waving my hands around in an effort to distract the bulls away from the dogs sufficiently for my wife and daughter to make it across the field. At this point I would have lost the will to live, but for Branthwaite finally in the distance and the thought of a pint waiting on the bar.

Our step picked up as the railway embankment bends gently to the right giving some fantastic views. As I admired the scene I noticed another group of cattle in the distance, but getting larger. My wife shouted "RUN". It was at this point I realised she could run. With a sprint that Sally Gunnell would have been proud of, she completely cleared the field gate as if it wasn't there.

By the time we got to the pub we received some strange looks. We were filthy and wet and ready for a well-earned drink and some food. It had taken three-and-a-half hours but I could tell my neighbour that we too had done it...

David Dunn

Allotments

The Parish Council acquired a plot above the Lostrigg in Little Clifton from the National Coal Board on the understanding that it would only be used for allotments. The Parish Council owns and manages 16 allotments on this site. In 2003 the Parish Council invested in new fencing above the steep bank at the western end of the allotment plot to improve safety, and several uncultivated allotments were also tidied up. All allotments are now let to local individuals on annual leases, with a rent currently just £6 per annum, and several individuals rent more than one allotment. As is standard allotment practice, there are some basic rules for allotment holders, setting out the permitted uses of the allotments and requiring allotment holders to cultivate their allotment or otherwise surrender it.

Some allotments remain in poor condition with little evidence of cultivation, and untidy sheds. There is nobody currently on the allotment waiting list, but residents of the Parish interested in an allotment should contact the Parish Council. The Parish Council's aims for the allotments are to:

- Monitor that allotment holders actively cultivate and manage their allotment.
- Encourage allotment holders to remove derelict buildings and fences.
- Encourage allotment holders to maintain fencing of their allotments.
- Maintain any vacant allotments and advertise any availability.

Environmental improvement and maintenance works

Environmental projects are good for building community spirit and generating a greater sense of ownership of community facilities and outdoor spaces. The public consultation detected considerable interest in environmental projects; for example the household survey found that 92% of respondents would like to see some form of landscaping around the Village Hall, and a number of people who were interested in getting their hands dirty. Although contractors should be engaged when necessary for special-

ist works, volunteers will be encouraged to take part in any environmental projects that proceed.

There is certainly pressure on local habitats that may appear to be "wild" areas in need of attention. For example, insensitive river bank maintenance and increasing use of rivers as areas for recreation can lead to bank erosion and disturbance to wildlife and cause loss of wildlife habitat. Therefore, conservation must be a priority to be considered at the planning stage for any site.

Most improvement works will have some on-going maintenance requirement, which must be within the capacity of the Parish, whether through volunteers or local contractors working to the Parish Council. It is perhaps unlikely that additional maintenance can be obtained from the highways authority. It will be necessary to consider the on-going maintenance cost; the Parish Council does already fund a small annual programme of grass cutting and hedge trimming of the footpath alongside Hunday, of the village green, and contributes to the cost of churchyard maintenance. The Parish Council is also responsible for maintenance of the two bus shelters at Chapel Brow and the bus shelter at Bridgefoot.

The paths and environment working group that met during 2004 considered in detail the visible and/or public open spaces in the Parish that could benefit from new works and then from on-going maintenance:

Chapel Brow A66 - A595 entrance: pond and woodland

Currently this key entrance into the community is dull with a scattering of alder and pine trees planted approximately 20 years ago along the verges. The field on the left on entering Chapel Brow is owned by Cumbria County Council and was the old school field and included the creation of a pond and small woodland bordering a tarmac footpath and further young trees. The pond and woodland is currently let on a grazing lease and has potential to be fenced off from the field and to create a discrete area surrounding the pond. Potential Works: Extend pond / replacement fencing / new planting / seating. Maintenance: Regular cutting of grass / periodic maintenance of plants and pond

Map of the Parish of LITTLE CLIFTON

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PARISH BOUNDARY



SETTLEMENT (1996 LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAN LINES)



NEW DEVELOPMENT



FOOTPATH



PROSPECTIVE WALKING
ROUTE



OPEN ACCESS AREAS



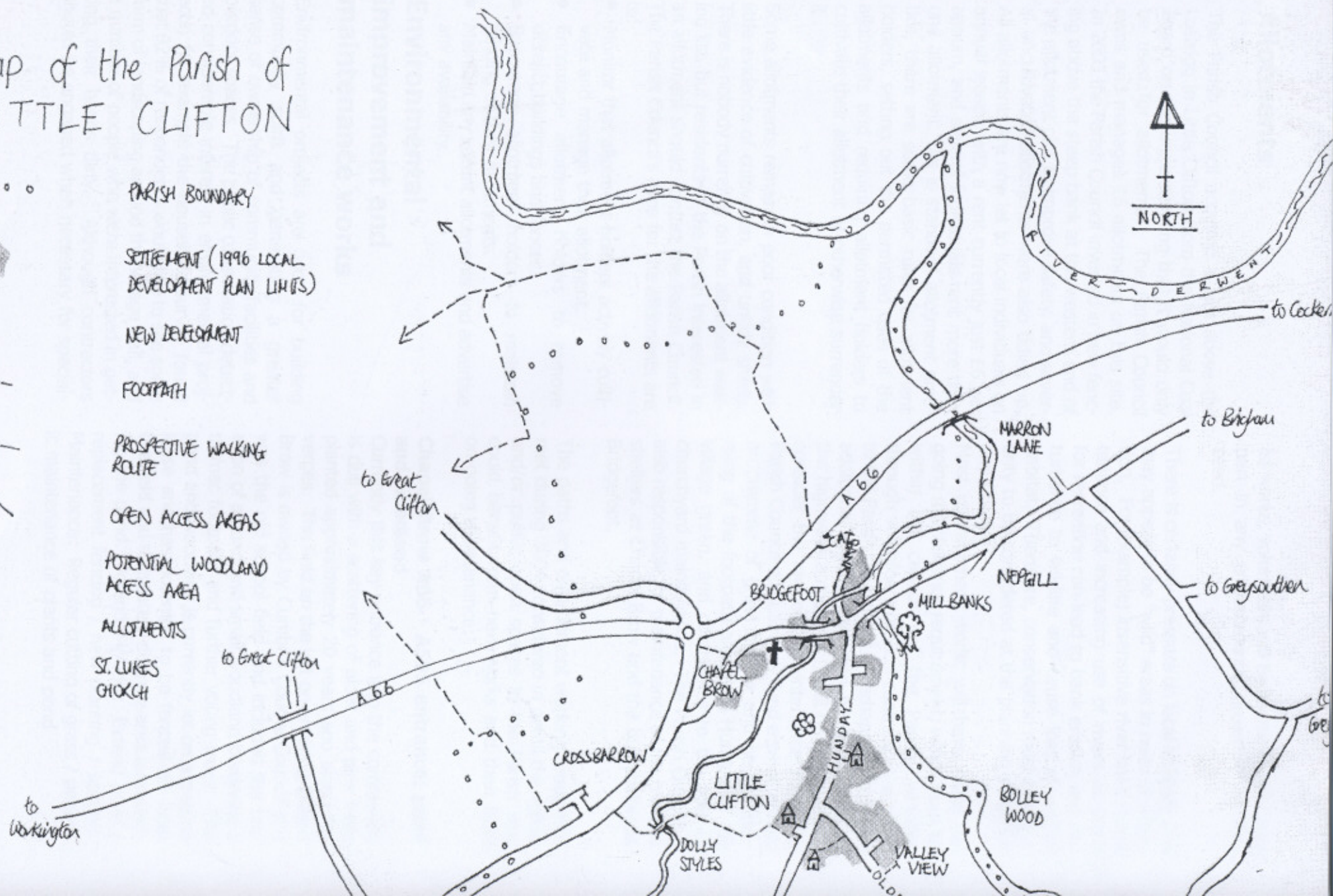
POTENTIAL WOODLAND
ACCESS AREA

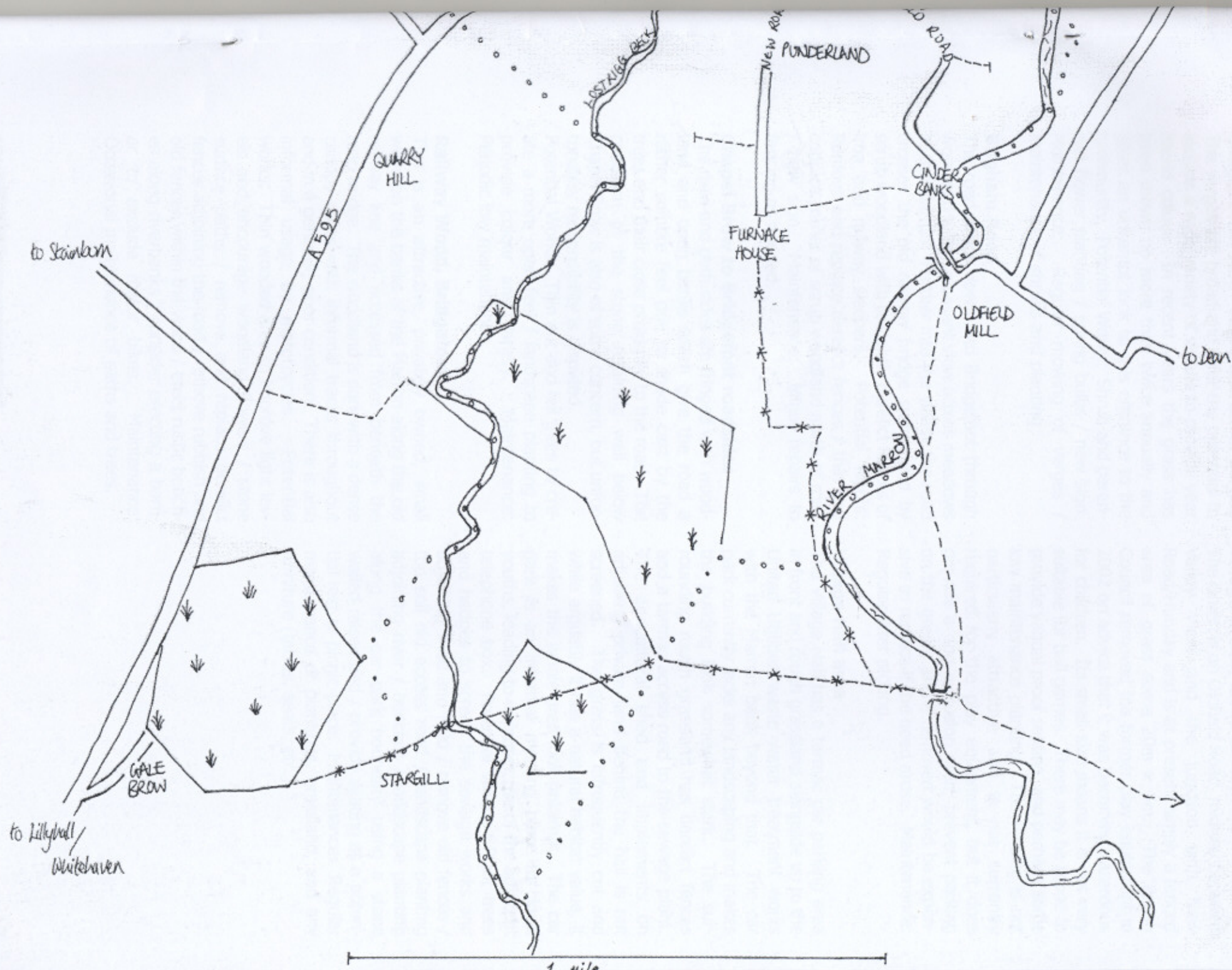


ALLOTMENTS



ST. LUKE'S
CHURCH





Chapel Brow A66 - A595 entrance: verges

The verges are broad and offer the potential to include a wide variety of shrubs to provide year round colour. In recent years the grass has been mown no more than twice annually and gives an unkempt look to this entrance to the community. Potential Works: Shrub and perennial flower planting / spring bulbs / new sign. Maintenance: Regular mowing of verges / maintenance of shrubs and planting

Brigham Road

The road drops down into Bridgefoot through woodland with a pleasant view across meadows to the Marron. Further into the village the road crosses the old railway bridge surrounded by scrub woodland with unsightly derelict fences of iron and railway sleepers. Potential Works: Remove and replace derelict fences / thin and coppice corner of scrub woodland north of road / new sign. Maintenance: Minor repairs to fencing as needed.

Chapel Brow to Bridgefoot roadsides

The road and path sides are fringed with woodland and open banks which give the road a rather sombre feel due to shade cast by the trees and their close proximity to the road. The condition of the stone retaining wall below Chapel Brow is also of some concern, but unfortunately responsibility is disputed. Potential Works: Thin out and fell trees to create a more open feel / landscape planting to provide colour and variety. Maintenance: Periodic low maintenance.

Railway Wood, Bridgefoot

This is an attractive, privately owned, small wood on the banks of the Marron along the old railway line and accessed from beneath the road bridge. The woodland is dark with a dense canopy cover with informal tracks throughout and in a generally poor condition. There is also informal usage by motorcycles. Potential works: Thin wooded area to improve light levels and encourage woodland flowers / stone surface paths / remove and replace derelict fences adjoining the road / remove rubbish and old fences within the wood / erect rustic benches along riverbanks / consider erecting a barrier to exclude motor bikes. Maintenance: Occasional maintenance of paths and trees.

Village Green, Little Clifton

The Green is on Oldfield Road, midway between Valley View and the junction with New Road/Hunday and is at present simply a fenced area of grass some 20m x 5m. The Parish Council removed the former play equipment in 2002 on advice that it was becoming hazardous for children. Its small size means it is not very suitable for ball games. There may be scope to provide vandal proof seating, and perhaps some low maintenance planting. The fencing is not particularly attractive and is not currently required for the play equipment, but it does provide a dog exclusion area, prevent parking on the green, and if removed would be expensive to replace if the need arose. Maintenance: Regular litter picking.

Village Hall area

The Village Hall has a tarmac car parking area in front and rough grassland alongside up to the United Utilities waste water treatment works with the Marron bank beyond that. The car park currently lacks any landscaping and makes the building look somewhat stark. The surrounding rough grassland has derelict fences and a tarmac access road to the sewage plant. The agricultural shed and implements on adjoining private land behind the hall is not screened. The grass is infrequently cut and while arguably it has a natural habitat value, it makes the whole area look unkempt. The car park is an informal meeting place for local youths, leading to improper use of the adjacent telephone box. Potential Works: Plant trees and hedges to screen the sewage works and adjoining shed and field / remove old fences / top soil old access road / landscape planting adjoining river / benches / landscape planting along the car park boundary using a stone walled raised bed / provide seating as a potential rest or picnic place. Maintenance: Regular maintenance of plantings, grassland, and any furniture (tables, seats, etc.)

Litter

Although sadly there are incidents of fly tipping and, occasionally, abandoned cars (either of which residents are encouraged to report), a more frequent complaint made to the Parish Council is dog fouling. "Scoop the Poop" notices have been put up in the hope that dog owners will take action. Subject to negotiation with Allerdale Borough Council, a further measure could be poop scoop bins. The most appropriate sites would also need to be identified;

potential sites are at Bridgefoot near the Village Hall, near the footpath sign to Lostrigg beck at New Road, Little Clifton, and at Chapel Brow. The household survey also identified general litter as a concern for a clear majority of respondents, 80% were in favour of more litterbins. Again, the siting of litterbins would need to be considered carefully and maintenance arrangements agreed with Allerdale. An occasional litter sweep day by residents may also be effective and could be incorporated into a Parish maintenance programme.

Health

The household survey found only moderate interest in a health clinic at the village hall with the most requested services being flu jabs, blood pressure tests, well man/well woman clinics and chiropody. Beyond the Parish, the Parish Council has responded to the consultation on future hospital services for West Cumbria and has made a donation to the Great North Air Ambulance.

First Responders

Medical emergencies can require the quickest possible action and the value of First Responders has already been proved in our community, although we rely on the voluntary efforts of schemes in neighbouring communities. In the household survey, eight people expressed an interest in helping to organise a First Responders group in Little Clifton, with three willing to train as First Responders. A

meeting was held at the village hall in early 2004 with a view to forming a First Responders group for Little Clifton. Dr. Andrew Butler gave an informative talk illustrated with slides and re-assured those with worries about volunteer First Responders being personally liable and stated that Little Clifton was a big enough community to justify having its own First Responders group. Of the rather limited attendance some were interested in becoming involved as organisers or fund raisers, but too few people were willing or able to train and act as volunteer First Responders to give adequate cover. The meeting concluded that a dedicated First Responders scheme for Little Clifton was not viable. However, it was proposed that people from the Parish interested in involvement in First Responders could seek to join with an established group, e.g. Brigham First Responders.



Air ambulance presentation Cheque - Jean, Sue, Brenda

Housing

Owner-occupied housing

The majority of houses in the Parish are owner-occupied, and like most communities the advertised prices of properties for sale in the last few years have increased far more than household incomes have risen in the same period. It is believed that there are a few properties in the Parish that are holiday homes rather than permanent homes, although it would be hard to say that there is an unmet demand for homes to buy from within the Parish, especially with the new development of two new housing estates in Little Clifton, at Home Farm of 14 houses called "The Coppice", with a further 12 houses, called "The Garth" at the part of Scots Croft opposite Company Fold.

Although some older buildings have been demolished over the years, a considerable number of 19th century and earlier homes remain in Little Clifton and Bridgefoot. Many of these retain a visible Cumberland vernacular in their building materials and style; for example the group of buildings at Bridgefoot around the confluence of the Lostrigg and the Marron. Almost all the 20th century buildings are post-1945. The Valley View, Scots Croft and Fell View estates and the individually built houses are varied in style and reflect different building fashions and the different developers involved. The terraced housing at Bridgefoot was replaced in 1970 by bungalows, and a number of the individual post-1945 properties in the Parish are also bungalows, but the vast majority of homes are two-storey houses.

Millbank Farm at Nepgill, after a period of ownership by the National Coal Board, was acquired by Leo Smith for a caravan park. Over the years, most of the caravans have been replaced by newer-style park homes, with all the features of a modern house. Most are owner-occupied, paying ground rent to the landowner. Farm buildings have been converted into flats, a shower room, and a laundry room with large washing machines and dryers. The Millbank's Court retirement community was added in the

1980s, adjoining the Nepgill site, and now has some 30 park homes, all owner-occupied.

Rented housing

A small number of mobile homes at Nepgill are rented, but the key landlord in the Parish is Home Housing Association Ltd. In January 2005 there were 46 properties owned by Home Housing in the Parish of Little Clifton. Unlike tenancies offered by private landlords, Home Housing tenants have either secure tenancies or assured tenancies and, rather than being for a fixed period, the tenancies are indefinite, as long as the conditions of the tenancy agreement are met. Rents for Home Housing properties in the parish range between £41.35 and £67.57 per week, including water rates, which is more affordable than many private tenancies. These properties are ideal for households who are settled in the locality but who do not wish to, or cannot afford to, buy, so they are a particularly valuable feature of the community in times of very high house prices.

There are 16 Home Housing properties at Chapel Brow, three properties at Scotscroft, 26 properties at Valley View and one other property in Little Clifton. However, the number of these homes for rent has reduced gradually since the Right to Buy was introduced in 1980 and tenants have been able to buy their homes. Since 1980 there have been 23 right to buy sales in Little Clifton. The remaining Home Housing stock in the parish is made up of:

4	2-bed houses
9	2-bed bungalows
30	3-bed houses
3	4-bed houses

Home Housing has a policy to allocate bungalows on a priority basis to elderly and disabled tenants. Home Housing also have properties for rent in the adjacent villages of Brigham (currently 26 properties), Deanscales (3 properties), Great Clifton (183 properties), Greysouthen (7 properties), Great Broughton/Little Broughton (207 properties).

Demand for homes to rent

Since 1998 the average turnover of Home Housing properties in the parish of Little Clifton has been three per year. The survey of October 2003 found no unmet demand for rented accommodation within the parish. The number of households responding to the question Will members of your household want to rent a home in the Parish? with 'Yes, looking at present' or 'Yes, in the near future' or 'Probably, in some years time' was nil, except for one respondent who stated that they 'may look at a home to rent in some years time'.



"The Bottle" - Chapel Brow

As with all their areas, Home Housing maintains a waiting list of people looking for housing in Little Clifton. Numbers on the waiting list are restricted to those Home Housing can offer a tenancy to in a reasonable time. Occasionally the Little Clifton waiting list is closed and cannot be joined. In January 2005, the waiting list was open with one applicant for a 2-bed house, three applicants for 3-bed houses and four transfer requests from existing Home Housing tenants currently living outside the Little Clifton area. In comparison, the current number of applicants on the waiting list for Brigham is also eight, where there are 26 Home Housing properties and the waiting list total at Great Clifton is 38 where there are 183 Home Housing properties.

Local services

Library Van

Cumbria County Council provides a mobile library service every third or fourth Monday, with fiction and non-fiction request service, videos, DVDs and talking books. Membership is free and no overdue fines are charged. The dates for the remainder of 2005 are July 4th and 25th, August 15th, September 12th, October 3rd and 24th, November 14th and December 5th. The official timetable is Nepgill 10.20am, Bridgefoot 11am, Fell View 11.20am, Post Office, 11.30am, (!) Valley View 11.45am, Chapel Brow 12.05pm.



Library Van at Millbanks

Licenced premises

Ann Coats is the licensee of the Dukes Head at Bridgefoot, a straightforward community pub, an asset that many similarly-sized villages no longer have. The Melbreak Hotel at Crossbarrow is more orientated to food, accommodation and functions.

Post Office

Bridgefoot Post Office offers a range of useful services without the need to travel into town and queue. The Post Office depends entirely on local custom, so every transaction is important to keep the service going. The Parish Noticeboard is located outside the Post Office. Bridgefoot Subpostmistress Denise Sanderson also runs a Post Office service at Greysouthen Village Hall on Mondays 1.30pm to 4pm



Dukes Head

BRIDGEFOOT POST OFFICE

18 Fell View Bridgefoot

Tel. 01900 871637

Open

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 12 noon

- Cash withdrawals and deposits without a charge (using card and pin number) for:
 - Alliance & Leicester
 - Barclays
 - Co-operative Bank
 - Lloyds TSB
 - Post Office card account
 - Smile.co.uk
- E111 forms
- Foreign currency within 24 hours of ordering
- Fresh flowers to order
- Letters and parcels services, inland and international
- Mobile phone top ups for: 3, O2, Tesco, T Mobile, Virgin
- Napster Music Vouchers
- Pay most household bills free of charge

Recycling

A clear majority (85%) of respondents to the household survey were in favour of recycling facilities. Allerdale Borough Council has introduced paper and garden waste doorstep collection schemes that Parish residents can opt into. This still leaves an unmet demand for a

collection point for collection of glass, metal packaging and, possibly, plastics. A central location for "bottle banks" would need to be accessible on foot and by vehicle and, once in use would need to be kept tidy, and so the location would need to be carefully considered.

Shopping Locally

There has not been a shop in the Parish for many years and interest in using a village shop was low, although almost half of respondents said that they would use a village shop occasionally. Many of these expected to spend between £5 and £10 per week. One quarter of respondents would buy a daily newspaper. Given current shopping habits - and even the resurgence of home deliveries by supermarkets - it is probable that there would be insufficient trade for a stand-alone shop to succeed in the Parish; and perhaps not even enough to justify the Post Office or pub offering a small general grocery service, as has been tried in some villages. However, over half of respondents to the

survey said they would try a food co-operative, with five people interested in helping to set one up. A food co-op is a buying scheme run by volunteers usually for fresh vegetables and fruit, but can include other items too, and is intended to give better access to good value, fresh and healthy food, especially local produce. Money is collected on a weekly basis from the members of the food co-op and used to buy a bulk order. Such schemes exist around the County; the nearest is a food co-op at Great Clifton, based at Derwent Vale School.

Telephone kiosk

A BT coin operated public telephone is at Bridgefoot, outside the Village Hall.

St. Luke's Church

The Vicar of St Luke's, Rev'd Ken Kitchin writes: In 1066 when William the conqueror and King Harold were fighting it out at Hastings, there was already Christian worship happening at the top of the hill at Bridgefoot overlooking the river Marron. How do we know? Well, if you go into the church building and make your way into the Chancel, just before the Altar rail and leaning against the right hand wall under the window is an ancient stone. It dates back to between 900-1000AD and it is the shaft from a Norse Christian Cross.

Even though the present building is little over a hundred years old we have physical and written evidence that prove that Christians have been in Clifton for over 1000 years. We who gather here today at St. Luke's for worship rejoice in the fact that we belong to such a history and heritage as we go on sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. We recognise that we share our story with brothers and sisters in Christ of other traditions, in particular with the church family that meets at the Chapel in Great Clifton every Sunday. We unite in worship with them and our hope is to build even stronger links with them over the coming years. We also unite with the other churches with which we share ministry, namely St. Oswald's Dean and St. Philip's Mosser.

We come together for worship on most Sundays of the year at 9.30am and our current pattern of worship is:

- 1st Sunday Morning prayer
- 2nd Sunday Holy Communion
- 3rd Sunday Holy Communion
- 4th Sunday Holy Communion

When there is a fifth Sunday in the month we unite with one of the other Parishes.

During the week we have home groups which meet for fellowship and learning and on the first Tuesday of every month we have said Holy Communion followed by Prayer and Praise which offers us an opportunity for further worship, prayer and learning.

We extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to come and join us and if any further information is required about the life of St. Luke's then please do not hesitate to contact Rev'd Ken Kitchin Tel: 01900 603886 email:kenkitchin@uk2k.com

Planning

The Parish Council is notified by Allerdale Borough Council of all planning applications. The Parish Council responds in writing, as a body, where there are any reasonable concerns to be raised, and may make further enquiries or take further action. Although the Parish Council does not decide planning applications within the Parish, nor have a vote on planning applications, the views of the Parish Council should be taken into account by Allerdale.

Since the Parish Plan process began the Parish has, in relative terms, been deluged by planning applications. At the site of Home Farm barn and yard development is underway of 14 houses "The Coppice"; at the site of Scots Croft Farm, development of 12 houses "Scots Garth" is also underway; and planning permission has been given for barn-conversion into four homes plus two new build houses at Clifton Green farm. The Parish Council called two well-attended public meetings that found a consensus view that too many new homes were proposed. The Parish Council made detailed representations setting out the local concerns and the grounds for objection. As the Parish Plan goes to press the Parish Council is consulting the community on further detailed planning applications for a holiday resort at the Melbreak Hotel.

Some 44 respondents to the household survey agreed that new developments in the parish should fit in with the design and architecture of the village and also the number of new houses limited to protect open spaces. There is no demand shown for any further rented homes in the parish and a very small number are (2 people) interested in future purchase of a home in the Parish. The Parish Council used this information in responding to planning applications.

The Parish Council is still learning about the planning process, and about presenting the voice of the community so that voice is listened to. Although a site visit by Allerdale Councillors was secured for Scots Garth, the only influence the Parish Council's efforts had on the outcome of the planning applications for the three housing developments in Little Clifton was the

preservation of the mature sycamore on Scots Garth, which had been due to be cut down. For the future, the Parish Council will attempt to state the views of the community in planning matters, not only at the planning application stage, but more particularly during relevant consultation exercises that Allerdale undertake. If nothing else this will at least balance the pressure for the release of further land for development from landowners and potential developers. The Planning Statements in this section of the Parish Plan are part of this objective.

All three Little Clifton sites were within the current "development limit", which in simple terms meant that development of these sites would go ahead, because on this basis the planning applications were approved or recommended for approval by Allerdale's Planning Department. The current development limit that applies in the Parish of Little Clifton is set out in the 1996 Allerdale Local Plan and is a single block, broadly following the boundaries of properties from Bridgefoot to Valley View. The only two remaining significant undeveloped pieces of land left within Bridgefoot and Little Clifton are the larger part of Scots Croft field and the plot between the Village Hall and Scots Croft estate, which has one non-residential building, are outside the development limit. The Chapel Brow development limit is a separate block (separated by the churchyard), and again follows the property boundaries. The remainder of the Parish and as well as the part of Bridgefoot out of the Parish and Nepgill do not have a specific development limit.

Little Clifton Planning Statement: New Development

1. Further housing development will make the community increasingly suburban and less rural in character. Given the high number of new-build houses in Little Clifton in 2005 relative to the size of the community in 2004, the remaining rural character would be eroded in particular by: *(Continues Over)*

- loss of agricultural "greenfield" land and/or open spaces (even if not accessible to the public) to buildings
- replacement or reduction of features such as field dykes or stone walls, perhaps not outstanding in isolation but nevertheless contributing to the overall character of the community, and the introduction of new access roads, driveways, garden fences et cetera.
- additional vehicle movements and parked vehicles

Although not necessarily a pre-requisite of new development, the high-density, yet mainly detached, spatial arrangements and choice of house designs lacking in local design features or materials, suburban-style landscaping and driveways, is itself detrimental to the rural character.

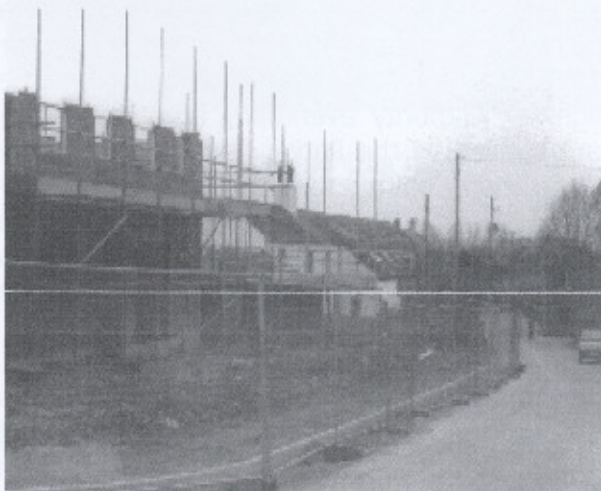
2. The distinct character of the separate settlements of Little Clifton and Bridgefoot will be lost if the remaining open spaces have "infill" development.
3. The physical infrastructure of the Parish is already at saturation point, and the Parish Council does not take the view that renewed infrastructure, or new community facilities, will be brought by further development or that further loss of the rural character and traffic can be offset by the benefit of new blood in the community.
4. Further development will be detrimental to safety of road users, particularly pedestrians, by increased traffic movements on country roads that date from the days of horse-drawn vehicles. It is accepted that some alterations should now be made at some points for road safety reasons. However changes such as kerbs throughout the community and road-widening (where it is possible to do so) would further erode the rural character and could, in any case, enable increased vehicle speeds, and so undermine any safety benefit.
5. Further development will be detrimental to the quality of life of residents arising from increased traffic movements and parking problems.
6. Further development will cause loss of visual amenity and local landscape value, on any site where open space and views from within the community, trees, established field dykes or stone walls, are reduced or lost.
7. There is no evidence of demand for further housing from people within the Parish of Little Clifton, from the October 2003 survey or from any other source.
8. Further development may well find a ready market, but this would be attempting to meet an insatiable demand, itself fuelled by new development, to move to villages. This is a national phenomenon, but a local dimension to this is the perception that some West Cumbrian urban areas are less desirable places to live. The Government figures do not show that the population of West Cumbria is growing; instead recent new building in Little Clifton reflects a local population shift to rural areas, a process which is economically and environmentally unsustainable.
9. Further housing development would not conform with the sustainable objectives of national, regional, county and local adopted planning strategy, including the Allerdale Interim Local Housing Policy of September 2004, particularly in terms of the absence of facilities, employment and public transport in the community, leading to further car dependency.
10. Further development is likely to disturb, alter, encroach upon or lead to total loss of remaining local wildlife habitat, potentially also causing detriment to natural water-courses.
11. Further development will increase pressure on capacity of mains foul drainage and on surface water run-offs and may lead to increased risk of flooding in extreme weather conditions.
12. There is no justification for any extension of the current development limit set out in the 1996 local plan and there should be no further land identified in the forthcoming local development framework for development within the Parish.
13. The Parish should not otherwise be identified as being appropriate for further housing development. In particular the undeveloped pieces of land that remain outside the "development limit" for Bridgefoot and Little Clifton in the current Allerdale Local Plan are the remaining Scots Croft field and the site between the Scots Croft estate and the village hall.

14. The above points are primarily concerned with housing development but equally apply to business or agricultural development; however in those cases weight should be given to any creation of employment for local people.



Below Left: Home Farm Barn before the Persimmon development

Below: The Coppice under construction



Little Clifton Planning Statement: Design

1. Any new development that does occur within the 1996 development limit or future development limit (often called "infill") should only proceed:
 - to meet identified local need,
 - and
 - where the design standard is high, including energy and water efficiency and sustainability of construction techniques.
2. Wild areas, even smallscale, are important habitats and corridors for flora and fauna and should be preserved.
3. Changes to pavements, kerbs, road surfaces, road signs and road markings should only be made where there is a clear road safety benefit.
4. When undertaking alterations or extensions, property owners should seek to preserve and reflect traditional local design features and works should be in reasonable scale to the property and surrounding properties.
5. New private garden and property boundaries should, whenever possible, be of local stone or native hedge planting and peripheral features that have a marked visual impact beyond the property boundary, such as high intensity or intrusive external lighting should be avoided.
6. Whenever possible overhead wires, poles and equipment should be replaced with underground services.
7. Public street furniture and equipment should be of a high standard and carefully sited.
8. Introduction of additional public amenity lighting should only be made where there is a clear safety benefit.

Transport and traffic

The household survey was carried out before the long awaited 40mph speed limit for Bridgefoot and 30mph in Little Clifton. The Highway Authority eventually bowed to pressure applied by the Parish Council, particularly by the then Chairman Joe Agnew. The household survey found that 99% thought that some form of traffic calming is needed in Little Clifton and Bridgefoot, although 50% were against speed humps or similar.

The survey also found that over three-quarters of households have at least one vehicle, with over two-thirds having a car for each driver in the household. Some 82% of respondents had no problems making local journeys and there was no interest in an organised car-sharing scheme. Car-sharing was also mooted in the 1981 report, so it is perhaps unlikely to happen whilst motoring is affordable for most households. The results from the survey indicate there is no clear cut transport problem, although for those few reliant on public transport, from the comments at the public meetings, any reduction in services and the location of bus stops are both worries. As with many rural bus services the problem, of course, is that there are barely enough passengers to sustain them, and simply not enough to increase the service. The 36 service was saved when Cumbria County Council stepped in, and the subsidised route is now operated by four bus companies. The X5 has had more local criticism (including in the household survey) than use because the nearest stop was at Great Clifton, so hardly convenient. However, the X5 evening

service has now been diverted from its previous route on the A66 to come through Bridgefoot in the evenings, which does make it a more useable service for residents of the Parish and is a welcome improvement. Timetable arrangements permitting, if there is some take up of this service, then perhaps this could be extended to the other X5 services. At present, there are nine weekday buses to Cockermouth, the earliest at 9.01, the last at 22.25; and eight buses to Workington, the earliest 8.16, the last 23.56, although there is no Sunday bus service. The desire for a speed limit for our roads is long-standing. The minutes of Little Clifton Parish Council for 24th April 1914 record that it was proposed by Councillor William Carruthers, and seconded by Councillor John Smith, that the Clerk should write to the Superintendent of the Police at Workington, asking him to "attend to the same and if nothing was done we should see further about it". It took 90 years to get our speed limit. Things move slowly in villages. Except for the traffic!



New Road



At that same Parish Council meeting just before the outbreak of the First World War, Mr. Joseph Barnes Glaister moved and Mr. Thomas Sanderson seconded that the Cycle Union be asked to fix a warning notice on the approach to the school. What would they think of the speed and number of vehicles coming past Chapel Brow through Bridgefoot now?

Many residents, for example, those in Bridgefoot between the Dukes Head and the Church, and those near the blind junction of New Road (Gaythorne Terrace), Oldfield Road and Hunday have continued to suffer from inconsiderate drivers using inappropriate speed. Recently these problems have been exacerbated by increasing numbers and size of vehicles associated with the new developments in Little Clifton, and more complaints have been received by the Parish Council from pedestrians and drivers encountering such vehicles on Hunday between Bridgefoot and Little Clifton.



Railway Terrace Bridgefoot

At any time, the stretch of road between Nepgill and Bridgefoot is dangerous for pedestrians because of the lack of a continuous pavement or path and the poor view when crossing to reach the pavement with the bend, dip and wooded area. Anyone attempting to cross has to rely on listening for approaching traffic and



quick footwork. Walking this route at night or in winter, necessary for Nepgill and Millbanks Court and Railway Terrace area residents to reach the Village Hall, is particularly hazardous. A light-controlled crossing may not be feasible, but the situation could be improved by an extended path or pavement and by discrete lighting.

Whilst the 40mph speed limit for Bridgefoot was a little disappointing for the Parish Council, and even though the limits are, theoretically anyway, for a trial period the Parish Council has been advised that we can seek further limits of 30mph through Bridgefoot and 20mph for Little Clifton, which many residents will welcome. The Parish Council would, in fact, wish to see the limit reduced to 20mph throughout the Parish. Of course, speed limits alone will not stop anyone who wants to speed, but at least now the law is clear and the police can prosecute speeders.

The Parish Council is consulting with the Highways Authority to gather more information about traffic speed and numbers to identify what remedies we can use to make our roads safer.



The Village Hall

History of Little Clifton Village Hall

After the Second World War a wooden army surplus hut was acquired and erected in Bridgefoot to serve as a multi-purpose village hall. In the mid-1970s this building was condemned by the local authority - whilst a children's party was in full swing! The children were evacuated and the doors were then nailed shut.

A meeting of villagers was held in a farmyard in Little Clifton and it was agreed that a replacement hall was needed. Douglas Cullen was nominated as Treasurer, with Rob Dixon as Chairman and in 1977 plans for a new building were approved for the same site as the ex-army hut. Various fund raising schemes followed, with some donations being made by local businesses. And a lot of the construction was done by a few local individuals giving up weekends over three years. The whole village helped to fund the project and on 31st August 1980 the new Little Clifton Village Hall was completed and officially opened by Tommy Thomas of BBC Radio Carlisle.

The hall was soon in use for flower shows, old folk's concerts, dances, Christmas parties and many other activities, including the monthly meeting of Little Clifton Parish Council. The dedication and determination of Douglas Cullen to complete the project was recognised and he is honoured by a plaque in the new hall. His attention to detail can be seen in the building - it was he who insisted on a parquet floor to give

a perfect dancing surface, and it remains in use! For the millennium, the Village Hall Management Committee, who are all local volunteers, decided to invest in the building to bring it up to date. Gates, offering protection from vandalism, were specially made by John Gunson. In total, more than £12,000 has been spent; on modernisation of the toilet facilities, the inclusion of a toilet for the disabled, the refurbishment of the kitchen, and improvements to the hard surface outside.

The Village Hall in use

Responses to the household survey showed varying levels of interest for the examples of possible activities at the Village Hall given. The most popular suggestions were live music, public meetings, social events, coffee mornings and the following classes - keep fit, history, quiz nights, art and First Aid. However, few people volunteered to organise events. After a decline in usage the Management Committee is pleased that this has recently picked up.



Christmas Party 2004

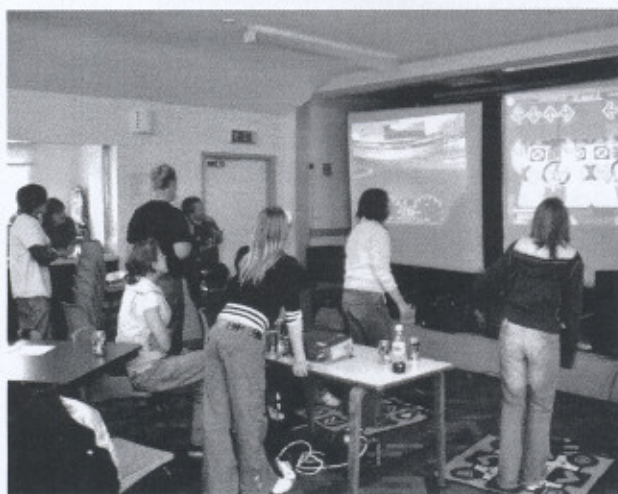


Outside the Village Hall

Groups currently using the Village Hall include U³A (University of the Third Age), Crafts of Cockermouth, Broughton Scouts, a weekly dancing club which has been run by Barbara and Bill Bristow for 20 years, an Old Time Dancing group, fortnightly coffee mornings on Thursdays serving home baked items, Derwent Valley Quilters, an Art Club, bingo on Monday evenings, and, most recently, Easy Exercise & Relaxation classes. St. Luke's Church also uses the Village Hall for various functions. The session run by the Reef for young people shows that the Village Hall can and should be a facility for all ages.

The Parish Plan has also made good use of the hall with the public meetings and of the Parish Plan working group. However, at other times the Dukes Head and St. Luke's Church were used for meetings because the village hall has been booked with another activity and the layout of the hall does not lend itself to more than one function at a time.

The hall does have an ample car park and - subject to availability, as most nights of the week the hall is in use - it can be hired for events such as Shows, which are put on approximately four times a year, and children's birthday parties. Events at the Village Hall are advertised on the Parish Noticeboard outside the Post Office.



The Reef at the Village Hall



Action Plan

PROPOSAL	TO BE ACTIONED BY:
Children and young people <i>A priority for action</i> ● Provide access to organised activity, at least on a quarterly basis. ● A first phase outdoor facility for young people (approximately ages 8 to 17), involving young people in the planning and if possible in the physical work. ● After completion of the first phase and depending upon that facility being used well, the second phase would be to provide play equipment for younger children (up to approximately age 8), potentially at a different location to the first phase.	A youth working group, reporting to and assisted by the Parish Council, consulting and involving professionals, such as the Reef, equipment suppliers, and young people themselves.
Communication Follow the launch of the Parish newsletter with the development of a community website.	A volunteer or volunteers will be required, but the Parish Council can meet or contribute to reasonable website costs.
Crime, nuisance and policing Work with neighbourhood watch co-ordinators and community police officer to report and address issues and incidents as they arise, and liaise as activities / facilities for young people are planned.	The Parish Council, the local Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, the youth working group
Education Liaise with schools as activities / facilities for children and young people are planned.	The youth working group.
Employment and local business Invite businesses to support community initiatives, such as advertising in the Parish Newsletter, to encourage local use of local businesses	The Parish Council.
Environment: improvement works <i>A priority for action</i> Develop a costed environmental plan building on the options identified in the Parish Plan – the first priority for implementation being the first phase outdoor facility for young people.	The Parish Council will investigate the options of professional assistance to prepare the plan and / or delegate to an Environment working group reporting to and assisted by the Parish Council
Environment: footpaths Improve condition of all existing public rights of way and formalize or re-open historic routes / new routes	The Parish Council and / or delegation to an Environment working group, reporting to and assisted by the Parish Council, with co-operation of landowners, and County Council access officer

PROPOSAL	TO BE ACTIONED BY:
Health Investigate the choices of formally joining Little Clifton with an existing First Responders scheme, or joining with Great Clifton to set up a new First Responders scheme.	The Parish Council initially, if there is interest then individuals / First Responders to take forward.
Housing No unmet housing need or other action point is identified, but the Parish Council will continue to liaise with Home Housing Association, particularly in regard to upkeep of communal areas at Chapel Brow and Scots Croft.	No action point identified.
Local services: food-co-op Investigate the practicalities of setting up a Food Co-op for Little Clifton	The Parish Council will call a public meeting, if there is interest then individuals / Food-Co-op members to take forward.
Local services: recycling, litterbins Review provision of a recycling point, as well as sites for poop scoop bins and litterbins, with reference to Allerdale's existing and proposed collection services from households and from street bins.	The Parish Council and Allerdale Borough Council.
Planning Respond to any planning applications that may have local impact as they arise. Participate in consultation exercises such as the Allerdale Local Development Framework.	The Parish Council, calling ad hoc public meetings as may be necessary, and responding to consultations.
Transport and traffic <i>A priority for action</i> Identify and implement solutions for particular danger points, especially for pedestrians, including the lack of pavement at Oldfield Road / Hunday junction and the lack of lighting between Bridgefoot and Nepgill. Seek a 20mph speed limit for Bridgefoot, Little Clifton and Chapel Brow.	The Parish Council, a traffic study to be undertaken by Cumbria County Council.
Village Hall Review the options to improve availability of a space for meetings when the village hall is in use.	The Parish Council, Village Hall committee, Parochial Church Council

It will be necessary to estimate the cost of each identified project, to identify sources of funding and, for some projects, to apply for funding. As well as the Parish Council's own funds from the precept, there is potential for local fund-raising events and there are numerous grant schemes and charitable trusts that may provide project funds in full or in part. The Parish Plan document is intended to provide relevant background information for potential project funders.

Lostrigg Again

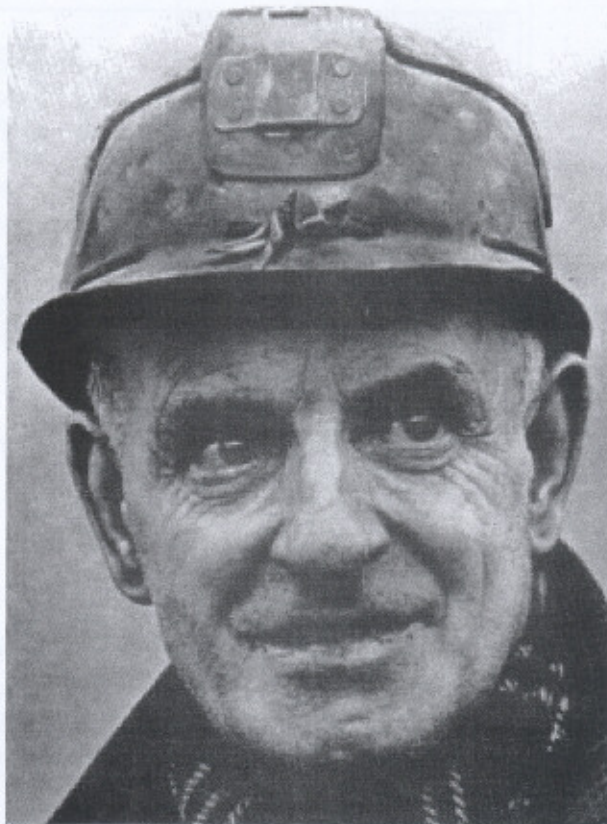
No depth, nor shallow that I know,
Within this heart, surpasses thee.
Thy murmur'd matins heard below,
The evensongs of melody;
And though I wander far and long
Amid fair aisles by nature planned,
I shall not hear more tuneful throng,
The bird-choir of thy wooded strand.

For I have loved thee with a love
Unshattered by the keenest blast,
How oft have watched from meads above
Thy silver beauty gliding past;
Of Albion's water have I heard
By Cymric mirrors charmed have been,
But O! thou lures the brightest bird
And cleaves with joy the greenest green.

The sacred scene thy way attends -
The cluster'd hamlets concord deep,
And hallowed place where cherished friends
Lay side by side in dreamless sleep;
Ah! yes, these dear domains of thine -
This life and lifeless state of clay
Impressed upon this heart of mine,
Impart their wisdom day by day.

O Wayfarer of ages gone,
Yet forward to the broader trail,
The ceaseless pageant passes on
'Neath darkling dome and cirrus sail,
No depth, nor shallow that I know,
Within this heart, surpasses thee,
Nor firmer could such friendships grow,
Chaste essence of fraternity.

Derwent Pickering (1901 - 1984)



Derwent Pickering, described in his obituary as miner-poet-philosopher, lived at Chapel Brow for much of his life. He became a miner during the First World War, retiring in 1966. The story goes that Derwent started writing poetry in 1917 when a workmate at Buckhill Pit, Broughton, tired of the grim, wet conditions in the mine, said to the lad with a love of language: "Ah wish thoo'd mak summat up aboot this spot." Jim Parker recollects how Dowie (as he was often called) whilst underground at William Pit, Great Clifton, used to call Jim's father, in the lamp cabin at the surface, to try out a few lines of verse he had just composed. Over the decades the West Cumberland Times printed poems he wrote to celebrate local life or to mourn friends. Some were Cumbrian dialect verse, such as *Leuk Efter Thee Lamp*, about a miner's trusty lamp - "It's a star for ta guide tha". *Lostrigg Again* was kindly provided by Derwent Pickering's daughter, Mary Wilkinson, of Chapel Brow.



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