



# Ravenglass Village Forum

June 2010

www.ravenglassforum.org.uk

No 11

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## No more free parking?

Free use of the Village Car Park is the essential part of the policy agreed by us and the Parish Council to direct visiting traffic away from Main Street and keep our village centre pleasant and safe. We and the Parish Council have been warned that the Lake District National Park Authority, which owns the village car park, is again under pressure from Government auditors to introduce parking charges.

We know that car parks owned by the National Park elsewhere in the Lake District are not free. The charges in tourist traps like Hawkshead, Bowness, Ambleside, Grasmere and Keswick are high. Unlike those places, Ravenglass is not a quick detour off the M6, a major shopping centre or a convenient stop-over on a journey between the South and Scotland. You have to want to drive over or round the mountains to come here.

If charges are imposed on our Village Car Park they will probably be comparable to the charges in the Ratty car park. They will not be as high as in the central Lake District but we believe that, even so, they will be enough to:

- **drive potential visitors away** and adversely affect the income of the few businesses in our village. Remember what happened at Seascale in 2003 when Copeland imposed a charge of only 30p?
- **tempt less considerate visitors to park indiscriminately** (outside *your* house?), causing annoyance and possible danger to residents and other visitors and obstructing emergency vehicles.
- **negate the efforts** that we, the Parish Council and the Highway Authority have made to make our village a safe and pleasant place for residents and visitors to enjoy by keeping unnecessary traffic out of Main Street.

As a body that depends on public money the National Park Authority has an obligation to generate income from its assets when it can, BUT it also has a statutory obligation to care for the welfare of residents of the National Park. The imposition of parking charges would be contrary to that obligation. The Authority respected it in 2003, when it withdrew proposals to impose parking charges, but the pressure is on again. In April 2010 the Authority told the Parish Council that charges WILL be imposed, probably by the end of this summer. We attribute this to pressure from the Audit Commission. Not for the first time it is ignoring the Authority's duty of care to those who live and work in the National Park.

The Forum supports Muncaster Parish Council in its opposition to the charges. If you also oppose the charges, **please write** to Mr David Coxon, Operations Manager, Lake District National Park Authority at Murley Moss, Oxenholme Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 7RL. **We need your support.** David will *not* take the decision himself, so no abuse, please, but he will see that your opinions are presented to the Members of the Authority who will take the decision. A flood of well-reasoned letters from individual residents will give much more authority to formal communications from the Parish Council and the Forum.

The National Park has not told us yet what the cost of ticket machines and enforcement will be and whether there is any real prospect that the Car Park will earn enough money to make a profit after those expenses: another point for your letter of protest. If there's no benefit, why create the problem? ~ Mike Harrington

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### New seats for the Picnic Area

And now some good news from the National Park. The three grotty old seats in the picnic area on the Pennington side of Croftlands Drive will soon be replaced by two new blue seats of the Ravenglass pattern used on the Village Green. David Coxon has agreed to place the order for us and to contribute £825 (the cost of two standard National Park wooden benches) from his budget. He will also arrange for the installation of the new benches. The Forum is finding the difference in cost between the standard benches and the Ravenglass seats with a grant of £250 from the Bootle and Seascale Neighbourhood Forum and £600 from its own resources.

At the time of writing the order is about to be placed with David Ogilvie Engineering of Kilmarnock and delivery will be in six to eight weeks, so the new seats should be installed by mid-July. ~ MH

# Chairman's Report for 2009-10

The past year has seen much work behind the scenes on various projects for the village.

We have co-operated very closely with the Parish Council on the refurbishment of the Children's Playground, which unfortunately failed in much of the last safety assessment. The Village Forum has secured £5,000 from the NDA towards the project. It has also made an application on behalf of the Parish Council for Lottery funding for new play equipment and I am pleased to say that £35,000 has been allocated to us. It can be accessed as soon as we have satisfied a few more formalities. The Parish Council and the Forum have a joint application for playground funding with the 'Playbuilder' scheme accessed through Copeland Borough Council and we are awaiting a decision.

We have also negotiated with the Lake District National Park Authority to have the seating area opposite the Car Park revitalised. The existing three wooden benches will be removed and two 'Ravenglass' style blue metal seats will be installed. The LDNPA are funding much of the work and the Forum has provided £850 to fund the difference in cost between National Park wooden benches and the Ravenglass seats.

The sign giving information about the Market Cross has been installed outside 'Cambria' and the lettering on the actual plaque is to be enhanced as soon as time and weather allow. A new Union Flag has been purchased and is now flying in the Millennium Garden.

The Village Green project stalled when it was found that the Green was actually inside the SSSI and that the Environment Agency has imposed some restrictions. However, the revised plans are back before the Parish Council and hopefully progress can be resumed.

I wish to express my thanks to all the Committee members for their efforts this past year. Kate Hunter has been our Treasurer since we started as an informal group in 1999, but she is standing down from that office now because she plans to move away from the Village. David Tyldsley resigned from the main Committee last summer but he has continued to serve on the Village Green Sub-Committee. Carol Stent resigned from the Committee for family and health reasons but she is another who has made a valuable contribution over several years. During the year we welcomed Gary Blythe as a new member of the Committee.

We still have some vacancies on the Committee to fill at the AGM, even if all the other retiring members stand for re-election, and we hope that there will be some good candidates at this meeting. ~ *Stuart Robb*

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## Notice of AGM

The tenth Annual General Meeting of Ravenglass Village Forum will be held on **Thursday 17 June 2010 at 7.30 p.m.** in Muncaster Parish Hall.

## Agenda

To confirm the Minutes of the ninth Annual General Meeting held on 19 May 2009.  
Chairman's report.  
Treasurer's report and Statement of Accounts.  
Elections for Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and six other members of the Committee.  
Any other relevant business. The meeting will be opened for discussion.

## Elections

The Committee for 2009-10 consists of:  
*Chairman:* Stuart Robb, *Secretary:* Mike Harrington, *Treasurer:* Kate Hunter  
*Members:* Gary Blythe, Shirley Broadhurst, Ann Edwards and Peter van Zeller

All members of the committee retire at the AGM and a new committee will be elected for 2010-11. We have vacancies to fill and we shall be looking for a new Treasurer. Nominations from the floor will be accepted. If you wish to stand for election, you must have a proposer and seconder. You and they must all be registered members of the Forum.

## Are you a member?

The Forum has 40 members and we have plenty of room for more. You have to be a member to vote at the AGM or to stand for office and any resolutions from the floor must be proposed and seconded by members. Members who are online can also ask to receive copies of the Committee's Agenda and Minutes by email. There are no other privileges but the number of our members is evidence of the village's support for the work we do. It increases our authority when we apply for grants and deal with the local authorities and agencies that supply the services on which we depend. Your support is valuable to us.

You can be a member if you broadly support our aims, you are aged at least 18 and you live in the village, which includes Raven Villa and as far up the road as The Grove. You pay nothing.

If you are not yet a member and you wish to join, please ask the Editor for a registration form or fill one in when you arrive at the AGM. Time will be allowed for enrolment of new members before the formal meeting opens.

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