

Annual Review

2020/2021

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Front cover image: Milky Way over
Catbells, by Pete Collins.



I am delighted to welcome you to CALC's 2020/21 annual review - my second as your Chairperson.

The last year was dominated by the pandemic, which prompted dramatic changes in how we live, work and interact. It tested the resilience of people, communities and town and parish councils. Everyone had to dig deep to keep families, friends and communities safe.

Local town and parish councils adapted and responded incredibly well, remaining true to our purpose and responding rapidly to the changing world around us. This is showcased in the articles later in this review about local councils in Appleby in Westmorland helping their town to thrive socially and economically, St Bees holding a doorstep disco through their community radio, Scaleby walking all their rights of way and Bootle working with the West Rivers Trust to improve their water catchment management schemes.

Listening to what matters to you helps CALC to shape how we innovate our support for members. With the move to two unitary authorities on the horizon, CALC will continue to be a collective voice for the first tier of local government, contributing wherever we can to solving the challenges of our post-lockdown world - so please keep sharing your stories, comments and suggestions with our team.

I hope you enjoy reading this annual review and that you continue to remain proud of being part of Cumbria Association of Local Councils.

Councillor Sue Castle-Clarke | Chairperson, CALC

2020/2021 Highlights

375,00

people in Cumbria live in parishes that are CALC members

98%

of Cumbria's parish councils are members of CALC (229 out of 233)

73%

of Cumbria's parish meetings are CALC members (25 out of 34 total)

6

District Associations offering members opportunities to link locally

16

Executive Committee members from across the county leading the association

4

part-time employees (Chief Officer and 3 Parish Support Officers)

1000+

queries from members across Cumbria answered during 2020/2021

322

councillors and clerks from across Cumbria trained during 2020/2021

1

town councils' professionalism recognised under the Local Council Award Scheme

£7,551,856

raised in precepts during 2020/2021 by Cumbria's town and parish councils

15

district association meetings arranged

Welcome to CALC's annual review.

This year has been a year of hellos and goodbyes for CALC. Parish Liaison Officer, Amanda McCleery left CALC after 12 years of fantastic work with the local councils in South Lakeland and Barrow. We welcomed Lesley Cooper who joined us in January 2021 to take over the reins in the South. As a Cilca-qualified clerk herself, and coming with many years working in Health and Safety, she is abundantly qualified for the role. Jean Airey, a long-standing CALC trainer also stepped down this year and her great sense of humour and determination will be missed (though she is still working with many members in her capacity as an internal auditor)

Clearly the Covid-19 pandemic has dominated the work of CALC and all our members over the last year. But Covid hasn't been the only challenge...In July 2020, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick MP announced the reorganisation of local government in Cumbria (along with Somerset and North Yorkshire).

CALC moved quickly to produce an Interim Position Paper which set out our priorities for members, whilst the principal authorities set about getting their proposals for the reorganisation of Cumbria ready in time to meet the government's tight time frame –submissions deadline was early September 2020. At the CALC AGM in October we were delighted to welcome Cllr Martin Tett, the Leader of the new Buckinghamshire Council as our keynote speaker. We all agreed that he gave an illuminating presentation. With the reorganisation of Cumbria being the most significant change to Cumbria's governance arrangements since 1974, it continued to dominate discussions with members for the rest of the year.

Kind Regards,
Samantha Bagshaw | Chief Officer, CALC

Thanks to our supporters

We would like to thank our member councils for their membership subscriptions. We are also extremely grateful to the following local authorities for their continued financial support, which is greatly appreciated.



Lake District
National Park

The CALC Executive adopted a Strategic Management Plan to help us prepare for the future.

Our Vision

For Cumbria's Local Councils and Parish Meetings to be indispensable to their community.

Our Mission

Cumbria Association of Local Councils will be future focused and member led to support, promote and develop local councils within Cumbria for the benefit of those who live, learn and work within their parishes.

Our Objectives

- Manage the organisation effectively to ensure it remains financially sustainable
- Maintain the current membership level
- Provide mentoring for new clerks
- Expand guidance for local councils in line with new legislation and emerging priorities of our partners and communities
- Publicise the activities and achievements of local councils to the general public
- Raise the profile of the Local Council Award Scheme
- Demonstrate the benefits of a qualified clerk to increase uptake of the Certificate in Local Council Administration
- Facilitate performance improvements within local councils
- Deliver relevant, more varied and reflective training
- Harness the skills and experience of CALC Executive Committee

Our Values

- Leadership
- Openness
- Integrity
- Accountability
- 'Members first'



- One of our core values is 'members first'. Over the last year we focused on improving CALC internal processes by adopting revised policies covering all aspects of our activities. We also renewed our Welcome Pack for Executive Members containing important information for those new to the CALC Executive.



- We continued to send members regular updates on the pandemic and the complex arrangements for returning to face to face meetings.



- We produced a new Induction Guide for member councils to assist them when they have new members of staff joining them, particularly for new clerks. This is also full of important information that the council needs to share with their new clerk and in doing so, will ensure a smooth transition between the outgoing and incoming employee.



- We renewed our partnership with Steve Parkinson Associated as you told us that you valued access to their financial expertise.

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Covid-19 has continued to challenge Cumbria's communities both urban and rural. Yet local councils have risen to the challenge of finding new and creative ways of making sure that their residents are not only safe but still thrive, despite everything that the pandemic has thrown at them.

Appleby-in-Westmorland - Honorary Quidditch Town

Appleby-in-Westmorland, former county town of Westmorland and now the Official Quidditch Town, home of the Appleby Arrows.

The granting of this honour by JK Rowling and her book publishers Bloomsbury in October 2020 has captured the

imagination of the people and businesses of the town. Within days of the announcement, shop windows were filled with Harry Potter inspired displays and visitors have been coming to have their photographs taken with the official Appleby arrow's banner.

Appleby Town Council has embraced the honour and can see the potential to develop the Quidditch Town status, and the magic is already starting to take place with the opening of a new Harry Potter inspired shop - 'The Cupboard Under the Stairs.' However, this is just the start of Appleby's Quidditch story...

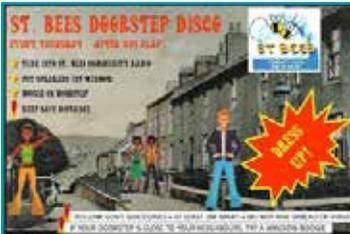


Community Radio initiative bringing St Bees together

The Covid pandemic brought significant challenges for everyone but it was also the catalyst for new ideas. A local resident wanted to set up a Community Radio station and began to investigate how to do it using the internet. With help from volunteers, the station was launched in March 2020 and immediately became hugely popular.

The Parish Council saw the value in bringing the community together and provided funding of £650 to ensure that the station was able to cope with the demand. By the end of July over 200,000 households/businesses had listened in. The population of St Bees is only 1800, so this had quickly spread well beyond the parish. The station provides a variety of programming including music, poetry, public service information (parish council bulletins, COVID news), thought for the day and much else. It also provided the music for a village doorstep disco when villagers played the same music along the streets with pavement dancing in household bubbles.

St Bees Radio continues to thrive and has now been set up as a Community Interest Company. It provides an excellent example of what can be achieved with some initial 'pump priming' support from a Parish Council.



Bootle's Green Flood Protection

In 2016, serious flooding damaged properties in Bootle village. Concerned residents came to the Parish Council seeking help and support in dealing with the issue.



A Flood Resilience group was set up with representatives from Bootle Parish Council and local residents and they looked at how to prevent further instances of flooding. The Parish Council got permission and the necessary permits from West Cumbria Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency and liaised with local landowners to take some gravel out of the river to deepen it and better ensure the flow, the cost of which was borne by Bootle PC. The community got involved and costs were kept to a minimum eg a digger was hired but a resident had the necessary permits etc to be able to operate it which he did for free, which reduced costs considerably.

The Group and the Parish Council then got involved with the West Cumbria Rivers Trust who help them apply for around £16,000 of funding to look at flood prevention measures. Their project developed and, working with local landowners, they identified areas on the fell that could be used for the planting of trees and the making of the leaky dams to slow down the flow of water into the village. Gradually, as the project developed, it was supported by a range of organisations including Copeland Council, Cumbria County Council, the Woodland Trust, Haverigg Prison, The Farmer Network and Lancaster University which assisted with the surveying and water level monitoring. A large amount of tree planting was carried out by locals and also some of the prisoners from HMP Haverigg as part of their community project.

The Parish Council has co-ordinated this project and it has been a successful community endeavour. It covers the Bootle rainfall catchment area of 25 square kilometres and aims to slow down the rush of water from the Fells into the village rather than permanently contain it. The work is still ongoing - covid having stopped some more tree planting!



Saving Footpaths and Bridleways in Scaleby Parish

A map on the wall at Scaleby Village Hall show the parish, its boundary and some important features including the rights of way footpaths and bridleways. An article published in the press in late 2020 highlighted the need for the public to use these footpaths or

lose them. It reported that walkers are urged to identify 10,000 miles of historic footpaths that are missing from the map in England and Wales of which some could be lost forever.

All rights of way must be identified before a government deadline of 2026, after which it will no longer be possible to add old paths to the official record. The Senior Countryside Officer (SCO) for the Cumbria County Council is responsible for periodic reviews of footpaths where a census is carried out to ensure rights of way are maintained and signage is visible. The last census was in 2016 and is next due in 2022, though likely to be delayed due Covid 19.

Last year I was fortunate to enjoy a dry period of weather during the first lockdown and walked the footpaths in the Scaleby area. Thankfully all footpaths are identified and accessible. Most appear to be neglected with damaged or missing signage as well as step stiles and directional arrows. I made a full report of my findings to the SCO who is currently taking action where necessary, in particular missing signage.

The quality of our footpaths can vary and most require wellington boots or walking boots, especially through fields where flooding is common. Clearing overgrown hedges and step stiles is an ongoing concern and whilst landowners are directly responsible for their maintenance it is up to us to report any misuse of land. Good luck, enjoy exploring your parish and perhaps you will save one of your local footpaths or bridleways!

District Associations Activities

There are a range of meetings held in each district for our members, councillors and clerks are welcome. Some are 'three tier' meetings meaning representatives of the local borough or district council and county council are present. These are sessions to discuss local issues such as highways, devolution of assets, community governance reviews or discussing proposed changes to the local plan.

Success in Allerdale - Footway Lighting

In 2020, the Chairman and Parish Support Officer Chris Shaw met with the leader of Allerdale Borough Council and officers over the vexed question of who should pay for footway lighting in the borough. After many months of discussions and negotiations around the pros and cons of transferring the costs of the maintenance of the lights to the parish and town councils, it was finally agreed that there would be no question that parishes will be billed for maintenance in the foreseeable future. Individual councils will be charged for power but the Allerdale Parish Council reps questioned how the district council have calculated the figure. The Allerdale officer agreed to look at this matter and speak to individual clerks. This represented significant progress for the parish councils of Allerdale, but with Local Government Reorganisation on the horizon, the question over footway lighting and who should pay for it may not be over yet.

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CALC's Chief Officer attends the following meetings to ensure that each group is aware of the needs of the parish and town council sector:

Cumbria Resilience Group – group for escalating issues raised by the district resilience hubs

Cumbria Chief Executives – strategic, county-wide issues, mostly regarding the pandemic.

Cumbria Monitoring Officers – discussions on the legal and procedural issues affecting all tiers of local government including considering if elections can take place safely, the revised Code of Conduct, how to manage the safe return to face to face meetings and finally, the issues concerning Local Government Reorganisation in Cumbria.

NALC County Officers – around 43 county officers join NALC legal team to discuss issues in their areas.

Parish Support Officers attend the local Resilience Hub meetings weekly where issues on the ground have been discussed and hopefully resolved. Any issues that cannot be dealt with go up to the county wide teleconference.



Mayor Doug Lawson and the Vice Chairman Cllr Scott Jackson

The Local Council Award Scheme

This year, Penrith Town Council was the first council in Cumbria to achieve the Local Council Award at both Foundation and Quality Level.

The Mayor of Penrith, Cllr Doug Lawson, said: 'I am delighted that

Penrith Town Council is the first council in Cumbria to be awarded the Quality Award under the Local Council Award Scheme. An impressive achievement for a council established in only 2015.

Over the last five years, the council officers and members have worked tirelessly to reach these quality sector standards. We want to acknowledge the support of the Cumbria Association of Local Councils throughout the process.

This achievement recognises that Penrith Town Council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement. The council has had an independent sector performance assessment which identifies the council's commitment and hard work.'

The Local Council Award Scheme was launched in January 2015 and is available at foundation, quality and quality gold levels. It is awarded in recognition of a local council's professionalism and ability to do their best for the community they serve. If your council is interested in applying for the Local Council Award Scheme, please contact us at office@calc.org.uk

Certificate in Local Council Administration

The Certificate in Local Council Administration is a foundation qualification for clerks. Having a CiLCA-qualified clerk should be the aim of all councils, as it gives confidence that you are receiving up to date, accurate advice. With two thirds of your council members elected (not co-opted) and your clerk CiLCA-qualified, your council becomes eligible for the General Power of Competence, which widely expands your powers to achieve things for the community.



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Benefits of CALC membership

- ✔ Timely advice on any aspect of local council work, by email or by phone if it is urgent
- ✔ A bi-monthly newsletter, emailed to councils and councillors, providing information and guidance on current issues relevant to local councils
- ✔ The provision of a range of publications, both digital and hard copy, on local council work
- ✔ A CALC website to provide information about all parishes to the general public, as well as downloadable information and guidance for exclusive use by local councils (clerks and councillors)
- ✔ Providing guidance on new Government legislation, for example, the Coronavirus regulations, revised Code of Conduct and the General Data Protection Act.
- ✔ An annual training programme
- ✔ Access to conferences on topics of interest to parish councils
- ✔ Working in partnership with principal authorities.

Membership of NALC

- ✔ Specialist legal advice on complex issues
- ✔ Bulletins on legal issues, new Government policies and other matters
- ✔ Access to the NALC website
- ✔ Promoting Government support for the parish tier of local government
- ✔ Lobbying Government for changes to assist the work of local councils
- ✔ Responding to a large number of consultations from Government and Government agencies on policies and proposals that affect local councils
- ✔ Being the national 'voice' of local councils in the media, in Government and amongst Opposition political parties
- ✔ Publication of the 'Local Council Review' - available to councils and councillors.

CALC Staff



Samantha Bagshaw
Chief Officer



Lesley Cooper
Parish Support Officer for South Lakeland and Barrow District Associations



Sonia Hutchinson
Parish Development Officer and Parish Support Officer for Carlisle and Eden District Associations.



Chris Shaw
Parish Support Officer for Allerdale and Copeland District Associations



Karen Wood
Freelance administrator

CALC Honorary Members

President: Cllr David Graham MBE

Vice President: Mr Stan Simpson

Hon. Treasurer: Ms Julie Hartley

CALC Executive Committee



Cllr Sue Castle-Clarke
Executive Committee Chairperson and Eden District Association Chairperson



Cllr Mike Cumming
Barrow District Association Chairman



Cllr Andy Pratt
Copeland District Association Chairman



Cllr Jane Tea
Eden District Association Vice-Chairperson



Cllr David Wilson
Vice-Chairman for Allerdale District Association



Cllr Bryan Craig
Executive Committee Vice-Chairman and Carlisle District Association Vice-Chairman



Cllr Mike Higginbotham
Carlisle District Association Chairman



Cllr Doug Sim
Copeland District Association Vice-Chairman



Cllr Peter Smillie
South Lakeland District Association



Cllr David Peters
South Lakeland District Association Chairman

Cllr Roger Hart
Allerdale District Association Chairman

Cllr Mary Bradley
Directly elected to Executive Committee

Cllr Mark Kidd
Directly elected to Executive Committee

Cllr Leith Hallatsch
Directly elected to Executive Committee

Cllr Jonathan Davies
Directly elected to Executive Committee

Cllr Bev Pink
Directly elected to Executive Committee

CUMBRIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Receipts	2021	2020
Affiliation Fees	56,377	54,301
Sale of Publications	143	544
Sale of Local Council Review	289	153
Local Authority Grants	44,885	44,885
Training	7,262	13,486
Zoom Accounts	1,787	-
Deposit Account Interest	177	611
Sundry Income/Conference	400	1,425
Transparency Website fees including website development	-	244
	111,320	115,649

Balances at 1 April 2020

Deposit Account	32,833		32,767
Current Account	35,534		43,533
Cumberland Building Society	52,459	120,826	128,214
		232,146	243,863

Payments	2021	2020
NALC – Affiliation Fees	20,769	19,906
Publications	346	703
NALC Local Council Review	198	110
Printing and Stationery	960	863
Travel and Subsistence	99	1,907
Meetings	1,268	3,495
Bank Charges	65	66
Salaries and expenses	66,424	74,050
Accountancy Fees	774	756
Honoraria	500	500
Training	3,688	8,689
Sundries	40	40
Insurance	330	345
Fingertips – Agency Costs	7,805	7,071
Conference	-	3,693
Postage/Phone	180	-
Transparency Fund (CALC)	-	183
Subscriptions	600	660
Zoom accounts	2,053	-
	106,099	123,037

Balances at 31 March 2021

Deposit Account	32,851		32,833
Current Account	40,578		35,534
Cumberland Building Society	52,618	126,047	120,826
		232,146	243,863

We certify that the above Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 March 2021 is correct and in accordance with the best of our information given to us and as shown by the books.

Saint & Co Chartered Accountants, Unit 7b, Lakeland Business Park, Cockermouth, CA13 0QT



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Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) is run by local councils for the benefit of local councils. It assists local councils in their day-to-day work and represents their interests

CALC's work is paid for by the subscriptions of its member councils, together with grants from the principle authorities of Cumbria and the Lake District National Park Authority.

Get in touch

Cumbria Association of Local Council

Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Carleton Avenue, Cumbria CA10 2FA

Tel: 01768 812663 **Email: office@calc.org.uk** **www.calc.org.uk**