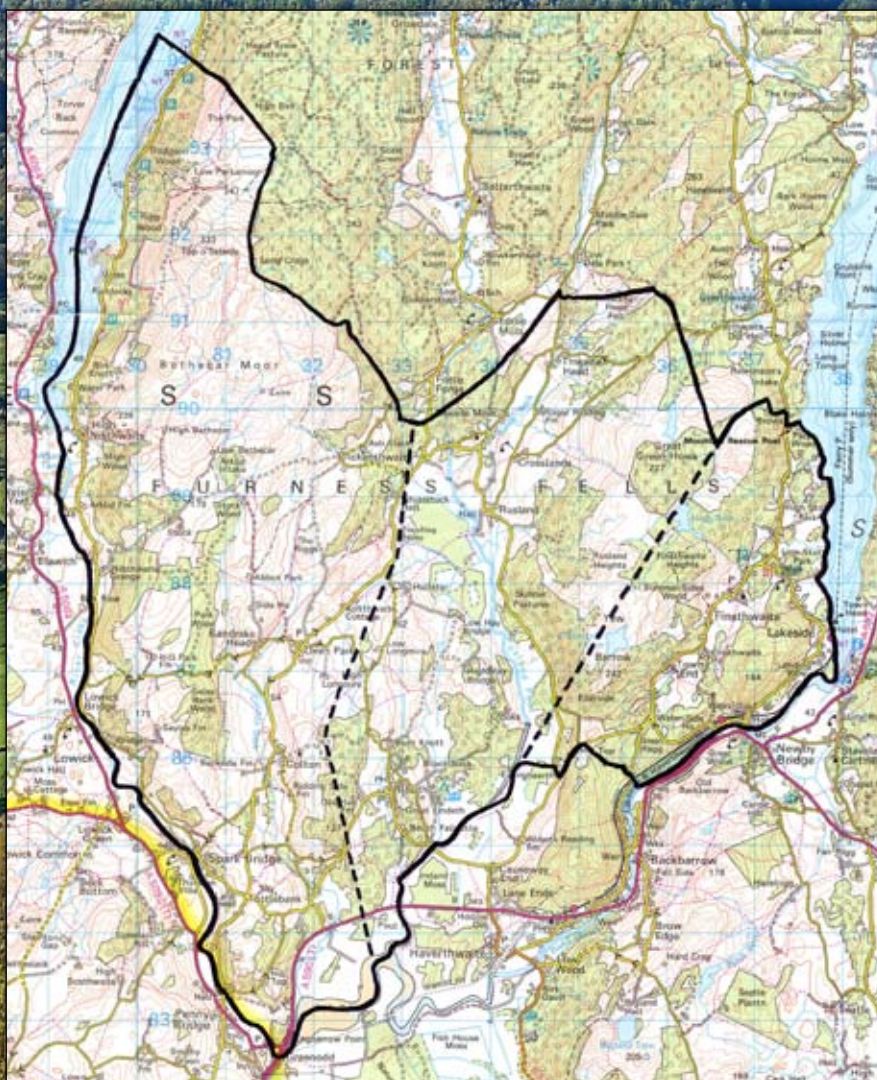


COLTON COMMUNITY PLAN 2015



Colton Parish Community Plan 2015

Introduction

Topics, Policies and Actions

- 1. The Local Economy**
- 2. Landscape and the Natural Environment**
- 3. Communities and Well-Being**
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Map of Colton Parish (back page)



Introduction

Purpose

Community Plans set out the issues that local people value about their neighbourhoods, and their aspirations for the future. They tend to be based on civil parish areas (like Colton) or groups of parishes. It is essential that such Plans properly reflect the values, opinions, needs and aspirations of the community, and that they should be community-led, facilitated by the Parish Council. Principal authorities (in Colton's case: Cumbria County Council and South Lakeland District Council) and planning authorities (in Colton's case: the Lake District National Park Authority), are increasingly using these Plans to guide local policy and inform planning decisions.

The purpose of this Plan is to set out policies and action plans for the future of the Parish. To this end, invitations to join a Community Plan Working Group brought together people from all three wards of our large rural parish, including parish councillors and the parish clerk. Working group members and contributors are listed in Annex A.

Background

Colton Civil Parish is a sparsely populated rural area of about 20 square miles within the southern part of the Lake District National Park, spanning three valleys running north-south: Coniston Water and the Crake Valley to the west, Rusland in the centre and Windermere and the River Leven in the east. The Parish has no central settlement, being composed of small villages and hamlets linked by a network of minor roads.

In 2003, Colton was one of the first parishes in Cumbria to produce what was then called a Parish Plan.

This 'set the scene' by describing Colton Parish, its environment and communities, and set out an 'action plan' based on issues raised through community meetings, community groups and questionnaire surveys. Plan updates – questionnaire surveys and an assessment of progress – have been carried out twice since the Parish Plan was published. In 2010, parishes were encouraged to produce new 'Community Plans' that would be more policy and action-oriented.



What powers does the Parish have?

Parish Councils are the lowest tier of local government. They have limited powers to make changes on their own, but they can and do increasingly influence policy and decisions made at higher levels. For example, the Lake District National Park as our Planning Authority consults on all individual planning applications and refers to local plans and housing surveys when making policy decisions.

The Localism Act 2011 has given local communities further powers in determining change, providing they meet certain qualification criteria. Colton Parish Council has the potential for exercising new powers, having a fully qualified Clerk and a sufficiently high proportion of elected Councillors. The Localism Act also gives communities more influence over the location and appearance of development in their areas through creation of formal 'Neighbourhood Plans' as a statutory part of the formal local planning framework. It may be that Colton Parish produces a Neighbourhood Plan in due course, possibly together with neighbouring parishes, as the task incurs significant costs in effort and resources. In the meantime, it will be useful to learn from the experiences of nearby Coniston and Torver Parishes, two of the Government's 'front-runners' or pilot parishes for the process, whose Plans are near completion.

What resources are available to the Parish?

Parish Councils rely largely on funding through the Parish Precept and on volunteer effort. The precept is a small proportion of the Council Tax that each household pays to the District Council. In Colton Parish, the precept pays principally for the Council's Clerk to work ten hours a week, the Lengthsman (Roadman) for three days per month, plus maintenance of our eight notice-boards, the Bouth Village Green and Playground, the Finsthwaite clock and two 'adopted' phone kiosks. Colton Parish Councillors volunteer all their time, but may claim expenses for travel to meetings where they represent the Council. Any other activities rely on volunteer effort from the local community and on bidding for occasional grants.

Community Plan: Our Values and Aspirations

Summary of Responses from Events and Questionnaire survey.

With guidance from Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT), the Community Plan Working Group organised a range of activities and events, of which the following were key to gathering opinion and ideas:

- 28th January 2010, Rusland Reading Rooms
- 1st October 2010, social evening and CP meeting, Finsthwaite Village Hall
- Questionnaire Survey – 2010/2011
- 27th March 2011, CP Children's event, Rusland Reading Rooms

The two social events at Rusland and Finsthwaite were well-attended and the opinions and ideas that emerged, together with reference to the original Parish Plan survey, provided the basis for a new questionnaire sent to all households. Of 420 questionnaires sent out (distributed with the Colton Parish Council newsletter), 75 were received. This is a response rate of 18% (though given that 32% of Colton's houses are second homes or holiday lets, this could be interpreted as 26%).

Questionnaire Results

The results of the survey are illustrated Tables 1-3 and Figures 1 and 2 at the end of this section.

Part 1. Issues and Concerns:

The questionnaire asked for a rating of 0 to 5 in importance (0=least important, 5=most important) for each of the 15 concerns that emerged from the last Parish Plan. Table 1 and Figure 1 show these 15 issues listed in order of importance, according to their rating.

In relation to results from the 2003 Parish Plan, protection of peace and quiet, traffic and highway concerns remained in the top three most important issues. Electronic communications rose from least important (15th!) to 4th most important, reflecting the increased dependence on the internet since 2003 and frustration at the poor rural broadband service. Lack of affordable housing dropped to 7th most important, from 2nd on the list in 2003. This is consistent with the housing surveys conducted in 2006/7 and 2012 which shows a drop in affordable housing need (but see Section 4.). The need for local services and facilities for an ageing population remained relatively high up the list. The emergent interest in green energy solutions, sustainable living and traditional woodland management has been a notable addition from the 2003 survey.

The questionnaire allowed for people to set out and rate other issues not covered in the 15 questions. These were (in order of number of responses):

- Highways-related (14 responses): more cutting of verges for road safety, speeding traffic, size of lorries and coaches, danger on roads for pedestrians and cyclists, car-parking in villages, deteriorating roadside walls, lack of gritting of roads.
- Housing (3 responses): use of empty homes and fair taxation of second homes.
- Local services (3 responses): lack of shops & post-offices, help for isolated elderly, need for more recycling services.
- Local Economy (3 responses): need for more local industry and support for local businesses.
- Tourism (2 responses): Need for low-impact, sustainable tourism to preserve peace and quiet.
- Concern over privatisation of forestry land (2 responses).
- Other: concern over low-flying aircraft, more support needed for community-run initiatives (village halls, cinema).

Part 2: Ideas and Suggestions for CP Action Plan

This second section of the questionnaire listed the ideas and suggestions that had been raised at the community events and asked people to tick all those that they supported. These are shown in Table 2 and Figure 2. Other ideas listed by respondents are listed in Table 3.

Table 1. Issues and Concerns

Issue	Total	Score	Order
Support for farming with conservation of ecology and landscape	313	4.17	1
Protection of peace and quiet	301	4.01	2
Concern over traffic and deterioration of highways	300	4.00	3
Need for improved electronic communications	297	3.96	4
Support for sustainable woodland management and traditional skills	284	3.79	5
Provision of services and facilities for an ageing population	281	3.75	6
Lack of affordable housing	279	3.72	7
Concern over off-road traffic and deterioration of green lanes	278	3.71	8
Lack of local services (e.g. bus, shop, post-office, school)	274	3.65	9
Need for more green energy solutions appropriate and sensitive to local conditions	266	3.55	10
Need for self-help initiatives (when snow-bound, flooded, etc.)	266	3.55	11
More flexible planning policies required to assist local economy	250	3.33	12
Need for more local decision-making	241	3.21	13
Need for more integrated public transport/community schemes	229	3.05	14
Concern over litter and dog fouling	211	2.81	15

Figure 1.

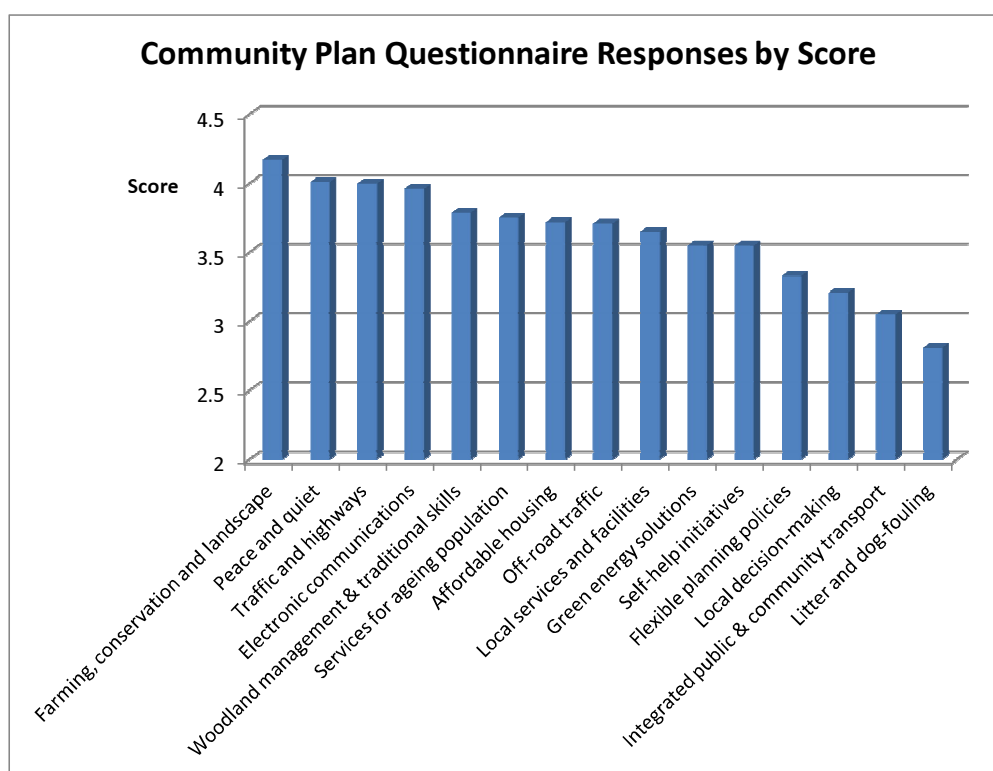


Table 2. Ideas and Suggestions for CP Action Plan

Idea	Score
Small-scale hydropower	43
Pressure group for improved broadband and to keep in touch with new technology	36
Create and support community sustainable woodland areas and wood-sharing scheme	35
Pressure group for affordable housing - with target for 2020.	27
Forum for sharing information on sustainable energy opportunities	25
Community 'contract' to install efficient insulation in stone houses	25
Energy-efficient village hall project	21
Promotion of shared purchases (food, fuel)	21
Weekly café (local produce/meeting place)	17
Explore how better to use Greenodd as hub for transport and services	17
Pressure group for improved bus routes and car-share schemes	16
Community minibus or local car rental scheme	14
Community or mobile shop	11
Pilot biogas plant using cow manure	11

Figure 2.

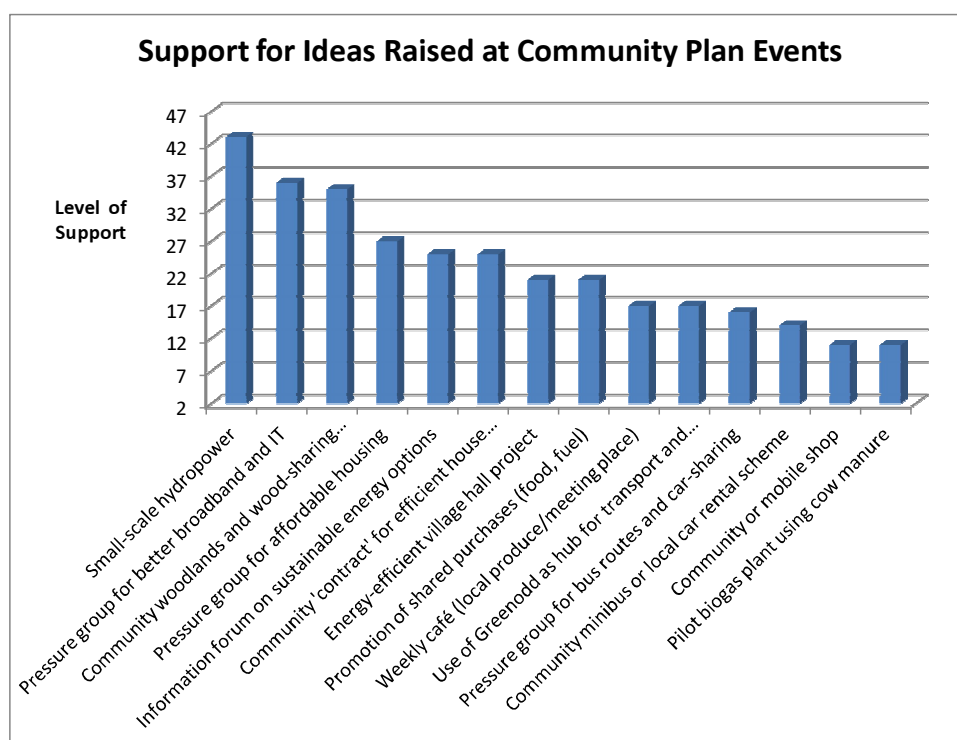


Table 3. Other ideas listed by respondents

Idea	Score
Include people who have had to move away in decisions e.g. about housing	1
Promote large-scale water capture for community to use in times of drought	1
Mobile shop - could place on-line orders (with volunteer help for the 'non-IT confident'?)	1
Recycle plastic and cardboard (other Councils do it)	2
Improve electricity and water supplies	1
Restrict second homes and implement double rates for second homes	1
Allotments	1

TOPICS, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Based on the findings summarised above, and on a review of issues brought to the attention of the Parish Council, the Community Plan Working Group has formulated policies and action plans based on the topic areas below, detailed in the following pages:

1. **The Local Economy**
2. **Landscape and the Natural Environment**
3. **Communities and Well-Being**
4. **Housing and Other Development**
5. **Roads, Traffic and Transport**
6. **Energy and Sustainability**

1. The Local Economy

Current situation

Although, like other parts of South Lakeland, Colton has a relatively high proportion of retired and elderly residents, some 67% of people are described as ‘economically active’¹. A sizeable number of these run small business or are self-employed². Their success is important to many families and, indirectly, they help support the dwindling services that occur in, or adjacent to, the parish.

Within the boundaries of the parish, economic activity is dominated by agriculture and tourism, which are also the main economic drivers for the county as a whole. However, many people travel to centres outside the parish for their main employment or to subsidise their principal work. In terms of overall income, the parish shows a wide variety of sources of employment, much of which may take place outside the parish itself. The 2011 Census reveals that the main employment sectors for Colton Parish residents are:

Employment sector	Proportion
Retail	12.8%
Human health & social work activities	12.0%
Accommodation & food service	11.1%
Professional, scientific & technical	9.6%
Education	8.7%
Manufacturing	8.5%
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	7.3%
Construction	7.0%
All other sectors	18.4%

Tourism is mostly small-scale in the parish as a whole, providing single or supplementary incomes to some families through accommodation provision (e.g. B&B, holiday lets, caravans). However, there are larger-scale hotel and other tourism businesses at Lakeside and Newby Bridge and three outdoor centres (YMCA Lakeside, Water Park at Nibthwaite, and Snows Heights at Colton). Some of these are significant employers, although the degree to which they provide employment for local people is unknown. There is also one large-scale company-owned caravan site at Bouth, and three public houses which also provide tourist accommodation.

Increasingly, farming only survives as a result of government subsidies and diversification; this latter includes branching out into tourism (accommodation, camping), taking on second jobs (mainly contracting) and relying on family members gaining employment elsewhere (instead of contributing to the farm’s own activity). It is claimed that only farmers over retirement age are able to farm full-time (supplemented by a pension). Meanwhile, the integrity of current farming units is increasingly under threat as sales often result in the fragmentation of traditional farms, fields being bought by ‘hobby farmers’ who can often afford higher prices but whose incomes do not depend on the land they have acquired.

1 67.4% of people aged 16-74 (2011 census)

2 26.3% of people aged 16-74 (2011 census)

Historically, woodland industries were among the most traditional form of economic activity in the parish and they remain important in the life-memories of many local families. Traditional forms of building, stonework (including dry-stone walling) and hedging are significant surviving skills which contribute greatly to the character of the parish.

More recently, given the withdrawal of many previously well-established services, technology has become essential in supporting all aspects of economic life. Broadband is essential in the farming industry (all stock records must be recorded on-line), the tourist industry (especially advertising and bookings) and in health and education. Many statutory bodies assume internet access is available to all. In reality, the service is very poor in most parts of the parish. Mobile phone reception remains very patchy with significant areas unable to receive reception from any provider; this may impact on tourism businesses.



Looking across the farmland of the Rusland valley towards High Dam in the winter ©Colin Barr

Meanwhile, the landscape that residents and visitors value so highly is largely a product of these traditional industries and activities; there is no-one else to act as guardians of the countryside in the way that, say, farmers do. So, the survival of these sectors is very important for the long-term health and wealth of this part of Cumbria.

Results of the survey as they affect The Local Economy

The results of the recent questionnaire survey show strong support for *farming and farm diversification, including the conservation of ecology and landscape*, which was rated as the *most important issue* faced by the parish of Colton. Support for *sustainable woodland management and traditional skills* was also high on the list.

Protection of peace and quiet was identified as the second most important issue in the survey and this is taken to indicate that only low-level, low-impact tourism is accepted in the parish. Whilst recognising that a balance needs to be struck between tourism impacts and its benefits to the local economy, tourism capacity may have reached its limit in some areas such as Lakeside, Bouth and Grizedale. For example, the expansion of the Grizedale Centre in Satterthwaite Parish to the north has led to a considerable increase in traffic, including coaches which can only reach the Centre using Colton's roads. Our policies endorse the Lake District Local Plan ('Core Strategy CS09: South Distinctive Area') which states that: 'We will strengthen the landscape character of the South area by protecting the quieter areas around ... the Rusland Valley' and 'We want to reduce the pressures from the volume of traffic on the minor roads leading to Grizedale Visitor Centre, thus alleviating traffic issues for communities in Satterthwaite, Rusland and Bouth'.

Issues relating to electronic communications (including phone reception and Broadband) were also rated highly and are important to a successful local economy.

The Local Economy

Policies

The Community Plan must assist the local economy in whatever ways are possible, provided that other policies are not compromised. In support of these principles, the Parish Council will adopt the following policies:

- PE1 We will encourage and support small businesses and self-employment opportunities that are based within the parish, but with due regard to other policies.
- PE2 We will encourage and support local farming (and related) activity, especially where this relates to appropriate sizes of holding, traditional types of agricultural activity and primary sources of income. In general, we will discourage the disaggregation of farm holdings.
- PE3 We will support tourist activity only if low-level and low impact, where there is capacity for such development and where it contributes to the local economy;
- PE4 We will encourage and support any initiatives which help to conserve crafts and skills traditional to the parish.
- PE5 We will encourage and support initiatives which will improve electronic communications in the parish

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AE1 We will support and promote initiatives that aid local farming (and related) activity as prescribed by policy PE2, provided this does not conflict with other parish policies.
- AE2 We will lobby government for better broadband and press for IT support for farmers, particularly now that CAP scheme submissions must be made online.
- AE3 In relation to tourism, we will support only those planning applications that relate to low-level, low-impact tourist activity linked to the local economy, as prescribed by policy PE3, provided they do not conflict with other parish policies (especially regarding peace and quiet, and housing)
- AE4 We will support initiatives (such as the current Rusland Horizons project¹) that help to conserve traditional skills.
- AE5 We will take an active part in the Connecting Cumbria Broadband initiative through supporting our 'Broadband Champion' in raising awareness and in lobbying for super-fast broadband connections in the parish. We will explore with the appropriate authorities how to connect those properties excluded from the Connecting Cumbria initiative.
- AE6 We will support initiatives that provide employment for local people, provided they do not conflict with other parish policies (especially regarding peace and quiet).
- AE7 We will explore the potential benefits of keeping a register of business premises operating in the parish.

¹ A local community-led Heritage Lottery Fund supported project focussing on woodlands, heritage, biodiversity and archaeology.

2. Landscape and the Natural Environment

General description

Colton Parish is an area of some 20sq miles in the southern part of the Lake District, between Coniston Water and Windermere lake. In terms of national landscape descriptions, the area constitutes a significant part of the South Cumbria Low Fells National Character Area (NCA 19). In the Lake District National Park Authority's own assessment, the area fits largely within Area of Distinctive Character (ADC) 63 Rusland and Crake Valleys and the southern part of what is called ADC 58 Dale Park (even though Dale Park itself is in a neighbouring parish).

The landscape is characterised by low fells and valleys, with substantial areas of mixed woodland. There is a diverse range of habitats including agricultural grassland, rough grassland, species-rich grassland, mixed woodland (but mainly broadleaf), moorland/heathland, tarns and becks, and small wetlands and mires. Agricultural activity has produced a pattern of fields, bounded by walls and hedges, whilst the woodland is a product of several centuries of economic exploitation. The settlements are a scattering of small villages and hamlets, linked by a network of minor roads. There is no main service centre in the Parish.



The view across the Rusland valley looking west towards the Coniston Fells © Teresa Morris

Effect of farming on the landscape – delivery through agri-environment schemes

Although the number of employees in agriculture, forestry and fishing, within the parish, appears relatively low (7.3%), this is a higher percentage than in South Lakeland as a whole (2.9%) and much higher than elsewhere in England (0.8%). Over the centuries, farming has been largely responsible for the landscape we see today. Farming has had an indirect effect on woodlands in that they have only survived on sites which have not been possible to farm (due to steepness of slope or soil factors). In living memory, the changes in farming produced by mechanisation and a reduced workforce, have seen significant changes in the appearance of the landscape with many more 'scrubbed-up' fells, more bracken cover, and corners left unmanaged. While this may be seen as undesirable by some, there may be nature conservation benefits. The area also has a handful of large estates which have a broader land management programme with agricultural, silvicultural and game interests. However, the landscape character of these estates is not significantly different from other farmed and wooded areas.

With regard to the balance between agricultural and wildlife interests, most of the farms in the area (but by no means all) have entered into agri-environment schemes of one kind or another. Some farmers are coming to terms with the closure of the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) scheme, introduced in 1987; this scheme offered incentives to adopt agricultural practices to safeguard and enhance parts of the country of particularly high landscape, wildlife or historic value. It has been replaced by the Environmental Stewardship scheme and many existing ESA farmers, and new applicants, are starting out on the Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) component of the new scheme which aims to deliver significant environmental benefits in priority areas (see Box 1).

Box 1: The Environmental Stewardship Scheme in the Rusland Valley

Approximately 80% of the farmland area within Colton Parish is currently under an Environmental Stewardship Scheme managed by Natural England. Agreements have varying start dates and will expire up to April 2024. The objectives of Environmental Stewardship are to:

- Promote public access and understanding of the countryside
- Maintain and enhance landscape quality and character
- Protect the historic environment and natural resources
- Conserve biodiversity

Within the parish, 'Entry Level Scheme' (ELS) and 'Upland Entry Level Scheme' (UELS) management options have been applied, targeting the management of hedgerows, ditches, stone walls, traditional farm buildings, some archaeological features, cereals for whole crop silage, some permanent grassland, rush pastures, mixed livestock grazing, enclosed rough grazing, and unenclosed moorland.

Higher Level Scheme (HLS) options relate to more active work on drystone wall and hedgerow renovation, restoration of various woodland types and traditional orchards, restoration of upland hay meadows, and grassland for waders and wildfowl, management of ditches for water vole habitat, restoration of habitats for certain butterfly species, restoration of upland wet and dry heathland, moorland and coastal salt marsh, maintenance of some ponds, reed-beds and fens, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh management, restoration of lowland raised bogs, cattle grazing projects, historical and archaeological feature protection and restoration of traditional farm buildings and, finally, some educational access projects on the periphery of parish.

Bethecar Moor is a large area of high common between the Rusland Valley and Coniston Lake, covering almost a quarter of Colton Parish. The Bethacar Commoners Association manages the common and is in receipt of an HLS grant for specific projects, many of which are for enhancing and improving the area's sensitive habitats. The scheme will bring in some £3/4 million into the Parish over its 10 year life-span.

Woodland

Colton Parish has an unusually high percentage of semi-natural ancient woodland with distinctive bio-diversity and species, and several notable ancient and veteran trees. In past centuries these woods were managed on an industrial scale for wood and timber products; such woodland management practices were highly significant in preserving species diversity and habitat. Fewer woods are now actively managed and practitioners of traditional woodland skills are regrettably few, making it difficult for those land owners who wish to improve their woodlands to find the necessary skilled workforce.

A number of the area's woods are classified as Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) in which the planting of non-native conifers within an old wood has had a negative impact on the ecology. The restoration of these PAWS is a high priority for the Forestry Commission (FC), the Woodland Trust and Cumbria Woodlands Ltd. (CWL, see further information later in this section), all of which are currently working in the parish to support or manage this process. The National Trust also manages some woodland on the western edge of the parish, along the shores of Coniston Water.

A significant aspect of the approach to woodland restoration in the parish has been a commitment to involve local people. To this end, the FC have invited public participation in woodland development reviews (Linsty Green, Bessie Bank), community woodland management (Dockney Parrock and Old Hall Wood, Bouth). The Woodland Trust have leased one of their woods to The Coppice Association who, with the help of the Bill Hogarth Memorial Apprenticeship Trust (BHMAT), are re-establishing traditional wood-management practices there and the LDNPA have involved local volunteers in woodland surveys and tree-planting.



Volunteer woodland work party

Remnants of the industrialised past of our parish are to be found in abundance throughout the woods and wider landscape in the form of archaeological sites (e.g. charcoal platforms, potash kilns, woodworkers' huts, forges). The LDNPA are currently working along with local volunteers to map, with a view to maintaining, a number of these features.

Increasingly, parcels of woodland have been bought by private individuals mainly for wood-fuel and recreational purposes. Woodland owners and managers have access to help and advice from Cumbria Woodlands Ltd. (CWL), a 'not-for-profit' organisation launched in 1991 in response to widespread concern over the neglected state of the County's woodlands. Supported by various local and government agencies, CWL aims to encourage more and better woodland management through providing a programme of advice, knowledge-transfer, and training, including wood-fuel schemes, apprenticeship schemes, woodland skills courses, deer and wildlife issues, tree health, woodland management plans and grant applications. CWL also helps to set out a strategic direction for the forestry sector in Cumbria.



Stony Hazel Forge © Colin Barr



BOX 2: Rusland Horizons Working a Lakeland Landscape

Rusland Horizons is one of the first community-led Landscape Partnership Schemes to be funded by the *Heritage Lottery Fund*. The scheme is being delivered by *The Rusland Valley & Fells Heritage Partnership* whose aim is to restore and protect the woodland landscapes of a significant part of South Lakeland. The work will focus on heritage skills, woodland management and wildlife, archaeology and local history, and access and promotional events. Colton Parish occupies much of the scheme area which extends from Coniston Water to Windermere Lake and from Grizedale to the coast. Currently in its 'Development Phase', if Rusland Horizons is successful in its second-round bid, delivery of a range of projects, worth nearly £1.5M, will take place from 2016 to 2019.



Swill basket maker,
Owen Jones
© Colin Barr

Wildlife conservation

As described above, the Parish is rich in wildlife habitats. This is recognised in the number of areas designated for their wildlife value. In the parish there are:

- three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) – Rusland Valley Mosses, Yewbarrow Woods and Dodgson Wood (part of Bethacar Moor Common)
- a National Nature Reserve (NNR) - Rusland Moss
- a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) - Yewbarrow Woods
- a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – Hay Bridge
- numerous County Wildlife Sites

Whilst overall management responsibility for these areas belongs to bodies such as Natural England, the National Park Authority and the National Trust, the involvement of local people in consultation, planning and conservation activities (e.g. juniper planting on Bethacar Moor) is seen as being very important.

The Parish is home to a number of important wildlife species: data provided by the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre show that the parish contains a number of representatives from the IUCN¹ Red List of Threatened Species, including 63 birds, 22 insects, five plants, the European eel and the European otter. Of particular public interest is what is thought to be the only remaining native (and non-introduced)



Planting juniper on
Bethacar Moor

¹ The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's main authority on the conservation status of species

herd of Red deer in England, a remnant Red squirrel population, scattered populations of the Hazel dormouse, and less common birds (such as: willow warblers; pied and spotted flycatchers; redstarts; tree pipits; lesser redpoll; woodcock; wood warblers and marsh tits). Red kites have recently been re-introduced at nearby Grizedale Forest and have roamed locally. The area is one of the last strongholds for the Netted Carpet Moth and it's larval food-plant, the Touch-me-not Balsam, and a recent discovery of the Duke of Burgundy butterfly adds invertebrate interest. The Parish also hosts populations of glow-worms, a species which has decreased considerably in numbers in Britain over the last fifty years. There is a small population of small-leaved lime trees: survivors or direct descendants of the original wildwood established after the last ice age.

The Rusland Valley Mosses (Rusland, Hulleter and Hay Bridge mosses) are 'lowland raised bogs', representing a rare habitat in the UK - Cumbria is one of the few places where these bogs remain. However, they have dried out over the years and the plants and animals they once supported have declined. Natural England is encouraging some owners of these mosses to restore them to 'favourable condition' by installing a peat and clay 'bund' around the bogs to retain the rainwater, and selectively removing trees in order to create the right conditions for the sphagnum moss to grow back. Concern over possible flooding of surrounding farm-land and the landscape impact of removing the Scots Pine trees has led to detailed discussions between Natural England, landowners, the local community, the Parish Council and the National Park. For Hay Bridge Moss restoration. A compromise has been found through bunding the moss at ground level to allow it to remain a 'sink' for floodwaters.

As mentioned above, farmers also contribute significantly to the preservation of the landscape and ecology of the area through the Environmental Stewardship Schemes.

Landscape and Environment Protection Issues

Colton Parish is a quiet area of the National Park, recognised as such in the Park's Core Strategy:

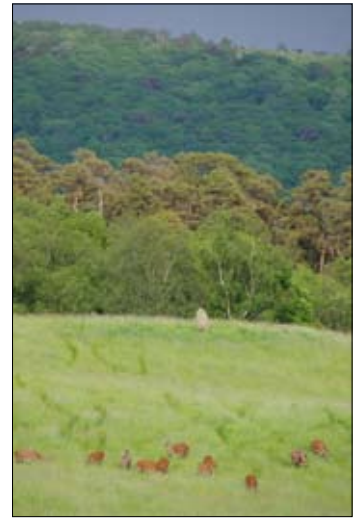
1. CS09: South Distinctive Area: 'We will strengthen the landscape character of the South area by protecting the quieter areas around ... the Rusland Valley' and 'We want to reduce the pressures from the volume of traffic on the minor roads leading to Grizedale Visitor Centre, thus alleviating traffic issues for communities in Satterthwaite, Rusland and Bouth.'

The protection of peace and quiet is consistently seen by residents to be a high priority. The main issues raised by residents that impact negatively on the environment and landscape are:

- **Traffic:** Tourist centres like Lakeside and Grizedale bring a significant number of visitors and traffic through the Parish, including large coaches negotiating Colton's narrow roads. Tourism is now year-round, with a big increase in organised events using (and sometimes closing) roads and rights of way.



Red Squirrel © Westmorland Red Squirrel Group



Red deer grazing by the Dane Stone © Tess Baxter



Duke of Burgundy © Butterfly Conservation



Dormouse © Danielle Schwarz



Rusland Moss



Coaches near Lakeside on the Newby Bridge - Hawkshead road

- **Recreational use of ‘green lanes’ (unsealed roads and by-ways open to traffic) by motor-vehicles:** Whilst legal, this causes significant wear and tear on and around these routes, and the County Highways Department which is responsible for their up-keep, is no longer able to find resources to make repairs. Some routes have become impassable for farm traffic, having a significant negative impact on the local farming economy. The Parish Council, the County Council, and the National Park undertook a pilot green road repair project for the County, focussing on two of Colton’s unsealed roads. However, although significant repairs were made, the project ran out of funds and the planned monitoring did not take place. Future maintenance and repairs seem increasingly unlikely.
- **Illegal off-roading by motor vehicles, particularly trail bikes,** is a growing problem, damaging sensitive habitat, causing upset for other recreational users, and sometimes involving aggressive behaviour. Motor vehicles have a legal right of way on roads, including ‘Unsealed Unclassified Country Roads’ (UUCRs) and ‘By-ways Open to All Traffic’ (BOATs). Illegal off-roading (an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988) occurs when vehicles venture away from the legal routes without the landowner’s permission. Much of the illegal activity occurs on Bethacar Moor, damaging the sensitive habitats that the government’s HLS scheme is trying to protect. Damage can actually directly affect the payments made under this scheme and potentially undermine upland farmer livelihoods. Representatives from the local community, the police, the National Park, government agencies and the Trail Riders Federation, have formed a working group to tackle this problem.
- **Poaching** is an increasing problem of organised crime, impacting on the wild deer herd and causing the deer significant suffering. A ‘poacher-watch’ scheme operates in the area, administered by the South Lakes Deer Management Group.
- **Littering and dog-fouling** are not major issues, but can become localised problems, especially around car-parks and key tourist routes, and on one particular commuter-traffic route in the parish.
- **Noise**, particularly at night, is becoming a reported issue: Two particular examples are: i) from users of private camping facilities (operating using the ‘28-day’ rule for permitted development), and ii) from the use of private helicopters landing at local holiday accommodation.
- **Light pollution** is becoming a concern, with an increasing tendency for properties, particularly holiday lets and caravan sites, to keep bright outside lights on all night.



Damage resulting from legal use of a ‘green lane’



Damage caused by illegal off-roading activity

Results of the survey as they effect Landscape and the Natural Environment

Results from the recent questionnaire survey show *Conservation of ecology and landscape* to be the **most important** issue for the parish with *Protection of peace and quiet* as the second most important. Both relate to this section and its policies.

Other priorities identified through the survey relevant to this section are: *support for sustainable woodland management and skills, concern over off-road traffic and deterioration of green lanes and concern over litter and dog fouling.*

Landscape and the Natural Environment

Policies

The landscape of Colton Parish is remarkable for its variety and hence for the associated ecological diversity. Sensitive conservation and management will not only help maintain biodiversity but should also contribute towards the local economy through skills development, the fostering of peaceful, low-impact, tourism preserving the cultural and industrial heritage of the area. The Parish Council is committed to safe-guarding the environmental heritage of the area and, to that end, will pursue the following policies:

- PL1 We will support initiatives to protect and enhance the special qualities of the landscape and natural environment; we will lobby and support agencies that seek to prevent activities that harm the landscape, especially those causing physical damage.
- PL2 We will support the local farming economy especially in relation to low-impact diversification and sustainable development, particularly encouraging initiatives that conserve landscape and ecology.
- PL3 We will support initiatives that protect the peace and quiet of the parish and we will seek to prevent inappropriate tourist and business developments. In support of initiatives to promote 'dark skies', we will seek to reduce light pollution.
- PL4 We will support any attempt to protect and conserve the special heritage of the area, especially those concerned with woodland and archaeology.
- PL5 We will promote and support wildlife conservation projects in the Parish; we will maintain vigilance concerning activities that might jeopardise the sensitive habitats in the parish.
- PL6 We will encourage and support proposals to create community-sustainable woodland areas and wood-sharing schemes; we will encourage and support approaches aimed at fostering woodland-management and conservation skills.

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AL1 We will share information about environmental initiatives and opportunities via parish newsletters, notice boards and websites. We will remain alert to any activities that might be detrimental to the natural environment (for example illegal off-roading and poaching) and refer concerns to the appropriate authorities.
- AL2 We will ensure that policy PL3 (peace and quiet) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications and we will maintain vigilance about developments which might jeopardise this policy.
- AL3 We will share information about initiatives and opportunities arising in connection with the special heritage of the area and invite participants to attend Parish Council meetings to inform the community.
- AL4 We will ensure that policy PL5 (wildlife conservation) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications. We will request regular updates from the Rusland Horizons project in this respect. We will encourage the community to raise concerns about any developments that might threaten wildlife (e.g. poaching) and wildlife habitats.
- AL5 We will ensure that policy PL2 (farming) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications, and share information about successful initiatives with parishioners.
- AL6 We will encourage and support information-sharing about community woodland and wood-sharing schemes, liaising with woodland owners such as the Forestry Commission, the National Park and the Woodland Trust, and will seek regular updates from the Rusland Horizons project on its initiatives concerning woodland management and conservation skills.
- AL7 We will encourage appreciation of 'dark skies' and work to reduce light pollution in the parish. We will ask properties and caravan sites to turn off lights at night or use low-output lighting (if lighting is regarded as necessary).

3. Communities and Well-Being

Overview

Colton is a large, rural and sparsely populated parish of scattered hamlets and isolated farms, with no villages (according to the National Park Local Plan definition) and no single settlement forming a service centre. There are no shops, post offices, schools, doctors' surgeries, or daily bus services in Colton, although some of these services are available in neighbouring parishes to the south. Colton does, however, have three pubs, five community halls (at Bouth, Colton, Finsthwaite, Oxen Park and Rusland), and five churches (at Colton, Finsthwaite, Rusland and Tottlebank, with a Quaker meeting house at Rookhow, Rusland). The village green and playground at Bouth, leased from South Lakeland District Council, is managed by the Parish Council through a local voluntary committee. A mobile butcher, a milkman and newsagent visit some parts of the Parish. Cumbria County Council's mobile library service visits various locations monthly, though this service is under threat.

Figures from the most recent Census in 2011 show that Colton Parish has a resident population of only 672 people living in 321 households. Comparison with the 2001 Census show that there has been a population decline of 12% in 10 years. Datasets from both Census years shows a higher than average proportion of older people, with a marked peak (mode) in the 45-59 age-group. The number of children, already low in 2001, has declined in all age-ranges by 2011.

The geographically large parish area and small, scattered and ageing resident population poses a challenge for creating and maintaining community links and ventures across the whole Parish. The modest precept has to support facilities for a wide area community and, in consequence, funds are spread very thinly. The maintenance of the village green and play-area at Bouth and the up-keep of five community halls is a struggle, yet these are key facilities for each of the communities they serve. The Parish Council also needs to maintain 8 notice-boards to cover all parts of the Parish. It is only because of the strong and active community spirit, self-help initiatives and degree of volunteering that community facilities, initiatives and indeed some essential services survive at all.

As well as the various village hall and village green committees, there is a wide range of community groups in the Parish, including the Rusland Valley Horticultural Society (which runs the annual Rusland Show), Women's Institutes, faith-based organisations, the Rusland Valley Community Trust, the Oxen Park Cinema Club, reading groups and the oil and gas-purchasing syndicates.



Rusland Church



Rusland Reading Room



Finsthwaite and Lakeside Village Hall



Colton Parish Room



Bouth Village Hall



Rusland Show
© Tess Baxter



Lloyd Willis from
Greenodd Store on his
daily newspaper round to
local villages



Harold Hutchinson, mobile butcher
for 60 years



The White Hart at Bouth

The Forestry Commission, the Parish Council and residents of Bouth have piloted a 'community woodland' initiative at Old Hall Wood, Bouth, enabling local input into the woodland management plan as well as practical woodland working parties. This scheme followed strong opposition to the government's proposal to sell-off woodland to private ownership; 'Rigg Wood' in the Parish was a nationally renowned example of closure and reduced public access following privatisation.



Locked gates at Rigg Wood

Communications

Four community newsletters are published each month, and a biannual Parish Council newsletter is produced and hand delivered to every household in the Parish through volunteer effort. There are also three main websites providing community information: the Parish Council's website (www.coltonparishcouncil.org.uk) the Rusland Community website (www.rusland.org.uk) and the Crake Valley website (www.crake.org). Broadband speeds are lamentably poor in the Parish, with speeds in some locations barely reaching 1mb/s. The community is actively involved in the Cumbria Broadband initiative, trying to encourage providers to improve rural access. Mobile phone signals are patchy and in the case of some providers appear to be getting worse as they 'rationalise' their networks.

Transport (see also under Section 5, Roads, Traffic and Transport)

The lack of public transport, services and employment in Colton Parish means that its population is almost completely dependent on cars. Given Colton's ageing population, many people are directly affected when they are no longer able to drive, and become dependent on relatives or the goodwill of neighbours to get around. Some mobile services and supermarket deliveries are available and there are opportunities to use Community Transport schemes where they operate, as described in Section 5 and Annexe C.

Health

Health services in this part of south Cumbria appear to be withdrawing to more distant centres. Examples are:

- The recent government proposals to withdraw grants from rural GP surgeries resulting in potential closure
- Out-of-hours visits no longer being provided by a local GP, but outsourced to centres more than 20 miles away.
- Ambulance services taking longer to attend emergencies (30 minutes is usual, but 45 minutes is not unknown)
- Specialist emergency services at local hospitals under threat, with plans for relocation e.g. to Preston, involving a 90 minute journey once the ambulance has attended.

Colton relies more and more on volunteer services, for example mountain rescue and air ambulance teams during winter when the roads are icy, and a committed local network of trained 'First Responders', providing a life-saving service, during the sometimes long wait for an ambulance. Oxen Park now has a defibrillator installed in its phone box, paid for through a grant from a local business, community fund-raising, and volunteer effort. Training courses were given free of charge by Colton's First Responders.



The defibrillator in the former telephone box in Oxen Park

Crime and Policing

There is relatively little crime in Colton, though the perception is that it is increasing. Deer poaching and illegal off-roading have increased markedly in the last 10 years, and these issues alternate as policing priorities for the area. Other crimes include thefts of heating oil, red diesel and machinery from farms, and thefts and vandalism in one of the churches. With the recent cut-backs in police budgets, rural policing has tended to suffer, with larger areas covered by fewer police officers. However, the Neighbourhood Policing Team based in Ulverston, though under more pressure, are very committed and have had particular success with catching illegal off-roaders and tracing poachers. Unfortunately the Ulverston police station is now to be closed and police officers will be based in Barrow-in-Furness and Kendal - each over 20 miles away. An officer often attends Parish Council meetings for an exchange of information. A 'neighbourhood alert' system operates in the area whereby residents can sign up to email alerts about suspicious activity and incident reports, and provide information back to the police.

Results of the Survey as they affect Communities and Well-Being

Protection of the peace and quiet in Colton Parish was rated as very important (priority 2). The lack of local services also caused concern (priority 9), particularly those related to an aging population (priority 6). The need for coordinated self-help initiatives and integrated transport schemes were also in the top 15 priorities.

Communities and Well-Being

Policies

The high value attached to the peace and quiet that characterises this part of the Lake District is recognised and supported throughout the policies in this Community Plan. In practice, this means assessing the likely impacts of any proposed developments and balancing these against the benefits to the local community, for example tourism impacts vs. benefits to the local economy. The withdrawal of services, facilities and employment opportunities from rural areas like Colton Parish is having a significant negative impact on well-being of its communities; the policies below attempt to address these issues.

- PC1 We will support the maintenance of peace and quiet in the parish as a key principle when considering other policies, actions and planning applications.
- PC2 We will promote and support the development of services and community facilities, for example village halls, in and around the parish.
- PC3 We will support the retention of services in and around the parish, particularly those on which older and more vulnerable residents rely, for example health services.
- PC4 We will support and encourage developments that improve communications, and seek to identify and resolve issues of social isolation.
- PC5 We will promote and support self-help initiatives within the parish, such as resilience planning.
- PC6 We will encourage the maintenance of rights of way and the potential for extensions to the footpath network within the parish.

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AC1 We will consider the effects on the peace and quiet of the parish of any development initiative, planning application or other proposal put before the Parish Council, and will make this consideration a key element in our decision-making.
- AC2 We will support the village hall committees in maintaining and developing these important community assets.
- AC3 We will seek to include important community facilities in a 'Community Assets Register' (Localism Act 2011) where they meet the necessary criteria.
- AC4 We will lobby the responsible authorities to maintain and improve local health and other services that are essential to well-being, particularly for the older and more vulnerable members of the community.
- AC5 We will continue to maintain the Bouth Village Green & Playground as a facility for local residents and visitors.
- AC6 We will maintain our website and eight parish council notice-boards and keep them up-to-date. We will examine ways of improving communication with parishioners, particularly the vulnerable and hard to reach, using appropriate available formats. We will develop and put in place an 'Information and Communications Strategy' (see also Local Economy Action AE5 – campaign for Super-fast Broadband).
- AC7 We will support the development of resilience plans for each settlement in the parish, based on the plan drawn up for Finsthwaite, and encourage the participation of parishioners.
- AC8 We will survey existing rights of way in the parish, including permitted and historic paths, with the aim of working with the National Park and the County Council for their maintenance, perhaps through a local volunteer network. We will assess the potential for the formation of new footpaths as formal rights of way where appropriate.

4. Housing and Other Development

Background

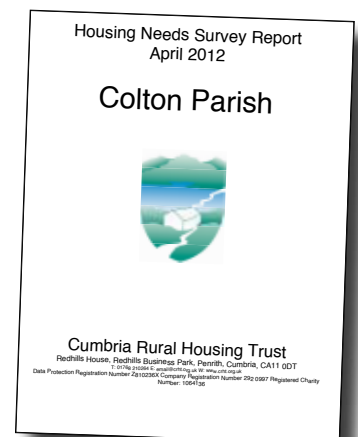
Being a rural parish in the Lake District National Park, Colton is a popular retirement and tourist destination. Figures from South Lakeland District Council indicate that over 30% of residences in Colton Parish are second homes, holiday lets or empty properties, for which Colton ranks tenth highest of 79 parish areas in the District. At the same time there is limited housing stock because, to preserve the special qualities of the Park, planning policy only permits the creation of new homes where they will provide local affordable housing or where they satisfy a local need.

This background has given rise to a rapid increase in house prices over the past 30 years and, despite the present recession, these prices have remained significantly high in relation to the modest wages obtainable locally. According to figures from the National Housing Federation, between 2001 and 2011 house prices in South Lakeland District rose by 93% against only a 17% rise in median incomes, to give a ratio of 13.3 for average house price over income. This large affordability gap is likely to be even more marked in rural areas of the District like Colton Parish. The decline in services and businesses operating within the parish has also reduced employment opportunities and access to social amenities. The result is that young people tend to leave the parish altogether to seek work, education or training and to find affordable housing. There has also been evidence of 'reverse commuting' by young farming families who are only able to afford houses in towns up to twelve miles away.

Whilst the high house prices and the 30% figure for non-main residences in the parish is a key concern, the Parish Council recognises that holiday lets, particularly those that support local household incomes (e.g. farm diversification) can be an important part of the local economy.

Housing Need

Two 'Housing Needs Surveys' have been conducted in Colton, commissioned by South Lakeland District Council and undertaken by Cumbria Rural Housing Trust. The first, in March 2007, indicated that 17 households within the Parish would be in need of **affordable** housing within the five years to 2012. More than half of these were families with adult children and all stated a need for 2 or 3-bedroom accommodation for rent. The second survey, conducted 5 years later in April 2012, found only one household in immediate **affordable** housing need, with 4 more likely to be in the same position within five years. This apparent reduction in the level of housing need is an interesting development; possible explanations might be: a) that housing need can fluctuate significantly year on year, b) the provision of some affordable housing for Colton residents in the neighbouring parish of Satterthwaite and Staveley-in-Cartmel since the last survey will have had a positive impact, and c) some people have since moved away to find work and housing and may not have been included in the survey.



Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) – Housing Policy

The Lake District National Park Authority is the planning authority for the Parish. Its present Local Plan incorporates a Supplementary Planning Document on Housing Provision which aims to support sustainable communities, delivering housing where it is needed, whilst avoiding adverse effects on the special qualities of the National Park. New dwellings (including sub-division of existing houses, change of use, and conversions) will only be permitted where they contribute towards meeting the identified local need or local affordable need of the community, with future occupancy secured in perpetuity for its original purpose. The Housing Need Surveys provide the evidence for identified need. No new open market housing is permitted.

'Affordable' housing includes rented homes provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, at a cost low enough for them to afford. 'Affordable Rent' is not subject to the national rent regime for social housing, but must be no more than 80% of the local market rent. An issue that concerns rural parishes in the Lake District is that 80% of the market rent is still very high and likely to be out of reach of most local households.

‘Local Need’ housing must meet the needs of a person with a local connection, normally that they have been continuously resident or in continuous employment in the ‘Locality’ for the past 3 years. The ‘Locality’ refers to a grouping of parishes within the National Park.

Legal ‘Section 106’ agreements make sure that occupancy restrictions are secured in perpetuity for all new dwellings. Housing associations and authorities have indicated that developers are unwilling to undertake small low-cost housing projects of less than 14 houses, citing economies of scale. This is of some concern to rural parishes like Colton where for its hamlets and small villages such a development would be a major change to the nature of a community and the landscape. There have been small-scale local-need housing developments in Colton Parish by local builders, so we remain confident that small ‘in-fill’ developments are possible, where needed.

More recently, the National Park Authority has approached the government to offer to be a pilot area for new powers to curb the number of second homes in rural communities, through requiring a change of use application.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced legislation to allow the development of ‘Neighbourhood Plans’ and the ‘Community Right to Build’ proposals which could allow Colton Parish Council and community groups to take a more proactive role in future. Such plans may not block development proposed in a Authority’s Local Plan, however, but can play a part in deciding on the location and type of development built. Colton is watching the progress of a number of pilot Neighbourhood Planning projects in Cumbria.

Tourism Developments

Caravan Sites: Many of Colton’s caravan sites are small-scale with traditional caravans, supporting the local farming economy. However, some are larger ‘stand-alone’ sites, the largest of which is a company-owned ‘Black Beck Caravan Site’ near Bouth. These sites provide important custom for local pubs, but their impact on small communities can be considerable. For this reason, the Parish Council expresses a view that occupation of caravan sites should remain seasonal, with a closed period over 2-3 winter months to allow local residents some quiet time. Although the current Local Planning Policies support this view, recent national government guidelines encourage year-round occupation and this is increasingly being permitted. In some cases, traditional caravan sites have changed in favour of large wooden lodges with garden planting and access roads, giving a suburban appearance in open countryside. The landscape impact of this type of development is a concern.

Other tourist developments: Section 1, The Local Economy, explains that because of the importance attached to the protection of peace and quiet, only low-level and low-impact tourism is felt appropriate. Unless carefully managed, the impact on a local community of visitor attractions can be considerable. The Parish Council works with the National Park to minimise impacts through defining access routes and restricting the number and types of events that can be held.

Results of the Survey as they affect Housing and Development

Although the 2012 housing survey revealed a decrease in demand for housing, the Community Plan questionnaire survey showed that lack of affordable housing remains a concern as does the high number of second homes and holiday-lets. In relation to development in general, the high priority given to landscape and peace and quiet means that any development should be low-impact, sensitively managed and targeted at providing employment, housing or community facilities supporting local need. In support of the above issues, the Parish Council will adopt the following Policies:



Barn conversion with Local Occupancy condition



Wooden lodges replacing traditional caravans, for sale on the open market

Housing and Other Development

Policies

The high number of second homes and the lack of affordable housing in the rural areas of the Lake District is well documented; 30% of Colton's housing stock is a non-main residence (ie second home, holiday let or empty property). The housing policies below support the LDNPA's Core Strategy policies in attempting to redress the balance and ensure that any new development provides for local need or local affordable need. In terms of tourism, policy PH7 attempts to resist the pressure from caravan sites to allow year-round occupation, in the interests of respite peace and quiet for at least a short portion of the year.

- PH1 We will support the principle of the LDNPA Housing Policy CS18: that 'new dwellings'¹ will only be permitted where they contribute towards meeting an identified local housing need or local affordable need', and where this need is supported by evidence in Colton Housing Needs Surveys. However, exceptions may be made according to policy PH2.
- PH2: We would consider supporting the reuse or extension of existing buildings for holiday letting purposes **only where** a) the income supported the local economy (i.e. person with main residence in the parish) **and** b) the building did not utilize a site suitable for local residential need, local affordable residential need or employment purposes (LDNPA Policy CS22a). Exceptionally, we may support proposals for holiday use where it can be demonstrated that the associated business would thereby provide significant local employment opportunities.
- PH3 In addition to policy PH1, we will consider supporting housing development only if small-scale, located on brownfield, 'in-fill' sites and not adversely impacting landscape or environment.
- PH4 We will encourage planning authority policies that attempt to bring second homes back into permanent use. We support the LDNPA's initiative to restrict the number of second homes. We also support full council tax for second homes and initiatives to turn empty homes into local need housing.
- PH5 We will only support other developments where they contribute to the local economy and are of an appropriate scale, having due regard to environmental and social impacts, including peace and quiet.
- PH6 We will consider developing a Neighbourhood Plan in due course, possibly in association with neighbouring parishes and when resources allow.
- PH7 We will oppose year-round occupation of caravan sites in order to preserve some seasonal respite for the local community .

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AH1 We will consider opportunities for small-scale, affordable housing development according to policies PH1 and PH3.
- AH2 We will continue to monitor the housing stock in the parish, particularly the proportion of main residences vs second homes, holiday lets and empty homes.
- AH3 We will consider applications for other development on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of the impacts as described in policy PH5
- AH4 We will monitor the Neighbourhood Planning process taking place in pilot areas in the National Park, and the associated resource implications. The Council will communicate with neighbouring parishes about a possible joint approach to developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

1 New dwellings' includes the sub-division of existing houses, a change of use, and the conversion of traditional buildings, as well as new-build.

5. Roads, Traffic and Transport

Background

The maintenance of the highways (other than major trunk roads), pavements, street lighting and furniture is the responsibility of Cumbria County Council. The County Council is also responsible for all drainage and flooding issues on the highway as well as pothole repairs, road surface dressing, winter maintenance and the cutting back of roadside verges and trees growing on the verge. Most of the 50 miles of roadway in Colton Parish consists of an extensive network of minor single-track rural roads. Against a background of spending cuts and increasing traffic, the maintenance of this network, along with winter gritting and verge-cutting, presents a considerable challenge. The County Council is also responsible for maintenance of the eight Unsealed Unclassified Country Roads (UUCRs) in the Parish, and the National Park is responsible for the maintenance of the single By-way Open to All Traffic (BOAT). These have deteriorated significantly over the past 10 years, mainly due to the increased traffic levels, including 'off-road' recreation and tourism businesses.



Blocked road gully

During 2012, following a review of the highway maintenance process, the County Council brought the operation back 'in-house', rather than contract it out. The need for locally based teams which could 'find and fix' problems on a more permanent basis was recognised. However, spending cuts in recent years have severely reduced the time that these teams can spend on routine maintenance. Drains which used to get cleared many times per year are now only visited once, and some on the more minor roads not at all. The consequence is more flooding of the carriageway which leads to further deterioration and increased need for repair, and therefore further expense. Formal channels of communication with Parish Councils declined markedly during 2012/13, with an end to the Locality Working initiatives and no consultation on priority works. However, during 2014, communications between Colton Parish and Highways officers have improved significantly through a system set up between the Clerk and the local Highways Network officer. A list of priority works is maintained and updated regularly through regular feedback; this list is available on the Parish Council website. Emergency repairs (e.g. deep potholes) can be reported by anyone to a central desk ('HighwaysHotline') and these are normally dealt with promptly.

Colton Parish Lengthsman

To supplement the work of the County Council teams, Colton Parish Council has taken on a part-time Lengthsman, paid for through the precept and occasional grant funding. The Lengthsman deals with blocked drains and flooding problems on the highway, can undertake minor roadside repairs, sign-cleaning and verge-clearing at junctions, but may not dig up the road surface. This initiative has proved very popular with Colton's residents and has been invaluable in the context of declining services from the County Council. It also demonstrates the value of 'Localism' in a providing a cost-effective and responsive service, combining local knowledge with locally-sourced skills.



Archie Workman, the part-time Lengthsman, at work

Traffic and Speed

The amount of traffic on Colton's roads is increasing as is the size of vehicles trying to negotiate them. Traffic and traffic speed in relation to road safety is the second most common concern (after the state of the roads) reported to the Parish Council. Cumbria County Council is responsible for setting speed limits and Traffic Regulation Orders on the roads in the Parish (excepting the A590 Trunk Road) and also for parking regulations and enforcement. However, only the police can enforce speed limits. Where no specific speed limits are imposed and signed, the legal limit on Colton's rural roads and through its villages is actually 60mph. An advisory 'Twenty's Plenty' speed reduction scheme has been introduced in Bouth and will be monitored for effectiveness. Cumbria County Council representatives (on request) and the Police attend Parish Council meetings where problems with highway matters, brought by the public or by Councillors can be reported and acted upon. The majority of complaints received by the Parish Council by far relate to Highways and traffic matters.



Advisory speed limit at Bouth

Transport

The only regular public bus service runs on a Thursday to Ulverston from the SE corner of the 20 sq miles of Colton Parish. An initiative called 'Go-Lakes' trialled a service primarily for tourists during July and August North-South through the parish during 2013, but publicity was poor and the service did not resume in 2014. In the absence of public transport, community car schemes can provide a life-line. Various schemes are currently available. Annex C provides details of those available in the year of publication of this Plan (2015).

Results of the questionnaire survey as they affect Roads and Transport

Concern over traffic and condition of highways was rated 3rd in priority, reflecting the degree of concern routinely shown to the Parish Council.

Roads, Traffic and Transport

Policies

In support of the above issues, the Parish Council will adopt the following Policies:

- PR1 We will continue to press for improvement in the condition of Colton's rural road network, including 'green lanes' (UUCRs and BOATs).
- PR2 We will continue to press for improved winter maintenance of roads in the parish.
- PR3 We will press for speed monitoring and speed reduction measures on highway 'black spots'.
- PR4 We will encourage the provision and use of public transport and community transport schemes (see Annex C) in the parish in relation to demand for these services.

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AR1 We will press for better liaison and consultation with County Highways on road maintenance. We will encourage parishioners to report road condition problems to the relevant authorities, providing contact and format information on our notice-boards and website. We will maintain a list of highways and flooding problems and press County Highways to resolve them. We will lobby County and District Councils for improved road maintenance and road sweeping in the Parish.
- AR2 We will continue to engage the services of a Lengthsman, funded through the precept for at least 2 days per month, seeking grant funding to increase the number of working days.
- AR3 We will consider community self-help schemes where feasible, for example encouraging able residents to clear their local drains of surface debris to prevent flooding.
- AR4 We will review and identify the need for grit bins and grit heaps in the Parish and press for their provision and maintenance. We will participate in County Highways winter-maintenance schemes where feasible.
- AR5 We will lobby for speed limits and speed reduction measures particularly along well-known 'black routes', for example the C5026 Newby Bridge to Stott Park road, the C5023 Tollbar to Spark Bridge route and the C5022 through Oxen Park. We will monitor the effectiveness of the '20's Plenty' zone in Bouth. We will report 'black-spots' and near-miss incidents to the police, including on green lanes.
- AR6 We will assess the need for public transport and community transport schemes in the parish and will lobby for provision of such services in relation to demand. We will publicise and encourage the use of transport services by residents and visitors.

6. Energy and Sustainability

Green energy, community woodland, home insulation, shared purchasing, biogas from cow manure, allotments

Current situation

For the purposes of this plan, sustainability is taken to mean the continuation and improvement of the existing landscapes, communities and economies in the parish. The converse assumption is that elements which are not sustainable will cease to exist.

Most houses in Colton Parish are thought to be over 150 years old and are built of traditional stone (slate) with solid walls. Some have been dry-lined inside for insulation and protection from damp. Colton has no town gas supply, so heating is commonly dependent on electricity (storage radiators), heating oil (kerosene), bottled gas (LPG) or wood/coal. The price of oil in particular has risen 5 or 6-fold in the past 20 years. With low incomes, this has meant that many people are now living in fuel poverty – defined as spending more than 10% of their income on household fuel. According to a study in 2003 by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, Cumbria has high levels of fuel poverty and Colton Parish is in the highest category for Cumbria. The Centre indicates that fuel poverty has got much worse in the 10 years since the study was carried out. The high cost of heating homes has become a key issue for our ageing population. Many people are fitting wood-burning stoves, but carrying logs is not always suitable for an ageing population, and there may be supply issues in the medium to long term as demand rapidly increases.

Many issues relate to sustainability, operating in every walk of life. Some of these have been highlighted in the recent questionnaire survey:

- **Green energy (or Sustainable energy):** this is a term which is generally used to cover the sustainable provision of energy that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Technologies that promote sustainable energy include renewable energy sources, such as hydroelectricity, solar energy, wind energy, wave power, geothermal energy, and tidal power, and also technologies designed to improve energy efficiency. In our parish, only some of these are applicable (particularly solar, geothermal and, to some extent, hydropower) and none is ruled out by the planning authority, the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA), depending on site conditions.
- **Community woodland:** the use of fuel-wood, together with appropriate woodland management is seen as a potentially sustainable energy source. A community woodland (i.e. a woodland where the local community has a significant input to management, irrespective of ownership) could be a viable source of such wood, as well as meeting a number of other parish objectives. More suitable woodlands are becoming available and both the Forestry Commission (e.g. Old Hall Wood, Bouth) and the LDNPA (which owns several woods in the area) have expressed support for community involvement. However, with an ageing population, cutting and extracting wood on a voluntary basis for local use may be a problem.
- **Home insulation:** it is arguable that no amount of green energy, or alternative fuel supply system, will be efficient unless homes are well insulated. There are already well-advertised schemes for roof insulation, cavity wall insulation and double-glazing. However, many properties in this parish are not cavity-built, being of solid stone construction. Such properties can be insulated by using modern internal, or possibly external, systems.



Solar panels on the community cinema roof at Oxen Park



Small-scale wind turbine at High Bethacar Farm



Ground-source heat-pump installation: drilling rig at Oxen Park

- **Shared purchasing:** a number of shared purchasing schemes are being organised. There is already shared fuel purchasing schemes for oil and LPG in part of the parish. Other opportunities exist including schemes for electricity and even, perhaps, wood-fuel.
- **Allotments:** there are currently no allotments in the parish. The Parish Council does not own any land but, if sufficient demand is demonstrated (e.g. six or more residents), then Section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 places an obligation on the borough, district or parish council to provide a sufficient number of allotments for residents who want them. In the first instance, responsibility lies with the Parish Council. If the Parish Council does not own suitable land, then it is expected to acquire a site by agreement. If this proves impossible, then the parish council can ask the County Council to acquire the land compulsorily under powers granted in the act for the compulsory purchase of land for allotments. However, the Parish Council may be expected to reimburse the County Council for all of its costs and will also be liable for the costs of purchasing the land. This could lead to an unrealistic increase in the precept.
- **Recycling** (particularly cardboard and plastics): at present South Lakeland District Council provides a service to householders whereby glass, cans, paper and compostable materials are collected for re-cycling. Any cardboard and plastic materials currently have to be taken to local recycling facilities in Key Service Centres such as Ulverston and Hawkshead, though there are plans to provide collections in 2016.
- **Car sharing:** the lack of public transport in the Parish results in a high level of private car usage which is relatively energy inefficient and to a degree unsustainable. Greener alternatives such as car-sharing and Community Transport schemes (See Section 5 and Annex C) are available. The case could also be made for the re-introduction of some public transport routes.
- **Biogas from cow manure:** in the north of the county (at Dryholme Farm, near Silloth) a £4M Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant was switched on in February 2011. It is the only such power station in Cumbria but it runs on specially-grown crops (such as maize and grass silage) and only serves its immediate geography. The Environment Agency (EA) says that anaerobic digestion is very well established in the UK as a treatment technology for sewage sludge (66 per cent of all sewage sludge was treated in this way in 2007) and that it expects to see a significant growth in the use of this technology for treating food wastes and agricultural manure and slurry over the next few years. Could such a facility be established in Colton Parish (e.g. near the A590), serving the wider area of South Lakeland?
- **Hydro-electric power:** is the generation of electricity through turbines and other devices which are powered by the flow of water. As elsewhere in the Lake District National Park, our surrounding fells and relatively high rainfall mean that we have a number of watercourses which may, theoretically, be suitable for hydropower schemes. Although a report commissioned by the LDNPA in 2009¹ failed to identify any suitable major sites in our parish, smaller schemes are a possibility for landowners to explore. These would be subject to permission being granted by relevant authorities (e.g. LDNPA and Environment Agency). Such a scheme at High Ickenthwaite Farm is illustrated here.



Small hydro scheme at High Ickenthwaite Farm

Results of the survey as they affect Sustainability

Of the 15 'issues' identified in the survey, *Support for sustainable woodland management and traditional skills* was the fifth highest score and *Need for more green energy solutions appropriate and sensitive to local conditions* was tenth. Also relevant was *Need for more integrated public transport/community schemes*. Under 'other' specific suggestions there was support for:

- Recycling services
- Small-scale hydropower
- Create and support community sustainable woodland areas and wood-sharing scheme
- Forum for sharing information on sustainable energy opportunities
- Community 'contract' to install efficient insulation in stone houses
- Energy-efficient village hall project
- Promotion of shared purchases (food, fuel)
- Pressure group for improved bus routes and car-share schemes
- Community minibus or local car rental scheme
- Pilot biogas plant using cow manure

Energy and Sustainability

Policies

Although no particular topic emerged over any other in the survey results, there was clear interest shown in ideas for sustainable living and green energy as a whole, and the Community Plan ought to address these seriously. In support of the above issues, the Parish Council will adopt the following Policies:

- PS1 We will encourage and support appropriate local initiatives which will increase sustainable living (including reducing energy use, sourcing local produce and recycling).
- PS2 We will encourage and support community-based 'share schemes' which will benefit sustainable living.
- PS3 We will encourage and support appropriate sustainable 'green energy' developments in the parish, particularly those that benefit the community and that are sensitive to local conditions, having due regard for the potential impact on landscape, peace and quiet, environment and wildlife.

Actions

From the policies above, the following actions should be undertaken by the local community, local organisations and Colton Parish Council. Please refer to Annex B: 'Action Plan' for specific details on how these actions will be implemented, who by, time-lines, priorities and review.

- AS1 We will explore options for further recycling schemes to be made available in the parish.
- AS2 We will help to maintain fuel oil/gas syndicates and to publicise their activities.
- AS3 We will talk to local organisations and agencies about the potential for local fuel-wood purchasing schemes.
- AS4 We will encourage residents to take advantage of grant schemes for all types of home insulation and ensure that information is available to householders.
- AS5 We will encourage residents to consider sharing car journeys for regular outings, such as shopping trips and social events.

Note: Actions concerning public and community transport schemes are listed under Section 5. Roads and Transport.

ANNEX A: Members of the Community Plan Working Group

1. Councillor Colin Barr (West Ward)
2. Councillor Vanessa Champion (East Ward)
3. Councillor David Hoyle (Central Ward)
4. Ex-Councillor Brenda Fishwick (West Ward)
5. Mandy Lane (Parish Council Clerk)
6. David Dunford
7. Bobbie Dobson
8. Tess Baxter
9. Andrea Meanwell
10. Mike Postle
11. Archie Workman

ANNEX B: ACTION PLAN

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
Overarching Action: A. Planning Policy Summary document To ensure that planning decisions made are informed by parish policies.	Parish councillors have the responsibility to ensure they understand LDNPA and Colton Parish Council policies and are confident with the decision-making process.	Clerk to produce. Councillors to ensure use of document to inform decisions.	High	2015	Annually
1. THE LOCAL ECONOMY					
AE1 We will support and promote initiatives that aid local farming (and related) activity as prescribed by policy PE2 , provided this does not conflict with other parish policies.	Ensure planning decisions about farm diversification/ development are informed by policy PL1 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document).	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AE2 We will lobby government for better broadband and IT support for farmers, particularly now that CAP scheme submissions must be made online.	Make submissions to and respond to consultations from Government and relevant agencies to provide the necessary infrastructure (ref AE5) for rural areas and IT support for farmers.	Council nominee. Broadband Champion.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AE3 In relation to tourism, we will support only those planning applications that relate to low-level , low-impact tourist activity linked to the local economy, as prescribed by policy PE3, provided they do not conflict with other parish policies (especially regarding peace and quiet, and housing).	Ensure planning decisions about tourism are informed by policy PE3 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document).	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
AE4 We will support initiatives (such as the current Rusland Horizons project) that help to conserve traditional skills.	Nominate a councillor to liaise with the Rusland Horizons project and to give quarterly updates on relevant developments. Use the Parish Newsletter to share information about relevant initiatives.	Council Nominee. Clerk. Newsletter Group.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AE5 We will take an active part in the Connecting Cumbria Broadband initiative through supporting our 'Broadband Champion' in raising awareness and in lobbying for super-fast broadband connections in the parish. We will explore with the appropriate authorities how to connect those properties excluded from the Connecting Cumbria initiative.	We will continue to support and liaise with the appointed Broadband Champion for the parish. Parish Council to be kept informed of progress and to respond positively to requests for support and help.	Broadband Champion. Broadband Champion. Parish Council.	High High	Ongoing	6-monthly
AE6 We will support initiatives that provide employment for local people, provided they do not conflict with other parish policies (esp. regarding peace and quiet).	Ensure planning decisions about employment are informed by policy PE1 and PE4 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document).	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AE7 We will explore the potential benefits of keeping a register of business premises operating in the parish.	Seek information from parishes that may have tried this. Agree approach in the light of findings.	Nominated Councillor. Council.	Low	2016	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
2. LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT					
AL1 We will share information about environmental initiatives and opportunities. We will remain alert to any activities that might be detrimental to the natural environment (e.g. illegal off-roading and poaching) and refer concerns to the appropriate authorities	Make active use of parish newsletter, notice boards and website. Nominate a parish councillor to liaise with the Rusland Horizons Project and provide feedback on relevant items. Encourage residents to report illegal activity. Councillors to inform clerk and contact police where appropriate. Maintain representation on relevant Working Groups	Councillors. Newsletter Group. Clerk. Council nominee. All councillors. Council nominees.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AL2 We will ensure policy PL3 (peace and quiet) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications and maintain vigilance about developments which might jeopardise this policy.	Ensure planning decisions are informed by policy PL3 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document).	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AL3 We will share information about initiatives and opportunities arising in connection with the special heritage of the area and invite participants to attend Parish Council meetings to inform the community.	Invite participants to attend Parish Council Meetings to inform the community. Use the newsletter and website to share information.	Agenda-setting group. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
AL4 We will ensure that policy PL5 (wildlife conservation) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications. We will request up-dates from the Rusland Horizons Project in this respect. We will encourage the community to raise concerns about and activities that might threaten wildlife (e.g. poaching) and wildlife habitats.	Ensure planning decisions are informed by policy PL5 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document). Use the website and newsletter to encourage the community to raise concerns about any issues/problems that arise.	All Councillors. Clerk. Council nominee. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AL5 We will ensure that policy PL2 (farming) informs Parish Council decisions about relevant planning applications and share information about successful initiatives with parishioners.	Ensure planning decisions are informed by policy PL2 (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document). Use newsletter and website to inform parishioners about local initiatives.	All Councillors. Clerk. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AL6 We will encourage and support information-sharing about community woodland and wood-sharing schemes, liaising with woodland owners such as the Forestry Commission, the National Park and the Woodland Trust, and will seek regular updates from the Rusland Horizons project on its initiatives concerning woodland management and conservation skills.	Use Newsletter and noticeboards to publicise opportunities and developments. Updates from Rusland Horizons project at Council meetings.	Newsletter Group. Clerk. Council nominee.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AL7 We will encourage appreciation of 'dark skies' and work to reduce light pollution in the parish. We will ask properties and caravan sites to turn off lights at night or use low-output lighting (if lighting is regarded as necessary).	Encouragement via newsletter articles.	Newsletter Group.	Low	By end 2015, and then occasional reminders	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
3. COMMUNITIES AND WELL-BEING					
AC1 We will consider the effects on the peace and quiet of the parish of any development initiative, planning application, or other proposal put before the Parish Council and make this consideration a key element in our decision making.	Ensure planning decisions are informed by policy PL3 (peace and quiet) - (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document)	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AC2 We will support the village hall committees in maintaining and developing these important community assets.	We will be alert for opportunities to help Village Hall committees maximise their income and seek grant funding. We will ask village hall representatives to share with a meeting of the Parish Council their current issues / challenges. We will promote the use of village halls for events, meetings etc.	Council nominees for Village Halls. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AC3 We will seek to include important community assets on a 'Community Assets Register' (Localism Act 2012) where they meet the necessary criteria.	Working Group to produce Community Assets Register and update at suitable intervals.	Council nominee. Clerk.	High	October 2015	2-yearly
AC4 We will lobby the responsible authorities to maintain and improve local health and other services that are essential to well-being, particularly for the older and more vulnerable members of our community.	We will assess priority issues and work actively to influence decision-making regarding local health service provision, especially when it is threatened or inadequate. We will encourage local initiatives that support health services.	Council nominee.	High	2015	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
AC5 We will continue to maintain the Bouth Village Green & Playground as a facility for local residents and visitors.	Support the Bouth Village Green and Playground Voluntary Committee in its management. Receive annual reports from the Committee. Continue financial commitment. Maintain the necessary insurance, health and safety, and other requirements as lease-holders.	Clerk. Bouth Village Green and Playground Voluntary Committee.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AC6 We will maintain our eight parish council notice-boards and keep them up-to-date. We will examine ways of improving communications with parishioners, particularly the vulnerable and hard to reach, using appropriate formats. We will develop and put in place an 'Information and Communications Strategy'.	Set up a Working Group to draw up a strategy. Maintain the eight parish council notice-boards and keep them up-to-date. Maintain and further develop the website. Review the newsletter format.	C & I strategy group.	High	2015	Annually
AC7 We will support the development of resilience plans for each settlement in the Parish, based on the plan drawn up for Finsthwaite, and encourage the participation of parishioners.	We will ensure interested settlements have access to practice and procedures developed elsewhere. We will encourage the participation of parishioners. We will invite applications for funding.	All Councillors to encourage residents in their wards. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Medium	2015	On Plan review
AC8 We will survey the rights of way in the Parish and work with the LDNPA and the County Council for their maintenance and development. We will assess the potential for new footpaths where appropriate.	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • survey existing rights of way, • form a footpath support group, • report and support maintenance, • explore the potential for new rights of way. 	Council nominee to liaise with the LDNPA, County Council and Rusland Horizons Project 'Greenwood Trails'.	Medium	By 2018	On Plan review

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
4. HOUSING AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT					
AH1 We will consider opportunities for small-scale affordable housing development according to policies PH1 and PH3.	We will consider any proposal put forward for small-scale affordable housing according to policy (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document). We will liaise with the authorities and the Cumbria Rural Housing Trust to re-run the Housing Survey every 4/5 years, to assess demand.	Council.	Medium	Ongoing	On Plan review
AH2 We will continue to monitor the housing stock in the parish, particularly the proportion of main residences vs second homes, holiday lets and empty homes.	We will maintain a register of housing stock and use this to inform decision-making.	Clerk.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AH3 We will consider applications for other development on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of the impacts as described in policy PH5.	Ensure planning decisions are underpinned by reference to the Parish Plan policies (ref. Colton PC Planning Policy Summary document)	All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AH4 We will monitor the Neighbourhood Planning process taking place in pilot areas in the National Park, and the associated resource implications. The Council will communicate with neighbouring parishes about a possible joint approach to a Neighbourhood Plan for this area.	Monitor the NP process underway locally and keep updated through CALC and NALC information.	Council nominee.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
5. ROADS, TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT					
AR1 We will press for better liaison and consultation with the County Highways on road maintenance. We will encourage parishioners to report road condition problems to the relevant authorities. We will maintain a list of highways and flooding problems and press County Highways to resolve them. We will lobby County and District Councils for improved road maintenance and road sweeping in the Parish.	Continue to press Area Highways Engineer for better consultation and liaison. Meet regularly with local Area Highway Steward. Contact and format information to be provided on notice-boards, newsletters and website. Maintain regularly updated list on the website. Provide progress reports to the Council every 3 months. Raise with County and District Councillors at meetings. Submit requests and meet with County and District representatives as necessary.	Nominated Councillor. Clerk. Clerk. Clerk. All Councillors. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AR2 We will continue to engage the services of a Lengsthman, funded through the precept for at least 2 days per month, seeking grant funding to increase the number of working days.	Ensure funding base, contract and remuneration systems in place. Ensure good management and liaison system in place for dealing with residents' requests and feedback. Monitor effectiveness of Lengthsman.	Finance Working Group. Clerk. Council.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AR3 We will consider community self-help schemes where feasible, for example encouraging able residents to clear local drains of surface debris to prevent flooding.	Encouragement through newsletter articles. Look for any funding opportunities.	Newsletter Group. Clerk. Councillors.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
AR4 We will review and identify the need for grit bins and grit heaps in the Parish and press for their provision and maintenance. We will participate in County Highways winter-maintenance schemes where feasible.	Annual review of bins and heaps before the winter season, and refer to County Highways. Maintain a map of bins and heaps. Liaise with County about appropriate schemes. Assess feasibility and decide on participation.	Councillors. Clerk. Clerk. Councillors.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AR5 We will lobby for speed limits and speed reduction measures particularly along well-known 'black routes', for example the C5026 Newby Bridge to Stott Park road, the C5023 Tollbar to Spark Bridge route and the C5022 through Oxen Park. We will monitor the effectiveness of the '20's Plenty' zone in Bouth. We will report 'black-spots' and near-miss incidents to the police, including on green lanes.	Encourage residents to report their speed and safety issues to the Council via newsletter articles and website. Consider priority issues and liaise with the appropriate authorities (County, Police). Consult Bouth residents about the perceived effectiveness of the zone. Report to Police and County Council.	Newsletter Group. Clerk. Council. Local Councillor. Clerk.	High	Ongoing	Annually
AR6 We will assess the need for public transport and community transport schemes in the parish and will lobby for provision of such services in relation to demand. We will publicise and encourage the use of transport services by residents and visitors.	Assess the potential for new public services based on use of existing services in the local area. Promote the use of community transport schemes (ref Annex D).	Council nominee. Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually

ACTION	HOW?	WHO?	PRIORITY	By WHEN	REVIEW
6. ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY					
AS1 We will explore options for further recycling schemes to be made available in the parish.	Liaise with District Councillor with recycling portfolio.	Council nominee.	Medium	2015	Annually
AS2 We will help to maintain fuel oil/gas syndicates and to publicise their activities.	Ensure syndicate details are available in newsletters, on website and on notice-boards.	Clerk.	Medium	Ongoing	Annually
AS3 We will talk to local organisations and agencies about the potential for local fuel-wood purchasing schemes.	Liaise with Rusland Horizons Programme for local wood supply.	Rusland Horizons nominee.	Medium	2015	Annually
AS4 We will encourage residents to take advantage of grant schemes for all types of home insulation and ensure that information is available to householders.	Publicise schemes in newsletters, notice-boards and on website.	Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Low	Ongoing	Annually
AS5 We will encourage residents to consider sharing car-journeys for regular outings, such as shopping trips and social events.	Publicise emerging opportunities and help to share good practice.	Newsletter Group. Clerk.	Low	Ongoing	Annually

Annex C: Community Transport Schemes

The Community Transport Schemes operating in Colton Parish in 2014 include the following:

- The Voluntary Car Scheme, organized by Cumbria CC in Carlisle (contact Katy Wood on 01228 226721) and run by a local coordinator (Marguerite Calvert on 01229 885498) using volunteer drivers in their own vehicles. The service claims to only cover Oxen Park and Lowick and is dependent on driver availability. Users must pre-book via the coordinator, and pay 36p per mile, cash only, for a door to door service. Drivers are paid 45p per mile for their efforts.
- Rural Wheels, also administered by Cumbria CC (contact 0845 6023786) is where users must purchase a £5 smartcard to register membership. This comes with a £5 credit so membership is in effect free. The service which uses local taxis, must be undertaken between 8.30am and 6pm and is limited to 2 return trips per week to the nearest town. Again pre-booking is necessary, is door to door and costs 36p per mile (or 25p for shared journeys).
- The Community Minibus scheme which provides accessible and affordable minibus transport for hire for community groups and organisations, and is either self drive or with a volunteer driver. The scheme is administered by Cumbria CC (contact Linda Howarth on 01539 727001).
- The Royal Voluntary Service (contact 0845 608 0122) which provides help particularly to the elderly to get to hospital and GP appointments, or to shops or into town.

Other community transport initiatives include:

- On-line lift sharing (<http://www.goeasy.org.uk/journey/car>)
- Peer-to-Peer car hire (www.carclub.easycar.com)
- Wheels to work – for younger people (currently being developed elsewhere in Cumbria)
- Informal or locally organized car sharing
- Village Wheels schemes, that are demand led fixed route journeys that run to a timetable usually to the nearest town

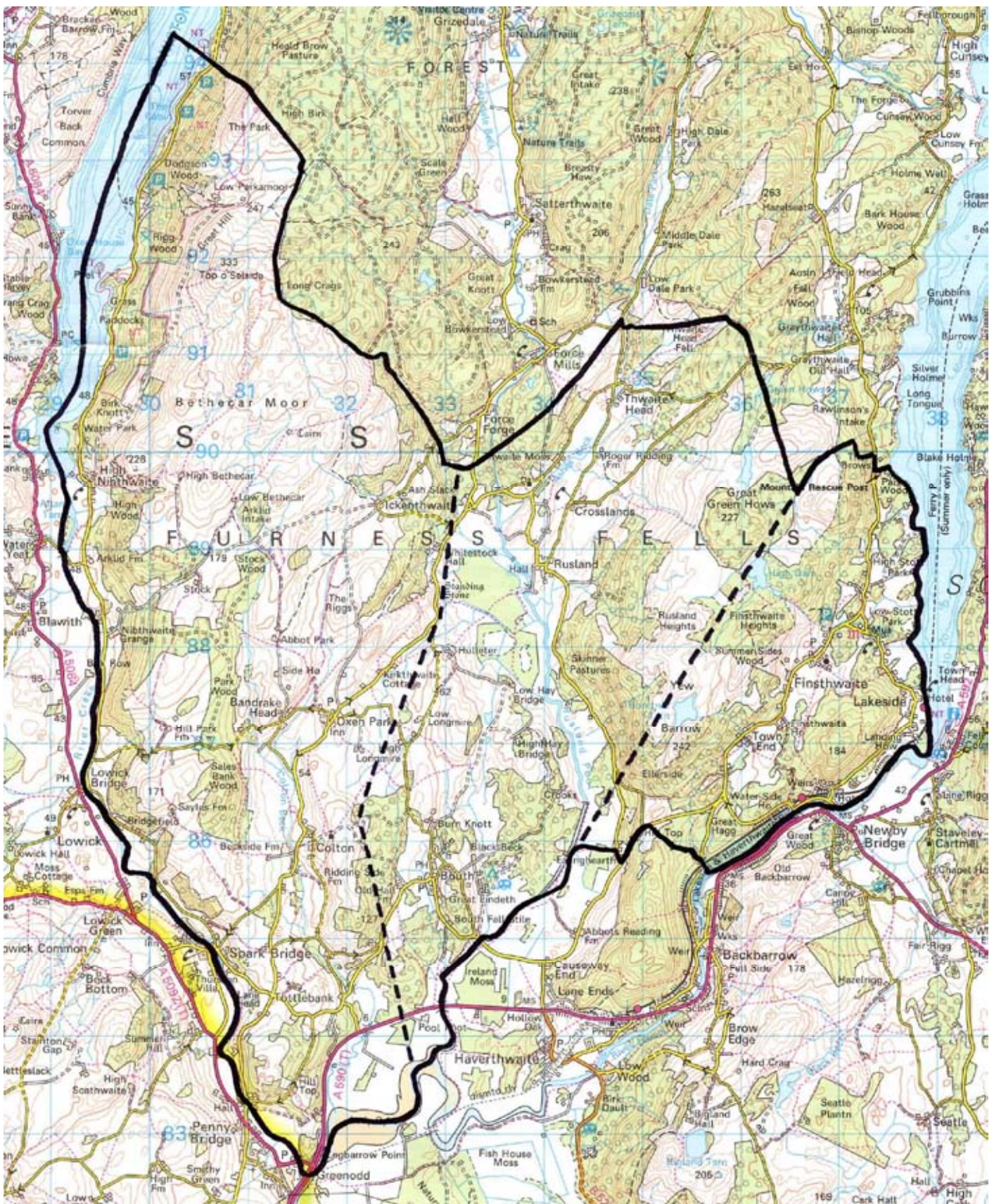
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Map of Colton Parish, South Lakeland, Cumbria

(showing ward boundaries as dashed lines)



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