

The Trustees of the Matterdale Community Association (MCA) met on 1 February 2016. This Bulletin is intended to let people in the valley know where we got to!

The MCA AGM will take place at the Royal Hotel on Thursday, 10 March at 6.00pm. We want to encourage as many people as possible to come to the meeting. The larger the attendance, the greater will be the demonstration that we really have a vibrant community that warrants our own village hall in Matterdale. The Trustees would also wish to encourage everyone to become a member of the MCA. Please sign up. The form will be circulated with 'Together', and becoming a member does not commit you to anything other than giving you a vote at the AGM! Indeed, you could come along to the AGM and become a member on the night by filling up a membership form.

Since the December Trustee Meeting, there has been considerable further research into the feasibility of refurbishing the current New School as a village hall, as opposed to a new build. The Parish Council has asked the MCA for a recommendation which it will consider at a Special Parish Council Meeting in late February 2016. Following a lengthy discussion, the Trustees of the MCA unanimously agreed to propose to the Parish Council that a new build was the right way to proceed for the following reasons:

- * the costs involved in a new build (without the addition of the 'Headmaster's house') is comparable to the costs of refurbishing the New School to an acceptable level.
- * The revenue costs of running a new build as opposed to a refurbished building is significantly cheaper.
- * We have been advised that obtaining funding for either a new build or refurbished New School would not be easy in the present economic climate as Matterdale does not fall into a high need area, and there are other village halls relatively nearby.
- * The sale of the New School would only be approved by the Planning Authority with change of use on the condition that a new village hall was to be provided by the Parish Council. This would imply that a significant sum towards the new build village hall would be provided by the Matterdale School Foundation out of the proceeds of the sale of the New School.
- * Trustees will now visit a number of local new build village halls, reassess the questionnaires, and consider possible layout suitable for a range of activities. This may include an externally accessible toilet/shower block to allow for outward bound/camping on the site.

Other issues covered in the Trustee Meeting:

*Virtual Village Hall: a sub-group of the MCA was set up to pull together a programme of 'activities' that will be organised in Matterdale during 2016. The purpose of the Virtual Village Hall is to provide evidence that a new village hall would be well used. If you have an idea as to what you would like to be organised locally, please let Jane Newport, MCA Secretary know.

*Communication: we are aware that not everyone gets the Bulletin, and our email list could be improved. We also know that not everyone in the valley uses email, and we need to know who would like a paper copy of the Bulletin delivered by hand. Work is currently being done to improve the email list. Please let Jane Newport know if you have an email address and have not been receiving the Bulletin when it is circulated.

*Website: a resident of Dockray has kindly volunteered to set up a website for MCA on which we could post all MCA information for easy access (minutes of meetings, activities planned etc). The Trustees are also hopeful of identifying someone local who will be able to keep the website up to date when it is running.

*Business Plan: we have identified someone to take the lead in pulling together a Business Plan for the new village hall in Matterdale, with the help of key people involved with other local village halls who have previously drafted Business Plans when they were initially set up.