

**From:** Jean Hamlett [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 12 January 2023 15:19  
**To:** Kevin Price <kevtherev7@hotmail.com>  
**Subject:** Lack of First Responders

To the Clerk of the Council

Please could you put an item on the agenda for the next meeting of the Casterton Parish Council about the shocking lack of First Responders in this area? (I was in fact speaking to Stephen Evans recently and I believe he was also going to mention this to you for discussion and hopefully action.)

When Duncan and I were First Responders quite some years ago I believe there were 55 of us. We had teams and had a rota system. They are only sent out to suspected heart attacks and strokes (not car accidents etc) and are trained to deal with these.

I was really pretty horrified recently to find that there was only one full-time responder (in Barbon) for our whole area - I'm not sure of the exact area now but it certainly used to cover Kirkby Lonsdale and all the villages around. There are evidently two other 'part time' responders, one of whom works away and can only do it when he/she happens to be here.

I am in touch with the one full-time responder, who is Karen Hodgson in Barbon (a busy farmer's wife), and she told me just before Christmas that there was someone in Kirkby who was receiving training, and who may perhaps now have started responding: however that is still nothing like enough!

I have also spoken to somebody in Kirkby who I believe was going to have a notice put in AKL. She is also in touch with Karen.

As I say, I find this all pretty shocking, and have been trying myself to drum up support in Casterton, which sounded hopeful at one time but has all gone quiet again. Probably nobody wanted to start anything before Christmas, but hopefully they may be willing to give it a try now.

I have given Karen's contact details to Stephen, and she is happy for him or somebody else on the Parish Council to get in touch with her for an update re the present situation and to discuss the way forward. There would need to be a public talk by the North West Ambulance Service, which is of course very stretched. I understand Karen will hopefully be going to a Leaders' meeting at the end of January (lambing permitting) and will speak to them then, but it may take some time to sort out a date.

No doubt anyone at all interested would be welcome to attend the NWAS talk, without any obligation to volunteer (although of course hopefully some would!)

I think quite a few of us who volunteered previously had fairly recently retired but were still fit and active.

Late 60's; early 70's.

I hope the Parish Council will take this on board and indeed make it a priority. We have all heard horror stories of how long it can take for an ambulance to arrive. Local First Responders, who can sometimes be there in just a few minutes, can make all the difference.

Many thanks.

Kind regards  
Jean Hamlett