

Bolsterstone Community Group Annual General Meeting
17 March 2015, Bolsterstone Village Hall
CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to Bolsterstone Community Group's 14th AGM. You will have already been made aware of our activities this year via BCG's twice yearly newsletters, but I will outline a summary of our activities here.

This year, BCG's management committee has raised £1100 by pursuing grant applications and raised almost £1000 from our combined Christmas events - the Christmas Fayre and Wreath Making Evening. This has allowed us to make improvements to the village and, through donations, to benefit various groups such as St Mary's Church, Muscular Dystrophy and 4SLC, not forgetting of course our support for the Village Hall through hall hire fees. A summary of BCG's improvements to the village include: Regular stocking and maintenance of troughs, borders, boundary stones and hanging baskets; repointing the flagged area outside the village hall; repairing the Village Hall gate; re-painting the telephone box; on going maintenance of the village allotment garden and restoration of the village field around the beacon.

I am pleased to report that our committee meetings have always been well attended and all committee members are encouraged to contribute to discussion on various issues affecting residents. This year, for example, these meetings have considered STC's support for maintenance of the toilets, approaching Broomhead Estate regarding residents' various concerns, appealing to the brewery to maintain the Castle Inn's presence in the village as well as local planning issues, gritting programmes, speed restrictions and flood defences.

During the last year you will probably remember the "hype" surrounding the Tour de France, but then realised how significant an event it turned out to be for Yorkshire. Certainly, again, Bolsterstone "did its bit" in welcoming visitors and cycling enthusiasts to the area. On the Friday evening Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir sang at a Golf Club Charity event, on Saturday St Mary's Annual Summer Fair was fabulously supported and at nightfall on the same evening over 100 supporters came together to celebrate and enjoy the festival atmosphere at BCG's own beacon lighting event.

Fast forward to November and BCG's Christmas Fayre when once again village volunteers - combined together with stall holders and local schools to give wonderful community support to provide a pre-Christmas focus for the village. We must never underestimate the work of our volunteers, whether they are involved in telephoning, arranging, cajoling or working on the day and their support is much appreciated. So thank you to everyone who helped. We would like to give a special vote of thanks to one of our longest serving members - Jean Hawke - who gave hours of devotion to the village before moving down to be near her family in Leicestershire. On your behalf, we thanked Jean for her years of commitment to BCG, in an informal presentation at the Castle Inn in January this year.

BCG's annual Christmas Wreath Making Evening in December was another popular event, and with the benefit of the Village Hall's redecorated small room in use we attracted more participants than ever. Not only was this a lovely social evening with a great atmosphere, it also helped increase BCG's income to help us continue in-house funding for village projects and maintenance. As grants from public bodies are increasingly susceptible to "cuts", we must budget to use our own funds to keep up our village maintenance programme. So we appreciate anything you can do to support us, either by making donations or volunteering to help with events.

This year BCG has continued to “grow” as a group, as people supporting various events have opted to become full members. BCG’s management committee has also gained new members representing the many groups, which influence Bolsterstone in some way. So in addition to our existing members, we are pleased to have recruited to BCG’s Management Committee representatives from Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir, and The Castle Inn. These new recruits will join the existing BCG Management Committee, which already has members representing St Mary’s Church, Bolsterstone Archaeology and Heritage Group, the local Walkers are Welcome group, the Village Hall Trust and Stockbridge Town Council as well as BCG’s own In Bloom and Christmas Fayre groups. This helps us share information and advertise events and activities for the benefit of local residents and the whole community.

I am pleased to report that all existing Management Committee members and the elected officers are prepared to stand again next year, and now that they will be joined by additional committee members I am pleased to say that BCG’s Management Committee, like its finances, is in a very “healthy” state.

We are committed to helping preserve and conserve all that is best about the small, but active village of Bolsterstone, in line with BCG’s original aim: ***“To promote the well-being of the people of Bolsterstone and adjoining areas, through the advancement of education and information and the conservation of the environment.”*** We are always happy for new volunteers and new members to join us in this aim. There is no membership fee and BCG’s constitution (paragraph 4a) states that: ***“Membership of the group shall be open to any individual...interested in helping the group and in supporting the Management Committee.”***

It just remains for me to thank you, on behalf of the Management Committee, for coming tonight. Although the numbers of volunteers are too great to mention individuals by name, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported Bolsterstone Community Group and its Management Committee over the year. I can assure you that I and the Committee will do our best to support the volunteers who will be involved, alongside ourselves, in Bolsterstone’s activities throughout the coming year as well.

Thank You.

Alan Rodgers (Bolsterstone Community Group Chair)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Christmas Fayre - Saturday 21 November 2015

Wreath Making Evening - Tuesday 8 December 2015