

Bolsterstone Community Group Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 28 March 2017, Bolsterstone Village Hall

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to long standing and new members to Bolsterstone Community Group's 16th AGM, which gives me the opportunity to remind everyone of some of this year's activities.

THANK YOU - On behalf of the Bolsterstone Community Group (BCG) Committee I would like to begin our annual review of events, by thanking all the volunteers who have taken the time this year to "muck in" and help make the village a place where people love to live and to visit. New members and residents have joined with BCG "In Bloom" and those who have been involved over many years, to help in numerous ways. People have continually looked after the village by painting and mending benches, strimming green areas, clearing leaves, planting troughs and baskets, keeping the allotment tidy and productive and attending various village events. The help and support from volunteers for the Christmas Fayre and Wreath Making Evening was humbling. What is more, most of these village "jobs" are done willingly without people having to be asked - that is why I'd like to thank everyone for simply "mucking in"!

Thanks also to Amey, not only for their local road improvement programme but also for providing many bulbs to replenish stocks around the village. Thank you as well to the Bridge Shop, which has become a major support pillar for all BCG's work and to everyone who has made donations to BCG over the year.

THE EWDEN VALLEY AT WAR PROJECT - ended in December 2016. Over the past year we have researched what Bolsterstone and Ewden Valley were like from 1914- 1918, who went to fight in the war from this area and what were their short lives like. We particularly wanted to find out more about the 48 men commemorated on the war memorial in Bolsterstone churchyard and appealed to anyone who had any information to get in touch. The project has now completed its work and we have produced 2 copies of a memorial book 'Soldiers' Stories' presenting our findings. One is now on display and available to view in St Mary's Church and the other with myself. "Soldiers' Stories" gives pen portraits of all the men listed on the memorial who fought in the First World War - their families, the jobs they did before enlisting and some of the battles they fought in. It also includes where they were buried or commemorated. Thank you to everyone who attended the two open days, in April and in August. These gave us the opportunity to showcase what we had found out, to hear interesting talks related to WW1 and to look at displays. We would like to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund who supported the Ewden Valley at War Project and to all those who contributed to the project by loaning items, giving talks, mounting displays, providing information, helping with refreshments, giving technical assistance, or doing research.

BCG Committee - We are pleased to welcome several new members to the committee, so that the full list of committee members is: Susie Abrahams, Barry Eustace, Dianne Fortescue, Alan Hobson, Anthea Peers (Treasurer) Tony Peers (Secretary) Chris Prescott, Alan Rodgers (Chair) Cheryl Rodgers (In Bloom Co-ordinator) Adrian Scott and Ian Sutton.

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Co-opted members to the committee include: Cllr Julie Grocutt (STC) Phillip Verhamme (VHT) John Williams (St Mary's Church)

THANKS AGAIN - We would also like to take this opportunity to thank The Village Hall Trust, without which we would have no venue for any BCG events and also to thank them for arranging the memorable cream tea afternoons! Thanks go to St Mary's Church as for loan of the Church for our Christmas Fayre and of course for arranging the fantastic Bolsterstone Summer Fayre and the special celebrations to coincide with the Queen's 90th birthday. Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir continues to make a uniquely memorable contribution to village life and Stockbridge Town Council always gives us their support. All the above groups send representatives to BCG Committee meetings and The Castle Inn generously allows us to hold our meetings in their upstairs room. All this helps us to join with others to maintain Bolsterstone as such a special village.

TOUR de YORKSHIRE - We are currently joining together as a village to prepare for the coming Tour de Yorkshire, which will pass through Bolsterstone on Sunday 30th April 2017 (Mayday weekend) before finishing in Fox Valley. We are hoping that, in the village itself:

- *People will decorate their own part of the village in the blue and white of Yorkshire, combined with the traditional yellow colour of "Le Tour".*
- *Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir will be singing*
- *Deepcar Brass Band will be playing*
- *Cycles will be painted yellow and blue and white and put at strategic spots*
- *The Village Hall will be busy serving their famous cream teas*
- *The Castle Inn will have one of their busiest Sundays ever*

CHRISTMAS FAYRE - Once again, this was a tremendous success. Local artists, school pupils and their teachers joined with countless volunteers, who baked cakes, served refreshments, washed pots, sold raffle tickets, provided raffle prizes, set up, cleared away, bought gifts from fantastic craft stalls, not forgetting the Santa(s) who juggled their other commitments to make the day! All these volunteers helped make it a happy, social occasion and enabled us to make donations to St Mary's Church, 4SLC, Cavendish Cancer Care and support Macmillan Nurses, the Shoe Box Appeal and a Ugandan school.

WREATH MAKING EVENING We never imagined, a few years ago, that this event would become so popular that we had to bring extra chairs to fit everyone in and almost run out of conifer cuttings for the wreaths. However, people still enjoyed themselves but Help! If you have any conifers in your garden, which need trimming, please let us know next winter, we can trim them for you and use the greenery for the next wreath making evening.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN 2017 - 8 April - Village clean up; 22 April - Decorating the Village for the Tour de Yorkshire; 29 April - BMVC/Deepcar Brass Band Concert; 30 April - Tour de Yorkshire; 18 November - Christmas Fayre; 12 December - Wreath Making Evening.

Thank you to everyone for their support this year. We hope you enjoy the refreshments.
Bolsterstone Community Group

