

Bolsterstone Community Group Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 19th March 2019, Bolsterstone Village Hall

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to everyone. This meeting is Bolsterstone Community Group's 18th AGM. 2018/9 has been an emotional time because we have been saddened to have seen the passing of several people who have supported the group over many years. However, we also extend a warm welcome to those who have recently moved in to the village. Not least, it is a pleasure to see that the Stone Moor Road vicarage is once again occupied by a member of the clergy who has been appointed in a part time capacity, to assist at St Mary's Church, Bolsterstone and in its family of local churches.

THANK YOU - On behalf of the Bolsterstone Community Group (BCG) Committee I would like to begin again by thanking all the volunteers who have taken the time this year to help make the village such a pleasant place. Members have looked after the village as usual by maintaining the stocks, benches, the allotment and green areas. They have cleared leaves, planted troughs and baskets, baked hundreds of cakes, erected a new gate, decorated the village hall for the Christmas Fayre, donated, acted as guides/comperes, attended various village events, sold cakes and served refreshments and set up, washed up and cleared up!. People continue to help when they can see something needs doing, without having to be asked. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank St Mary's Church and The Village Hall Trust (VHT), without which we would have no venue for BCG events and also to thank Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir (which continues to make a special contribution to the village) These groups are represented at BCG Committee meetings at The Castle Inn.

BCG Committee - The BCG Committee continues to meet in The Castle Inn about 3 or 4 times a year. Committee members, who have been proposed and seconded, are: Susie Abrahams (supported by Ruth Morgan, both of BAHG) Keith Clark (Treasurer) Barry Eustace, Dianne Fortescue, Anthea Peers, Tony Peers (Secretary) Chris Prescott (Walkers are Welcome) Alan Rodgers (Chair) Cheryl Rodgers (In Bloom Co-ordinator) Sue Rogers/ Liz Brooks (Bolsterstone Quilters) Adrian Scott and Ian Sutton. Committee co-opted members are: Cllr Julie Grocutt (Stocksbridge Town Council) Sue Fantozzi (St Mary's Church) and Phillip Verhamme (VHT)

CHRISTMAS FAYRE - Despite Bolsterstone's Christmas fayre having to compete with an increasing number of other local festive events, we found that once again Bolsterstone's Christmas Fayre was a huge success. The sheer volume of people who came through the Village Hall, many of them supporting their children who had been singing in St Mary's Church, was testament to the popularity of village events such as this. Many of the enthusiastic stall holders book their tables year in and year out and we've already taken bookings for several stalls for 2019's fayre! We were so grateful to welcome Santa, who met lots of children in his grotto and who never lets us down and we thank the teachers who trained and brought the children to sing in their choirs. Also the Art Society for their exhibition in Church and the Shoe Box appeal, which, like us, raised a record sum. We

supported Macmillan nurses and donated funds to Stocksbridge Community Leisure Centre, Cavendish Cancer Care and St Mary's Church who, along with the Village Hall Trust (VHT) open their facilities to us throughout the day, providing the perfect environment for our event. We would like to thank the host of volunteers who helped in so many different ways, including the many businesses and individuals who donated over £400 of raffle prizes. Everyone worked together to make it such a happy event.

Wreath Making Evening - The annual appeal for greenery ensured that the hordes of wreath makers were well supplied with conifer cuttings, holly, ivy, variegated leaves and pine cones. With a backdrop of baubles, lights, carols, mulled wine and mince pies, the event proved hugely successful again, despite the increasing number of similar local events. We raised sufficient funds over the festive season for us to increase our donations to charities, and to the Village Hall itself. Moving around the Bolsterstone area many of the wreaths decorated by attendees could be seen on various front doors.

Christmas Table Decorations' Evening - After the embryonic event last year with just 5 enthusiastic attendees, this year saw a group of 15, which also looks set to grow bigger in the future. With expert tuition and volunteers' help, this year's "happy customers" went away with floral displays, which were a credit to the organisers and to themselves.

Village Defibrillator - We are grateful to the 14 people who volunteered at the last AGM to check, on a rota, that the defibrillator is always in good working order. So far it has been regularly checked, but thankfully, not required to be used.

Planning and Highways - We do our best to keep abreast of planning and highways issues that occur in and around the village. Nowhere was this more apparent than last year's extended closure of Manchester Road with diversions through the village, and down Sunny Bank Road to More Hall Lane - where there were a number of scrapes and near misses. Thanks to the 2 local Town Councillors, who are also reps on our committee, we were able to minimise the negative effects of some of these closures with speed limitations, improved signage etc. Thank you to AMEY for completing this work on schedule. AMEY's resurfacing of the lower section of More Hall lane, is due to take place later in 2019. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, there are still no decisions relating to the proposed developments at Hollin Busk and the Porter's Lodge. We are concerned about the delays and continue to monitor the applications.

Village Maintenance - Our "in bloom" programme is funded by Christmas events, whilst being brought to fruition totally by volunteers. The troughs, hanging baskets, flower beds, the grass verges and areas around the boundary stones continue to be cleared, strimmed, weeded, watered and stocked with plants. This year all of the village benches were rubbed down and painted and we have purchased, painted and installed a lovely new gate to replace the broken one at the entrance to the village field. We have agreed to spend more of those funds from our Christmas events, which are not already earmarked as donations to charity, on projects required by the Village Hall Trust this year. The treasurers of both the BCG and the VHT will work together to prioritise what these specific projects should be, and we will hear more about that later this evening.

We hope you will stay and enjoy the refreshments after the information about the VHT and St Mary's Church. Please do have a look at the Bolsterstone Quilters' display as well.

Thank you all very much for your support throughout the last year.

Bolsterstone Community Group

