

Gainford & Langton

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2019

Present: Cllr's Johnstone, Coomer, Roff, Smith and Charge
15 representatives of various groups from the village and residents
Teesdale Mercury

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr's Hannan, Platten, Bayles & Britton

2. CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL TO PRESIDE:

Cllr Johnstone presided, opened the meeting by welcoming all present

3. GAINFORD CHARITABLE REPORTS 2018/19:

Montablo Village Hall & Recreational Charity

Neil Russell read out the report from the village hall. (Appendix A)

Gainford Riverside Millennium Green Trust

No one was available from the Trust to present the report (Appendix A)

Gainford Parish Charitable Trust

The Clerk read out the report from the Trust (Appendix A)

Cllr Johnstone invited other groups present to give a short statement on how their organisations work, thrive and the benefits to the wider community.

Below is a brief summary only:

Gainford Toddler group – Meet on Friday's in the village hall – numbers are strong at present (20-30) with the wider community represented. Activities, craft and refreshments. Grateful to the parish council and charitable trust with funding

St Mary's Church – Mother church of Teesdale with a congregation that is growing. The church is involved in the wider community and has strong links to the school. St Mary's Youth continues to grow and plans are for a Gainford Youth got talent show later this year. The new Pilgrimage walk will see the parish council involved in stakeholder meetings

Gainford Walking Group/table tennis – Established for 12 years and meet once a month for a sociable walk of between 6-8 miles. Always looking for new members. Table tennis club getting an average of 14-15 people.

Luncheon Club - Club has been going in the village for 13 years. Older and isolated members of the community meet together and have a 3 course lunch. Occasionally trips out are planned. Numbers have dropped recently so happy to welcome new people

W.I. -Meet once a month in the village hall and have guest speakers covering a wide variety of subjects. Welcome new members as does the Horticultural show committee

Drama Club – Run 2 shows a year from the Academy Theatre. The next show is “lend me a tenner”. Drama club has been in the village 70 years and value the support given by the village

Gainford School – Welcomes new housing developments to help sustain the village services and the school

Swankie Sports – Local coach working with parish council running children’s multi sports, adult circuits and adult walking football.

Gainford Cross Keys FC – Most successful season to date. A positive position finish in the league, two cup semi finals and our first cup final.

Paul Place – Music sessions once a month in the village hall; going for 2 years; open to all abilities. Also running meditation sessions every other week.

Allotment Association – All allotments taken up; less vandalism; looking for funding for new gates

Sports Day/Fun day - Sport day is a much loved annual village event for the whole family and now an integral part of Gainford Fun Day. We appeal for volunteers to help on the day which is Saturday 22nd June starting at 1.30pm with the fancy dress competition. We look forward to seeing you.

Scouts/Beavers – Very strong numbers at present with a waiting list

Bell Ringers – Bells are rung for New Year, weddings and other commemorations. Anyone is welcome to come along and join.

4. GAINFORD & LANGTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL CHAIR'S REPORT:

Cllr Johnstone read out his 2017/18 report (Appendix A)

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

No members of the public wished to speak

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input.

6. MEETING CLOSED.

Appendix A

Gainford Montalbo Village Hall and Recreational Charity – Charity no. 520799

This is my 7th annual report and I am pleased to say that over that period the Village Hall Committee have seen usage rise and a number of improvements have been completed. The building itself is old and becomes increasingly difficult to manage and maintain. Despite that, we have been able to improve our facilities and will continue to do so in the future. Over the past few years we have restored the main hall floor, reroofed the flat roof above the hall annex, improved the men’s toilets (although more work is required), recarpeted the upstairs corridor and committee room, replaced both boilers, installed a new kitchen and, in the last financial year, modernised the supper room.

The latter project was ambitious but necessary because hirers are looking for a high standard when booking for an event or meeting. The supper room is now less institutional and more homely. There are now new tables and chairs and a high specification audio/video system. To complete the updating we have installed a new

accessible door. We were fortunate to fund most of this from grant aid and fundraising, and so ensuring that we do not allow our funds to be seriously depleted. We have commissioned agents to undertake a full survey of the hall to enable us to prepare a 5 year plan of further works to the fabric of the building.

Following some hard work by Amanda Thomas and Kathy Russell the Village Hall was awarded a Hallmark 1 classification because, according to the judges, it provides a first class service to the local community and its system of management demonstrates good practice.

We are now working to meet the criteria for Hallmark 2.

The present officers of the hall watch the years passing by and are conscious that the time will come, sooner rather than later, when they need to allow younger people to carry the work of Gainford Village Hall into the future. Over the past year or so 6 new volunteers have joined our team and amongst them are people who bring much needed skills. For example we now have a restaurateur, a management consultant, a retired housing manager, a photographer and a civil servant engaged in GDPR issues. We continue to value the support of the Parish Council and the Village Halls Consortium

Gainford Riverside Millennium Green Charitable Trust A registered charity No 1074714

Annual Report for the Year Ended 31st March 2019

1. Financial Position

The Treasurer's Report shows that the Trust remains in reasonable health.

2. Insurance

We continue to hold Public Liability Insurance of £5M and Directors' and Officers' Insurance of £100,000, the latter to cover the individuals who are Directors of the Limited Company.

3. Corporate Status

The Limited Company is the sole Trustee of the Charitable Trust and the 'committee' members are the Directors of that Limited Company.

It is very sad to report that Anne Pratt has died. She was a long standing member of the Trust and her valued contribution will be sadly missed. She loved the riverside and was extremely keen to see that it was well managed both for the benefit of wildlife and the whole of the village. Just recently her son and his wife asked permission to plant a flowering cherry tree on the land by the river and we were delighted to agree to that request.

Another very long standing member, Alan Nicholls, decided to stand down. He joined the committee very early on in its development and apart from being a very enthusiastic member of the working parties was Treasurer for a considerable period. His advice and all round contribution will be sadly missed.

As a result of those being no longer available, it is felt we should look for two new Directorships.

4. Maintenance

The Autumn and Winter were on the mild side with not too many issues. We did have a bit of a flood in early March and most of the effects of that have been cleared away. The wind caused more damage and several large boughs were brought down, the one in the orchard being particularly big and troublesome.

The bird boxes were again monitored twice this year and it seems that members of the Tit family particularly appreciate them.

5. Orchard and small meadow

Many of the trees are currently in blossom and we can only hope that the recent frosts won't 'nip' them and prevent the production of fruit later in the year. For the record, last year saw 29 trees produce fruit, the late frost having had a negative effect.

As the trees mature, the orchard looks better each advancing year. Again we would like to extend to the Parish Council and big 'thank you' for the help they give in keeping the area looking at its best, especially with the grass mowing four or five times a year.

6. Health and Safety matters

We have had fewer problems this year with regard to life belts being interfered with. As mentioned earlier in this report, we have had several very large boughs snapped off trees in powerful winds.

There is continuing concern about horse riders not complying with the restricted permission they have been given, giving rise to serious safety issues.

7. Boundary Issue:

As a result of one bough being snapped of a tree on the bank in the orchard, there was a boundary issue. The tree was three quarters up the bank on the Northern boundary in the orchard. The understanding was that the wooden fence at the top of the bank formed the boundary between Edleston House land and GRMT land. It turned out that this assumption is not correct and in fact the boundary is described as being where the flat land at the top of the bank starts to slope downwards! There are two letters, one dated 11th April 1998 and the other 8th November 1999 which attest to that. These letters and other documents were only given to the Chairman following the dispute that arose. When the Chairman went to see the current owner of Edleston House (Cathy Carter) she agreed that the boundary description was perverse as it was bound to change with the effects of erosion.

8. Directors

The committee has remained stable and the current Directors are:
David Burton (Secretary), Paul Allan, Clive Harrison, Geoff Taylor and Anthony Sillars (Chairman).

My thanks go to them and our 'associate members (Debs and Tom Nicholson (Treasurer), Clare Peacock, Judith Wilson, Andy Snelgrove, Adrian Johnstone, Ralf Hall, Jon Dods and Anthony Fitzgerald) all of whom have done magnificent work down at the Riverside during the year and without whom the village would not be able to enjoy such a wonderful area of relaxation and beauty.

END

GAINFORD PARISH CHARITABLE TRUST ANNUAL REPORT 2018 (JAN-DEC 2018)

Established in 1990, the remit of the Gainford Parish Charitable Trust is to provide financial assistance to schemes or initiatives within the Parish which would benefit the community of Gainford.

2018 saw four grants being awarded to a total of £5320 as follows

Village Hall - Upgrade £4000.00

Gainford PC - Fallen Tommies £270.00

Gainford Baby and Toddler Group £200.00

Gainford Primary School Science Week £850.00

The value of the Trust holdings are approximately £87,000 at present.

The Trustees continued their commitment to the Trust and the Community and at the end of the year were Sarah Hannan, Ann Lavender, Patrick Langdon (Chair), Ann Napier (Secretary), Mike Roff, Anthony Sillars (Treasurer), and James Wood. The Trustees, at the Annual General Meeting held in April 2018 agreed to the Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary of the Trust continuing in their posts. Once again a common theme at each meeting of the Trust was the need to recruit new Trustees and to raise awareness of the Trust to all in Gainford who might benefit from a grant.

Report from the Chair of the Parish Council May 2019

I would like to thank you all for taking time out of your busy lives this evening in order to attend our Annual Meeting of the Parish. Thank you to all who have spoken.

Last week I was delighted to accept the role of Chair of the Parish Council for a 3rd year. We have a committed and hardworking council. A council with diverse interests and areas of expertise. We come together at our meetings, each bringing something unique to the table. And it is this diversity which is our strength.

Councillor Britton has worked tirelessly on the development of a Neighbourhood Plan which is the only statutory opportunity for parish councils to ensure its parishioners voices and views are heard when it comes to major planning decisions. Nearly every parish and town in County Durham is undertaking their own Neighbourhood Plan including all of our neighbouring parishes. Without a Neighbourhood Plan Gainford and Langton would have no opportunity to make its voice heard against major housebuilders and developers planning insensitive developments.

Cllr Britton has liaised with Raby Estates in order to have Gainford Hall opened up to the public in November and earlier this month.

Councillors Hannan and Platten continue to work on the Allotment Committee and the council was delighted to hear that we now have 100% occupancy of allotments and this is due to their hard work and that of their colleagues on the Allotment Committee.

Councillor Roff continues to take a lead role on matters concerning parish paths. He also maintains a rota of bench replacements ensuring the seats and benches do not fall into disrepair. In such a beautifully rural parish, Cllr Roff's knowledge of paths is invaluable. Similarly, Cllr Coomer representing Langton has been exceptionally useful with his wealth of knowledge regarding matters of the law.

All Councillors were deeply saddened by the loss of village stalwart Ann Pratt last year. Ann had not only managed our village Post Office for many years, but she had been one of the original organisers who started the tradition that is...Gainford Bonfire Night. A tradition that so many of our children have grown up with. Ann personified what it is to give of your time and energy happy in the knowledge that what you are doing is enjoyed by so many. Is a good thing to do. Is the right thing to do.

Thanks to the unstinting hard work of Cllr Charge and more recently Cllr Roff, the Parish Council have taken over the organisation of this much-loved event. This

event relies on volunteers and although we are still some months away if anyone would like to get involved please do let us know.

Thanks to the hard work of Cllr Britton the village enjoyed two Christmas trees last December. The tree, kindly donated by Raby Estates was lit with a small event in which we enjoyed mulled wine, Christmas music and sweets for the children. It is an aim of the council to grow our Christmas light provision annually but again...volunteers to help with this is essential in taking it forward.

This year has seen some wonderful work taking place by the hard-working residents of Gainford and Langton. Working amidst the steering group on the Tommies Project was a personal high. Being involved with this project was a privilege. When Alison Madgwick who led the Tommies Project approached me, I was keen to be involved. It brought our community together in both the careful and respectful preparation of the Tommy figures and then in the shared act of community remembrance. It was hugely poignant.

Working in the back of the church to ensure our boys were tough enough to withstand the November weather for a week, learning their names and comparing their lives with that of our own teenagers in Gainford, was powerful. Our boys were brought back to their homes for one week. And they were remembered. I would like to thank Alison Madgwick, who led this project so ably; David and Sandra Pullen for their painstaking research into the lives and deaths of our Tommies; to Geoff and Sue Taylor for their hard work on the project; to Simon Howey for his skills with a hammer!; and to all who took the time to pause and think about the sacrifice our Tommies made.

And what of the forthcoming council year?

We are looking forward to working with fellow stakeholders the village hall as we have done for many years in our role as Custodian Trustee. The council continue to fully support the hard work of all volunteers on the village hall committee with whom we enjoy good working relationships and applaud the stylish refurbishment of the supper room.

In April the council was delighted to hear of the plans for the Pilgrimage Walk, from Revd Eileen Harrop. These routes will see Gainford being one of the key points on "The Way of Life" pilgrimage walk, with Cllrs Bayles and Smith volunteering to be the council's lead representatives on the steering group.

In such a vibrant, active village we benefit from the school, shops, the pub, a village football team, the many groups, clubs, societies, churches, businesses and organisations, some of whom are present this evening. Gainford and Langton Parish Council look forward to supporting each as best we can. We invite all groups and local businesses to send us details which will be published on our new website.

The Parish Council has a policy of supporting local business and since January 2019 have provided free sports coaching sessions for the children of the parish employing local sports coach Kyle Swankie of Swankie Sports. These sessions have grown to include holiday sports clubs and since February, walking football and circuit training, both for adults. Kyle has delivered high quality, fun sessions for local people of all ages and provides an excellent service. He inspires children and adults alike to achieve, work out of their comfort zone, to make friend, to work as a team and most importantly to have fun.

It is hoped that funding may be in place to continue with the sessions for as long as possible. Using the recreation field provides us with a cost effective, top class outdoor exercise area.

The benefits to participants physical and mental health are tangible; the sessions are such great fun; accessible to all with the focus on having fun and making friends.

With attendee numbers growing weekly the council hope to continue to support the sessions. In conclusion, the Parish Council wish you all a successful Summer and hope to hear more of the activities and pursuits of your various interests throughout the coming months. Thank you again for your attendance.