

Diggle Community Association Annual General Meeting

21 January 2016 at Diggle Band Club

Present: Mark Brooks (Chair), Glenise Eason (Treasurer), Nick Cox (Secretary)

Committee: Julie Johnson, Ken McWatt, Stuart Coleman, Duncan Rhodes, Charlotte Coleman

Present: Dilys Redfearn, John Redfearn, Margaret Payne, Kathleen Lambert, Lesley Brown, Lynda Barlow, David Barlow, Gordon Coates, Dawn Boulton, Marlene Maclean, Barbara Barnes, Bernard Holden, Jo Castle, Pat Cliffe, Brian Cliffe, John Eccles, Duncan Anderson, Keith Lucas, Val Carter, Peter Carter, Nikki Kirkham,

Apologies: Charles Bowman, Nigel Shaw, Alison Coates, Rosalind Gartside, Margaret Hardy, Ray Withnall, Jo Taylor, Rachael Payne

1. Minutes of the last meeting

Accepted as a true record

2. Chairman's Report: Mark Brooks

I have had an opportunity to reflect on my new role as the DCA Chairman over the last few days and in reflection have thought about why I accepted this role.

Just to remind myself I took off on a walk around our village over the weekend taking the cold but welcome fresh air and met a few people. I met one man in particular who happened to comment on what a lovely village we had - I chatted further and we both agreed how lucky we were; me to live here and himself to be able to visit such a 'grand place' which was just on his doorstep - he lived in Manchester and often visited to walk the canal and take in the views. Don't let people take that 'lovely' bit away from you he said as he left.

You see I love Diggle and all it has offered me and continues to offer my boys as they grow into young men. Passing the opportunity to appreciate a lovely and characteristic village from generation to generation is a value I cherish and one that keeps me going.

Within the first few days of becoming Chairman I was asked by a local journalist to pose for a few pictures he prompted me to stand with the backdrop of the proposed site of the new Saddleworth School. As he prepared for his photo I said 'What should I look like' - 'Like a man of the people!' came his reply. Bewildered I thought of my favourite film 'Local Hero' and stood there with a my 'me trying to be a young Burt Lancaster with a chiselled jawline' look. The reality was the photo in the paper did indeed make me look like a star of film and TV but alas not as a young Burt Lancaster with a chiselled jawline but a rather a bedraggled, washed out, slack jawed version of Homer Simpson.

And there endeth my first lesson in being the DCA Chairman, that being if a journalist asks for a photo just say no or run away!

In my first year as Chairman we have achieved so much and we have achieved it with the unwavering help and determination of the members of the DCA Executive, the DCA itself and the Diggle residents.

This year we have worked hard to replace the loss of the Village Green and its re-siting. We have faced many challenges regarding the proposed re-location of Saddleworth Secondary School; the development of land in the village and the at times scary increase in traffic and parking, particularly around the school and on Huddersfield Road - what I now sometimes call the 'Mulsanne Straight'

We've battled the balsam and helped support the Whit Friday Walks and Band Contest, the Diggle Fete, the Diggle Blues Festival, we've worked closely with Diggle School and run a competition for all the pupils and we have also provided what I hope will be the template for the new Carol concert, Christingle Service and Christmas lights switch on.

The executive committee have worked tirelessly to gather funds to support and organise a new permanent site for the village Christmas Tree. My thanks go to everyone involved but especially to Stuart for his commitment and hard work in helping us to make this happen.

We have achieved many things - but as a reminder these are just a few:

- We've continued to challenge OMBC and the EFA through consistent SDAG dialogue for them to question and challenge every twist and turn of the ever increasing debacle which is the new Saddleworth School - After nearly 3 years It's still not 'a done deal'.
- We've continued to raise funds to not only support the relocation of the village green but to hopefully this year turn Diggle into a garden of flowers (my thanks to the generous donations and support of Cllr Nikki Kirkham in helping us on the way)
- We've supported Dave Wood in again organising the most successful Diggle Blues Festival to-date.
- We've helped to liaise and challenge the authorities to take responsibility for the repair of the clock tower clock which we lost to a wilful act of vandalism early last year.
- We've again supported and promoted, via Diggle News, Whit Friday and the Diggle Fete.
- We've attended and contributed to the District Partnership, the Parish Council and the Communities Associations
- We've supported the work of the Saddleworth Communities group
- We've made positive steps in helping to provide a new youth club facility for the village
- We've provided a new permanent site for the Diggle Christmas Tree and organised a hugely successful Christmas lights switch on Carol Service and Christingle event.

In looking forward, the next 12 months will be hectic. We will face many challenges perhaps more than the village has ever had to face in modern times. The application to site the new Saddleworth School in Diggle together with its proposed green belt parking and car turnaround has the potential to detrimentally affect everyone in the village and will ultimately test the resolve of us all like never before.

As a community we have demonstrated that we embrace change and can work together to achieve it - to make our village into a sustainable and lovely place to live. But we have also demonstrated that when something is not right, we know it's not right and we do not capitulate.

Again this year, with an ever strong DCA, we can continue to build on our successes and, hopefully keep Diggle looking the way we want it to look and with an ample supply of greenery and flowers.

As chairman, I would like to thank you for all your support and help and I would ask you to recognise the efforts of the executive committee members who work tirelessly on your behalf.

3. Treasurer's Report: Glenise Eason

The DCA began the year with £4,4045.02 (plus members' subs). The bulk of this is derived from grants received from First Choice Homes Oldham and from Councillor Nikki Kirkham. Expenditure in May had been for website funding, this would not be necessary this year as space for DCA information would be provided on the InSaddleworth website, which would be hosting community information. Other notable items of expenditure were the Christmas tree, lights and related expenditure and the new notice board to replace the one which had been damaged and become dilapidated.

Sales of mulled wine and minced pies at the Christingle service raised £144.22.

Current balance stands at £4,121.49 less £2, 886.50 for the new Christmas tree and related expenditure.

Diggle Community Association

Annual Accounts 2015

Date	Income	Expenditure	Balance	Comments
16 th January 2015	4045.02		4045.02	Balance B/F 2014
16 th January 2015	68.00		4113.02	Membership subs x 33+ £2 donation
13 th February 2015	2233.85		6346.87	BACS deposit FCHO Invoice note received
5 th March 2015	10.00		6356.87	Membership subs x 5
6 th March 2015	2233.85		8590.72	BACS deposit FCHO Invoice note NOT received
20 th May 2015		120.00	8470.72	Urban Haze web hosting
23 rd August 2015	3.72			Interest

September meeting 2015	38.00		8512.44	Raffle
		4.80	8507.64	Raffle books
	2.00		8509.64	Membership subs x1
6 th October 2015	400.00		8909.64	Donation Councillor N Kirkham(Tree lights)
8 th October 2015		2233.85	6675.79	Refund to FCHO(ROCA) overpayment
5 th November 2015		151.44	6524.35	Notice Board and Magnets cheque to J Johnson
November meeting 2015	27.00		6551.35	Raffle
6 th December 2015		2331.35	4220.00	OMBC ground work/power/lights
6 th December 2015		170.00	4050.00	S Coleman Christmas Tree base
6th December Christingle		63.88	3986.12	Cost of Mulled Wine
		8.85	3977.27	Cost of plates/napkins
	144.22		4121.49	Sale of Mulled Wine/Mince Pies
Total	9205.66	5084.17	4121.49	

Bank	3904.63
Cash	216.86
Total	4121.49

Glenise Eason

DCA Treasurer

20th January 2016

NB of the balance **£2882.50** is for the use of developing a village green, Christmas tree/lights and providing floral displays/tubs within the village.

4. Changes to the Constitution

Subscription rates currently stand at £2.00 per household, a proposal to alter this to £2.00 per person was passed.

Pat Cliffe raised the need to increase membership and revenue therefrom. MB indicated that the Committee were planning to use some funds raised through the raffles at meetings to produce and distribute a leaflet or newsletter outlining the work and achievements of the DCA in order to broaden the involvement of the community.

Keith Lucas suggested there was a need for more community events in Diggle. Stuart Coleman indicated that the Committee had discussed organising events and

also promoting the DCA at existing events such as the Blues Festival, School events and Whit Friday Band Contest.

5. Election of New Members to the Committee

Barbara Barnes proposed as new Committee member by Mark Brooks, seconded by Glenise Eason and elected to the Committee.

AGM CLOSED AT 8.30

Minutes of Open Meeting

Attendance and Apologies as for AGM

1. Minutes of the previous meeting.

An error relating to the discrepancy between the list of attendees and the report of contributions from the floor at the previous meeting had been brought to the attention of the Chairman and Secretary via email correspondence. This was explained by the fact that the contributor had arrived after the start of the meeting and not completed the attendance sheet circulated at the start of the meeting. The minutes would be amended to provide an accurate record of attendance.

2. Police Update

Police Officers were unable to attend but figures for crime are available through Saddleworth Watch on the InSaddleworth website. MB suggested that there was an apparent rise in criminal activity in the area and that this would need to be monitored.

3. Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

A meeting had been held by the Parish Council which representatives from Saddleworth community associations had attended. Glenise Eason, Julie Johnson and Charlotte Coleman had attended on behalf of the DCA. GE had provided a summary of key points and commented further.

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework/Strategy Consultation

Aim to

- **Identify the land needed to meet demand for Housing/Business development over 20 years**
- **Linked to population/economic growth across Greater Manchester area**

- Number of dwellings required
- Infrastructure requirements

Strategy seeks to protect open space/recreation areas/areas of distinctive character

Once adopted will become part of GM Strategic plan

- Draft consultation Autumn 2016 [at this point it will be important for Community Associations to comment]
- Final adoption 2018 at this stage the GMSF will become Law limiting objections to planning applications. Important to comment on Draft plan

Three growth Options (Oldham quota)

1. 289 new dwellings as at present per year over 20 years [the option favoured by Saddleworth Parish Council and the District Partnership]
2. 685 new dwellings per year over 20 years [the option favoured by OMBC]
3. 800 new dwellings (developers preference) per year over 20 years

Saddleworth will be expected to supply 10% of these

Consultation (ended 13th January 2016) [document had only been received in November and it was felt that there was little time to digest the report and comment]

- Seeking comments on which option should be adopted
- Possible development sites (this is underway) anyone can submit possible site

All comments will be taken into account

Key Issues for Saddleworth

- Amount of new housing
- Little focus on new development /employment opportunities
- Green belt under review(separate issue)
 - More development on green belt [a focus would be needed on areas where this might have less impact]
 - Restructuring/boundary review

Housing

- Amount of new housing is tied to economic growth for Greater Manchester from three options could be between 30 -80 new dwellings per year for 20 years

Employment

- Focus on South and West of Manchester plus City Centre -Office based employment
- Motorway Network -Industry
- Rural Areas - High Tech
- Green policies to discourage car use [it had been pointed out that in rural areas a car is often necessary]

Rural Protection/Tourism

- Residents access to natural /historic areas
- GM to look at how rural areas can contribute whilst maintaining characteristics of areas
- Active leisure and tourism opportunities- expansion of

Environment

- Protection of open spaces, trees, waterways, countryside
- Enhance local identity-new developments in keeping with area
- Emphasis on good design
- Industrial heritage maintained canals railways textile mills

[points 3 and 4 suggest that in an area like Saddleworth the re-use of existing buildings and brown-field sites for development would be appropriate]

Heritage

- Re-use /redevelop existing buildings
- Use previously developed land
- Minimise loss of green space

Saddleworth Response (District Partnership)

1. Aim to limit new housing to 30 per annum (option 1)
2. Defend greenbelt boundaries (small no of exceptions)
3. Protect special characteristics of Saddleworth
4. Promote new high tech business opportunities

Concerns no local knowledge input/Greater Manchester Decision [it will be necessary for Community groups to have a stronger input at the next stage of the process]

Response to the document can only be general at present as contains no detail

Individuals/Communities encouraged to comment on general areas

- Land allocation
- Local knowledge issues/infrastructure
- Tourism and recreational space
- Flood risks
- Employment- need for development
- Housing
 - Affordable homes
 - Development brown fields priority over green fields site

[Lesley Brown remarked in relation to housing that it would be vital to consider improving the infrastructure to support the new housing envisaged for Saddleworth, which equated to an additional village]

Parish Councillor Rob Knotts has put a letter together that can be used

Full document can be seen on GMSF website-also comments can be made on website

Email GMSF@agma.gov.uk

By Post at GM Integrated support team

PO Box 532

Town Hall

4. Garden Group Report

Stuart Coleman indicated that he had undertaken a tour of the village with Steve Scholes and they had identified potential sites for the location of planters and containers. It had also been agreed that the Memorial Garden for Nicola Hughes would be located in the wooded area by the river between Warth Mill and Wrigley Mill (now Diggle Day Nursery). SC to distribute images of the proposed sites. It was hoped that residents would take over maintenance of containers sited within their immediate neighbourhood.

5. Dog fouling

It was agreed that this is becoming a serious problem in the village (notably outside Diggle Day Nursery and Diggle School). It was proposed that prominent signs of the kind displayed on Harrop Green and on Sam Road near the Canal, located at key sites, could deter fouling. A press campaign was also suggested.

6. Planning Application for a New Secondary School in Diggle and Related Applications

Keith Lucas explained that, in relation to the proposed highway scheme which had been presented at recent public consultation events 99% of those members of the public who completed a survey about the scheme expressed an objection to it.

It was pointed out that members of the public who wished to express a view on any of the four applications relating to the school would need to submit objections or statements of their views because views expressed in the past would not be considered in relation to the applications to demolish the link bridge between the clock tower and the building at its rear or the application to demolish five other buildings on the former Shaw's site.

A public meeting is to be held on 2 February on the School application at which the Head of Planning will be giving a presentation. Saddleworth Parish Council's Planning Committee would be expressing its view on the applications on 8 February.

7. Any Other Business

- i) MB indicated that he felt it was necessary, given the recent media coverage of the case involving Councillor Mike Buckley that the meeting agree to a statement that could be made should he be approached by the press. It was indicated that Councillor Buckley was not a member of the DCA and had spoken at meetings in his capacity as Parish and previously Ward Councillor. The wording of a statement was discussed and agreed by the

meeting. A vote to agree the wording of the statement to be used only in the event that the Chairman should be approached was taken: 24 votes to accept the proposed statement, 1 abstention.

ii) Duncan Rhodes proposed a social meeting involving representatives of different faith groups and those with no faith with the objective of overcoming the misconceptions and misunderstandings between religious groups. In particular he was concerned to overcome the lack of understanding often shown towards Islam. His suggestion is for a debate to involve representatives of Christianity, Islam and atheism to consider the question: 'What is God to me?' The objective of the debate would be mutual enlightenment and to develop greater understanding between different religious communities. The proposed location would be Diggle Band Club. DR suggested that Howard Sutcliffe might be willing to speak from a Christian perspective. There was strong support in the meeting for this proposal and DR agreed to begin the process of organising the meeting.

iii) The Chairman asked for the meeting to agree to a payment of £20.00 for Diggle B Band for their excellent contribution to the Carol Service, Christingle and Christmas lights switch-on. This was agreed.

iv) DR indicated that the collection for the Children's Society at the Christmas service and switch-on had raised £92.00

v) Announcement of forthcoming events:

Clean for the Queen 4-6 March

Diggle Blues Festival 2-5 June

A summer celebration at Diggle School will be held on 8 July. This will probably involve a barbecue, bar and music and will replace (for this year at least) the Diggle Fete.

8. Date of Next Meeting

17 March 2016, 8.00 pm, Diggle Band Club