

Diggle Community Association

Minutes of the Meeting on 10 November 2016 8.00pm at Diggle Band Club

Chair: Mark Brooks;

Secretary: Nick Cox;

Treasurer: Glenise Eason;

Committee: Duncan Rhodes; Jo Taylor; Charlotte Coleman; Stuart Coleman; Ken McWatt; Julie Johnson; Barbara Barnes

Apologies: Dawn Bolton, Rosalind Gartside, Ray Withnall, Royce Franklin

Present: Margaret Gregory, Duncan Anderson, David Wood, Ken McWatt, Carolyn Wilson, Brian Cliffe, Charlotte Coleman, Stuart Coleman, David and Lynda Barlow, Kathleen Lambert, Duncan Rhodes, Alison Coates, Dilys and John Redfearn, Bernard Holden, Nikki Kirkham, Keith Lucas, Barbara Barnes, Glenise Eason, Mark Brooks, Nick Cox.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting: Accepted as accurate record

2. Police update:

Police sent apologies for absence – a change of shift patterns to tackle the rise in crime in the district meant they were not able to attend. There has been a rise in crime again in this reporting period (see crime report). Many of these incidents are associated with a group that has been identified by police but there are at least two other groups who appear to be targeting Saddleworth for crimes against property. Police provided the following advice: Keep a pad and pen next to window to record details of suspicious activity such as car registration numbers, make and colour of car; description of suspects and so on. Criminals want small items of value that can be quickly sold on – leave them out of sight and reach. Once they have gained access they spend 60-120 seconds in property and always head for upper floors, conduct untidy search on their way out of the property and leave. Thieves circulate during day-time trying doors of cars and houses. Keep vehicles and houses locked, even when you are in. Where possible, store bins away from the perimeter of the property as these can be used to gain access through windows. Garden tools left out can be used to gain access so do not leave these where they can be readily used. If you have an alarm set this during day. Use mortise locks on doors.

MB indicated that residents should not be alarmed but vigilant, particularly in the run-up to Christmas.

KM suggested that residents, if disturb burglars, avoid getting between them and the exit from the house.

KL indicated that had been recent attempted burglaries on Huddersfield Rd but nothing had been taken. Thieves had gained access to a neighbour's car but not removed anything. He was unsure whether it is legal to use images on CCTV.

Action: MB to ask what legal situation is in relation to use of CCTV on private houses.

KM reminded residents not to leave cars running on drives on frosty mornings.

3. **Diggle Christmas Lights switch-on: event details:**

MB indicated that the Committee had reflected on last year's event and comments from the community and had tried to learn from how the event had gone. Members of the community were generally very positive in their responses but there were some aspects that could be improved. MB distributed schedule for the event:

Sunday 4/12/2016

14:30 Arrival of choir and guests

14:45 Carol service (30mins) backing CD accompanied and one with Diggle B Band

15:20 Prepare to walk to tree site (Huddersfield Rd will be closed)

15:30 Procession to tree

15:30 Christingle, DCA Diggle School 'switch on the lights' competition winner(s) result and Carols

16:00 Count down, lights switch on and 'surprise'

16:10 Walk back to Diggle Band Club led by the band

There will be a competition at Diggle school, as last year, with the winner(s) switching the switch for the lights - children to write or draw picture on the theme: 'A Diggle Christmas' MB asked for members to volunteer as marshalls. Volunteers:

Margaret Payne
Keith Lucas
Charlotte Coleman
Ken McWatt

NC indicated that Diggle School choir will need some form of sound system for music to accompany their performance. Dave Wood indicated that Sub-pressure studios may have sound system. KL offered a speaker which could be used if the music was on an MPV device.

A 25 ft Christmas tree and lights had been ordered.

Lights will also be used to decorate Ellis Mill and The Gate Inn

MB thanked SC and others for their work in organising much of the event.

MB indicated that there was still not much recognition that the event was funded by the DCA. Costs are on-going and if we want this event to continue we will need to raise funds for it to continue. This message needs to be communicated to members of the community who attend this year's event. Mark gave the example that this years event (which supports the community) but has required the DCA to raise funds in excess of £500 to fund the Christmas Tree, lighting, insurance and ancillaries.

4. **DCA working with the Canal & River Trust: progress & update**

The DCA and CRT have been working together now for over 12 months. During this period there has been a visible improvement in the appearance of the area which the Diggle Community has adopted. For instance, on first litter pick over

30 bags of rubbish have been removed, this has reduced in every subsequent pick - this indicates that if the towpath and surrounding areas are kept clear then they stay clean. Recent developments include the construction of planters provided by CRT and designed by Community Gardeners. Currently also attempting to clear tow-path on the far (eastern) side of the canal.

The next CRT activity day will be on 19 November at 10am at the Diggle Tunnel entrance.

5. Diggle Diggers - Diggle Orchard info and Q&A

KL gave a short presentation in which he indicated that he understood the concerns that the DCA Committee had had over the timescale for completion of the projects to be delivered under the initial Green Dividend bid. The original deadline to spend the budget by Christmas has now been extended to August. The fruit trees planted on The Tip are intended to form a community Orchard planted and the fruit from this will be available for all members of the community. Diggle Diggers are working closely with the parks department and environment services at OMBC and have involved children from Diggle and beyond.

The next stage of the project will involve planting fruit bushes on The Tip in the area to the rear of houses on Heather Way. KL offered the Community Gardeners some bulbs if they are still required as Diggle Diggers had surplus stock.

Future aim is to promote conservation with young people from both Diggle and Saddleworth school and perhaps to involve other schools.

MB endorsed the project but asked what relationship with OMBC is. KL responded that Diggle Diggers were consulting with Countryside Services department at Brownhill and Joanna Green at Green Dividend. Some funding was shifting towards Oldham but Diggle Diggers had sought to make the case for Saddleworth being part of Oldham.

GE wanted to know if there would be further planting of trees on tip as this area was used by young children. KL reassured her that the phase of tree planting was complete and that the ten orchard trees were the only ones that would be planted on the field used for the band contest. The future plans are to plant fruit bushes, which are relatively small shrubs which will fit in with existing vegetation and care will be taken to plant species that will form part of the current habitat. An outdoor laboratory to enable children to gain a richer understanding of their environment was a future objective, perhaps to be located in land behind Warth Mill.

SC asked if there were ways in which the DCA could operate as a more effective umbrella organization to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination of the various groups operating in Diggle concerned with improving the environment (Diggle Diggers, Community Gardeners and CRT support group). KL indicated that he felt Diggle Diggers had done all it could to work with and through the DCA and had discussed the proposals at Open Meetings. NC commented that he felt most members of the community would support the work of all these groups but it was important to ensure that the community we kept informed and understood what was being done in its name. The DCA Executive Committee did not speak for the community as a whole and it was important that actions undertaken had a mandate from the wider community. Brian Cliffe suggested that members of

the community were not informed about projects such as the orchard and that changes to the landscape and environment in Diggle such as a laboratory should only be made after consultation with the community had taken place. KL responded by indicating that the laboratory proposal would not involve any alteration to the existing environment, it was an attempt to encourage local children to understand the natural world by interacting with it. Duncan Anderson asked for clarification about what the various groups are and who is involved in them. Charlotte Coleman pointed out that there was a difference in philosophy between Diggle Diggers and the Community Gardeners and that the latter were closer to the DCA while the former were, perhaps, more independent. SC sought to emphasise that the various groups shared similar aims and that the issue was how their work could be co-ordinated and promoted more effectively; he felt the DCA should be the means to achieve this.

- **GM Spatial Framework Consultation**

MB explained the nature and purpose of the spatial framework consultation. Currently there is a draft Framework document which is live and can be accessed via the Diggle News and In Saddleworth websites. Members of the community are invited to comment. The Draft Report makes recommendations for development within the Greater Manchester area. Within Saddleworth a significant piece of land, at Fletcher's Mill Greenfield, has been allocated for development (150 log cabins and 100 dwellings) these will not be affordable housing (larger and attractive housing has been suggested). The document indicates a possible development target of 226 new dwellings per annum in Saddleworth.

Mark advised people to comment. Joanne Taylor indicated that many would find this daunting, given the length and complexity of the document and suggested a template letter could be prepared for members of the community. SC suggested that residents should consider what key points they wanted to make and submit a statement on that basis, rather than trawling through the document. KL indicated that Saddleworth Parish Council were having a meeting and community associations should seek an input into this - perhaps calling a public meeting. Nikki Kirkham spoke in support of this and pointed out that, as the process was 'developer-led' many of the decisions could well be problematic and there was a danger that - unless communities engage at this stage - decision-making will pass to Manchester and local control considerably weakened.

- **DCA and Social Media**

MB suggested that the DCA could make more effective use social media to communicate message to wider community. There was further discussion of the need for a newsletter to communicate the activities of the Association and to broaden the base of the current membership. GE declared a willingness to produce a newsletter. Dobcross newsletter was mentioned as an example of good practice.

- **DCA Executive Committee Notification of officers** - Nominations should be submitted a minimum of 21 days before the AGM (see below for dates)

- **What's on:**

Saturday 12 November: Christmas Fair at Kilngreen 2-4

23-26 November Kiln Green Church Pantomime. Tickets available from Alison Coates on 01457 876 760

Sunday 4 December: Christingle and Lights Switch-on

7 December at 7pm St Chad's Church: Carol service with Saddleworth school
Nine Lessons and Carols

11 December 3pm Christmas service with St Chad's school choir St Chad's
Church

20th December Diggle Band Christmas Concert at Diggle Band Club

23rd December Diggle B Band Concert

24th December 5 pm Crib service at St Chads Church

1 January New Year's Day service at The Gate Inn

- **Any other business**

It was noted that on a day when there was light snowfall but no problems with traffic congestion on routes through the village buses stopped coming through Diggle because of 'bad weather'. First Manchester buses announced that due to the weather conditions buses would be 'omitted from Diggle'.

- **Date of next meeting**

AGM 12 January and Next Open Meeting.

Nominations for members of the DCA Executive committee need to be submitted 21 days in advance of the date of the next meeting (23 December).