CHIRNSIDE COMMON GOOD ASSOCIATION

Chairs Report 2022-23

Now totally out of the Covid restrictions life has returned to some form of normality for most of us. 3 years on from the start of an epidemic, we will never be fully rid of Covid or other bugs and we will manage to live side by side.

A relatively quiet year in comparison to pre covid times but still productive.

The committee have secured and installed the recycled plastic bench on the new Lang Hill path with money raised by the members of Mabons place community, this has been a lovely spot for many to go to or rest on the way up the hill, the path network including the sections added in Covid are being used as a matter of course by lots of people providing a safe off road passage for the south side of the village connecting the middle to the east end. Grass maintenance being done by the community council mower by their volunteers.

Litter and vandalism still seem to be issues within our village but with the newly created group Berwickshire Anti-Litter Group (BAG) and the help of some of the youth football team have meant a number of litter picks have been more successful than normal with the turn out. Over 25 kg being picked in one morning. We will continue to promote these and engage more people in keeping our village clean and well cared for.

The Village Enhancement Group has continued with its work in the village sprucing up the planters, the 4 large village entrance planters are proving a little harder to keep alive, we may need to think about re-siting to a slightly less exposed area. We entered the Greener Gateway awards by the council for another year. In its newest incarnation they are focussing more on the environmental and growing strategy impact of the village as a whole. We came away with a Gold award in the Cultivating Community Award and Silver in both the Biodiversity and Large Village awards. There was stiff competition from villages much larger than ours but good recognition for the hard work put in by our very small band of volunteers.

As part of our ongoing activities, we continue to work closely with the School awarding:

- the Frances Edgar Award (P6 essay competition),
- the Eric Hunter Award (Sporting) and
- the ‘Spirit of Chirnside’ Award.

At the end of the school year 2022 Linda on behalf of the CCGA attended the end of year assembly and presented the prizes and trophies. Hearing about the history

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behind the prizes the children were very happy to receive them and will put their vouchers to good use.

Thanks to the volunteer team once again giving us a ray of light with the erection of the Christmas lights around the village. The tree again being donated from a garden in the village that did not go straight to the fire, the weather was wonderful for putting the strings up and with the help of a forklift with basket and 5 volunteers had them up in 4 hours. The tree is the biggest we have had in a while and was very visible as you came along Main street and Crosshill brightening the centre of the village in the dark nights. Remedial work is required on another area of the lights as one string was particularly problematic this year.

With the fencing and new tennis net in place the court has been getting a lot of use from all ages and abilities, the surface still isn't the best but since the resurfacing is looking like it will cost in excess of £20,000 (prices have increased from original quotes), we have agreed at this time to put this on the back burner, if funding opportunities come up that are appropriate for this we will apply.

We have used some of the remaining money from the COOP fund to purchase and install a basketball hoop at the north end of the court. The hoop has been used multiple times, with some children in the village buying their 1st basketball to play with their friends at this hoop.

Due to the number and variety of inventory that the Common Good hold, from white line machine to Christmas lights and tables. It was decided that a storage facility would be beneficial for the group to hold all the items in one place rather than being distributed between the committees' garages and sheds. We will use some of the money donated via the COOP fund (raised excess to what we had planned for its use) to purchase and install a metal lock up shed at the side of the tennis courts. This will store tennis court equipment, Christmas lights, CCGA tables, white line machine and paint amongst other things.
This will be shared in cost and use with the community council as they have a lawn mower that needs an accessible safe storage too.

The swap and share shed is still going strong in the Common Good Carpark at the top of Crosshill. This shed has proved to be popular with all the people in the village and is open on a number of days to allow for the widest availability for the residents. Due to the number of donations we get some of these items are recycled once they have been in the shed for a while along with the collection of ink cartridges, this has been raising a small but significant amount of money for the common good ongoing maintenance programme.

200 trees planted by Simon the children at the school and other village volunteers in the south corner of the common good park are doing well. They have recently been mulched by the new primary 7 children in their ongoing maintenance programme to keep them growing and be as healthy as possible. A new addition of a Coronation tree planted by the Brownies and Rainbows of the village is a welcome addition.

With the Jubilee in June last year and the Kings Coronation in May this year it has been a busy year for the Royals. We ran our community event for the Jubilee last year during the Civic week and sadly Queen Elizabeth II passed away before we managed to plant our planned Oak Trees for her Jubilee. We eventually planted one in the Quarry and planted one with the kids at the school both with plaques and marked on

the Queens Canopy map. The plaque for Windram Park is proving to be more problematic, the stone we will site it on is tougher than originally expected. We have a stone mason on the case to get it recessed into the rock to protect it in the future.
We tried to get a Coronation event organised and planned but found there wasn't enough desire in the community for this to happen instead we sign posted via the leaflet to all the other local events happening in nearby. We donated some of the remaining union jack hats to the school for their celebrations.
The quarterly leaflet is going strong and is a valuable tool in letting people know what is going on in the village and wider community. We have enough sponsors every quarter to cover costs and our wonderful team of volunteer deliverers do a brilliant job or posting them.

This coming year the SCIO will continue to be an integral part of the community and hope to continue bringing together the old and young, encouraging engagement and discussion all round and enhancing the village in as many ways as we can. Linda and the history group have talks set up at the school to give the children an insight into the village of yesteryear which is invaluable to encourage the children to appreciate and respect what we have. We will try to have an active role in the new council Place planning initiative bringing things to the table and contributing as much as possible.
We will continue to maintain and encourage responsible use of the Common Good Areas of the village while keeping the environmental impact of everything we do at the top of our agenda.
Thank you to the whole of the group for their support and volunteering over the year and to Kevin and Linda for their support also it is very much appreciated.

Sara Doggett
Chair