**BURGH BY SANDS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Held on 1st May 2018 in Burgh by Sands Village Hall**

1. The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.15pm and welcomed all present. He was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd May 2017 as a true record.
2. Review of the Year – The Chairman read out his report of the year 2017/2018:

**Burgh by Sands Parish Council Chairman’s Report 1st May 2018**

Over the past year Burgh by Sands Parish Council has continued to maintain and where it can, improve the social and physical fabric of the whole Parish.

The most visible change to the Parish Council this year has been the retirement of both our beloved Parish Clerk, Mrs Vivien Sealby and equally beloved Responsible Finance Officer Peter Ditch who both decided to lay down their quills in the Autumn. We cannot thank them enough for their help and wise guidance in all parish matters during their tenure. We are fortunate in being able to retain their valuable knowledge and support as they both have agreed to be selected and elected to serve as Parish Councillors.

This perhaps an opportunity to welcome our new Clerk to the Parish Council Ms Isobel Elsdon who we hope has not found stepping into her new role too traumatic and when she has settled finds the work interesting and fulfilling without being too tiring and complex. We wish her well.

Speeding in all our villages remains a concern. The Parish Council actively combats this in whatever way it can and it remains a regular Agenda item. We continue to encourage Cumbria Constabulary to increase their visits to both major thoroughfares of the parish and give our support a team of volunteer speed monitors. Currently we have actively deployed Speed Indicator Devices at Moorhouse and Thurstonfield and it does seem to have a positive effect. To this end negotiations continue to take place to site a further device, already budgeted for, in Burgh by Sands Village.

Flooding continues to be an issue in several locations within the Parish and much work has been put in by both our City and County Councillors and we thank them both. However, it is small actions by the parishioners and parish councillors that make a real difference and those that report the problems to City, County and Environment agencies are encouraged to persist and are reminded that some, limited funds the clearing of some ditches within the parish are available. Special thanks must go to those who alleviate actual problems with machinery and by hand in the poorest of weather.

Fly-tipping and litter continue to be a concern and despite the provision of both parish and city facilities seems to be on the increase once more. The Parish Council would like to thank those parishioners who not only notify us and the city council of new incidents but frequently facilitate their collection by the appropriate agency by collecting and relocating offending material to more accessible sites. We continue to seek ways of limiting the opportunity for fly-tipping and are grateful for the support of the public.

The Parish Council spends much time on Planning considerations and generally supports improvement of the lot of individuals and the encouragement of business. However, the maintenance of the fabric, and indeed the lifestyles on offer within the Parish, has been fought with some diligence and the development of open spaces and gardens is generally resisted where possible but considered small scale developments and the development of derelict Brown field sites are acceptable. Our Ward Councillor has been very supportive of our efforts in this matter.

Many of the successes around the Parish of Burgh by Sands is due to the partnerships within the Parish.

A good example of this would be the Parish Allotment Society who with the Parish Council and our own county councillor have created a vibrant, busy and fully occupied set of allotments. The Parish Council would also like to add many thanks to those green-fingered individuals who continue to volunteer to look after the various planters which add so much to the feel of a cared for parish.

Much of the Parish Council work involves the maintenance and provision of Play Areas, street furniture and grass cutting and this continues.

We have continued to support financially small Parish Projects and parishioners are reminded of this facility. Two example are:- funds have been contributed, together with monies from our County Councillor and the BBSSRA towards the provision of a Portaloo in order to limit unwanted pollution and to provide facilities to those using ‘the Village Green’ and Parish council supports to the Parish magazine and maintenance of the old churchyard.

In order to maintain participation in the Parish Council process and to make the Parish Council more accessible parishioners are encouraged to put their aspirations for the parish to councillors. All are reminded that all meetings have a slot for public participation. Saturday morning Parish Council meetings in conjunction with the Parish Hall coffee mornings where councillors linger afterwards is a slightly more informal setting if that is required.

As always, special mention must be made of the Officer of our Parish Council; Ms Isobel, Elsdon our Clerk who puts in hours greater than her pay grade illustrating the point that it is clearly a vocation rather than just a job. We cannot thank her enough for her help, support and guidance in all parish matters and in conclusion I would like to thank all our Parish Officers, Councillors, County, District and Parish past and present who have given unstintingly of their time.

1. Reports from Groups around the Parish:

**Report for Burgh by Sands Parish Meeting 1st May 2018 St Michael’s Church**

2017-18 has been a steady year for the St Michael’s Church family.

In an uncertain world our congregation’s weekly Sunday service at 11am have been encouraged and challenged this last year as we’ve studied the certainty that Christians can know in life and death through the all-conquering power of Jesus, and yet how many still reject Him. We have also looked afresh at the Easter & Christmas stories and looked at what is so good about key Christian beliefs such as Creation, Sin, Salvation & Resurrection.

In March 2018 we partnered with neighbouring parishes in hosting a well-attended and appreciated ‘Grill a Bishop’ [i.e. any questions] over a delicious and free Cumbrian Supper for our local communities as part of the ‘Moving Mountains’ events across Cumbria.

We are very thankful for our ongoing partnership with Burgh school, with: Church members volunteering in school; their Harvest and Christmas Services being held at St Michael’s; class visits to the church building; and church members leading regular acts of Collective Worship in school. We also hold services for the Mother’s Union, the Annual Memorial Service for those who have loved ones who have died, and a much valued regular poetry gathering in association with the Wordsworth Trust.

It continues to be an honour for us to be part of the flow of weddings, funerals, thanksgivings for the birth of a child, and baptisms, acknowledging God in all parts of life, making promises before Him, and seeking his wisdom and blessing. Our home-based study groups continue to offer a relaxed interactive communal time to enjoy soul food as through the bible we discover and grow our relationship with Jesus. We also continue to provide Marriage Preparation so to help couples marrying thrive for years beyond their wedding day.

Hadrian’s Wall tourists and local groups make good use of the Church facilities, and we are most thankful for our committed team of volunteer guides from the church family and local community. Our prayer box is used both by tourists and local residents.

We continue to be very grateful for the kind support of the Parish Council in providing grants towards the costs of maintaining the churchyard to a high standard (as an asset for the whole community), and also to the parish magazine to enable it to provide a valued forum for the local community in publicising events and other information relevant across the area.

In the next few months we will be considering what a healthy church looks like, re-examining the Lord’s Prayer, and seeing God at work through the mess and muddle of the life of David (of Goliath fame).

There is much to thank God for, and I’m delighted for the support and contributions of our Churchwardens Carolyne Baines, Peter Ditch, and now Lisa Turner (who has taken over from Peter), our PCC, the ‘Lay Team’, our faithful Tuesday prayer lunch group, and so many from the rest of the congregation, as (in the strength of the Holy Spirit) we seek to pursue our aim of *‘Helping everyone enjoy life in all its fullness through being disciples of Jesus’.*

Please do come to your local church building or invite us to where you are. We’d love to pray for and help you however we can, be helped by you, and hear your thoughts & comments.

Rev Tudor Boddam-Whetham vicartudor@gmail.com 01228 576324

**Burgh Parish Allotment Association Report to Parish Council – 1st May 2018**

The year 2017/18 was quite challenging for allotment plot holders. A hot and dry spring was followed by many weeks of cool and wet weather leading into the New Year when an added cold wind made working conditions unpleasant and the ground too wet to work on. No doubt some pest species have suffered, to our benefit, but overall it has led to most of us being many weeks behind where we might have been in previous years.

We held our AGM on 27th November and were pleased to welcome Isobel Elsdon and to introduce ourselves to her. Our accounts were presented at the meeting having been informally audited by an independent assessor.

The Association now has 13 members occupying between us, eleven plots and one half plot. With the permission of the Parish Council two new polytunnels were erected by the tenants of plots 6 and plot 10.

In May 2017, thanks to the efforts of members, we acquired a number of wooden pallets which were used in construction of three additional ‘communal’ compost bins in the bottom corner of the allotment. However, communal management of the compost bins is proving difficult and we will be reviewing the possibility of returning to the practice of composting weeds and waste material on our own individually tenanted plots.

Again, thanks to considerable time given by a handful of members we have been able to keep the main access areas around the plots mown and generally tidy. We are grateful for the use of a clearing saw/strimmer on loan from the Parish Council which has been a great help with this work.

It was unfortunate that the wet weather prevented the Parish Council’s contractor from accessing the allotment to cut the long, coarse grass at the bottom of the field and from trimming the inside and roadside boundary hedges before restrictions imposed by bird-nesting regulations came into force in March. We look forward to this work being carried out later in the year. We hope that the delayed delivery of a load of surplus woodchips from a local tree surgeon can be arranged during the current year to aid maintenance of the inter plot pathways. As councillors will know, our 2018 tenancy agreements contain modifications relating to composting and pathway management which we will do our best to comply with.

We would like to thank the Parish Council for funding the repair of a section of fencing between the allotment and our neighbour to the west.

The handmade sign on the gate was stolen during the summer and has been replaced with a smaller temporary sign. We will renew this in due course – the allotment is of interest to walkers and others passing by, many of whom have plots of their own on allotments elsewhere in the UK – or abroad.

We look forward to maintaining close liaison with the Parish Council during the coming year and to cooperating over management of what is proving to be a productive site and pleasant environment in which to work.

Russell Gomm, Chairman, Burgh Parish Allotment Association

**BBSSRA Report to the Parish Council Burgh-By-Sands 01 May 2018**

It has been a year of change for the BBSSRA. Following the last AGM in September which was poorly attended the association was in danger of collapsing and the Green being closed to all. There is an evident lack of support, interest, enthusiasm and a willingness to help keep this superb asset; and in our opinion the centre of the community, alive and well. People are keen to use it but distance themselves from all other aspects of its existence. It was apparent that the existing members had had enough duly resigned leaving the association in a perilous position. Following a brief discussion of what would happen without a committee I volunteered to Chair it with the support of some local dads, wives and families to fill the rest of the vacancies and ensure it continued. We are a completely new association with no ties or connections to the past. We all live in the village, some longer than others but we all share the same view of the green in that it is an absolute gem of a facility, we are incredibly lucky to have it and should do everything in our power to protect its being for the future generations.

Since that date we have worked extremely hard to ensure that the area remains open and fit for purpose. To this end we have organised (and advertised) several ‘Clean the Green Days’. Unfortunately, these have not been supported by the wider community and it has largely been the committee their families and three members of the village. Much work has been done including: -

Pruning trees and bushes, Clearing paths, mending edging around the paths and beginning the grass-cutting season.

We have also tackled the neglected wildlife area. The pond had emptied and had been empty for some time. The hole was located and filled- the pond now full again and starting to attract the wildlife for which it was intended. The path around it has been re-instated. A major problem exists with the drainage. We were kindly lent a digger (thanks to Mally Pape) to clear the blocked ditches to the west of the green this has helped but more needs to be done on the actual surface. This continues to become water logged and we are often left with just a small area left to play on. This problem has got progressively worse. We plan to attempt to tackle this asap. We are also in the process of installing two new gates to the open entrances which will make the area more secure and safer for younger children.

We have tidied up the neglected and broken fence next to the pub and hope to turn this into a community garden area. We are also still moving slowly forward with the covered area/pagoda.

We have secured two different sets of funding which will be used to buy new bigger goals for the older children in the parish and a new set of medium sized goals.

We were also very grateful to the PC (Viv and Joe in particular) for the renewal and repair of the signs and their help in the new notice boards and existing flower beds.

We continue to have Saturday soccer which is currently being attended regularly by 20 youngsters and their parents and proving very popular – they recently had their first friendly game Many thanks to Dave Garrard who continues to be there every Sat rain or shine!. Cricket sessions for the same group will start shortly as the football season draws to a close.

We are currently planning our annual Duathalon/Games day followed by the Big Camp Out which raised much needed funds last year. Fundraising is a constant battle and again although the association appears to be in a favourable financial position due to the various fund-raising endeavours. Every year our biggest, continuing and ongoing, expense is the Indemnity insurance costs, around £480. On top of this expense we need to maintain the area, equipment and fuel costs. We are hoping the machinery will continue to last but would expect to have to replace and repair at any time.

We have managed to keep on top of the grass cutting, largely due to Neil Stevens, (Greyhound Pub), and are managing to keep all the areas as low as possible. We have not been able to use the Pay back team this year but will look to secure their services in the future.

Early this year there was the sad and sudden loss of John Bolton whose wife Wendy donated half of the donations from his funeral to the green. She would also like to place a chair in his memory.

We accommodated the Hadrain’s Wall Walkers’ toilet on the green again this year and are very happy to do so. There is a donation box present but this is largely ignored by users of the car park and the toilet.

Fundraising continues to be a worry. Our marquee provides some income, as does the fundraising activities, but it is a battle. We are re-introducing the membership scheme which is hoped will generate enough income to cover the insurance each year.

Another problem has been the dog fouling – we have enlisted the help of CCC in this and monitor the situation very closely. As of late it has improved but the amount and location of faeces on the actual playing surface is unacceptable and we will take further action if it continues to be problematic.

I could go on but shan’t bore you anymore. On a personal note I love this green and cant understand why more people seemingly do not feel this way. It is a huge community asset and should in my opinion form part of the centre of our community for young and old. We have the PC, the VH the church and us but there seems to be some barrier to unity and working together for a better future for the community and its members. I believe we are meant to have a committee member from the PC and the church, but in my five years here I can’t recall any being present. I would hope that whatever the reason for this is all left in the past and that we can all move forward join forces, work together and support each other in any way possible for the good of the community.

There was no other business and the meeting was closed at 8.20pm