

**MEMBERS MEETING**

**13th May 2019 at 7.00 p.m.**

**at The Crawcrook Social Club**

**M I N U T E S**

**1. Present:** Hugh Kelly, Audrey Gladstone, Tahmara Mardghum, Margaret Laraway, Heather Crawford, Julie Gavin, Helen Haran, Mick Harvey, John Forster, Judy Smith, Sue Welch, Tracy Weston, Denise Golden, Ann McDonald, Margaret Edwards, Caroline James.

**2. Apologies:** Received fromNick Worboys, Ruth Barker.

**3. Minutes of previous meeting of 28th January 2019:**

A copy of these minutes has been posted on Our Villages Crawcrook and Greenside Website for all to read.

**4. Update on recent activities:**

* **Jumble Sale.** This event was held on 16th February 2019 and from this we raised around £700. This sum included proceeds from sales on the day, Cash for Clothes and eBay. There were lessons to be learned, it was agreed a bigger hall would be needed, also wider publicity prior to the event. Despite a lot of people helping out, it was acknowledged this event was hard work,
* **Daffodil Fair.** This event was held on 30th March 2019. The fair is usually run by the committee of Greenside Community Centre, however, this year Our Villages joined the committee and it was run as a joint event. This was well supported, and proceeds raised amounted to £716.90 which was split equally between the two organisations. Members were reminded that events are not just about raising money, they are also about building vibrant communities, in-keeping with the charity’s objects. It is one of the priorities this year to reach out in Greenside, spreading the word about the work of Our Villages.
* **Easter Egg Hunt.** This event took place on 20th April 2019, with all the eggs being generously donated by local businesses. It was extremely popular, however, the way in which it was conducted did result in some children going away with too many eggs and some going away disappointed. It was agreed that next year this would be a different kind of event and that a sub-committee would be formed to organise this. On a positive note it did generate more volunteers!
* **Spring Clean on the Green.** This is an annual event, this year it took place on 11th May 2019. It was reported that people were hard pushed to collect litter as Greenside is very clean in this area. There was a slight mix up on the publicised start time which will be rectified next year.
* **Litter Picks.** These events take place monthly on a Saturday morning, two consecutive months in Crawcrook followed by the next month in Greenside. It has been agreed that future litter picks will need to be more targeted and that we would try and involve other community groups e.g. Schools, Scouts, Brownies, Beavers. All equipment would be supplied by Our Villages. Members suggested we need to speak with Albion FC, ask that they clear up the litter following their events. A member also mentioned that Main Street, Crawcrook, had been looking very dirty, thanks were given to Judy and Sue who did a full clean. It was acknowledged that some people litter pick on an individual basis and that we need to try and engage shopworkers in this. It was pointed out that it is not helpful having litter bins removed. The meeting was informed, by two ladies from Woodside, that there are no bins by the bridge in Woodside. They gave details about their area and the problems faced there. They litter pick near the churchyard, they find picnic debris, McDonald’s wrappers and wrappers from flowers for graves. They also reported that they found a drum of hazardous waste which took the authorities some time to remove.
* **Gardening.** Looking after the beds in the park is a core activity. Sue and Judy are starting to plant out the plants from Morrisons. Of the 84 packs received they have managed to save half of them. Spring flowers are being planted in the tubs along Jubilee Terrace and there are going to be more tubs placed along Main Street. Some of the shops have already said they would like a tub and it is thought some residents would like one too. The tubs cost £15 for two. It was agreed, in principle, that we should make funds available to provide these. It was suggested we take photos and place them on social media to encourage others to be involved. Two volunteers have come forward from Greenside to be involved in gardening, which is really good news. The meeting was informed that Our Villages has received £1,150 from the Co-op, so far, and that this money is to be used for improvements to be made to the Park. The Chair asked for suggestions from the group on how this could be spent, whilst keeping in mind the object that members of the public directly benefit from it. The following suggestions were made:
  + More benches.
  + Wooden pergola structures.
  + Some sort of barrier/protection around the rose beds which are in front of the pavilion.
  + Character litter bins, for litter, cans, paper etc.
* **Handyman tasks.** It was agreed that it was a good idea to have a handyman. Our handyman, John Forster, has completed several tasks so far. He has repaired and varnished several benches in Crawcrook and one in Greenside, he has put a decorative fence along the edge of the park’s raised flower bed to deter children from walking/trampling on the flowers. More tasks have been identified including varnishing the Crawcrook notice board.

**5. Future priorities and actions:**

* **Land of Oak & Iron.** This is a joint funded project; Our Villages are match funding £4,000. The project is to provide seating with information boards. The meeting was reminded of all the activities which have taken place so far. In order to move this forward, and to ensure we are accountable to the Land of Oak and Iron, it was suggested that we need to have a singular person in charge, a project lead. There are a number of things we need to do before we can get our ideas translated, by the artist, into something which is representative of what we need. We need to research and pull together the history. Mick Harvey explained what he has available to him and said he is happy to become involved in this, along with the other members currently engaged in this project.
* **Strategic Priorities.**
  + **Crawcrook Park**. The first phase has been completed; this was a feasibility study. We now need to translate this into a plan of action, i.e. an implementation plan. It was suggested we need to create a small focus group to take this forward, this would include engaging with the council. It was acknowledged that members would like to see this ambitious plan turn into a reality. It was agreed the park needs to serve all age groups such as having a better play area for the children, an area for teenagers to hang out and a place for older people to appreciate. If people want to become involved in the planning of this or know of someone who would like to be involved, we need to know. Ideas for how people can indicate their interest was discussed and it was suggested we could encourage this via social media, the notice board and our website. The feasibility study is to be posted on our website (JG)
  + **Support local businesses**. It was highlighted that two new businesses recently opened in Crawcrook, one of which is yet another hairdresser which the area already has a large number of, and the question was asked, how can we express our views to planners? A helpful explanation was given by Hugh in relation to legislation and the fact things only come to councillors when there are objections. Support to businesses given in the past included producing an attractive newsletter which was circulated to everyone in the area. There are still 1,000 of these left and it was suggested we put one through each of the homes on the two new housing estates. It was further suggested we speak with the businesses to ask what support they would want.
  + **Improve the way we engage with Greenside.** The meeting was reminded of the current activities taking place in Greenside these include: Spring Clean on the Green, Daffodil Fair, Litter Picks and Christmas Lights. It was suggested we hold a jumble sale later in the year to help fund plants for planters in Cameron Park. It was also suggested we offer support to Transition West in Gateshead (TWiG) who want to find a location, in Greenside, for an edible bed project. It was acknowledged that the members meetings are generally held in Crawcrook and that they should perhaps alternate between the two villages. It was brilliant to hear we have new volunteers from Greenside too.

**6. A.O. B**:

* **Crawcrook Fair.** Work has already started, Julie Gavin is going to arrange fair meetings.

**7. Date and time of next meeting:**

* 8th July 2019. Time and location to be confirmed.
* 9th September 2019. Time and location to be confirmed.