



Newsletter

December 2020



www.grimsarghparishcouncil.org



HERITAGE CORNER

The Plough Inn

The eighteenth-century Plough Inn has long been a focus of village social life. Its walls have witnessed many comings and goings of local tradesmen, farmers and a succession of ‘mine hosts.’

The Plough Inn of today was first constructed in 1785 and was originally a coaching house and combined farm under the control of the squire until 1831. Landlords in those days had to deposit 10 golden guineas with the squire as an assurance they would keep good behaviour at the inn. Another stipulation to be met was the provision of a loose box for a travelling stallion, and accommodation for the grooms.



In Victorian times the landlord donned their second caps and went farming in the fields. Even Inquests into sudden deaths were held regularly at the multi-purpose pub. The first trains of the Longridge line stopped outside the Plough where facilities inside the pub included a booking office. With the opening of a new Grimsargh railway station across the road the former booking office was converted and the slotted shelves which used to hold railway tickets are today concealed behind the plaster.

The 1841 Census shows Mary and William Walmsley, as mine host and six family members whose ages ranged from 4 years to 24 years. In 1922 the landlord, Thomas Brown was advertising the proximity of the railway station facility as well as ‘refreshments, billiards, wines and spirits of the best quality, cyclists and picnic parties catered for’. Tom managed the Plough as a ‘free house’, before selling it to Matthew Brown of the Blackburn- based Lion Brewery.

Following hostilities in 1945 it was as though time had stood still in the immediate post- war years. Grimsargh’s own version of the ‘Last of the Summer Wine’ Foggy, Compo and Clegg team kept one another company on the wooden bench opposite the ‘Plough Hotel’. From this strategic position they had been watching the world go by since, it seemed, time immemorial. Matters of all sorts were debated at length and judgements handed down; the person or persons being discussed going about their daily lives in blissful ignorance of the ‘rulings from the bench’. One day in 1948, they had a matter of extreme gravity to cope with. They had heard a whisper that a new landlord, Tony Parker and his family, were about to move into the Plough. Their conversation was noted for posterity. “Dus’t know owt about new folk as comin in” “No, norra thing.”



The new Landlord was Councillor Tony Parker who was both Chairman of Preston Rural District Council and District Councils’ Association and represented the interests of the local community on several other committees.

As a child his daughter Eileen Parker made thousands of salmon sandwiches in the Pub and consequently now loathes salmon. The 1950’s pub grub at the Plough, preceded the universal adoption of ‘bar snacks’ and included a fare of delicious hot pies with bowls of pickles, red cabbage and salad strategically placed on the sideboard.

The accents of the fab four were once heard at the Plough Hotel during 1962. ‘Imagine’ mine host, Tony Parker behind the bar, one summer lunch time when a large car drew up outside and four scousers and a woman with long blonde hair purchased drinks and asked for directions to ‘The Hermitage’. At the time the property was on the market and Tony later told his daughter, P.C. Eileen Parker that the Beatles along with Cynthia Lennon had just dropped in at lunch time. As a result of diligent enquiries, it was ascertained that the group appeared at Preston’s Public Hall in August, 1962, and a visit to the Grimsargh could have been on their agenda before the gig.

In 2017 Chris and Kelly Brown moved into the Plough. The valued role of the village pub has been rekindled with a warm welcome to customers, fine fare and new innovations. Chris has capitalised on the pub’s history by transforming the original booking office into a railway themed dining room with a portfolio of photographs depicting the golden age of steam on the two branch lines that once served Grimsargh: ‘So, don’t forget to obtain a return ticket.’

By Councillor David Hindle

Grimsargh Village Hall

What 2020 has Meant for Your Favourite Community Asset

I'm sure none of us as Trustees of Grimsargh Village Community Association ever imagined we would be managing a community building through a pandemic, but that is what we find ourselves doing and it has, without a doubt, been a "challenge" and one which we all would rather not have been handed.

There was quite a bit of work required during those first few weeks. We had to try to get ourselves on a sound financial footing, so we did all we could to cut costs, changing or suspending services, where possible, but also agreeing to honour a couple of contracts, that would have left those involved in uncomfortable circumstances. We quickly picked up on the availability of the government grants for small businesses – which initially looked to not be available to us, but perseverance on behalf of our Treasurer prevailed and our application was successful, enabling us to relax just a little on the monetary side. That would at least cover our residual fixed costs for a while though not, of course, our lost income.

We then set about trying to understand what would be required once lockdown started to ease. One of our first key "issues" was that there were government guidance documents starting to be published for various businesses, by sector, but we covered a multitude of them, as our uses can be classified under leisure, retail, education, office, and hospitality so no one set applied to us. Indeed, by the time the government publication entitled "COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities" was first published on the 30th June, we had already completed our first risk assessment, written all our initial procedures, had two groups using the hall and had held the first outdoor Farmers' Market. Thankfully we do have a good grounding of "common sense", plus a range of industrial and commercial experience in our team, so were able to battle our way through the maze of documentation to make what we were confident were reasonable decisions.



After very sadly putting up the "Closed" notices on the front door in March and having a period of reflection while it all sunk in..... we set about working out just what it meant for us in running the Village Hall.



Like everyone else we got to grips with "Zoom" for our meetings – including our most senior members, who don't have internet access, but joined us via dial-up – determined not to be beaten by technology!

Our Regular User Groups were wonderful – quickly understanding their roles in the procedures that would be required for any use of the hall to be permitted. A few of them recognised that their demographics meant that they would unlikely to be able to re-convene any time soon. We are protecting all their slots in the calendar for when they do.

Our first Farmers' Market in June was a delight, albeit a rather stressful one for us, with all that was required to prepare for it. It coincided with the date the over 70s completed their 12 weeks of not leaving their houses, so many of those took their first opportunity to get out and do some shopping. It was a fantastic day, sunny and dry and everyone found it a wonderful way to do a bit of shopping in a very safe environment – outdoors in the fresh air and with lots of space. We continued with the markets through summer and were thrilled in September when James Cowell agreed to become the new markets co-ordinator – bringing his wonderful, cheerful demeanour to the team. He is already a firm hit with our stallholders.

We kept our spirits up and a view to the future with applications for grant funding to enable us to “replace” our ugly tin roof and have an upgrade to the insulation to ensure a sustainable future for the hall. We were both delighted and extremely grateful when the Parish Council agreed to support this project with up to £70,000 in funding. Many of our users and residents wrote letters of support for the second application to Lancashire Environmental Fund – which we will hear about just before Christmas. I say “replace”, as the proposed scheme is actually to over-plate with a specialist slate-effect sheet metal covering. It most certainly would improve the look of the hall, bring down our heating bills and also stop the leaks.

We had a heat pump installed in the kitchen to address both the chill in winter and sweltering heat cooking for the cafes at the summer Farmers' Markets. A heat pump was chosen, as it is a very energy efficient and therefore environmentally friendly mechanism, which can both heat and cool, though it came with a high initial capital cost. Again the Parish Council supported this project to the tune of £2,500.

We have now completed the lease agreement for the kiosk housing the gas “governor” that is located on our site near the road. This might seem a little “after the event”, but it has taken over three and a half years to get the legal agreements finalised and signed off. This will bring welcome additional income to our coffers for the next 50 years.

We continued to gradually increase the uses with a number of exercise classes, educational,

training and support groups, plus the continued monthly Farmers' Markets. By the end of October, we were getting to the position of almost covering our fixed costs. However, as I write this, the second lockdown has just been announced, turning lives and businesses upside down once again.

So we continue doing what we have to in this time of uncertainty and difficulty for all. One thing is sure – as we see our way through this, there will be a Village Hall at the end of it. Over time the groups will come back and parties will happen again. In the meantime, Grimsargh is a pretty good place to be “locked down” and we thank you all for your support. Should anyone wish to offer us any help with running the hall – and in return perhaps gain some valuable skills and experience plus enjoy some hearty camaraderie, then please email info@gvca.co.uk.



***We wish you and your families
a Happy Christmas - whatever
form it may take. Stay Safe!***



by Eileen Murray



Friends of Grimsargh Green

We are delighted to submit a brief report on the activities undertaken by Friends of Grimsargh Green (FOGG) and volunteers over the past few months.

GG Beds

The beds were weeded and more compost was added. Peter Croft grew seeds which were planted for summer, making a colourful display which was appreciated and admired during the summer months. The raised grassed area around the bed, the QE 2 playing field commemorative stone, and sign posts have been dutifully cleaned by John Baron.

Prior to this the Art Class at Grimsargh St. Michaels C/E primary school delighted us with a Spring display of windmills and flowers. Thank you very much children and Jeannie.

Small Trees

Tony Cookson has taken care of the trees for some years. This year he has been busy fitting the damage occurred during mowing, by fitting protective sleeves around the trunks of the small trees and support stakes with webbing. A number of new trees have also replaced dead ones.

Maintenance Work

Additionally, FOGG volunteers are currently reviewing the maintenance work which is required in all areas of the green, including the replacement of the logs supporting the GG bed, trimming the willow arbours and clearing and monitoring the water level around the pond area.

New picnic Benches

We were delighted that Grimsargh Parish Council paid for the replacement of two new picnic benches on the village green. The benches were built by Dig In and the Mayor of Preston, Councillor David Borrow came along to enjoy the sunshine when the benches were installed in July.



Time to be Slow

by John O'Donohue

This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good:
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.



FOGG members would be delighted to welcome other volunteers who would be interested in joining them, please contact our chair person, Joyce Chessell on **01772 653751** or email **chessell931@btinternet.com** for further information and a chat.

Village Event News

Understandably, many of the regular events we looked forward to so much had to be cancelled this year. There was no Grimsargh Field Day, normally the highlight of our summer. The Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition was cancelled, and following that decision we decided not to hold our usual Village Planter Competition as we didn't want to put any additional pressure on any of our 'planter parents' to be going out and about if they weren't comfortable to do so, or were shielding. Nevertheless, all the planters still looked wonderful and cheered us up as we did our daily exercise around the village. Sadly, the Grimsargh Flower, Produce and Handicraft Show couldn't go ahead in August.

Then, as things eased from mid-summer, our shops began to open again, the Plough and the Club reopened, our part time Post office returned and things became a 'new' normal, with lots of hard work undertaken to make things as Covid-safe as possible. The Farmers Market opened again outside on the Village Hall car park and gradually moved inside as well, breaking all records for the number of stalls taking part - a real success story.

Sadly, as we write this newsletter, we are about to enter another 'lockdown' period. The Lancashire Resilience Forum had already forbidden Trick or Treating and large gatherings for Christmas Tree light switch-ons. We couldn't hold our formal Remembrance Sunday ceremony, yet Reverend Neil made individual tributes available in church for parishioners to place their own at our War Memorial, and our new Chairman, Councillor David Hindle placed the Parish Council wreath.

Although we can't hold a proper light switch on like last year, we WILL be having a Christmas tree on the Village Green and it will be lit from 30th November onwards. Our crib will also be in place at Grimsargh Club even though we can't sing together in our usual Carol service.

We don't know yet what will happen by Christmas. But get out those lights and decorations, and let's light up the village like never before, and hope for a better 2021.

New to the Village?

We love to welcome new residents to our village. We deliver a welcome pack with introductory letter, previous newsletters, a Heritage Walk map, and information about our village hall, farmers market, and some of the community groups. If you are new, or have new neighbours, let us know by email at **welcome@grimsarghparishcouncil.org** or send us a message on our Facebook page.



Parish Council Changes

There have been a few changes within the Council over the summer.

Lindsay Philipson, our Chairman for the last five and a half years, stepped down in September, although she will remain as a Councillor. Our new Chairman is David Hindle, who will be well known to many of you through his books and articles on the history of Grimsargh and his Chairmanship of Grimsargh Wetlands Trust. Our new Vice Chairman is Mark Bell, who takes over from Terry Cryer. Our thanks go to Lindsay and Terry for their leadership over the last few years.

In October Ian Liptrot stood down after four years as a Councillor, and we thank him for his service and wish him all the best for the future.

At the end of December we will lose Eileen Murray. Eileen has been a Councillor for over seventeen years, and was our Chairman from 2010 to 2014 and knows every aspect of Parish council work inside out, so will be a tremendous loss to us. We wish her a wonderful retirement and many great adventures in her new motorhome.

This means we will have two vacancies, and we will keep you updated on the arrangements for filling them as soon as we are able.



Local Grants Available...

Did you know that Grimsargh Parish Council gives small grants to support worthy causes in the Parish? We are always pleased to hear from local groups that benefit the residents of Grimsargh and we will try and help where we can.

If you would like to apply for a grant you can either write or email the Clerk, Sue Whittam, or alternatively you can download our small grants guidelines and the application form direct from our website at www.grimsarghparishcouncil.org.

Road Safety Issues on Whittingham Lane



For some time now there have been concerns by the residents and the wider community with regard to road safety issues on and in the immediate vicinity of Whittingham Lane. These concerns have been exacerbated by the planned developments of Seddon and Duchy homes which exit onto a dangerous bend towards the Cowhill junction with Whittingham Lane and Haighton Green Lane.

A working group consisting of two Parish Councillors, Joyce Chessell and David Hindle alongside a resident, John Baron, from the Silver Birches has been set up to explore the road usage; how the housing developments might impact on the road users and pedestrians; to examine potential traffic calming measures including signage in an effort to prevent accidents and, to produce a report on their findings

Information and up to date data on road usage speed etc has been difficult to obtain. Comprehensive exploration of the development plans has only increased the concern we have for road users especially pedestrians due to lack of reasonable lighting and footpaths.

Residents have sent emails supporting their concerns. These have been included in an interim report.

The interim report has been presented to the Parish Council, George Wilkins, County Councillor, who will discuss the findings with Keith Iddon, LCC Cabinet Member for Highways and to Preston City Councillor Ron Woollam.

To date we are waiting the response from Lancashire Road Safety Partnership and the Lancashire County Councillors in order to enable us to progress your concerns.

If you have any observations which would support the effort to improve road safety and/or reduce accidents the working group would be happy to hear from you.

If you wish to view a copy of the interim report please contact Joyce at chessell931@btinternet.com and she will email you a copy.



Parish Council Meetings 2021

Meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month. We normally meet in the village hall, but due to the pandemic we are holding our meetings remotely until further notice. The link to each meeting is circulated with the Agenda and everyone is welcome to attend.

Thursday 14 January 2021

**(note change of date)*

Thursday 4 February 2021

Thursday 4 March 2021

Thursday 1 April 2021

Thursday 13 May 2021

**(note change of date due to Elections)*

Thursday 3 June 2021

Thursday 1 July 2021

Thursday 2 September 2021

Thursday 7 October 2021

Thursday 4 November 2021

Thursday 2 December 2021

A copy of the Agenda is available 5 days before the meeting on our website at www.grimsarghparishcouncil.org.

*Wishing you all a very
Happy Christmas and
a safe and peaceful
New Year!*



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