



Garstang Town Council

The Historic Market Town of Garstang



Annual Report

2020 - 2021

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Moss Lane Park Report

Most of the Council's focus has been on the Children's Play Area.

The play area has been improved by laying a paved entrance from the Moss Lane end and replacing the crazed paving area with new paving and the installation of wheelchair friendly picnic benches.

We have not been happy with two of the new pieces of equipment, the Trampoline and the inclusive Roundabout. Neither work satisfactorily and we have been in discussion with the supplier about solutions to both items. The Trampoline as we all know fills with water when we have heavy rain. This is not acceptable and the proposed solution from the supplier is not practical. The Roundabout does not run freely and again the proposed solution is not practical.

We have been unable to meet with the supplier due to covid restrictions. We will be making every effort to improve this over the next few months. Once we have a satisfactory solution, we will begin to look at how we can extend the park to provide more equipment for the children.

The gate at the Kepple Lane end needed to be removed to effect a robust repair to the hinge and spring loaded mechanism. Wyre Council undertook the repair, and the gate was returned at the beginning of April.

The equipment has a weekly safety inspection by Wyre Council.

Cllr Allan and Cllr Hynes
Moss Lane Park Project Team

Financial Report

1 April 2020 -31 March 2021 (the last financial year)

The figures are yet to be approved by Council, on 4 May 2021, and are still subject to audit.

Receipts: The Council set a precept of £76,809. The precept allows the Council to carry out its functions and services for the year. Other sources of income for the Council, included:

- a) Rent from the 3 allotment tenants of £41 each making a total of £123.
- b) The rent from the scout hut (£120 covering 2 years rent).
- c) £3,200 was received from Wyre Council as a grant donation towards the town's Christmas lights (organised by the Chamber of Trade).
- d) £500 was received from Wyre Council as a grant donation towards ICT costs incurred by the Covid 19 pandemic. This money was used to purchase a laptop, headset and offset costs with the new up and running Microsoft Teams.
- e) £500 from Lancashire County Council to assist maintenance of the ProW; Riverside Walk which is maintained by the Town's Lengthsman.
- f) £400 from Lancashire County Council, Champion Grant from County Councillor Paul Rigby, the Champion for Parishes. The monies will be utilised towards the cost to purchase of equipment for the Town council's Emergency Plan.
- g) Lancashire County Council grass cutting monies, paid to the Town Council for the maintenance of the grass verges carried out by the Town's Lengthsman.

Payments: A budget is set in November/December prior to the financial year to determine what costs the Council are likely to face in the following financial year. The Council decided to support the following projects in the town.

A)Kepple Lane playing field project -This project is being led by the Kepple Lane Park Trust, whereby Cllrs Atkinson and Pearson are trustees. Since April 2008 the Council has approved £4,000 each year for the project. At 31 March, the funds for the project amounted to £6,569.

b) Moss Lane playing field project –this project is being led by recently retired Cllr Ryder and Hynes. Similar to the Kepple Lane project, since April 2017, the Council has approved £4,000 each year for the project. At 31 March, the TC funds for the project amounted to £1,816.00.

c) The Town Council awarded a grant of £500 (in additional to the £2,500 approved budget figure 180(2019/2020) and Mayor's allowance of £508.52 minute 111(2020/2021).

d) Sadly due to the pandemic, the town's festivals did not take place along with the Legend Fires North West Stages Rally 2021and VE Day 75 celebrations. Underspent monies were allocated to the projects initiated by the Market Town working group.

e) A new Council website was produced by Councillors Atkinson and Dyer. The Council had earmarked £2,000 for this project. This saving was transferred into the EMR Market Town working group project.

Other expenditure of the Council relates to salaries (the Clerk and Lengthsman) and for the administrative running costs of the Town Council.

Maintenance of the two playing fields –Kepple Lane and Moss Lane, is paid for by the Town Council and carried out by Wyre Council. Additional maintenance is carried out for the sensory garden at Kepple Lane Park. The Finance Committee of the Council meets quarterly and enables the six Councillors to study the finances of the Council in detail and make recommendations to Full Council.

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, March 2020. Members of the public are always welcome to inspect the books.

Edwina Parry
Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer



Garstang in Bloom

2020 will go down in history as something very different in many ways but certainly in terms of Bloom

It doesn't seem two minutes ago since Team Members attended the RHS Awards in London and the NWIB Awards in Southport and what a year we had including the Neighbourhoods and Parks we came home with 15 Awards, the best Small Town in the North West and an RHS Gold and an RHS Special Award

Then CV19 kicked in and just as we were planning for another year everything was halted

Despite all the lock-downs we continued to keep the Town looking pretty, we did this with limited funds and limited opportunities to work together.

I feel we did a great job and many people who know us have commented on how well the Town looks and one gentleman approached Tony as we were working and gave him a £15 donation.

Thanks to you all, you have worked to the limits of what you were allowed and have done the Town proud

We didn't achieve anything new this year, but there is plenty to go at as soon as we can work again

- A new Bed near Sainsbury's [sponsored by Duchy Homes]
- A suggested new bed outside Billy's yard / car park where the big container sits now
- The refurbishment of the raised beds
- The completion of Norah's Garden by the erection of the stone and plaque and some additional planting for more colour around the time of judging

Our work with the Dementia Café and the new garden at the library will hopefully be revived post CV19.

I have also been asked to advise on setting up Neighbourhood Gardens at the entrance to Meadow Park and by a lady in Bonds

Thanks to all of you including those who work out of normal hours and those who work alone.

Hopefully 2021 will bring more cheer and less social distancing so we can meet and work as normal.

Alan Pearson
Chairman of Garstang in Bloom



Garstang Millennium Green Trust Report

Who would have thought 12 months ago that we would still be in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Fingers crossed we are now seeing light at the end of the tunnel.

The Millennium Green trustees, would like to take this opportunity to thank the Millennium Green Working Party and the Wyre Borough Rangers you all there continued work on the Millennium Green. In these unprecedented times of Covid-19, the Millennium Green has been maintained as a place to visit and a safe haven for all to walk. The numbers using the facility have swelled and this increased footfall has continued as restrictions have changed, cementing the importance of this facility in the local community. The Trustees are fully aware of, and appreciate, the difficulties the current situation has created for the Working Group and Rangers in performing routine tasks and all the background logistics involved in order to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all workers. It's very uplifting and a reflection of the commitment and camaraderie they have, not just continuing to keep the Green in its usual high standard but also improving the facility.

Despite all these challenges the teams have managed to carry out some additional improvements with a viewing platform at the pond, two new interpretation boards and further tree planting from public donations and the Woodland Trust community tree planting scheme. It will be no surprise that the river Wyre flood gates have been raised a number of times this last year. Again a big thankyou to the Working Party & Wyre Borough Rangers in all the tidy up after the floods to ensure the users of the Green have a safe and pleasant area to walk and relax.

The Trust would also like to thank Councillor Liz Webster for choosing the Millennium Green as one of the mayoral charities for the year and thank her for raising the Millennium Green profile and the funds raised in these difficult lock-down times.

The Green has again seen some vandalism and miss-use by different parties which the Trust has been keeping a close eye on, especially with the lighter nights starting upon us and the Covid-19 restrictions gradually being lifted. This is always challenging owing to the Greens geographic location. If you do see any misbehaviour please report to the police via Tel. 101 giving the location as 'Millennium Green' stating if it's at the Wyre Lane end or Cricket Club end. Or the other recommendation is using the 'What 3 Words' app to identify the location and advise the emergency services as they are using it particularly for identification of off road areas. All to ensure the safety for all who use the Green.

Thanks finally goes to the continued support of the Trustees, Green Management Team, Maintenance Team, Friends of the Green & Wyre Rangers.

All who freely give their time and play a part in keeping the Green looking pristine.

The Green has had and maintains I believe, a very positive impact on the mental health of the people of Garstang during these very challenging times.

CLlr Mike Halford

**Garstang Town Council Representative to and Chairman
of the Garstang Millennium Green Trust**



Fairtrade Garstang Report

As you will be aware Garstang is the world's first Fairtrade town. 18 May 2020 The Town Council appointed Cllr Ryder onto Fairtrade Committee Cllr Ryder produced monthly information reports to the Council during 2020-21 During the year the highlights were:

June

Reported Fairtrade Directory The directory which lists retailers, eateries, takeaways, and accommodation selling or using Fairtrade products An up to date list can be found on <http://www.garstangfairtrade.org.uk/>

July

Reported This summer the Fairtrade Foundation is starting a Youth for Fairtrade group to advise the Fairtrade Foundation and shape the future of Fairtrade campaigning.

September

Garstang, the World's First Fairtrade Town, would have been celebrating its 20 year anniversary this year, but Covid-19 meant that organised events taking place throughout the summer had to be cancelled. However, they did have a 20th Anniversary and Fairtrade Fortnight exhibition in the Market Hall window.

November

Town Council Annual Awards 2020 Ruth Bruce (Chair of Garstang Fairtrade) was nominated in the Good Citizen category Ruth said 'I am just so glad for the Fairtrade Group that my nomination was thought to be worthy of consideration'.

February

Fairtrade fortnight 22 February to 7 March 2021 March 2021 The Town council considered the Fairtrade Town Renewal from the Fairtrade Steering Group; In order for the Fairtrade Steering Group to progress the Garstang Fairtrade Town Status renewal, the Town Council agreed to renew its commitment to include the use of Fairtrade tea, sugar and coffee and other products at Town Council meetings and functions and to support Fairtrade products more widely when reasonably practicable.

Peter Ryder

Community Engagement Report

In last year's update I spoke about the limits imposed on us by Covid-19 and our frustration at being unable to meet with residents face to face. It is extraordinary that a full year later we are still battling those same issues.

Despite the restrictions there have been successes. We were quick to get online and have been able to stick to our usual schedule of meetings throughout the past year and keep the business of the town in motion. Residents have been able to join us for these meetings, and for significant issues such as the possible closure of the swimming pool, it was good to see a full house of interested parties joining the meetings, despite them being held online.

Our website has undergone a comprehensive revamp thanks to the expertise and hard work of councillors Atkinson and Dyer. It is now easier than it has ever been to access our minutes and agenda items and keep up to date with the latest news. Importantly, it also meets all relevant accessibility requirements.

As we begin to move out of lockdown, we are expecting to return to face to face meetings soon. Prior to Covid-19 we had an action in place to extend the scope of our 'surgeries' at the library. These were regular sessions where anyone could drop in for an informal discussion with councillors. We hoped to make this a multi-agency meeting with representatives from the Police and Wyre Council to ensure that the right person would be there to help, whatever the issue. Having attended several surgeries in my first year as a councillor, I am keen to reinstate these as soon as it's safe to do so.

We have made significant improvements this year but there is more to do. I know that whilst some of the regular routine of the council may go unremarked, there are times when issues of real concern come up that attract the interest of a wide range of people. In the coming year I'd like to ensure that we do all we can to make it quick and easy to see what the council position is on these topics and what actions are being taken. There is also scope for us to be more proactive in engaging with our community and encouraging participation, especially as lockdown eases.

We live in a digital world so our use of the website and Facebook as our primary methods of information sharing feel appropriate. We use the Focus Magazine, (or Green Book), for a monthly update as this has a strong readership across the town and is a good option for those that are not online. However, I would like to get a better understanding of whether residents feel our current channels are enough and if we are reaching everyone.

Along with the wider council I will consider how we can best do this but in the meantime, I would be pleased to hear from anyone that has feedback on our current methods of contact, or suggestions for new ones.

**Clr Sharna Mitchell,
Garstang Town Council Community Engagement Officer**



Wyre Councillors Report

This has been a terrible year, not just for us here in Garstang but the whole country. And yet Garstang has come up trumps again with all the assistance that was gathered by Councillors and local community groups to make sure that those in need got the help they required.

Wyre was at the forefront in helping businesses and constituents in the Borough and is still making sure that monies and food etc. are getting to the people who need it.

With the first lockdown it was the Management Team who dealt with everything, including Planning, but Webex was set up and this enabled Councillors to take part in Council Meetings and the various other Committees that keep the Borough going.

The Chief Executive, Garry Payne, is working towards July for Staff and Councillors to return to normal at last. But the virus is still there and we have to make sure it is safe before we can proceed.

Wyre Cllr Sir Robert, Wyre Cllr Lady Dulcie, Wyre Cllr Alice Collinson

Wyre Council Climate Change Policy Group

Inevitably, we have been treading water somewhat over climate change. The Council's Working Group has met virtually and is leading and supporting the Council's Officers in changing attitudes and procedures - and light bulbs (!) - throughout Wyre.

But when we are back to relative normality, more action will be taken on tree-planting, waste recycling, planning guidelines and community involvement - to name but a few. Watch this space!

Wyre Cllr Sir Robert Atkins

Mayor's Report

Over the last year the Town Council has enjoyed a full house with a team of 12 councillors this year until recently along with our Town Clerk and Lengthsman. During this year we co-opted 2 new Cllr's during the summer including our youngest ever councillor, Cllr Atkinson and also Cllr Dyer. The Town Council has certainly had another interesting year. During these unprecedented times, the council decided it was best for the stability and continuity of the council and community for me to serve for another year in office as mayor which in itself is unprecedented.

I am very proud at how quickly the council adapted to change. We were up and running with our virtual zoom meetings to conduct our business in no time at all. We even held our Annual Town Council Awards via zoom and streamed the event live on social media which was a huge success. Again, a huge congratulations to all our winners. It was with great sadness we learnt the Town Council's Junior Award winner for 2020, Charlie Robinson, passed away just aged 5 years of age only recently. I attended Charlie's funeral on behalf of the council to pay our respects. Charlie was indeed a very special boy and our thoughts are with his family.

The Town Council were saddened to receive the resignation of Peter Ryder having served nearly 7 years, however, this of course presents an opportunity. We will soon be advertising the vacancy so if you feel you have the energy and drive to make a difference in your local community please contact the town clerk.

This civic year saw the council launch a brand new website thank you to Cllr Dyer and Cllr Atkinson, which is very easy to navigate and extremely informative, so please do visit the page.

A big thank you to our Lengthsman who has continued to make the town look tip top throughout lockdown when we have seen an increase in littering and dog fouling. This year the Town Council purchased a new mower for the town to keep our open spaces maintained.




During June last year I instigated an extra ordinary meeting after receiving an open letter from a member of the community, to pursue the opportunities and rescue plan to ensure Garstang was a safe retail destination. We engaged with the community and invited members of the community and local organisations to discuss the impact of Covid on our town and how to adapt to the new challenges. The Market Town Working Group was born. Deputy Mayor, Cllr Allan volunteered to chair the group who met regularly. We worked with the Town Trust and assisted with the road closure for the weekly outdoor market. The Market Town Working Group also produced a new Heritage Trail leaflet which has been distributed throughout Garstang. The Market Town Working Group also set up a new Facebook page and website, This is Garstang to help promote all aspects of Garstang. Finally, The Greater Garstang Partnership Board evolved from the Market Town Working Group which has been set up to drive the development of a Regeneration and Investment Framework for the town and its surrounding villages. The Board involve a range of organisations and representatives who lead areas such as Health and Wellbeing, Business and Economy, Education and Skills.

The Town Council liaised with Save Garstang Pool Community Group and our local district and county councillors to lobby YMCA and Wyre Council on the reopening of the pool following the first lockdown. No sooner did we have an opening date of early January we went into another lockdown. The good news is the pool is due to reopen 1st May.

The Town Council this year agreed to sign up and join 'Our Lancashire'. Our Lancashire is funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the website is dedicated to not for-profit organisations - providing space to advertise the amazing work they do, promote their upcoming events, get their message out to new members or potential volunteers and network with other organisations. The Town Council also resolved to follow up the offer of free DBS checks for a number of councillors.

Garstang Volunteer Force has been a lifeline for the vulnerable and the elderly during lockdown. Having been involved with Garstang Volunteer Force since its inception, I encouraged them to apply for a grant application to Wyre Council. I'm pleased to report this application was successful and they were granted £500.



November saw the Town Council agree in principle to explore the potential for a Garstang Community Hall in order to further support our community, looking at the feasibility of various sites within a central location to Garstang and how the Town Council could finance such an investment. The same month we approved that the late Lance Corporal Jonathan James McKinlay, who was killed in Afghanistan 2011, be added to a new tile/plaque separate to the main memorial at the War Memorial.

We have agreed proceed with the proposal to form a group of coordinators to form an emergency plan and I'm pleased to report Cllr Dyer is leading this project. The aim of this plan is to provide a single source of local information to improve Community resilience and provide an effective initial response in an emergency situation. The plan is to assist an area in times of need, and to have a community response that works alongside the emergency services, although not every emergency may require input from the emergency services, or indeed the emergency services may be overwhelmed so a coordinated community response would be very much of assistance to them.

Cllr Brooks continues to be the council's Flood Forum guru. Cllr Brooks is fully up to date with flooding issues and regularly attends Wyre Council's flood forum meetings.

Following a recent meeting with members of the Royal British Legion, it has been agreed for Garstang Town Council to be the local authority responsible and manage the Remembrance Sunday event on 14/11/2021 and beyond.

The Town Council agreed this year not to hold the Town Council Awards because we recently only completed the awards for 2020 due to Covid, however we agreed for the Mayor's award to still go ahead. This award is a very special award for the mayor to recognise someone who has contributed to the community and made a difference for the benefit of others. The 2021 mayor's award is awarded to a very special lady who I admire immensely. She works tirelessly to help others and together with her husband Barry and dedicated team she has raised a total of £157,002.53 for CRY. Cardiac Risk in the Young.

Paula and Barry's son Matt, died August 2011 & they started fundraising 6 months later in Feb 2012.

During the lockdowns funds have continued to be raised in a huge variety of ways. Paula acknowledges they are so lucky to have fabulous & very loyal friends, family & supporters who have done their utmost to keep the fund going ready for when the time comes that we can screen safely once more. Paula explained to me how lockdown has been.

Paula Boscott's under the glitterball event was cancelled but most still very kindly donated their ticket money!

Sales of John Waite's book a Ramble around Catterall & district have continued; We have lost very dear family & friends during the pandemic & donations have been made in their memories;

Friends have had significant events in their lives but as they couldn't celebrate as they would normally do they have made donations in lieu of events & gifts;

Friends have held personal events such as the mini tractor run & lone sponsored bike ride;

Churchtown in bloom held outdoor honesty box sales, as Team Matt did with puzzles & books (to keep folks entertained whilst not able to go out) on Cockrobin lane.

Sales of masks made & sold by our friends at Quilters Quarters, Longridge, sold at Best Wishes garstang & our neighbour Pat, made & sold them at Nicksons;

Trisha Barker painted pebbles & friends @ Longridge Highland Cow offered them outside for donations; Handmade cards sold; Mike Coleran sold a canvas; Sale of Wyre lottery tickets; Clothing collections, especially from our green recycling box on Catterall village hall.

To date the fund has screened just shy of 1,500 young people

38 have been referred for very serious/ potentially fatal conditions

A further 37 have had letters of advice sent to their GPs regarding less serious anomalies that nevertheless need checking/addressing.

A weekend long screening costs £10,000, testing up to 200 young people so that equates to £50 per test - not a lot to potentially save a life! Screenings directly benefit our young people here in Garstang as the screening testing site is generally at Garstang Community Academy.

I think you will all have guessed, I am very proud to announce the winner for this year's Town Council Mayor's award is Paula Hesmondalgh. On behalf of Garstang Town Council, thank you for everything you do for our young people.

Finally I am proud to announce my lockdown fundraising total for this mayoral year. £1150!

I will be donating £575 to both Garstang Millennium Green and Garstang Christmas Lights.

Cllr Elizabeth Webster
Mayor of Garstang 2019 - 2021



Report from Wyre Area Committee Rep: Lancashire Association of Local Councils Report

The Wyre Area Committee meets quarterly to discuss issues that may be local to any one of the 24 member parishes or Area wide. We invite guest speakers to give updates and insights to borough and county wide topics.

In October 2020 we had a presentation from Clare James, Corporate Director for Resources with management responsibility for amongst other things, finance.

Shaun Turner updated on Lancashire County Council Covid 19 and I gave an update on the Market Town Working Group.

In January 2021 we had further updates on local and county wide response to Covid 19 including an overview of the Lancashire Resilience Force.

The LALC AGM was held on Saturday 14th November 2020. The keynote speaker was Geoff Driver, Lancashire County Council Leader who spoke about the potential for Lancashire Council to be reorganised into 3 unitary councils with an elected Mayor for the Combined Authority..

CLlr Alec Allan
Town Council Representative

Garstang Youth Council

I was enrolled as Garstang Youth Mayor on 2nd October 2019 before anybody knew what was about to come in terms of the global pandemic. I had high hopes for increasing the numbers of meetings and events that would take place throughout the year to raise funds for Garstang In Bloom.

My first duty as Youth Mayor involved visiting local primary schools (Garstang St Thomas, Garstang Community and St Mary and Michael) during democracy week. One of my main aspirations was to increase awareness of the youth council and to encourage recruitment of future members to the youth council.

The first fund raising event was organised by the Deputy Youth Mayor, Jorge Pollard, which was 'Turn Garstang Orange', which raised £119.

In November 2019 along with other local dignitaries, we took part in the Remembrance Sunday event, where I laid a wreath on behalf of the youth council.

Later that year, I took part in the Christmas lights switch-on celebration and organised a youth council chocolate tombola stand at the Victorian Evening which raised £183

2020 activities started with the Garstang Youth Council Family Fun Quiz at Kepple Lane Scout Hut which was a well-attended and very successful night seeing Nathan Halford's team winning the quiz whilst raising £359. Little did we know this would be our last event before social distancing and mask-wearing would become compulsory.

We had planned our second event of 2020, which would've taken the same format as the family fun quiz, but instead a beetle drive. Unfortunately, this was never happened as it was meant to take place at the end of March. I hope to hold this event as soon as Covid restrictions allow.

We began virtual youth council meetings mainly to stay connected throughout the unforeseen times that we were living through. I have always been a very optimistic person, but when it comes to Covid-19, I believe we could still be living under restrictions for many years to come. So, with this in mind, I decided to change the format of the Garstang Youth Council meetings turning them into more of a debating society which is how they remain.

Declan Stephen

Youth Mayor of Garstang



Kepple Lane Park Trust Report

Over the last year Kepple Lane Park along with Moss Lane Park and the Millennium Green has been the green beating heart of Garstang more so than ever. This last year has seen the park used more than ever as we all have sought exercise and relief from what has been an incredibly difficult year.

The Park has welcomed many new and longstanding friends on a daily basis as we have all adjusted to an ever-changing world and as trustees, we're so pleased that the park has been on resident's door steps for their daily exercise!

This year despite the restrictions Kepple Lane Park still saw a toned-down Armed Forces Day raising of the flag by the Town Council to show support for our country's military community.

Like for many charities this year has brought about fresh challenges for Kepple Lane Park Trust and has thrown many of our plans into the air. The trust had exciting plans to redevelop one of the existing mounds to highlight the growing climate crisis as well as the plantation of a new tree section. However, sadly due to corona-virus restrictions this has not been possible so far, we hope to bring these plans to life as soon as possible once restrictions have been lifted.

Furthermore, the challenges of lockdown have meant that we have been unable to fundraise, we can't wait to see you all in Sainsburys with a raffle one day soon!

As always, we remain on the lookout for volunteers! Spade in hand preferable (we have lots of trees to plant!)

**Cllr Atkinson, Cllr Pearson and KLPT Chairman Gordon Harter
On behalf of Kepple Lane Park Trust**

Christmas Lights Group Report

The Christmas lights group is a small group with representation from Garstang Town Council, Garstang Town Trust, Garstang Chamber of Trade and the general public, with the purpose of facilitating the Christmas festive lights in Garstang. In 2020 we were in year 3 of a 5 year contract with our suppliers, LITE, for the Christmas festive lighting scheme in Garstang. The Christmas lights are illuminated from the end of November to the beginning of January, to bring social and economic benefits to the town during the darkest months of the year. The LED lights we use are efficient, using modern low - energy technology.

The lighting scheme design we introduced has been credited for bringing a 'positive feel' to Garstang particularly after the year we had experienced with the pandemic, brightening our town over the festive period. We have received anecdotal positive feedback from locals and visitors alike.

The lights cost approximately £12,000.00 + VAT. After generous donations from Wyre Council, Garstang Town Council and Garstang Town Trust (and VAT reclaim) we are left with approximately £6,000.00 to raise. 2020 Was a challenging year for fundraising, we used different avenues than previously and were overwhelmed with the generous help we received. We contacted other local parish councils and most contributed funds for the lights, we also set up a 'Go fund me' page and were active on Facebook which contributed to raising awareness and funds. Business collections were down (as expected) however we still received donations from many. Also, we had other individual groups collecting for us alongside businesses; from raffles to dressing in costume collecting. With this and the extra donation from Garstang Town Council and the Town Trust, also the 'Mayoral allowance' the Mayor kindly donated alongside £1200 reduction in the invoice we negotiated, we were able to reach our target to pay for the lights for 2020.

Our intention is to save any surplus to extend the lights scheme further around the town, on Park Hill Road and Bridge Street and currently we are negotiating with LITE about costs. The Light Switch on was held virtually and broadcast live over Facebook. Once again this went down well with many positive comments.

There is no doubt that the Christmas Lights are an important part of Garstang's calendar and the help that Garstang Town Council gives financially and practically is invaluable.

Damian Carr

Chairman of Garstang Christmas Lights Group

Garstang Town Trust Report

Garstang Town Trust is made up of eleven Trustees' all of whom live within a two and a half mile radius of Garstang town centre. Once we are able to resume normal meetings there will be several changes to some of the Trustees. Just before lockdown one of our longest standing Trustees Mr Eddie Livesey retired from the Trust after a service of 46 years. Mr. Livesey will be well known to many in the town as he has been involved with many local organisations. Unfortunately the Trustees were unable to make a presentation to Mr. Livesey due to the then newly implemented Covid regulations. Therefore Mr. Livesey's daughter, Mrs. Julie Bell, was asked to make the presentation on behalf of the Trust. Mr. Bill Chippendale had continued to assist on market day since his retirement from the position of Clerk and Market Superintendent more than a decade ago but has now fully retired, although if it were not for the Coronavirus I am sure he would still have been going strong.

The remit of the Town Trust is to run the markets in Garstang, both the indoor Market House and the Thursday street market. All the money raised from the running of the markets and the rental from the businesses within several prominent listed buildings that are under the guardianship of the Trust, these being the old Town Hall, the Market House, the Old Grammar School and slaughter house which is one of the oldest buildings in the town and has now been renamed 'Butchers Court', stays within the town and is used for the upkeep of the buildings. If there is surplus income it can be given, at the discretion of the trustees, as grants to local community groups. The Trust is also responsible for the Market Cross which was first listed as an historical monument on 27th February, 1957.

The Town Hall and the Market House between them provide premises for seven businesses. Unfortunately over the last year the businesses in the Town Hall have, like so many others, been closed for a large part of the year due to the coronavirus. The businesses in the Market House have, being food outlets, tried to remain open where possible. Where it has not been possible they have provided a delivery service to many customers who were unable to get out to the shops. The old Grammar School which is better known as Garstang Arts Centre has also unfortunately had to be closed for most of the past year, as has the outdoor market.

The planned maintenance and repair work to the buildings last year included, replacement of skylights in the flat roof at the Arts Centre, replacement of windows to the rear of the Town Hall, replacement of the wooden panels under the arch in the Town Hall and painting of the internal communal areas. All these jobs were completed. This year we have made repairs to the back wall of the Town Hall, both inside and out, repairs to the woodwork on the gable end, replacement of broken or missing vent covers and now the exterior walls are being painted. There is another window yet to be replaced at the front South corner of the Town Hall which is in progress.

Kate Rowe
Clerk to Garstang Town Trust

Market Town Working Group

The Market Town Working Group (MTWG) was set up in June 2020 after the Town Council had received communications from The Chairman of Independent Garstang Traders (IGT) and the owner of Market Place News. Both had raised concerns about the High Street's recovery from the Pandemic lock downs and wanted the Town Council to coordinate efforts to support businesses through the lockdown periods and support the re-opening of our High Street.

In response to these requests the Town Council held an Extraordinary Council Meeting on 8th June 2021 and invited local businesses and organisations. The meeting agreed that we should set up a Market Town Working Group drawing its membership from local business, Town Council, Wyre Council, neighbouring parishes, Town Trust and other local organisations and members of the local community. At the time of this meeting in June 2020 the Chair of IGT had resigned.

This initial meeting on 16th June 2020 was well attended with 25 representatives from businesses, community groups, Town Trust, Town Council and neighbouring Parish Councils and Wyre Council.

It was agreed that we should set up two subgroups to address short term needs, the Implementation Team and the longer term recovery plan, The Strategy Planning and Funding Team. These teams are headed by Cllrs Dyer and Pearson. It was made clear that both short term and long term activities needed significant input from businesses and the community if they were to make a difference. Meetings were organised on a weekly basis until 18th August.

The MTWG considered that a Thursday Market Day road closure would be a necessity if the Market was to be re-opened. The road closure was discussed at length in June with business and residents having an opportunity to consider the pros and cons. Wyre and LCC highways officers and the police were consulted. It was determined that we should implement the road closure from 9am to 4pm on Thursdays. The closure was in place from mid July until Christmas. Volunteers manned the entrance to the High Street to ensure that High Street residents had access to their properties. We also allowed access for delivery vehicles and some essential shops on Bridge Street. The road closure was generally received well.

Strategic Planning and Funding Team: The SPF Team has been working with Wyre Council Economic Development Team to determine the overall approach to create a document that can be used to attract strategic funding to enable Garstang and the surrounding areas to thrive into the future. This document would provide a vision of the needs of the local area covering a 15 year period. The team recognised that it did not have the skills and experience required to ensure the greatest opportunity to raise significant levels of funding to address priority requirements.

The SPF team were tasked with establishing the Greater Garstang Partnership Board drawing on expertise from around the borough. We have been successful in setting the Partnership Board up with membership providing a broad range of skills. We have secured board members from Myerscough College, Lancaster University, Blackpool Transport, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, local businesses and many other disciplines.

The Partnership Board had its first meeting on 14th April and it will be concentrating on the development of a 15 year vision for Garstang and the surrounding districts. This will need significant consultation with people in the local community, residents and businesses over the next 12 months. The Board will be instrumental in the development of a regeneration framework which will identify the major projects that will need to be delivered to realise the vision.

Implementation Team: The MTWG wanted to see a consolidation of the many social media sites supporting different aspects of Garstang; Business – General Info – Traffic. The group suggested that we should have one site promoting the town and surrounding areas and This is Garstang was created to address this.

Wyre Council advised us that they had access to a national scheme and funding under Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF). Wyre had access to £98,000 across the four Wyre service centres which included Garstang as the only service centre in the east of the borough.

Working with Wyre we established that 50% of the fund would be held and used from a central pot and that each of the 4 service centres would be able to draw on £12,500 to address short term RHSSF needs. This fund is retained by Wyre and we can call off on agreed spend.

Wyre suggested a number of RHSSF ideas including Sound Systems and Hand Sanitiser Stations. The view of the MTWG was that our shops and businesses had already catered for hand sanitisers and that additional stations were not essential. It was also considered that a sound system broadcasting the Hands Face Space message was not practical for Garstang whereas it might be appropriate for the larger centres. Wyre subsequently supplied 2 Hand Sanitizer Stations from their central pot.

Bollard covers were suggested but blocked by LCC.

We had agreed to the purchase of pavement stickers but unfortunately Wyre deemed them a trip hazard.

We are in the final stage of discussions on a number of tools we plan to deploy around the town centre which will enable us to highlight different business initiatives around the district which can be provided in a covid safe environment.

Cllr Alec Allan
MWTG Chair

Garstang Town Councillors



Cllr Oliver Atkinson



Cllr Graham Salisbury



Cllr Elizabeth Webster



Cllr Jonny Leech



Cllr Sharna Mitchell



Cllr Leah Hynes



Cllr Roger Brooks



Cllr Michael Halford



Cllr Alec Allan



Cllr Alan Pearson

During the civic year of 2020-21 the Town Council received the resignation of then Cllr Peter Ryder, prior to the publication of this report the Town Council also received the resignation of then Cllr Dyer. For further details on how to get involved with Garstang Town Council please visit our website.



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Background photos included in this report courtesy of Lynn Harter