# Town Meeting of Appleby

The Town Meeting of Appleby was held on Wednesday 24th April 2024.

This document includes all the reports received from local groups and organisations, including some that were not able to attend. Some groups who attended and gave a verbal report have not yet supplied written reports. *

If you are interested in joining any of the below organisations, but do not have any contact details, please email admin@applebytown.org.uk.

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This report was published on Friday 3rd May 2024.

* If any additional reports are received, the report will be updated accordin

## Appleby Town Council and Tourism Update

Appleby Council is quite unusual for a Parish Council in that it owns and maintains quite a substantial property portfolio, including the Moot Hall, Public Hall and the Cloisters, as well as 6 retail units. Although the buildings are an asset to the Council and town, they obviously require maintaining.

After finishing the refurbishment work to the Moot Hall and Cloisters buildings last year, the Council have been concentrating their efforts recently on upgrades to the Public Hall. This has included installing a new accessible toilet in the ground floor reception area, replacing rotten windows and fire doors, new flooring in some rooms, upgrading the ladies' toilets, as well as installing new guttering and downpipes. Energy efficiency improvements have included replacing the lights in the main hall with LED lights and motion sensor LED lights in the public toilets. Work this coming year will include repairs to the hall's roof, along with internal repairs to the attic spaces and ceilings.

Appleby Council has also taken on the responsibility or being the accountable body for the George V Playground fundraising committee, which has included submitting grant applications, procuring the new equipment and managing the installation. Over £102,000 has been raised for the playground refurbishment, including £30,000 from local fundraising events and donations from individuals and businesses, with the remainder received in grants from 11 different funders. Work is currently a little bit behind schedule because of the wet weather and a few missing equipment parts, but it is hoped the playground will be open any day soon.

Another issue Appleby Council has taken the lead on recently is the town's black & white bollards. The bollards have been an ongoing concern for some time and the time has come to do something about them. The bollards are not owned by Appleby Council and are the responsibility of Westmorland & Furness Council (previously Eden District Council's responsibility) and the situation has arisen because historically no budget was ever set aside for their repair or replacement. There are 400 bollards in town, which have been replaced at various times throughout the years and which are in a varying state of dis-repair. The Council has recently carried out an audit of all 400 bollards and have assessed that over 250 need either full replacement or repairs making to them.

After looking at various options, the Council plan to replace the wooden bollards with more durable concrete bollards and working with a local contractor, have had a prototype made to match the design of the existing

bollards. The specification is the same as for kerbstones and the bollard is also re-enforced with two metal bars running through the centre.

The plan is to replace all the bollards with the new concrete ones in phases and thanks to a grant and a very generous local anonymous donation, the Council have enough in the budget to replace over half the bollards. The design has been approved by Highways and the plan is to begin the replacement in early June, starting with the Butts and Sands, followed by Boroughgate. It may be that any wooden bollards which are taken out and are in a decent condition, will be used to replace damaged ones at Scattergate, until the budget is found to replace them.

A prototype bollard has been installed on the Sands side of the river path. It is the very end one at the bottom of the steps, should anyone like to see what it looks like.

The Town Council works hard to support tourism in the area by running the TIC (which also acts as a council contact centre for residents). We manage our Visit Appleby website and busy social media pages in house. We also produce local walking, accommodation and where to eat guides for the area.

The Council part fund the Appleby Town guide which is distributed down the Settle to Carlisle railway line, and in Cumbria and Yorkshire TICs.

Over Winter the TIC generated over £5000 for various charities through the sale of Christmas cards, calendars, etc.

Tourism is still not back to pre-covid levels and visitor numbers are slightly down to date for 2024 (mainly due to the prolonged wet weather, train strikes and continued cost of living crisis). There is optimism within local tourism businesses that the summer season will see improvements on last year.

We are always looking at ways to help promote the town, this year so far, they include.

- A full-page Appleby Town advert and QR code in the Settle to Carlisle pictorial line guide.
- To run alongside the very successful Heritage Open Weekend held in September, which we have organised for the past 2 years, we launched a QR heritage trail, with audio clips and photos. The trail will be formally launched next month with proper signs and a trail leaflet and will include 12 venues.
- Working with the Settle to Carlisle Marketing manager and Appleby Rotary club we are planning a minibus trial into town from the station on the last Saturday of each month over the summer season.

- Meetings with Cumbria Tourism (who have funding from Westmorland and Furness council to promote culture and heritage outside the national park)
- We ran a successful children's town trail over the Easter Holidays with the help of Jenny from Cupboard under the stairs and the wonderful Appleby Crafty Ladies group. Another trail is planned by the Appleby Crafty ladies for summer.
- The TIC has a new range of local craft work for sale this year to promote local Artisans work and help towards the cost of running the centre.

3 of our Councillors have setup a Working Group to look at the various concerns around dog issues in the town, particularly around dog fouling and dogs not under control. A public meeting was held last Thursday, which was well attended by dog owners and non-dog owners alike, who were all keen to find solutions to the issues raised. The working group has been strengthened by the addition of some local residents, and they hope to find a workable solution, leading to improvements that accommodate everyone's needs.

It goes without saying that a huge amount of all staff members' time is taken up with responding, resolving, reporting or facilitating the vast range of enquiries received from residents, businesses and other stakeholder groups and organisations. Many of the enquiries are not the direct responsibility of Appleby Council, in particular highway issues, but all staff members are very happy to accommodate these requests and help resolve these issues when we can.

Questions raised by residents included a complaint made by a local business owner that people working in businesses in town are parking in the town centre parking bays taking up spaces that could be used by visitors. Another resident asked about the plans for the temporary car park at Edenside and Clive Wigley, the Chief Executive of Oaklea Trust explained that although the planning application had been approved in principle, there were still conditions that had to be met before any demolition work could start.

Cllr Davidson also reminded the meeting that if any Appleby electors have any issues or concerns that they would like to bring to the Council's attention, public participation is welcomed at all our Council meetings. The next Full Council meeting is on Wednesday, 22 May. The Council have also started to trial Councillor drop-in surgeries at the library on the last Saturday of the month, from 11am to midday.

Cllr Pamela Davidson, Chair of Appleby Council and Mayor of Appleby Town
Sue Gilbertson, Town Clerk
Nicola Elliot, Appleby Tourist Information Centre Manager

## Appleby Community Enterprises

*The group submitted the following report, as they were unable to attend the meeting.*

ACE is Appleby Community Enterprises a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee formed in 2012 with community objectives. It has 6 directors, all of whom are residents and/or business proprietors of Appleby or the surrounding villages. We all have a common interest in working together for the benefit of Appleby and the surrounding area, none of the directors are paid for their work and give their time freely.

Over the years, we have led on a number of initiatives, including delivering service level agreements for Eden District Council, facilitating a range of community and business activities and development opportunities. This included setting up and running the pop-up 'Appleby Times' Museum in Bridge Street, in conjunction with the Appleby & Westmorland Society for a couple of years, exhibiting old photos and memorabilia of Appleby, which can now be seen at The Hub as a permanent exhibition.

During the last year we have helped finance several initiatives in Appleby to support businesses and encourage visitors to stay longer in the town, including providing match funding with Appleby Council for the production and printing of both the Shop Local leaflet and the Heritage Open Weekend leaflet. We also helped support the Shop Local loyalty card scheme. Last year, we also carried out an online survey to measure the impact of the Horse Fair on local businesses.

ACE have engaged Jenny Gibbons from the Cupboard Shop Under the Stairs, who works with the TIC to liaise with fellow traders in town on promotional activities and events - both to increase footfall and takings.

In the past we have celebrated Marie Curie month with decorated shop windows, various quizzes, and trails, and most recently the Easter trail which was a great success. It is important to us to use local shops and services, for example, Appleby Business Services for the design and printing of leaflets posters, etc, Angelo's restaurant for a meeting venue and Sugar and Spice for sweet prizes. With social media being such a useful tool for free promotion, reels in particular, Jenny works alongside the TIC to promote local businesses via Facebook and Instagram.

The plan this year is to hold more events and seek additional funding to further promote the town, but we still have some residual funding and would welcome ideas of how we can continue to support the town.

Alan McViety and Jenny Gibbons

## Age Concern, Appleby

You all will know of Age Concern Appleby. We have 2 charity shops, one on the corner of High Wiend and one in Low Wiend.

We are an independent charity, not part of Age UK, run entirely by volunteers, no one takes any payment. All of our profits (after shop expenses) are given as donations to support groups, organisations or charities who support people in the CA16 postcode, i.e. Appleby and the surrounding villages.

We give to larger county charities such as Air Ambulance and Hospice at Home, small local groups such as Evergreen and the Crafty Ladies, and many in between. We have recently supported about 20 groups with varying amounts of money and have donated approximately £40,000 each year since Covid. We are all very proud of that.

We need three things to survive:

Volunteers, there are about 50 stalwarts, but new blood is always welcome.

Good quality donations. I emphasise good as more than half our time is spent sorting and disposing of ”stuff” people should have disposed of themselves, but are too idle.

Customers, so do call in, I’m sure you will find something you need and probably something you didn’t; but it will be a bargain!

Linda Ronan

# Appleby Air Cadets: 2192 Squadron

Appleby Air Cadets are a youth organisation affiliated with Royal Air Force, who take cadet from a minimum age of 12 and in year 8 up until 17 years old. However, once they are in the organisation, if they can offer something back, then they can stay on until they turn 20. We offer knowledge and qualifications in leadership, First Aid, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Swimming, Outward Bound Activities, Presentation skills, shooting, climbing, cyber, radio, STEM, music along with drill. Our aim to give cadets new experiences and help give them the tools for life, while having some fun on the way.

I have been a member of 2192 Appleby Sqn since my son joined in 2016, but 2 years ago, I took over the reins of OC of the sqn with 2 staff to help, all juggling full times jobs. We had 4 cadets at this point and like many youth organisations we were struggling to find our feet after covid.  I contacted our two-feeder schools, Appleby and Kirby Stephen Grammar and arranged to go and introduce myself in September to the Year 8 and 9's, hoping we could encourage a few to attend an open evening. 30 walked through the door, it was a bit of a baptism of fire if I am honest. In fact, the whole of the first year was. But as a sqn we are slowly finding our feet.

But we now have 15 cadets on our books that all attend regularly. We may be a small squadron but it doesn't stop us being active in everything the organisation has to offer. We are the smallest sqn in our sector which includes Penrith, Carlisle, Workington and Whitehaven, but it didn't stop us beating them all at our annual 10 pin bowling competition.

In the last year we have taken cadets to Stenneshope twice, near Hawick where cadets get to experience fieldcraft, leadership and camping. We have offered cadets the opportunity to fly at RAF Leeming and go gliding at RAF Topcliffe, allowing them to take control while in the air, letting them put into action when they learn about in sqn.

Recently we attended our wing competition day and competed against 31 other sqns in Cumbria and Lancs, across 10 competitions. We only had a team of 8 cadets, but they came 1st in leadership, 3rd in photography, 5th in First Aid and did an amazing job of coming 14th in Banner Drill, despite being the first time competing in this event. This resulted in us coming 14th overall and being awarded 3rd place for the most improved sqn.

As a sqn, and part of the RAF, we take an active part in Remembrance Day, from selling poppies, helping the Ladies Section of Royal British Legion at their coffee morning, and of course taking part in the parade, which is always an honour to be a part of. Working closely with the Mayor we have just introduced a Mayor's Cadet, who will carry the ceremonial sword at special

occasions on behalf of the Town Council.  This is a first for the town, and we hope the role will develop over time.

Last summer, we worked with Appleby Rotary and helped to give the Appleby sign at the railway station a face lift. The cadets had a great night, although I think there was more paint on them by the end of the night than on the stones.

Although the RAF provide us with basic running cost and provide the blue uniform you see our cadets in, we also have a small committee of volunteers who work tirelessly behind the schemes to raise money for the squadron. We have had a duck race and quiz this year and the money is then used to help keep the equipment up to date in the sqn, like buying an Xbox to act as flight simulator, or helping to pay for trips to the museum at RAF Cosford. A number of our committee are looking at retiring in the next year and if anyone is interested in getting involved, please come and have chat.

Our most exciting achievement is a trip we are organising to Normandy, France in July to study the D-Day Landings on its 80th anniversary. I have organised this trip for 12 cadets from Appleby at a cost of £700 each. However, we wanted to give every family the opportunity to attend whatever their financial situation, so as a sqn decided to offer it to our cadets at £150 and try to raise the raise the rest. With kind donations from Appleby Rotary, Appleby Town Council and Westmorland Furness Council we have raised a large amount, and the cadets have been busy also. They have organised bag packs at Morrisons, a Big Breakfast and a Sponsored Walk, and raised around £3,700 themselves. We are very grateful for the support that the Town Council has shown us and especially Sue Gilbertson for her help with grant applications. We will look forward to sharing our experience with you when we return.

FS Dawn Brown

## Appleby Archeology Society

The Appleby Archaeology Group was created in 1998 by Martin Railton and others. It exists, to not only have lectures and visits, but to do real live archaeological excavation. We are fortunate to have two professional archaeologists in the group - Martin, and Trish Shaw. We now have nearly 60 members and have a committee which meets regularly.

Our winter programme consists of six lectures on various subjects of both local and national interest and our AGM includes talks by members on current projects. Starting in October we will have talks on, among other places, Birdoswald, Lowther excavations and Lindisfarne and our summer visits this year include trips to the Carlisle cricket and the newest Birdoswald excavations.

Many of you will know that we recently completed our project ‘Dig Appleby’ which achieved lottery funding. There is now a booklet on sale locally which describes what we found including confirmation of the priory location and the results of an excavation there. We are now planning a new project based on phased exploration of the sites round Appleby associated with the Roman Road. We are currently in the fund-raising stage for Phase 1 and we encourage anyone who is interested in any way to contact either myself or Martin. There are opportunities for people of all ages and skills to become involved not just in digging but in dealing with finds, recording, drawing, photographing, cataloguing etc. as work proceeds there will also be workshops, training sessions and lectures.

From October we meet in the Supper Room on the second Thursday of every month until April and meetings are not just for members but are open to all. All our meetings are summarised in our newsletter which we issue four times a year and our website  apparch.org has a wealth of information about our previous work and future programmes.

Richard McGregor

# Appleby Bowling Club

The Bowling club was founded in 1913 and has approx. 70 Members ranging from Full playing Members of about 40 and the rest made up of Social and Life Members. We like most other bowling clubs are struggling to attract new members. we do hold opening evenings every Tuesday from 6-30pm through the outdoor season and Tuesday afternoons indoor on the short mat through the winter months so to encourage people to come along and have a go.

Our national governing body is Bowls England who are also trying to attract new members by holding National Events such as The Big Bowls Weekend and Bowls Bash. We intend holding “The Big Bowls Weekend” in May so everyone is welcome to come along and have a go. The Club plays in 2 Eden Valley Bowling Leagues, Hosts County Games and competitions also have Friendly games with other clubs locally and from as far away as Middlesbrough, as well as internal competitions. We have entertained the Brownies, The Golf Club and the Rotary and so any other organisation that would like to try the sport please contact Peter. It is no longer an older person’s game, but any age can bowl.

One of the bowling clubs’ other major concerns is Flooding**,** the club was flooded again late February this year as well as 5 times since Storm Desmond in 2015. We can no longer get Flood Insurance, so it is left for the club members to put in place our flood resilience plan by lifting everything up at height and then cleaning up after the flood. We hold social events like Bingo nights, Quiz nights, coffee mornings which raise much needed funds to help cover the costs we may incur after a flood. I hope this gives you a small insight into what we do.

Lesley Metcalfe

## Appleby Community Acting Together

ACAT was set up about 14 years ago to take over the management of the town's Christmas Lights and to organise Sparkle Day, designed to bring residents and visitors, including Santa, into the town centre just before Christmas. Much grant aid funding was obtained to replace all the old lights with new LED ones. Gradually those involved on the committee diminished and volunteers to put up the lights declined to just a small group of 6, who became disillusioned because no one else seemed to care and were ready to withdraw. Luckily, along came the cavalry in the form of Appleby Rotary, who now provide about 15 members to augment the remaining originals: a separate group source, collect, put up and decorate the tree the weekend before the big switch on. Last year we formed a new partnership with Appleby Remote Cinema to show a Christmas Film aimed at children, to replace the Pantomime that we had always purchased from a touring Theatre Company.

ACAT now receives £2000 annually from the Town Precept and have regularly benefitted from grants from local groups. Last year our treasurer approached a number of local businesses who donated £1450 between them to support the lights and Billy Welch of the Travelling Community donated £200. Age Concern Appleby and Appleby Masons donate the electricity for the lights on their side of Boroughgate, but some other suppliers we pay.

Public Liability for our activities (£536), new curtain lights for the Cloisters (£2300), more snowfall lights for the tree (£810), repair and replace equipment (£315), Santa presents (£409), Sparkle Day equipment and Film Hire (£300) and the purchase of Christmas Trees (£390) made up the bulk of our expenditure, totalling around £5200.

Our own activities around fund raising have been curtailed over †he las† 3 years due to Covid, however we now think that people are ready to re-engage in social activities and community events. We did hold three Big Breakfast events which raised £1350 in total, and we have a number of events in the pipeline.

Archie Spence

# Appleby & District Royal British Legion

*The group submitted the following report, as they were unable to attend the meeting.*

This document details the activities and issues encountered by Appleby & District Royal British Legion's Branch over the last 12 months. The report does not include activities undertaken by the Ladies Section of the Branch, of which I have no information.

The main Branch activities centred around the annual poppy appeal, the remembrance parade, and the production and siting of a Memorial Bench, depicting images of the World Wars. The Branch Vice-Chairman Colin Smith was the instigator and main driver of this initiative.

**Poppy Appeal 2023**

Just in excess of £6,000 was collected. It was noted that the availability of a card reader was of great benefit, although the lack of QR codes on the collection boxes was a handicap. This is expected to be remedied for the 2024 appeal. The success of this appeal was largely due to the effort and commitment of the Branch treasurer, Laura Thornborrow.

**Remembrance Parade 2023**

The 2023 Parade was successfully planned and executed thanks to the sterling efforts of our new Branch Chair and Standard Bearer, Simon Walton with the support of Appleby Town Council and St Lawrences Church.

**Memorial Bench**

Health and Safety issues were raised with the original design. A re-design was required. The Branch committee proposed that bench be positioned outside the club, facing down towards the Cloisters. The idea behind this was that it would offer the users a more pleasant view of the town rather than looking across Boroughgate, staring at passing traffic. This proposal was rejected. Given that there are no benches on that side of Boroughgate, it is hoped that this decision may be reconsidered.

Additionally, Colin Smith has proposed a large steel silhouette to be located in the Appleby Swimming pool garden area, adjacent to the parking area. This has been agreed subject to the design and size.

Ken Hunt

# Appleby Emergency Response Group

Appleby Emergency Response Group was set up as a charity in early 2016 in response to Storm Desmond the previous year. Our purpose is to help the community of Appleby to plan and prepare for, and recover from, emergencies, principally floods. We have also provided support during other types of emergency, e.g. helping to search for a missing person and providing support to people in the town during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have been grateful recipients of funding from Appleby Town Council, Cumbria Community Foundation, Eden District Council, the Environment Agency, Appleby Age Concern and Appleby Rotary Club. We have also generated income through our own fundraising activities. This has enabled us to fund the cost of employing a part-time Project Coordinator to manage the work of the Group and to buy equipment.

Our Project Coordinator manages our response to emergencies and organises our team of over 60 volunteers during them. During floods, we liaise with the Environment Agency and emergency services about likely flood levels and their potential impact. Our volunteers visit any properties at risk of flooding to inform residents of a flood alert or warning and provide help to enable them to erect floodgates, move personal possessions to safer areas and deliver sandbags. We are responsible for activating the town's emergency sirens. We also advise the emergency services of any resident who may have particular requirements that need specific support.

We communicate with the community via our website, Facebook page and an app called TextLocal.

We would welcome new volunteers who would be interested in actively helping the community.

Jim Chalmers

## Appleby Football and Squash Club

*The group submitted the following report, as they were unable to attend the meeting.*

Participation at the Club is thriving. Membership has been growing over the past few years largely thanks to the success of the Junior football section. We now have roughly 200 members: 120 junior footballers, 40 senior footballers and 40 squash players.

The costs of running any organization are increasing year on year and we are no exception, where two of our largest costs are utilities and insurance. We have been looking at where we can generate increased revenue to contribute to these costs. Our Clubhouse is roughly 40 years old and in need of refurbishment. The refurbishment of the Clubhouse should provide us with a facility that we can use to generate additional revenue from both sporting and non-sporting activities. We have drawn up plans with the major areas of work being as follows:

• Internal work on the kitchen, club room and installing additional toilets.

• Replacement of external windows and doors.

• Replacement of the roof.

We are progressing a number of grant funding opportunities to assist with this development, including with the Football Foundation.

The improved facilities would enable us to provide food and drink to supporters and teams before, during and after matches/training. They would also allow us to host club fundraising events, which would be open to the wider community.

We would hope that the significantly enhanced facilities would enable us to become an asset to the local community. We would engage with the community and offer the facilities for outside events.

**Senior Football**

We have a First Team and a Reserves team who play in the Westmorland Football League.

The First team are currently top of the First Division of the League with seven games left to play. They are also in the Finals of the Westmorland Senior County Cup and the High Sheriff's Cup, which are being played at Kendal and Penrith on 3 May and 30 April, respectively.

Unfortunately, this season the Reserves have been relegated from Division 2 of the League, but have competed well in a division mostly comprising of First

teams. The Reserves play a significant role in both supporting the First Team and providing a bridge into Senior Football for the Junior sides at 16 years old.

**Junior Football**

We have had the following mixed Junior teams playing in the Penrith and District Junior Leagues this year: two U9 teams, U10, U11, U12, U14 and U15. We also have an U8 team that play non-competitive football and have and are looking in the future to run training sessions for younger children.

All teams have performed well in their respective leagues and the U15 are participating in the Ted Nanson Cup on 12 May at Penrith Stadium, and the U10 are participating in the Europa league finals Jimmy Romano Cup on 21 April at Appleby.

We were recently visited by the Westmorland FA Positive Football Ambassador who came down to assess one of our match days to ensure that all was working well with regards to the FA Respect programme and safeguarding. He gave positive feedback on all aspects thanks to all the teams, coaches, players, and parents creating positive play. We have an increasing number of supporters each week who come down to watch the junior section. Away teams comment on how friendly the teams are and how we offer a really good facility and welcome.

**Squash**

The Club has two squash teams competing in the Cumbria Squash League: the A team in Division A and the B team in Division B. Both teams finished third in their respective divisions and the B team were runners up in their Cup.

Given the relative size of the Club compared to other Clubs in the league, such as Carlisle and Kendal, it is a credit that we can produce two Club teams competing as strongly as they do.

Bucking the national trend, we are also seeing a recent increase in squash membership.

Martin Smith

## Appleby Rotary Club

*The group submitted the following report, as they were unable to attend the meeting.*

Appleby Rotary Club is a member of Rotary International, a global organisation whose motto is Service Above Self. Rotary works at all levels to support and improve the lives of others. Being part of the local community is important to the Club and its members. During the past year we have worked alongside the Council and other groups in both financial and non-monetary activities for the good of local residents.

In the financial sense, we have provided £17,200 towards the refurbishment and modernisation of the playground; £1,200 towards helping local youths attend a Tall Ships Experience helping them overcome anxiety problems; smaller funding has helped such groups as Appleby ATS, Eden Eagles girls cricket, Appleby (and other) local primary schools and the secondary school where we run a number of youth programmes, such as youth speaks, young writers and young chef.

In the non-monetary sense, we have been the main source of volunteers to put up, and take down, the town's Christmas lights; many local organisations come to us for volunteers to act as marshals for events (e.g. Remembrance Day). Many residents benefit from Rotary organised events such as a Fun Run, a Golf Competition, coffee mornings and quiz nights.

Rotary organise and run one of the main car parks for the Horse Fair (which is also one of our major fund raising activities and enables us to support a number of local groups).

On a wider view, we contribute to many organisations important to local people: the Great North Air Ambulance, Blood Bikes, Beep Doctors, and the Eden Talking Newspaper service.

In a less tangible sense, Rotary are in touch with other clubs in areas of need. We have links with Rotary in Ukraine and can react to the locally perceived need, collecting such as warm clothing and toiletries for Rotary colleagues to transport, and enabling local people to contribute in a practical, meaningful way.

Dr Alan J Green

## Appleby Scout Group

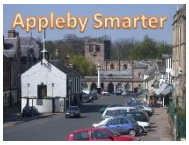
*The group submitted the following report, as they were unable to attend the meeting.*

There has been a registered Scout Group in Appleby since 1958, and over the last 66 years the group has provided real skills for life, through making friends, learning by doing, and creating everyday adventures. Since its inception, Scouting has always been delivered by unpaid adult volunteers, to whom we thankful to have and grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment.

In 2022, to help keep scouting in the area sustainable despite lack of volunteers, the groups at Appleby and Shap merged to form 1st Westmorland Scout Group. By doing this we have been able to run an active programme for our beavers (6-8yrs old) at Appleby and Shap, along with providing Cubs (8-10.5yrs old) at Morland. However, we do have an aspiration to grow scouting across both Appleby and Shap to provide more adventures for young people and are currently recruiting more adult volunteers to help with this.

In the meantime, you might have seen our Appleby Scouts around town, either singing campfire songs on the playing fields or rafting along the River Eden up towards the leisure centre. We've been very lucky to have been joined by WO Mal who taught us all about communication, Vet Helen who told us all about her job and how to look after our pets, and Mountain Rescue Volunteer Matt and his dog Morag who taught us how to tie a reef knot! We've also enjoyed visits to the library to complete our reader badge and to Morland to work with the Eden Rivers Trust.

Mike Freeman




## Appleby Smarter

Appleby Smarter is a small group of volunteers who take pride in the appearance of our lovely Town. Our sole ethos is to tidy up the town. We are a sociable group of mainly retired folk and we all enjoy the company and companionship of the group, so much so that we have built up strong friendships throughout the time that we have been volunteering.

We were so proud to be nominated for a Kings Award for volunteer Groups last year.

This last year has seen the group varnish and paint all the wooden benches in the Town. We have also cut back the foliage in Banks Lane and mown the grass, when needed, several times during the year.

We were also asked if we could paint the Appleby stones at Appleby Railway Station. This job turned out to be longer than expected as we also varnished the planters and tidied up the garden. We will be doing this again this summer.

We have taken a lot of pride in cutting back and opening up pathways at what we call the Gardens and that others call the Memorial Gardens, at the top of the pathway behind the Methodist chapel on the Sands. We felt that visitors to the town walking down from the station would get a lovely view of our town from there, once this was done.

We recently cleaned up the area surrounding Jubilee Bridge after the small flood and have made a big difference to the area concerned. We have also cleaned and cut back the area around the raised flower bed at the start of the Butts by the bridge.

In addition, we removed the green algae off the Moot Hall which we did very carefully to avoid damaging the rendering.

Our most recent task was to repair the fence separating the public footpath from the Heritage Centre, putting in new posts and fixing new slats to the fence. Whilst there we put gravel down on the path in those places likely to retain surface water or become muddy.

There are lots of different jobs that we do and we work very closely with the Town Council, who are very supportive of our little group.

Appleby Smarter is open to all and the volunteer numbers have grown this year. If you see us in the town in our high visibility jackets then please do say hello.

Frank Dolby

## Appleby Wombles

Appleby Wombles joined forces in early April 2021 and are part of a larger group of litter pickers across the Eden Valley, known as Wombling Free Eden. The Appleby Facebook group was created in March 2021 by myself, Nikki Brabant, after I was shocked by the amount of litter on the A66 towards Scotch Corner.

Appleby Wombles have come and gone over the last three years but there is a committed group of us that includes Julie Bartlett, Debbie and David Beaumont, Lucy Berry, Doreen Dickinson and Denise Edwards. There are others in town who also voluntarily litter pick, but as a group we record our collections on the Facebook page to raise awareness, support other local litter pickers and record data for use with other organisations such as the Council.

We meet regularly to collect litter from the roadsides around the wider Appleby area and since January 2023 have collected approximately 170 large bags of litter and many large items that we do not put in bags. The problem is worse after the Horse Fair and the resulting litter is still around even now as much of it is not visible until vegetation has died down over the winter. The Horse Fair cannot be held solely responsible though and much of what we collect has been thrown from vehicles. On our travels around other towns and cities we are proud that we do manage to keep litter levels low around Appleby and the local area.

We collaborate with Debbie Shawcroft from Urbaser who collects the bags of litter once we have notified her of the location. We have been supported over the years by Appleby Town Council who have funded litter pickers and hoops as well as plastic signs for us to put up in areas we keep clear. They also printed off posters in the early days that are displayed in shops and other businesses around town encouraging people to dispose of their litter responsibly.

Going forward we would love Appleby to be at the forefront of the litter problem - maybe we could become a 'litter free town' in the style of Fairtrade towns, with roadside welcome signs that encourage locals and visitors to dispose of their litter responsibly. We have a few ideas of how this could be done.

We will collect litter for as long as we need to, but we also feel there are more preventative things we could do as a town. If anyone is interested in joining, please come and chat to one of us or join Wombling Free Eden on Facebook.

Nikki Brabant

## Appleby-in-Westmorland Society

Appleby-in-Westmorland Society are a group of about fifty to sixty members. We meet bi-monthly on the last Thursday in the month, but during winter months we move to Sunday afternoons.

The topics are usually historic with a local connection. The Society also organises and runs the Town Archive, located in Appleby Public Hall. Due to this resource, we are able to respond to any questions with regards to the Town's history. Within our collection we have 1600 photos of the Town, some are duplicated, but we do sometimes attend other local groups meetings to do a 'show and tell' type event. We are always looking to expand our archives, so if anyone has anything they feel could be important, please do speak to one of our members.

We like all other groups struggle to get officers to run the Society and fear in the near future it may cause the demise of the Appleby in Westmorland Society. We hope that people, both young and old, who have a keen interest in their town's history will be moved to join our Society. Schedules of our lectures are printed at the beginning of the year and are available in Appleby TIC.

Chris Wilson

## Fellside Singers

Fellside Singers were formed in 1995 and under their conductor Judy Craig. Judy Leigh Harding conducted for many years and I took over in 2017.

During Covid we met together on Zoom and kept singing but I had no idea what anybody was actually singing, as everyone had their microphones on mute. However as soon as we could, we got back together live - first singing Christmas Carol's outside then later rehearsing in the open air in the St Anne's Almshouses courtyard.

We are a community choir of about 25, still including founder conductor Judy Craig and other founder members, as well as those new to Appleby and the area - and every year we do three concerts. Our December concert is usually centred on a Christmas meal, while the March or April concert will be a shared one, with either soloists, the band or a speaker – the idea behind this to emphasise the community aspect of the choir. This is usually held in the Appleby Hub. In June we go out to one of the village halls for an informal concert, which usually involves other performances.

From time to time, we do perform at different functions. We have been involved with various town events including the Lady Anne dressing day in March, singing in the rain as it turned out, and Kings Meaburn harvest service.

We are non-audition and welcome all voices (especially men!). Music reading is not essential though it does help. We meet in the Sands Methodist Church most Tuesdays except in July and August, and over holiday periods.

Richard McGregor

## Remote Cinema: Lights...Camera...Appleby!

Our aims: to promote, organise and encourage the showing of cinematic and other cultural events in Appleby.

This is our 12th year showing films in Appleby. We couldn't do this without our volunteers who work hard to help increase access to arts, culture and quality films in Appleby. We choose our films twice a year, usually from a menu curated by Cine North, but not exclusively. The films include arthouse, British, foreign language and one or two blockbusters or locally made films.

In 2023 we showed 11 films including: Top Gun, Mrs Harris Goes to Paris, Banshees of Innisherin, Decision to Leave (foreign language film), Emily, Living, Empire of Light, Barbie, Cumbrian Red and Everything, Everywhere, All At Once. Plus we showed the Polar Express for Appleby's Sparkle Day event, supported by ACAT.

Over 12 years, we have built up a core, faithful audience that seem to come to whatever we put on. In 2023, 803 people enjoyed our film shows. Of these our smallest audience was 45 and our largest 128 for Cumbrian Red.

Our 13 volunteers put in over 170 volunteer hours, in 2023. At the going rate of £13.70 an hour, that's £2,329 in real money.

We regularly work with local businesses to cater food for our films. We supported 10 local businesses and put over £3,350 into Cumbrian businesses in the local economy.

We are regular renters of the public hall: £830 to the Town Council for hall rental; we bought a Catering trolley and blinds for the public hall backstage, to the tune of £460; and we paid £1444 to Cine North for cinema licenses.

We also support local charities and creative initiatives. In 2023 we gave a total of £1600 to: Upper Eden Food Bank for Christmas dinner boxes; Appleby Library Crafty Women's Group for materials which they have used for the beautiful decorations and trail for locals and visitors to enjoy around town this Easter; the cost of hire of a coach to take members of our Remote Cinema audience to the opera in Grange for Cumbria Opera Group's Don Giovanni last August and supported a jazz & blues concert, Hayley's Little Big Band at the Appleby Hub at Christmas.

Andrew Radcliffe

*Written by Karen Babayan - Chairperson for Appleby Remote Cinema*

## St Anne's Almshouses

The Hospital of St Anne is the charity which owns and looks after the Almshouses in Appleby. 13 Almshouses, built by Lady Anne Clifford in the mid 17tCentury have a special place at the heart of Appleby. They are managed by a team of voluntary Trustees, chaired now by Guy Heelis, following the recent retirement of Lord Hothfield.

Over the last nearly 400 years the houses have been well maintained and upgraded on a regular generational basis, to ensure they remain good homes for the exclusively Lady residents. The last major renovations took place perhaps 60 years ago.

Two houses became vacant a couple of years ago, and the Trustees decided that they would benefit from upgrading to include better insulation, heating, ventilation, as well as redecoration, and updated fixtures and fittings such as kitchen facilities and bathrooms. One of the benefits of this refurbishment would be to resolve some issues of damp, caused by the use of cement renders, non-breathable plaster, and lack of ventilation.

Architects were engaged to review the current fabric and make recommendations. The costs of such a refurbishment are high, leading the Trustees to consider applying for grants, and other sources of finance to supplement the monies which the Trustees have built up for this purpose over the years.

It became evident that it was easier and better to take advantage of grant funds available and complete the refurbishment of all 13 properties. The project took on a different life at a much larger scale.

Planning permission has been granted, and subject to finally obtaining the core funding the project will go ahead in the very near future. The core funding approval depends on knowing the results of the Tender and having an exact price for the renovations. It is hoped that work will start this year, with 4 empty properties being renovated first, and others completed in rotation.

An air source heat pump and distribution system will provide heating for all 13 houses, a communal space will be created, and storage improved for rubbish and recycling. Insulated Lime plaster, and roof insulation will prevent damp problems and reduce heat loss.

The result will ensure that the houses should be safe, secure, warm and desirable place to live for 13 ladies for another 50 years.

Alasdair Darroch