



Bolsterstone Archaeology and Heritage Group

ANNUAL REPORT

October 2019 – October 2020

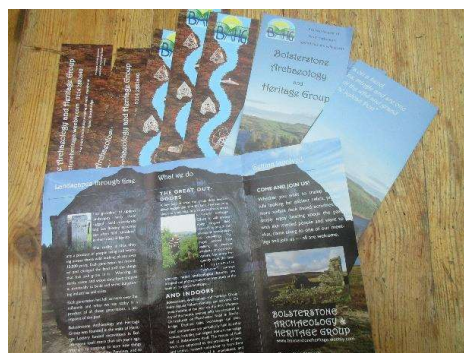
Our AGM in October 2019 was attended by over 20 members and led to 3 new committee members coming forward. Membership remains fairly stable at around 25 though there is clearly a significant interest in archaeology and heritage in the area which we have been trying to grow through the year. Of course this year has not been typical due to the pandemic and we have not had any BAHG meetings since 3 March 2020.

The Committee has managed to meet every 2 months, with the exception of May 2020 when notes about activities were circulated. We struggled initially to find a free venue where we could hold our committee meetings; in January 2020 a local business very kindly allowed us to use a room in their office in Stocksbridge, and we were then able to book the Council Chamber in the Town Hall for the remainder of the year thanks to the Town Council (which we were only able to use in March). The last two meetings in July and September have been outside in a garden and socially distanced; at the final one with a maximum of 6 people allowed, one person was invited not to come and we will have to take turns if this continues.

We were unable at the time of the 2019 AGM to identify a Treasurer but subsequently Andrew Tissington, with support from other officers, agreed to take on the role which Peter Abrahams had kindly covered for the year. So while we now have a full committee, there are lots of small ways to help and share the load, such as making refreshments at meetings or selling raffle tickets...please consider how you could help.

We have been applying for a number of grants over the year. At the start of the year we applied to the City Council's Ward Pot for £500 to design and print an archaeological trail, but this was submitted too late for the 2019/20 allocations; given everything else that is going on, we have put it on hold until next year. We also applied to the Bridge Community Shop in January and received £500 for the analysis and reporting of flints from Broomhead and Midhope Moors, and for presenting the results in a talk (still to come).

In February we also received funds from Stocksbridge Town Council to design and print publicity leaflets and bookmarks for the Group, which we now have – the plan is to circulate these round homes in Stocksbridge with Look Local, and give them out at events. We aim to give bookmarks to schools to



hand out to students. If you would like some to put in a venue near you, please get in touch.

We put in a successful bid for some of our overheads for 2021 on room hire, speakers' expenses and insurance to the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership, with the strap-line 'Growing a Community Group', by which we hope to increase our membership. This grant will enable us to divert some of our funds to fieldwork.

Finally we have applied to Sheffield Town Trust for a more substantial grant to enable various strands of work to be done, led by Tim Cockrell, to bring together the wide range of evidence he now has for the prehistoric landscape around Sheffield. The Group will make a small contribution to this project.

You may have noticed that we have a new logo, at the top left of this annual report, designed by Rosie Cockrell, and we're very grateful to her for this very appropriate and fun depiction of our landscape.

The talks we managed to hold before lockdown have been very varied and interesting. Our October talk after the AGM was by Colin Merrony, who gave us a fascinating insight into monastic life and the history of the religious order of Premonstratensians, with reference to Beauchief Abbey in Sheffield. In November, Chris Atkinson from Pennine Prospects gave us an overview of his project on woodland surveys in the South Pennines. In the course of 3 years, he and volunteers have mapped over 1,000 features in 37 woods, from WWI practice trenches to charcoal platforms - he excavated three of these, enabling him to identify the proportions of trees concerned and to date the layers. His final celebration event should have been in March 2020, but has had to be postponed.



On 9 November the Group hosted the Sheffield Heritage Forum in Bolsterstone Village Hall, to which all community groups around the city were invited. Refreshments and homemade cake were provided. The morning event was publicised and introduced by Janet Ridler, and speakers included Tim Cockrell who outlined the work of the Group, Sarah Poulter from Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership and Howard Bayley from Wardsend Cemetery. A rare archive film of life in Hillsborough in the 1930s-50s with commentary from Jenny Morton was also shown for

the first time. Ruth Morgan led about 12 people on a guided walk around the village – it was a very cold day!

We had our Christmas meal at the Castle in Bolsterstone on 11 December which coincided with Bolsterstone Male Voice Choir singing carols in the pub – a great treat and a very enjoyable evening.

Our February meeting featured Graham Appleby from the Rivelin Valley Conservation Group, looking at their work in saving and protecting the 21 millponds still surviving or visible, from Uppermost down to Grogam Wheel. In early March we held an afternoon talk in the downstairs room at Stocksbridge Library – drystone waller Pete McLeod described his passion for gateposts! We thought it might appeal to a wider and different group of people and indeed we had over 40 attending; lots of questions were asked and the



audience clearly enjoyed the talk and refreshments. All the remaining talks in the programme have been rescheduled for next year.

As well as the talks, we usually arrange some excursions and walks. In late November 2019 we took a walk on Strines Moor with drystone waller Pete McLeod to see the evidence of gatepost manufacture. Though other events were planned, the pandemic prevented any of them happening and stopped all excavation in the summer of 2020. However, in October 2020 Tim led a walk with 6 people onto Derwent Edge, to Whinstone Lee Tor, taking in some little known archaeology - a small cup-marked standing stone and cairnfield. During lockdown, individuals carried out their own reconnaissance walks on the moors (some with Terry Howard) -

investigating Spout House Hill, Bitholmes Hunting Tower and Allman Well. The committee has commissioned Tim Cockrell to lead a walkover survey of Emlin Moor (across the valley from Duke's Road) and this will be done next February-March – he now has permission from the Fitzwilliam estate and Natural England.

Tim Cockrell has been able to complete a number of archaeological reports describing his analysis of flint assemblages from Broomhead, Midhope and Wigtwizzle – all are available on the BAHG website at <https://bolsterstoneheritage.weebly.com/reports.html>. The fine cup-marked stone in Wilkin Wood in the Ewden valley has been published in the Transactions of the Hunter Archaeological Society (volume 29).

We are an affiliate organisation with the CBA (Council for British Archaeology) and receive an excellent Archaeology magazine every 2 months which can be shared by members – look out for copies at meetings. We also have a representative on Bolsterstone Community Forum and keep them informed of our activities.

By joining BAHG you not only have the opportunity to hear some fascinating talks and visit interesting places, but you are also kept informed of events by email and can borrow a range of books and magazines we have collected. Do tell us if there are topics you would like to hear more about or places we could visit. A feedback form is available at meetings and we'd like to hear your thoughts. We have a full programme of talks planned for the coming year (fingers crossed we can meet) but we always welcome new ideas - do get more involved if you want to.

RM 13/10/2020