

Fairfield Association Chair's Report 2021

I would like to thank everybody for coming. We have done as best to make the situation as Covid-secure as possible but I know that indoor meetings are still a worry for many people.

Despite continuing difficulties, we have moved a long way since last year. Positive notes and highlights were: July saw our first tea and cake event at Robin Loxam's Open Garden and this was followed in September by Apple Day. Both events were very much appreciated and thanks go to all those people who organised or contributed, particularly Patricia Clarke, Emma Foster and Carole Martin together with all our wonderful bakers. There was also a much appreciated but very wet Walk and Talk with the University Linguistics students which finished in the Orchard where everybody ate rather soggy cake from brown paper bags. We are hoping for better weather this year. In December we had a Pop Up Shop outside the shed to sell calendars and cards. This was a great success and will be repeated this year on December 4th – a date for your diary or you can pre-order by filling out a slip and leaving it by the door or contacting Carole Martin

There will also be Christmas cards and notelets for sale – all new this year. A new venture is a book of local walks accessible by train, written and published by a group of Fairfield Association volunteers who are donating all profits to the Fairfield Association. This will also be on sale outside the shed on December 4th.

In addition to these community events, our educational outreach is once again up and running thanks to the efforts of Tony Finn.

Forthcoming events for your diary, covid permitting, are Wassailing (15th January) and a Meadow Exhibition in the Storey Monday 9th – Friday 20th May and we are planning a new Meadow Board (opposite the Meadow). Carol Singing on Christmas Eve may also be possible.

Our membership remains high – at 400 members and despite the loss of many of our community events we remain in good shape financially. We received grants from TransPennine Express and Tesco Bags of Help. Some of this funding went towards the bee-friendly window boxes and the rest will pay for new signage, a new strimmer (to keep our paths open) and a new marquee. We have also benefited from the huge generosity of local people in addition to the regular contribution of approximately £5000 a year made by Fairfield Friends. The FA is deeply indebted to Geoff Oliver for organising this.

There are financial outlays on the horizon: the shed needs a new roof, and the current play equipment has been in place for just over 15 years and, because of safety concerns, much of it will need replacing. However, a new subgroup of local parents is forming to take on this challenge and that is a very positive development.