



Middleton St George Parish Council

www.middleton-st-george.org.uk

clerk@middleton-st-george.org.uk

A meeting of the Middleton St. George 2025 Bicentenary Organising Group was held Wednesday 18th September 2024 in Middleton Hall Retirement Village.

1. Progress on the events in 2025

1.1 Heritage Trail

A copy and extracts from Alan Pallister's book on the History of Middleton St. George was produced and circulated. It was agreed that the book would be very useful as the basis for identifying historically significant places in the village for the Heritage Trail.

The Middleton St. George History Group agreed to identify historically significant places. A long and a short walk to the historically significant places was suggested.

The meeting discussed grants for marking the places. A Heritage Lottery Grant was suggested and contact be made with Caitlin Barratt, Heritage and Community Participation Manager to ask for sources of grant aid. The

Group were conscious that the permission of owners of properties will be needed before the places were marked.

The meeting agreed that:

- a. The History Group will identify the historically significant places for the heritage trail and to bring suggestions to the next Group meeting.
- b. Alan Macnab agreed to contact Kaitlin Barratt for details of sources of grant aid.

1.2 Events

The last meeting of the Organisation Group on the 17th July, 2024 agreed that the **combined events be held during the week 14th to the 22nd June, 2025.**

- a. **The exhibition of railway related photographs of Middleton St. George** will be held from the 14th to the 22nd June in the WI Hall. Norman Hugill suggested that the photographs be placed on a memory stick and shown visually on a screen. Alan Macnab will discuss the format of the exhibition with Norman Hugill.
- b. **Railway related song.** Claire Throw reported that a song was being organised by St. George's CE Academy.
- c. **Bunting and Yarn Bombing to decorate the village.** WI representatives agreed to take this forward and form a group of volunteers to make the bunting and display the bunting and yarn bombing. Alan Macnab to ask Katharine Mathews to publicise the making of bunting.
- d. **Middletons in Bloom Railway Related Theme.** Alan Macnab agreed to contact Katharine Matthews to ask if the Middletons in Bloom will organise a railway related theme in 2025 with shops, businesses and residents to be asked to participate.

- e. **Scarecrow Trail** from the Square to Middleton One Row on the 14th June. Katharine Matthews will be asked by Alan Macnab if she will organise the scarecrow trail with the assistance of Marion Ogle. Claire Throw agreed to print the leaflets for the trail at nominal cost. A charge could be made for brochures. It was suggested that 50p may be charged for the leaflet.
- f. **St. George's CE Academy Summer Fair.** Claire Throw confirmed that the Summer Fair will be held on Saturday 14th June, 2025 which will be train related. There will be a "Track the Train" event, different stalls, volunteers in costumes which can tie in with the Scarecrow Trail. The Heritage and Community Participation Team for the 2025 Celebrations may support the Summer Fair. Katharine Matthews would be asked to support advertise the event. If it is linked with the Scarecrow Trail insurance, toilets and portaloos would need to be provided.
- g. **Involvement of pupils of St. George's CE Academy.** Claire Throw reported that the pupils were being involved in learning about the railways as part of their studies and were being encouraged to participate in the events. Pupils were going round the village to see certain places which featured in the history of Middleton St. George.
- h. **Tapestry.** Middleton Hall Retirement Village will be liaising with the Women's Institute to produce a tapestry featuring the history of Middleton St. George and railway events.
- i. **Procession through the village** was suggested with a band, children singing. Alan Macnab will write to Darlington Round Table and Rotary Club to see if they will help.
- j. **Middleton Hall Retirement Village events.** Claire Robson reported that the following events were organised by the Retirement Village. A talk by Beamish Museum related to the railways will take place in January 2025 which will be open to the public. The knitting and sewing group were working on a tapestry with the WI. Events were also planned with Tees Pumping Station.
- k. **BBQ.** The meeting agreed that Middleton St. George Cricket Club be asked if they will organise and host the BBQ on the 14th June.
- l. **Litter Pick.** Alan Macnab agreed to organise a litter pick for the week before the 14th June and the week after the 21st June.
- m. **Signs at the entrances to the village.** Alan Macnab reported that a response from the Highways Officer over signs at the entrances to the village which had a Middleton St. George emblem on them. The response was not positive that signs could be sited at the entrances. Councillor Pease suggested that signs be located away from Highway controlled areas. Alan Macnab will discuss this further with Councillor Pease.
- Ross Chisholm reported that the village entrance sign on Sadberge Lane was removed to allow highway and other works relating to the construction of what is now Paddocks View. The sign has not been replaced.
- Three years ago, the MSG Railway Heritage Steering Group recommended that a railway heritage art work be incorporated in a replacement village entrance sign. Discussions were held with Stephen Wiper and he suggested either a carved stone block or a totem sign in the highway verge between the road and the new metal railings. There could be funding from the Borough Council and Arts Council England. Stephen volunteered to look for potential artists but nothing happened.
- The Group agreed that it would like to resume investigations into creating the new village entry sign in time for the village programme of celebrations with Stephen and suggests having a meeting with him on site. Alan Macnab will write to Stephen Wiper.
- n. **Community Centre Summer Fair 2025.** The Trustees of the Community Association decided that a meet and eat event could not be held on Friday 13th or Friday 20th June, 2025. However the Summer Fair in August 2025 will have a railway related theme.

o. **Sponsorship.** Suggestions for sponsorship included Teesside International Airport and Draken which will be pursued by Alan Macnab.

3. Route updates and sharing the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway proposed plans in Middleton St. George

Reports were given by Ross and Peter of the Friends on the following areas:

3.1 Landscaping Master Plan

3.2 The Waiting Shed

3.3 Funding Sources

3.4 Volunteering

3.5 Conservation Area

3.6. Footpaths

4. Any other business

4.1 Sponsorship

A resident reported that a potential sponsor for the events in Middleton St. George could be Trans Pennine Express. Alan Macnab will ask if they will contribute to the sponsorship of the events. The resident also reported that the station owners were looking for volunteers to help at Dinsdale Station.

4.2 Friends Walks

Ross Chisholm reported that the Friends were holding a railway walks.

4.3 Official Launch of the Bi Centenary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway Festival

Ross Chisholm reported that the Official Launch of the Bicentenary Festival will be held on the 19th September at the Hippodrome Theatre, Darlington.

5. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 20th November, 2024 at 6.30 p.m. in Middleton Hall Retirement Village.