

Feuars' committee Chairperson's report.

George Dempster left properties and land to the village which include the Greens. Lethem Feuars' committee are trustees for the properties and land. As trustees we endeavour to maintain the properties and to look after the land. We have held regular meetings throughout the year to discuss issues relating to the Feuars's land and property.

Feuars hall

There have been problems with damp in the Feuars' hall for a while and in the last few years work has been done to resolve this. This year the chimney was sealed against inclement weather.

Thanks to the work of the previous committee, we received funding from the Lottery to allow roof repairs to the hall which will prevent water getting in and causing damp. A builder has been contracted to do the work required.

The Greens

Initially the Greens were an area for washing the linen weaved in the village but more recently it has become a recreational and conservation area. The committee looks after the area allowing villagers and visitors to enjoy access to the Greens and the burn while trying to ensure a biodiversity of native plants and provision of suitable habitats and food sources for wildlife.

To allow access to the Greens and burn, areas of grass are regularly mowed to: provide paths around the area, access down to the burn at various points and an area for children to play.

Throughout the summer Himlayan balsam was removed to encourage growth of native plants and to prevent the bank erosion it can cause. To help reduce the spread of dock, their seed heads were removed and some plants taken out. Some docks were left as they provide an important food source for various insects and birds. Wildflower seeds were planted in the central areas of the Greens and Aquatic iris planted at the water's edge.

Willow and other trees have been planted next to the river to help stabilise the bank and to provide shade for wildlife in the river. Further trees have been planted in the central area to create a wildlife habitat. After discussion with Angus Council tree specialists two diseased trees were cut down and the branches stacked to provide a wildlife habitat.

The metal bridge was repaired by Flosteel and painted. The wooden bridge over the burn in the Greens was assessed for its impact on bank erosion and flooding by SEPA and the committee. One solution suggested to help bank erosion was to raise the bridge, so Angus Council has been contacted for their approval to alter the bridge as recommended by SEPA, as this may impact on water flow through the road bridge downstream at Bridgend.

Removable bollards have been put in to allow the ride on lawn mower in via the wayleave access but prevent other vehicular access.

More seating has been provided in the picnic area.

Angus Council was asked to remove the stones under the road bridge to try and reduce the risk of flooding and this has been done.

The registration of the Greens has been transferred to the modern land register.

A flood report for the Greens has been prepared and submitted to Angus council as part of their flooding review. We have also had meetings with SEPA, Scottish flood forum and Angus Council to discuss the issue of flooding in the Greens and ways to try and mitigate it.

Other Events

A litter pick was arranged for Letham village with several bags of rubbish being collected.

Hanging baskets for the square were purchased and watered regularly. We purchased 4 self-watering baskets. In the hot dry weather this summer the plants in the self-watering baskets did better than those in the standard baskets. So, we have purchased another 12 for next year.

A wreath was laid in Dempster Park at the Remembrance service and the area around the memorial cleared of weeds.

The Christmas tree lights were switched on in November with mince pies, doughnuts and hot chocolate and other snacks handed out to everyone attending. Lights switched on by 2 children from Letham primary school.

A get together was arranged on Christmas eve for the Letham residents. Santa came and gave gifts to the children while food and treats were given out. Donations of food and sweets was made by Keptie bakery, Central Motors and Santa. Mark Irons donated the tree

We donated £100 to the Letham scout group to use towards the maintenance of the scout hut.

We have started publishing our Committee meeting minutes on the Letham webpage to make accessing them easier.

Thank yous

We would like to thank those who have helped in supporting the Feuars' committee over the last year.

- Katie Christie for her work in the bookshop
- Mark Irons for the Christmas tree
- Central Motors for donation of a Christmas tree for the square
- The Keptie bakery for their donation of food at our events
- The hall committee for the use of the hall free of charge on Christmas eve.
- All the Feuars who helped at the litter pick, putting up the lights and who provided catering at our events

Going Forward

SEPA, the Scottish flood forum, and Council representatives and agreed several recommendations to help reduce bank erosion of the burn and to mitigate flooding. I have listed them here for the future committee to consider.

- Alterations need to be made to the wooden bridge to safeguard its structure and maintain the right of way. These alterations are also required to protect the adjoining landowner's wall.
- Willow fencing to be installed near the wooden bridge and back filled with earth and vegetation to repair the erosion that has occurred.

- Vegetation to be planted amongst the large boulders in the burn to hold the structure in place and to reduce the flow of water. These measures are aimed at stopping bank erosion.

The repairs to the Feuar's hall roof are planned for the coming year.