CHAIRMAN’S REPORT FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2018-2019

Thank you all for attending our meeting. Once again I would like to thank William McLaren, President, and Denise Hiscox, Vice-President for their support, which is greatly appreciated.

The Community Shop and Gym continue to thrive with a combined income in excess of £28,000. Both the shop and gym have been great assets to the village and we are in discussion with NCC regarding the future of the gym building. Unfortunately this is not being resolved as quickly as we would like. We cannot thank our volunteers enough for their hard work. Special thanks go to the Shop Committee and Gym Committee for their continued efforts.

The Arts Festival was again a great success. Thanks go to Judy and Fiona for stepping in when the producer was unable to continue, and to all those who were involved in making it happen. This was the second festival and the committee were able to build on the success of the previous year, and we hope to see the festival develop and grow in future. We were proud to be the main sponsor of the festival and would like to thank the other sponsors also.

Once again we have worked closely with Bell View and given grants towards their projects, as well as to The Pensioners Christmas Party, Christmas Lights, Pantomime and the Candle Festival. These are real community events enjoyed by both villagers and visitors alike. Along with these we have issued grants to The Ferguson Bowls Club, Belford Village Show, Northumberland Family History Society, Friendship for Ages Project, The There but not There Bench Silhouettes and funds towards the Snooker Club table.

I would like to thank the Woodland Team for continuing to manage the woodlands, which are such lovely spaces to spend time in. To Amanda for keeping the website up to date. Also to Ruth and Phil for the markets which are as popular as ever and continue to do well.

Also thanks go to Eric and Kevan for printing the newsletter and to Sue Smith for producing it each month, along with those who deliver it. It is a valuable communication within the village, especially for those people who do not have access to social media.

There are always so many people who give up their time to volunteer and to thank, but once again, Dave and Val, our Treasurer and Vice-Treasurer have gone the extra mile in keeping our accounts in order, and we very much appreciate their efforts.

We have a strong team of Trustees and Volunteers and I look forward to working with you all over the coming year. Our aim is to continue to make grants available for projects in Belford to improve our village.

We are extremely sorry to lose Judith Thurland as a Trustee, as she was one of our long-standing members, and we would like to thank her and wish her well with her work with Canine Partners. Also Doug Renton has stepped down and we would like to thank him and June for their work in the Woodland and to Doug for his loyal commitment as a committee member.

At the end of last year, Amanda, Val and I formed a Strategy Group to look at the short, medium and long-term objectives of the group. I would like to thank them for their hard work on this and I believe we have made good progress this year and will continue to do so, building on relationships with our partners in the village and having clear objectives for the future.