

**Appleby Horse Fair 2022 Public Meeting**  
**18 May 2022**

Councillor Andy Connell, chaired the meeting and welcomed all.

Opening statements were made by members of the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group for Appleby Horse Fair, followed by a question and answer session with members of the public.

**Councillor Andy Connell, Cumbria County Council Elected Member for Appleby**

Appleby Fair is a misnomer in as much as the field on which it was originally held, Gallows or Brampton Hill was on the edge of Appleby, the nearest town, and the borough corporation had nothing to do with it. The fair on the hill for the sale of sheep, cattle and horses had ceased by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and gradually changed into the occasion that 'Appleby Fair' now describes: an annual gathering of people who mostly identify as Gypsy Romani Travellers, some of whom trade horses. They get together by the same right as anyone in Britain who makes a journey – people from Appleby going to Carlisle or Skipton for example. What makes it unusual is the disparity in numbers; for a few days Fairgoers and visitors vastly outnumber the resident population. To maintain safety, order and some normality of life the involvement of several public agencies, such as police, highways, licensing and cleaning authorities and the RSPCA, is necessary. The Multi Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (MASCg) was set up to enable the agencies to plan together. It does not own the Fair – no-one does; it manages the consequences of such a large gathering.

I should add that there is no known document specifying the date of Appleby Fair. We know from the newspaper report of its beginning in 1775 that it was held on the second Wednesday of June, and this has been a landmark ever since, although times of when most people came and went have moved around. It is a matter of tradition not written rules. Last year it was – controversially – agreed that, because of changes to the Covid legislation which made the Fair impossible in 2020, people should be encouraged to come in early August. In 2022, to enable to the Celebrations, fairgoers have been asked to come a week later to enable local celebrations of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee before and over the first weekend in June, to take place without too many people gathering in the locality, Fairgoers have been asked to come a week later that they traditionally do.

The intention of tonight's meeting is to advise residents and the wider public of the preparations made for this year and respond to any questions and concerns you raise. As well as the Chair of MASCg and the Police Gold Commander there are in attendance several Cumbria County and Eden District Council officers, who will be able to respond to points relevant to their particular responsibilities. I shall now hand you over to Les Clark of Eden District Council, who is Chair of MASCg,

**Les Clark, Chairman of the Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group for Appleby Horse Fair**

I'm going to concentrate on changes we've made that will happen this year, in light of last year's fair. First and most obvious, is the change of date to happen after the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend, which clashed with the traditional time of the fair. This was raised at last year's post fair meeting, and we came to an agreement shortly afterwards to start the fair on Thursday 9 June 2022.

As is usual, this decision is a compromise that enables both the settled communities of Appleby and the surrounding areas, and the Gypsy and Traveller communities to arrange and enjoy both celebrations. A delegation of representatives from the Gypsy and Traveller Community will gather on the Fair field on Wednesday 8 June which represents the last day of the traditional Fair period.

MASCg have reinforced the usual 'Do not come early' message in respect of the Jubilee Celebrations

taking place across the area. MASCG have also put some operational changes in place, based on the experience from last year's Fair. This includes the number and type of toilet provisions to increase capacity and accommodate more people. In addition, MASCG are considering extending the closure of The Sands later into the evening on some days, details will be confirmed soon. Arrangements for street cleaning in the area will happen later in this area. Additional resources will also be made available to assist with clean-up of the transit sites. The spacing of the posts on and around Salt Tip corner will be reduced to remove the risks around vehicles parking dangerously in this area. We have also consulted on changes to the Traffic Regulation Order and have formalised the arrangements that have been in place for the last two Fairs including the 40mph speed limit along the A685 between Appleby Road and Brough.

The Community Advisory Group meetings (CAG) will start earlier from 3 June to cover the bank holiday Jubilee weekend. Full details of the meeting dates will be posted on the web page soon.

Whilst the COVID rules have now come to an end, there may still be some anxiety with people. Latest advice regarding COVID will be communicated in advance of the Fair.

In summary rules requiring people to wear face masks have come to an end so key messages are:

- Get vaccinated.
- Keep washing hands regularly.
- Wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces.
- If meeting others indoors, improve ventilation by letting some fresh air in.
- If you develop symptoms please stay at home and avoid contact with others.

This information is purely advisory, and practical application is likely to be limited, as we see everyday.

Andy Connell, Chair of MASCG Public Meeting introduced Chief Superintendent Matthew Kennerley, Gold Command Officer for Appleby Horse Fair 2022.

### **Superintendent Matthew Kennerley, Appleby Horse Fair Gold Command**

I have 20 years' experience of working Appleby Horse Fair and managed Gold Command in 2021. Appleby Horse Fair is the biggest Policing commitment for Cumbria Police through the year. The event requires resources of more than 100 Officers. All our officers assigned to the fair work for long periods of time and rest days are cancelled to reduce overheads for the event. We work alongside key agencies across the region to provide a safe event, balancing the needs of settle community and visitors to the fair.

During each phase of the fair, all officers receive regular briefings and updates on daily the management of the fair activities, these are both via video and in person, officers are asked to intervene and do their utmost to stop any issues before they escalate. The number of officers required for the fair has been uplifted since 2019. The 2022 fair will reflect the capacity of officer numbers in 2019. In addition, our normal policing resources during phase two of the fair will be implemented over the Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebration weekend. All patrols across the region are now increasing in the run up to fair. A dedicated phone line through 101 has been set up, we have a call back option and online reporting to help keep waiting times to a minimum. A contingency of additional resources are in place that can be actioned if required. A lot of our Policing now takes place via mobile phone, officers receive regular updates and intelligence crucial to their role that is communicated online.

Cumbria Police have Neighbourhood Teams who are present year-round and throughout the event. We also hold daily Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting in the area which are useful for raising

issues that can be dealt with there and then. MASCG also provide an opportunity for the community to feedback on any elements of the fair via the Post Fair Public Meeting.

Our ask to the community is that you speak to Officers if any issues arise.

**Question and Answer Session with members of the public:**

**Q:** Concerns were raised around the costs of last year's fair, there seemed to be a large increase in costs compared to the previous year. How much more are we expecting to spend on this year's fair?

**A:** *Any changes that are being made by EDC this year are small, any change to costs will be manageable within our budgets. Police will see rise in costs compared to the 2019 Fair, but a reduction in cost from last years` Fair. The decision was taken to pay some overtime last year and this is why the costs appeared to spike.*

**Q:** Officers have referenced speeding, where is this an issue and what is the speed limit in that area? On some surfaces (e.g. hills) horses have to trot to keep their footing, so this may be why they are going faster.

**A:** *A685 from Appleby to Brough. A speed limit on the A685 is in place to deal with safety concerns when vehicles are parked on verges.*

**Q:** How did MASCG come to the decision to move the Fair to the weekend after Jubilee weekend? This decision will spoil some villages Jubilee plans as visitors will arrive 2 weeks earlier than usual.

**A:** *By coincidence this year's traditional Fair weekend falls on Jubilee weekend. MASCG looked at a range of dates for a suggested new Fair. There was a feeling that if we suggested a date that was too far away from the traditional date of the Fair it would run the risk of people coming for the new Fair date and Jubilee weekend. It was felt that the chosen date would minimise this risk.*

**Q:** Were the public asked about this new date? We have a local business and weren't consulted. There is a feeling from the community that the Fair should have been moved to the week before Jubilee weekend to allow visitors to leave before Jubilee celebrations.

**A:** *Generally MASCG do not consult on decisions. We rely on feedback from community representatives.*

*Cllr Dew: MASCG has elected member representatives, we pushed for an earlier date for the Fair and the decision was made to have it at a later date. All arguments for and against must be considered and this was a decision made as a group. MASCG are working hard trying to mitigate the consequences of the new date with increased policing and other measures.*

*Cllr Lancaster: Kirkby Stephen has been impacted by the date change with potential early arrivals for the fair over the Jubilee weekend as a result we have had to adjust our plans. If it had been the week before it would have worked around the celebration plans for Jubilee in Kirkby Stephen.*

**Q:** *Licensee The Midland Appleby, we have been talking to the police about the area at the top of Clifford Street outside our pub. Horse and carts gather here which is a hazard. We have spoken to the police about installing a rope for tethering horses on one side of the road to help maintain safety and control traffic. We have now been told that this will not happen and horses should not be there due to the risks. The Midland being opening reduces the number of people gathering on the Sands but if the horses are not able to be tethered this will not help.*

**A:** *Happy to talk to you out of the meeting and discuss options. Will look into the decision.*

*A: This is a plan that we did have previously and may have worked, the pub is popular with gypsies and travellers. The original plan with putting horses all on one side would be the better option.*

**Q:** Resident from Long Marton have been asking about a new bar planned on the trotting field but resident were not consulted on this. Will the same rules apply to this mobile pub as with others in the town such as the use of plastic glasses and provision of toilets?

*A: We are still waiting for the `temporary event notice` application, as soon as this is received we will speak to the residents about the proposed mobile bar. We will be implementing the same rules around closing times, use of plastic glasses, litter, clean up and toilet provisions. We will ensure to make local residents aware.*

**Q:** Travelling along the Kirkby Stephen – Brough road since posts have been put in, I was surprised to see that some areas of road have no posts on either side. I would have expected it to be one side only to allow any visitors to park to reduce risks.

*A: All posts are in same places as in previous years, the only gaps are in places where it has been assessed safe for vehicles to stay. We will review the post positions and ensure they are in the right places.*

**Q:** A group of us go litter picking throughout the year. After last years Fair we noticed what could be described as a toilet area. This was after the Fair clean-up had supposedly happened. Is there not a way of ensuring these kind of things are cleaned up? It seems that some roads are cleaned and verges or hedges are not looked at. Happy to show where problem areas are.

*A: The public realm is cleaned. If areas are being missed we will ensure these are picked up. There is a plan for clean up each year, we have limited crews but clean up is prioritised. Sometimes it takes a week post Fair to complete the clean up. It is not always possible to remove everything but what can be cleaned up is. If places are missed, please let us know so we can address these.*

**Q:** Could Courtfield Garage in Appleby have some posts to prevent vehicles camping? Lots of litter is left behind after the Fair and it is left to residents to clean up.

*A: This has been noted and we will be looked into it.*

**Q:** How will unitary authority affect MASCG?

*A: At the moment we don't know. The only change we can see at this point in time, instead of having Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council and South Lakeland District Council around the table, the new unitary authority would be responsible for everything.*

**Cllr Dew:** Myself and Cllr Greenwood speak up at the MASCG. I have spoken up for a long time that there should be no camping on the A685, but there have limits to enforcing this. A compromise has been made to have exclusion zones to make it manageable for enforcement. Due to the level of Police presence in recent years it is a much lesser issue.

**Cllr Greenwood:** As elected members our contact details are available on Eden District Council's website, if you are not comfortable coming to us about Horse Fair issues, Appleby Town Council has councillors who will listen to your concerns. Please do get in touch with us with problems and concerns. The Community Advisory Group (CAG) meetings will be taking place again this year, these are opportunities for you to bring forward your concerns, you can report to a CAG meeting or call 101 and report to the Police direct.

**Q:** The main problem seems to be that our community representatives give our views at MASCG but MASCG overrules them. Until MASCG has more elected representatives from the community, very little will change.

**A:** *Cllr Greenwood: There are 3 community representatives on MASCG, one for each local authority. Since MASCG has been set up it has always been officer led and it was set up because officers need to coordinate the response to the Fair. Historically, MASCG did not have elected representation. We are now on the group and are there to feedback community concerns and advise. MASCG is an outstanding example of multi-agency working.*

**Q:** In terms of last years report, a rise of in costs was put down to a change in policy. Can you confirm that this was in fact down to a decision to pay overtime?

**A:** *Yes, this was clarified earlier in the meeting. This rise was due to a decision to pay overtime.*

**Q:** Can we request a clear breakdown of additional costs, overtime and true costs for this years` fair?

**A:** *The costs in the reports capture any additional costs over and above usual officer time.*

**Q:** The report is misleading, without the true costs we can't look at what could be spent elsewhere on the Fair. Can we have an agreement that everyone will report in the same way next year?

**A:** *We will look into this.*

**Q:** There was talk of doing an economic impact study, but this was on hold due to Covid. Will this be happening this year?

**A:** *The university doing the study were not able to complete it this year, but will pick it up again next year.*

**Cllr Dew:** We did discuss at length the suggestions made last year around ticketing the event and licences, all this is recorded in the report that is published online. Everything raised last year was considered and discussed.

**Q:** There are things in the report that are incorrect. The law is the law but in the report some laws have been misquoted when justifying why a decision was made. When explaining why changes and improvement can't be made to this event in a public document, it is important it is correct.

**A:** *Cllr Dew: I would suggest writing to the chair of MASCG with these concerns so that these can be addressed.*

**Q:** The market field causes problems for shops in the town, they attract people who are not interested in the fair, taking trade away from the high street. Can the licence be revoked so that this will go back to just a licence for the fair? Are these stall holders insured? What if faulty goods are sold, how will this be dealt with?

**A:** *The market field is not a licenced market, it has planning permission to be used as a private market field, the trading licence is different to local authority owned markets. The question around trading has been raised with planners at the district council. Trading standards are involved in the sale of faulty goods. As the site is a private market site, EDC do not have responsibility to do checks on insurance. However Health and safety legislation still applies to the site, there are standards that have to be met by all stall holders. The site is not licenced by EDC.*

**Additional information provided:** *The market trade fields at Appleby Horse fair are not licensed as a market by Eden District Council (EDC) . The market field is privately owned land and has planning permission that allows market stalls and vendors as well as caravans and vehicles but does not specify a number of stalls. There is a food stall permit system in operation, this is an informal agreement with the landowner and EDC to prevent in advance issues with poor quality or unregistered food businesses attending. The Health and Safety at work etc Act would apply where a work activity is carried out, in relation to agricultural land this is the Health and Safety Executive, in relation to a retail activity it would be Eden District Council. Gas Safety and other health and safety matters are covered by EDC officers whilst inspecting the food vendors on the fields. EDC do not check any trading licences, we do check registration of food businesses. Public liability insurance is not legally required in the UK, employers' liability insurance is a legal requirement for most businesses that employ staff and is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive not the local authority.*

*A letter is sent each year to the licensed site operators at Appleby Fair which amongst other things strongly recommends that they have public liability insurance in place.*

**The meeting came to a close at 8.20pm**