

GOXHILL GANDER AGM Thursday 24th September 2026

At the Parish Rooms 6.30pm start

Present: Jeff Teasdale, Jack Lawtey, Rose Williams, Alex Williams, Morten Olsen, John Noton, Rebecca de Torre and Rebecca Noton

Apologies: Bev Manifold, Stuart Cooke and Janet Shephardson

No members of the public in attendance but apologies from Elizabeth Fincham

1. The AGM minutes from last year were approved (04/06/2025)

2. Distribution Report (JL)

Since the last AGM there have been a number of changes at the Gander, some of which have impacted on distribution. The change of Print Company has been the most significant and this has been a positive change.

The Gander magazines are now delivered into the village avoiding the need to travel to Barton to collect them. After the initial delivery arriving in boxes of 75 we are hopefully back to boxes of 50 which make it easier for distributing to the deliverers and moving them! The new style of printing and changes to the paper weight has reduced the overall weight of each magazine and this has had a positive reaction from the deliverers, as has the change to the cover, making them less slippery.

The distribution teams have in the main remained unchanged with the exception of Gerard Burns team. After a number of years as a deliverer and then a distributor, Gerard has decided to retire from the Gander team. Having checked the records and spoken to Gerard we were unable to decide how long he had been on the team other than “quite a few years!”. We thank him for his service and wish him well in the future. His place on the team has been taken by Richard Jacques, whose wife Heather is already a deliverer.

Another positive from the change in Printers is the fact that we now receive over-run copies which are provided FOC and this has allowed us to add to the number of Public Access locations where Ganders can be obtained or read. So a few figures for you:

We have seven Distributors who have 37 deliverers covering 39 delivery routes. They deliver to 1041 houses in the village. We post out copies to 6 people, deliver to 11 out of village people, 5 Public Houses, 2 Libraries, 1 Information Centre, the Church and Chapel and three shops in the village. With a further 10 copies either spare or in the archives, we distribute 1111 copies of the Gander 4 times a year usual within 5-7 days of receiving each edition.

I would like to say a big thank you to everyone involved in getting The Gander swiftly delivered through letterboxes regardless of the weather and often within hours of receiving them.

Jack Lawtey

Distributor

3. Editor's Report (RW)

Design & Branding Changes

The transition is about complete, and from the start, I made design my first priority.

I didn't want to overhaul everything at once, so I started small. The first thing I brought to Jeff was a new cover suggestion, a tweak to the typography, and a goose upgrade. Just small changes, sneaked in gradually one by one.

We've also shifted the tagline over time—from the *Village Newsletter*, to the *Village Magazine*, and now to the *Goxhill Community Magazine*. The goal with that was to get the community more involved in the content and truly encourage it to be the quarterly voice of the village, as it says on the website.

As for the website, it's always a complement, never a replacement. The main thing for me was preserving what was already there that had grown mothballs and become inaccessible and refreshing it into a modern format. That turned out to be a bigger job than we thought. Once we cracked the files open, the completionist in me took over, so I set about updating the maps and organising the archives, which are now searchable.

The Geese & Care Home Feedback

Those geese eventually morphed into an entire family of characters. Many are based on our existing team, and others represent distinctive characters in the village.

Initially, we made them with children in mind. But actually, with the colouring book, it's not the young, but the oldest in the village who have been most appreciative. We've received emails from carers and family members of people in care homes and high dependency units, saying how grateful they are for a new and different activity resource.

Software, Workflow & Production

On the technical side, I don't own a Mac and am unlikely to ever have one again, which was still leaving Jeff to do all the final artwork himself. John Hamlin was on board at the time, and with his college access, we both had Adobe InDesign on PC. But to get a proper license for everything we needed would be up to £800 a year, which just isn't sustainable for *The Gander*.

With a stroke of luck, Affinity by Canva became free software that anyone can use. That allowed me, Jeff, and Morten to work on our own pages. Without software anyone else could use, Jeff wouldn't have been able to step away. Though with the size and quality of the magazine, it still needs substantial computing power to handle the master file all at once.

I've put together 4 issues so far. The first couple stuck to the old format with Newtons and bordered digital print. But when we finally went to full bleed litho, I could properly dig into the layout.

The priority was keeping advertisers happy by revamping around 70 ads, because they account for a substantial chunk of the magazine. But this latest issue was about taking advantage of that extra print real estate to reorganise the content.

Content Improvements & Editor Challenges

Institutions have now been given defined zones, and I've started writing and initiating new content where needed to expand variety.

For example, the Open Gardens submission didn't actually talk about the gardens, so I wrote a piece for it. I added a research snippet for the Library piece to give it more depth, added educational panels like *Box Tree Month* and *Did You Know?* boxes, and took photos myself—like Open Gardens, the playpark, the cemetery for Best Kept Village, and the old cemetery for the online grants article.

I also kept the layout of the last issue to myself, because with so many structural changes happening, having someone else do a page would have been near impossible.

It's these little touches that bring it together. Unfortunately, when we invite writers, they often want to submit walls of text that occupy entire pages, leaving no room for variety or presentation. Many institutions are just sat on repeat, and nobody wants to feel like they're getting a carbon copy of the same old thing.

As for the print quality, we have reached a real sweet spot, with the 52 pages layout, and increased colour pages, and the paper weight versus the costs, although I will explore making the black and white pages to silk to increase the depth and clarity to assess if it is worth it.

Rebecca de Torre, has become the guardian angel of the Gander, and seems to have a way of speaking to advertisers and contributors that is really smooth and productive. Her support with ideas are reflected throughout, including the QR code to be placed on the front (although was wrong haha) is just one of the touches that brings the whole thing together, and the amount of social media reach she has cultivated has been a huge contribution to making this issue the most successful yet.

Local Politics & Meeting Recordings

Now, moving on to something a bit more contentious: local politics...

On politics, *The Gander* used to comment on it. Lately, the council has been getting a bit of a crash course in media law.

Over a postage-stamp-sized, true comment alongside a satirical illustration, the chair—who thinks he's God—argued his own misinterpretation of a meeting minute that he wasn't even

present for. If you discount those who were absent, it wasn't a 7-3 defeat to ask for a correction from *The Gander*—not that they can do that anyway—it was defeated 7-1. They will get a correction in December, about how they didn't follow standing orders when it suits their personal campaign.

Had I recorded the meeting in question, there would be no discussion. Because of that, *The Gander* now holds complete meeting recordings in full. Hopefully, this will encourage meetings to be properly recorded so my service with that will be done soon. If anyone wants them, just ask me.

I took on Jack's suggestion of taking politically tense stuff out of static print and onto the web where it's changeable, and on that, I've had comments from usually quiet sources saying, "Finally, *The Gander* is doing exactly what it *SHOULD* be doing!"

Moving Forward & Financial Strategy

So what now?

The Gander itself becomes permanent history, so it should be reflecting reality. In print, we need real-life issues—like the carbon pipeline, keeping an eye on Keigar, or bird trapping—balanced with bits of fun. The crossword was very popular, but many found it hard, so different puzzle ideas are welcome. Puzzles and word games are an old *Gander* tradition that had faded away. I'd also like to bring in "*From the Gripevine*" permanently, to show a cross-section of both good and bad. Where we have a good selection of community hubs, things like the kids football clubs are missing. Above all, we need some reporter/writers and more ideas are welcome.

Misconceptions

Before I finish, there's a big misconception we need to clear up regarding the Parish Council. People have been asking councillors to clarify Short Awards rules when the GPC actually haven't had one iota to do with it in 12 years! Some even believe *The Gander* is financially supported by the council, when not a single councillor's own business even advertises with us.

Sponsorship mentality not commercial mentality:

We need to be more proactive in gaining ads, especially from North Lincs Council and the police, rather than just giving all our attention to existing advertisers.

I've suggested simplifying our ad rates by offering sponsorship rates—one-off or annual, guaranteed colour or... not. That way, businesses are contributing to the community, the short awards, and grant schemes, rather than just their own gain, and ticking a major box on the charity application. It's still paying for an advert, just under adjusted terminology. Under that model, they're far less likely to ask for refunds, and it furthers our aim toward charity status which will give us better email, web, storage services, and tax benefits as turnover continues to increase.

Editor's Report (JT)

JT introduced Rebecca DT to Morten as they had not met before.

At the last AGM I was pleased to report the help John Hamlin was giving to the production of the Gander and subsequently Morten Olsen also offered his help to artwork some of the Gander pages.

Later the minutes said that Ferne and I were due to meet up with Rose Williams, who had expressed interest in helping too.

What a momentous meeting that proved to be.

Rose was more than capable of helping, she had the expertise, experience, design and publishing skills, to take over. And boy, has she done that.

With her husband, Alex and his vast website and hosting expertise, together they have taken over the running of the Gander almost completely.

Sadly, John Hamlin had to give up because of his proper job pressures, similarly Ferne sadly also had to leave the team. But Rebecca De Torre has joined as Assistant Editor and is bringing her enthusiasm and social media expertise to play, brilliantly.

And Eureka! I could at last retire, just before my ageing brain finally ground to a halt.

Leaving the Gander in the very capable new hands of ROSE, ALEX, REBECCA DT and the rest of the existing Gander Team!

You just need to look at the most recent copy of the Gander to see the revolution that has happened, in a very short period of time. A completely new design, new articles from Goxhill people, more pages, more colour pages, top quality litho printing, at LESS COST. The move away from Newtons had to be!

However, I feel very sad for Zoe at Newton Printers who have printed the Gander for many years and losing it is a bitter blow for her business, especially after the Barrow Missing Link closed recently. I have spoken to her and she is very bitter about it. Sadly, I don't think a thank you card or flowers would be well received.

An unbelievable new website has been created by Alex & Rose and hosted by their web company. With more content, an ever-expanding archive, with so many more visits.

I am blown away by the dramatic improvements and modernisation. I am clearly a dinosaur.

I am delighted to hand you over to the brilliant Editor of the Gander for the real Editor's report.
.... ROSE!

THANK YOU ALL!

Discussions verbally at the meeting included suggestions made for the next issue to possibly change the pages to silk so the black and white stands out more. Also, to remove the actual bus timetables as it is hard to keep up to date with the timings so we could just provide the contact details for readers to access the relevant information and current timetables.

RW provided a document titled Community Support and Sponsorship Information, the content of which was approved by the committee.

This included creating guaranteed colour options for our sponsors and the increased costs the sponsors would have to pay for these colour adverts annually.

It was agreed that RW and RdT would work together to communicate with our sponsors re: the above and it would be a first come first served situation. Invoices would then be issued for the amount owed if they upgraded to colour all year.

4. Assistant to the Editor's Report (RdT)

Year to Date figures are as follows: 108.3 K views of posts on FB, 8.2K different viewers looking at posts, 870 content interactions, 2K visits to the actual FB page and 64 new followers.

Last month (22/08/26 to 22/09/26) 21.8K views, 3.4K viewers, 193 content interaction, 301 link clicks (people checking links to our website), 436 visits and 13 new followers

GPC had 3592 views on one post and 2312 views on the other post.

It was agreed that these were all excellent figures with the FB page having much more interest.

Assistant Editor's Report (MO)

Due to busy work commitments MO has not been able to contribute to the last few editions but is hoping to help much more moving forward.

5. Treasurer's Report (JN)

Income

Advertising Income was down from the previous year as we lost several advertisers. We had increased advertising costs by 3% to reflect increasing print costs. We had still managed to fill the magazine with more content and recruited some new advertisers.

Expenditure

Print costs have risen by just over 4%. Website costs continue to rise significantly by about thirty percent, so we started to look at alternatives. There was also a repair cost for Jeff's printer. We also continued to pay the invoice for the annual fund-raising calendar, the cost of which is reimbursed to us from sales and any profit goes to the local churches. There was a slight mismatch in costs and income of the calendar due to year end timing this year

Grants and Awards

We made one grant for replacement Christmas lights at the church of £105. We also continue to support the Short Award of £50, due to timing last year two appear in this year's accounts.

6. Secretary's Report (RN)

All invoices were processed in June at an increase of 3% on last years prices. 75 businesses were invoiced and we now currently have 66 advertising in the magazine therefore, providing the income for the continued publication of the Goxhill Gander. We thank them for their support and loyalty.

7. Charity Status

JL and JN will revisit the application for charity status and make some changes to then resubmit. RW suggested using AI to help with this process.

8. It was suggested that we definitely do something to celebrate 40 years of the Gander next year. It was first published in Autumn 1987. Perhaps a special edition with articles relating to the original edition and perhaps an event to celebrate the achievement too. All ideas are welcome and in the meantime, JL has had some thoughts which will be shared with the committee.

9. AOB

It has been brought to our attention that June Gathercole is possibly starting a mobile food scheme and will be calling it The Gander Pantry. We all agreed that this may lead to confusion with members of the public thinking it is connected to us. RdT to contact June and explain our concerns.

As chair Jeff thanked the committee for all of their hard work over the past year.

Meeting closed at 8.35pm