

Flaunden Parish Council

Chairman's Report for the Year 2014 – 2015

This is my twelfth annual report, with once again the same parish councillors and officers.

Each Councillor has an area of responsibility, for which they work diligently during the year.

- * John Newman for Highways
- * Pam Esom for Planning
- * Sheila Wade for the Community & Leisure
- * & Jill Saunders for the Environment

We have attended various training and liaison meetings during the year, including a planning forum in July, the Annual Dacorum Parish Conference in Hemel in December, the Dacorum Highways Liaison meetings, & Chilterns Planning Conference in October. Linda and Erik have also attended training courses run by the Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils and Linda and I will be attending a Planning course this coming September.

Highways

John liaises with Herts Highways trying to resolve issues, such as potholes and degradation of the verges. Potholes still also cause major problems. Although some have recently been filled more permanently, there are still many large potholes on our roads. Please report them! The best way is through the Herts Highway website under “fault reporting”. The more people who report faults, the more chance of repairs!

- * Last year we took advantage of Herts “Winter Self Help Scheme” & ordered bags of salt which were not needed as there was no big freeze then or this year! But they are stored again ready for next year!
- * John organised a flood risk assessment meeting in January. Andy Hardstaff, from Herts CC Flood Risk Management talked to residents from Hogpits who had been affected by flooding the year before.
- * The Birch Lane & Hogpits corner has been cleared of overhanging branches & tall weeds to provide a good, clear sightline for traffic & pedestrians. Grass seeds were sown which are now growing well but I do hope cars will not continue to park on it when they can't find a space in The Bricklayers Arms car park! Thank you Jack for overseeing this work.
- * Some resurfacing was done down Flaunden Hill and verge cutting round the village signs was carried out regularly. A car accident at the top of Flaunden Hill caused damage to the chevron sign & although reported to Highways it has still not been mended.
- * We thank Herts County Councillor, Richard Roberts for all the support he gives us with Highways problems and for sharing part of his Locality Budget on some village issues. & particularly this year for his support in organising the surfacing of part of the unsightly “swamp” on the verge near Hollins Hall, leading to Bridleway 008, the ginger track. This has been caused by vehicles parking on it & driving across it to avoid oncoming traffic. After discussions about what to do to stop this area being unsightly, with Richard's support we have now protected the whole verge area there, with tree trunks along the roadside and topsoil, wildflowers & grass seed on the inside. Many thanks to the five men who joined me to shovel and rake the mountains of topsoil on an extremely wet morning. We hope it will become an attractive natural feature.

Thank you John for your hard work in dealing with Highways issues.

Planning

Pam has dealt with 15 planning applications this year and currently has 2 enforcement issues outstanding. For every planning application that comes in Pam and Linda liaise with the appropriate Dacorum Planning Officers, and prepare background information to help the PC with their decision making process. Pam also liaises with Dacorum on enforcement issues and planning appeals and attends planning seminars to keep up to date with new regulations. Some planning applications are relatively easy and uncomplicated, but others are involved, problematic and time consuming. We very much appreciate and thank you Pam for your conscientious, hard work throughout the year.

Environment

Jill organised the ever popular annual Litter Blitz on 7th March to clear rubbish from the lanes into and around Flaunden. 18 pickers came to help & wore the Flaunden PC high visibility jackets and collected 15 sacks of rubbish & 7 bags of recycling. They all deserve a big thank you. It is always amazing that so much rubbish is collected on litter blitz day when our village warden does such a brilliant job himself all year picking up rubbish in the village. & thank you again to Alvin Michaels at the Bricklayers Arms for treating all the "pickers" to their "traditional" & very welcome winter warmer afterwards. Thanks also to Dacorum's Clean Safe & Green Team for providing litter pickers, bags & gloves.

- * Thank you also to Colin & the villagers who regularly pick up rubbish as they pass. It makes a big difference to our village.
- * Following a resident's complaint about the pollution of the River Chess I wrote to Thames Water & Jill contacted the Wildlife Trust.
- * Jill reports to Dacorum any problems with our network of footpaths & bridleways, such as broken kissing gates overgrown greenery and blocked paths. She has taken villagers on guided nature walks round the churchyard and is a mine of information about the flora & fauna of the village.

Thank you Jill for your hard work and for sharing your knowledge about the environment with us.

- * We were allocated a grant of £1000 under the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme which was used to do resurfacing work to Footpath 01 which runs from Hogpits to the Church.
- * We are very grateful to our Footpath Warden, Bruce Boshier & his trusty walking companion Pauline. And thank them for regularly walking all the footpaths, informing us of any problems and for giving us a report at our meetings. Because of this, the footpaths and bridleways continue to be kept maintained & useable. However, unfortunately Bruce is unable to walk the footpaths at the present time, but we wish him well & hope he will soon be able to do so again
- * Continuing thanks go to Clayton Rae, the Herts Countryside Access Officer, based at Dacorum who manages the local DBC footpaths and bridleways and is always ready & willing to give support if it is needed.

Community

Sheila continues to be involved in a large variety of village issues such as the local bus timetable. Some are positive, some negative. But all impact on our village. She liaises with our PCSO Bardhyll Agallili regarding crime in the neighbourhood, and attends seminars on related community topics, such as the proposed cuts to bus services. She has distributed leaflets round the

village about the Chiltern Society, Dacorum Health walks and the change in refuse and recycling bins. Tonight you will find leaflets on your chairs about the Drive Safe scheme. If you are interested in participating in this please contact Sheila in the break. She is always ready to talk to villagers about problems that concern them. She is a good neighbour. Thank you Sheila.

A lot of good things have happened this year, including:

- * The Village Hall has continued its programme of decoration and renovation, including disabled toilet facilities. For which the PC has been pleased to be able to make a contribution of £2000. The defibrillator is installed outside the Village Hall. Thanks to Linda for finalising all the requirements for this and organising a very reassuring training meeting for the village and thanks also to everyone who kindly donated towards this, villagers & others. We are currently looking at introducing a Village Emergency Telephone Scheme, and we hope to introduce this within the next few months.
- * A new bench has at last been installed in Hogpits opposite the entrance to Flaunden Park. We congratulate Erik on his diligence & persistence in dealing with the considerable paperwork required to get permission to install this!
- * Native daffodils were planted round the village gates and on the grassy mound at the back of the village hall. Thanks to Jack for organising this & also to the volunteer bulb planters.
- * The PC again sponsored a craft table at the annual Christmas Craft Fayre in December for 30+ children who had an enjoyable time making Christmas table decorations. Thanks to everyone who helped.
- * The Flaunden Flyer is now twelve years old and about to produce its 48th issue. Continued congratulations to the Flyer team for providing all villagers & friends of the village with a superbly presented magazine. Thanks also to the advertisers, as their support means that the Flyer has never needed a Parish Council subsidy. Thank you Flyer Team, very well done.
- * This year 68 children & 71 adults took part in the annual Easter egg treasure hunt on Easter Saturday, 19th April. After completing the treasure hunt sheets the families returned to the hall for well earned refreshments and the children enjoyed their chocolate eggs and the craft activities provided for them. Thanks to Ken for continuing to be responsible for decorating the hall so beautifully and to Daph and her volunteers in the kitchen for providing and serving the lovely refreshments.
- * The Parish Council has taken over the administration of the Village Website. We have expanded the Parish Council section to include dates of forthcoming meetings, copies of Meeting Agenda, Finances, Minutes and also the chairman's annual report! We have also included a section with links to local planning applications.
- * We continue to use the Village Email Noticeboard to update residents with information from the Parish Council. In the last year 50 notices have been sent out. If you are not already included on the email distribution list, please contact Linda.
- * Our Police Community Support Officer, PCSO Bardhyll Agallili visits the village occasionally & sends monthly updates on local crime, fortunately mostly the lack of it! It is, however, disappointing that the local Police Officer & Bardy have not attended any of our PC meetings this year. In fact I do not know who our local Bobby is! However we are grateful to the neighbourhood watch co-ordinators who inform us of problems in the locality.
- * Our own Village Warden, Colin Gurney, continues to deliver an excellent job keeping the Village itself looking good, by going round the village litter picking, cleaning road signs, removing debris, clearing the areas around the village gates and digging out the grips which

run into the ditches. To name just a few of his jobs! Thank you Colin we all appreciate your efforts and support and are all so pleased you are willing to continue to be our village warden.

We continue to hold 10 meetings a year, four of which are held in the Village Hall and our other meetings are held in the Church Room. Members of the public are welcome at all of our meetings.

I thank Herts County Councillor Richard Roberts & Dacorum Councillors, Jack Organ, Gill Chapman and Gbola Adeleke for their continued support of Flaunden's needs this year. We are sorry that Jack & Gill have not stood for re-election this year, but congratulate Gbola on being re-elected and welcome Stewart Riddick and Adam Barnes as our new Dacorum Borough councillors.

I also thank all the willing helpers for continuing to provide and serve the refreshments at our meetings.

I'm very fortunate to have the same councillors and officers for the coming year. Councillors; Sheila Wade, Jill Saunders, John Newman & Pam Esom. Our Clerk, Erik Vischer, Deputy Clerk, Linda Inchenko and Finance Officer, Jack Debnam.

Thank you all, for the care and time you take to support the people of Flaunden. Thank you team.

Flaunden is lucky to have so many talented, kind people who give their time willingly for the benefit of us all, including Colin Gurney, Flaunden's, cheerful, hardworking village warden who was the worthy recipient of the Peter Scribens silver salver last year for his outstanding contribution to the welfare and appearance of the village. Each year we are grateful for the ease with which we are able to choose the next worthy recipient.

Thank you to everyone in Flaunden who helps to make our village the special place that it is.

Thank you.



Award of the Peter Scribens Memorial Salver 2015

It is with great pleasure again this year that I make the annual award of the Peter Scribens Memorial Salver. The PC presents this award to commemorate the life of Peter Scribens, who was a committed resident of Flaunden. One of his hobbies was the wellbeing of this village hall.

For the second time we are very pleased to make the award to two people. Two people who support the community of Flaunden in a variety of ways, together and separately as good neighbours, willing volunteers and experts.

They are good neighbours to people on Flaunden Park, by giving lifts to the church or to the shops and generally looking out for residents there. They are part of the Flaunden Care team and have even driven as far as the Wellington Hospital in North London! They make very welcome tea or coffee for anyone who drops in to their home, two or four legged! Though the 4 legged visitors get a pat on the head, not a cup of tea!

They are very willing volunteers in many ways for Flaunden church. They clean & care for the church room every week. They both help with teas after church on a Sunday and are expert at

serving refreshments after special services or meetings. Yes, you must surely know who I'm talking about!

Betty takes her turn at arranging flowers in church and she makes excellent cakes & scones! And Iain always puts the wheelie bins out!

Iain has been a major champion of the defibrillator. When it was first suggested that Flaunden should have a defibrillator, Iain researched ways of making this a successful project. He held meetings for people who were interested in volunteering as first responders and expertly taught first aid to them while giving them confidence at the same time.

We are very pleased to make the award this year to Iain and Betty MacLeod, an excellent team.

You are good neighbours and friends. Please come and accept the Peter Scribens Memorial Salver.