

## **Flaunden Parish Council**

### **Chairman's Report for the Year 2015 – 2016**

This is my thirteenth 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

Erik and Linda have continued to share the role of Parish Clerk and Jack our Responsible Financial Officer.

We have attended various training and liaison meetings during the year, the Annual Dacorum Parish Conference in Hemel in December, the Dacorum Highways Liaison meetings, planning training meetings in September and April, plus other meetings regarding planning issues throughout the year, including 3 development control committee meetings. Linda and Erik have also attended training courses run by the Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils.

#### **Highways**

John continues to liaise with Herts Highways to try and get resolutions to the many highways problems.

- \* We have supplied Richard Roberts, our Herts County Councillor with a list of the priority projects (such as filling potholes along Flaunden Bottom) and Richard has agreed to allocate part of his Locality Budget for these works. Hopefully we will see this work completed in the not too distant future. However, there are still many large potholes on our roads. Please report them! The more people who report faults, the more chance of repairs! The best way to do this is through the Herts Highways website under "fault reporting".
- \* John has investigated vehicle damage to verges around the village, taking photographic evidence to present to our local councillors. He also reports damaged signage, fly tipping and blocked ditches and gullies. Plus, he is an expert at pothole measurement!
- \* Following continued concerns by parishioners, which were expressed at our July meeting, the PC agreed to support the operation of the Drive Safe Scheme, which is run by Hertfordshire Police. Local resident Fraser Copp has worked with John Newman and both are 'lead volunteers' for this project. So far the first speed check undertaken in Birch Lane resulted in 14% of vehicles logged over a 1 ½ hour period, exceeding 35mph – these have been reported and the drivers will receive letters from Hertfordshire Police.

Thank you John we appreciate your hard work in dealing with Highways issues, those that are successful and those that aren't. Thank you John.

#### **Planning,**

This year there have been 15 planning applications and two appeals. For every planning application that comes in Pam and Linda liaise with the appropriate Dacorum Planning Officers, often meeting with them and then preparing background information to help the PC with their decision making process.

- \* Most planning applications are relatively uncomplicated, but some are involved, problematic and time consuming for instance, this year we dealt with 4 planning

applications for Flaunden House Stables which involved us going to 3 separate Development Control Committee meetings at Dacorum. This caused a huge amount of work for Pam as it was very complex and difficult to deal with. We would like to give a huge thanks to our Dacorum Borough Councillors, Stewart Riddick and Adam Barnes who were very supportive during this process. We would also like to thank residents, Ian McAleer, John Rugg and Jane Duncan who also spent a lot of time and effort in support of the Parish Council's decision.

- \* Pam also liaises with Dacorum on enforcement issues and appeals and attends planning seminars to keep up to date with new regulations. In April Pam and I attended a planning training meeting in Kimpton, and we were informed that new rules are in the process of consideration.

Pam, we very much appreciate that the planning role is very complicated, with many changes happening. It is particularly time consuming and we thank you for all your diligence, expertise with a slide rule and hard work throughout the year. Thank you Pam.

### **Environment**

Jill organised the ever popular annual Litter Blitz on 27th February to clear rubbish from the lanes into and around Flaunden. 20 adults, 1 child & twins in a buggy came to help & wore the Flaunden PC high visibility jackets and collected 24 sacks of rubbish & 10 bags of recycling. This year all of Chenies Hill was cleared, resulting in more rubbish being collected, including about 100 vodka bottles!

Everyone deserves 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. Afterwards we were all provided with the now "traditional" & very welcome winter warmers at the Bricklayers Arms. A big thank you once again to Alvin Michaels and his staff.

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. Every one of you makes a difference.

- \* 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. She protects rare flora such as Lady's Smock outside the village hall and the early purple orchids and other wildflowers in the churchyard.

Thank you Jill for your hard work and for sharing your knowledge about the environment with us. You are an expert we can always rely on.

- \* We were allocated a grant of £1000 under the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme this year which the PC match funded to upgrade Bridleway 10.
- \* Jill has also been liaising with Dacorum Parish Council to arrange for the potholes along the lane from the church to the observatory to be repaired and we expect this work to be completed shortly.
- \* We have been very grateful to our Footpath Warden, Bruce Boshier & his trusty walking companion Pauline for regularly walking all the footpaths, informing us of any problems and for giving us a report at our meetings. Sadly, Bruce has had to retire as our Footpath Warden, but in the meantime William Taylor has volunteered as part of his D of E Silver to monitor footpaths as well as Pam and Linda who regularly walk most footpaths in the area and report any problems.

- \* 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 has continued to be involved in a large variety of village issues.

- \* She liaises with our Police Community Support Officer Bardhyll Agallili regarding crime in the neighbourhood, and attends meetings about related community topics.
- \* She distributes leaflets round the village relating to community involvement such as the Chiltern Society, Dacorum, the hospital and the Police.
- \* She has liaised with Ev Leach regarding advertising for more volunteer drivers for Flaunden Care in the email noticeboard and in the Flaunden Flyer.

Sheila is always ready to talk to villagers about problems that concern them. She is a good neighbour. Thank you Sheila for your care of our community.

I give Erik, Linda and Jack, the PC's Officers, great thanks and much appreciation for all their hard work during the year behind and in front of the scenes. They keep us councillors informed, directed, legal and many other things too. We are a great team.

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

- \* 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 thirteen years old and about to produce its 52nd issue. Continued congratulations to the new 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 54 children & 49 adults took part in the annual Easter egg treasure hunt on Easter Saturday, 26th 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. It is always a happy, lively event.
- \* The Parish Council continues to be responsible for the administration of the Village Website. The Parish Council section includes dates of forthcoming meetings, copies of Meeting Agenda, Finances, Minutes and also the chairman's annual report! There is also 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 40 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 only occasionally & sends monthly updates on local crime, fortunately mostly the lack of it! I believe there are 7 Police Officers with joint responsibility for the area of Chipperfield, Bovington, Kings Langley and Flaunden. It is, however, disappointing that there is not an

allocated Police Officer for Flaunden whom we can get to know. 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 looking good, by regularly 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 really appreciate your efforts and support and are all so pleased you are willing to continue to be our village warden.

We continue to hold at least 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. If you have any issues you wish to bring to the attention of the PC or would like us to discuss at our meetings, please let us know before the meeting so that we can add it to our agenda.

I thank Herts County Councillor Richard Roberts & our 3 Dacorum Councillors, Gbola Adeleke, who has just completed his year as Mayor of Dacorum, for which we congratulate him and Stewart Riddick and Adam Barnes who have been an enormous support particularly with the difficult planning issues we have faced this year.

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

I'm very fortunate to have had the same councillors and officers this year. Councillors; Sheila, Jill, John & Pam, our Clerk, Erik, Deputy Clerk, Linda and Finance Officer, Jack

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

The forthcoming year will see some changes for the Council as Erik is stepping down as Clerk, and Sheila will be moving out of the village and is therefore stepping down as a member of the Parish Council. Linda will take on the full role of Clerk. We will shortly be advertising for a new member of the Parish Council.

If anyone is interested in this role do please come and have a chat to me!

Flaunden is lucky to have so many talented, kind, caring people who give their time willingly for the benefit of us all, including Betty & Iain Macleod the worthy recipients of the Peter Scribens silver salver last year for their outstanding contribution in supporting the welfare of residents 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 2016**

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.

This year we are very pleased to make the award to someone who gets involved in Village activities, supporting the community of Flaunden. Someone who has done sterling work over many years especially for The Parish Council and the Friends of Flaunden Church. She supports her husband with his role on the Parish Council and indeed supports the Parish Council by her attendance at meetings and by helping to provide and serve refreshments.

You could say the award this year goes to Flaunden's very own Delia or maybe Mary Berry (although she only bakes cakes!) she is a caterer extraordinary.

She has been a trustee of The Friends since 2004 and has organised the very popular and incredibly successful annual Safari Supper since then. She has the logistics perfectly systematized with the hosts deftly located and the consumers impeccably assigned. This event is supported by a cross section of the village and helps integrate new people. Attended by many who go to no other village events. It has raised £5500 for the Friends and is therefore their biggest fundraiser.

She has not just masterminded cooking but has done most of it for the Friends major fundraising events where the quality of the food is always applauded. She has also catered for Rotary Mencap Games and although not a village event it just goes to show what a caring and good egg she is!!

She is also an excellent neighbour in every respect.

Yes, you must surely know who I'm talking about!

We are very pleased to make the award this year to Libby Newman

You are a good neighbour and friend. Please come and accept the Peter Scribens Memorial Salver.