

## **Chairman's Report for the Year 2017 – 2018**

This is my fifteenth annual report.

There have been a few changes to the Parish Council this year.

Pam Esom, John Newman, Jill Saunders and myself have continued to be Parish Councillors and Jack Debnam has continued to be the Responsible Financial Officer. Linda Inchenko retired as Parish Clerk last May and Keith Robinson resigned as a parish councillor take on the role of Parish Clerk. Diane Wass joined us as a new parish councillor. So we were a full complement.

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

John Newman-Highways

Pam Esom-Planning

Jill Saunders-the Environment

Diane Wass-the Community

Very sadly on 11<sup>th</sup> January Keith Robinson died. Although he had only been clerk for 8 months he was a lovely member of our team, a great source of legal knowledge and an expert with words, particularly invaluable with writing comments for planning applications! He worked tirelessly for the whole of those 8 months. We miss his cheerfulness, kindness, humour and friendship.

I thank Jack for being so diligent and knowledgeable in looking after the parish council's finances this year and for stepping in to very capably take on the role of temporary clerk and I also thank Diane for so proficiently supporting and helping him. We all greatly appreciate what you are doing. Thank you both.

We have all attended various training and liaison meetings during the year, including the Annual Dacorum Parish Conference in Hemel in December, a conference for the new Data Protection legislation in March and a planning law seminar in April . Many organised by HAPTC.

- **For Highways**, John continues to liaise with Herts Highways to try and get resolutions to the many highways problems. The same old issues continue to be potholes, speeding traffic, verge erosion and now the premature cutting of the daffodils and other wild flowers round the village.

Richard Roberts, our Herts County Councillor has been given a list of the Highways issues and we are grateful to him for allocating part of his Locality Budget to help meet the cost of dealing with these problems and for reinforcing our concerns with Herts Highways and Dacorum. He was instrumental in getting part of Flaunden Bottom repaired.

However there are still many large potholes on our roads. Please report them!

SID, the Speed Indicator Device, owned by Dacorum, is now in the village with 2 location points. At present sited by the village hall, its other location is in Hogpits. Data collected during its time in Hogpits showed:  
103,248 vehicles passed by in 89 days (1,160 a day)  
16% exceeded 35mph  
50% exceeded 30mph

There were about 3 minor accidents at the Hollins Hall bend this winter. We thank Peta Woollett for putting out the “danger ice” warning sign again during January and February.

The problem flooding, at the end of the byway by the church was caused by a damaged drain and was eventually cleared by Dacorum.

John we appreciate your hard work and perseverance in dealing with all the Highways issues. Thank you.

- **For Planning**, This year there have been about 10 planning applications. For every planning application that comes in Pam liaises with the appropriate Dacorum Planning Officers, sometimes meeting with them and then preparing background information to help the PC with their decision making process.

Although most planning applications are relatively uncomplicated, some are complex and problematic and for these we would like to thank our Dacorum Borough Councillors for their support during the year.

Pam also liaises with Dacorum on enforcement issues and appeals and attends planning seminars to keep up to date with the ever changing new regulations.

The planning role is particularly time consuming and we thank you Pam for all your diligence, expertise with the now digital plans and your hard work throughout the year. Thank you Pam.

**For the Environment**, Jill reports to Dacorum any problems with our network of footpaths & bridleways, such as broken kissing gates, overgrown greenery and blocked paths. 2 kissing gates on Footpath 11 have been repaired this year.

Jill organised the ever popular and very necessary annual Litter Blitz on 24<sup>th</sup> February to clear rubbish from the lanes into and around Flaunden. 22 adults, 2 children and a dog took part. All humans wore the Flaunden PC high visibility jackets and collected 20 sacks of rubbish & 6 bags of recycling. The 40 odd bags of rubbish dumped on the edge of the woods near Martin Top Farm were collected the following Tuesday by Dacorum. Once again all of Chenies Hill was cleared, resulting in more rubbish being collected, including again about 100 vodka bottles! 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 and quickly taking away all the rubbish we collected.

Colin, our Village Warden, does a brilliant job throughout the year, picking up rubbish from inside the Village gates, the litter blitz also enables us to clear all the lanes leading into the village. Thank you Colin & everyone who joined the litter blitz this year.

Thank you also to Colin & all the villagers who regularly pick up rubbish as they pass. Every one of you makes a difference.

We were again allocated a grant of £1000 under the Parish Paths Partnership Scheme this year with which we purchased and had installed a seat in the meadow above Home Farm by footpath 07 and also contributed towards resurfacing the Flaunden Bottom end of bridleway 05 from road to the woods.

Continuing thanks go to Clayton Rae, who is based at Dacorum and manages the local DBC footpaths and bridleways and is always ready & willing to give support and advice if it is needed.

Thank you Jill for your hard work, for sharing your knowledge about the environment with us and your diligence in organising hedge cutting, footpath clearing, gate and stile mending, fallen tree clearance, cutting down nettles etc. We are all very grateful to you. Thank you Jill

**For the Community,** Diane Wass has taken over the management of Flaunden Care. On behalf of the PC she attended an NHS Clinical Public meeting last September, reported to us and then gave them our feedback.

Diane also reported to our PCSO, Bardyll Agalilli, reports of aggressive dogs on the playing fields. She checks the crime rates and has reported on the recent dramatically increased crime figures for Flaunden.

She has taken over administration of the email noticeboard and 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.

Diane is also supporting the clerk role by dealing with all PC emails, monitoring the inbox and forwarding to councillors as required and has updated us on the new legal requirements for data protection.

We all greatly appreciate your enthusiastic and expert involvement in all aspects of the Community. Thank you also for supporting Jack in clerking the PC and for reliably and regularly updating us all. Thank you Diane.

- 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 sixteen years old and has produced 59 issues. Continued congratulations to the Flyer team for providing all villagers & friends of the village with an ever more superbly presented magazine. Thank you Flyer Team, very well done.
- This year 33 children & 24 adults took part in the annual Easter egg treasure hunt on Easter Saturday, 14th April. And as usual all the children received a free chocolate egg. Thanks to Ken Lousvet 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.
- We continue to use the Village Email Noticeboard to update residents with information from the Parish Council. If you are not already included on the email distribution list, please contact the Clerk.
- We are extremely grateful to our Village Warden, Colin Gurney. He continues to deliver an excellent job keeping the Village looking good, He can be seen regularly going round the village litter picking, cleaning road signs, removing debris and fallen trees or branches, 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! Colin, we all really appreciate your efforts and support. Thank you.

We really welcome villagers to our meetings. Members of the public are entitled to come to all our meetings. Indeed we want to let you know what is happening and also we want to hear your concerns or of course your gratitude! So please do come.

I thank Herts County Councillor Richard Roberts & our 2 Dacorum Councillors, Gbola Adeleke and Stewart Riddick who are always an enormous support throughout the year.

I give all the parish councillors great thanks and much appreciation for all their many contributions this year towards the welfare of the village. And I also give Jack and Diane great thanks and much appreciation for all their hard work during the year behind and in front of the scenes, keeping us councillors informed, directed, legal and many other things too. We are a great team. Thank you all.

Flaunden is lucky to have so many talented, kind, caring people who give their time willingly for the benefit of us all, including Jane Duncan, the worthy recipient of the Peter Scribens Silver Salver last year for her 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.

However we do need to appoint a permanent clerk and despite advertising twice we have had no response! Help!

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

Thank you.

*Vivienne Adams*