

Sunningdale Parish Council - Chairman's Annual Report 2010

As we look back on the last year it certainly seems to have been one of action with major achievements and numerous improvements made. There have been some changes to your Parish Councillors; Alison Ellwood who had been a great source of help found that she was unable to give of her time. We thank her for the time she was with us. Two new Councillors have joined us in the last few months, Paul Diluce-Brown and Neil Collin, so we are now at full strength of 10 Councillors.

For the last two years we have talked of the Pavilion Project and the need to improve the poor quality and standard of the building to meet environmental standards. Last year I spoke of the consultation on these plans and the need to increase the Precept to help pay for the first phase of extending into the roof space and again this year we consulted on retaining the Precept at the same level to help pay for the second phase of rebuilding the front and refurbishing the office and community room. Your responses were positive and showed keen interest, so it was very exciting last summer as the work into the roof space progressed and was completed giving our Grounds Manager much needed additional family accommodation, something that had been talked of for years.

Work started a few weeks ago to the front of the building which is being rebuilt to a high level of sustainability, improving the appearance and creating a much improved community room and more workable office space. We were hoping to show you these improvements and have refreshments in the new Community Room at the end of this meeting, but as so often happens with building work we are a week or so behind schedule.

We are very proud that with the assistance of a Big Lottery Grant following a feasibility study we received grants from Community Sustainable Energy Programme, the Low Carbon Building Programme and EDF Energy for Renewable Energy to be installed. A wood fuelled boiler was assessed to be more effective than wind or ground-source heat, given our access to freely donated wood. We thank those of you who have helped us with the supply of wood. This has been tied in to solar thermal panels on the roof which supplies hot water from the sun. The log boiler and solar thermal panels were installed last summer which fitted in very well with the roof work.

We have also introduced SUSS – Sustainable Sunningdale – and I hope you have all joined up to these small and yet so important actions. In partnership with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Learning for Sustainability programme, SUSS sets out to encourage our community to take actions to lower our use of fossil fuels. 400 signed up to the challenges where we as a community can make a difference. We are now planning to move on to the next stage, of an event in the summer working with the schools where we can encourage children and their families to explore how every day actions can effect the planet.

We were delighted that the Mayor of the Royal Borough, Cllr Jesse Grey, joined us for the launch of our Renewable Energy installations and viewed the display of SUSS.

He was so impressed by our lead he wanted to take the idea to his village of Datchet. We also received a letter from the Chief Executive of the Royal Borough, Ian Trenholm, acknowledging our initiative and leadership with the SUSS campaign and how our partnership can but grow.

A success was our persistence with the dumping of waste at the Surrey Heath site enabling this to continue.

The Village Hall is now operated under its new management structure and comes under the banner of Village Venues together with the CMI. Its old 100 year lease has been replaced by a 15 year lease and you will be hearing later from Jamie McCaul one of the Trustees.

Planning is led by Rodney Stubblefield and Jon Read and the number of applications for new developments continues to be low compared with the last few years, most applications being for extensions to existing properties. Major work at Coworth Park continues to take shape and is due to open this summer after a £50 million-plus refurbishment.

We would like to thank SPAE and especially Keith Streams for his input and help on planning over the last year.

The standard of allotments continues to improve which is evidence of the hard work put in by most of the allotment holders and the waiting list continues to grow. We have been fortunate in having Brian King as Site Representative for the last three years, but Brian decided to stand down in February and no-one has come forward to fill his role. A huge thank you to Brian for his commitment and perseverance for all he has done in helping to raise the standards.

Brian you will be missed.

The William Pack cup was won by Brian and Janet King for an outstanding plot, Fred Parfitt was second and Eileen Ufton third.

A new prize for the best mixed plot went to Eve Chilton.

Kate Webb and Jon Read continue with their vision and improvements for Kiln Lane Cemetery and they have received many positive comments about the improvements I talked of last year. Jamie and Shirley McCaul continue to maintain and plant the rockery garden at the entrance and we thank them for all they do.

We are in the process of organising the publication of an Official Guide to Sunningdale and Paul Diluce Brown is leading this. You would have read about it in the April Parish Newsletter and if you wish to find out more please speak to Paul later.

The Community Room was put to good use last year with Anne Holby being our regular hirer throughout the year with her Ceramics package. Refreshments were served throughout the summer by Rendezvous' and the room was also used for ad hoc parties and meetings.

This year we have an exciting new project of a Community Garden having received an Awards for All grant to establish this as part of Sustainable Sunningdale.

This will be linked to gardening courses run by Gary Mumford who is an experienced local gardener and teacher. So do find out more and enrol for Gary's courses.

Anne Holby will continue with her Ceramics workshops combining this with a café.

The Community Café will be open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday afternoons run by volunteers which is in line with the Borough objective of greater use of volunteers.

So we have an exciting summer ahead of us.

Our long term volunteers who plant and maintain the flower beds at the Jubilee Clock, the terraced garden and the tubs in Chobham Road are Shirley McCaul and Sheila and Gordon Williams. From us all thank you for helping to make our village look so cheerful, colourful and cared for.

It was great to have Chip Hawkes, a long term Sunningdale resident turn on the Christmas lights last year at the Christmas Celebration. Our thanks to the traders and businesses for all they do and the teachers and children for the preparation before the event. I am always amazed at the wonderful talent we see as the children and young people perform. This year's event will be on the 3rd December.

Next month will be the Annual Parish Walk on Sunday the 23rd May. Come and gather at the Recreation Ground at 2 pm.

The Carnival this year will be on Sunday 19th September and the theme will be 'Around the World in 80 days'.

Now to our two staff, Anne and Graeme, who work so well as a team.

Graeme is seen around the Parish as he carries out his jobs caring for the recreation ground, the cemetery and the allotments. Gathering wood and keeping the log boiler stoked to keep us all warm. Graeme thank you for all you do and your flexibility.

Anne has such commitment and with her status as a qualified Clerk ensures that we as a Parish Council are fully up to date with all our procedures. The grants that we have received have been thanks to Anne's tenacity and the initiatives we are leading on are the teamwork we have as a whole Council. Anne also collects the wood and stokes the boiler, so yes a real team effort. Anne thank you sincerely from us all.

Christine Gadd
April 2010