



LITTLE CHALFONT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

21 March 2018

Introduction

I was asked a few days ago by a potential new member, whether or not the Community Association made a difference and my answer was, of course, strongly in the positive.

As I was about to prepare this report, it was a timely question and it has prompted me to set out what we achieved in 2017.

Highlights

- Another excellent Village Day, very well organised by Paul Nicholls.
- Maintaining the funding for all the Hanging Baskets in the village centre.
- Continued to produce our half-yearly newsletter.
- Seen the weekly 'Simply Walks' become a permanent activity.
- Dealt with several problems that surfaced during the year concerning the wiring and timers for the Christmas lights at minimal cost to the Association. If ignored, we would have been without many of the lights.
- Undertook an in depth review of our responsibilities for the Christmas lights and, with the help of Rebecca Cargill, Lisa Stockdale and Sam Tolley, devised a phased programme of needed replacements and improvements.
- Working closely with the Parish Council, progressed the 'Good Neighbour' initiative very ably led by Helen Tyers
- Undertook a review of the Community Action Plan with the help of Sian Lloyd and Rose Crabb, resulting in a refreshed plan that will now be styled the Community Improvement Plan.
- Maintained the level of household membership at c700, despite the usual loss of members each year, resulting from residents moving away etc.

Some of these activities are, of course, work in progress and satisfactory outcomes are yet to be delivered but all of them meet our objectives of 'improving the local amenities, environment and character of Little Chalfont, making it an attractive place to live, work and trade.'

Your committee and those helping us believe that we do make a difference but I must leave you to judge.

Other Key Activities

In addition to the highlights mentioned above, our principal other activity is undoubtedly in representing your views on the Emerging Local Plan and the proposal for the development of at least 700 homes and other facilities on the land between Burtons Lane and Lodge Lane . During the year, we have continued to be very closely involved through the Coordination Group for the Local Plan and the following briefly summarises what has taken place.

- Continuing to keep you (and the community) advised of progress.
- Seeking pledges from members and other residents to help pay for professional advice, should it be required.
- Organising the Public Meeting with our District Councillors that was held just after the year end and attracted almost 500 members and residents.

There is still some way to go before the Local Plan will be ready for adoption sometime next year and there will be more to address thereafter. Still very much work in progress but if we, together with the Parish Council, are successful in our opposition, we will certainly be tempted to claim that we have played a part in making a difference!

(There will be an update on the current position at the meeting that immediately follows the AGM.)

Your Committee and Funding

We would not, of course, make any difference at all without these two elements.

As to the committee, we have still not been able fill the roles that were vacant 12 months ago and, indeed, have lost Tony O’Sullivan during the year.

Tony had not only been our eyes and ears on planning applications that had wider implications on the village but was also a member of the Coordination Group. Personal circumstances and work commitments, meant that it was necessary for him to step down and his sound advice and ability to keep us grounded with humour, is sorely missed. I extend my grateful thanks to him.

With just six committee members, maintaining the level of activity has not been easy at times and we have also been dependent on other members, as mentioned above. Their commitment to the cause has not been shaken and I am extremely grateful to each and every one of them for their support.

On your behalf, I particularly want to record our sincere thanks to Lisa Horne (Secretary), Ted Cooper (Treasurer), Adrian Lockyer (Membership), Shirley Strange (Voluntary Organisations) and Helen Tyers (Good Neighbours).

Funding Support

With our role as the Revitalisation Group for Little Chalfont, we still receive a grant of £2000 each year from Chiltern District Council and, along with the annual subscription income, this enables us to cover our core operations.

We would not, however, be able to achieve all that we do without other grants and we continue to be most grateful to GE Healthcare, Tesco and The Entertainer for their generous support.

Our shops and traders also play a part, most notably on Village Day and their contributions, either by advertising in the programme or active participation, enable the event to be run on a break-even basis.

Finances

I touched on a review of our financial position in my report last year and the outcome is encapsulated in the resolutions presented for adoption at this AGM.

The reasons are clearly explained in the notes that accompany the resolutions. There is little that I can add, other than to say that we are committed to ensuring that the Association is on a secure financial footing for the future and I sincerely hope that all of our members will view the £10 p.a. subscription proposed as very good value.

Bucks Unitary Authority

We have highlighted the recent announcement to members in advance of the AGM and the final outcome will not be known until after the consultation that ends on 25 May and the final recommendation receives parliamentary approval.

The outcome could well be important to us, as the way in which local organisations such as ours are supported will change.

We shall be monitoring the situation as matters progress and ensuring that any appropriate representations are made.

Volunteers

This report would not be complete if I omitted the key role of all our volunteers in helping us to make a difference. Without their help in delivering the newsletters of both the Association and Parish Council, we would not be able to continue this key element of keeping the community informed. Also, all who help out on Village Day, especially the marshalls, are crucial to its smooth running and success.

On behalf of the committee and the members, I extend our very grateful thanks.

Going Forward

We have three challenges to face in 2018.

Firstly, the need to fill the vacant committee roles has become imperative. We continue to highlight our need in the newsletters and other publications and, whilst some interest has been shown (and is being pursued), it would nevertheless help us greatly if all our members with a little time to spare, would consider putting

themselves forward or at least think about their friends and neighbours whose skill and experience could benefit the community.

Secondly, there is the continuing focus on the Emerging Local Plan. The interest and support remains at a high level but there is still some way to go and the Draft Local Plan, due to be published for consultation in June/July, will undoubtedly involve increased engagement with the community.

Thirdly, we shall be addressing the fundraising from all in the community, to enable the second and third phases of Christmas lights improvement programme. (We plan to launch this via our newsletter in July.)

Thank you all for your membership and continued support.

Roger Funk

Chairman

20 March 2017