



FAIRFORD TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

Mayor's Introduction

Cllr Caroline
Mumford

Fairford Town
Mayor

Tel 01285
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In my first Annual Report as Mayor, I can report that last year we started work on The Fairford Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). This is part of the strategic vision for Fairford which fits in to the emerging Cotswold District Council (CDC) Local Plan. For the last year a dedicated team of volunteers have been working very hard to produce this document. We are about halfway through and are now embarking on writing up policies that will hopefully set the standards for the Many thanks to all involved.

I was very nervous and honoured to meet HRH Prince Charles when he attended St. Mary's Church for the 'Music in Country Churches' concert in May only having been in the mayoral position for 13 days, but everything went smoothly and he was charming and the event was a great success.

In February Sarah Schantz came to visit Fairford. She is the granddaughter of Wallace Glavor, a US army service man who was stationed at 186th General Hospital Fairford during WWII. She wanted to see the union flag her grandfather "liberated" during the VE day celebrations, and meet any of the family's that may have connections to this piece of history. We tracked down the Flag and a Baseball hat belonging to her grandfather and hopefully we gave her a warm 'Fairford Welcome'. Many thanks to Edwin Cuss, Syd Flatman and the Fairford History Society.

Over the past year we have hosted several events in the Market Place. The French market in June, the Italian market in October and the Christmas Festival in December.

We are very pleased to have been able to renew and add additional play and exercise equipment in the Walnut Tree Field.

Since last year's report the Town's population has increased with the building of 61 new homes to the west of Fairford. A further 262 homes were approved of which 120 were only approved on appeal by developers, and work has now commenced.

This year the council has run a photographic competition 'Focus on Fairford' which ran between December-March. The response and the quality of the images was superb making the judging an almost impossible task.

The Town Council has been able to award grants to a variety of organisations in 2015, details of which can be found in the Finance Committee Report.

Jenny Sanford
Mayor

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Town Councillors 2015-16

Mayor: Cllr Jennie Sanford	Deputy Mayor: Cllr Barry Fenby (resigned Feb 2016) Cllr Mark Dudley (part)
Cllr Stephen Boulton	Cllr Robert Lear (from Oct 2015)
Cllr Janet Bowen	Cllr David McKinley (from Sept 2015)
Cllr Johnny Dallow	Cllr Robert Rao
Cllr Mark Dudley	Cllr Christine Roberts
Cllr Richard Harrison	Cllr Robert Winney
Cllr Trevor Hing	

Councillor Attendance at Meetings 2015-16

Committees	Full Council	Works & Community (Incorporates Facilities & Highways)	Planning	Finance
Meetings in the year	12	12	23	7
Councillors				
C Mumford	15	8	17	7
J Sanford	13	9	19	8
S Boulton	15	10	20	n/a
J Bowen	10	7	n/a	n/a
J Cumpstey	4	n/a	9	3
J Dallow	12	n/a	18	8
*M Dudley	9/10	n/a	n/a	04/4
B Fenby	9	n/a	11	n/a
M Harwood	14	9	n/a	n/a
T Hing	12	n/a	n/a	8
C Roberts	10	9	n/a	n/a
M Wardle	12	n/a	10/10	8
R Winney	7	0	n/a	n/a

Works & Community 2015-16

Members: Councillors:- S Boulton (Chair), C Roberts, J Bowen, R Rao, B Fenby (resigned February 2016)

Mill Lane Path – thanks to the Ernest Cook Trust for allowing the path to be constructed and to Tom Paton for giving up some of his field. Walnut Tree Field has seen many improvements in the last year, new picnic benches; new adult exercise equipment; new Play equipment – trampoline, see-saw, gravity bowl roundabout. Replaced the swings & upgraded the zip wire and installed new slide. Thanks must go to Les Webb and the team at L R Engineering for their help, and ingenuity with the slide and zip wire. Upgraded the Christmas lights and added additional blizzards. Mill Lane Path – thanks to the Ernest Cook Trust for allowing the path to be constructed and to Tom Paton for giving up some of his field.

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Upgraded the Christmas lights and added additional blizzards.

Pleased to be able to offer Father Christmas a new grotto to operate from whilst he was in Fairford.

The Council worked along-side Young Gloucester in an attempt to reinvigorate the Youth club in Fairford. Sadly, efforts were in vain, and the club closed earlier this year. The remaining money that the Council had budgeted for the club we given out in grants to various youth orientated local clubs and organisations.

The Council bid Albert Alder and very fond farewell after decades of service. We have a new contractor carrying out some of the work that Albert did for the town, and we hope to maintain Albert's high standards.

A new contractor has been taken on to cut the grass verges and Walnut Tree Field, and we hope you agree that they are doing a good job.

The allotment plots on the Bloor estate are imminent and we are in constant contact with the site office to try to speed things up!

The Council repaired the church path that runs from the gate to the South door just in time for the remembrance service. Our thanks must go to Tom Maddox and the team at Green Attitude for persevering with the work in the most horrendous weather!

We planted over 1000 daffodil bulbs in the raised verge along London Road – which looked beautiful when spring finally arrived!

The Council entered the wacky world of Facebook, and it's proved a useful tool for keeping the public updated.

We continue to look for a suitable burial ground and additional land for allotments.

CLlr Stephen Boulton (Chair)

Planning Committee 2015-16

Committee Members: Councillors:- J. Dallow(Chair), S Boulton, R Harrison, J Bowen, M Dudley, J Sanford, B Fenby (resigned February 2016).

This has been a frustrating year for the Planning Committee. We have seen a new application from Gladman to construct a further 92 houses on the land parcel on Horocott Road. We have had issues with CDC over the failure to enforce pre commencement conditions on the Bloor site on the south side of the A417 and likewise with the Bovis site at the East end of Town.

We have also continued to raise our grave concerns about sewerage and surface water flooding with Thames Water. However, we are grateful to Thames Water in their work to produce a drainage strategy for Fairford which is ongoing and in particular identifying where surface water is entering the sewage system. Furthermore, we have raised our concern about sewerage being discharged into the River Coln.

Mention must be made about the hard work of the Council and Fairford Community Voice on the Neighbourhood plan which when formally adopted will chart the Future of Fairford for the next five years. This will dictate where development may take place and restrict the speculative applications by developers. This depends in part of the housing allocations given to CDC remain static and do not increase.

In conjunction with the above we continue to express disquiet over the failure of the planning system to address infrastructure issues including primary school capacity, highway parking and speed limits; all of which we have informed Gloucestershire County Council.

Cllr J Dallow (Chair)

Finance Committee 2015-16

Cllr J Dallow (Chair) Committee Members: Councillors:- M. Dudley (Chair), T Hing, J Dallow, S. Boulton, J. Bowen, J Sanford, B. Fenby (resigned February 2016)

This is my first report as Chair of the Finance Committee. and I am delighted to be able to say that the Town Council finances remain in a strong position. Following several years where we have not increased the level of precept, the Council have this year decided that a very small increase should be applied taking into consideration the growing number of homes coming into the Town and the fact that more and more services are having to be dealt with directly by the Town Council. The increase equates to 0.25% increase (0.19p per head figure). This year the Council has invested further funds in the Walnut Tree Field, purchasing new adult exercise equipment and other items of children's play equipment. All expenditure has been carefully managed to provide best value for residents. Both Councillors and staff members have contributed to the management of all projects.

Funds received from developers in the previous year continue to be used to enable the council to undertake some of the projects needed to improve infrastructure but may not be completed until such time as all the current developments have been completed. We have been able to open a Community Youth Grant, with monies obtained from a refund of business rates applied to the Town Car Park for several years, and using money allocated for the youth club, which has been closed. With this we have been able to help groups such as: 1st Fairford Brownies, Messy Space, Messy Church, Fairford Rainbows, Tiny Tots, S. Cotswold Team Ministry Youth Club, Fairford Youth Football Club and Fairford Youth Rugby Club. Our annual end of year grant awards have been allocated to T.S. Raleigh, Fairford Festival, Corinium Talking News, U3A, CAB, Glos. Chest Fund, Cobalt Appeal.

Cllr M Dudley (Chair)

Grants Awarded 2015-16

<u>Community Project Fund</u>		<u>Annual Grant</u>	
Fairford Cricket Club	£3471	Corinium Talking News	£100
U3A Table Tennis Group	£500	CAB	£100
Fairford Town Football Club	£5000	CCVS	£250
Fairford Youth Football Club	£5000	Fairford Festival	£250
Little Lambs	£107	Little Lambs	£108
U3A Table Tennis Group	£387		

Summary of Income & Payments 2015-16

Summary of Income & Payments	Last year ended 31/3/2015	Current year ended 31/3/16
Income		
Administration	110997	117996
Community Centre	8176	7408
Promotion	2623	1255
Community	25495	57
Projects	254000	0
Churchyard	6216	3077
Environment	2815	3534
Planning	0	5680
VAT Data	21205	16650
Total Receipts	431525	155656
Administration	23645	48520
Payments		
Staffing Expenses	32471	39285
Community Centre	12037	12320
Communications	961	734
Promotion	7582	5209
Community	19991	1395
Projects	110249	35515
Churchyard	9410	3651
Environment	16778	16566
Planning	7755	7958
VAT Data	24739	11371
Total Payments	265616	182525
Receipts & payments summary		
Opening Balance	195170	361079
Add total receipts	431525	155656
	626695	516735
Less total payments	265616	182525
Closing Balance	361079	334210

County Councillor Report

Year end figures - were correct and the books balanced

Reserves - were moved to cover losses in key areas i.e. care for adult and vulnerable children. The Council are looking at ways of handling the key areas in the future and are talking to the NHS regarding Adult Care. This is proving difficult due to budgetary constraints. Unless dramatic changes are made in the way we handle the problems with the older population, GCC cannot see a way of providing services and Central Government must intervene.

Roads – problems with potholes in the road have been dealt with using a different method of repair. Rather than just filling in the holes, work is completed by using strips of tarmac, which is proving to be more effective.

Incinerator – Last year saw the approval of the Javelin Park Incinerator after 2 judicial reviews. Work is due to start in June/July 2016.

Air Balloon- £1million has been accepted by Highways England for the Air Balloon project, but it will be several years before this project is completed.

Active Together Fund – Last year this fund was used to the benefit of Fairford, helping many organizations in the town. This fund is now closed.

County Cllr R Theodoulou

District Councillor Report

Boundary changes – At the start of 2015 the Boundary Commission split the wards in Fairford so that we now have Fairford South and Fairford North wards. District Cllrs Coakley and Andrews to cover Fairford South and Cllr Beccle to cover Fairford North.

Responsibilities – District Cllr. Coakley is appointed to the Cabinet at CDC

District Cllr Beccle has been appointed as Vice Chair of the Planning Committee at CDC.

District Cllr Andrews is appointed to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Developments – Whilst the District Cllrs objected to the developments that have taken place in Fairford, they were overruled, one on Appeal to the Secretary of State, albeit that Grampian conditions have been issued on this particular development. There is huge pressure for further development.

Local Plan – this has been worked on throughout the year and has gone through the consultation period and it is hoped will be approved by the end of the year. This will be a great defence against further inappropriate developments.

Flooding – not as severe as in previous years, with defences proving successful, although there are still issues relating to surface water which are being dealt with.

Holding costs down – i.e. Green bins.

District Cllr Beccle reported as follows:

Broadband – Have been endeavouring throughout the year to improve services in the area. £500k has been provided which has been matched by GCC.

District Cllrs Coakley and Beccle

Fairford Neighbourhood Development Plan

Steering Group Members:- Malcolm Cutler (Chair), Richard Harrison, Sarah Basley, Alison Hobson, Margaret Bishop

It is now about a year since the Fairford Neighbourhood Plan project was revived by the Town Council. The new Steering Group has met on average fortnightly over that time, in addition to other meetings and work to progress the development of the Plan.

The major aim of the Steering Group is to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan – when produced – represents the views of Fairford’s residents about future development of the town, whilst at the same time ensuring that it meets the necessary requirements so it can achieve final approval and become part of the formal ‘development plan’ for the area.

The initial steps in this process were: Identifying the main Aims and Objectives; Forming work groups on subjects including housing, infrastructure, heritage & culture, business & employment; Publicity and communications to highlight the importance and aims of the Neighbourhood Plan to residents; Identifying and consulting existing documents such as the Fairford Community Plan, the Cotswold District Local Plan and other towns’ completed Neighbourhood Plans; Defining cost requirements, budgets and timetables.

Over the past 6 months the Steering Group’s main activities have included: Commissioning work from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) and a couple of consultants on Town Centre Planning and Transport; Discussions with Gloucestershire Rural Community Council on how to develop the Plan; Meetings with bodies such as the Cotswold Water Park Water & Integrated Local Delivery project (WILD), Cotswold Water Park Trust and the Ernest Cook Trust; Design and distribution of the town questionnaire.

The response both in numbers and content was very encouraging. We had nearly 650 responses, which is about 40% of households. We’d like to thank you for this valuable input.

Distributing a business questionnaire and subsequent meetings with the majority of businesses in Fairford (town centre) and on the Horcott, London Rd and Welford Rd business parks.

Analysis of the questionnaire responses. A summary has already been provided to the Town Council, and we will be making use of this in developing our proposals and responding to planning applications.

Also Creation of four new work groups which, based on the questionnaire responses and other feedback, are identifying and detailing the specific objectives, policies and projects which will form the core of the Neighbourhood Plan. The groups are: Housing Development – led by Richard Harrison; infrastructure & Environment—led by Sarah Basley & Margaret Bishop; Business, Employment & Visitor Development—led by Malcolm Cutler; Local Community, Services & Facilities—led by Jennie Sanford (following the resignation of Barry Fenby from the Town Council). to support these and contributions to improving local facilities. It would be inappropriate to make further comments until discussions have taken place with relevant parties. These groups have involved interested residents as well as Steering Group members. As you would expect there has been a lot of interaction between them, coordinated by the Steering Group. We recognised the need for professional advice on the writing of the Neighbourhood Plan from the outset, and we have talked to other Neighbourhood Plan Groups about how to get the most out of this. Following the successful questionnaires and the initial output from the working groups, the Steering Group has now appointed a specialist consulting group who have extensive experience in producing successful neighbourhood plans, helping to defend against major planning applications, and have worked with other groups in the Cotswold District.

An initial meeting has been held with them and they have already provided a draft report on what we have done and how we should proceed in the present circumstances. This is now being acted upon and the necessary ongoing support and involvement from the consultants is being planned (in line with budget availability). As you will probably know, CDC have recently changed their draft Local Plan to include two additional development sites for Fairford (at Milton Farm and behind Faulkner's Close near the Horcott lakes). These were 'reserve' sites from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Following discussion with the consultants, the Steering Group is now considering proposing a longer term vision and strategy for Fairford. This will comment on the sites proposed by CDC, possibly propose alternative more suitable sites, and potentially additional sites for longer term development post 2031, including .

Communication about the Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing through the website, Facebook page and planned poster/leaflet displays.

The timescale for the completion of the Neighbourhood Plan cannot be confirmed at this time, but the consultants believe that we can submit our draft plan to CDC by the end of the year.

Finally, thanks to Malcolm, Sarah, Margaret, Alison and the other Steering Group members.

Richard Harrison

FEAG(Fairford Emergency Action Grp)

We have contracted with the Gloucestershire/Worcestershire 4 x 4 vehicle response team to provide access to their vehicles and support staff if and when we need them. We only incur a charge if we call them out to help. We are also looking at undertaking another exercise in the autumn.

Trevor Hing

Community Centre Report 2015-16

The Centre continues to provide services and facilities for the local community. We've had a good year and been very busy. It is a community building and is used by many different groups at various times of the day.

As well as church activities, it is a popular venue for meetings, parties, coffee mornings, charity lunches, funeral wakes, etc. There are more than 20 regular activities, including Art classes, Ballet dancing, Bingo, Bridge Club, Country Market, Children's activities, Exercise and Fitness classes, Gardeners Society, History Society, Mother and baby groups, Walking group, Weight watchers, Yoga, and Youth club, plus various U3A activities including Boccia, Bridge, Mah Jong, Needlework, Quilting, Scrabble, Table tennis and Recorder music. There is also a Police Point, and we serve as local Polling station.

The community Xmas dinner, organised this year by Amanda and Mervyn Culley, was very successful and we extend grateful thanks to them and their many volunteer helpers.

We were sad to hear that the charity which ran the volunteer Bureau and dial-a-ride bus service has closed, leaving their room empty, and we hope that something will be arranged so that the services to the public can continue.

We are a non-profit-making organisation and a registered charity. Our aim is to provide good accommodation at reasonable cost and make sure the building is well looked after. We've done a lot of maintenance this year; the Heritage room has been re-decorated and fitted with new carpet; the Farmor room has had new blinds; and the keble room upstairs has been completely refurbished with new flooring and redecorated. It looks good and I recommend it if you want to hire a room. There are 4 rooms available for hire, of various sizes. They can be booked by the hour, the day, or for longer periods, with reasonable rates varying from £4.50 to around £14 per hour, with concessions for regular bookings. Full details are available from the office or web site.

What users want is important to us and we welcome ideas and suggestions. All are cordially invited to become members of FCC Ltd. There is no joining or membership fee, just an annual general meeting once a year. Our next AGM will be in 3 weeks time, here on Monday 13th June at 7.30pm and everyone is welcome.

We express our grateful thanks to the FCC Trustees for all their hard work, to Sadie and Eric our centre managers who keep things running smoothly, and to all the people who have helped in many different ways to give us a very successful year.

For further information contact FCC Office:-

Tel : 01285 711571 Email: bookings@fccentre.co.uk

or see full details on our web site www.fairfordcommunitycentre.org

Margaret Bishop

Police Report for Fairford 2015-16

Crime figures reported 22% reduction in crime overall.

Violent crime down 47%

Assault with injury down 62%

Theft down 10%

Criminal Damage down 58%

However drugs offences increased in the year. Areas where offences take place are being monitored with a view to improving policing in these areas.

P.C. Stewart Liddle-Peters

League of Friends 2015-16

The League of Friends does not focus on Fairford Hospital alone. The Hospital is a very important facility for outpatient appointment services with approx 6000 + appointments. The League has a strong commitment to it. The League focuses on local community spending £75k last year on health issues, such as palliative care where 37 patients have been looked after. An agreement is in place with Prospect Hospice. The League also operates a voluntary drive scheme for hospital appointment covering 700 drives a year. £12k has been spent on counselling services. A lunch club is run very week for the frail and elderly which costs approx. £12k to run. They also fund the Young at Heart club at Beaumont Place, which is a dementia led project and provides respite for carers. There is strong support in the Community raising between £16 - £19k a year. The Charity shop in Lechlade raises approx. £16k a year. Financial details are available on the League's website. The biggest problem is that there are not enough volunteers to help out.

Graham Hewitt (Chairman)

Citizen Awards 2016

Presentations were made for the above Awards:

Citizen of the Year Award - 4 nominees were received from which Mr & Mrs Cully were chosen as the winner of this year's award for their work with the Christmas Lunch for those on their own and their work with the church and T.S. Raleigh.

Albert Alder Award – 2 nominees received of which Jasmine Beach was selected as the Winner, for her work in clearing litter in Fairford.

Geoff Chick Bursary Award – 2 applications received. Both candidates, Jillian Smith and Freya Mizon received the awards to help them in their Gap Year working abroad for various charities.

Other Reports

COMMUNITY CONNEXIONS

Following the demise of CVS as from Monday 18th April Community Connexions have stepped in at short notice to provide accessible door-to-door community transport in the Cotswolds District using minibuses and volunteer cars at the request of Gloucestershire County Council and the Trustees of CVS.

We are a charity with over 30 years' experience in the provision of community transport, we are able to deliver professional, safe transport solutions to the most vulnerable of passengers. Highly trained, GCC DBS cleared volunteer drivers are supported by experienced transport coordinators.

We provide pre-bookable transport solutions for groups and individuals to all destinations.

We are currently undertaking a measured re-design of the service provision using our current model which we know works. Our aim is to meet the communities' needs whilst ensuring that the service is sustainable.

We have employed two drivers who used to work in the Fairford area for CVS – their knowledge of the area and passengers is invaluable. The minibus is sited at the Fire Station as before. We are working towards dovetailing services across South Cotswolds to ensure that we make best use of our minibus and driver resources.

Passengers will not be asked for the annual registration fee of £10 until 2017. This is to ensure fairness as some passengers had previously paid a registration fee and some hadn't. We have introduced a staged approach to increasing fare charges.

In the first instance we are providing regular shopping trips into Cirencester every Thursday from **Fairford and Gloucestershire villages within a 5 mile radius**. If passenger numbers are consistently high we can justify registering this as a bus service which would mean passengers could use their bus passes – which is an approach we have used effectively in other areas. We are currently charging £5 for this which does not cover its costs and is therefore not sustainable as it stands – we will need to charge £10 going forward if we do not register it as a bus route. We will make a decision on this in the near future.

Informing passengers of the real cost of transport and managing expectations has met with mixed reactions. Some people are very realistic and welcome the fact that there is still a service and therefore an opportunity to get out, with others finding it more difficult to embrace the change – often for financial reasons.

For monthly excursions within Gloucestershire see below - a minimum number of eight passengers is required for these excursions to go ahead. Seats are allocated on a first come first serve basis.

Cheltenham – 1st Wednesday - £13.50 per person

Gloucester – 2nd Wednesday - £17.50 per person

Fairford Market – 3rd Wednesday - £6.25 per person