

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015

A successful year for the Village Society in a number of ways, as you will hear through the reports from other members of the Committee, together with the recent Newsletter items.

Membership has held up, our income has enabled us to expend considerable sums of money on modernising the Greenwood Centre heating system and, during the summer holidays, some further improvements on the internal decorations will commence, once the damp problems have been eradicated. All this, together with a new children's toilet and wash basin partly paid for by a grant for the Pre-school, and some changes we have already carried out on the front wall to improve car access, should make the hall a good deal more attractive for users.

Many of you will also have read in the recent newsletter about our input to both the Biggin Hill airport planning issues and the Orpington Priory potential sale. Deliberations continue on both subjects with our continued involvement but it has to be accepted that the final outcome on Biggin Hill is likely to be a compromise, with residents getting some increase in aircraft noise.

The discussions between the Society and the London Borough of Bromley seem endless, with minimal sign of any success on numerous areas of concern along the high street, such as parking, speeding traffic on local roads, village signs, and the visual impact of decaying buildings, vacant plots and litter. Rest assured, however, that Councillor Keith Onslow is working hard on our behalf and there might just be some light at the end of the tunnel. However, with a petition currently circulating (as I write this at the very beginning of May) on the lack of appropriate parking restrictions at certain road junctions we cannot just accept the status quo. The one exception is our inability to achieve any action at all on rebuilding the damaged wall opposite Waitrose, despite having obtained details of the car ownership along with acceptance of responsibility to effect a repair by the relevant insurance company, as the instruction has to originate from the wall owner or his/her insurance company.

Internal discussions have included a suggestion to amalgamate the two sections of The Society, the catalyst for which was the £1500 War Bond loan repaid by the Government that was registered to the Greenwood Centre rather than the Society. Having taken advice from both our President and the Auditor, the decision was made to leave things as they are and transfer funds between the two accounts as and when appropriate. The £1500 was transferred to the Village Society as indicated in the accounts.

You will see that, despite an agreement at last year's AGM to change our Constitution, we find the need to make a further minor amendment, so as to comply with the membership requirements of an organisation we previously had membership of, and found the need to rejoin - The Federation of Bromley Residents' Associations. The change is merely to confirm that The Society is non-political, and the Committee recommends acceptance of the proposal.

I will be standing again to serve on the Committee, as are a number of others, although there are some not wishing to continue. We will be able to operate should we not get any other volunteers, but there is a distinct disadvantage in that situation, so I hope that some of you will offer to fill the gaps and give us a broader viewpoint than would otherwise be the case.

Bob Trott