

I think that it would be fair to say that despite adverse weather conditions this year, coupled with a variety of personal issues which have taken up the time of many of us, this has once again been a very successful year for the Fulford Village Group.

In the following review of the year I apologise for not thanking anybody by name because, although many have gone above and beyond the call of duty, the village group works as team – a team of what I am sure you will agree are amazing individuals who are supported by a network of wonderful people in the village, also prepared to give of their time and energy.

The monthly village walks (including the very popular New Year walk) were well supported whatever the weather as were the regular seasonal tidy ups, with last year's leaf clear attracting a record number of helpers. The second village Barn Dance on 25<sup>th</sup> Feb (a fund raiser for the FVG) sold out almost as soon as the tickets went on sale and the table tennis club and Choir continue to go from strength to strength.

Spring and summer saw the village concentrating its efforts on the BKV. It was very pleasing therefore to be judged as third in the small village category for our region, with every aspect of the village complimented, especially pleasing to see was the special mention given to FVG initiatives such as the planters, the village sign, the renovated well and the community herb garden - not forgetting the fantastic poster displays and the hedgehog project with the school!

Once again the village appearance was enhanced by residents participating in the garden competition, and the photo competition provided so many excellent pictures that not only has a calendar been produced from the entries, but also packs of Christmas cards, both of which are selling out fast.

This year the group purchased and installed three signs proudly displaying the slogan "Best Kept Village Winner". This celebrates our having won the competition in 2015 and our continued successful participation. This is in keeping with past winners in the county who display an open-ended sign.

As we approach the festive season can I mention last year's highly successful events; the visit of Santa and Carols on the Green. Record numbers of children and adults came to see Santa and despite the appallingly cold and icy conditions, there was a good turnout for the Carols. Sadly the Choir Christmas concert did not fare so well having to be cancelled at the very last minute.

It has been very pleasing to see that a great number of events that started as FVG ideas have now become regular events in the village calendar. It could be that last week's Ghost walk and yesterday's Village Remembrance held in the pub's grounds could also become village traditions.

The Ceramic Poppies purchased in 2014 from the Tower of London Exhibition by the Parish Council at the suggestion of the FVG, have been made into two permanent wreaths incorporating barbed wire and a horse shoe from the Queen's Cavalry by a local artist who works in mixed media. They were on display at the church and the pub yesterday and later at the Beacon lighting service at Meir Heath, and will continue to be a beautiful and meaningful legacy for the community.

And so to next year: At the forefront of our minds is the restoration of the War memorial – a project that requires £2500 to be raised in a very short time scale and this will be the group's immediate focus. In the summer a Community Fun Day is in the calendar (Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July) to include a dog show, crafts, games, a produce show and much, much more.

Finally, I should like to emphasise the importance the FVG attaches to the good relationships we have with village organisations, fully supporting the School, the Village hall, the Church, the shop and the pub.

Mention should also be made of the continued support of Fulford Parish Council.

In the same way that the Fulford Village Group is the sum of many individual talents, Fulford is the sum of its parts, people from all ages and walks of life, often in a quiet and understated way, work to make the village what it is: a warm, vibrant community living in a friendly and attractive place. Our objectives as stated in the constitution are "to advance, improve, develop and maintain a sense of community and pride in the village .....including the organisation of events open to everyone" It is very encouraging to see that in general the village is more and more embracing this aim.

Thank you to anyone who has contributed in any way to any of the village activities this year, your help and support are greatly appreciated.

David Godfrey 11/11/2018