

Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2013

On 4th June 2012 our parish council held a joint event with Strode Park to celebrate the Royal Jubilee, this was well attended and all the local children who attended were given a jubilee mug by the parish council.

The 9th Garden Safari was held on 10th June, visitor numbers were down due to the weather conditions prior to and the weather forecast for the day. £1,460 was raised on the day £730 went to Pilgrims Hospices and £730 went into our Community Projects fund, this helped to pay for the Dave Lee bench installed in Curtis Wood Park. A BBQ was held for those who opened their gardens and a representative from Pilgrims Hospice attended to collect their cheque.

The fun day held on 19th August was a great success with a very good turnout £2,196 was raised on the day with £1,098 being donated to Strode Park and £1,098 going into Community projects.

A quiz night was held on 22 September which raised £401.33

A cheque presentation afternoon was held on 2nd December, all volunteers had been invited and a cheque was presented to Strode Park.

The children's party was held on 9th December and was well attended. Some grant funding was received towards the cost of this and the remainder came from the Community Fund.

Although slow progress is being made with the allotments there is some action. Plans are being prepared for our planning application and, when this has been received, the Allotments Society will swing into action preparing the plots and car park and erecting the fencing. *[ed: planning permission has now been granted]*

Funding was successfully sought to paint a mural on one side of the underpass and the clerk is currently seeking funding for the other side.

The parish council has taken over the wildlife area adjacent to Ruskins View in Cherry Orchard and has agreed to allow Little Acorns to use it as a Forest School. The area has been fenced to make it secure and tree works have been carried out to make the area safe.

A public meeting was held on 19th Feb and a questionnaire distributed to seek residents views on the proposals to include Strode Farm and the Golf Course in the new CCC Local Plan.

Concerns were raised by some about councillor's conflict of interest and it was explained that councillors across all levels of council and throughout the UK sometimes find they have a conflict of interest with council business. This is managed by excluding the interest holder from participating,

indeed where the interest is pecuniary, the councillor must not be in the room during discussion and decision making.

In many cases, and ours is one, the council would be very much poorer if the interest holder were not allowed to be a councillor just because they MAY have an interest in ONE item at some indeterminate time in the future.

On a personal note, this has been my 4th year as chairman of the council and it has been a most enjoyable and rewarding one as have all my terms in the chair. From my point of view a successful council must have a good team of Chairman and Clerk and in Monica we are blessed with a clerk who puts her heart and soul into the job. She and I get on well and work well together.