



Hello Fellow Members

Spring is here for the 24th Issue of our Newsletter and in it we have:

- a few words about 'Future Events',
- some 'Fundraising News',
- a bit of recent 'Publicity',
- a report and photo's from this years AGM, Pizza Supper & Sing-a-Long,
- another 'Meet The Committee',
- an article about Bedford Borough's 'Equipment Demonstration Area' in Gadsby Street,
- changes to Parking in Bedford Town Centre,
- an article about the forthcoming 'Bedfordshire Games' to be held in July,
- FLAG at St Pauls Church's 'May Market',
- a report and some photo's from the Easter Tea/Coffee Afternoon,
- a list of 'Dates for your Diary',
- and a list of Committee Members and FLAG contact details.

Future Events

Duxford Air Show - 24th May

Its not really a future event because we went there last week but there wasn't time to put anything in this newsletter, so an article and photo's will be in the next issue.



Quiz Night



Flyers will be coming out soon for the FLAG 'Quiz Night' and meal, so get your brains in gear.

Museum Trip

In September we are organising a coach trip to a museum or two in London.



Ideas



Don't forget if you have any ideas for events or outings for next year let us know.

Funding

After giving a talk to a Bedford Masonic Lodge Roger Gaunt (Brendan's father) donated his £300 fee to FLAG. Many thanks Roger.



Publicity

Did you see this article in the 'Bedford Times and Citizen' newspaper on 24th April. A big thank you again to Harpur Trust and Tesco's for their donations.

Flag flying high for friendship group

A social group for disabled adults is celebrating two cash windfalls.

The Bedford Friendship Link and Action Group (FLAG) received grants of £4,545 from The Harpur Trust's Isolation Fund and £1,000 from the Tesco Community Awards Fund.

FLAG treasurer and fundraiser Tracey Brightman said: "We are delighted. The Harpur Trust and Tesco saw what a worthwhile group we

are. The Harpur Trust funding will be used to help organise our events and provide a weekly meeting place over the next two years and the Tesco donation will pay for the hire of an accessible coach for two of our day trips."

FLAG aims to combat social isolation, boost confidence and promote independence for Bedford adults with a physical or learning disability or sensory impairment,

their friends, carers and volunteers.

Tracey said: "As disabled people ourselves, FLAG knows the major barriers to social inclusion faced by disabled adults are transport, support and low income. FLAG solves all these problems by providing transport and support at subsidised events."

Times & Citizen



FLAG Bedford AGM 10th April 2014, Priory Methodist Church

31 members attended this year's AGM which was chaired for the first time by Laura Peggs. She began by welcoming us all to the meeting.

Tracey Brightman, our Treasurer, gave a review of FLAG's Annual Accounts. Reserves have fallen over the year by £1931 to £4143, however we are due to receive funding of £4545 from the Harpur Trust to be used over the next two years. Finances are good.

Dylan, our Administrator, gave a report on last year's events namely:

- AGM 2013 - 11th April 2013,
- Naidex Exhibition - 1st May 2013,
- Thames River Trip - 15th July 2013,
- Bingo Evening - 26th Sept 2013,
- Halloween Karaoke - 31st Oct 2013,
- Christmas Meal - 12th Dec 2013,
- Ten Pin Bowling - 13th February 2014.

There were shouts from a few members asking when the next 'River Trip' will be. It was a really popular event and very well attended so we'll have to think about a similar outing for next year.

A new Committee was then elected:

- Chairperson - Laura Peggs.
- Vice-Chair - Jeff Noble.
- Secretary - Lisa Thomas.
- Treasurer - Tracey Brightman.
- Committee Support - Ros Graham.

Those elected into new roles were:

- Volunteer Coordinator - Tracey Brimmell.
- Member Liaison - Brendan Gaunt.
- Member Liaison - Gordon Cooke.

Two roles are yet to be filled:

- Fundraiser,
- Newsletter Editor.

Our Administrator, Dylan, remains in his un-elected paid role.

Laura went on to talk about the events planned for the year ahead:

- It'll be Duxford or Legoland in May/June 2014 (there was a vote at the end of the meeting as to which one we will be going to, see bottom of page),
- Quiz Night - July / August 2014,
- A London Museum - Sept 2014,
- Halloween Event - 31st Oct 2014,
- Christmas Meal - Dec 2014,
- Theatre Trip - February 2015.



A.O.B. - Any Other Business

After a complaint from a member it was decided that more consideration should be taken for certain wheelchair user members with mobility problems when asked to transfer from their wheelchair to a seat in a coach.

It was also decided that as there are limited wheelchair spaces on coach trips it would be fairest to allocate the wheelchair spaces on a first come first served basis.

FLAG merchandise was for sale at the AGM (polo shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies and fleeces) along with craft items.



After the AGM we voted on where to go for the next trip. The result was: Duxford 17 votes, Legoland 14 votes. So it means Duxford Air Show on the 24th May won. A report will be in the Summer issue of the Newsletter.





Pizza / Sing-a-Long (after the AGM) 10th April 2014, Priory Methodist Church

After the AGM we tucked into a delicious Pizza and Salad from the Honeycrust Bakery. As usual our great gang of volunteers were on hand to help serve the food and drinks.

Our two youngest volunteers, Amy and Holly, did a wonderful job selling raffle tickets, raising £52 towards future FLAG events, thank you everyone.

And then the highlight of the evening, so he tells me, was Dylan, who sang a few songs from his fabulous repertoire.

I hope you all enjoyed a great evening of chat, food and singing with fellow FLAG members.



Jill



Ros and Dylan



Ros and Karina



Andrew



Simon



Holly and Bernadette



Amy and Tracey



Carole and Lance



Ros and Dylan



Lisa, Matthew





Pizza / Sing-a-Long (after the AGM) cont... 10th April 2014, Priory Methodist Church

Nick Retires.



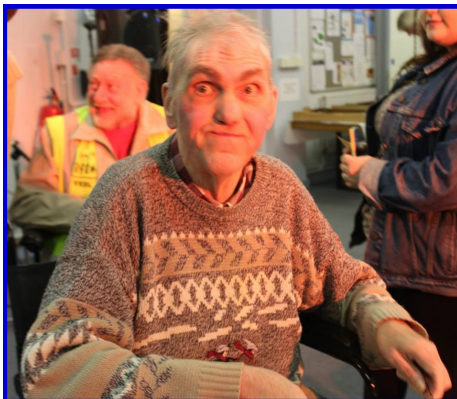
Nick Cochran was a founding member of FLAG. He has been a great friend and support to the group over the last eight or so years holding several positions on the Committee including Chair, Fundraiser, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor, although not all at the same time. He has decided to stand down and retire from the Committee but he will still remain a member of FLAG.



Nick

A big thank you to Nick for doing a great job keeping FLAG going all these years and for helping it to go from strength to strength.

At the AGM our Chairperson Laura thanked Nick for his hard work and presented him with a bottle of wine. Cheers Nick and best wishes.



Mervyn



Holly and Amy



Jeff



The AGM gang



Meet the Committee

It is now the turn of Lisa Thomas, our Secretary, to be interviewed for the 'Meet the Committee' slot, and here is the interview.



1) *How long have you been a member of FLAG.*

> I have been a FLAG member since March, 2011.

2) *Why did you join FLAG.*

> My mum, Jan, was a FLAG member and she suggested I join.

3) *How long have you been FLAG's Secretary.*

> I have been FLAG's Secretary since April, 2012 after being voted in at the 2012 AGM.

4) *What does a Secretary do.*

> I record the minutes at the Committee meetings and the AGM's and supply a copy to the Committee members for the next Committee meeting.

5) *What is your work history.*

I worked for Autoglass for 20 years since leaving school. I am currently looking for work unfortunately I am slightly limited to what I can do because of my disability.

5) *What was your favourite FLAG event and why.*

> I have two favourite events, one was going to Woburn Safari Park because I had not been there since I was little. My other favourite event was the trip to see Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, at Northampton's Theatre, even though I've seen it before, it is still one of my favourites

6) *Have you any pets, what are they and what are their names.*

> I have a 4 year old cat called Oscar. I've always had cats and this is my fourth. Oscar is good company and makes a really great foot warmer when he sits on my feet.

9) *What sort of books do you read.*

I like thriller books, I have a favourite author called Harlen Coben, I have most of his books.

10) *What TV shows do you like.*

I like some American shows especially 'Greys Anatomy' I have seen all of the ten series and have them all on DVD. I also like Criminal Minds, again I have all nine series on DVD, I can watch them over and over again.

11) *What sort of music do you like.*

I don't listen to a lot of music, but I like listening to musicals, Les Miserables is my favourite.

12) *What fun stuff do you like doing.*

I like seeing my niece and nephew, and I enjoy going to the gym, I try to get there twice a week, I have recently been studying PowerPoint on a course, I like to socialise with my friends and go out for meals with them, I also enjoy watching films and reading.

Thank you Lisa.

Equipment Demonstration Area.

Bedford Borough Council provide an "Equipment Demonstration Area" in Gadsby Street with advice to promote independence and safety within your own home. They have a range of general household items (including kettle tip-pers, jar openers and dressing aids) and larger items (including bathing equipment, stair lifts and a ceiling track hoist) that they can demonstrate and provide advice on how to access these.

The Occupational Therapy Team will be able to:

- Discuss the issues you may be having within your own home,
- Demonstrate equipment that may be available to assist you,
- Signpost you to other support services,
- Provide advice on how you can adapt your lifestyle to make your life easier,
- Provide information about voluntary agencies that may be able to provide support.

Where appropriate they can arrange for a further assessment in your own home to provide more specialist guidance or advice. There is no charge for advice and if they need to signpost you to other services, they will be able to provide the information on any potential costs.

Bedford Borough Occupational Therapy Team—Centre for Independent Living.

Bedford Borough Council
Gadsby Street
Bedford
MK40 3HP



Monday > Friday - 10am to 3pm,
by appointment.

Wed - 11am to 3pm, drop-in service, no appointment is necessary

Tel: 01234 276102 email:
equipment.demonstration@bedford.gov.uk

All Night Parking in Bedford Town Centre.

In a boost for Bedford Town Centre the Borough Council is introducing all-night parking for the first time ever at both Lurke Street & River Street Multi Storey Car Parks. The two car parks will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from Monday 19 May.

New payment machines will also be installed at Lurke Street on the same day which, for the first time, will offer the facility for both card payments and change for cash payments. The payment system will be the same across all multi-storey car parks, with car park users taking a ticket on entry and simply paying for the time they have used on their return to the car park.



Bedfordshire Games

Started in 1989 the 'Bedfordshire Games' aims to give local teenagers and adults who have significant learning disabilities (SLD) and complex needs the opportunity to take part in an annual sporting event. The event is always held on the first Tuesday in July at Bedford International Athletic Stadium.

In 2013 approximately 330 competitors from 18 establishments across Bedfordshire (Local Authority and Independent Adult Care Centre, Day Resource Centres, Charity run Residential Care Homes, Special Schools) participated in a total of 74 track and field events.





St Paul's Church - May Market Saturday 17th May 2014



Members of FLAG ran a stall at the annual St Paul's Church May Market on Saturday 17th May 2014. It turned out to be a wonderful spring day, which was lucky as FLAG had an outside stall.

The idea was both to raise funds for FLAG and to raise the profile of FLAG. Laura Peggs was the main organiser of the day but was helped out by a few other FLAG members as you can see in these photo's. A big thank you to them and the people of Bedford who attended the Market. A brilliant £52 was raised for FLAG on the day.



Laura and Angela wearing their matching FLAG 'Polo Shirts'



Gordon





St Paul's Church - May Market cont... Saturday 17th May 2014

FLAG ran a 'Find the Birdie' competition where, for 50p, people were asked to guess the square on which the Birdie was. The prize was a Parrot Puppet with a squeaky beak.



There was also a 'Hook a Duck' competition where nine ducks numbered underneath from 1 to 9. floated in their



little pool and had to be hooked with a stick to win a prize. An odd number and you won a lolly, an even number and you won a FLAG 'Ducky Bag' full of lots of little goodies.



Quack, Quack.



FLAG member Carole M has a go at 'Hooking a Duck'.



Hooray, Carole 'Hooks a Duck'.



Carole leaves with a wonderful FLAG 'Ducky Bag'.





Easter Tea/Coffee Afternoon

At the Easter Tea/Coffee afternoon Laura Peggs got us making 'Easter Baskets' with a competition for the 'Best Basket' being held at the end of the afternoon. Four of our newest members won prizes of an Easter Egg each. You might think it looks like a bit of a 'sweatshop' in the photo's below but although we all worked hard we had fun and a good laugh as well.

Laura had also made some 'Easter Cards' and was selling them with the money raised going to FLAG funds.

Most members come along to our Thursday afternoons just for a chat and a laugh. If there is other stuff you would like to do, games or crafts, let us know and we'll try to make it happen.



Easter Cards



Laura

Easter Baskets



Tracey



Lisa



Angela





Dates for Your Diary

FLAG Thursday Afternoon's.

Events are held from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue, unless otherwise stated.

- 5th Jun Drop-In.
- 12th Jun Drop-In.
- 19th Jun Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 26th Jun Drop-In.
- 3rd Jul Committee Meeting
- 10th Jul Drop-In.
- 17th Jul Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 24th Jul Drop-In.
- 31st Jul Drop-In.
- 7th Aug Drop-In.
- 14th Aug Committee Meeting
- 21st Aug Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 28th Aug Drop-In.
- 4th Sep Drop-In.
- 11th Sep Drop-In.
- 18th Sep Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 25th Sep Committee Meeting
- 2nd Oct Drop-In.
- 9th Oct Drop-In.
- 16th Oct Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.

Dates for Your Diary cont...

- 16th Oct Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 23rd Oct Drop-In.
- 30th Oct Committee Meeting
- 6th Nov Drop-In.
- 13th Nov Drop-In.
- 20th Nov Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 27th Nov Drop-In.
- 4th Dec Drop-In.
- 11th Dec Committee Meeting
- 18th Dec Tea / Coffee / Cake Social Afternoon.
- 25th Dec No FLAG Meeting or Drop-In.

Bi-Monthly Events

- Jun / Jul Quiz / Meal
- Sep Trip to a London Museum
- Oct 31st Halloween Event / Meal
- Dec Christmas Meal
- Feb / Mar Theatre Trip

Next Issue

If any member has something they would like to write about or would like us to write about for the next issue please let us know.

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FLAG Bedford

Committee Members
+ Administrator



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Laura Peggs
Chairperson



Jeff Noble
Vice Chair



Lisa Thomas
Secretary



Tracey Brightman
Treasurer



Ros Graham
Committee Support



Tracey Brimmell
Volunteer Co-ordinator



Gordon Cooke
Member Liaison



Brendan Gaunt
Member Liaison



Bernadette Frisby
Fundraiser



Dylan Bowers
Administrator

