



Fleet & Church Crookham Society Newsletter – Autumn 2020

Member of



A display of autumnal colour on Basingstoke Canal

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Chairman’s Introduction

When I wrote the introduction for the Spring newsletter, I made reference to the possibility of having to re-write the whole article the following day as Central Government advice on the Covid-19 lockdown was fast moving and being updated almost daily.

Seven months on, I am compiling this introduction having made two re-writes during the week due to government changes.

The first major change this week is that Hart District Council has announced that the controversial pedestrianisation of Fleet Road is to be withdrawn at the earliest opportunity. The pedestrianisation was hastily introduced in August to meet a grant funding deadline

from Hampshire County Council. The scheme has caused furore and (sometimes unpleasant) political debate and has been a hot topic on social media platforms such as Facebook. There has been considerable criticism about the lack of consultation, traffic routing and access for the disabled and cyclists. John Pearson has undertaken the unenviable task of compiling a balanced article for the newsletter which is detailed on page 4. By definition, this controversial scheme has yielded a split in opinion. Certainly, there is a range of views within the Society’s committee. We respect that there is a wide range of views from the public,

The views and comments expressed in this Newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Fleet & Church Crookham Society. Neither the authors nor the Society accept responsibility for any use to which the information contained in this Newsletter may be put.

retailers, and our membership. We have therefore endeavoured to report the issue as fairly as possible without siding with one camp or the other.

The second major change this week is the Prime Minister's announcement that we are to embark on a further national lockdown period. Back in the Spring, most of us were thinking that the situation would pass within a few weeks and everything would get back to normal. Clearly the pandemic is set to be prevalent for quite some time yet and economic and other repercussions will be long lasting. I am particularly concerned about the economic outlook for Fleet's retailers. Changes in shopping habits in recent years have had a considerable impact on high streets nationally, and the Covid pandemic accelerates the need for retailers to adapt to change. We urge residents to support local business wherever possible.

The need for social distancing and limiting contact has introduced many changes in the way all organisations function, whether that's businesses, councils or community organisations. Most regular events in the town have had to be cancelled or postponed, including the Food Festival, Carnival, Fleet Lions' Beer Festival and Fireworks Extravaganza etc. Most meetings are now held 'virtually' via Zoom or other platforms. The Fleet & Church Crookham Society is no exception, and we have had to conduct committee meetings via Zoom. Like many organisations it has meant very few physical activities have taken place throughout the year. We are therefore approaching the year end with a small surplus of funds. At our most recent meeting, the committee agreed to direct the excess to causes within Fleet & Church Crookham. The Society has previously

provided donation to the Christmas Day lunch for people who would otherwise be on their own. The Society is in contact with Fleet Town Council and will support whatever alternative arrangements are made for this event.

Almost overshadowed by national events since Spring is the news that Hart District Council has finally been able to formally adopt its Local Plan for Strategy and Sites to 2032 (at last!). Having been riddled with controversy and delays for several years, it is pleasing that the Local Plan has finally been adopted that provides the Council with a strategic plan for providing housing in the district. This will hopefully bring to end the jeopardy of 'planning by appeal' as developers take advantage of the vulnerability of the Council having no plan. No sooner than adopted, it was announced that Central Government was releasing a white paper consultation to overhaul the planning system. In our view this rides roughshod over the Local Plan system and introduces a 'top down' system of housing targets. Ironically, the proposed system removes the need for 'duty to co-operate' between neighbouring councils. This is particularly frustrating as it was the then newly introduced duty to co-operate that derailed Hart's Local Plan at the time of examination several years back! It is interesting to note the widespread criticism of the current government proposals from all sides, including Civic Voice and the Campaign for Rural England (CPRE).

Whilst we have been restrained from being more active during the year, my thanks as always to the Society's committee for their support and vigilance during the year, and our particular thanks also to Gillian Wain for compiling this newsletter.

Phill Gower

Hampshire Coronavirus Support and Helpline

The Hampshire Coronavirus Help and Support Line continues to operate this winter, providing information and advice, as well as practical support, to vulnerable Hampshire residents who do not have support from family, friends or their local community.

Hart District Council, in partnership with Hart Voluntary Action, has created the Hart Response Hub (HRH). The Hampshire Coronavirus and Support Line matches those requiring assistance with the most appropriate support network, often a referral to the HRH. HRH staff assess the referrals received and allocate help through town or parish volunteers.

The Hampshire Coronavirus and Helpline can be contacted on 0333 370 4000 and is open 9am to 5pm weekdays.

This service is for vulnerable people who need urgent assistance with essential food or household supplies, collection of medication, or who are at risk of loneliness and who have no other support available. You can discuss your requirements with friendly advisors who will ensure you get the help you need. Further details are available at www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus/volunteer-welfare

Hartland Park Submits Phase Two Proposal



Building at Hartland Park continues to make steady progress. The former aero engine test facility at Pyestock obtained outline planning permission for up to 1,500 dwellings in December 2018, with detailed planning permission granted for the first phase of 181 dwellings.

At first, there did not seem to be much progress as St Edward Homes undertook work to clear the area and install some of the underground infrastructure and groundwork in preparation for the build. Since then, some of the first dwellings have been completed at the southern end of the site including the impressive vista from the entrance overlooking the bridge and a lake created, with fountains and spacious landscaping.

In Spring, construction work was halted as the housebuilding industry met restrictions brought about by the Covid lockdown. Construction work has since resumed in the summer months and progress seems steady. Above is a photo of the current progress from the southern entrance. We hope you agree that the view from the marketing suite is very impressive, though our concern has always been in the detail behind this headline image.

Our original objections included the high density of the housing and the lack of affordable housing. The outline application was approved with only 20% affordable housing allocated to phase one despite Hart Council's requirement that 40% be devoted to shared ownership and social rented accommodation.

St Edward Homes has recently submitted phase two of the proposal that requests permission for the next 132 dwellings (HDC planning reference: 20/01885/REM). The

application allows for only 30% affordable housing, so extends the shortfall of affordable units that are intended to provide subsidised housing ownership for those, including key workers, who would otherwise not be able to afford to live in the area. Parking spaces are also well short of Hart's parking standards (a shortfall of 63 parking spaces). The landscaping buffer zones are also a long way short of that approved on the outline planning permission. The Society has raised objections on all of these points. There are a few other objections, though with outline permission already secured, the majority of the other objections relate to aspects that have already obtained outline planning approval.

We hope that Hart District Council maintains a strong stance to ensure that St Edward Homes delivers the best possible development to provide housing to support the community of Fleet & Church Crookham.



Phill Gower

Temporary Pedestrianisation of Fleet Road

Photos from Fleet Business Improvement District



At its Full Council meeting held in July 2020, Hart District Councillors decided to endorse a proposal to temporarily pedestrianise the retail core of Fleet Road. The reasons given included that it would assist businesses in the recovery phase of the Covid-19 crisis and that pedestrianisation would provide greater space for social distancing and allow activities to take place in the road space to attract people to Fleet and to spend more whilst they were in Fleet.

The pedestrianisation scheme was being funded from Government, via Hampshire County Council, from a *Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund*, providing £50 million from the European Regional Development Fund to councils across England to support the safe re-opening of high streets and other commercial areas. All expenditure incurred needed to be defrayed and all delivery completed by 31 March 2021.

Council members endorsed three proposals.

1. To temporarily pedestrianise Fleet Road from its junction with Church Road to its junction with Upper Street/Victoria Road.
2. To temporarily block off Upper Street at its junction with Clarence Road for traffic management purposes.
3. To work up and implement place-making elements of the scheme.

When debating the proposals, assurances were sought that the traffic impact from the scheme would be actively monitored and that, if there was any indication that the scheme required changes, this would be evidenced and taken to Hampshire County Council to make improvements or to remove the scheme. It was

also considered that with the high street in decline, viable temporary measures might help businesses by creating more space and feelings of a safe environment for visitors. On the other hand, the measures might cause greater disruption to businesses and to residents. The importance of regular and careful monitoring with both retailers and with residents was recognised.

The pedestrianisation proposals were approved by 12 votes in favour, with 11 against and 7 abstaining. Clearly the scheme did not enjoy overwhelming support from councillors at that time.

The pedestrianisation scheme began to be implemented on 24 August. Initial impressions about the closure were often unfavourable, particularly since the resulting street clutter from road traffic barriers, for example, made for a very poor street environment (as *pictured above*). There was also confused advice regarding cycling along the closed off section. Initially, cyclists were advised to dismount when entering the section. Later, cyclists were advised they could cycle on the closed off section provided they showed courtesy to pedestrians, especially during busy periods.

During the weeks that followed the closure, commendable efforts were made to encourage feedback on the scheme from both businesses and the public. The Hart Council website published detailed information about the scheme and about the feedback received. Imaginative changes to street furniture gradually took place, so that the street environment became greatly improved (*pictured opposite*). Nevertheless, a host of concerns continued to be raised, especially by

members of the public, about some of the shortcomings that were felt to arise from the scheme. These were too numerous to list here but could be viewed by accessing the Council's website.

It appears that a number of public opinion surveys were attempted by various interested parties since August to find out whether the public, in particular, was in favour of the scheme. All but one seemed to suggest a majority were not in favour and this conclusion seemed to be in line with the Council's feedback from emails received from residents and businesses following the road closure.

During an initial 3-week period following closure, the Council received 300 emails of which 270 were from residents. On average, 68% of those expressed dissatisfaction with the scheme with only 25% approving, leaving another 7% emailing with questions. Businesses, representing about 10% of all responses, were more evenly split with 28% in favour, 41% against and 31% asking questions.

It was, perhaps, therefore unsurprising that a number of Councillors at Hart's September Full Council meeting submitted a motion for the scheme to be terminated. The motion to terminate was amended to postpone any termination of the scheme until after retailers had been actively engaged to understand and to assess the nature of their concerns and to physically observe the impact of traffic on neighbouring roads at peak times, an issue that seemed to have caused most concern to residents. The amended motion received 20 votes in favour, 10 against, with one abstention.

Following the findings from the initial 3-week period of email monitoring, information from monitoring some 432 further emails, all but 15 from residents, was published by Hart. This period covered a further 5 weeks ending 18 October and showed 63% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the scheme,



35% now approving and 2% with questions.

In October, Hart's Cabinet commissioned a consultant to engage with businesses in Fleet to provide a report on the views of businesses, understanding concerns and collecting evidence around benefits of the closure scheme. The consultant undertook intensive engagement over a short period ending 17 October and produced a 26-page report that can be read on Hart's website. In summary, the report found that businesses were evenly divided with 39% against the scheme, 36% in favour and a substantial 25% neutral.

As we went to press, Hart announced that after reviewing feedback from residents, retailers and businesses, a Council Executive decision had been reached to end the temporary closure of Fleet Road as soon as practicable, recognising the concerns of Fleet residents, in particular, that the scheme was affecting their quality of life. These concerns were felt to outweigh the positive impacts.

So, what should our Society have felt about the scheme? There were clearly pros and cons, as with most initiatives. Many pedestrians and cyclists will have favoured the scheme, also some businesses, but not all. Residents living on roads near Fleet Road seemed to be mostly against this scheme, because of the perceived ill effects from additional vehicle traffic on their roads. A question remained about whether this scheme was helping to attract more people back to use Fleet town centre or not and making sure that they were safely social distancing.

Doubtless our own FCCS members will have included those in favour, as well as those against the scheme, so our Society has preferred to remain neutral on the matter. The success or otherwise of the scheme has now been judged, following evaluation of more feedback from businesses and from the public.

John Pearson



Brendoncare Clubs Support for Members in Fleet & Church Crookham

Brendoncare Clubs is a registered charity that brings joy and friendship to 1,500 older people through its network of over 90 clubs across Hampshire and Dorset, thus preventing loneliness and isolation.

The clubs are temporarily closed at present, and with many members living alone, Brendoncare has been helping to maintain the positive connections and friendships that members usually enjoy through their regular clubs. There has been regular telephone contact and support to all members and volunteers, regular virtual clubs and help with digital connections.

Plans are in place for these services to form a permanent part of Brendoncare Clubs' activities. This means that when the clubs re-open and some members feel unable to visit, or they need extra support from time to time, Brendoncare will be there for them. Demand for basic digital skills has also increased, and Brendoncare will continue to offer the friendship support to get members and volunteers connected if they want to be.

Brendoncare is committed to getting club members and volunteers back together again when it is safe to do so. Planning continues so that when the clubs are able to re-open, members and volunteers can feel safe and secure to visit their clubs again. The clubs in Fleet vary in their format, but all offer fun,



friendship and a warm welcome, and are open to both men and women.

Sam Agnew, Head of Brendoncare Clubs, said, "We have had such a positive response to the telephone calls, it is making a huge difference to our members' lives. I would like to say a big thank you to all the staff and volunteers who are helping to brighten up our members' days.

"We have heard from our members that since the clubs closed in March they have missed the social contact and the time with friends, the fun and laughter. We look forward to being able to get the clubs running again, when it is safe to re-open them."

For further information call 01962 857099, email clubs@brendoncare.org.uk, visit www.brendoncare.org.uk/clubs, or visit Facebook and Twitter @Brendoncare.



Photo from www.Brendoncare

The Fleet & Crookham Brendoncare Club meet online

FCCS Past Chairman's NHS Experience during the Pandemic

Many of us may be scared to attend for regular GP appointments or hospital appointments during these difficult times. I'd like to share my experiences with both services during lockdown to try to alleviate some of those fears. I am in the extremely vulnerable group and so was shielding for all of the first lockdown period.

Due to ongoing health issues, I have had many contacts with my GP practice between March and October and at all times I have felt very safe and supported. I have had telephone appointments, video appointments and face-to-face appointments, as well as having a paramedic from the surgery visit me in my own home.

Let me share with you one of my experiences, which led to me being admitted to hospital in October. I have ongoing breathing problems due to complications following a double lung transplant in 2010, and in August I started to feel more breathless than normal and had swollen legs and feet. I called my surgery, who arranged for my GP to call me for a telephone consultation. During this, the GP decided he needed to see me in person to assess my swollen feet. I visited the practice and sat in the car with a mask on. The GP came out to see me in the car park in full personal protective equipment (PPE) and said he needed to examine me properly. I had to wait for 5 minutes or so for the room in the surgery to be made ready for me and I then went inside to be examined. He said I needed to go to A&E for assessment as to whether I should be admitted to hospital, and I had to wait 5 minutes for the letter, which he brought out to the car.

My wife drove me to Frimley Park Hospital and we walked up to the A&E entrance. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 restrictions she was unable to come into A&E with me and we parted company, having told the A&E staff that I was in the extremely vulnerable category. I was taken through to be triaged and was then put into a room on my own. I was in the 'amber stream' as I was not proven to be COVID-19 positive or negative. From A&E I was assessed by the medical team and then admitted to an 'amber ward' where I would wait for the results of my



COVID-19 test. I was in a bay with three other patients (two beds having been removed to help with social distancing) and I remained on this ward until my results came through (thankfully negative).

Straightaway I was moved onto a 'green ward' (COVID-19 free) and put into a single room because of my vulnerable status. Every 5 days

whilst staying in hospital, each patient on a 'green ward' has a Covid test. I was under the care of the medical and respiratory team and, after a couple of days spent on this ward, I was moved onto the cystic fibrosis unit (also a 'green ward') and again into a single room. I remained on the cystic fibrosis unit for around 10 days until I was discharged.

At all times in hospital, any member of staff who had contact with me was wearing PPE and when I was in the bay on the 'amber ward' I also had to wear a mask. Visiting was difficult, as I could only have one visitor a day for a maximum period of 1 hour which was tough on the family at a time when we were not sure what the prognosis was going to be. I felt totally safe and cared for, as I always have any time I've been treated at Frimley Park Hospital and would like to reassure anyone having to visit hospital that your safety is paramount to the staff.

I have also had experience of using the outpatient service at Frimley Park Hospital a number of times during COVID-19 and again have felt very safe every time I have visited. I have had two minor operations at Heatherwood Hospital and Frimley Park Hospital during lockdown, as well as appointments with my transplant hospital (Royal Papworth Hospital in Cambridge).

I would just like to reassure anybody reading this account that if you have any health problems and are putting off visiting the GP or the hospital because of concerns around COVID-19, please feel assured that all the staff you come into contact with have your safety (as well as their own) as a top priority. The NHS is open for business and is as caring and supportive as it ever has been, and you should not risk your health because of fear that it is not safe to go.

David Bentley

A Milestone Uncovered

When local conservationist Chris Hall sadly died very suddenly, his partner was left with the unenviable task of finding homes for the rooms full of papers, reports and documents he had accumulated from his wide local interests: natural history, nature conservation and local history all featured in his in-depth studies over the years.

I agreed to take Fleet Pond-related items and it has taken me some while to sort out, scan and record as much as I can. Among these is an important document which eventually laid the foundation of Fleet Pond Society, namely the minutes of a meeting hosted by Fleet & Crookham Amenity Society (our Society's name at our formation) to debate ideas for the future of Fleet Pond. The date was 23 May 1972 and Fleet Urban District Council (FUDC) was in the process of acquiring ownership from the MoD and ideas for its use were to be discussed. Present at the meeting were representatives of the Sea Scouts, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Naturalist Trust and Fleet & Hartley Wintney Sports Council, and residents with their own special interest in Fleet Pond. Councillors from the FUDC were there as observers but were allowed to speak. Attendance was high, indicating how much local people valued Fleet Pond.

I have the impression that, when opting to

buy the site, FUDC had the leisure potential foremost in mind and had little awareness of the implications of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) status and how this would constrain what leisure activity would be possible. One councillor showed even less awareness of what nature conservation organisations did by declaring strongly that no nature conservation organisation must be given a management role as they would put a fence around the pond and keep people out. However, the environmental and biological value was made clear in the introduction speech by Brigadier Champion-Jones when he read out the letter from the Nature Conservancy (forerunners of English Nature). This emphasised that formalised recreation would be extremely damaging.

F&C Amenity Society looked forward to making access to the pond easier and recommended a circular path, possibly using the railway land as a route along the railway embankment side. They also favoured use as an educational facility, nature trails and a picnic site in a suitable location. They saw a potential for "limited boating", possibly controlled through youth groups, Sea Scouts and local schools.

The Sea Scouts proposed canoeing and sailing at weekends under supervision and proposed the construction of a boathouse



Photo from Fleet Pond Society

The first bridge Fleet Pond Society installed in 1977, across the Brookly Stream. This was the very first volunteer project for the Society; the bridge was provided at cost by the engineering company owned by Cllr Peter Carr, later to become chairman of the Leisure Services Committee at HDC

available to youth groups from the Fleet and Crookham area.

Hampshire & IoW Naturalist Trust proposed compromise: they pointed out that Fleet Pond was important for its rich wildlife variety and diversity and the rarity of the reedbed habitats in the UK. They felt that fishing would be possible without undue conflict and sailing could be trialled on a restricted basis at first.

A councillor who was chairman of Fleet & Crookham Sports Council, however, did not see the importance of the wildlife as a reason to restrict leisure activities. He wanted the wildlife and birds to be preserved, but FUDC Council, at a meeting on 21 November 1971, had agreed for activities to be considered for future leisure purposes. The list was angling, boating (not powered), canoeing, leisure sailing, and model boating and walking and picnicking. Car parks should be provided at southern and northern parts.

Several concerned residents then gave their views. Most wanted to maintain the pond as a wildlife sanctuary with controlled public access to avoid damage and disturbance to the wildlife environment.

Most outspoken was Freddie Tuck. Freddie lived in Fugelmere Road and had a keen love of Fleet Pond. He urged for a warden service to be available at all times to address the many abuses he had experienced: fly tipping was a serious issue at all access points; youths were regularly riding unlicensed, uninsured motor bikes around the area; a

regular party of what he called “marsh cowboys” could be heard and seen hunting wildfowl among the reeds; and the Gelvert Stream often burst its banks, flooding a wide area. Freddie was the first Voluntary Warden approved by Hart DC when they took over ownership in 1974 and he founded the Voluntary Warden Service.

The meeting chairman Mrs Graham Taylor, Alderman for Hampshire County Council, summed up as follows: “It is quite obvious that most people want to keep the tranquility and the present life of the pond. If we have other amenities on it, so much the better, but the whole feeling here this evening is that we should keep it as nearly as possible as it is; but we wish Fleet Council well and we are delighted they have bought it on our behalf. Who the council have to manage it is something to be resolved.”

FUDC was against appointing a special committee to look after the interests of Fleet Pond but Hart DC set up the Fleet Pond sub-committee on which Fleet Pond Society, founded in 1976, was an active member.

The meeting that established Fleet Pond Society on 28 April 1976 was also hosted by Fleet & Crookham Amenity Society and sponsored by the Kent & Avondale Roads Residents Association. FCCS can proudly claim to have started the process of caring for this very valuable amenity asset.

Colin Gray MBE

Raising Funds to Rebuild All Saints' Church, Fleet

In our Autumn/Winter Newsletter of 2019, Revd Mark Hayton, the Vicar of Fleet, explained the project to rebuild All Saints Church, which was destroyed by fire in 2015. Christopher Riley provides an update on the project, and then tells the story of a fundraising effort that he undertook in September that was hugely supported by the community of All Saints and beyond.

Many of you will be aware that the project for the rebuilding of All Saints Church encompasses a new annex on the north side of the Church to include a new public space for Church activities and local community groups. In addition to restoring the Church itself, a new entrance porch and narthex at the west (Church Road) end is planned that would make entering the Church a much more satisfying experience. It would also make the Church a more visible and welcoming presence for the whole Fleet community.

The rebuilding plans also include a new heating system for the Church and Annex that not only will improve comfort, but also will help the Church fulfil the commitment to be responsible in energy use and care of the environment.

After extensive discussions, and several amendments at the requests of Hart District Council (HDC), English Heritage, and the Victorian Society, the plans for the rebuilding were passed finally by HDC on 29 October 2019. The final decision now rests with the Chancellor of the Diocese. Unfortunately, the Victorian Society, having already made many representations at the time that the plans were with HDC, have now registered as objectors to the project, mostly on the grounds of the plans for the porch and west entrance that already have been amended many times to try to accommodate their views. The irony seems lost on them that the west end of the Church to which the porch connects, whilst built in the Victorian style, is the 1934 extension. The Chancellor has tried very hard to bring about a swift resolution that does not involve any sort of



The proposed annex, on the north side

formal 'hearing' that would both be costly and cause more delay. Correspondence between the Church's architect and the Victorian Society has moved closer to an agreement that would allow the Chancellor to grant the faculty without further obstacle. What the Church needs is to avoid any amendment of the design that would necessitate resubmitting the plans to HDC and then the Diocese. Not only would that incur the Church in further cost, but it is likely to delay the project by up to another year.

The delay is extremely frustrating. HDC took over 6 months to approve the final plans: over four times the 'normal' timescale. The planning system allows far too many obstacles to be placed in the way, giving too much say to interest groups who are given multiple opportunities and unlimited time to voice their objections. Hopefully final resolution will be achieved very shortly.

Once clearance is given to go ahead with the project, the second issue facing the Church is money. Initial tenders have been obtained; hardly surprisingly with all the delays, they are higher than originally anticipated. They now are being reviewed by the Church's architect and quantity surveyor. However, the Church's insurers still have to confirm how much they will be providing. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Church currently is some way short of the funds needed to complete the full project. Those who pass the Church will see the fundraising barometer standing at a little over £500,000, but there is a shortfall of somewhere between £300,000 and £500,000 to complete the full project. The Covid pandemic has inhibited fund raising this year; the challenge will be to almost double the funds raised already before the project can be fully completed.

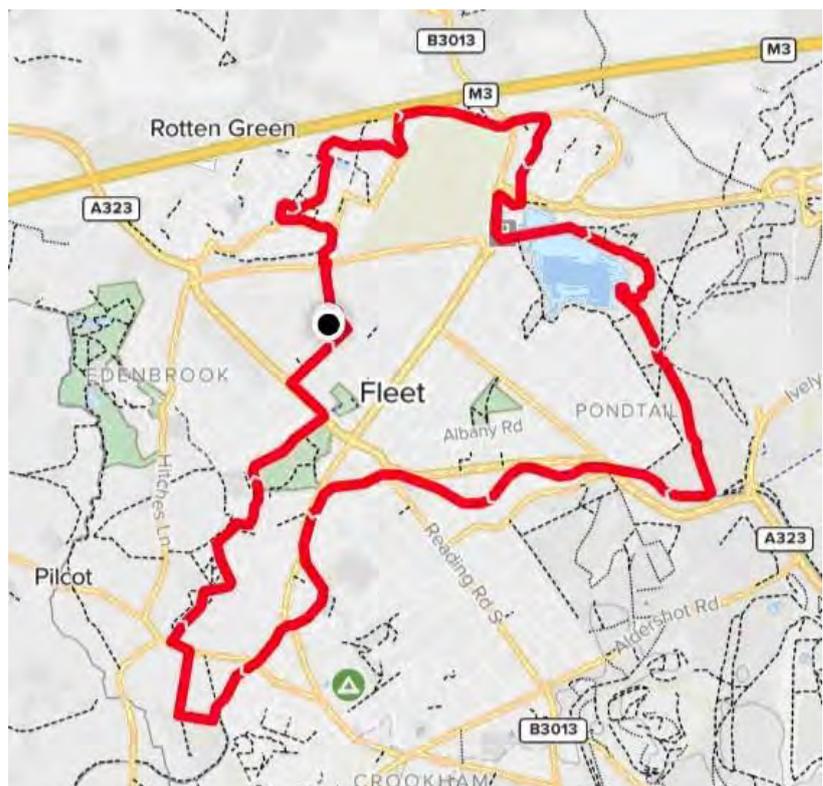
Very conscious of the problem that so little fundraising had been possible in 2020, I recalled that last year, many of members of the Church joined the Fleet Rotary Fun

Walk to raise money towards the rebuilding fund. With this year's Walk postponed until 2021, I decided to walk essentially the same route of 10½ miles and seek sponsorship to raise further funds.

My aim was to better last year's personal total of £775 including gift aid. I had originally hoped for a four-figure sum and set a target of £1,000. Thanks to the many people who sponsored me so generously, that target soon was exceeded; and when I adjusted it to £2,000 that in turn was beaten. So I raised the bar again to £2,500 and with all the munificent additions that were added following my walk, even that was surpassed. I yet again reset the target at £3,000 which seemed to be the maximum that was realistic.

I walked on Wednesday 2 September. I set off at 06h00 for the first circuit, and managed the 10½ miles in 2 hours 59 minutes, an average speed of 3½ miles an hour; a fast pace. For the second circuit, I was joined by my daughter Alexandra; appropriately enough, as she was baptised at All Saints. We left at 10h15 and walked the circuit in the opposite direction at a rather more leisurely pace. I was already tired from the first time, and Alexandra, whilst a good walker, is a bit out of practice. We last did this sort of distance together 3 years ago. We managed fine, and got back home at 14h36 with a bit of leg ache and I raised some largish blisters; but well worth it for the sponsorship.

The route was that of last year's Rotary Walk (see below): through Elvetham Heath Nature Reserve, the edge of Ancells Farm estate to Fleet Station, around Fleet Pond to join the Basingstoke Canal, along the Canal to south of Crookham Village, and then back up through



Crookham Village, past All Saints school, through Calthorpe Park, past Hope Cemetery and home.

I was very determined to get round twice in one day as a large number of people had offered very generously to double their sponsorship if I made it. 21 miles takes one from Fleet to Windsor, which puts the distance in some context!

I have been absolutely amazed at the generosity of my many sponsors. I have had contributions from folk who have the most tenuous connections with All Saints and with Fleet, including a former colleague in Singapore, but who appreciate the need to get our Church restored as the centre of the wider community of our town: A Place for Everyone. Very many thanks to all my sponsors and particularly to those who took me up on the 'double your money' suggestion.

The total raised currently stands at a little over that £3,000 target; with gift aid, the Church will receive just over £3,700. I shall just mention that if you have yet to add your name to the Roll of Honour, I hope you feel able to be generous for a very worthy cause. You can do that using the Virgin Giving website: <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/ChristopherRiley4>

If you prefer to use a cheque or cash, please enquire at the Parish Office. If you are able to, please gift aid any sponsorship donation; many thanks.

Christopher Riley



Christopher and Alexandra at the end of their sponsored walk

Remembrance 2020

Committee member John Pearson and Chairman Phill Gower laid a wreath on behalf of the Fleet & Church Crookham Society at the war memorial in Gurkha Square, Fleet on Sunday 8th November. It was a very different remembrance this year as the customary service, parade and wreath laying ceremony were not possible due to Covid-19 restrictions.

FCCS Chairman Phill can normally be found in Hi-Viz on Remembrance Sunday, laying out road closure signage for Church Crookham ceremony in the morning and the Fleet ceremony later in the day, so was grateful for the opportunity to lay a wreath this year.

There was a poignant ceremony at 11am with representatives from Hart District Council, John Kennett; Fleet Town Council, Bob Schofield; Elvetham Parish Council, Marilyn Robson; Royal British Legion, Bill Tyack and the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire, the Earl of Malmesbury. To enable the ceremony to take place, it was important that the public did not congregate, so instead it was live-streamed on the Hart District Council Facebook page. Other organisations were advised to lay wreaths at staggered intervals during the day, which they did.

The Fleet & Church Crookham Branch of The Royal British Legion have worked especially hard this year to make the special arrangements to facilitate the ceremony, collection and the wonderful display of poppies that mark the lampposts throughout the town. Our grateful tanks to Bill Tyack, Tim Burt and the team for the work that goes into making this happen each year.



Fleet & Church Crookham Society Activities March–November 2020

- 18 June FACC meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. Information reports were provided as usual and can be found on the FACC website: www.facc.org.uk
- 25 June **Committee meeting (held online)**, where matters discussed included the Covid-19 pandemic, the cancellation of the AGM due to the lockdown, and the best way for the Committee to proceed whilst it remains inadvisable to meet in person.
- 6 August **Committee meeting (held online)**, where matters discussed included the need to recruit a newsletter editor and a membership secretary, phase 2 of Hartland Park, the proposed temporary pedestrianisation of part of Fleet Road (see page 4), and the proposed changes to national planning regulations.
- 23 September **Objection to planning application at Hartland Park.** The Society registers objections to the planning application for phase 2 of the Hartland Park development due to the shortfall in affordable housing, parking provision below the level recommended by Hampshire County Council, and reduced landscaping compared with the original application (see page 3).
- 24 September **Committee meeting (held online)**, where matters discussed included the temporary pedestrianisation of part of Fleet Road, phase 2 of the Hartland Park development, and plans for the autumn newsletter.
- 20 October **Committee meeting (held online)**, where matters discussed included the temporary pedestrianisation of part of Fleet Road, arrangements for Remembrance Sunday, and possible donations the Society could make as Christmas approaches.
- 26 October **Fleet Town Council Planning Meeting (held online)**, where Phill Gower represented the Society. Applications included an objection to a retail conversion to eight flats on the corner of Fleet Road and Victoria Road as there was no parking provision whatsoever.
- 29 October **FACC meeting (held online).** Society represented by Jenny Radley, where matters discussed included changes in senior staff at Farnborough Airport, changes in flight movements, the new Gulfstream hangar facility, FACC membership and the Community Environment Fund.
- 8 November **Remembrance Day.** Phill Gower and John Pearson (*below*) lay a wreath at the war memorial in Ghurkha Square in remembrance of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.



Your Committee

- Chairman:** Phill Gower, 01252 624506, phill.gower@fccs.org.uk
Secretary: Judith Sutherland, 01252 810322, judith.sutherland@fccs.org.uk
Treasurer & Acting Membership Secretary: Phill Gower, 01252 624506, phill.gower@fccs.org.uk
Acting Newsletter Editor: Gillian Wain, 01252 677536, gillian.wain@fccs.org.uk
Executive Committee: Judy Armstrong, Dave Bentley, Colin Gray MBE, John Pearson
Co-opted Member: Jenny Radley (FACC Representative), 01252 628751, jenny@jradley.com

We welcome suggestions of topics for inclusion in this twice-yearly newsletter. Please send contributions to newsletter@fccs.org.uk or phone Gillian Wain on 01252 677536.

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