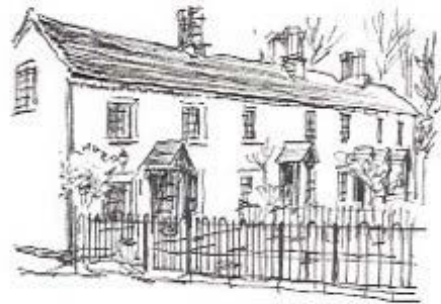


FULMER NEWSLETTER



December 2024 - Issue 75

fulmervillage.org

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We are very grateful to our advertisers and their contribution helps to fund this newsletter twice a year - Editors

FROM THE EDITORS

Over the past 6 months there has been much activity in Fulmer and reports in this newsletter highlight this. We echo David Brackin's call for support with litter picking and speed watch and the latter could not be more relevant with the recent car crash into the church wall which was a shocking event. . On a lighter note thank you to those who help deliver the newsletter, our loyal advertisers and all of the readers who say how much they enjoy having a hard copy of the newsletter to read still! Happy Christmas to all.

Susie & Ronnie Simkins – Editors

FULMER VILLAGE HALL

Fulmer Village Hall is situated at the heart of Fulmer Village, opposite the 17th Century redbrick church, only a stone's throw from the equally historic Black Horse public house and surrounded by picturesque cottages. A frequent winner of Buckinghamshire's Best Kept Village competition, the setting of the Village Hall offers a charming backdrop for any function or celebration. Fully licensed for the sale of alcohol, facilities include a modern kitchen, numerous tables and chairs, disabled access to the main hall, a stage, one smaller meeting room and, of course, parking and loos, including a disabled lavatory. The Hall can comfortably accommodate up to 120 people standing or 80 seated. It is a venue for wedding receptions, anniversary and birthday parties, both children's and adults', as well as seated dinners, catered from the kitchen. It is also available for regular weekly or monthly evening activities. The Hall is one of the best available locally, in the prettiest of settings, and offers excellent value for money. Please call Karen Nelmes (Lettings Secretary) on 07498 041253 for more details and to discuss your specific requirements. We look forward to welcoming you to Fulmer Village Hall!



FULMER PARISH COUNCIL & DUTIES 2025/26

David Brackin:	Chairman (chair@fulmervillage.uk; 07970 793058) – Finance Group Representing Fulmer in Bucks (Community Board, Police etc)
Ian Bocock:	Councillor (thebococks@hotmail.com); Transport and Highways Fulmer Conservation Volunteers
Francesca Hall-Drinkwater:	Councillor (francescaatrushworths@gmail.com) St James' Church Liaison, Churchwarden; Parish Website Manager
Parm Khanghura:	Councillor; (parm@connectglobalconsulting.com); Planning including Neighbourhood Plan
Kathryn Robinson:	Councillor (tillyjohnny23@gmail.com) Enforcement incl. Planning, Public Rights of Way & Community Safety Environment; Neighbourhood Watch & Police Liaison
Susie Simkins:	Deputy Chairman (susiemsimkins@gmail.com) Finance Group; Pinewood Studios Liaison; Community Institutions Liaison (inc. Teikyo, and RDA); Fulmer School Liaison; Fulmer Newsletter Editor & Publisher
Lorette Du Toit:	Councillor (lorettedutoit@hotmail.com); Allotments Liaison; Chair & FPC member, Fulmer Sports & Community Assoc (FSCA)
Pauline Vahey:	Clerk (clerk@fulmervillage.uk); Proper Officer – Council administration & governance; Responsible Finance Officer – Finance Group; FPC member & Secretary, FSCA Liaison with Bucks Unitary Authority & other county-wide partners; Communications
Others	
Barbara Zoltowska:	Fulmer Village Hall Chairman (bzoltowska@hotmail.co.uk)
Karen Nelmes:	Village Hall Lettings Secretary 07498 041253
Guy Hollis:	Buckinghamshire Councillor; (Guy.Hollis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Santokh Chhokar: Buckinghamshire Councillor;
(Santokh.Chhokar@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Jaspal Chhokar: Buckinghamshire Councillor;
(Jaspal.Chhokar@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)



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PERSONALIA

Deaths

We send sincere condolences to the families of

David Simons who died on 20 May. His funeral took place on 14 February.

John Fagan of Watersplash Farm and long time resident of Fulmer. John died on 11 November and a service of thanks for his life took place at Fulmer Church on 29 November.

(Marie) Mieke Chandler who died on 17 April. Her funeral took place on 6 August.

Births

Congratulations to Alice & Stephanos Karageorgi on the birth of their daughter, Theodora, in August.

DAVID SIMONS 1 October 1940 – 20 May 2024

David was born in Hugglescote, Leicestershire on 1st October 1940 to Elsie May and Frederick Harry Simons. He was the younger brother of Patricia. He grew up in Gerrards Cross attending Gayhurst school after which he won a scholarship to Oundle. He excelled at Oundle and went up to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he read economics. Graduating from Cambridge, he qualified as a chartered accountant.

He joined Slough Estates in 1972. In 1986 he was made a Board Director, serving until his retirement in 2002.

David was known as Dagsie to his friends. This could be due to his dogged determination!

In retirement, David devoted himself to his many interests - golf, family and fishing. Golf was a major part of his life. He made many lifelong friends and travelled the world. He had many achievements.

David and his father took up fly-fishing in 1970 on the River Chess. In 2003 he joined the Piscatorial Society with its fantastic fishing on the rivers Avon, Itchen and Test. His great love was salmon fishing, particularly on the River Oykel, which he fished every year from 1982.

Friends have commented:

We met David fishing in 1982, and it was the start of a long fishing friendship. We remember his fine turn of phrase. You "folded your tent" when you packed up after a day's fishing. He asked us to join him on the Oykel in 2022 for one last time, "before the close of play". He was generous and easy-going; we will miss him.

David was dedicated to golf, his own and that of others, and was a source of great encouragement for the young.

David was a unique mix of kindness and stubbornness. Always ready to support and mentor, making him well-liked and approachable. However, once he made up his mind, it was hard to change, leading to intense but productive debate.

St James's Church gave him spiritual guidance in his later years and we, the family, are very grateful to Daf and Jill for their counsel and kindness.

Duncan McNair

ST JAMES, FULMER

Once again, wondering how we have reached November; sunny days of Summer seeming a while ago. We continued through the Summer with our usual services and activities at St. James. A high point in the Church calendar was our Weekend Away to Ashburnham Place in East Sussex in June. Circa 250 families of the wider Church with several from Fulmer attended to enjoy taking part in activities and hear several talks on the theme of "Guarding the Heart". So many commented on the warm and open atmosphere. Kids and youth in particular enjoyed their special events. Luckily the weather was kind to us all. In August, Stephanos and Alice, our organist welcomed their first child, young Theodora who has joined as our youngest congregation member! Our Choir are continuing to progress and contribute to services at least monthly.

Currently we are preparing for Christmas Worship. September saw the return of **Coffee & Chat** on Thursday mornings 8.45 10.00am; usually for Fulmer Infant School Mums, Dads and carers and those from the Beehive, this is open to all, should you wish to come. Our key event this term will be our wreath making on December 5th. This has been a particularly positive and fun gathering last year.

The **Vision Dinner** for all the St James' congregations were held at the Centre on September 28th & Vision Lunch on September 30th. Matt and the team spoke on our theme for the year, "Building up the Body" Ephesians 4.11-16, building on last year's approach to bring others into the Christian family. We had 2 Fulmer tables which was encouraging. The evening and lunch were both a great success, the food and companionship very enjoyable. Our **Harvest Festival** service followed on October 6th, this was an all-age service in a specially decorated Church. We were pleased to welcome the children from the Village and the school. We marked **Remembrance Sunday**, November 10th for the fallen in all wars and welcomed many, tolling the bell for each person Fulmer lost. David Brackin, Chairman of the Parish Council laid a wreath.

Reverend Jill has been away for some time but I know she joins me in thanking all those that serve in any way towards running various activities across the Church, especially the Sunday refreshment team and the Choir!

You'll be receiving a Christmas at St. James brochure with this magazine, outlining services across both Churches so I'll just outline our St James Fulmer services here.
Sun 15th Dec **Advent Carols** 11.15am a traditional service with carols and reading.

Sun 22nd Dec **Advent Carols** 11.15am a traditional service with Communion, carols and a reading.

Sun 22nd Dec **Carols by Candlelight** at 6pm. A beautifully candlelit evening with carols, readings and a Christmas message.

Tues 24th Dec **Christingle Carols** at 4pm. A Christmas Eve service for all ages with carols to sing, a Christingle to make and a short talk. We had over 50 children last year.

Tues 24th Dec **Christmas Eve Communion Service** 9:30pm. A candlelit service with readings, reflections, carols and communion.

Wed 25th Dec **Christmas Day Celebration** 11.15am. A Christmas Day celebration for the whole family.

Please join us for some of the above and indeed for our usual services into the New Year. A heartfelt Happy Advent and Christmas to everyone!

Francesca Hall–Drinkwater
Church Warden.

The advertisement is split into two main sections. On the left, a light grey background contains text about the gardens. On the right, a photograph shows a large, ornate stone urn on a pedestal in a grassy area with trees in the background.

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DAVID BRACKIN, CHAIRMAN FULMER PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council is charged with the mission to Keep Fulmer Special, and the real magic -- what is special about being in the village – is how we as a community come together to help one another. I have been delighted, therefore, to attend the new regular litter picks organised by Cllr Ian Boccock. They are on the 3rd Saturday of the month, and all are welcome. Come and meet your neighbours and take pride in your village – see the Weekly Briefing email for details. The group has had a tremendous impact on Windmill Rd, Hay Lane, Stoke Common Rd, Alderbourne Lane, Fulmer Lane and Hawkswood Lane.

Speedwatch has also been holding sessions over the summer but does need more volunteers to give up an hour to help keep the speeds down in the village – particularly during the winter. Training is simple. Speedwatch both gathers data to inform Police and policy-makers and warns drivers that they are over the limit through a warning letter delivered by Thames Valley Police. If you can't volunteer then please do your bit by driving carefully through the village. I am amazed at how many vehicles blindly cross the hazard lines by St James and carry too much pace past the exits of Stoke Common Rd and Fulmer Common Rd.

I am also really pleased how the Studio at King George's Field has continued to grow and flourish as a venue for a wide range of classes. It has been brilliantly managed and promoted by the FSCA team and hosts a wonderful set of loyal instructors who value the quiet rural setting. The Parish Council enabled this development by providing the initial financial backing which has been returned through a share of receipts. This is now on the cusp of being entirely paid back this year – meaning that there was no net cost to you as council-tax payers for the development of this tremendous addition to the community. The new car park and entrance was completed this year to make it easier and safer to get in and out and that was funded partly in the same way and also through a grant from the Bucks Community Board. This was one of the largest that they granted as a result of the excellent proposals put together by Cllr Lorette du Toit and her team and their hard work in following up and making it happen.

By the time I write to you again next year, we will have faced Local Council Elections for both Parish and Unitary Council seats in May. While Fulmer's boundary has remained the same, the Unitary Ward boundary has moved to take us away from Denham and Gerrards Cross and put us in with the Farnhams, Stoke Poges, Hedgerley and Wexham. There will be three seats available for election (I put myself forward to represent Fulmer's interests but sadly was not successful in selection). Some of the existing councillors have been attending Parish Council meetings to introduce themselves and I am sure we will have a positive working relationship with whomever the electorate returns going forward. I shall write further next time.

In the meantime, our relationship with our neighbouring parishes remains strong – both those that we are joining and those that we are moving away from. I have regular meetings with other Parish Council Chairs and I am Deputy Chair of the South Bucks Association of Local Councils which gathers us together to share information, support one another's initiatives and coordinate responses to Bucks.

A reminder that all are welcome to attend Parish Council meetings which are public meetings and happen 10 times a year (timings and agendas are published in the Weekly Briefing and online) and if you'd prefer to speak with myself and the Clerk in a private session we hold a private surgery session one afternoon a month. To find out more about everything that is going on, you can sign-up to my weekly email – The Fulmer Weekly Briefing – to get news, photos and all the regular updates of everything happening in the village and around. Email myself or Pauline to be added to the list – chair@fulmervillage.uk.

Thank you for all your support and communications this year!

FROM OUR M.P.

I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year! I hope this special time of year brings you happiness, warmth, and time well spent with family and friends. It's been an incredibly busy year, marked by the election in July and a change of Government, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to represent you once again in Parliament.

First and foremost, it was an absolute honour to be re-elected as your Member of Parliament in July. Since then, I have been working tirelessly on the issues that matter most to you, not only here in Fulmer but across the entire constituency. Your trust means everything to me, and I am committed to championing your concerns at every step.

One of the biggest issues that residents have written to me about since July has been the Government's decision to cut Winter Fuel Payments for millions of pensioners, including many in Fulmer. This decision will result in annual losses of up to £300 for approximately 10 million pensioners—a devastating blow during a time of rising living costs. As someone who believes that pensioners should be treated with dignity and respect in their retirement, I am deeply concerned about the impact of this decision. Pensioners deserve the security they have worked for all their lives, yet this Government's plans threaten their financial stability. I will continue to do all I can to ensure pensioners living in Fulmer and beyond are heard loud and clear at the heart of Government.

Locally, safeguarding our cherished green spaces remains my top priority. Protecting the Green Belt is something I am deeply passionate about, and I have been actively fighting against proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that could make it easier for developers to build in these protected areas. I have written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities, and Local Government to express my strong concerns. The new Labour government's plans to impose 100,000 new homes across Buckinghamshire would have a devastating impact on our green spaces and put immense pressure on our local infrastructure. Rest assured, I will oppose these plans with every resource at my disposal to protect the natural beauty and character of Fulmer.

Another area I've been focusing on is enhancing our local transport infrastructure. Whether it's securing better road surfaces in Fulmer or advocating for improved rail links, I've been working to ensure your voices are heard. I recently met with Chiltern Railways to discuss how we can improve local train services, especially for those who commute to London. I know how vital reliable train services are to so many of you.

Beyond Fulmer, I have been dedicated to addressing the need for a secondary school in Burnham. This is a cause close to my heart, and I've been working on it since I first became your MP in 2019. I've had the pleasure of collaborating with local parents, campaigners, and even my colleague, Tan Dhesi MP for Slough, on this vital initiative. A local school would make a world of difference to families in Burnham and surrounding areas, reducing long commutes and supporting our young people's education.

This year has also brought changes in my Parliamentary role. I was both delighted and honoured to be appointed by Kemi Badenoch as her new Shadow Deputy Chief Whip. Now more than ever, with a Labour Government in power, a strong Opposition is essential to hold them accountable. I am committed to challenging policies that threaten free speech, enterprise, and the hardworking individuals of throughout the country.

Whether you're celebrating Christmas at the Black Horse Pub or cozied up at home with your loved ones, I hope this season is filled with joy and laughter. Please know that if there's anything I can assist you with, I am here to help. You can reach me at joy.morrissey.mp@parliament.uk or on 01494 977 505.

Here's to a happy Christmas and a bright, prosperous New Year!

Joy Morrissey MP

FROM OUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR

The biggest recent development are the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework proposed by the new government. These will have a massive impact on Buckinghamshire, and particularly affect villages such as Fulmer. Under the revised system to calculate housing targets, Buckinghamshire would have to accommodate 86,000 new homes over the lifetime of the next local plan, plus a new town may well be imposed on the county as well, pushing the total number to around 100,000 homes. This will inevitably lead to development having to take place on green belt land. Also, areas such as London, Slough and Milton Keynes have had their housing targets revised downwards, which seems odd as those are areas more in need of new homes and have the existing infrastructure to support them. The previous government had removed the 'duty to co-operate' with neighbouring councils (where councils could be forced to take on some of their neighbours' housing needs if they did not have enough of their own sites to fulfil it). Unfortunately, this will now be re-introduced. For example, historically Slough had been looking to acquire land in Stoke Poges for their own housing requirements and we could see this reappear.

The government has introduced a concept of 'grey belt' land which is still green belt land but falls within certain loosely defined criteria and can therefore be looked on more favourably for development. Speculative applications lodged in Denham and Gerrards Cross for new homes on land deemed to fall within this new 'grey belt' concept. Developers will seek to take advantage of this. Buckinghamshire Council will continue with its preparation of a new local plan and one of the priorities will be to defend our greenbelt land, but we may find ourselves unable to do this due to the new imposed targets and policy changes introduced by the government. It is good to see improvement works have been completed at the entrance to the car park at King George's Field, funded by the parish council and Buckinghamshire Council via its Community Board.

If you wish to discuss any of the above or if there are any issues I can help with please contact me at jaspal.chhokar@buckinghamshire.gov.uk (07966 273506) and I will do my best to assist you.

PLANNING IN FULMER PARISH

In the 12 months up to November 2024, 47 planning applications for the Parish of Fulmer have been received and reviewed by the Parish Council – an average of 3.92 applications per month. In contrast to the 40 received over the same period in the previous 12 months. Gerrards Cross Town Council received 292 applications in the same period, or just over 24.3 applications per month a fall on the previous 12 months from 348 applications. Iver Parish Council 224, in comparison to 219 applications over the same period in the previous 12 months. Hedgerley Parish with 16 applications, in contrast to the 27 applications received in the previous 12 months. The table below illustrates the percentage change in the last 12 months compared to the previous 12 month period. The illustration includes more of our parish neighbours for reference.

Parish	November 8th 2022 to November 8th 2023	November 8th 2023 to November 8th 2024	% Change on previous 12 months
Burnham	189	180	-5%
Denham	195	185	-5%
Farnham Royal	144	132	-8%
Fulmer	40	47	18%
Gerrards Cross	348	292	-16%
Hedgerley	27	16	-41%
Iver	219	224	2%
Stoke Poges	156	146	-6%
Wexham	73	63	-14%

In comparison to our Parish Neighbours, Fulmer Parish has seen an 18% increase in the number of applications submitted. Iver Parish also so seeing an increase over the same period of 2%. The majority of our Parish neighbours seeing a decrease in applications over the same period with some having significant reductions i.e. Gerrards Cross -16%, Hedgerley -41% and Wexham -14%.

Applications received include TPO orders (mostly permission request to fell trees) to the construction of new standalone buildings, to single and double storey developments as well as several conversions and change of use requests. There are always contentious developments, and we continue to

work with concerned residents to deal with such developments as well as enforcement issues, working closely with the Council to address concerns raised.

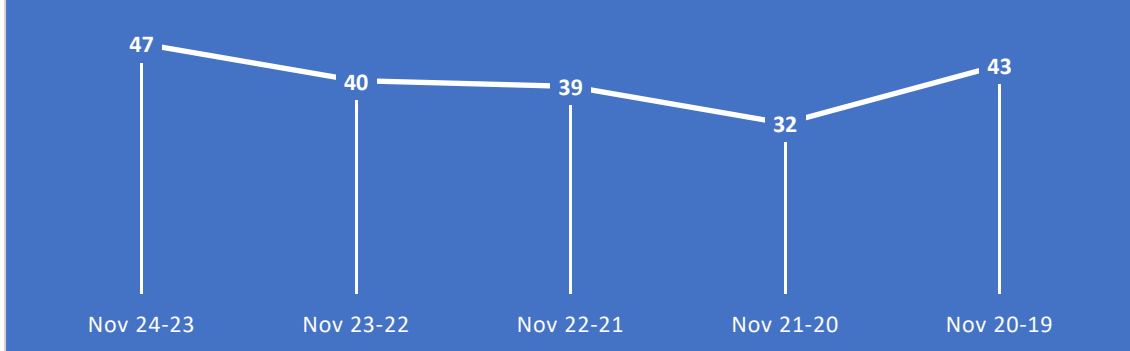
The process is that the Parish Council is given a few weeks to comment on any planning applications before the South Bucks and Chiltern District planning officers meet and decide finally on each case. We have seen improved traction with the Planning teams now under a unitary body and have seen several historic applications finally move to a decision, in some cases awaiting a decision for 18 months. Parish residents are welcome to attend the monthly Parish meetings to voice their thoughts, concerns or request our support on planning matters. We have seen a number of residents attend Parish Meetings over the last year to voice their concerns. We encourage residents to attend Parish Meetings as we will not always have same understanding or unique perspective as those closest to proposed developments. We will continue to act as your conduit into the planning office to express your concerns and reflect your thoughts on planning matters in the Parish of Fulmer.

The Parish council provides its views to the Planning Officers - our aim being to promote development which helps the Parish to continue to function as a participative community, preferring buildings for permanently resident families, over huge 'structures' that can sometimes attract temporary residents. We remain committed to the protection of village life and prevention from overdevelopment.

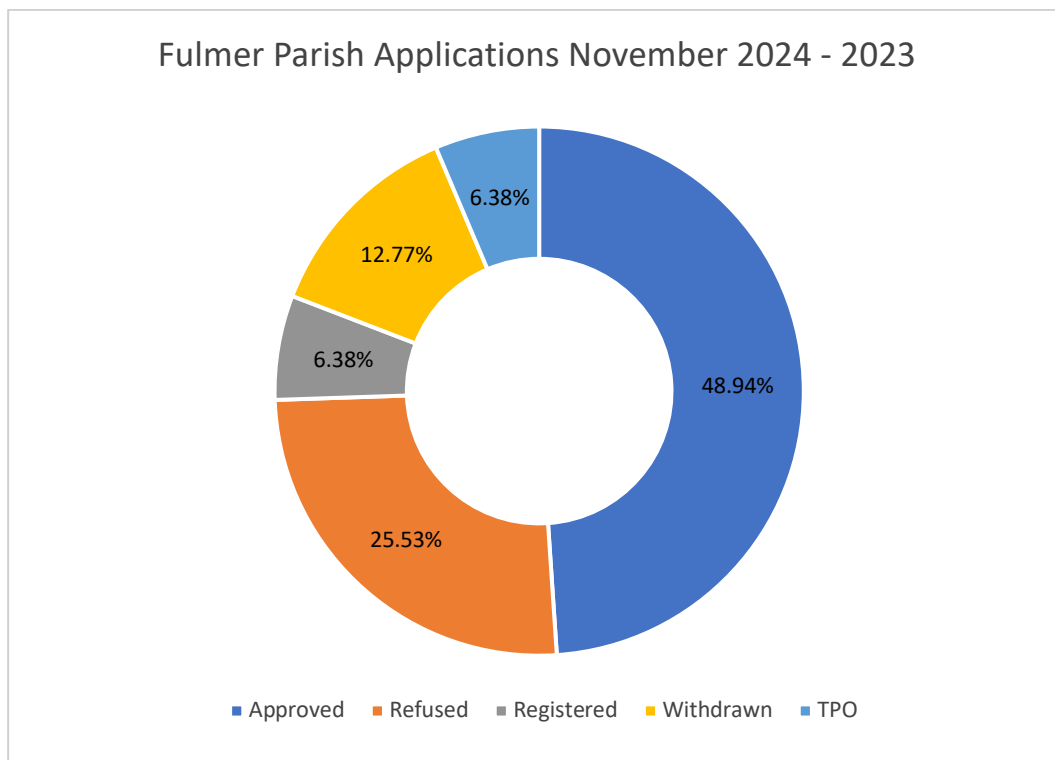
In the 12 months from November 2023 Chiltern & South Bucks Council have published decisions on 47 planning applications affecting the Parish of Fulmer.

Below are the number of applications received over the same period in the last 5 years.

FULMER PARISH - NUMBER OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS (LAST 5 YEARS)



In addition, the graphic below shows the split of the status of applications. 48.94% of applications being approved with over 25% of applications being refused over this period. 12.77% being withdrawn.



The Fulmer Parish Council will continue to provide commentary on Parish views with regards to planning applications.

We will continue to support and work with Fulmer residents with regards to a number of long-standing Enforcement activities working closely with Chiltern & South Bucks Council.

The Village continues to be very active with the increase of applications over the last 12 months, with the number of Planning requests high for such a small community.

The Parish Council would very much like to hear from Residents of the Parish on how we work better in providing information and supporting any concerns for all planning matters.

Parm Khanghura – Parish Councillor

FULMER VILLAGE VOLUNTEERS

Litter Pick Group

A group of Residents, of all ages, volunteer to keep our Village clean and free of litter. For the most part, this has been dropped by motorists passing through Fulmer. We usually meet on the third Saturday of each month at 10.00 am at the Village Hall and sessions last about one hour. Starting in September, we have filled 27 bags over the last three sessions. There are outlying parts of the Village that still require our attention, namely Fulmer Common Road and Fulmer Lane where large amounts of litter have accumulated over the last twelve months. This has become more apparent now that the vegetation has died back and where the verges have been trimmed by Bucks Council. Litter pickers and refuse bags are provided and volunteers only need to turn up to help on the day. Gloves are however recommended. Look out for announcements of our next session in the Fulmer Briefing emailed to all Residents of Fulmer. All bags filled are picked up from a previously agreed collection point by Bucks Council.

Speed Watch Group

This was set up to try and monitor the extent of speeding vehicles through the Village. It was hoped that from the data collected we could justify the installation of speed cameras at either end of the Village. Sadly, we are averaging less than one session a month. This is not enough to secure the data that is needed and unless we attract more support in the form of volunteers, the group is not sustainable. We have three ladies who regularly attend, when free. Three volunteers are required for each session so sadly, if one is unavailable no session will take place. To cover all the days of the week and the various times of the day, particularly during rush hour, you can see that a much larger group is urgently required. The average traffic flow is approximately 200 vehicles an hour, but this can be as much as 460 an hour during commuting times. To date, 148 vehicles have been registered as speeding over eight speed sessions.

Meanwhile, I am pursuing an application to impose a weight restriction on the lorries that use Fulmer as a short cut. You will have witnessed the HGV's and 20 tonne tipper lorries that pass through the Village which miraculously have, so far, avoided any collisions or impact damage whilst negotiating the narrow S bends in the Centre. This type of traffic should be using the recognised heavy lorry routes namely the A412 & A4007 and not creating

congestion, noise and fumes by using unauthorised routes. Much of this traffic can be attributed to the traffic movements associated with the development of South Bucks Country Park in Wexham, the remodelling of Wexham Golf Club and the unauthorised Concrete batching operation in Rowley Lane. However, a weight restriction in the long term will exclude these vehicles and will reduce the wear and tear upon our roads and bridges.

Best Kept Village

Having been runners up in the competition last year, I was surprised by the results in 2024. Incorporating the recommendations made by the Judges last year our final position this year was even more remote from securing first place than we did previously. Their most incongruous comment was "The Village is blighted by a busy through road with buses and heavy lorries". We are aware, see previously, but how relevant is this to how well the Village is kept? Perhaps they have changed their judges?

Fulmer Conservation Volunteers

This was originally set up to maintain the three registered footpaths in the Village. Beeches Way leading up to Fulmer Rise has been heavily overgrown this year, partly due to the heavy rains earlier in the year. The overhanging vegetation required to be extensively cut back, and this was beyond the capabilities of most volunteers. It required professional equipment and resources as well as the means to cart away all the debris. The Landowner fortunately agreed to undertake this work.

Ian Boccock – Parish Councillor
thebococks@hotmail.com

FULMER FAMILY FIREWORK NIGHT

Fulmer Family Fireworks Night took place at King George's Field, Fulmer on 1st November. Tickets were sold online in advance and most visitors took the opportunity to buy our special earlybird discounted tickets. This much-loved event attracted over 600 visitors from Fulmer, Stoke Poges, Iver Heath, Farnham Common, Wexham and the surrounding areas. The evening kicked off with a warm welcome from these very tall, dazzling ladies! Thanks go to Buckinghamshire Council who once again supported our application for a road closure for the evening on Fulmer Common Road. Those who didn't walk from the village were able to drive and park safely. Live music from local band "Stealworks" kept everyone entertained and absolutely mesmerised this little girl, to the delight of her grandparents!



Both the inside bar, run by Andrew Nealon and Angie Bass and the outside bar, run by Liz & Karina Finan, Steph & Cheryl Dobinson and Charlotte Rakowski were kept busy throughout the evening supported by Chris Alcock, who kept both bars supplied with cleaned glasses all night. These awesome

volunteers ran everything so smoothly, no one had to queue for long. Hot drinks and cakes were much in demand and expertly served by Bev Nealon and Sue Box. Danny The Fire Performer, put on a stunning 30 minute show of fire eating and dancing and juggling with flames. His performance culminated in a firework extravaganza and a huge round of applause.

Following a brief interlude of frenzied raffle ticket buying, to the delight of all our visitors, a spectacular fireworks display lit up the sky. More raffle ticket buying kept Peter Box, our Treasurer as well and Anne and Ian Boccock very busy splitting all the tickets! The Grand Raffle was drawn by the Chair of Fulmer Parish Council, David Brackin, and the raffle numbers were called out by KGFF General Manager and MC of the event Ian Finan. A fabulous selection of prizes were donated by various local families and local businesses including The Black Horse, Squirrels Chase Veterinary Physiotherapy, My Boutique and La Cantina in Farnham Common, Pinewood Studios, Lucas Films, The Hyde in Gerrards Cross, GX&FFC, Fulmer Cricket Club and King George's Field's very own "The Studio" which had free classes to be won!





Our Fireworks Debris Clean-up Competition the following morning was magnificently supported by many children from local families, some on whom came along simply to help out and ended up winning cash prizes! The morning was great fun and huge thanks go to everyone who helped us out including Jim Pelton and Dave Moore who did a lot of the heavy lifting.

Fulmer Family Fireworks Night was organised by Ian Finan, Geoff Pocock and myself with the support of Fulmer Sports and Community Association and Fulmer Parish Council. Special thanks go to all of our many fabulous volunteers without whom this event could never have taken place. Sue Spittle aka "Miracle Worker" came to our rescue when we were setting up during the day and we will be forever grateful!

All funds raised at this event go towards helping the King George's Field, Fulmer Charity to maintain and improve the facilities at KGFF for the benefit of residents of Fulmer village and the surrounding areas.

Linda McKenzie, KGFF Trustee

Congratulations again for another incredible Firework Night and huge thanks to everyone for all their efforts – it is so appreciated by the village – Editors

HOME SAFETY AT CHRISTMAS

Research shows that burglaries increase in the winter months, with insurance company Admiral revealing a fifth of claims (21%) take place during November and December. However, there are things we can do to lessen our risk of fallen victim to burglary.

1. Close the curtains - Especially around the festive season, with Christmas gifts on show, it's important to make even more of an effort to block the view into your home. BBC's Beat The Burglar presenter Michael Fraser urges, "Never, ever advertise what you've received for Christmas. A lot of people put the empty boxes showing they've got a 42" plasma colour-screen TV outside, and it's like an invitation in."

2. Upgrade your locks - When you get a home insurance quote, your insurance company will ask what type of lock is on the main entrance, because having secure and robust door locks means your home is less likely to be burgled. Look for door locks that have been designed to provide maximum resistance to forced entry and that have been awarded accreditations such as the British Standard Kitemark, Sold Secure Diamond and Police Secured by Design accreditation.

3. Let there be light - One of the easiest ways to deter burglars is to install motion-activated lights around your home. The newer floodlight cameras can even send live feed to your smartphone, so you can monitor your home from anywhere in the world, at any time.

4. Remember to secure your garden - Whilst we all pay attention to the home itself, it's important to protect the surrounding areas of the home too. As the outdoor season comes to a close, put all garden furniture and barbecues away, and secure the sheds with high-security padlocks and cameras where possible.

Kathryn Robinson
Neighbourhood Watch



FULMER INFANT SCHOOL

At Fulmer Infant School we have had a lovely start to the autumn term. We welcomed our new children and families to the school and the school staff were excited to return and begin the new academic year. As always, we remain very grateful for the support we receive from the local community, our reading volunteers do an amazing job of building the confidence of the children they hear read, while the front of the school is kept tidy by a small group of volunteers. We are very fortunate that a member of our school community keeps the front of the school looking wonderful by planting displays of colourful and seasonal flowers. We are also grateful for the help provided by the Black Horse in allowing our parents to use their car park. This term our Reception children have been learning about forms of transport in the past and present, Year 1 have been learning about what history is and Year 2 have been learning about the Romans. Everyone has been very busy and enthusiastic in their learning.

Here are some of the highlights of the autumn term:

Meet the Teacher – We began the year with meet the teacher sessions so our parents could meet their child's new teacher and see the classrooms.

Friends of Fulmer Coffee Morning – Our new families were invited into school to meet our Friends of Fulmer Committee. The school receives a tremendous amount of support from the Friends of Fulmer and we highly value this collaborative relationship. Last year the Friends of Fulmer supported the school to purchase many resources and funded additional learning experiences for the children.

School Governors – Our school governors play an important role in the management of the school. They visit the school regularly and this term we have enjoyed welcoming them into school to share our curriculum vision and our learning.

School Eco Council – A new school Eco Council has been elected for this year. They have already arranged a clothes recycling collection, for which the school receives additional funds. The Eco Council are also leading the school in recycling paper and cardboard as well as informing the rest of the school about the benefits of composting.

Harvest Assembly – In October we held a Harvest Assembly in the school hall. The generous food donations were collected by Francesca who took them to the Trussell Trust. Our assembly was attended by many parents and family members and the children sang the harvest songs beautifully.

Spooktacular Disco – The children had a wonderful time at an after-school disco arranged by the Friends of Fulmer. The school hall was transformed with balloons and decorations, and spiders were spotted hiding in their webs. The children had a fantastic time, and the staff joined in by wearing autumn colours for the day.

School Council – A new school council has also been elected. One of their duties was to lead the school Remembrance Assembly. Every child made a poppy and we held them up to create our own poppy field. The School Council read the poem In Flanders Field by John McCrae.

Diwali – At the end of October we celebrated Diwali by having a special assembly. We looked at the meaning of Diwali along with the celebrations and traditions that take place at this time.

Curling – Our Year 1 and Year 2 children were very excited to learn about and try the sport of Curling. They went on a trip to Burnham Grammar School where they were taught about Curling and took part in a friendly inter-school competition.

Open Mornings – We have held three very well attended open mornings this term. These are for the parents of children who are due to start Reception in September 2025. Parents and families have an opportunity to learn more about our school and see in operation.

We are currently planning and looking forward to our Christmas celebrations. We have a whole school Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day coming up, as well as our whole school Christmas performance. We all love December and the excitement it brings in school!

Mrs Julie Matton
Headteacher

1st GERRARDS & FULMER SCOUT GROUP

We currently have 56 Girls and Boys attending Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays each week at our HQ on the Allotments. We have 20 x Beavers, 24 x Cubs and 12 x Scouts and 8 x hard working Leaders! At the moment we have no children attending from Fulmer and it would be great to hear from you??

In each section the children are enjoying the traditional activities of Hikes, cooking in HQ and in our fire circle behind our HQ. In addition, we use the PACCAR activities centre near Chalfont St Peter for wall climbing, camping, high ropes, archery, air rifle shooting, caving, zip wiring and junior tomahawks!

During the year we have visited local Nursing Homes to chat and/or sing to the residents, collected food for the homeless and then distributed in Slough, visited a Sikh temple, toured the Fire station at Tatling End and other community events.

Our Fund Raising is mainly selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts from a stand at the GX Christmas Lights Festival and the King Charles 111 celebration on GX Common and we also Bag pack at Tesco in GX.

We always celebrate Remembrance Day at the GX Memorial Centre Sunday Service and we will be there this year, it is very pleasing to see that we always have at least 20 of our children attending which is a great effort.

I am very proud of the time and effort that my small band of dedicated Leaders take to ensure our Group provides an alternative lifestyle despite our small size compared to other local Scout Groups.

Please don't forget we still need adult help from anyone in Fulmer from 18 - 80 years old and you don't need any scouting experience just some enthusiasm, so get out of your chair and join us as we are only 'up the hill' from the centre of the village! Or, if you prefer, we need help with admin jobs (no uniform) for a few hours a week so please contact me!

Mark Shaw – Group Scout Leader
07788 891232, scoutermark@hotmail.co.uk , www.gxscouts.co.uk

FULMER CRICKET CLUB

We participated in the Chilterns League, with our First XI in the Premiership Division and our Second XI in Division 1, again this year for the last year of its existence. The Chilterns League voted to join the Thames Valley Cricket League from 2025 season onwards. The main reason for the move is to streamline cricket administration. We are yet to see which divisions our teams will play in but one of the benefits of TVCL is that clubs will be grouped such as to minimise travel distances. Our membership was steady with 46 members. Why not come along and support your local team in 2025?! There is a game on virtually every Saturday and most Sundays during the summer, the facilities are first rate, and the well-appointed Club house is always open for refreshments.

Playing performance in 2024 - Our First XI, skippered by Priyan, played 12 league matches, winning 6 and losing 6, with 6 matches lost to the weather. We ended the season being 3rd in the table, which is commendable effort having been promoted through the divisions in the previous 2 seasons.

Our Second XI, skippered by Brijesh and Sami, were in mid division with 7 wins and 7 losses with 4 matches being lost to the weather. Congratulations to all the players who played league cricket. We also played Friendly cricket before and after the league games and on Sundays. Of the 25 matches played we won 13 and lost 12.

Last year saw the last **President's match**. In the 28 years of the President's matches, the President's XI have won 15, Fulmer 11, 1 was a tie and a draw. This year saw the inaugural Chairman's v Captain's XI match which was a closely fought affair with the Captain's XI running out winners by 10 runs. It was great to see lots of players' family members at the match.

Off Field activities - We use a facility, Play Cricket, to record all the scores which makes the annual collation of statistics much simpler. We should also mention Ben Fisher who attends each home game and manages the bar while the match is in progress. He also does a great job with packing up at the end of the day and making sure the pavilion is properly secure before leaving. Tony King, our Hon Treasurer, does a vitally important job in keeping the finances under control, making sure that all players pay their dues, and Armando Borges does a lot of work behind the scenes as an Hon Secretary. Our skippers Priyan, Brijesh, Peter Bradford, Arun, Sami, Namit and Tony play

a big role in getting out teams and managing our playing performances. Emma Randall is new to the Committee as our Safeguarding Officer, and we are very grateful for her diligence in getting us in a compliant state with the league. Finally, are our fantastic ground staff Paul and Derrick. They put in countless hours at King George's Field to make sure we have playing facilities that are second to none in our league. Paul has now retired from the physical maintenance side of things will be available to provide his valuable technical advice.

Awards for 2024 - We have decided to hold the Awards event as part of the Chairman's v Captain's match day. This will allow the families of players to be involved in the celebrations of the award winners.

New Players Welcome - We have excellent playing facilities and are a very friendly club. New players, of whatever standard, are always welcome. Please refer to our website for contact details www.fulmercricketclub.com

Sponsorship Opportunities - The club is financed through membership subscriptions, match fees and a sprinkling of donations. There are opportunities to sponsor the Club through signage at the ground, on club kit, branding on our website etc. If you are interested, please provide your details via our contact facility on our website www.fulmercricketclub.com

2025 Season - We look forward to our first league season in the Thames Valley Cricket League.

Peter Box



IT IS WHAT IT ISN'T – Susie Mattheww

One of these poems took several painstaking attempts to complete, the other took one minute. With many thanks to AI we can now all stop trying.

The road less travelled
Changed its path
Beyond all recollection.
The walls are bumped, the
potholes dumped,
The constant demolition.

Not long ago, a pretty shop,
Where we walked up to buy,
Our papers, bottles, tins and stuff
Now lorries speed on by.

A farm across the busy road,
Sold eggs both white and brown,
Has ceased to trade and sadly
closed,
T'was beaten by the town.

The church remains, the pub still
thrives,
The battle... 'Psalms? Or beer?',
Perhaps instead, a bit of both,
Whatever gives you cheer.

The road most taken still remains,
Whatever threat it meets,
And everyday from restful sleep
To chimes forever sweet.

We'll soldier on to keep you safe,
Whatever might befall,
And try our best, our souls to rest,
God bless you, one and all.

In Fulmer, where the frost-laced
hedgerows stand,
Winter lays her quiet hand upon the
land.
The cottages, in their thatched
repose,
Are veiled in silver as the north wind
blows.

The beechwood paths, once auburn
and gold,
Now lie beneath a snowy fold,
Where deer move softly through the
trees,
And breath turns misty in the freeze.

The village pond, a mirror bright,
Reflects the moon's pale, ghostly
light,
While chimneys whisper threads of
smoke,
And stars adorn the oak's broad
cloak.

Beneath the church's ancient spire,
The bells chime softly, crisp and dire,
Calling through the biting air
To warm the hearts that gather there.

And though the days grow dark and
still,
In Fulmer's hush, there's a quiet thrill,
For in each flake, each crystal gleam,
Winter weaves a gentle dream.

Thank you Susie for this entertaining piece – Editors



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STOKE COMMON NEWS UPDATE

Good management of the vegetation on any heathland is essential, not just to create a varied habitat that encourages biodiversity, but also because the vegetation on heathlands (even Stoke Common which seems to have eternal puddles) creates dry habitats which are very susceptible to fires. Fire of course is a huge concern for all people who live close to or visit the Common, but it also makes some of the key, slow moving/immobile heathland species (like reptiles or the eggs/young of ground nesting and other birds) vulnerable. As around 80% of the UK's lowland heaths have been lost to development, farming, roads or just neglect, the remaining fragmented areas of heath are even more priceless refuges for the heathland specialist species that live on them.

People who have been local to Stoke Common will be acutely aware of the major fires that have happened there over the years. Lionel Rigby's 1975 book "the History of Stoke Common – a poor's fuel allotment charity" makes several references to management to reduce fire risk. However, in the early twentieth century, despite the best efforts of the then Trustees to cut trees to reduce the risk, there was so much opposition that it was decided that "any such clearance would be useless from the point of view of preventing further fires and that, as regards appearance, one year's growth will entirely hide all effects of recent fires". History shows how several large fires followed and the quality of the heathland habitat fell into rapid decline.

The restoration of the heathland carried out by the City of London's team since 2007 has greatly reduced the fire risk (not to mention vastly improved the habitat quality), but the natural process means you can never rest on your laurels. To keep the area open and control excessive scrub growth, continuous management by hand, machine and particularly livestock is essential. The Sussex cattle have now grazed the reserve for about 15 years but they are removed in late October when their natural forage declines. The City of London's use of Exmoor ponies, which do very well eating what the Common has to offer over winter - even the gorse - not only means the grazing season can be extended and more types of vegetation managed, it also means that areas like the north of Stoke Common, opposite the Fox and Pheasant pub can be grazed with the help of electric fencing. The ponies were released on the north of Stoke Common in October and will stay until

November, when they are shifted to the west of Stoke Common. Welfare of the livestock whilst on the reserve is paramount so they are checked daily to ensure they have water, sufficient grazing and are healthy; for the cattle this is carried out by the grazier, but the ponies are checked mostly by volunteers Geoff and Sally Cox.

Part of the restoration process has been to improve the firebreaks at Vine Road and Windmill Hill to minimise the threat to properties in those areas. Not only have the firebreaks been widened, but the edges have been 'scaloped' and softened, making them more attractive visually as well as better for the wildlife.

Even following restoration the work, the common can still be vulnerable. Clearly hot, dry summer weather is a great concern but, late winter, before the new flush of spring growth has started to grow through dry bracken, gorse and grass from the previous year, can also be a dangerous period. This was highlighted in February 2022, when multiple fire tenders were called to a fire on the west of Stoke Common. Fortunately, on this occasion, the cleared rides acted as informal firebreaks and the fire service were able to contain the fire without too much spread.

Managing the fire risk on Stoke Common is a continuous, and at times complex process; safety always comes first, but looking after wildlife diversity is also extremely important. The staff and volunteers will continue with the on-going management work over the autumn and winter months, and this will help lessen the risk. More volunteers are always needed, especially over the winter scrub cutting season, so if you can give some of your time please contact burnham.beeches@cityoflondon.gov.uk for more information.

Chris Morris
Senior Ranger, Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common
Natural Environment,

BLACK PARK NEWS

Since the last newsletter a lot has been happening in Black Park. The biggest change for visitors and the biggest piece of work for the country parks team has been the building of a second café and new toilet facilities close to the car park and Go Ape. Work on this started in autumn 2023 and since being granted planning permission in July 2024 the project has accelerated quickly and is on track to have the café and toilets open by Easter 2025. The building itself is modular, meaning large sections of it are built off-site in a factory, some of you may have seen images of the three large modular sections of the building arriving in early November, they were all installed in one day which meant we went from foundations to a watertight shell of a building very quickly! The new café will be run by our current caterers San Remo and will provide a different food offer to the Lakeside Café, as well as hot and cold drinks, cakes and snacks.

Another addition to Black Park that some of you may have noticed is the changing places toilet located next to the Lakeside Café, for those of you not familiar with changing places toilets, these are specially adapted toilets that offer additional facilities to disabled toilets, including a hoist system, a full adult size changing table and shower, as well as providing enough space for wheelchairs to be able to fully manoeuvre within the building. This facility has already enabled a local school with teenage children with complex additional needs to visit more regularly.

The delivery of erosion control work in Black Park Lake has been ongoing since mid-November, our contractors Salix are delivering the project and once finished over 200 metres of the most eroded areas will be stabilised using coir rolls planted with native marginal plants. For those not familiar with coir rolls, they are actually made using the husk of coconut shells that are formed into what look like giant sausages! These are fixed into the lake using wooden stakes with the plants already in them, the fibrous nature of coir helps retain soil and silt and also provides structure to hold the lake bank together, as the plants grow and establish the coir slowly breaks down leaving a natural edge that is stabilised and protected by the vegetation.

Autumn and winter are the times that the ranger team can focus more on conservation work, so if you are in the park you are likely to see rangers and volunteers working on our heathland controlling invasive Birch trees and managing the age structure of the Heather to ensure that we have a variety of different micro-habitats across the heathland as a whole. The team have also been working on rides edges again to improve the woodland edges for wildlife, this includes some planting of shrub species such as Blackthorn and Hawthorn, which provide early flowers for pollinators, and later in the year fruit for birds and other animals to feed on, once established their thorny nature also provide great protected nest sites for birds.

Finally you may have seen in the local newspapers or on signage in the park that for 2024 Black Park has won a prestigious Green Flag Award. Green Flag is a quality standard for parks and green spaces and to achieve it the park must be appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve and demonstrate standards of good management and best practice. There are 27 criteria that Black Park was judged on and I am pleased to say that it scored highly overall.

The country parks team wish all the residents of Fulmer a Merry Christmas and hope to see you all in Black Park in the new year.

Tim Williams
Country Parks Operations Manager
Communities Directorate
Buckinghamshire Council

RIDING FOR THE DISABLED – SOUTH BUCKS

We have had an exciting summer with the build-up to the competition season. This has involved those who are just learning the benefit of interacting with horses to those who are competing for medals. Participants from Coteford School had a great summer picnic and hack organised by Romilly.

A group of our riders went to the National RDA Championships and came back with rosettes in both dressage and the Countryside challenge. Two of our riders were then invited back to compete at the British Dressage Summer meet at Hartpury College. All the time this was going on Mari Durward-Akhurst was quietly training on Athene, owned by our Chairperson, Di Redfern with Rob Waine, a local dressage trainer learning the tests for the Paralympics in Paris in September. They did us, and GB, proud achieving a Bronze Medal in the Grade One Free-Style competition. Mari has been so kind letting many of our young participants have a go at holding the medal since her return. It is great to see the expressions on their faces first with excitement at looking at a paralympic medal and then surprise as they feel how heavy it is.

During the Summer we said goodbye to Frankie, who moved back to Herefordshire and hello to Lizze Ragg who joined us from Berkshire College of Agriculture to be our centre manager. Lizzie has come with some great ideas the first of which was a Halloween Hello as a thank you to volunteers for the time they put into the centre. Staff dressed up the ponies into pumpkins, witches and zombies so they could pretend to go trick or treating. Hazel, Carol, Toby and Sally were presented with 'great volunteer' awards for the work that they have done during the year. Mari and Athene performed their magical freestyle dressage which was so inspiring to all present. (Okay we did not have the wonderful backdrop of the Palace of Versailles, but we did have an enraptured audience). Finally, we had a special presentation by coaches, Romilly and Fern as the Mystical Merlin the dancing horse who did a routine to the Addams Family. They moved the audience from raptured silence to peals of hysterical laughter.

As Autumn was on the horizon, the RDA virtual championships took place. This year we entered riders into the Countryside Challenge. As this is a filmed

event, not only does the rider and horse have to compete but the person filming has to negotiate the course, for the virtual judge, without tripping over any obstacles. Definitely no Oscars for filming! However, one of our youngest riders Jasmine, on our smallest pony Bailey came second in their class. We are very proud of both of them; this was their first competition together.

The nights are drawing in and after struggling last year in the gloom, we have managed to get lighting in our outside stables. This is going to make it so much easier for our volunteers to get ponies ready for classes. We rely on our volunteers in so many ways, from getting ponies ready, helping keep the fields clean, to fixing fences and helping on rides.

If you are interested in joining us, you will get a great feeling of pride as you see participants achieve and develop skills in riding and horse handling, please contact us by ringing the office 01753 662796 or emailing enquiries@southbucksrda.org and talking to Jane our administrator or Lizzie the centre manager.

**Theresa Drake
Coach and Trustee.**

FUNDRAISING – RDA South Bucks

It's been a quiet summer for us on the fundraising front, we had fewer events and a couple that clashed with team members holidays, we did however do well at the ones we did attend. We had a great time at the Fulmer Fun Day on King Georges Field, as I'm sure those of you that were there will remember, the weather wasn't kind to us, in fact our team of fundraisers ended up absolutely soaked, we found that one of the gazebo's wasn't waterproof and leaked everywhere, and we spent all our time moving things around, this didn't seem worry visitors to the fun day, we actually raised more money than in previous years and met some great people, so a big thank you to all who braved the torrential rain came to our stand. Stoke Park have generously donated the funds to refurbish our classroom at the yard, this will enable us to make much better use of the space, we'll be able to provide some good resources for the schools that visit us for lessons, make it nice and comfortable for the parents and carers of our riders to use, it will give our staff and volunteers somewhere nice to relax between rides and give us an excellent area to deliver training.

On a personal note and with great sadness, I will be standing down as a trustee of South Bucks RDA and moving on to something new, I'd like to thank the people of Fulmer for their support during my years as trustee for fundraising, to Susie for allowing me the space in the Fulmer newsletter and encourage you all to carry on supporting South Bucks RDA, it's a very special place full of wonderful, inspiring people, it's a place I feel really passionately about and will miss everything about it.

Alan Lawrence
Trustee – Fundraising 07881 950147

*We all thank Alan for his efforts on fundraising for such a worthy charity –
Editors*

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