

## FPCA CHAIR'S AGM REPORT

I am co-chair for the association. I have been sharing responsibility for chairing the committee along with Richard English and Scott Urban since Stella Bell had to resign in December.

It's been another great year for the centre and the Florence Park community.

As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 there were 251 members of the Associate. This shows a small fall of 34 members from the previous year. A new membership payment system is now in place to avoid some of the confusion that existed about renewal and joining up half way through the year. Thank you to Sue Hallett for all the work putting that in place. And thank you to Dave for being the front man for the membership card distribution system.

If you haven't got an up to date membership, please renew as soon as possible!

Building on the hard work done last year to give the association charity status, and now with a clear charitable agenda, we are renegotiating the new community centre lease with the council and the occupational licence with the social club.

The negotiation with the council is ongoing with the lease due to be set for the next 25 years. We are aware that the community is strongly supportive of the development of the back room at the centre and this issue is under discussion. Can I thank Richard English and Stella Bell for leading those negotiations? The time it takes up and the number of communications involved is staggering. The business plan is also taking shape - having begun with Richard and Stella's lead and now with Scott Urban on board.

Also, thank you to Sue Taylor, our contact with the council, and of course our Labour councillors Christine Simm and David Henwood for their ongoing support and knowledge - and for showing up to almost every committee meeting this year!

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to Paul Walker, the new chair of the social club. It has been great to see Sue at meetings too. It has been really helpful.

On less formal matters...!

Last year's consultation about what you would like from the community association was very valuable.

Please use the post it notes on the table to write any suggestions for future events or uses of the space that you would like to see happen.

A new monthly event this year is the film club. Well done Stuart and Jane for all your hard work. It is a great thing to have in the centre and we're looking forward to it going from strength to strength.

The Sunday Sessions organised by Dave Noble continues to be fantastically popular. Well done Dave and team.

Not even a biblical deluge could stop the fun at FloFest. Well done to every involved - Viv Peto and Rob Earl running the talent tent, Jon Flint and Dave Noble running the music stage, Alan Brown, Sara Reeve and Abi Simmons for running everything and especially the stall holders and audiences for not running away when the storm came.

The seasonal events run by Sara are now an established part of the community calendar. This year the Christmas market was packed and the Hallowe'en party was sold out long in advance. The street party was a great success and the horticultural show shows promise. A new event, the Christmas sing a long was a wonderful way to get the community together.

The over 60s club is a great success - and, as tackling loneliness an increasing priority for national health organisations, the over 60s club is a key part of the way the association is fulfilling its brief to support the community. Thank you to everyone involved in that - and most of all the club co-ordinator, Jackie Singer.

The community cafe has reached regular attendance levels never dreamt of. The list of volunteers is growing every month and the profits from the community cafe directly into fund the over 60s club. The community cafe is a great example of the way the Florence Park community has become so close and connected. There are not many parts of the country where an entire community can go to one place to meet up and share experiences every month. It is great too that the local councillors are available for us to air our grievances at the same time! I'd also like to give a thank you to Jane Gallagher for all her often unseen work supporting the committee and community - notably the creation and distribution of the Florence Park newsletter - and the creation the Florence Park cafe banner. This coincided with a big upturn in attendance and it is a great monthly reminder for passers by that the centre is active and open to all.

Last but definitely not least, the Florence Park panto was bigger and better than ever. It involved over 50 community members just in making the show with 360 people coming to see it. And if we had the capacity, we could have sold it out all over again. It generated a staggering profit which goes to support all the charitable activities throughout the year. To give you an idea of the contribution the panto makes to the association finances, it brought in £1761 minus expenses, compared with £1150 for the previous two years. Well done to Viv Peto the producer and Emma Webb the director. It is a tremendous undertaking. Thank you.

We'd like to thank our funders and supporters - and those who've worked tirelessly over the last year - particularly Sara Reeve, our Centre Manager, Dave Emmett behind the bar. And the committee: Sue, Viv, Prue, Richard, Chris and Scott.

We're very excited that there are so many new people eager to join the committee this year.

And a big thank you to the social club for all the hard work during the year keeping the bar and all the other activities running every week.

Finally... at the end of last year, Stella Bell had to step down as chair of the committee. On behalf of the everyone on the committee, and I am sure the whole community, I would like to thank Stella for the extraordinary amount of work, energy and commitment that she has given not just to the community association, but to the whole Florence Park community.

Under her leadership, the community centre has evolved into a vibrant community hub and is set to flourish in the future. The community is more connected, vibrant and happier. This is an amazing legacy to leave.

So thank you so much from us all. We hope you will continue to be an active member of our amazing community.

Chris Michael  
Co-Chair FPCA 2017