

# FPCA CHAIR'S AGM REPORT

19 Mar 2018

I am co-chair for the association. I have been sharing responsibility for chairing the committee along with Richard English and Viv Peto.

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

As at 31st December 2017 there were xxx members of the Associate. This is a shift of xx members from the previous year. We now offer a choice of ways to join the association including directly from our website. Once again thank you to Dave for being the front man for the membership card distribution system. I'd like to take this opportunity to offer mine and the association's sincere thanks to Sue Hallet for her 24 years of dedication and service as she moves on from her role as Membership Secretary – Please join me in giving her a round of applause ...

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

The negotiations regarding the new community centre lease with the council and the occupational licence with the social club are both in advanced stages. The negotiation with the council is ongoing with the lease due to be set for the next 25 years. I this point I'd like to thanks Richard English and our Secretary Chris Michael. Special thanks here go to Brendan Rolle Rowan, a solicitor who has kindly donated his time free of charge to help in these negotiations.

We are aware that the community is strongly supportive of the development of the back room at the centre however its official condemned status and planned demolition means that we're also collecting feedback on how we might best use an expanded outdoor space. Can I thank Richard, Sara, Adam and Eliane for the ideas and fundraising consultation they undertook at the recent community café on 3<sup>rd</sup> March – I understand a good array of ideas was received.

The business plan is also continues to benefit from our treasurer Scott Urban's skills in financial oversight so thank you Scott.

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!

I'd like to thanks Sue who has chaired the Social Club in the last year. It has been great to get to know Sue at both at meeting and more generally around the centre too – It has been really helpful.

Last but not least, we rely on our volunteer stewards who give up there time everyday to ensure the place is opened and closed as needed ... so our thanks to Pete, Avril, Viv and Eliane for their generous help here.

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.

The film nights have been continuing. Well done Stuart for all your hard work. It is a great thing to have in the centre and my son and I enjoyed jaws very much a couple of Friday's ago.

The Sunday Sessions continues to be fantastically popular and has more recently been augmented by other events such as FloFest Inside, local history evening and regular variety nights. Well done all involved as it takes leadership, dedication and organisation to deliver these occasions as successfully as they have been.

What a day we had at FloFest – the meteorological opposite of the deluges experienced in 2016 – The sun shone, people came, people stayed and we had possibly the biggest and best one yet. Well done to everyone involved – Viv Peto and

Rob Earl running the talent tent, Jon Flint and Dave Noble running the music stage. Obviously, I can't go any further without mentioning my FloFest co-organisers; Sara Reeve and Abi Simmons, the 2 founding members of team FloFest and excellent team mates of mine since 2014.

The seasonal events run by Sara continue to be a vital part of the community calendar.

This year the Christmas market was packed and the Halloween party was again sold out even though it occurred at the same time as Larkrise School's own Halloween Disco. The street party was another great success

The Christmas sing a long was another huge success always a wonderful way to get the community together.

The over 60s club continues its amazing efforts- 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 continues to attract the numbers and is starting to act as a great platform for local initiatives and groups to come together, discuss possible collaborations, runs consultations etc – this is the kind of additional community value altogether that our monthly café is clearly nurturing. The list of volunteers continues to grow 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. It's still true that there's 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 which a critical part of keeping the vibe of Florence Park going.

Last but definitely not least, the Florence Park panto was bigger and better than ever. The cast was bigger than ever and also involves dozens of others off stage too. Tickets evaporated instantly with 360 people coming to see Cinderella. 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 £xxxx minus expenses, compared with £1761 for the previous year. 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, Adam, Eliane 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, I'd like to thank everybody round here that I've encountered along the way thus far in my Florence Park adventure and I look forward to many more good times and collaborations. This speech will be my last act as chair as I'm stepping down to hopefully help out in other ways at this lovely community centre that we're all sitting in – and in so doing, I look forward to working with people from all the various groups gathered here and beyond to deliver a successful and tremendous 2018 for Florence Park Community Centre

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

Alan Brown

