

COMMUNITY CONNECTION – JUNE 2016

So, this has been June has it? On one hand, we shall remember it for at least three powerful reasons: the awful weather (the rain is spattering at the window even now), our European exit referendum ... and that other exit: that of our national football team's comeuppance in the European Cup. There's a message of hope even there – that smaller communities can be extremely successful – just what we want for Bressingham and Fersfield! But, June has had some wonderful moments: our sharing in the 90th. Birthday of Queen Elizabeth, our celebration of that event and the Open Gardens Weekend. More about those in a moment.

The Parish Council's June meeting dealt mostly with ongoing business: planning for improvements to individual homes, including the return to dwelling standard of a disused home in Stone Lane, securing the future of the villages' website (Liz Handy really would be delighted to hear from anyone who could spare some time to help her with the editorial side of things), insurance issues concerning the collapsed village sign at Pillarbox Corner, and the licence for the Bressingham Hall Wedding /Function facility (to be discussed at South Norfolk Council HQ on 11 July). The next meeting is Monday 4 July at 1900 in Fersfield Church – please remember that everyone is welcome to attend.

Saturday 4 June saw our party for the Queen's 90th Birthday, a splendid occasion with a large and enjoyable celebratory tea at the Village Hall. The company and activities were super, the food delicious and the atmosphere so happily festive. A big 'thank-you' is due to the Village Hall Committee and their team for the marvellous organisation – and to all those who took part to make this event so special. A particularly enjoyable event to me is one in which our whole two-village community comes together yet is able to show the distinctive characteristics of those villages.

The second such event during June was, of course, the Open Gardens Weekend – 'Blooming Bressingham and Fragrant Fersfield'. What a splendid series of activities this was – open gardens, exhibitions in the churches, photographic and craft displays, delicious refreshments, Saturday evening's 'Gardener's Question Time' and the decorated wheelbarrow competition. The superlative financial success, (over £4,000 raised for the restoration of our parish churches and development of the village hall) was so important, but so too was the wonderful community spirit and the participation of so many members of our community, including people newly-arrived here. Everyone involved really does deserve our congratulations and thanks: I know there are other tributes, so I am just going to say a heart-felt 'well-done' to absolutely everyone, and to mention just one person by name – Linda Holly – whose determination and drive really did fuel everyone's motivation – thanks, Linda!

And we move into July ... the Anglia in Bloom judges will be with us on 14 July ... when the wheelbarrows will again be on parade, along with other aspects of our villages. Our recent successes make me feel we have a part to play in this enterprise – complicated as it seems to be – and we may look forward to the outcome! I wish you sunshine, a dry Wimbledon and the chance to enjoy our beautiful outdoors!

Thank-you again, Richard.