



Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 2022

Welcome

Welcome to the Society's Annual Report for the year ended 31st March 2022. I am writing this for the last time as Chair of FVCS as I shall be standing down at the AGM, after five wonderful years at the helm and many more on the Committee. Although I feel sad to be moving on, it is to make time to focus on other areas of my life. I also know that I will be leaving the Society in a strong position with a flourishing membership, plenty of events and activities – including our main event for 2022 which will be the **JUBILEE SUMMER FETE** on 9th July – and a healthy bank balance.

What we did in 2021/22

Like many organisations, we started the year virtually, on Zoom but moved to the “real world” as soon as permitted. We began in early May 2021 with a virtual History Talk for our members, given by Sarah Slater, Hampton Court Tour Guide and Guide Lecturer on her “Working with Ghosts at Hampton Court Palace”. This was a well-attended event giving us an informative and amusing look behind the scenes; whether the numerous sightings of other worldly figures over the years at the Palace were real or not was left, in the end, for each of us to decide!

This event was swiftly followed by the resumption of our monthly Beach Cleans on 22nd May 2021, once the Government's restrictions had been lifted. We also participated, once more, in the Great British Beach Clean later in the year. We are so grateful to the many doughty volunteers who turn out in all weathers to litter-pick our shores, promenade and greenswards. Plastic remains a prolific pollutant, regrettably, along with all sorts of other rubbish all of which could have been taken home or binned at time of use. We love running the Beach Cleans but the day that they are no longer needed will be a good one!

We were also delighted to welcome back our monthly Old Rectory Gardens Group who have continued to keep the gardens looking tidy every month, no matter the weather. The Group work closely with Arun District Council to plant new shrubs and remove plants as necessary whilst ensuring the gardens are enjoyed by the whole community. We were obviously delighted when, once again, the gardens received the Green Flag Award.

May 2021 saw the Annual Plant Sale at St Michael's Allotments. The Society has two plots which are used, amongst other things, to plant up and grow on the plants for the hanging baskets. We were very pleased to put up the baskets again at the end of May 2021 after not having done so the year before. They remained in place until the autumn when they were replaced with British Legion poppies for Remembrance Sunday.

July 2021 saw our participation in the St Mary's Church Flower Festival and Open Gardens; we submitted a flower arrangement on the theme of Allotments and offered teas and coffees in the Old Rectory Gardens during the afternoons. We also took a stall at the Felpham Farmers Market in July to sell plants, some produce and pure wildflower seeds and had a fun time meeting up with members and other local residents.

By popular demand, local historian, Sylvia Endacott repeated her History Talk, in October 2021, on the origins of Butlins in Bognor Regis. We had a full house with many questions, comments and reminiscences on people's holidays in Felpham. Our History, Heritage & Archive Group are now looking for new projects - and new members to the group are always welcome.

The Fox Inn provided a warm and hospitable setting for our Members Autumn Social Evening in November 2021. This is always an opportunity for members to meet each other and the Committee as well as generally relax and unwind.

This was followed, in early December 2021, by the welcome return of our Christmas Tree Light-up event with carols sung by Felpham Community College, Bishop Tufnell School, St Mary's Church Choir and local soloist, Anthony Jenkins. Butlins once again generously donated a beautiful tree which was lit by volunteers and blessed by Father John Challis. Mulled wine and mince pies completed the festivities.

We were at the St Michael's Allotments again, in February 2022 for a Work Party where our willing volunteers cut brambles and hedges, shored up the levee and generally tidied around the plots. We fired up the barbeque and offered bacon butties (and vegetarian alternatives) as a thank you.

Early March 2022 saw the Members Spring Social Evening, once more at the Fox. We had a good turnout and were pleased to welcome many familiar faces and also sign-up some new members.

The final event of 2021/2022 will be the AGM, on Monday 25th April 2022, at 7.00 pm, at the Felpham Memorial Village Hall, Vicarage Lane. We do hope you will be able to join us.

Communicating with you

I have continued to write history articles for the Heart of Felpham series in *Felpham in Focus* magazine which we hope you have enjoyed reading. My quarterly Newsletters, our emails to you, and our Felpham Village Conservation Society Facebook page also provide ways in which we engage with members and the wider community. We so enjoy seeing your old photographs and postcards of Felpham and love reading people's reactions to these on Facebook. Please keep them coming in!

The Committee and Finances

The Committee met nine times throughout the year, mostly on Zoom, to plan our activities and events, keeping each other abreast of what was going on in our various groups, and monitoring our finances.

The Treasurer has reported separately on the finances which show a deficit of circa £1,200 for the year given that no Fete was held due to the pandemic. However, the Society still retains a healthy bank position to enable the range of usual activities to be planned for 2022/23, including the **JUBILEE SUMMER FETE**. The Committee would like to thank the Felpham Parish Council for their generous grant of £1,000 which I have received on behalf of the Society in the last few days. This will show in next year's accounts.

Some Dates for your Diary in 2022

Sunday 15th May 2022: **Annual Plant Sale**, St Michael's Allotments, 11.00 am to 1.00 pm

Monday 23rd May 2022: **Pop-up Plant Sale**, Felpham Village Post Office, 11.00 am to 1.00 pm

Saturday 11th June 2022: **Quiz Night**, Felpham Memorial Village Hall, 7.00 pm to 9.30 pm

Saturday 9th July 2022: **JUBILEE SUMMER FETE**, Old Rectory Gardens, 12.00 to 5.00 pm – *our main event of the year*

Friday 2nd December 2022: **Christmas Tree Light-up and Carols**, Grasmere Parade, 3.30 to 5.00 pm

Plus - our regular monthly **Beach Cleans** on the second Saturday of each month (other than July when it will be on the third Saturday) and **Gardening** in the Old Rectory Gardens on the fourth Friday of each month.

Other Events to watch out for – dates to be advised

Autumn History Talk
Members Autumn Social Evening
Members Spring Social Evening

Key Memories as Chair

So, it has been another full year. As I reflect on my time as Chair, I can confess it has been challenging, especially during the period of the pandemic. It was during March 2020 when I first wrote a letter from the Committee to let you know all our forthcoming events would have to be cancelled – one of the hardest decisions we have had to make, but obviously the right one at that time.

Personally, my highlights as Chair of the Society would have to be the successes we have had and there have been many. If I had to pick one or two, they would have to be the Annual Summer Fete and the Commemoration of 100 Years since the end of WW1, for which we were awarded special recognition from Felpham Parish Council.

Every event has its difficulties, but I think you would agree we have tried to give you our members and the Felpham Community a variety of interesting and exciting occasions, which I will always remember.

But, of course, each and every event would not be possible without help from others. I have been fortunate to have had great support, especially from my Committee, without whom I would not have been able to continue as Chair of the Society for these past five years, but also friends, family and you, our Members.

Although I am retiring from my responsibilities of the Society, rest assured the Felpham Village Conservation Society will continue to give the Community support in future events and on-going activities.

Questions

I am happy to take questions on the Annual Report and cordially request these are submitted in advance, where feasible, to mail@felphamvillageconservation.co.uk . Questions may also be raised at the AGM and we will endeavour to answer them all.

Yours truly,

Joyce Pritchard
Chair, FVCS
April 2022