

FLAG
Bedford



Friendship Link & Action Group



FLAG News



Autumn 2015, Issue No 30



FLAG's Notice Board

**Dates for your
Diary 2015/16**

26 November
CAB Energy Talk

3 December
Drop in

10 December
Drop in

17 December
Christmas
Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social
Afternoon

24 & 31
December
No FLAG meeting

7 January 2016
Committee
Meeting

14 January
Drop in

21 January
Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social
Afternoon

28 January
Drop in

10th Anniversary Fundraising News!

At FLAG's AGM way back in April, the Committee announced that all Community and Internet fundraising would be directed into raising money for our 10th Anniversary celebrations. Money raised will go towards providing a much subsidised Coach Trip (no promises but it might be free) and a Birthday Party.

FLAG is a third of the way through our fundraising marathon and things are looking good!

On Saturday 16th May FLAG had a stall at St Paul's Church May Market.

Gordon Cooke did a marvellous job at rallying people and getting them to take part in our games. This was the first event where we were able to display our amazing banner, which attracted loads of attention, and we raised a staggering **£120.80p**.

On Bank Holiday Monday the 25th May, FLAG was once again out Fundraising, this time at Sharnbrook Village Fete. Despite the cold, dull weather, great fun was had by all, and it was good to see our wonderful volunteers, **Bernadette** and

Maggie, and our dedicated and hard working Administrator - **Linda**, **Brendan Gaunt** and **Gordon Cooke** did a sterling job manning the stall and a magnificent **£80.60p** was raised.

More recently we all gathered for FLAG's second Fundraising Barbeque at the White Horse Pub. The event was a great success with around forty people attending.

Ros Graham, who has been doing a bit of house clearing, held a Bric-a-Brac stall.

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Get well soon Brendan!

As a lot of members will be aware **Brendan Gaunt** has broken his leg. Brendan's accident occurred on Saturday 17th October. Unfortunately, the break is a complex one and has required surgery, Brendan will also have to spend a period of time in a wheelchair, while the leg heals.

I am sure we all wish Brendan a speedy recovery and hope to see him back with us soon.



10th Anniversary News (cont...)

We sold lavender bags, with lavender lovingly grown by **Bernadette** and the bags skilfully filled by her granddaughter - **Holly**. **Linda** worked tirelessly hard and personally made the wonderful cup cakes. **Bernadette** once again created some beautiful flower arrangements to sell, a raffle and the FLAG games all contributed to the Barbeque raising around **£224.10**

It was great to see residents from Brendan's home (Elm house) and a huge thank you to all friends and family, who are supporting FLAG in its Fundraising.

A very Important

milestone was reached at the barbeque, **Karl Fowler** (from Elm House and a friend of Brendan) had the great honour of placing the 1200th 5p in FLAG's 5p pig, bringing the total in the pig so far to **£60**. It has been very touching and we cannot express how much it means to FLAG, the extent members, friends and family have supported us in this challenge. It is with great anticipation that we await the grand total of the 5p challenge, next April, when we have all the contributions of all our members, friends and family. The money raised is

constantly changing; Online Sales so far are around **£160**. Income from Fetes and the Barbeque is around **£380** and with the **£60** from the pig the total at the one third point stands at roughly **£800**. However we must not get complacent! Coaches are expensive and FLAG wishes to celebrate in style.

Our fundraising Michaelmas Market which took place on the 19th September at St Paul's Church, Bedford, raised **£72.20**.



St Paul's Christmas Tree Festival 2015



FLAG will once again be taking part in the "Christmas Tree Festival" at St Paul's Church, Bedford.

FLAG took part for the first time last year. It is a great opportunity to

advertise the good work we do at FLAG and interact with the wider community.

The tree will be decorated on Tuesday 1st December at St Paul's and the Christmas Tree

Festival will run from 2nd to the 7th December.

If anyone is interested in helping to decorate the tree please contact Linda on:

07815 196357

Bedford Bus Station



The new Bus Station in Bedford is finally finished. What do you think of it, Is it better or worse. One of our members represents FLAG at the Council run "Passenger Transport Users Forum" and would like to hear your views on the new Bus Station, whether good or bad. FLAG will then compile a report and present

it to the "Transport Forum".

Things you might consider are:

- Is it fully accessible,
- are the toilets adequate,
- are the signs easy to read,
- can you get the information you want,
- can you get on and off the buses easily,
- what about the placing of

disabled parking,

- and the placing of Taxi ranks.

We would like to know the good things as well as bad.

Send your comments to our email address, by post, by phone or just mention them to any Committee member.

Thank you!





Video Race Night - 28 October, Priory Methodist

FLAG decided to have a "Video Race Night" for its October event. Our volunteer, Bernadette, found a DVD game called "*Night at the Dogs*", hiding away in her cupboard. As you might have guessed the DVD was about Greyhound Racing and not Horse Racing, but as it was free we went with it.

23 members attended the event, with all of them "Betting" on the Races, apart from myself, who was given the job of

Commentating and Scoring. I say "Betting" but we did not actually charge members to play. There were six races with six dogs in each race and members were asked to pick two dogs per race by ticking the names on their "Betting Slip" and then handing it to me to score. If they picked the winner they were awarded 10 points, and if they picked the runner-up they were awarded 5 points.

After 3 races we tucked into a Buffet and cakes which kept us going for the next 3 races. While I added up and double checked the scores for the 6 races, our volunteers got on with calling the raffle. We had been collecting Clubcard points and a voucher from Tesco, a Voucher from Wilko and Nectar points from Sainsbury's, so we were able to buy several raffle prizes for almost nothing.



Betting Slip

RACE 1

THE TREKKIES
STAKES

Trap	Name of Dog	Tick 2 Dogs
1	THE BORG	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	HOLODECK	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	SPOCK	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	WARP DRIVE	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	ENGAGE	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	STAR DATE	<input type="checkbox"/>

Crime most Horrid at the Race Night.

While FLAG members were enjoying the thrills of the race night and tucking into the buffet, it is my unfortunate duty to inform you all that an act, most fowl was committed! Somebody placed a 1p in the 5p pig! As you can see in the photo, the read out on the 5p pig reads £74.06.

A fine sum you may think? However the mathematicians among us will realise the amount is not divisible by 5! The problem has been rectified and the offending 1p has been sent for forensic analysis.

Of course I ham this story up, but It would really help if all the coins are 5ps.

Thank you
Laura Peggs

Video Race Night - 28 October, Priory Methodist

The raffle raised £68 towards FLAG funds, which was brilliant, thank you everyone!

After the raffle and I had eventually managed to add up the scores we awarded the "Race" prizes. Several people, including our mascot, Jeff the Bear, tied for fourth place with 35 points, in third place was **Kerry Seymour** with 40, in second place was **Bernadette Frisby** with 45 and the winner with 50

points was **Angela Etherington**.
Well done Angela!

The first 3 members won a Box of Chocolates and a jar of Retro Sweets each.

A big thank you to Sue from Priory Methodist for coming in to help us set up the projector and as always thank you to our volunteers for their support and I hope you all enjoyed yourselves.

Tracey Brightman.

PS - Did you notice at the "Race Night" we were using FLAG's new PA System that was bought with part of the donation from the Norwich & Peterborough Building Society. The EUROPORT EPA40 PA system is compact, portable and easy to operate. It features a loudspeaker, an integrated battery, Mic and Aux inputs as well as a Microphone.



For sale

We have 3 FLAG Baseball Caps for sale. One Blue, one White and one Red. They each have the FLAG Name and LOGO embroidered on the front. Each Cap costs £8. We can post them to you if required.



Community Transport - Door to Door

The BRCC (Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity) is Bedfordshire's only countywide Community Transport provider, one of its services is outlined below:

Door to Door.

I'm sure you have all heard of Door to Door. It provides wheelchair accessible minibuses for people unable to use public transport in the Bedford area. Their aim is to provide a safe, accessible service for those who are unable to use ordinary public transport due to disability, either temporary or permanent. The staff and volunteers of Door to Door aim to provide at all times a reliable, personal and friendly service, allowing added freedom and independence. However, they only provide their service Monday - Friday, 8.30am to 4.15pm and not evenings or

weekends.

Charge - as from 1st June 2015, because of rising costs and demands on the service they have introduced a charge of £1 per journey (£2 return). They will also be charging £2.50 for journeys that are cancelled later than 1pm the previous day.

Concessionary Bus Pass - Along with other groups and individuals FLAG has been campaigning for disabled people to use their Bus Pass on regular Bus services as well as Door to Door services. After some wrangling with the Council an

agreement has been made. As long as a disabled person meets the qualifying criteria they can use their Bus Pass on regular Buses and become a member of Door to Door and use their services at a cost of £1.00 per journey.

Membership - £20 first year and £15 annually thereafter.

Booking line - Mon - Fri, 9am-1pm
- Tel: 01234 271087 to book for the next day.

Advance bookings for appointments - can be made further in advance by contacting the enquiry line on Tel: 01234 345327.



Tower of London Trip - 10th September



On the morning of Thursday 10th September, FLAG members congregated outside the White Horse Pub (due to Priory being otherwise engaged) to set off for the Tower of London.

This trip was a momentous one as it was the first coach trip for the new FLAG mascot – Jeff the Bear.

The weather was beautiful and there was an air of excitement as we set off in Motts coach. The journey was a long one with lots of delays, this being due in part to the celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II

becoming Britain's longest running monarch in History. Once we finally arrived, we all got our tickets and went our separate ways, to explore the historic wonders of the Tower.

The Tower of London is approaching 1000 years and while bits were added later at various historic periods unfortunately none of these periods were particularly disability aware. FLAG members are made of strong stuff and we braved the cobbles and made our way to see the ravens,

crown jewels and Beefeaters. The history of the tower can't help but have an effect, seeing Traitors' Gate and the poignant memorial to those beheaded in the Tower grounds, really brings it home that these were real people and real events – not just stories to entertain.

At the end of the day we all met up to come back home, we were tired, those in wheelchairs and with rollators were thoroughly shaken with the cobbles – but at least no one was beheaded!





FLAG's Notice Board

Dates for your
Diary 2016

4 February

Drop in

11 February

Committee
Meeting

18 February

Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

25 February

Drop in

3 March

Drop in

10 March

Drop in

17 March

Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

24 March

Committee
Meeting

31 March

Drop in

Bi-Monthly
Events

Christmas Meal
9 December
Harvester

Feb/March -
Harry Potter
Experience

Donations 2015 / 2016



The Harpur Trust - £2045.00

This is the second part of a two year grant.
The money will be used to pay our
Administrators Salary and the Room Hire at Priory
Methodist Church on Thursday Afternoons.



Bedford Borough Council - £824.00.

This is the second year we have applied to the
Borough Council for funding from its "Third Sector
Support - Financial Assistance programme". This
year we have been successful and the money will
go towards Insurance, phone, stationery,
photocopying and committee travel costs.

St John's Hospital Trust, Bedford - £1155.00.

A big thank you to the trustees for this donation. The money
was used to pay for the Coach Hire for the Tower of London
trip and will be used for the trip early next year to the
Harry Potter Experience.

FREE Energy Best Deal Session

Do you worry about the rising cost of energy bills?
Are you up to date with the changes that have occurred in
the energy markets this year?

A free talk by Bedford Citizens' Advice can help you to:

- Understand energy bills
- Reduce energy bills
- Shop around for a better deal
(or get a better deal from your current supplier)
- Get help with grants, discounts and trust funds.

**citizens
advice
bureau**

Just come along to the free talk at Priory Church on

Thursday 26th November at 2.30pm –
bring your recent energy bills if you'd like some personal
advice.

Tea and coffee will be provided from 2.00pm



FLAG's postal address: FLAG Bedford
c/o Priory Methodist Church, 63, Newnham Avenue,
Bedford. MK41 9QJ

Merry Christmas Everyone