

FLAG

Bedford



Friendship Link
& Action Group

FLAG News



Registered Charity Number: 1165681

Summer 2016, Issue No 33



FLAG'S Notice Board

Dates for your Diary 2016

22 September

Drop in

29 September

Drop in attended

by our **MP**

Richard Fuller

6 October

Drop in

13 October

Committee

Meeting

20 October

Tea/Coffee/Cake

Social Afternoon

27 October

Drop in

3 November

Drop in

10 November

Drop in

FLAG's Fifteen Minutes of Fame

As preparations were getting underway to celebrate our momentous 10th anniversary, **Ros Graham**, who wanted to ensure that FLAG got the recognition that the charity deserves, went to the Bedfordshire on Sunday (BoS).

On Thursday 19th May, at one of our fabulous Tea & Coffee Afternoons, FLAG members gathered waiting with anticipation for the arrival of **Stephen Penn**, the BoS reporter, and his trusty photographer, **Richard Marsham**.

Stephen spent a long time talking to the Committee

about the vital work it does then to members about their experiences. Richard was busy taking photos, wonderfully capturing our vast collection of 5p's. The article came out in the 22nd May edition of the BoS and focused on FLAG's role, our recent successful application to the Charity Commission and no story would be complete without a love interest, that of our own **Carole**

& Lance Mason.

Thank you to everyone who turned up at such short notice to show FLAG your support. Come and see the full article in the FLAG memory book!



10 Years FLAG Anniversary

Sir Roger De Gaunt comes to the aid of a damsel in distress

Ten years ago, FLAG was set up as a social group for clients of the original Lifestyle Choices Project at Livability Bedford.

Over the years it has separated and expanded to become a leading independent movement for local people, and in June FLAG members and friends enjoyed a 10th Anniversary Party to remember. Thanks to our fantastic committee, our no-detail-left-untouched Chair Laura, our generous funders, and our dedicated volunteers.

Held at the very spacious Bedford Athletic Rugby Club, guests were treated to a ball atmosphere. There were celebration display boards, themed presentations in blue and silver, balloons, a buffet, a busy bar, music, dancing, raffles,

games, and prizes, and of course, CAKE. (As members know, cake is very important to our committee.)

A special mention must go to our gallant 'Knight of the Night' Sir Roger De Gaunt. Always on hand to aid a damsel in distress, he set off on a quest to find more helium for the balloons so that the Lady Laura could have her table displays exactly as she wanted!

The trials of that noble Knight will be recorded in history, but he succeeded, and won the hearts (and everlasting gratitude) of all those involved.

Special congratulations to all those who won the marvellous top raffle prizes, and to Lisa who guessed the total of our famous 5p Challenge!

It was a truly

memorable night, and consolidated everything we know about FLAG: a thriving, rich, and ever growing organisation, that in ten years has achieved everything and more that it set out to do, and above all has proved that disability is no barrier to ambition, hard work, cooperation, and success. #proud."

By **Ros Graham**



FLAG 10 Years



Anniversary Party

www.flagbedford.org

3

flag25@hotmail.co.uk

FLAG 10 Years



Anniversary Party

www.flagbedford.org

4

flag25@hotmail.co.uk

Romance flourishes at FLAG for Carole and Lance



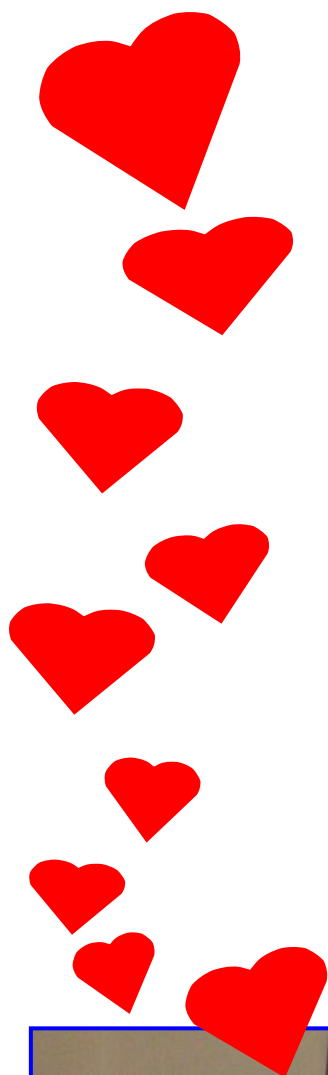
In July 2006, I was introduced to FLAG through **Ros Graham**. At that time, I had become a bit of a recluse after spending 9 weeks in hospital following a horrendous RTA in January 2006. After many months and much encouragement, **Tracey, Nick and Ros** persuaded me to attend the FLAG Christmas meal at the Priory Marina in Bedford. I have since learnt that they hand-picked one of their

voluntary drivers, **Lance**, to give me a lift to the event. Following this meal, Lance and I saw each other several times and enjoyed each other's company. During 2007 we were seen as a 'couple' and enjoyed lots of FLAG events together. Most of you reading this, will know that **Lance** and I got married on 8th June 2010 and we find it amazing that the 10th Anniversary of FLAG has

coincided with our 6th Wedding Anniversary! Following our quiet ceremony on 8th June, we enjoyed a Church Blessing Service on 14th August, at which **Ros** was a very special guest – can you spot her hat?

We have a lot to thank FLAG for!

By Carole Mason.



2006 - The birth of FLAG

In 2006 I attended a meal in which FLAG was born. Over the last 10 years I've attended a lot of FLAG Trips and here are my highlights. The trip to the BBC, Boat Trips and

the Cruise on the Thames.

FLAG Events I've enjoyed are the annual Christmas Dinner, The Halloween Karaoke, The Halloween Bingo to name but a

few.

Now FLAG is 10 years old I'm looking forward to our 10th anniversary year.

by
Matthew Payton



Bedfordshire on Sunday - photo gallery



5p challenge 2016/17 - Back by popular demand!

Last year's 5p challenge raised an astonishing **£472.32p** or **9447** coins and using 95 coin bags.

5p challenge 2016/17 was launched at our August Fundraising Tea Party and will end at our August fundraiser 2017.

The rules are simple, collect as many 5p's as you can in 1 year.
Thank you everyone and keep

collecting for an even bigger amount next year.

£472.35 is tough target! Can we beat it?



All Saints' Church - £40 donation to FLAG

All Saints' Church, Houghton Conquest, hold a monthly Afternoon Tea in aid of a Charity. In June the nominated Charity was our very own FLAG.

So on 30th June the ladies of the village (that's not sexism, they are all ladies) went along to the Church with offerings of scones, fruit cakes and many other wonderful home-made delicacies as well as tea and coffee. The doors were opened from 2pm to 4.30pm to residents and visitors who could partake

at a very reasonable price. The opportunity was taken to promote FLAG, and information about our Charity raised a lot of interest, getting us better known outside of Bedford itself.

Bearing in mind the date fell towards the end of the Wimbledon fortnight, we did very well to receive a donation of £40, and we pass on our grateful thanks to All Saints' Church.



FLAG'S Notice Board

Dates for your Diary 2016

17 November

Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

24 November

Committee
Meeting

1 December

Drop in

8 December

Drop in

15 December

Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

22 / 29 December

No FLAG Meeting
or Drop-In

Bi-Monthly Events 2016/17

Event 4 - 11 Oct
Beetle Drive

Event 5

Afternoon Tea at a
Garden Centre
(Free) (9th Nov)

Event 6

Christmas Meal
(TBC 8th Dec 2016)

Event 7

BBC Studio Tour
(TBC) (Feb 2017)

Membership Fees

This year FLAG has 47 fully paid up members. We collected Membership Fees totalling £458.50 which helps cover our Administration Costs.

Fundraising News

Donations.

A Donation of £40 was received from a Coffee Afternoon, attended by FLAG's Administrator Linda Payne, at the village of Houghton Conquest on the 30th June. Many thanks.

A Donation of £20 was received from Donna, the lady who provided the excellent Buffets at the AGM and the 10th Anniversary Party. Many thanks.

A Donation of £10 was received from Bob Hughes, the Accounting Adviser from the Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity, who checked and approved our accounts for last year.

Raffle Takings.

FLAG raised £40 from the Raffle held at the Buffet after the AGM on the 24th April. FLAG also raised an astonishing £300 in Raffle takings at the 10th Anniversary Party on the 8th of June.

St Pauls Church - May Market - 21st May 2016.

FLAG raised £52.80.

Sharnbrook Village Fete - 30th May 2016.

FLAG raised £127.20.

EasyFundraising.

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be raising a free donation for FLAG. There are nearly 3,000 retailers on board ready to make a donation, including Amazon, John Lewis, Aviva, and Sainsbury's - it doesn't cost you a penny extra. It's really simple, all you have to do is: Head to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/flagbedford/> and sign up for free.

Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first, pick the retailer you want and start shopping. After you've checked out, that retailer will make a donation to your good cause for no extra cost whatsoever. Last year FLAG Members raised on average £10.00 per month by doing this.

**Talk to your Local MP, Richard Fuller,
29th September 2016.**

FLAG has invited Richard Fuller MP to come and see the work we do and its also a chance for our members to ask him questions. It will be Thursday afternoon the 29th September at one our regular drop-ins at Priory Methodist Church between 2.00pm and 4.00pm.

Have you any questions about, PIP, DLA, ESA, Job Seekers, Housing Benefit, cuts in funding for Social Services, Care Packages, the future of Bedford Hospital and many, many other Disability or Non Disability issues, if so, come along and get some answers from you local MP.

