



FLAG News

Registered Charity No. : 1165681

Autumn 2016, Issue No 34



FLAG's Notice Board

Dates for your Diary 2016

1st December
Drop in

8th December
No FLAG Meeting

15th December
Christmas Tea,
Coffee,
Cake
Social
Afternoon

22nd December
No FLAG Meeting

29th December
No FLAG Meeting

Continued
on Page 12.

Richard Fuller MP visits FLAG.

On Thursday the 29th of September FLAG members gathered at our usual location, waiting to meet a very unusual visitor. Richard Fuller, MP for Bedford and Kempston had offered to grace us with his presence. Any opportunity to engage with the political process is very important. The afternoon was well attended and provided an opportunity for everyone to ask questions and find out what was happening in Westminster. Topics such as Bedroom tax, Personal Independence Payments and the future of Bedford Hospital were all up for discussion and the afternoon was going very smoothly until Richard Fuller mentioned Jeremy Hunt (Secretary of State for Health), at which point a distinct change in atmosphere could be felt. We ended the session on good terms with Richard offering to help us arrange and fund a trip to the Houses of Parliament in the next FLAG year, 2017/18.



We are grateful to Richard for donating his time to come and see us and look forward to seeing the Houses of Parliament next year. Sadly we were all so engrossed with proceedings we forgot to take any photos!

In this Issue

Page 1 Richard Fuller MP visits FLAG.
Page 2 August Fundraising Tea Party.
Page 3 August Fundraising Tea Party.
Page 4 The Beetle Drive.
Page 5 The Beetle Drive cont.
Page 6 Next Years Events.

Page 7 Garden Centre/Afternoon Tea.
Page 8 Garden Centre/Afternoon Tea.
Page 9 Event / Trip Policies.
Page 10 Policies cont. - Jeff the Bear.
Page 11 Trustees' Week.
Page 12 Fundraising News.



FLAG Fundraising Tea Party. (The Great Scone Heist of 2016).

Thursday 18th August, Priory Methodist and the stage was set for the FLAG Annual Fundraiser. FLAG's devoted team of volunteers and trustees were preparing for Afternoon Tea, with cream tea, for over 50 individuals and their Chairperson, Laura, was mid nervous breakdown as she had just been informed that half the scones had gone missing!

Scones form a major part of a cream tea, Gunns the Bakers had kindly offered to donate 30 scones to the cause but when Bernadette Frisby went to collect the scones they were not at the bakers! The donation had kindly been arranged by Jesmary Gaunt. Frantically the Chairperson rang Jesmary to see if she could shed any light on the disappearing scones. After several phone calls we found out they had been "nicked" by the Cerebral Palsy Society, who were also having a Tea Party.

The hero of the hour, Maggie Herbert, leapt into action to race across to the other side of Kempston to retrieve our scones from the clutches of the Cerebral Palsy Society,

MISSING

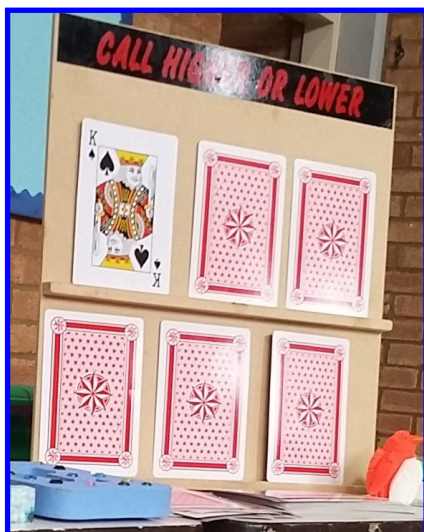


FLAG Fundraising Tea Party continued. (The Great Scone Heist of 2016).

After such a dramatic start and thanks to Maggie everyone had an enjoyable Cream Tea and the afternoon passed without further drama.

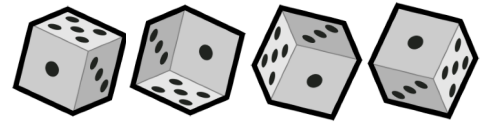
As well as the sale of tickets we raised money through the sale of lavender bags donated by Bernadette and a raffle. We also had Anglia Mobility come with a selection of mobility and living aids that a lot of our members took advantage of.

The afternoon was a great success raising £317.35p and a huge thank you to our Volunteers, Roger and Jesmary Gaunt, Gunns the Bakers and Peter at Anglia Mobility



Beetle Drive - 11th October 2016.

Priory Methodist Church, Bedford.



32 FLAG members and friends attended the Beetle Drive with Fish or Sausage and Chips. We split up into about eight teams. Laura had allowed for 4 games before a break for food and 4 games afterwards. Each team threw their dice as fast as they could in order to get the correct number for each of the Beetles body parts. When the Beetle was completed the team would shout "BEETLE". I didn't think Beetle could be as exciting and thrilling, I have never seen dice being thrown as quick. It was fast but really enjoyable.

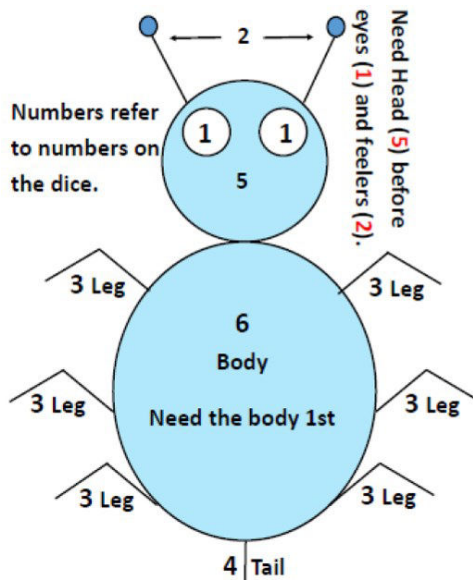
We took a break at about 7.30pm when the Fish or Sausage and Chips were delivered



by Mario's on the High Street. They were delivered on time, were still hot, very tasty

and a good price. Thank you Mario. At these events we have tried Fish & Chips, Pizza and a Buffet. Which of these do you like best, or is there something else you would like us to try?

As usual raffle tickets were sold during the break and the raffle was drawn soon after, with the winners picking up their prizes.



Julie



Maggie

Beetle Drive continued Priory Methodist Church, Bedford.



Angela & Andrew



Laura & Elizabeth

As we had filled the score sheet up during the first half of the evening the second half began with Laura and Ros frantically looking for extra sheets of paper to use. I think we ended up playing about 24 games. At the end each team added up their scores to get a final total. Laura had explained the rules at the beginning of the evening and each table had a set of rules to go by, but no, there was controversy when the teams revealed their scores. One team was well in front of the rest and a recount was called for. Apparently the team with too many points had misunderstood the rules and gave themselves extra points. Never mind it was all good fun. The real Winning Team was made up of Bernadette, Beverley, Jill, and new members Sharon and Rhianna. They each took home a Lindt Chocolate Bear as their prize.



Lisa & Simon



Jill, Bernadette & Sharon



Beverley & Rhianna

FLAG - Next Year's Events - 2017/18.

Every year FLAG aims to organise 7 Events, the AGM, 3 Coach Trips and 3 Local Events. FLAG has been collecting ideas for next years events and ended up with a choice of 6 possible Coach Trips, 6 possible Local Events and either a Christmas Meal or a Pantomime. Over the last month Laura & Gordon have been asking members to pick 2 of their favourite Coach Trips, 2 Local Trips and a Christmas Meal or a Pantomime. The results were:

Coach Trips	Votes
Houses of Parliament	24
Theatre Trip	13
Shepreth Zoo	10
Ten Pin Bowling	6
Bletchley Park	5
Wrest Park	0

Local Events	Votes
Quiz Night	13
Cinema Trip	13
Murder Mystery Night	12
Bingo	9
Disco	8
Halloween Party	3

Christmas Event	Votes
Christmas Meal	20
Pantomime	9



**ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING**



Therefore, subject to funding, accessibility and other practicalities, next years events will be:

- **AGM.**
- **Houses of Parliament.**
- **Christmas Meal.**
- **Theatre Trip.**
- **Quiz Night.**
- **Cinema Trip.**
- **Shepreth Zoo.**

The AGM will be sometime in May 2017 and the Christmas Meal in December 2017 but we have yet to decide when the other events will take place. We hope you will come along and enjoy each event.

Garden Centre / Afternoon Tea - 9th November 2016.

Frosts & Wyevale Garden Centres, Woburn Sands.

FLAG's third and last free Event of its 10th Anniversary year was a trip to a Garden Centre with Afternoon Tea. We couldn't decide which Garden Centre to go to so decided to go to both Frosts, because it is very good, and Wyevale, because its Afternoon Tea was a lot cheaper.

32 FLAG members boarded the Motts Coach at 11.00am, with trusty driver Steve at the wheel again. We arrived at Frosts Garden Centre first. The car park was packed and for those members who tried its restaurant the queues were equally long. The Christmas displays and items for sale were extensive and magical. I think a lot of us were mesmerised by the 3 animatronic Reindeer, Dancer, Prancer and Dopey. I have no idea why one was called Dopey, he's a Dwarf isn't he.



Anyway they were brilliant.

FROSTS
Three green leaves.



Garden Centre / Afternoon Tea continued.

Frosts & Wyevale Garden Centres, Woburn Sands.

We met up at 1.45pm and boarded the coach again for the short trip down the road to Wyevale Garden Centre. Here we enjoyed a wonderful Afternoon Tea comprising Sandwiches, Scones with Clotted Cream and Jam, mini Cream Cakes and a Pot of Tea. Mmmm yummy.



Shopping bags full of Christmas Goodies we once again boarded the coach and returned to Bedford. Thank you to everyone who came on this trip, especially our volunteers and our Administrator, Linda, who make our trips run as smoothly as possible.



**FLAG members
enjoying
Afternoon Tea**



FLAG Trip and Event Policies Reminder.

Over the past few months FLAG has been very lucky and gained a few new members. We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new members and hope you enjoy your time with FLAG. The Trustees felt this is also a good opportunity to explain our Policies and Procedures regarding FLAG trips and events.

Subsidies

All FLAG events/trips are subsidised for members and their carers. The Committee normally aim to subsidise events by 40%, this means if the cost of an event is £10 you pay £6 and FLAG pays £4. As 2016/17 was our 10th Anniversary year we had 3 free events and the rest had a 60% subsidy. Next year all events will be back to a target subsidy of 40%.

Personal Care

Our excellent team of volunteers are great for pushing, carrying, fetching and guiding, but if you need help with toilet needs or medication then you will need to bring someone who can assist you.

Charges for carers

While FLAG would like to have a carer goes free policy, financially it is not viable, we would have to put up prices for everyone. For this reason carers pay the subsidised price when they attend.

Why are there two prices?

Members, who do not need personal care, sometimes want to bring friends and family, FLAG welcomes this but feels it is unfair for them to benefit from the subsidy that people who have paid their FLAG membership are entitled to. The Higher price reflects more what it actually costs FLAG.

Transport

FLAG recognises a huge barrier to going out is the practicalities and cost of transport. If you live within Bedford Borough we can send one of our dedicated volunteers to pick you up or arrange a taxi for you. FLAG will pay the first £20 per event. Unfortunately we are unable to send volunteers to pick you up or take you home if you live outside the Borough, but you can still claim up to £20 for a taxi, with a receipt.

FLAG encourages independence so if you can safely get yourselves to an event and home again please do so although we can always provide transport home on a late night event or if the weather is particularly bad.

FLAG Trip and Event Policies Reminder continued.

Return by date

Organising a FLAG event is a mammoth Task! It takes time and we often have to work closely with the coach company or the venue. **Please try to reply by the date on the event Flyer!** If its not convenient to pay by the return date, then please come see a trustee but we need to know you want to come and if there is a menu choice what you want.

Cancellations

If you are unable to attend an event you have signed up for **please let us know as soon as possible!** Cancellations often mean we have to alter transport arrangements, contact the coach company and the venue.

Refunds

FLAG refunds can only be given if FLAG has not already paid out for your attendance and at the discretion of the trustees.

A Note to volunteers

If you have been given the honour of supporting a member on a trip and you need a break, please ensure they are left in the care of another volunteer and not left unsupported. **Never Abandon your Member!**

The Policies and Procedures were drawn up with careful consideration of what is fair, safe and in the best interests of members and volunteers.

Jeff the Bear & Steve.

Eagle eyed FLAG members may have noticed, on our Garden Centre trip, that the Motts coach has acquired a new accessory. Tucked in the top corner of the windscreen, on the drivers side, is FLAG's own Baby Jeff. It could be that Steve (our regular trusted driver) is prone to bouts of loneliness or our bear is an excellent navigator? Whatever the reason it was touching to see our little FLAG mascot take pride of place on the Motts coach. We wish Baby Jeff and Steve many a safe and happy Journey.



Trustees' Week.

Running a charity involves hard work, organisational skills and patience! So much is unseen and while being a Charity Trustee is immensely rewarding it also has its challenges.



As 2016 is FLAG's first as a registered Charity, I (Laura Peggs), as Chairperson, thought I would take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to FLAG Trustees, the one way I knew it would be appreciated, a cake! Our Trustees show dedication and commitment, having to sit through tedious Committee meetings and make often difficult decisions on areas such as funding and governance.

FLAG is a little unusual as most of its Trustees balance their Trustee work along with their disabilities and health issues, making it even more important their hard work is recognised and rewarded. So a huge thank you must go to: Tracey Brimmell (Vice Chair), Lisa Thomas (Secretary), Tracey Brightman (Treasurer), Brendan Gaunt (Community Fundraising Support), Gordon Cooke (Member Liaison), Ros Graham (Committee Support) & Bernadette Frisby (Newsletter Editor). **Thank you xx.**

If you would like any further information about being a FLAG Trustee please come and talk to one of us.



(The Committee would like to thank Laura for all of **her** hard work and say how much **she** is appreciated).

**FLAG's
Notice Board
Dates for your
Diary 2017**

5th January
Drop-in

12th January
Committee Meeting

19th January
Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

26th January
Drop-in

2nd February
Drop-in

9th February
Drop-in

16th February
Tea, Coffee, Cake
Social Afternoon

23rd February
Committee Meeting

Bi-Monthly Events

BBC Studio Tour
Feb/Mar 2017

Fundraising News.

Waitrose Bedford Donation.

FLAG was one of the three monthly charities in the Bedford Waitrose "Community Matters" Green Token Scheme. We received £219 of the £1000 which is split between the three charities depending on where customers put their Green Tokens.

Waitrose Ampthill Donation.

FLAG was also one of the three monthly charities in the Ampthill Waitrose "Community Matters" Green Token Scheme. We received £250 this time.

Raffle Takings.

FLAG raised £71 from the Raffle held at the Beetle Drive on the 11th of October. A big thank you to Freda Dunlop for selling the tickets and Angela Etherington for folding up the tickets ready to be drawn.

5p Challenge 2016/17.

A reminder that FLAG would like members and friends to carry on collecting 5p coins. Lets see if we can beat the total of £472.35 that we collected last year.

St Pauls Church - Michaelmas Market - 24th Sept.

FLAG raised £20.

**Priory Methodist
Christmas Fete -
5th Nov.** FLAG
raised £67.

**St Pauls Church
- Christmas
Market - 19th
Nov.** FLAG raised
£33.



**Brendan at one
of the Christmas
Fetes**

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
to all FLAG members and
their family and friends.*

