

West Hagbourne Village Association Chairman's Annual Report November 2023

The AGM in November last year was quickly followed by a number of small-scale, but important, events:

- Planting of a horse chestnut tree on 4th December 2022 at the entrance to Foxglove Lane to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee.
- The erection of a Christmas tree in The Square. The tree was sponsored by the Village Association and will be repeated this year as a way of encouraging the village children to get involved in village events.
- Carols in the Farmyard on 11th December was organised by the Christmas Tree Festival, run by St. Andrew's Church. The Village Association provided mulled wine and mince pies. The money raised went to two charities – St. Andrew's Church and 'Albie and Beyond' for brain tumour research.
- 2023 started with the New Year Village Walk around Upton on Sunday 8th January and ended with our last helping of mulled wine and mince pies.

The Village Association then had a short break before organising its biggest events of 2023.

- The Dragon Competition ran from 8th - 23rd April. Support for this event was good – 26 dragons, compared to 28 last year – but we did have two King Charles dragons and a coronation chicken. Linda Benton acted as our judge. Congratulations to our winners: 5 Manor Close and 6 York Road. We had a very enjoyable Dragon Tea in the garden of Woodleys, thanks to Robert and Hazel and, for the first time, we ran a plant stall. This proved popular and we hope to make it a permanent feature of this event.
- Our biggest event of the year was the celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III at York Farm on 6th May. We provided two 65-inch big-screen TVs in the barn, a Hog Roast lunch and an afternoon of activities including a cake competition, children's crafts and a raffle. Unfortunately, it turned out to be one of the wettest days of the year and we discovered one of our marquees leaked badly. Many people, not surprisingly, decided to stay at home, but those of us who attended

went away with a strong sense of achievement and, I think, a genuinely positive memory of a unique day. Thank you to the P.C. for helping to fund this event and to the Allen family for hosting the event and donating the pig.

- The annual Madge Trophy competition was judged on 7th July by Jenny Smith and Penny Barfoot. Congratulations to York Farm on coming first and Green Thatch close behind in second place.
- We held a Garden Games afternoon on 2nd September at Manor Farm. There were a total of 8 activities, including some for children but the most popular was a Boules competition. The event ended with a very closely fought final between Paul and Patsy Ryman. Paul won! This was truly a very enjoyable event and we hope to repeat it next year
- The Macmillan Coffee Morning was remarkable this year. A new record of £2196.87 was raised. It was also a convivial occasion enjoyed by many villagers under the protection of our brand new marquee. Thanks go once again to the Allen family for hosting the event.
- Our seasonal walks continued throughout the year, come rain or shine. A loyal band of hardy walkers and a couple of faithful dogs continue to support these rambles around the neighbouring parishes.
- A simple Remembrance Day ceremony was held at our War Memorial/bus shelter on Sunday 12th November. 22 people attended the service. The Village Association hung a poppy wreath on behalf of the village.

At this point I would like to acknowledge the considerable support the Village Association receives from the residents of West Hagbourne. A huge thank you to Manor Farm, York Farm and Woodleys for providing the venues for many of our events. Thanks also to Sue Totterdell and Mary-Ann Le May for publishing the details of our events in the village newsletter. Thanks too to the gang of people who turn out, event after event, to help us put up and take down the marquees. We couldn't do it without you.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the Village Association. This meeting marks a year since I took over the chairmanship of the Village Association. I wasn't sure if I could do the job, but, I can honestly say that I have enjoyed it enormously and that this is due largely to the efficient, professional, enthusiastic and just plain lovely people who are on the committee.

Rosey Gardiner
Chair, West Hagbourne Village Association