

Chairman's Annual Report 2010-11

As with last year's report, this report does not set out to be exhaustive in its description of the various HVRA activities during the past year. This is because nowadays all HVRA projects and activities are reported extensively in the Hughenden News Magazine and on the Association's website at www.hughendenresidents.org.

Initially, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone concerned with the smooth running of this Association during what has been a period of uncertainty and apprehension for a significant number of our residents. It would appear that in recent days much of the uncertainty relating to the possibility of an unwanted rural affordable housing development has been resolved. However, the uncertainty of the proposed HS2 high-speed rail link remains with us and much work remains to be done.

The Officers of the HVRA over the past year, that is Angus Idle as Vice Chairman and Albert Bowyer as Treasurer, plus all the members of the Committee, especially those who have covered the temporarily vacant office of Secretary, are deserving of the most fulsome gratitude and appreciation of all the members who pay their annual subscriptions. Particular mention must be made of those stalwarts Dory Morgan and Rosemary Hewitt on the Planning sub-committee as well as the Potter Cup Quiz and Senior Citizens' event; Christine Bowyer and Daphne Hicks with regard to their valuable contribution to the Potter Cup Quiz; also Janet Idle as Editor of Hughenden News and Sara Hamilton as organiser of the Christmas tombola; and all those who assisted them. To them I say that your devotion to duty and the time and effort that you put in has not gone unnoticed and we thank you. We now wish Councillor Dory Morgan much success in her new role on the Wycombe District Council. It is comforting to know that we are in good hands.

On a broader note, it is, I believe important to consider the relationships of this Association with other groups representing the interests of local residents. For example the relationship between this committee and the Village Hall Committee has been and continues to be a strong one. The village hall lies at the heart of our community and is deserving of our support. This Association has been proud to assist with fund-raising activities and support of various projects concerned with the village hall.

The relationship between the HVRA and the Hughenden Parish Council has for a time been subject to a degree of stress. On occasions I have deemed it necessary to resort to the local press to correct certain misinformation propagated by members of the Parish Council. The Bucks Free Press has always been most cooperative with this Association and enabled us to make out points fairly and rationally. We have always stated that the relationship between Residents Association and Parish Council should be a strong one based upon mutual respect and cooperation. Following the recent local elections we look forward to excellent relations being restored at the earliest opportunity. We were pleased to see that the turnout for the elections was an impressive one and for the first time in many years we have a fully elected Parish Council. We wish our new Parish Council well and look forward to working with them to the combined benefit of all residents of this and other local villages.

The relationship with the local Police Service continues also to be a strong one and is reinforced by the activities of the recently-formed Hughenden Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG), which numbers local residents, including me, on its committee. Our local Neighbourhood Police Officer PC Lee Turnham and the team at the Hazlemere office have been particularly helpful in alerting us to potential threats and helping to resolve antisocial behaviour, speeding traffic, burglary and other crimes perpetrated in the local area. Once again it would appear that we are in good hands.

Finally I come to the valedictory part of this my final report to this Association as its Chairman. For nine years I have served in this office as well as Vice Chairman for a further two years. It has been an honour and a privilege to work with a group of public-spirited people that have each contributed to this being one of the strongest and most capable resident's associations in the surrounding area. Over the years I have seen much achieved and been impressed and sometimes amazed at what a group of determined residents can attain; from dealing with graffiti to entertaining the village with quizzes and tea parties, there is no stopping the Hughenden Valley Residents' Association. This group accepts as one of its foremost objectives the improvement of the quality of life and the enhancement of the well-being of its residents. In my time I have seen many Road Representatives come and go but all have been admired for their selfless devotion to 'giving something back' to their community and their willingness to give their time to serving their neighbours and securing the interests of the wider community. I salute you all.

Now I am standing down as Chairman because I find that because of other important commitments in my life, I am no longer able to devote the necessary time to this important task. I will not be leaving the committee as I believe that I still have something to offer and I hope to be of service to the village in future. Having resided in Hughenden Valley for over 25 years it has become an important part of my life and I would very much like to see it protected from undesirable or inappropriate development. In recent times there has been an apparently increased urgency and desire to urbanise the countryside, especially those areas in the vicinity of large conurbations like High Wycombe. By so doing, part of the very character and soul of our rural villages can be lost forever. We live in a charming and beautiful part of the country and it is our responsibility to keep it that way and pass it on to our descendants. Long may the HVRA flourish and do its part to protect this, our village and its residents from all that threatens to disturb the peace and harmony of living here.

Thank you for having me as your Chairman.

Paul Cawte
May 2011