Fetcham Residents Association

Over 75 years service to the village

(Founded 1932)

FRA Communications Report for FRA 2021 AGM

Summary

The FRA communicates with Members in a variety of ways and many of these channels were further enhanced in the past 12 months. Spreading the message about our activities serves to raise our profile in the community. This can only help to maintain, and hopefully increase, our membership and influence.

Website - fetchamresidents.co.uk

After its relaunch in the summer of 2019, the FRA website continues to be an effective public face for the FRA, and a source of local news and information for the community.

It has been especially useful during the Covid-19 crisis as a way of passing to residents essential public messaging on matters such as where to access help, and the status of local services. We have also been posting the public messaging from our local authorities.

New features in the past year have included:

* A Coronavirus Updates sidebar on the Home page.
* A virtual 'Village Noticeboard' on the Home page, as an addition to the traditional noticeboard outside Sainsbury's.
* Using the website more interactively – material supporting the Easter Bunny Trail was available for download; in a few weeks we will be launching the Fetcham Tree Trail, with the website as the key resource.
* On a lighter note 'Sara's Lockdown Suppers' supported home cooking.

In my report last year I said that the site had received in the region of 3,400 visitors since its relaunch. That figure now stands at more than 18,000. On some days following a new post of wide appeal, the number of page views will be over 300.

Social Media

I must thank Dan Phillips for curating our social media presence. He is regularly translating our website news items on to Facebook, multiplying their reach many times over. Again, this raises our profile, and the comments generated give us an insight into community thinking.

Newsletter

This was published once again in Autumn 2020 and in Spring (late March) 2021 and is delivered free to every household in Fetcham, more than 3,300 homes. Both of these issues extended to 20 pages (compared to 16 pages previously) with the extra printing costs fully covered by strong advertising support from local traders. In fact, no FRA subscription monies at all are taken up by the Newsletter, and we normally expect to generate a small surplus.

The Newsletter is our primary communication link with residents who do not have access to our website or social media, or simply prefer to have a 'physical' publication to read.

The recent 20-page editions reflect the very full agenda of activity undertaken by the FRA in the past year – the impact of the pandemic, the future of the land at Fetcham Springs and the Local Plan, the revival of the Molebridge GP practice, the Greenhouse Scout project, the Norbury Park sawmill, and the FRA's support for local good causes.

With its wide distribution, the Newsletter is intended to raise the profile of the FRA, especially among non-members, and to raise residents' awareness of issues which will affect them, such as the Local Plan.

Email updates

Members who choose to supply us with their email address also receive regular email updates alerting them to matters we believe will be of interest.

Analytical data suggests that more than two-thirds of members are opening the emails and at least a quarter of recipients are following links through to our website.

Challenges

Without regular communication with our residents, the FRA will cease to be of relevance to most people in our community. But we rely completely on volunteers willing to give their time on a regular basis to answer emails, or provide items for the website or Newsletter. If we are to maintain our progress we need to expand our team.

So if you would like to contribute to our communication effort, even in a small way, please get in touch via our email info@fetchamresidents.co.uk.

Ian Anderson

Vice-Chairman and Editor, FRA