

FVS AUTUMN MEETING

Welcome to our Autumn Meeting and thank you all so much for coming despite the cold and dark nights which have now approached us. First of all I would like to thank Leroy for all the hard work he has put into the society over the last four years. as chairman. Without his dedication and determination, we may not have been here today. He has been a true friend and inspiration to all of us on this committee, especially to me. Thank you Leroy.

In recognition for all the hard work and achievements you have completed, the committee feel that it would be a shame to loose you as part of the Findon Valley Society. Therefore, we would like to propose to our members the position of Vice President. May I please have a seconder..... thank you.

On that note, let us present this framed photo of the valley which you yourself took which is on our front page of our website. **(Mayor presents with photos by Geoff Dean)**. Let us have a round of applause for Leroy Bryan.

Without any further ado, I would like to brief you on what we have achieved since our AGM in May.

We have been working closely with the cemetery registrar Ian Rudkin to increase security to prevent overnight vandalism to Durrington Cemetery. You may have read the article in the West Sussex Gazette last August which detailed our propositions. So far we have achieved all but the Main gate on Findon Road closed overnight, CCTV has and will continue to be introduced, and some of the fencing has been made inaccessible to climbing. We are also looking to make the fencing along Findon Road more secure and the redesigning of the landscape to improve visibility. Our suggestions to fully close all the gates keep being rejected at this stage as they wish to allow police access. The idea of giving them a key or a combination lock did not convince them. However, should any further vandalism occur, they will seriously consider this proposition.

Having been working closely with Ian Rudkin to deal with the vandalism issue, you can imagine our reaction to the application for a premises license requested by Mace Convenience Store at the Findon Valley Service Station at the bottom of Findon Road, directly opposite the cemetery. The activity they have requested is an “everyday late night refreshments 23.00 to 05.00 hours” and “alcohol sales 00.00 to 24.00 hours.” We received many complaints from our members in fear of further damage to the cemetery and the increase of potential overnight trouble and noise. Needless to say we have opposed the application.

I would like to thank Susan Smith for all her hard work in trying to keep our cemetery free from vandalism and her unique ability in getting the papers involved. You may have read articles in both The West Sussex Gazette and Worthing Herald. If not, they are available under the latest page on our website findonvalley.org.

I am pleased to announce that we have had a very successful year in terms of our membership. I would like thank Doreen Tickner who took on the role of membership secretary and made it work! All bar a couple roads have been collected which is a first for many, many years. Over 850 households have now joined our society, meaning in excess of 1500 members. As part of our move into the 21st century we now have a computerised membership database which can tell us information on each member, road, collector and of course who has and has not paid. This in turn will make next year so much easier. At the AGM we shall announce which road collectors are required for, and as suggested at the last AGM, how many members to be collected from. Hopefully we shall be able to gain a collector for each road. Also it means that we can accept payment at the post office more efficiently as a report of paid members can be produced at any time to hand over to the collector meaning they will not have to knock on every door. Our sincere thanks are extended to all our Road Wardens & Collectors.

Following feedback from our collectors, it has become apparent that our members know us better by our second name, The Findon Valley Residence Association, than our primary name, The Findon Valley Society. Upon talking to our members they only realised who we were once referred as a residence association. Therefore it

has been decided to refer to ourselves as the Findon Valley Residence Association with Findon Valley Society below in all further correspondence.

Our website (www.findonvalley.org) has continued to grow with over 3000 visitors. The main points of interest seem to be our "LATEST" page which allows visitors to find our latest movements. Any changes to the website are posted here, letters and articles regarding issues we are addressing, planning proposals etcetera, Another popular page is our downloads page which has minutes of general meetings, newsletters and chairman's reports, and latest statistics like the ever growing death rate on the A24 between Offington and Washington roundabouts.

On the subject of IT, we have computerised our accounts system which produces a balance sheet all year round. What this means is if there are any discrepancies they are found at data entry level and not at the end of year. This has made our accounts more efficient.

Our latest development has been to organise Late Night Shopping for Findon Valley, which I hope you shall all attend. It shall be on Thursday 14th December from 5.30pm till 8pm. It has been a real hard task but I am pleased to say that we managed to get the support of virtually all the shops. In previous years, some shops have decided to stay open on a designated night but have not had any visitors. That is why this year, the Findon Valley Residence Association decided to organise it on a much larger scale. First of all the evening is in support of the Chestnut Tree Hospice Appeal so any money raised on the evening shall be donated to this cause. There shall be carol singers from 6pm onwards outside the baker, a roundabout on the opposite corner outside Jacobs and Steele, chestnuts and candyfloss on sale, plus much much more. Each shop will be doing something on the night including a balloon race from Michael Jones. We recently had a poster competition with Vale School to design a poster to advertise the event. The winners, Samuel Medwell age four for the First School and Caitlin Bennett age ten for the Middle School. Amelia Wilson, age seven was our runner up. They have been presented with a framed colour copy of their design and have been displayed in all the windows. They can also be viewed at findonvalley.org. There shall be a treasure hunt on the evening for the kids where they will need to go into every shop involved and find an item on sale, which would not normally be in that shop, like a banana in a computer shop. The Girl Guides will be available to help. The entry form will need to be handed to Interiors and Antiques who shall be donating a prize at the end of the evening. We shall have a Christmas tree on the parade and hopefully a Santa and a bell too (if any body knows of one?) A presentation to the Chestnut Tree Appeal will be made at the end of the evening. And before I forget, Splash FM will be broadcaster from 2 till 6 pm from PC HELP so do pop in.

Now over to David Morgan who will brief you on our road related progress

DM SPEAKS