



*Giving the village a voice*

## Forum Newsletter November 2020



Our next Open meeting of Bulphan Village Community Forum was due to take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 12th November 2020. However, this will now not take place: the hall is closed to all but the Post Office and it is also the date of Peter Tarrant's funeral. Peter was a valuable member of our Forum committee, with extensive local knowledge, a willingness to help others, the ability to provide many practical solutions and a sardonic wit which couldn't hide his innate kindness. As numbers at the funeral are restricted to 30 invited guests only, friends, neighbours and any others who wish to pay their respects are invited to stand lining Church Road on the approach to the church, from 10.30am (the funeral is at 11am).



For the last few years, it has been Peter who has procured a Christmas tree for the village: the Forum, Bulphan in Bloom and Village Hall will again share the cost, but I have to go and negotiate in Peter's place. I will be surprised if I can strike as good a deal as Peter used to.

Our last open meeting was a socially distanced one in the hall, and was our AGM. David Gilbane has left the committee after many years as chair and then a committee member. We are very grateful for all he has done over the years for the Forum.



### **Spitfire Pilot Plaque unveiling**

A short but moving ceremony took place to unveil the plaque the Forum had commissioned to honour the memory of Gerald Langley, a Spitfire pilot shot down over Bulphan during the Battle of Britain. Rector Sue took the service, Piper Jo played beautifully, as always, trustees from the Hornchurch Aerodrome Historic Trust attended, as did members and the standard bearer of Grays RAFA. Neil Speight of Nub News captured it all on film. Peter Tarrant had been the inspiration for this tribute so I'm glad he was able to see it come

to fruition.



### **Great September Clean-Up**

We joined with Bulphan in Bloom to carry out the Great September Clean-Up on September 19th: 13 volunteers collected 21 bags of waste and we were again very well supported by Thurrock Council workers Antonio and Henrique.

### **Proposed solar Farm**

Both our councillors and I attended a virtual meeting with a solar farm project team who were going to apply for permission for a 900 acre solar installation. Residents were given an opportunity to attend a Webinar later, and the project team also visited some of those who would be most affected should the application be approved.



### **Tommy**

Bulphan now has its own “Tommy”, in the churchyard next to the war memorial. This Tommy was donated and installed by Anton Vidler, in memory of his parents, George and Lisbeth Vidler, who lived in Bulphan, in Lower Dunton Road. He took up residence just before the Remembrance Service on 8th November, which was another moving outdoor ceremony led by Rev. Sue Mann and accompanied by Jo the Piper. Thank you to Ron Porter for the evocative “Tommy in the mist” photo.

### **Highways Meeting**

On Tuesday 10th November, I attended 2 virtual meetings: as chair of Bulphan Forum, I attended a meeting with transport development officers from the council. Orsett, Bulphan and Hordon-on-the-Hill have a named transport engineer with whom we will liaise over Highways issues. We will receive monthly updates on traffic schemes which are on the programme and funded, those under investigation and requests for intervention. On the programme at the moment is work on the A128 (in response to the level of accidents resulting in injuries). The road surface is to be improved, as the skid resistance is poor: the slip road opposite the Plough is to be decommissioned as a slip road, and a bund put in place, thereby removing the opportunity for parking on the cross-hatching. And the northern entrance to the Bombers Cafe layby is to be stopped up, with vehicles entering and exiting via the southern exit. Some remodelling of the roundabout as part of the A13 widening will make this a safer option.

A fixed speed camera has become available and will be used on A128 (between Orsett Cock and Barnards Farm). 3 locations are being tested to discover where it will be the most effective.

A consultation is planned regarding the problems of HGV movements, and of speeding, within the Orsett Ward. I will help to publicise the consultation when it goes live.

A request for funding for the provision of EV charging bays across the borough is going to Cabinet in December: these will be demand-led, and if there is sufficient need, we could ask for one to be installed at, for instance, the village hall.



There is a consultation on the council's website on improvements to cycling or walking routes. You simply go to the Have My Say page, click on "Making Walking and Cycling better in Thurrock" and put a pin where you would like the improvement and fill in the text box with the details.

Finally, if any Bulphan resident has an idea for a traffic project, please let me know as I can take that forward: it doesn't have to be a small project, as the council can apply for outside funding for bigger projects.

### **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

As secretary of TAF, the Thurrock Association of Forums, I attended a virtual meeting of the council's Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The councillors wanted to know how the council and Forums could work better together. We had a constructive discussion and mapped out a plan going forward.

As you can see, although we can't run the Community Cafe or some of our other events, there's still plenty going on. And our Virtual Kindness scheme is still going strong: if you need some support (or you know someone in Bulphan who does), 'phone me on 0775 283 6902 or Kelly on 07762 700167 and we can get the volunteer for your road to make contact with you.

Janet McCheyne

Chair

Bulphan Village Community Forum