

Fynn-Lark News - Report for 2023

The Magazine itself seems to be thriving. We regularly have 40 plus pages, many of them in colour. Judging by comments received, it compares well with similar publications. There is no shortage of material, no shortage of news, no shortage of advertisements, no shortage of events being promoted for our villages. All good signs of an active community.

In budgetary terms though, we live on a knife-edge. The Magazine is now a £4000 pa operation, and, as editor, I have to persuade individuals, advertisers, Parish Councils and village organisations to support us. We finished last year with £820 in the bank – that seems healthy – but is only enough to pay for two issues. Every new year is a challenge if we are to reach that magical £4000 figure.

In the circumstances, we do have to have a Plan B lurking in the wings. That would have to involve slightly fewer issues, or a more rigorous page count. We very much wish to avoid that scenario. The signs are that we will have significantly less in the account at the end of this year than last. So the knife-edge remain quite sharp. This year has started off solidly: we gained as many adverts as we lost, despite a slight but necessary raising of prices in line with current inflationary trends. Most of the advertisers remain local. Our offer of guaranteed colour for half and full-page adverts has been popular. It seems that in this faceless digital age customers do still like dealing with real people, businesses with which they can identify, close-by. A healthy number of individuals have responded warmly, and generously with donations and standing orders.

We are dependent on a large team of helpers: the editorial team, collectors, distributors. Some 40 of them attended a thank you tea party last summer, which was a great opportunity for saying thank you. It was particularly good that our long-established printer, Jason, Printing for Pleasure, Chattisham, should himself have felt it worthwhile joining us. We are lucky that the whole printing operation is so reliable.

Later this year we hope to organise a meeting of all major interested parties, to discuss the current situation and ways in which we might progress.

Central to our whole operation are Tim Llewellyn, inexhaustibly patient and good-humoured, still putting it all together despite living way out on the peninsula, and Peter and Vicki Carr who do a wonderful job organising the whole complex distribution process. I pay tribute to all who play a part in making sure that, in this digital day and age, we, as a community, can still produce a printed magazine which readers appear to value.

Norman Porter. Editor. February 2024.