

Mayor's Report 16th November 2023

One of the joys of representing the town is attending so many events showing off the abundance of artistic talent in our town. I was much impressed by the Haslemere Musical Society's concert early in October and that of the Waverley Ensemble at the end of the month where children aged 9 and 10 whose skills are being developed joined the ensemble to play at a most professional level. And it is not just music, the Arts Society annual exhibition at the museum had a wide range of paintings, pottery and sculptures; Roger Dellar has kindly offered to paint the council, possibly at our November meeting. But best of all was without doubt the pumpkin faces made by children at the Museum before parading down West Street led by their Pied Piper – the Mayor.

Not only does the arts flourish in our community but also sports ability. We have in Haslemere and its surrounds a wealth of sporting talent at county, national and even international level. The Mayoress and I joined the celebration of this talent and presented awards at the Sports Haslemere annual awards ceremony.

This Autumn sees a number of anniversaries which I had the privilege of attending. I joined the Haslemere Hospital League of Friends for the launch of ex-mayor Fay Foster's book recounting the 100 year story of the hospital since its origins on Shepherds Hill. Haslewey has a little way to go to catch up with the hospital but its 20 year anniversary celebration was a great event helped by glorious weather. And that glorious weather held for the Lion Green car boot sale that raised some £300 for the Mayor's charity with 51 cars – officers and fellow councillors help Make this a huge success; many I talked with said how good it is to have such events that brings the community together.

Charities are finding it difficult to meet the calls on their resources. I met last week with the Farnham Lions who have a charity with Haslemere (aptly named Wenceslas) to provide financial aid to those having difficulty with energy payments. They hope to raise over £50,000 over the next few months and especially ask those who receive Winter Fuel payments but have sufficient income to not require this aid and, instead, to donate this to Wenceslas. I opened the Christmas Cards for Good Causes shop in the Museum and purchased all the cards I need for this year.

At the beginning of October, I had the pleasure of joining our MP in the opening of the new wing of the Voyage Care Supported Living centre. It is housed in the old Grove School and supports young disabled adults.

The Lion Green toilets continues to be an issue – the performance of our supplier has been appalling. I much appreciated the advice from fellow councillors when we met to review with officers the action to be taken. Sadly, I am not able to provide a positive end to the issue of the Edge, the performance of both WBC and SCC in resolving this is disappointing to say the least. On a happier note, meeting with the Chamber of Commerce last week I was reassured that all is well for the Christmas Carols. Lastly, I sense that the "Update and Participate" evening was appreciated by all members and I look forward to the next evening in the new year.