**Surrey Volunteers**

**Gill Balister**
Gill is an extraordinary person who has given 35 years to voluntary service and continues to work tirelessly for Chobham. Gill has been a stalwart at Chobham Care for over 10 years, which provides help with transport; visitors for lonely people and those unable to leave their homes; and also a sitting service for children, older and disabled people. Other services Gill has helped provide those in need with is gardening, shopping, letter-writing, dog walking, cooking and help with paperwork.

Gill has also been editor of ‘The Gridiron’, the parish magazine which reports on all aspects of village life in Chobham and Valley End for more than 25 years.

Gill has helped so many people - too numerous to count. She is a real credit to Chobham and the village and its residents are very lucky to have her.

**Vivienne Bennett**
Viv is an integral member of the volunteer team of Surrey Heritage’s major Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project *Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers*. Viv has a long-standing interest in the history and work of the British Red Cross (BRC) and volunteers for the local Woking branch. This, combined with her interest and experience in family history research, led her to volunteer for a recent national BRC archives project to transcribe and place online its archival records of all those who volunteered for the BRC during WWI. Since June 2015, Viv has brought this interest to the service of *Surrey in the Great War*, for which she has been bringing to light the stories of Surrey’s own BRC WWI volunteers.

Over the past year Viv has expanded her activities to become the manager of a sub-project within *Surrey in the Great War*, leading a team of volunteer researchers to investigate WWI-era BRC workers linked to Surrey. She runs a session for the project’s school workshops on WWI BRC volunteers from the pupils' community and has given several hundred children across the county a broader appreciation of Surrey life in WWI. Viv is also a key member of the *Surrey in the Great War* volunteer oral history team, interviewing those who were born in or grew up in the inter-war period.

Viv is a dedicated, enthusiastic volunteer who is always willing to help the project team and who devotes many hours of her time to *Surrey in the Great War*. Her interest in and affection for her subject is infectious and she is a linchpin of this project.
David Bishop
David came to Tatsfield Village in 1952 and has been working hard for the community ever since. David established the St Mary’s Church Tatsfield Youth Club and has organised many Ballroom Dances and Afternoon Tea Dances. The dances resulted in some couples finding romance - and there was even the occasional marriage!

For the past 18 years, David has contributed to the weekly ESSN Surrey group of newspapers and magazines, keeping them up to date with news and events in Tatsfield.

He has organised and run the annual Christmas Carol Singalong in the village centre for more than a decade. Another delight is ‘helping out’ Father Christmas for some 50 years. He still enjoys playing Father Christmas and giving presents annually to children at Tatsfield Village School, the Tiny Tots group and church groups.

2017 saw David running Tatsfield's Inaugural Remembrance Service, as well as securing funding for a war memorial in the village centre. The memorial was duly built and in place for the service.

Events like these bring the whole community together in celebration and commemoration and this is purely down to David’s efforts, passion and determination.

Peter Brinsden
Peter has been volunteering in his local area of Farnham for nearly 20 years and it is the youngsters in Farnham who have particularly benefited from Peter’s kindness and generosity.

A keen cricketer, Peter was Chairman of Rowledge Cricket Club from 2000-2011 and he has been head of junior section since 2011. Under Peter’s watch, £1000s have been raised for the Club each season and its membership has doubled to over 600. The Club is now a real hub of the village.

Peter has also taken a keen interest in education and over the years has sat on the Board of Governors at Weydon School, Weydon Multi Academy Trust and Highfield South Farnham School. Formerly Pilgrims Way – a failing school - Peter joined school Governors in 2015 when it joined the South Farnham Education Trust to form Highfield South Farnham School. The school is now heavily over-subscribed and close to outstanding.

In addition to all this, Peter was a General Advisor at the Citizens Advice Bureau for four years, assisting those in debt and on benefits, specialising in difficult cases.
**Michael Cannon**
A military man, Michael is Chairman of Surrey Community Action, Vice-Chairman of the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board and is Chairman of the Community Integration Task Group. Michael is excellent at partnership working, bringing people together and acting as an advocate on behalf of the Military.

Michael has played a key role in addressing the issues affecting the military and their families in Surrey, including service children accessing school places and school transport. He provides support for military carers, ensures a consistent approach to local connection for housing eligibility for service personnel and investigates ways of encouraging Service leavers to stay in Surrey.

Michael is a voluntary member of the Independent Advisory Panel of Army Training Centre (Pirbright) which involves regular visits to meet new recruits to see how they are settling in and bringing any issues back to the Panel for onward transmission to the Commanding Officers.

Michael is also a very active member within the church community in Pirbright.

**Colonel Robert Crawley OBE**
Robert does a fantastic amount of work to support currently serving service men and women and also veterans in need. Robert is Chairman of SSAFA Surrey and represents SSAFA and other Service Charities on the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board. He has been a signatory to Armed Forces Covenants across the county and a key member of the SCMPB as well as regular speaker on service charities on behalf of SSAFA.

He has been a leader in developing relationships with Surrey County Council Adult Social Care and the Contact Centre, providing direct links and referrals to SSAFA. Over the past 18 months, SSAFA Surrey has received over 69 direct referrals from SCC resulting in support being provided.

It is thanks to Robert that many service men and women in need in Surrey have received direct help and support. Veterans have been be-friended and supported; veterans in prison and their families have been visited by trained SSAFA Prison In-Reach case workers; and the SCMPB has benefitted from Robert’s insight into the complex world of service charities.
Mike Fox
Mike has been actively volunteering in different roles for the past 20 years. He was one of the original members of Tadworth and Walton Overseas Aid Trust, a local charity that raises funds for small projects such as re-building a school devastated in the Nepalese earthquake; part-funding teachers’ salaries in Madagascar and funding school dinners for Myanmar refugees so they are guaranteed one hot meal a day and education.

Mike is a Trustee and volunteer at Tattenham Library and is the Reigate and Banstead Borough Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, bringing to the rest of the county innovative ideas and then working alongside other co-ordinators to bring these to fruition.

Mike is also a Committee Member for the Tadworth and Walton Residents Association where he took personal responsibility for updating the membership list and writing and updating a database of members.

Mike is renowned across the local area as a ‘can do’ person, totally reliable and trustworthy. He can be relied upon for a ‘no-nonsense’ but informed view on all manner of local subjects, from planning to road safety and crime prevention. It is difficult to quantify or measure Mike’s impact; it is ongoing and growing.

Ann Harington
Ann has dedicated nearly all of her life to volunteering, contributing to village life and helping others. She started at the tender age of 12 with teaching in her local Sunday school and progressed to helping Brownie Groups aged 14 - and she has not stopped since.

A huge variety of community service followed over the years, a small sample of which includes editing the Woking History Association newsletter for 20 years; providing services to the elderly and disabled through Horsell Care, which offers a helping hand for residents, young or old, who find everyday tasks difficult; and she is a committee member of the Horsell Resident Association. Through this, Ann helps organise such events as group litter picking and Christmas fairs – always a highlight in the Horsell calendar. Furthermore, Ann helps the local Scout and Girl Guide groups with their various activities.

Ann is a keen supporter of local schools and voluntary causes and has greatly enhanced the quality of life for many, many individuals. She has a vigorous spirit for volunteering and is committed to helping those in need. She is a fantastic member of the community.
Norman Holden
Norman has been volunteering in Bisley for more than 25 years. Over the years Norman has been involved in, supported and raised money for many causes. Amongst these are the Bisley Residents Association of which Norman has been Chairman for 11 years, the Royal British Legion, of which he has been Vice-Chairman for the local branch and also the standard bearer; and he has been a fantastic helper at the village’s ‘Brass on the Grass’ events which are hugely popular.

Norman is always on hand to support local causes and will help in any way he can. He is the epitome of community spirit. Bisley would certainly be a far poorer community without him. Thank you Norman for all you have done – and long may you continue!

Emma Hone
Emma has been instrumental in running Rainbows in Guildford since 2000 and became a leader in 2001. She also has a role in three Rainbow units in Godalming and is a Division mentor, helping and supporting new Rainbow leaders. In addition to her usual duties, Emma also organises Godalming District Girlguiding and Scout Carol services. Furthermore, Emma acts as local liaison for Brownie and Guide camps so that any emergency contact can be made between the families and the group whilst they are away on camp.

As well as her local groups, Emma recently helped Rainbows across Haslemere Division to celebrate 30 years of Rainbows.

Emma always goes above and beyond to ensure children with challenging circumstances are included. She makes sure that the Brownie and Guide leaders are aware of their situation and that the girls are given any extra consideration they might need.

Godalming district is extremely lucky to have Emma in the team.
Iben Hornbek

Iben has been a valued volunteer at the Old Moat Garden Centre since 2011. The Old Moat is not just a garden centre but a mental health service and relies on volunteers to support the people who use the service. The Centre currently supports over 60 people and couldn’t do this without the support of its dedicated volunteers like Iben. Iben works with individuals or in small groups with people who have physical, mental health and learning disabilities. With a kind and patient nature, Iben gently guides the individual to enable them to carry out their duties within the garden centre.

When Iben first joined the Old Moat she was central to setting up the gift shop area, taking responsibility for ordering cards and gifts in order to support the garden centre manager. She worked alongside service users to help train them on the till, giving people the skills to aid their employability.

Iben has given so much to the charity in so many different ways. Without Iben’s support, people with needs would have had to be turned away as there are not enough paid staff to offer one-to-one support to individuals. Thanks to Iben and the other volunteers, no one has ever been turned away from the Old Moat Garden Centre.

Maureen Hume

Maureen has been a tireless fundraiser for the Alzheimer’s Cafés in Farnborough and Camberley and she is currently chairman of Camberley Alzheimer’s Café. The café evenings and courses have been offered free of charge owing to Maureen securing over £30,000 grant funding.

The cafés provide a safe place and a relaxed environment as well as provide information, refreshments, company and entertainment for patients, carers, professionals and all interested parties - all free of charge.

In addition to the cafés, since 2013 Maureen has organised training days for those interested in dementia. She is also a key organiser of the ‘Man with a Pan’ cooking sessions for widowers and other men who care for partners and for men who find cooking skills useful.

So many people have been helped thanks to Maureen. The cafés and courses really wouldn’t have been so successful without her. Long may she continue to support these causes!
Maggie Kippen
Maggie has had a long connection with Gatton Park as a result of her involvement (and current chairmanship) of Gatton Community Theatre, which uses the park to put on promenade performances. Her first direct involvement with the Gatton Trust was to offer her support to the education team with fundraising and since then she has become a trustee and now also assists with events and activities.

To celebrate 300 years since the birth of Capability Brown, it was decided to carry out restoration, interpretation, art and family learning activities to share the park with the local community, with a funding target of £77,000. Maggie was instrumental in putting together successful applications to many organisations. She also sat on the steering group and provided a lot of support to the staff involved throughout the whole project.

Much of this work Maggie did in addition to her regular volunteering. During this time she also researched and ran a crowdfunding project to achieve the funding for the restoration of the bridge in the park’s Japanese Garden.

In addition to her practical help with fundraising and running events, Maggie spends considerable time supporting the day to day work of the Gatton Park Trust staff. She is a friendly and approachable person, who always has sensible advice to offer.

Suki Lowres
Suki is a selfless volunteer who, over the past 10 years, has given a huge amount of her time to help people with learning disabilities as well as volunteering with other community projects.

Among her many activities, Suki is a dedicated ambassador for the Fountain Centre, a charity for cancer patients. With SCC’s Community Learning and Skills (CLS), Suki volunteers at various courses at the Guildford Adult Learning Centre. She provides vital support for learners with additional needs and her help is invaluable.

Suki has an exceptional ability to get to know each learner. She talks to them sensitively and listens to what they have to say, remembering what they have told her from week to week.

Suki is also on the committee of the Harvey Gallery, a community-run arts gallery in Guildford, and is a judge for Guildford in Bloom, enthusiastically giving hours of her time in the summer, visiting local schools and nurseries.
**Susie Maguire**

Susie runs story time at Chertsey Library every week. Her sessions are very popular and many children attend. She has also involved the children in designing illustrations for a children’s book she is writing which was a very popular and inclusive activity. Susie has also visited other libraries for special one-off storytimes at Weybridge, Walton and Esher libraries. She sometimes runs her sessions ‘in character’, fully dressed up for the occasion which the children and their families love.

Susie is full of energy and has a positive effect on all those around her. She loves libraries and fully supports all efforts to bring more people into the library to borrow books and share her love of reading and stories.

Susie enthuses children attending her sessions and one mother has commented that her children asked to go to the library to borrow books as they had been so inspired by one of her storytime sessions.

Susie works incredibly hard giving to other people, not only in the library service but to other people in the community, including homeless people in London.

**Moira Nairn**

Moira has been a volunteer since an early stage in Surrey Heritage’s major Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project *Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers*. Her work forms part of the project’s free online index to Surrey’s newspapers of the war years, which currently holds some 51,000 entries and makes available to the people of Surrey and beyond the information in this otherwise-inaccessible source.

Moira has also researched the stories behind those commemorated on the war memorials of Windlesham and Valley End which helps to ensure that the memory of those individuals’ sacrifice remains fresh.

Moira has also played a crucial role in the *Surrey in the Great War* volunteer oral history team as one of a group of volunteers seeking to interview those who were born in or grew up in the inter-war period. She has helped to conduct interviews with elderly residents of the county and, most importantly, she has taken the lead in organising the administration of this part of the project. This is a huge, complex and crucial role and without Moira’s dedication and considerable commitment to it, plus her tact and patience, the oral history project would not be possible.

Moira’s volunteer work with *Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers* has made a significant contribution to the information that Surrey Heritage can provide freely to the people of Surrey (and beyond) about their community’s WWI past. Her work will be of great long-term benefit to people of Surrey and beyond.
Ian Nelson
Ian has been Chairman of the Stoke D’Abernon Residents’ Association for more than 10 years, during which time he and his team have arranged a Christmas event when the tree lights are turned on. This is the start of Christmas in Stoke d’Abernon. He also championed the fundraising of over £2,000 for a defibrillator for the village.

Ian also runs a tree maintenance and bulb planting programme all around Stoke d’Abernon which have greatly enhanced the village.

Ian is a Director and is timetable supremo of the Cobham Chatterbus, a community-run scheduled bus service to help alleviate transport poverty and to meet a range of social needs. Ian is indefatigable in his efforts for the Chatterbus, to the extent that he has even transported people home himself when it breaks down!

Finally, Ian is the organiser of an annual Classic and Vintage Car Gathering for Cobham Heritage Day, the biggest community event in Cobham with hundreds of stalls and activities which bring thousands of people onto the streets of Cobham. This brings much pleasure to local residents and visitors, come rain or shine!

Jean Parker
Jean has been a volunteer in the village of Leigh for many years. She became Chair of the Leigh Parish Council in 2000 and retired from this role this year after 17 years of service to the village. She worked tirelessly to maintain Leigh Village’s way of life and bringing residents together to promote wellbeing and a happy community. Jean is well known and well respected for organising litter picks, fundraising for the renewal of the children’s playground, campaigning and consulting for a community shop and supporting the village school and nursery.

Jean always stands up for local residents and businesses. During the flooding in 2013, several houses were inundated and the bridge in Flanchford Road was washed away. Plans for the new bridge took time to develop and in the meantime the village was cut off. Jean made sure that the residents were kept informed of progress and were also involved in the design of this key point of access to the community. Jean provided much-needed support during a time of great pressure and stress and her efforts were thoroughly appreciated by many.

Jean, thank you for everything you have done for Leigh and its residents over the years; the village owes you a great deal and is a far better place for having you in it.
Steve Parrott
Steve has been involved with the Dorking Primary School sports event every year for more than 30 years. This is a huge event involving eight local primary schools and around 250 pupils. It is the sporting highlight of the year for all those who take part and witness this fantastic event.

Steve’s involvement really can’t be overemphasised. He organises the event every year, from liaising with all schools, arranging parking and organising marshalls to marking out the tracks, preparing the long and vertical jump pits, organising helpers and completing the obligatory paperwork. Steve manages and oversees every aspect of the day itself.

It is a fantastic day, thoroughly enjoyed by pupils, parents and teachers alike and teaches the children so much about the spirit of competing, sports membership and friendship. With so many schools involved it is a really community affair and brings so many people together.

Steve really puts his all into making this event a success and even takes days off work to make sure it is a triumph – totalling over a year’s worth of holiday. As Steve himself says: “There are no losers. They all participated and are therefore all winners.”

Rosemary Porter
Rosemary has a long history of working for and leading developments in the voluntary sector, particularly in support of a range of charitable organisations. Examples include Keychange Charity Reigate which supports homeless women; the Oasis Trust in Thornton Heath which supports young people in need; and the Richmond Fellowship, a mental health Charity in East Molesey and in Horsham.

In 2012, Rosemary established the Dorking Beatitudes Charity Shop and was instrumental in its development. The shop sells a large variety of good quality donated clothing, prams & pushchairs, beds, toys, equipment and accessories at a much lower price than conventional charity shops. Although the shop is open to everyone to use, the main purpose is to seek to help families most in need.

On very many occasions where Rosemary has become aware of extremely acute needs, she has given away goods free of charge and also helped with financial gifts from the charity. The shop also offers a play area for children and a space for parents to relax. Rosemary frequently finds herself offering emotional as well as practical support to parents and relatives in need who gravitate towards her very readily and easily.

All of the voluntary work that Rosemary has undertaken has been of immeasurable benefit to the individuals that she has helped and to the communities in which she has been involved.
Jeremy Pursehouse
For nearly 30 years, Jeremy has worked tirelessly for the benefit of Warlingham. He is Chairman of the Village Hall management committee, successfully changing its status from a working men’s club to a village hall owned and run by the residents of Warlingham. Jeremy is a trustee of Blanchman’s Farm Local Nature Reserve, Vice-Chairman of the Management Committee and a regular volunteer at the Reserve’s work days.

When Mint Walk children’s play area was under threat with just one piece of equipment, Jeremy worked with other parents to raise money for further equipment. The success of one fundraising event, a Village Fair, secured the future of the play area and led to the start of an annual summer fair in Warlingham which has now been running for 25 years. Jeremy is a member of the Warlingham Christmas Lights Committee and is a member of Warlingham Events, which provides organisational help and back-up to many village events, including the annual May Queen Crowning and Mayday Celebrations and Fireworks Display.

Warlingham has a wonderful village atmosphere with many activities during the year that bring the community together, which is largely due to Jeremy. It’s no wonder that he is known locally as ‘Mr Warlingham’!

Paul Reed
Paul has a whole array of charitable organisations and roles to his name, namely Governor of Valley End School; Trustee for the past 10 years of St. Lawrence Friends Heritage Trust in addition to being part of the Executive Committee for 17 years; he has championed the St. Lawrence Tower Fund that raised £150,000 to repair the tower; he is on the Church Fabric Committee and was a Church Warden for four years.

Paul has also been heavily involved in the Chobham Festival for many years. He is coming to the end of a five year term as Chairman but he has been on the committee for many years before that and has helped ensure that the Festival is a tremendous success, year after year.

Paul contributes across so many areas of village life and is an absolutely fantastic asset to the village. Chobham is very lucky to have him.
Bug Robertson

Bug is known as a woman with a BIG heart and has the knack of bringing the community together. She is fully involved in community life and is responsible for so many events that happen in Horsley. Amongst the many events that Bug is involved in are the annual village fete; monthly pub villagers’ nights; street parties to celebrate Kate & William’s wedding and the Queen’s 90th birthday; fundraising for village causes; a classic car rally; Village and Music in Bloom festivals; harvest suppers; village litter-picking; quiz nights; children’s carol services; church cleaning, flower arranging and running the village hall – and this list is by no means exhaustive!

Bug is a vital member of the community and her endeavours bring so much happiness and joy to so many people. She always has a smile on her face and her ‘can do’ attitude means that so much is achieved. Bug, thank you for all that you do; you are a marvel!

Brian and Stella Smith

Brian and Stella are very much a team and have done so much for their local community. For many years, Brian has been involved in horticulture and natural history and is a key member of Spelthorne Natural History Society’s nature conservation team. Since 2006, Brian and Stella have helped to turn a neglected area into a wonderful nature reserve in Shepperton: the Ash Link Local Nature Reserve. This entailed the creation of footpaths and different habitats, planting of trees and the installation of bird and bat boxes.

Their activities have resulted in a dramatic increase in visitors and an increase in the biodiversity due to the creation of different habitats. So far 640 species have been recorded and the work continues in this semi-urban part of Surrey. Visitors benefit from a ‘green’ area and numerous benches - leading to a sense of well-being and the ability to enjoy the natural environment.

For the past four years the reserve has been nominated for an award in Britain in Bloom’s conservation area category. In September 2017, the Ash Link Local Nature Reserve achieved a Gold Award and Brian and Stella were part of the team whose hard work achieved this.
Colin Sutherland

Colin has been a scout leader since the 1970s. Colin organised the rebuilding of Scout Ridge from a broken down timber shed to a three storey brick building with a sports hall and climbing wall. To do this he persuaded the Borough Council to insist that the local golf club grant the scouts a long lease; with the long lease, he was able to raise grants for the building. As a result, the scouts have a much enhanced headquarters which enables them to carry out many activities which previously wouldn’t have been possible.

Colin’s fundraising didn’t stop there however. He has also organised the funding for the replacement of two old decaying finger posts in Banstead Village with aluminium replicas at a cost of £10,000. He has organised the building and funding of a dry store for equipment at Scout Ridge as well as a shooting room. He is currently organising the building of a camp site for the scouts on the same site.

Colin remains active in the local community. Although in his 80s, he continues to be an active scout leader who is much loved and admired. He has achieved so much for the scouts and is very highly regarded in the community.

The Easter Project

For 10 years, The Easter Project at St Mary’s Church in Reigate has provided a two course hot lunch every Saturday for anyone who is in need, whether they are homeless, have learning disabilities, are unable to provide for themselves or are simply lonely. Everyone is welcome to turn up and have a hot meal and a chat. There are usually 60-70 guests every week but the team has been known to cater for 100 guests on occasions.

Once a month, clothes and books are given out and there are also art classes in the summer. The team is extremely proud of the fact that over the past 10 years, not one Saturday lunch has been missed; guests know that they are always guaranteed a hot meal.

The Easter Project is a fantastic group and community affair, with around 50 volunteers working in rotation to ensure the lunch takes place and is a success every week.

The success of The Easter Project has had a ripple effect and once a month, an afternoon tea for residents at the local home for residents with dementia is held, the idea being to ‘Bring The Ritz to Reigate’! Sunday lunches are also being introduced.

Throughout the years The Easter Project has had an incredible impact on very many people, whose lives have changed for the better.
**Bob Thomas**

Bob is an extremely active and dedicated volunteer in the local community and across Surrey.

He has a county wide volunteering role as Honorary Treasurer for ABF The Soldiers Charity Surrey. Over the past year the branch raised over £35,000 locally which went towards supporting Surrey service families in need, such as providing white goods, respite breaks and emergency food parcels.

Following his key role in Brockham during the 2013/14 floods where he was on duty 24/7 over the Christmas period when Brockham was completely flooded and cut off, Bob was instrumental in establishing the Brockham Emergency Response Team (BERT), which has gone from strength to strength. Bob has presented to Surrey Prepared, the Countywide Community Resilience Forum on BERT, and has presented to many other fledgling Community Resilience Groups sharing their best practice. Bob has also helped establish Young BERT, a core young group of people who work alongside BERT learning key skills such as lifesaving and water safety as well as helping prepare for and respond to emergencies. BERT has recently become a registered charity.

**Gill Utting**

For over 25 years, Gill has run the Merstham and Banstead Brownie and Beaver groups, providing vital support for many children and teaching youngsters new skills as they discover the world around them. During her time with the Girl Guides Association, Gill has held the position of District Commissioner for 20 years and has been on the Executive Committee for 11 years.

Gill also served as Chairman of the Lower Kingswood Fete Committee that annually raises over £15k for 14 local organisations and provides a fantastic day for all residents. For more than 15 years, Gill has also served as a member of the Lower Kingswood Residents Association and has been instrumental in organising the Lower Kingswood Fete – serving as Chairman and Vice-Chairman – for over 30 years.

Gill is a tremendous support to Lower Kingswood and to Surrey as a whole. We are in her debt.
Vernon Wood

Vernon was evacuated from London to Ripley during World War II and remained a resident of the village ever since. Ripley Scouts gave Vernon an early introduction to, and love of, nature and outdoor activities and he later became a Scout leader. Vernon has given his time to serve on Ripley Parish Council in two stints, reaching back to the early 1980s.

Vernon was a key member of the group which progressed the recent project to create a Nature Reserve for the village on formerly derelict agricultural land. The project was greatly helped by Vernon’s skills as a carpenter and his knowledge of local wildlife. Alongside his devotion to the parish and its environment and inhabitants, he has also served as a Village Hall Trustee for many years and is Chairman of the Ripley Bonfire Association.

Vernon has devoted a good deal of his adult life to benefitting the community in one way or another. From the practical skills he has used to help maintain the Village Hall or create the Nature Reserve, to the leadership skills he has used to inspire younger generations of Scouts or to help guide both the Parish Council and the Bonfire Association, Ripley’s community of all ages has benefitted from Vernon’s dedication to public life for many years.