

9 January 2017

Parish Councillors  
Parish Clerk

## **NORTH LUFFENHAM PARISH COUNCIL SAFETY REPORT ON BONFIRE NIGHT 2016**

References:

- A. Bonfire Night Review – Jul 15
- B. Bonfire Working Group Report to NLPC dated 30 Aug 16
- C. Administrative Instruction – Bonfire Night / Fireworks dated Oct 16.
- D. Review of draft Safety Report by Parish Council on 5 Dec 16.

### **AIM**

1. The aim of this report is to identify the lessons learnt from the Bonfire Night activities on 5th Nov 16.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. Between Jul and Nov 16 the Bonfire Working Group: Cllrs Cade /Marson /Burrows /Cummings met on a number of occasions to plan the event. The Group reviewed the 2015 Review Report (Reference A) and the 2015 post event report dated 12 Jan 16. The Group additionally took advice from the Police and the Fire Service. In Oct 16 the Group published a detailed Administrative Instruction which included a full Risk Assessment / Site Plan and Staffing Lists. This was endorsed by the Parish Council at its meeting on 17th October.

### **OVERVIEW – THE EVENT**

3. The annual Bonfire Night event was held on Sat 5th Nov 16 on the Oval. It is estimated that some 500 people were in attendance, however for future events it is important that a more accurate measurement of attendance is available, notwithstanding the difficulty of controlling access to the Oval – consideration needs to be given as to how best to achieve this. On 5th Nov the weather was not ideal, with a forecast of strong winds gusting to 20mph from North West and potential threat of rain. The weather was monitored continuously in the period leading up to the event. This included the measurement of the force of the wind with a hand held anemometer, which was kindly made available by Cllr Burrows. By 5pm the wind had slackened to Force 3 (8/9 mph). At this point it was possible to confirm the event and to identify the most appropriate area for the launch of fireworks. The bonfire was lit at about 6.10pm and the display commenced at 6.35pm and was complete by 7.15pm.

## SAFETY

4. There were no reported safety incidents, however at one point the **Stewards were required to move the safety barrier back by 15m on the SE edge due to falling firework debris** that had been carried further than expected by the wind. This could have been anticipated and lessened by moving the launch site 15m further into the direction of the wind, however this was not possible due to the cricket net which had not been removed prior to the event. **The removal of the nets should be considered in future years.**
5. Following the event a number of 'used' fireworks were placed on the embers of the fire, resulting in more than one ignition of an element of a firework. **This must not be allowed to happen in future years.**

## PREPARATION

6. Police and Fire Services were notified 4 weeks prior to the event. In the week before the event, Watch Manager Vince Howard from Oakham Fire Station visited the Site and reviewed the arrangements and the Risk Plan, providing very helpful guidance and advice for which we are most grateful. As a result a revised Risk Plan was drawn up and the template will be utilized in future years.
7. As in previous years, Cllr Cade purchased the fireworks in advance of the event and stored them in a locked garage. The storage arrangements were entirely satisfactory. During the event, the fireworks were held in a secure container (Van) and prepared for firing by a nominated individual with 2 x assistants.
8. The safety zone was bounded by a picket fence, bailer twine and hazard tape and proved to be both secure and resilient. No spectators were allowed in the area to the North of the bonfire bounded by Edith Weston Road and the established, marked safety zone 35m from the fire. No 'live' elements of fireworks fell outside the safety zone, though as noted above the wind carried debris beyond the safety cordon, resulting in a need for swift action by Stewards.

## INSURANCE

9. As noted at Reference B, the Chairman had sought clarification from the Local Councils Team at Aon Risk Solutions regarding the requirement that any fire/fireworks had to be at least 100 m from any buildings or property. On 8 Aug 16 he had received a note from Aon stating that:  
  
"the insurers will **not** look to change these guidelines. If by any means the council have ignored the guidelines in any way or form the parish council **will not be covered**. As stated on the guidelines all Firework display/Bonfires/Beacons should be 100m away from all buildings, materials and any flammable or other dangerous materials."
10. It was agreed that on this basis it would not be possible to run the event on The Oval within the limitations imposed by our current insurers. Having obtained 3 quotes, appropriate cover was obtained from NFU Insurance (Policy No:013X6081155/N71 at an additional cost of £450). Under the terms of the policy the Parish Council were required to provide a warranty that:

- the bonfire would not be lit within 12 metres of any road, railway, building, structure, overhead cable, woodland bracken or
- similar combustible material;
- the bonfire or firework display areas will be roped off to provide a minimum distance between the display and spectators of 15 metres;
- authorised adults only will enter the roped off area to tend the bonfire or to light fireworks;
- a responsible adult will be in direct charge of safety matters at all times;
- fireworks will be kept in a metal container fitted with a lid;
- no petrol or other accelerant will be used for the purpose of lighting or maintaining the bonfire;
- any flammable liquid or material or empty containers will be removed from the area of the bonfire or firework display.

11. Having reviewed the requirement noted above, the Bonfire Working Group were content that the required warranty could be given.

## **BONFIRE**

12. The bonfire was made entirely of wooden pallets – with the exception of straw for lighting no further extraneous material was introduced to the fire itself. A full 40' container of pallets was provided which created a fire some 7m x 5m x 2.5m. The fire was built with a broad base, which ensured no risk of collapse. The fire was checked in advance of lighting for people/animals in line with HSE recommendations. It was lit with a blowtorch using suitable kindling materials. The fire caught immediately and spread throughout the base evenly. I believe that in future, 2/3rds of a 40' Container of Pallets would be sufficient.

13. The pallets burned very cleanly, resulting in little if any burning debris, beyond the inevitable column of fine embers. Because of the strong wind the fire burnt very rapidly and provided an excellent spectacle.

## **FIREWORKS**

14. Again this year, in line with previous recommendations, no rockets were included in the display which meant that there was a lack of variety in the display. In a wish to increase the variety of fireworks a number of 'Catherine Wheels' were introduced, however these had a significant failure rate. The range of fireworks available is limited within the explosive 'category 3' products that we are able to purchase for the display. The fireworks provided an excellent display which lasted for some 40 minutes –the pace of the display was limited by having only one 'firer' – it is recommended that in future 2 x Teams of loader/firer/remover are maintained – this activity requires a total of 7 volunteers. As noted above, spent fireworks were not secured after the event and some were placed on the fire by persons unknown – this should not happen in future years. Sufficient portfires were available for lighting fireworks. There were no safety incidents reported relating to the lighting of fireworks. **Consideration should be given to attendance of a nominated individual on a BPA Cat 3 Firer's Course.**

## **SPARKLERS**

15. In 1997 Sparklers injured more people than any other firework and care needs to be taken in their use (BPA Website). Certainly they should never be given to children under 5 years of age. Whilst a significant number of bins were available for 'dead' sparklers many were dropped on the ground and it is recommended that careful consideration be given to tackling this problem in future years.

## **LIGHTING**

16. Due to the non-availability of a 'professional' lighting tower, the Working Group, together with Bob Rennard, created a DiY tower using a trailer and a scaffolding tower. Together with a number of 'worklights' provided by Working Group members sufficient lighting was available. A 6kva generator was hired from Abacus hire in Oakham at a cost of £37.50 plus VAT - this was ideal for the job. Additional lighting was provided by Bob Rennard and Working Group members to cover both the Pavillion and BBQ area.

## **SOUND**

17. A PA System was kindly loaned for the event at no cost by Nick and Maddie Poole – this was excellent, but suffered a power failure part way through the event. Use of a PA system is strongly recommended for future events.

## **FIRST AID**

18. CO 2 Medical Regiment sought support for the event from Kendrew Barracks Rapid Response Team, which was booked for the event. However, it did not arrive and First Aid cover was provided by qualified first aiders, Tim Smith and Paul Cummings. There were no minor injuries. The military cannot provide cover in the future, and alternative provision needs to be sought.

## **REFRESHMENTS**

19. An enthusiastic team of Volunteers provided first class refreshments. Details of stock purchased will be identified for future events. Jason Allen in The Fox kindly arranged for all food to be pre-cooked and delivered to site. All stock was sold.

## **CLEAR UP**

20. A small team of Volunteers including Working Group members cleared the area completely by 1100hrs the following day. The Oval Committee will now need to address the issue of the reinstatement of a large area of burnt grass. Sufficient volunteers were available to complete the clear up.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

21. Sufficient volunteers were available to support the event, however we inevitably rely on a small pool of individuals year on year. Work needs to be done early to identify 'new' volunteers. Appropriate hi-vis jackets and communications were provided to Stewards, however in the dark communication between Stewards remains problematic.

## **SUMMARY**

22. A safe and very well organised event. However, it does require considerable planning and resources in terms of staffing, and management. The members of the PC all made a concerted positive effort to ensure the success of the event. This remains a 'high-risk' event which needs careful supervision and management. If it is to be repeated, I recommend that the PC nominate a Bonfire Working Group to review the event in Jun 17 including a detailed analysis of the Risk Assessment and the early identification of volunteers. The PC should formally review all aspects of the event in Jul 17.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

23. The following recommendations are made regarding safety:

- Fireworks Working Group to start work on consideration of 17-18 Proposals in May 17.
- A method of identification of numbers attending should be introduced.
- The removal of the cricket nets prior to the event should be considered in future years.
- Size of bonfire should be reduced to no more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a 40' Foot vehicle load.
- Consideration should be given to attendance of a nominated individual on a BPA Cat 3 Firer's Course.
- Identification of suitable First Aid cover should be an early priority

PBG CUMMINGS  
Chair NLPC

Attached: Income/Expenditure – Bonfire Night 2016.

**NORTH LUFFENHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
BONFIRE NIGHT - PROVISIONAL ACCOUNTS**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>COSTS</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>+ / -</b>
<b>FIREWORKS &amp; SUPPORT COSTS</b>			
Fireworks	£1,050.00		-£1,050.00
Generator	£40.00		-£40.00
Safety Tape	£20.00		-£20.00
Free Sparklers	£80.00		-£80.00
Miscellaneous	£20.00		-£20.00
Sparklers Sold on Wine Stall	£100.00	£150.00	£50.00
Insurance	£426.15		-£426.15
Bucket Collection		£1,650.60	£1,650.60
<b>Total Fireworks / Support Costs:</b>	<b>£1,736.15</b>	<b>£1,800.60</b>	<b>£64.45</b>
<b>BARBEQUE</b>			
Burgers / Sausages	£215.00		-£215.00
Baps	£45.00		-£45.00
Condiments / Onions	£25.00		-£25.00
Charcoal	£20.00		-£20.00
Hire of BBQ	£20.00		-£20.00
Sales		£721.50	£721.50
<b>Total BBQ Costs</b>	<b>£325.00</b>	<b>£721.50</b>	<b>£396.50</b>
<b>MULLED WINE</b>			
Wine / Orange	£80.00	£618.50	£538.50
Temporary Drinks Licence	£21.00		-£21.00
Donation - Drinks Licence		£21.00	£21.00
<b>Total Wine</b>	<b>£101.00</b>	<b>£639.50</b>	<b>£538.50</b>
<b>REFRESHMENTS</b>			
Soup & Cake	£25.00		-£25.00
Toffee Apples	£30.00		-£30.00
Ingredients / Cups & Drinks	£100.00		-£100.00
Total Sales		£275.00	£275.00
<b>Total Refreshments</b>	<b>£155.00</b>	<b>£275.00</b>	<b>£120.00</b>
<b>STALL</b>			
Donation		£30.00	£30.00
<b>Total Stall:</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£30.00</b>	<b>£30.00</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS:</b>	<b>£2,317.15</b>	<b>£3,466.60</b>	<b>£1,149.45</b>

<b>Total Income:</b>	£3,466.60	<b>PAID TO BANK</b>	£3,225.60
<b>Total Cash Expenditure:</b>	£841.00	<b>Less FLOAT:</b>	£600.00
	<b>£2,625.60</b>	Cash to Bank	<b>£2,625.60</b>
<b>Less Bank Expenditure</b>	£1,476.15	Less Bank Expenditure	£1,476.15
<b>Profit</b>	<b>£1,149.45</b>	<b>Profit</b>	<b>£1,149.45</b>