Chair's Report to the AGM – March 2nd 2016

This has been a busy year and one where we have welcomed many new members.   We have enjoyed: cream teas, BBQ, sales, lunches, visits, holiday, tango, exercise classes. Dance for Parkinson's, voice classes, theatre visit, Fun Run, Oxford Walk, Christmas party, Christmas market visit, Christmas Concert.

Fundraising has exceeded anything we could have imagined. The golf day at Huntercombe was the end of a fine relationship with Huntercombe Golf Club as their Charity of the Year. The Captain and Lady Captain were both keen to find out about Parkinson's and their visit to OPDC clearly made an impact on them. We were also the Charity of the Year for the Oxford Soroptomists and many of us enjoyed listening to Paul's entertaining talk

We have been the beneficiary of a couple of legacies and these must be spent with guidance from PUK. We tried to focus on certain areas of concern: the needs of our carers, for those living with PD alone, and addressing voice difficulties.

What we did:

We sought guidance from our members through our group activities in Aug and Sept. This has led to us to starting up exercise and voice classes. We are also seeking advice in order to set a befriending service in place. We plan to offer respite care for members so the carer can get a break for a few hours. All these ideas came from that group work.

We put forward a sound proposal for PUK to evaluate a voice research project and though having had it checked out by two directors from PUK had it rejected. This was a grave disappointment. However with every cloud having a silver lining, we are hoping that Dr James Cantley who visited us a couple of meetings ago will create a working voice enhancer for our members to pilot.

Our links with OPDC are stronger with a great deal of mutual support – our members sign up as research volunteers and our events are well supported by researchers. Links with Brookes are also strong and further research opportunities and Zumba are on the horizon.

Many members were kind enough to pilot First Steps workshops for newly diagnosed people and following their feedback the scheme is up and running regularly in Oxfordshire.

The committee continues to be creative, hard working and dedicated and I thank them. Lin is leaving the committee and we thank her for her contribution.

Special mention must go to Delia who works beyond her remit and represents our branch at many events.

Thanks to Helen and Wendy who do the raffle each week. To Malcolm who organises the 200 club. To Helen who ensures we have a cuppa each mtg. To Claire who arranged the taxi service.

Looking ahead:

We have plans to continue with the exercise and voice classes.

We aim to get the befriending service in place.

We will decide on good and effective respect care providers and get this up and running.

We will continue to build on our events this year with additional concerts, and also strive to raise awareness of living with PD to even more people.

...And finally....

I always hope that everyone who comes to any of our events whether as audience or socially should leave knowing something more about PD. So I did a tally of people at our various events and I estimate we reached over 2000 people direct. How many we reached through radio interviews I cannot say. All I do say is keep it up and let people know how we work to fundraise in order to speed up the day we can say – We used to have PD.

Thank you. Sally Bromley
February 24th 2016