

Charney Chatter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

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PUBLISHED BY

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Deadline for copy for the next edition
in May 2004: 24 April 2004

Meetings are at 7.30 p.m. in the Village Hall on the
second Wednesdays of odd-numbered months.

Next meeting 10 March 2004.

CLERK'S CORNER

Good Neighbour

Grateful thanks to Tim Fitzgerald O'Connor, the owner of the land alongside Charney Field. He has again offered to harrow the Field and keep it mown and this offer has been accepted with alacrity. He also "donated" (if that's the right word!) two piles of horse manure to villagers who made short work of shifting it!

Tree felling

John Daglish and I have started to cut down the dead elm trees along the Stanford bridle path. We have removed those which were likely to fall on the bridge to footpath 4. The resulting logs will be piled along the path and if you're prepared to come and give a hand, you can have the logs for nothing. Contact John (868557) or me for news of the next session.

The Vale Council has indicated it will replace the dead elms next autumn.

Best Kept Village Competition

Do you think it's worth the village entering the Best Kept Village competition again this year? Which areas you think need to be improved if we are to stand a chance of winning a prize?

Lost and Found

I'm delighted to say that the "man in the moon" metal brooch advertised as found on the Village Green has been re-united with its grateful owner, for whom it has sentimental value.

Have you lost or found something? I'd be delighted to register another success.

Broadband

Progress towards broadband for the West Hanney telephone exchange is, apparently, very slow. Have you registered your interest yet?

ADVERTS

Staff Wanted

Matonique is opening a gift shop at Farmer Gow's in Eaton Road Appleton and needs two members of staff to work alternate weekends from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact Viv Maton, Manor Farm Barn on 868080 or 07813 346563 for details.

Calling all gardeners

Are you splitting your perennials, weeding your borders or transplanting your seedlings? If so, could you pot up a few extra plants for the plant stall at the Village Fete on Sat 10th July? Contact Mary Daglish on 868557 if you need any pots.

EDITORIAL

Well, the first edition of Charney Chatter seems to have been reasonably well received. I'm pleased at the number of people who have welcomed it as a good way to tell villagers what's going on. I'll try to produce one every two months, if I get material to fill it.

As I said in the first issue, feedback will be welcome and, in particular, short letters, notes or comments on matters of village interest.

Anonymous letters may be published provided they're not libellous and a name and address is given to the editor.

Village organisations are welcome to report on their activities in these pages.

I've also been asked if I'll accept adverts and the answer is "Yes" - and there's no charge for them (yet!).

The Editor's contact details are on the back page.

VILLAGE EVENTS

John and Mary Daglish, Joyce Ferguson and Eunice Davies attended a carol service at the Riding for the Disabled stables in Longworth Road to hand over a cheque for £120 - the surplus from the last session of Coffee Morning. RDA have expressed their thanks and extended an open invitation to see their classes in action.

Coffee Morning is held in the Village Hall every Tuesday from 10.30 to 11.30. Come along and take part in some

stimulating intellectual conversation - or just friendly gossip!

Viv Maton of Matonique Designer Accessories and Gifts held a sale in the Village Hall on 24 January and a proportion of the sales (£118.71) was given to Debbie Little for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. A big thank you to all those who supported this event.

See the Matonique advert on page 4.

LETTERS

Bill Lindsey has written to the Council to express pleasure at the sounds of children playing on the equipment on Charney Field. He feels it shouldn't be fenced to preserve the openness but unfortunately health and safety considerations mean it must be.

HEADLINE TOPICS

- *Non-emergency calls to the police*
- *Village environment.*
- *Talk on Charney Mill.*
- *The precept - where your money goes.*

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VILLAGE COLLEGE

The VC continues with French Conversation and Yoga. Flower Arranging resumes before Easter, on a date to be arranged.

The VC is a pipeline through which funds from the Charney and Lyford Education Trust (CLET) to support and encourage educational activities can be channelled to the villagers of Charney and Lyford. So, the VC is supported by CLET with grants to pay for the hire of the Village Hall.

It's been agreed with the CLET Trustees that the current arrangement where the VC applies for individual course grants is unnecessarily bureaucratic and difficult to

administer. CLET has therefore decided to give an annual grant of £750 towards the cost of running the VC. This is very welcome and enables the VC to undertake forward planning.

It's worth repeating that the VC is not just for adult education and we would welcome suggestions for courses for youngsters. How about sports courses on Charney Field?

College management contacts:
Jackie Cross (868706)
Peter Davies (868646)
Elisabeth Dahele (868673).
E-mail: villagecollege@hotmail.com

CHARNEY FIELD

The Vale Council has been as good as its word and has replaced the oak trees which died in the summer drought.

The children's play area is being fenced to keep the children in and dogs out. RoSPA insist on fencing for these two reasons and at

the risk of harping on about dog fouling their statistics show that annually in the UK, 350,000 tons of dog excrement are dropped (not all of it on Charney Field!), 100 people catch serious eye diseases from it and 1,600 children end up in A&E through dog bites!

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

2003 was a mixed year. We had a crime-free six months up to September and the police caught several burglars who had been active in the area. The crime-free period ended with two burglaries at the end of the year.

Distraction burglaries still happen in the area. Police advice is to put the chain on before opening the door to strangers and NEVER let anyone in without seeing, and if necessary checking, their identity cards.

Genuine callers don't mind being checked by a telephone call. Burglars often say they're from the Water Board, or other utilities.

Don't be embarrassed to check up on them, especially as a Water Board van containing uniforms was stolen recently near Reading.

If you see a strange vehicle, or suspicious person, the Police would find the following information useful should a crime be committed:

Vehicles - registration number, colour, make and type, old or new, outstanding features.

Suspect(s) - where and when, how many, sex, age, ethnic appearance, height, build, hair colour/style, facial hair, visible marks, tattoos or scars, voice and accent, clothing and what they did or said. Which way did they go?

Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator:
Margaret Roberts Tel: 868285.

POLICE NEWS

The last issue criticised non-emergency call handling in Thames Valley Police. In fairness they knew there were problems and now they've announced improvements.

The February Cherbury News told you about a new non-emergency call number to run in parallel with 01235 867000. Make a note of it - 0845 8 505 505. Calls on this number (local rate) will go to a Police Enquiry Centre (PEC) which is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An extra 16 operators have been recruited to deal with over 30,000 non-emergency calls a week.

In addition, every operational police officer has been issued with a mobile phone which the PECs can contact quickly.

It remains to be seen whether these steps will improve the response because they will still involve remote officers who may lack local knowledge. However, I've used it recently and it worked well! Tell me if you still have problems or ring the Quality of Service Unit at TVP HQ on 01865 846319.

For the best non-emergency service ring PC Martyn Holder: Home: 01367 870232 and Mobile: 07970 145294.

CHARNEY MILL

Bruce Hedge, leading light of the Mill restorers, is giving a talk on "The Archaeology of Charney Mill and its Millstream" in the Methodist Hall, Grove at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 8 March; entry £1.

Bruce explores why the mill was built where it was, when it was and what that involved.

He will draw on physical evidence in the building, archaeological evidence from elsewhere and documentary evidence to build a picture of a previous mill on the site.

The talk is part of the 2003/4 programme of the Vale of White Horse Industrial Archaeology Group and all are welcome.

COUNCIL FINANCES

The 2004/5 precept has been set at £2,000 - the same as it has been since 1999.

The known items of expenditure are : Grass cutting (including churchyard and Charney Field) £1000; Street cleaning £350; Insurance £180; External audit fee £150 Annual sub. Oxon Assn of Local Councils £108; Printing (Charney Chatter) £105; Electricity bill, Charney Mill £80; Councillors' travel expenses £60; Internal audit fee £60; Clerk's expenses £50; Christmas tree £40; Charitable donations £120; Hire of Village Hall for Council meetings £28, Subscription to Oxon Playing Field Association £25; CPRE membership £25; Best Kept Village Competition fee £12 and Ock Green Lease £1.

The total budget is £2,394. In case you think this will put us in the red, there will be a healthy year-end balance to start the new year and we will get grants and a VAT rebate to keep us within the precept of £2,000.

The donations (each of £30) will be to Hanney British Legion, South and Vale Carers, Abingdon Citizens Advice Bureau and Oxon Association for the Blind.

The fencing on Charney Field, referred to above will cost £800. The Council has sought a grant from CLET for this work but if this is not forthcoming it considers the children's welfare paramount and will find this sum from reserves.