

Charney Chatter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER 2004

VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT

Grants

The last issue reported on three grant applications to improve the village environment. This issue cannot add much to that report because the only news is that the application to the Trust for Oxfordshire Environment (TOE) to carry out basic repairs to Bridle Path to allow access for disabled buggies and for children's pushchairs has been unsuccessful and other sources of funds are now being sought. TOE believe that any request for funding disabled access should come within the Disability Discrimination Act and that's a matter for OCC.

The two other applications, for seats and repairs to Ock Green railings were deferred by the Vale Council to the next meeting early in 2005.

Pavements

We've had better luck with our request to OCC Highways to do something about Orchard Close pavements and their contractors are due to start resurfacing the entire Close on, or even before, 22nd November.

Nothing to show - yet!

A working party, meeting as a result of an initiative by Julie Rumble, met behind the bus shelter on 16 October and after an hour's earnest endeavour

there was no evidence of anything having happened! Why not? Well, the evidence won't appear for some time because the task was to plant crocus bulbs on the green behind the shelter. Many thanks to the dozen or so villagers (and the Parish Council) who donated and/or turned up and planted over 1,000 bulbs - in particular to Geoff Rumble who did most of the digging! This should produce a spectacular show when they all come up.

Bus Shelter Green?

Talking of this green, I've had two suggestions for naming it: Orchard Green and Millennium Green. Which do you prefer?

Fly Tipping

Have you noticed the dramatic increase in the number of tyres dumped on verges and in ditches in the vicinity of the village? It's presumably due to the new policy of charging for tyres deposited at landfill sites. If you see any, please let The Clerk know, or, better still, ring the Vale Council on (01235) 520202 and ask for Waste Management. Tell them the exact location and the number of tyres together with a description of any other waste dumped with them.

Your councillors:-

Geoff Beer (Chairman), Buckland Rd. 868709
Jim Harper (Vice-chairman), Barnfield 868288
Penny McGuire, Main Street 868666
John Stiles, Barnfield 868191

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

The next meeting is on 10 November 2004.

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CLERK'S CORNER

Seats

There was a further positive response to my appeal in the May issue for sponsors of seats to be placed at strategic places in the village and a second seat has been donated. Two more and we don't need the Vale grant.

Audit

In reporting in the last issue that the audit of the Council's accounts for 2003/4 had been completed I said that the auditors failed to understand a couple of points in my Annual Return. I should have said that the external auditors were the ones at fault, our internal auditor Peter Leaver had no problem with it!

Council Membership

Stafford Taylor resigned from the Council on moving out of the village. He is currently in

temporary residence in Oxford pending a move to Morlaix, NW France in January 2005. (I hope to advertise his superior B&B in Charney Chatter when he's settled in!) He was warmly thanked at the last PC meeting for his contribution to the Council during his term of office.

The vacancy arising from this resignation was advertised but nobody came forward to seek an election (thankfully because elections are costly and come out of our council tax) but Geoff Rumble has volunteered to fill the vacancy and at the next PC meeting on 10th November he will be duly co-opted as a councillor.

Broadband

The West Hanney exchange has been Broadband enabled - did you know?

ADVERTS

House Contents Sale

Steve Champion and Sue have (previous) house contents for sale i.e. beautiful yew wood furniture including table and chairs for 6, side units, TV cabinet including big screen TV, stereo unit including stereo system, and many more household/electrical and memorabilia items. Phone (01235) 867469 to arrange a convenient time to call round.

50% of all the proceeds will go to the British Heart Foundation.

Personalised Home-made Cards

Do you have difficulty finding just the right card for that special occasion? Eunice will make one for you. Give her a ring on 868646 or see her large stock at "Narrogin", Longworth Road. Proceeds to St. Peter's church.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Didcot & District CAB has a vacancy for a part time, temporary Fundraiser, paid on an hourly rate of £9.93 Details from the Bureau Manager on (01235) 512839.

HEADLINE TOPICS

- *Phantom working party!*
- *New CHAFT committee*
- *Charity Travels*
- *Village College resumes*
- *Crayfish at large*
- *Planning news*

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Village Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour (10.30 to 11.30 on Tuesdays) has resumed in the Village Hall and runs to 14th of December

VILLAGE COLLEGE

Currently running are a six-session Flower Arranging course on Thursday afternoons and Yoga. After a very successful four-session taster course of Pilates in September a full course has also been arranged.

The resumption of French Conversation has been delayed while Abingdon & Witney College find a replacement tutor. This will eventually run as we have enough students.

The second Christmas Decorations (Willow) Course will be held on 1st December. There are still two spare places on this.

College contacts:

Jackie Cross (868706)

Peter Davies (868646)

Elisabeth Dahele (868673)

E-mail: villagecollege@hotmail.com

Letters: Village Hall post box.

CHARNEY AND LYFORD EDUCATIONAL TRUST

The July edition contained a letter from Geoff Rumble which, in light vein, sought more information on the activities of the Charney and Lyford Educational Trust (CLET). I published the letter because I believe Geoff was making a valid point which aligned with my view that villagers don't know enough about the Trust. I invited Alison Peters, Clerk to the Trustees, to respond and she produced an excellent piece which should mean that everyone now knows much more about CLET. Her reply did not, however, contain any financial information and she referred my questions about this to the Trustees.

I have now received a letter from the new

Chairman of the Trustees, Christoff Lewis which, unfortunately, is too long to print. He defended CLET's record in publicising its activities but declined to provide financial details on the grounds of confidentiality. That is understood, but we were not seeking information on individual grants. Christoff points out that CLET meets the obligations placed on it by the Charity Commissioners - but that was never in dispute. However, looking on the CC web site I found the financial information Geoff was asking for. CLET's gross income/expenditure over the last four years was:- 1999-2000: £4,650/£2,011; 2000-01: £9,551/£3,124; 2001-02: £6,927/£895; 2002-03: £5,906/£16,975.

WILDLIFE NEWS

"Chimney Meadows - One Year On"

An illustrated talk by Lisa Lane, Project Officer about the work done on this fabulous local nature reserve. Thursday 11th November 2004, 7.30 p.m. at Buckland Memorial Hall. Free admission and parking. Contact: Kathy Warden 01235 764832 .

Lost - Colin McGuire found a crayfish wandering across his drive. It turns out that it had escaped from a bucket of 4 or 5 of them

which Diney Godfrey had caught. Have you seen the others? From its size ("it was chunky with big pincers") it was believed to be the American interloper (signal or red-clawed crayfish) which is killing off the native variety (white-clawed crayfish). Colin couldn't say if they are good to eat because he put it back in the river. *(I have it on good authority that they are becoming increasingly common, are edible but an acquired taste! - Ed)*

PLANNING

The proposal to demolish a steel-framed building at Gunton Barn and replace it with a garage, store and granny annexe has been approved at an appeal against the Vale Council's refusal to grant permission. The appeal Inspector applied a condition that the additional building "shall be occupied only as ancillary accommodation to the existing dwelling and shall not be occupied as a separate dwelling unit".

The Parish Council has not objected to a proposal to extend Mill Cottage although it has pointed out to the planners that the proposal would be a big increase in the size

of the cottage with a significant impact on its overall appearance in a sensitive area. At a site meeting, Steve Champion, owner of Mill Cottage, explained the steps taken to revise the original plans to make the extension more in keeping with the conservation area. These include a dummy chimney to match the existing cottage. Councillors agreed he had been successful in this.

Outline planning permission has been granted for the change of use of McBain's yard to residential development.

The Council has not objected to an application to extend Elm Cottage.

CHARNEY HALL & FIELD TRUST

CHAFT committee has a new Chairman, Colin McGuire and new committee members John Stiles, Emma Buchanan, and Anna Greenacre. Lucy Gildersleeves remains Secretary, and Philip Greenacre Treasurer.

Don't forget the Bonfire and Fireworks on Charney Field on 7th November at 5.15 p.m. Tickets for soup, sausages and cake (£5.50 adults, £3.00 children) from Kay Adamson on 868599

CHARNEY MILL

Stafford Taylor's report on the condition of the Mill building has been studied by Grant Audley-Miller, the Conservation Officer on the Vale Council responsible for listed buildings. His opinion is that the standard of the roof "repairs" carried out for OCC is not good enough and we will be asking OCC to rectify the faults.

When the Parish Council negotiated the Mill lease, it had to pay legal expenses of £450. OCC agreed to offset this with a grant to help with the additional facilities needed for improved public access. It is gratifying to report that OCC have sent the Council a cheque for £450 and this will be put to good use in helping with the restoration work.

CHARITY TRAVELS

Dave Belcher, of Orchard Close, completed his cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats (1,200 miles) in 19 days, without a puncture or injury, raising in excess of £2,500 for BLISS. Many thanks to all who contributed.

Best wishes to Steve Callaghan who will run in the New York marathon on 7th November. He's paid all his expenses so the £2,000 he's seeking from sponsors will all go directly to Whizz-Kidz, the charity which provides mobility for disabled children.