

Your councillors:-

Geoff Rumble (Chairman), Buckland Road 868738
Jim Harper (Vice-chairman), Barnfield 868288
John Stiles, Barnfield 868191
Jos Bath, Buckland Road 868260
Mike Cox, New Road 868276

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

The next meeting is on 11th March 2009

ADVERTS AND EVENTS

Personalised Home-made Cards

Can't find the right card for that special occasion? Eunice will make one for you. Ring her on 868646. Proceeds to charity

Village Hall Bookings

Contact Eunice Davies on 868646 for hire of the Hall, crockery, cutlery and the gazebos.

Table Tennis

Interested in playing table tennis in the Village Hall? Contact Dave Sibbert on 868734 for more details.

Street cleaner wanted for litter picking.

£5.52 per hour. 8 hours max per month. Details from Clerk (868646).

Lent Lunch - Sunday 15th March

KHAOS Kids and St Peter's Church invite you to a **LENT LUNCH** in aid of the Shalom Centre, Tanzania from 12.30 pm in Charney Bassett Village Hall.

You are invited to contribute the cost of your normal Sunday lunch towards our collection.

The Shalom Centre project is providing a home and livelihood for orphaned street children in Arusha. The money we raise at the lunch will help towards the costs of a water bore hole and a market garden to feed the Centre and provide income.

Great British Fish and Chip Supper – Friday 15th May 2009

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want

to eat Fish and Chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 15th May 2009 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting Spinal Injuries Association's information and support services. Visit www.spinal.co.uk for more details.

CLET

Charney and Lyford Education Trust, CLET, supports a range of educational projects, with grants both to individuals under the age of 25 and to the community in Charney and Lyford.

Applications will be considered by the Trustees who meet in January, May and September. Details from the Clerk: Frances Rothwell, "Oldwalls", Buckland Road, Tel: 868704 E-mail: fc.rothwell@tiscali.co.uk.

Boys' Football

Charney are starting an U-12's Football Team that will play in the Oxford Mail Boys League on Sunday mornings next season 2009/2010. Any children interested in playing, please contact Bernard Townsend on 01235 868181, Mobile: /07747 094351 or Mr D Kitchen on 07823 446757.

The Chequers

Husnu and Roberta at the Chequers have introduced a new lunchtime special menu served from noon to 2.00 p.m., Tuesday to Saturday. One course is only £5.95, two are £8.95 and three £9.95. This is excellent value for quality food. Do support your local pub!

Charney Chatter

NUMBER 32

MARCH 2009

EDITORIAL

Responding to questions raised by villagers on the safety and operations of helicopters over the village, your Council wrote to the Station Commander at RAF Benson seeking reassurance that the wellbeing of residents in the Vale of White Horse (which has been a low-flying helicopter zone since 1959) was always taken into consideration by training flights. Our MP, Ed Vaizey, also wrote to the station and as a result your Clerk and MP were invited to Benson on February 13th to be briefed on helicopter operations, followed by a flight over the Vale, including Charney and Sparsholt (Ed Vaizey's house).

This was an excellent visit and the reassurances we were seeking were freely given in an open discussion of station activities. Safety is paramount, not only for the aircrews but for the villages over which they fly. The helicopters involved, Merlins and Super Pumas, have excellent safety records and the former, in which we flew, has considerable redundancy built into its design to ensure safe operations in hostile places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. It has three engines and can fly on one. And don't even think about trying to shoot one down, it's designed to resist RPGs fired by insurgents!

Military helicopters are permitted to fly down to zero feet which allows them to land anywhere in the Vale. However, they have designated landing fields in which farmers allow them to land; the nearest of these to Charney is at Lyford. They have clearly identified avoidance areas which include the Riding for the Disabled stables in Longworth Road and any very low flying (100 feet) follows carefully chosen routes avoiding villages. Evidence of very low flying over villages could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Questioned as to why night flying takes place after 11.00 p.m. when it's dark at 6.00 p.m., the explanation is that night flying in two-hour sorties starts as soon as it gets dark and due to limited availability of aircraft for such flying it continues into the early hours. If we get helicopters over at 11.00 p.m., someone else has had them earlier - and vice-versa.

The RAF crews are fully aware of the risk to horse riders from low flying but they explained they have difficulty picking them out from background scenery. However, wearing a fluorescent yellow jacket could draw attention to a rider and might result in avoiding action being taken - sound advice!

HEADLINES

- *Chopper safety is paramount!*
- *Support the Village Diner!*
- *Church burglaries*
- *Diversion routes explained.*
- *Village Hall update*

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Coffee Hour in the Village Hall on Tuesdays (10.30-11.30) has resumed and will run until March 31st. Call in and chat. 50p buys you as much tea or coffee as you can drink - with biscuits too! Everyone welcome.

Deadline for copy for the next edition in May 2009: 20 April 2009

Contributions are welcome, preferably by e-mail. Adverts are free!

Charney Chatter can be e-mailed free to anyone giving their e-mail address to the Editor
It's already international with copies going to France, Australia, Japan and Wales!

Visit www.charneybassettpc.org.uk for the very latest village news

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP - NAG2

February Report:

Stanford-in-the-Vale is still experiencing a few anti-social problems, the latest being youths shouting swear words through letter boxes and then running away. We have a couple of names of those we believe to be the offenders and these individuals have been spoken to. They are local to Stanford and we would like to prosecute them through the courts but need more evidence. If anything similar happens, we are asking if a quick photo of the offenders could be taken, either with a camera, or a mobile phone.

There have been two searches of premises carried out in Faringdon under the misuse of drugs act and substances have been seized and sent off to be forensically examined. We are awaiting the outcome of these tests when we hope to charge the offenders with offences related to the supply of drugs.

On Wednesday 18th February, a burglary took place at St Peter's church in Charney Bassett. Two pewter jugs were stolen from a locked

cupboard. The offenders will no doubt attempt to sell them to some unsuspecting buyer. If anyone has any information, please inform the police on 0845 8 505505.

[Editor's note: This took place on the day the TV crew was in the village. Did you see anything or anyone suspicious (the crew are not suspects!)? Sadly East Challow and West Hanney churches were also burgled around the same time]

Over the weekend of 20th and 21st of February, police were called to several incidents of criminal damage and theft in Faringdon town centre, windows were smashed and graffiti sprayed indiscriminately. From information gathered at the various scenes, identities of offenders were established and arrests made. With the number of offenders currently on bail or arrests pending, I am hoping to see a reduction of anti-social behaviour incidents in the near future, making your lives a little more comfortable.

PC 3723 M Bennett.

CHAFT - FOURTH ANNUAL FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT

Despite losing a few contestants to illness on the night, 10 teams turned out to battle for the CHAFT Quiz Shield and to enjoy the splendid hospitality and catering provided by Chequers landlords Husnu and Roberta.

Over the course of 8 topic rounds (somewhat tenuously structured around a 'Spice Girls' theme!) and a trio of marathon rounds, the pole positions changed several times during the evening. Teams gambled all on playing a Joker 'doubler' on a predicted good round (strong contenders *The Gauls* had a very unlucky stumble here) and on guessing which round to discard with a Vulture. A grand total of 226

points plus bonus humour marks were on offer and in the end a mere 30 points separated the winners and the wooden spoons.

In the end the 2008 champions *The Lobster Pots* just clung onto their title, fending off *Mothers & Daughters* by 2 points, with the *Quizerables* turning in a storming marathon score to take third place only half a point behind *MAD*.

The event raised £189.30 towards the CHAFT Village Hall Development fund. Thank you very much to everyone involved for a sociable evening.

100 CLUB DRAW

The February draw was made at Coffee Hour on 24th February. First prize of £25 went to Ed Preece (No. 65) and second of £10 to Geoff Beer (No. 41).

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FROM YOUR MP - ED VAIZEY

I had a useful up-date from Thames Valley Police Chief Constable, Sara Thornton, on the issues our local Police face. While we live in one of the safest areas of the country, with a very low crime rate, there are always problems, such as occasional hot-spots of anti-social behaviour, and the occasional wrongful arrest (an 85 year old nicked for chopping down a tree in his garden springs to mind!), I have few complaints and a lot of praise for the hard work our officers do. The biggest problem we face is our proximity to London. Because of London weighting, police officers in London get paid £4500 more than in Oxfordshire. And if you live in Oxfordshire but work in London, you get free travel. So it is not surprising that many officers who train and get experience here end up working in London. Across the Thames Valley, we lost 79 officers to the Met in 2008 and we have the second highest proportion of young officers in the country. Thames Valley MPs are now going to lobby the Government to reduce the differential in pay between London and the Thames Valley, as well as seeking to limit the number of officers that can be poached.

Overall, Thames Valley Police is still understaffed. On a like-for-like basis, comparing us with similar counties, we are down some 436 police officers, 100 community support officers and 350 specials. I am delighted that the force is planning to recruit more specials, and we should be up to 400 by the end of the year. Population growth is also a factor. While all new development is on hold because of the credit crunch, housing expansion puts a huge strain on resources. Because of the way the funding formula works, we are unlikely to get the necessary increase in police numbers to match housing growth. Bizarrely, because of the huge geographic spread of Thames Valley, our policing resources are affected by the growth

of towns like Milton Keynes. I am trying to get the Government to change the formula.

At the beginning of every parliamentary session a ballot is held and MPs that win can propose a Private Member's Bill. However, making one of these Bills an actual law is far from easy because they are subject to very strict scrutiny, they are not whipped so MPs have a free vote, there is no in-built Government majority to see them through and at least 100 MPs have to back the Bill. Despite all this, about once a session, one of these Bills does gain the support needed.

On Friday the 27th February one of the ballot winners, Cheryl Gillan MP, will bring forward the Autism Bill originally brought forward last year by Angela Browning, when it did indeed fail. The two of them have been working non-stop with the National Autistic Society to make a useful piece of legislation and the first ever one about autism. The bill aims to "recognise the numbers of people with autism, to provide effective transition from child to adult services, and to ensure appropriate support and services thereafter" and I have been answering a torrent of e-mails from the good people of this constituency asking me to support it. The provisions for integration of child and adult services is the most important part of this bill because all the evidence tells us that autistic children need routine and familiarity, so such a substantial change of people and routine can often cause massive setbacks in the progress of a child into adulthood.

On the 27th I shall be doing my best to be in the House to support it before I race back to Didcot for my evening surgery.

You can contact me at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, on 0207 219 6350 or at vaizeye@parliament.uk. My website can be found at www.vaizey.com.

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VILLAGE HALL PROJECT - GEOFF RUMBLE REPORTS

We currently still have approximately £87,000 available and the organisations that have pledged grants (totalling £67,500 of the £87,000) are being contacted to ensure we are going to receive the money despite further delays. I have also submitted an application to "Grassroots", a government sponsored fund, for £4,500 to fit out the new kitchen we plan to have in the extended hall.

I submitted a revised planning application to the Vale in December, using the on-line planning portal that now operates centrally for the country. After a month, I have received a response from the Vale asking for more detail and more plans. This has lost us more than a month as the 8-week decision period will start from when they receive the extra items. They require a large scale block plan, a cross-section plan and a roof plan. These are all items which were required for building regulations approval (which we still have) but have been added by the Vale for planning approval since we obtained our previous consent in 2006. Our architects Anderson Orr have the original drawings on their system and will only need to modify them slightly.

CHARNEY ARMY

The Army has continued its activities although it had a rare cancellation due to the weather in early February. It is currently starting to tackle the multitude of small dead elm trees along the Stanford bridle path to ensure they do not fall into Charney Wick Ditch. It will resume activities under Project Chaffinch when water levels in the drainage ditches

VILLAGE DINER

The Village Diner provides home-made food from local sources in Buckland Village Hall, at 12.15 p.m. every third Wednesday in the month (except August and December). For £4 you get a two-course meal, tea or coffee. Next date: 18th March.

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Andrew Alder of Andrew Alder Associates has quoted the following costs for providing a supervisory service:

- 1) Preparation of Building Regulations alterations (we have approval but a number of items have changed) - £440
- 2) Produce a tender document and obtain three prices (we will not be allowed to claim most of the grants unless we show we have carried out a full tendering process) - £560
- 3) On-site supervision of builders and subcontractors, including site visits - £2,950
- 4) CDM Co-ordination to meet the 2007 Construction Design & Management regulations - £1,150
- 5) Asbestos survey - in the region of £450

This is a total of £5,550 excluding VAT.

After paying all of Andrew's bills, plus those expected from Anderson Orr, we will be left with less than £80,000 but Andrew believes in the current climate, this might be enough. We will not know until the tenders are received.

return to normal. It has been thanked by Steve Champion at Mill Cottage for its work on the millstream which helped avoid further flooding on February 10th.

The Army meets at 10.00 a.m. on the second and last Thursdays of the month. To receive automatic notification of activities send your e-mail address to the Editor.

Attendance has fallen off somewhat lately, threatening the viability of this semi-social event. Mary Daghish, Julie Rumble or Eunice Davies can give you more information and can recommend the quality and variety of the food.

NEWS FROM THE COUNTY COUNCIL

I am hoping to clear up some rumours and misunderstandings about the yellow/black signs that have appeared in our villages lately.

The County Council is drawing up a contingency plan for the A420 in case of a blockage due to a road traffic accident or other incident. The signs are diversion signs for people to follow. There will be drop-down signs on major routes and you follow the square/triangle/circle as directed by the signs. The idea is to take HGVs off the road at either Botley or Swindon and divert them to the A338/A34/M4. Light traffic will be diverted through the villages - but generally one way only, as east- and west-bound traffic will be separated. This is to ensure that fewer vehicles pass through villages.

The diversion routes followed by HGVs are the main concern and to minimise the possibility of them following the light traffic diversion signs, the County, along with the Police and other interested parties will contact known operators of HGVs in the area and will

tell them about the diversions before they set off from their depots and that the A420 is closed to them altogether. The main HGV operator using the A420 is BMW so this is already in hand. The media will also be informed so that people will know where the accident is.

The object of the exercise is to get HGVs off the A420 altogether when there is an incident. The County is fairly confident that the majority of west-bound HGVs will be diverted at Botley and Tubney Woods and east-bound at Swindon.

Parish Councils have received information explaining all this but I thought it was worthwhile to explain it all now. If you want any further information, please contact me. The Clerk holds copies of maps of the diversion routes.

Melinda Tilley, Kingston Bagpuize Division.
Tel: 01865 820385. Mob: 07816 834234
E-mail: melinda.tilley@oxfordshire.gov.uk

PLANNING

Permission has been granted for conversion of "Penny Chickens" in Buckland Road to a one and one-half storey chalet-style bungalow.

Permission has also been granted for the partially-completed office conversion at Minmere Farm to become a single dwelling. It's unusual for permission to be granted for an out-of-village dwelling but in this case the need for an office has now gone with a change in business circumstances. Allowing it to become a dwelling will avoid leaving it abandoned and will result in clearing the site with landscaping, improving the first impression visitors will get when they approach the village from the West.

Still awaited is the decision of the appeal into the refusal of planning permission for two workers' dwelling at New Manor Farm.

An application to replace the outbuildings at Home Farm has been referred to the Vale Planning Committee for determination. This is a controversial development in which the neighbours agreed on the form of the replacement buildings but were overruled by the Vale planners on the grounds that the house is listed and the replacement buildings have to meet strict listed building guidelines. The Parish Council has sought clarification of the role of the planners in this case.

Charney Manor has sought permission for a footpath and gate to make access safer for pedestrians.

By the way, Intelligent Equines in Longworth Road are not building anything - they're putting down hard core to facilitate access to their yard!

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