

Charney Chatter

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Your councillors:-

Mike Cox (Chairman) 868276
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Jane Fry 868114
David Roberts 868285.

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

The next meeting is on Wednesday 10th July 2013

Charney Bassett and Lyford Educational Trust

CLET supports a range of educational projects, with grants awarded both to individuals under the age of 25 and to community groups in the villages of Charney Bassett and Lyford. Applications will be considered by the Trustees who meet in January, May and September. For further details please contact the Clerk: Mrs Frances Rothwell, Oldwalls, Buckland Road, Charney Bassett, Tel: 01235 868704,

E-mail: rothwell555@btinternet.com

The next meeting of the CLET Trustees will be on Wednesday 4th September 2013. Please contact the Clerk for a Grant Application Form, which should be returned to her for consideration at this meeting.

The Village Diner

Your community lunch for £5.00 per person

Buckland Memorial Hall

Do come and enjoy a hearty, hot 2 course lunch in a cheerful village setting on the third Wednesday of each month. Future dates for your diary :-

Weds 17th July 12.15pm

Weds 21st August (run by Buckland W.I.)

Weds 18th September 12.15pm

Deadline for copy for the September 2013 edition: **20th August 2013**

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. roger.watson@tiscali.co.uk

CHARNEY FEAST

Saturday 6th July 2.00-5.00p.m.

On the Village Green

Teas, Pancakes & Ices, Grand Draw, Tombolas, Whisky Raffle, Bric-à-brac, Plants & Produce, Silent Auction, Books & DVDs, 10pin Bowling, Other Games & Stalls

Offers of Help & Enquiries to

Jane Fry 01235 868114

An Evening of Celtic and Classical Harp Solos and Duets

Harpists Keziah Thomas and Hannah Phillips will be giving a concert of music for all tastes
St Peter's Church
Friday July 5th.
At 8PM

Entrance is free with a retiring collection.
As seating is limit please apply for tickets
From: 01235 868557

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Report

This is my third report as your Chairman. When I agreed to take the post two years ago I made the comment that the role was not a demanding one. Parish Council meetings took less than an hour with an audience of generally five members of the public. How things have changed.

Council expenditure comes from a precept on the Vale of White Horse District Council, and derives its income from Council Tax. In the period under review and, as last year, the precept was £3,800 per year which represents a tax of approximately £30 per year on a Band D property. Your learned Clerk is far better qualified than I to comment on receipt and expenditure of monies but it is sufficient for me to say that your Council has kept the precept for the coming year at its present rate.

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Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour every Tuesday in the Village Hall from 10.30 to 11.30 am.

The cost of £1.00 per person includes as much tea or coffee as you like and biscuits too.

Chairman's report—continued from p1

At the last Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th May 2012, casual vacancies had arisen caused by the resignation of Miss P Edwards and Mr D Hughes due to work commitments. No election was deemed necessary and two new Parish Councillors were co-opted, Mrs Jane Fry and Mr David Roberts agreeing to serve. Regrettably a long serving member of the Council, Jim Harper, resigned from his duties shortly afterwards and we were indeed fortunate to be able to co-opt Mrs Sue Dobson to fill his post. Jim Harper served on the Parish Council for many years and made a strong commitment to the Community. On your behalf I thank him for the contribution he made.

As always your Council were invited by the District to comment on a number of planning applications during the year. One application for the erection of 4 houses in Longworth Road was opposed and the matter is due to be dealt with shortly by the District Planning Committee. (*Since this was written the application has been refused*). Planning applications face us with a real challenge for the future and I will return to planning issues later in the report.

Project Chaffinch (Challenge Avoid Further Flooding in Charney) has continued under the stewardship of the Parish Clerk and Jim Gardiner. Additional work has been carried out and the findings were presented to the Environment Agency by Jim Gardiner, Stephen Cowlam and David Roberts at a meeting held at their Crowmarsh Gifford offices. They expressed a view that the work done was well researched and agreed that it contained more qualified, detail and analysis than the report they had issued after the flood in 2007. At the last Annual meeting three small projects were proposed and liaison is now taking place with local landowners to put work in hand. The Vale of White Horse District Council is offering flood grants of up to £1000 and we hope to take advantage of this. To sum up "it is work in progress".

The Village College is co-ordinated and run by Lynn Brookes. It continues to flourish with a whole range of classes including the following:

Patchwork and Quilting running morning, afternoon and evening sessions, with 25 students

Yoga and Pilates

Saturday Workshops for "Machine Quilting Fun days", Calligraphy and Singing (What next – the Charney Bassett Choir!!)

On your behalf I thank Lynn for the sterling work she carries out.

As many of you are aware the Parish Council has

rented Ock Green and the adjacent field in Lyford Road from the Trustees of Charney Manor since 1973. The Parish Council had maintained the field as a natural habitat for the benefit of the community. In December 2011 the Trustees of the Manor indicated that they had received a request from a nearby resident to purchase the field and they sought our views on the subject. I can say there was no sinister motive attributed to the purchaser whose only intention was to preserve it as it was. After further correspondence with the Trustees it was agreed that the Parish Council should continue to rent the field and to develop it into an orchard in recognition of H.M. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Money for the project was raised by a table top sale held on the village green, organised by Steve and Sue Champion along with Parish Councillor David Roberts, raising £311 (they won't give up the day job – it was hard work). Additionally the Jubilee Committee which raised funds for the village Jubilee celebrations donated £112.30p. A project team was formed, trees and bushes together with protection guards purchased prior to planting. David Godfrey rotovated the ground and removed the debris. I am happy to report that the orchard flourishes and is a fine example of a community working together.

A number of people were involved, too many to name individually but I will mention one person, John Daghish. The hand carving of the Oak Wood Jubilee sign is a mark of a craftsman.

Technology plays an important part in village life and some 90 residents have now opted into the Village e-mail messaging group which has been used extensively by our Clerk to keep you updated with planning issues. It is hoped to extend its use to provide news on other matters. The village website had become unworkable leading to the custodian John Wright, assisted by his wife Stephanie, spending considerable time in setting up an effective replacement. It is now up and running. Check it out, www.charneybassett.org.uk. The Parish Council will have to establish guidelines relating to read/write of the contents. I am grateful to them both for the contribution they have made.

Earlier in my report I indicated that I would return to planning issues and you will recall that last year I explained that the planning rules had been relaxed and I spoke of the V of WHDC Interim Housing Policy. In November 2011 we were advised that it had been calculated that Charney Bassett should have ten additional houses by 2026. In February 2012 the V of WHDC advised the Parish Council that its new Interim Housing Policy now identified scope for ten to twenty houses that could be built on land owned by

Maintenance of the Churchyard at St Peter's

Some in the village have asked why the churchyard is no longer mowed in the way of past years (i.e. around every gravestone). In recent years the contractor has found it difficult to mow and collect the grass with his ride-on equipment. It was also proving a threat to the fabric of grave stones, flower containers etc. Partly because of this complexity and the resultant cost, the Parochial Church Council has decided to rely on church members for the mowing and to focus the mowing on the graves that currently need access by the family and friends of the deceased. Pathways will therefore be mown to these key areas and the areas immediately around these particular gravestones will be also kept clear.

This means that grass will deliberately be allowed to grow around the old graves. This is a practise now adopted by many churches as unmown churchyards can provide a vital habitat for grasses, wildflowers, insects and other wildlife that are increasingly threatened with depletion or even extinction. To see where and how this is being done, we recommend entering 'Churchyard wildlife habitats' into your internet search engine. You will see that St Peter's, Charney is by no means alone in adopting this policy and we are glad to make our own small contribution to the preservation of our environment.

From your MP - Ed Vaizey

In recent weeks I have had one or two constituents e-mail me to ask why I do not discuss either national or controversial local issues in this newsletter. Because I am writing for all my constituents, I try to stay off national topics, because I do not want to be accused of using this space to push political propaganda! Those of you who have written to me on national issues know that I respond quickly and in detail setting out my position.

I try to include local news where relevant, but I have not covered the vexed subject of planning. This is without doubt the major issue in the constituency at the moment, with many people writing to me to express their concerns about the number of developments being proposed. I have set out my views in some detail here : - www.wantageandgrove.org/ed-vaizey.php and this statement is now on some other parish web sites. I am pleased that the Vale Council has appointed a new head of planning, and two new planning officers. I am also writing to the Planning Minister to ask him to clarify whether housing numbers override local planning considerations. In

too many cases, it seems, the Vale is approving proposals which do not fit local planning considerations because, they claim, they need to reach their housing targets. I want to get some clarity from the Government on whether this is right or not.

Finally, related to this issue, I am delighted that the Department for Transport has allocated £5 million to help sort out the Milton Interchange on the A34. This junction is a significant 'pinch point' which has long needed addressing. The scheme will improve the operation and increase the capacity at Milton Interchange, by providing a 'hamburger' style roundabout of the type which have so improved the traffic flows around the Oxford bypass. It should enable the junction to operate effectively even with planned growth in traffic, and help all of us living and working in the area. As ever please feel free to contact me at the House of Commons, SW1A 0AA, 020 7219 6350, or vaizeye@parliament.uk. Surgery details can be found at www.vaizey.com.

Ed Vaizey MP

CHAFT 100 Club Winners April, May & June

	First Prize	Second prize
April	£25 Andrea & Graham James (121)	\$10 Marian Gardiner (14)
May	£25 Joe Ody (19)	£10 Adrian Hodges (49)
June*	£50 The Leavers (58)	£25 Liz Cowlam (131)

*Prizes for June are higher than other months to celebrate the start of the summer!

Our thanks to the 126 people who have recently joined or renewed their membership for the current twelve months. The money collected has covered the prizes for the year and donated £962 towards the upkeep of the Hall and Field.

Mahala and David

Charney 100 Club Organisers

Patchwork and Quilting Exhibition

Charney Quilters held their second very successful Patchwork and Quilting Exhibition in the Village Hall on Saturday 25th May; the magnificent sum of £358 was raised for Charney Village College funds.

Visitors were quite overwhelmed by the wonderful collection of work produced by the students of Charney Quilters, some of whom were beginners and others with very little previous experience in quilting.

Our next set of classes are already planned for the autumn: morning, afternoon and evening on Wednesdays, and Thursday mornings. If you are interested in attending classes please either telephone or contact Lynn Brookes (village.college@yahoo.com, tel: 868471) for more information.

Christian Aid Collection

Thank you to all those who donated and the helpers. We collected over £460 of which about half was gift aided.

Mrs. J. Harrison

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

Oxfordshire County Council. The Parish Council responded in April 2012 that we would support 10 houses over the period of 14 years but not twenty, giving the reasons why.

This has now become academic; the Interim Housing Policy was not fit for purpose and is deemed unlawful. The National Planning Policy Framework requires Planning Authorities to demonstrate a five year supply of house building. The Vale can only demonstrate a 3.3 year supply of house building land and the local plan has lapsed. The National Planning Policy Framework contains a presumption in favour of development provided a site is sustainable and the Planning Committee should only refuse an application where it is assessed that it could cause material harm. Refusing an application without reasonable grounds leaves an applicant free to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. An Inspector could then approve the application awarding costs against the Council. The Council would also lose control of the development and Section 106 monies which are financial contributions to support community projects.

The Local Plan is being re-written in two parts – Part 1 has been published and will be adopted in 2014 after consultation. Part 2 will address the position of smaller villages with consultation in 2014. The VofWHDC have a points system for identifying the size of villages which impacts on the number of new houses that can be supported. At the present time we are classed as a small village with 7 points. We, along with the Charney Bassett Action Group (CBAG) are challenging the grading and if we can reduce to 6 points we are then classified as “Open Countryside” where future growth would simply be ‘natural’ growth’ i.e. 5 houses per decade.

We have to bear in mind that with no District Council strategy in place, difficulty is created in having valid objections to planning applications. In effect, whilst it is an expression the Vale of White Horse doesn't like “it is open season for the next 12 months” and this includes agricultural land.

I mention sustainability. This takes into account the economic, environmental and social impact of a proposed development. This is a key test and one we must contest. We have already objected to the four houses in Longworth Road. They would be outside the built up area of the village, they present a loss of privacy to residents in Longworth Road, they present an increase in traffic, noise and disturbance to neighbours and the access is too narrow.

The role of the Parish Council is to act as a conduit for concern and practical views of the community

and we are grateful to CBAG for the role they play. At the present time plans have not been submitted by Pye Homes but we understand that there may be changes to their original proposal to build 13 new homes in Buckland Road.

At our last Annual meeting the benefit of either a Neighbourhood or Community plan was discussed. It was agreed that our best chance of bringing influence to bear in the interest of the Community was to have our own Community Plan in accordance with the recent Localism Act. A Community Plan needs to be prepared and owned by the Community and accordingly a project team was formed to formulate a plan under the Chairmanship of Brian Hook. A considerable amount of work was carried out including the gathering of the views from the occupier of every house in the village. The response was analysed and a draft report prepared. There were differing views as to the direction the report should take. On 28th February a representative from the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council discussed with the Council and members of the working group the progress of the report and asked challenging questions. At the March Parish Council meeting it was considered advisable to continue with a Community led plan. Three residents agreed to join the Working Party and the Clerk undertook to organise a briefing meeting and to re-launch the project under the Chairmanship of Ian McGregor. I can inform you that the process has begun, it requires a structural approach and does need the ideas and support of the village – it is your Plan.

Regrettably this report is longer than usual but it is right and proper that your Council makes you aware of the difficulties that exist with planning applications being made and the challenges that we face. This year has been an outstanding one for community involvement, the Jubilee Orchard project completed, progress made with the Community Plan, not an easy task and the efforts of CBAG in response to unwanted planning applications. Work continues with Chaffinch in relation to flood prevention.

Finally, and he won't like it, I would like to place on record our appreciation of the work, support and advice we receive from our Clerk, Dr. Stephen Cowlam. His work this year has quadrupled and he has kept open our links with the Community and CBAG. A safe and effective pair of hands.

Michael Cox.

Chairman of the Parish Council.

8 May 2013