

LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL

Newsletter – Autumn 2020



Anti-social parking Remember pedestrians!

The Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps, has recently launched a consultation to decide how to stop vehicles parking on pavements. This is already banned in London and it may be extended to other areas.

Inconsiderate parking in Little Chalfont has certainly been increasing with many reports received of cars thoughtlessly – and in some cases illegally – parked over dropped kerbs, or completely blocking the footpath in Little Chalfont.

This presents very real difficulties for the visually and mobility impaired, the elderly and parents with children. It often forces them into the roads with their wheelchairs, pushchairs and children, putting their safety at risk.

We would therefore like to clarify the regulations regarding such parking. The following guidelines have been issued by the police on this matter:

Parking alongside dropped kerbs

It is an offence to park where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles.

Dropped kerbs are clearly marked, either by a white cross painted in the

road, like that alongside Nightingale's Corner or by double yellow lines, like those in Chenies Parade.

Regardless of this, we have observed many cars ignoring this rule, sometimes on a regular basis.

Blocking the pavement

Pavement parking can have a considerable impact on people's lives and their ability to leave their homes safely. While pavement parking can be a necessity in some cases, many people are not aware of the detrimental effect that pavement parking can have.

If a pavement or footway is blocked, it can be viewed by the police as an obstruction. An obstruction involves an unreasonable use of the road and will depend on several factors.

A good practical test is, could someone in a wheelchair or with a pram walk past without having to go into the road? However, we emphasize that this is only a guide.

Again we have observed many motorists parking on pavements in the village, either completely or partially blocking the footpath as can be seen from our pictures.

Parking bays for the disabled

It is also an offence to park in bays that are specifically reserved for disabled drivers with appropriate badges.

Even if you are 'just popping into the shop for a couple of minutes' there is no excuse for illegal parking in disabled bays. Please leave these bays free at all times for those less able to access the shops.



Cars parked blocking the footway in Elizabeth Avenue (top left and middle); Cokes Lane (top right); Nightingales Lane (bottom left) Cavendish Close (bottom right)



Cars parked across the dropped kerbs at Chenies Parade (top) and Nightingales corner (below)



Reporting a problem

Buckinghamshire council will usually deal with vehicles in breach of parking restrictions, eg yellow lines, whereas the local police will usually deal with vehicles driving on the pavement or causing an obstruction.

You can contact your local police by calling the 101 phone number. Additionally, in a non-emergency, many police forces also enable you to contact them online via a form that is usually on the 'contact us' page of their website, if available. You should be able to access this via the link: askthe.police.uk/content/Q727.htm

Alternatively, you can contact transportforbuckinghamshire@nsl.co.uk or parkingqueries@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call NSL on 0343 208 5544. ■

Amersham Community Board

Little Chalfont to benefit from good start

The Amersham Community Board encompasses the areas of Little Chalfont, Chesham Bois and Coleshill.

Progress report

Alongside the other 15 community boards in the county, Amersham Community Board was formally launched in September 2020 and we are pleased to report that it has made a very encouraging start.

The commitment to involving our four communities has been excellent and the board members have conferred not only with the parish councils but also with community organisations, voluntary clubs and residents.

In addition to attending the two board meetings held to date, many have been involved in the working groups that have been set up to recommend strategies and actions for the priorities chosen for the current year. These priorities are:

- Coronavirus recovery and ongoing support
- Green issues and the environment
- The health and wellbeing of young people
- Village and town centre revival

Following input from the working groups, an initial presentation was prepared and a copy of this is available to view by visiting: littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk.

We encourage everyone to view this,

as it clarifies the work being undertaken, the budgets available to the board and a link to learn how to apply for project funding.

How it could help you

If you are a 'not for profit' organisation with a potential project, the presentation slides would be a good place to start and you are then encouraged to email the board coordinator: lizzie.wright@buckinghamshire.gov.uk to confirm that the project qualifies and that funding is still available.

If you are a member of the community in any capacity and you would like to see specific issues addressed, within the priorities, we would invite you to let us know by emailing either chairman@littlechalfont.org.uk or clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk.

What you have in mind may already be included in the community improvement plan or is being considered, but this should not stop you highlighting it.

Meet board representatives

Members of the board and its coordinator will be visiting Little Chalfont on Saturday 14 November 2020.

You will find them at a gazebo on the Village Green between 9am and 1pm. ■

From the chairman



What a strange six months this has been. I wrote my last message just after lockdown had started and had hoped that, by now, we would be back close to normality. However, that is far from the case.

Our staff are presently working in the office for most of the time but the village hall is being used only for some very limited activities.

These have been difficult times for local shops and cafes, but they have continued to offer excellent service despite restrictions imposed on them. Your support will ensure that we have a good choice within the village.

Parish council meetings, including those of the planning committee, are being held virtually, using Zoom. Government guidelines mean that this situation may continue until well into next year.

Members of the public are still able to join the meetings and can use a 10 minute period to speak on any relevant subject. The agenda for all meetings is published on the council's website and notice boards with details of how to connect to the Zoom meeting included.

We are expecting that the council elections, postponed from May this year, will be held in May 2021. As some of our longest-serving current councillors have indicated that they will not be standing for re-election, I hope some local people will put themselves forward.

A good way of gaining some knowledge of the activities of the council would be to join a Zoom meeting. For details see our website.

Brian Drew

Keep Little Chalfont tidy!

Litter picking weeks announced

The original 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign originated in the 50s and has been running, in one form or another, ever since.

Walking around the village, today, you cannot fail to notice the amount of litter. We need to change people's behaviours so that they stop discarding sweet wrappers, empty cans, bottles and facemasks in the village. With Covid-19, the economic problems and climate change issues, we would like people to have pride in a tidy village. This would create a better sense of community.

The parish council is in talks with Buckinghamshire Council about the possibility of additional bins in the centre of the village, but it seems that not everyone is prepared to walk even

a few steps to deposit their litter.

To help address this problem, the parish council, in conjunction with the community association, will be running a 'Clean up Little Chalfont' fortnight, from 9 – 22 November 2020.

Subject to any Covid-19 restrictions and mindful of the need for social distancing etc, we hope that schools, local organisations and families will obtain black sacks and grabbers from the village hall and do their bit for their street, their green spaces, their village.

Perhaps residents in a road, or part of a road, could organise a litter pick. We also need a small band of volunteers to look after the centre of the village plus the village's open spaces.



Nature park update

Glorious summer comes to an end

As our glorious summer slips into autumn, we see signs of different plant life starting to appear in the nature park.

One of the first autumnal changes is the appearance of various types of toadstools, most of which are poisonous but many of which are very colourful!

The meadow had its second cut in late September and the seeds of the

wildflowers will now lay dormant until next spring when the meadow will come back to life once again.

This is how unimproved meadows, like that of the nature park, have been managed for years and what makes it such an important habitat. Our picture above shows the meadow after the second cut and you can clearly see the grass paths.

The nature park working party



liaison officer has been appointed for the nature park. Laura Silverstone, pictured, will be working with local schools and academies to encourage young children to make use of the valuable natural environment of the nature park. ■

volunteers have worked their magic again, keeping the park well maintained.

One of their tasks in September was to refurbish the bug hotel. It is now back to its former glory, as you will see from the picture.

We are also delighted to report that a new volunteer schools



Briefly...

Thanks for the flowers!

We are very grateful to Lisa of the Flower Boutique in Little Chalfont for providing the lovely formal flower cascade that graced Nightingales Corner, as can be seen from our picture.

Street lights

We reported in the spring edition of our newsletter that the parish council was applying for a loan to enable all of its streetlights to be converted to LED in one contract.

The process of obtaining the loan was more complicated than expected and, at least partly owing to Covid 19, took longer to get government approval.

However, the loan has now been approved and we expect contractors to have most of the work completed before the end of the year.

Please report any lights that are not working to the parish council office, giving the number of the light.

News from Cytiva

The majority of those who usually work at Amersham Place (opposite Chenies Parade) continue to be home-based, in line with the most recent Government guidance. The team is continuing to review the situation as it evolves.

We are pleased to report that the Cytiva front car park will remain available to local residents from Monday to Sunday (8am to 6pm, maximum stay 2 hours) for the immediate future. However, this is subject to review when the needs for staff parking increase.

Wildflowers blossom!

We were delighted to see that the wildflowers planted earlier this year in the village have now blossomed.

Our picture shows the flowers that were planted on the grass verge in Chenies Parade.



Westwood Park news

Fun in the sun!

In the difficult lockdown days this summer it was good to see Westwood being used regularly by the local community. Picnics, family cricket matches – very popular and entertaining – kite flying, walking groups passing through, just some of the many events that happened with due regard to Covid-19 rules, carried out under mostly sunny skies.

Although the park rubbish bins were regularly emptied, there was some unfortunate littering when the bins were full. The parish council would like to apologise for this, and to thank everybody who did their bit to keep the park clear of litter by taking their own litter home with them.

The parish council will be looking to upgrade to differently designed, bigger volume bins at the pavilion and at the junction of the park with Chessfield Park to try to combat problems of litter next summer.

Earlier in the year, the parish council installed a wooden fence between the tennis courts and multi-user games area (MUGA) and the children's play



area. This will enable the tennis courts and MUGA to be kept open independently if future Covid restrictions require the children's play area to be closed.

Sadly, an unfortunate result of the lockdown period was some vandalism to the fencing surrounding the MUGA and tennis courts. Some young people ignored the rules and were determined to use the facilities even when they were locked and displaying notices that they were closed.

The subsequent damage caused by bending the gates and surrounds (see above) means the council is now faced with having to replace sections of the fencing at considerable cost. ■

Local plan

Revised planning system and Little Chalfont

The Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan still awaits its examination in public, while the examining inspectors and Bucks Council remain in dispute about whether the plan's preparation met the procedural requirements for 'duty to cooperate' with neighbouring councils – in this case Slough.

Meanwhile, the government has published radical proposals for speeding up the planning system.

These proposals, if adopted, will not change plans like ours, which have already been published for examination – unless our plan is finally rejected and Bucks Council has to start again.

The government's proposals can be found online in two consultation documents:

- 'Changes to the current planning system', a consultation by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on technical changes that could be made soon.

One proposal, which could bring increased building to our area, is a higher emphasis on 'affordability' – building the most new homes where current prices are least affordable.

The deadline for responding was 1 October 2020 and a copy of the

parish council's response, showing the faults of this approach, is on the Save Little Chalfont website at savelittlechalfont.org.uk/key-documents/

- A white paper 'Planning for the future', contains proposals for new legislation.

These include a nationally set target of 300,000 homes per annum, with 'binding' targets for local authorities. Those targets would, for the first time, factor in land constraints such as green belt.

This is particularly important in Little Chalfont, which is surrounded by green belt and AONB, which need protection and should be factored into the local calculation of housing need. Also, the parish council considers that the existing chronic traffic congestion, lack of infrastructure, and other sustainability problems in Little Chalfont, should be taken into account in the calculation of how much new housing can reasonably be placed here.

The white paper also proposes more public consultation at the plan-making stage, and less once a draft plan is published. The aim is to reduce the time taken to make local plans from

the present average of seven years to thirty months.

The parish council is considering how to respond before the deadline of 29 October 2020.

In addition, some changes will be introduced immediately, including extending the scope of permitted development, ie, not needing planning permission, for homes and other extensions, and easier change of use classes for commercial buildings.

The coordination group of the parish council and the Little Chalfont Community Association continues to monitor the situation. ■

Little Chalfont Farmers Market

For autumn/winter 2020/2021, the farmers market will be held in the village hall car park from 9am-1pm:

Saturday 14 November 2020

Saturday 12 December 2020

Saturday 9 January 2021

Saturday 13 February 2021

If you are interested in taking a stall at the farmers market, please contact the organiser at info@tvfm.org.uk or call 01895 677455. The craft fair is currently suspended because of the Covid restrictions

Little Chalfont Farmers Market

A valuable local resource

As many of you will know, Little Chalfont has its own farmers market, part of Thames Valley Farmers Markets, held in the village hall car park on the second Saturday of each month.

Most of the food and drink is produced within a 30 mile radius of the market, which means you can be sure that you are buying products from the people who have grown, reared, baked and made it, all to the highest standards. Buying at farmers markets helps to support local farmers and producers: there are no middlemen involved.

The number of stallholders has been reduced lately because of social distance requirements, but there is still plenty of choice and variety at each market. For example:

Chiltern Farm Foods

This is the trading name of Stockings Farm. It is a mixed arable and livestock

family farm of approximately 130 acres, in Coleshill.

Tenant farmers Keith and Elizabeth Bennet have run the farm for over 30 years. They have been long standing supporters of our local farmers market, having had a stall there for almost every month since the market started in 2009.

All the livestock is free range and is traditionally reared.

The farm also has its own shoot that, when in season, provides partridge, pheasants and ducks, which are presented oven ready. Throughout the year the local land provides venison, rabbit and pigeon alongside this.



Chiltern Farm Foods' stall, with Tom serving



Styans family farm stall, with James Styans

Styans family farm

The farm is owned by the Styans family, and was founded in 1988. The Styans family has been selling its seasonal fruit and veg at our farmers market for the past eight years.

The farm is family owned, and the produce is usually picked just the day before it arrives at the market, so is not only seasonal but is very fresh too! ■

More stallholders will be covered in the spring issue of this newsletter



Community improvement plan (CIP)

The Little Chalfont Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is intended to represent the views and aspirations of the community and all the current projects are joint initiatives between the community association and the parish council.



Encouraging visitors

A small team of residents has now been identified to help develop leaflets of walks in and around the village and it is hoped that a start can be made in the coming months.

The leaflets will be in PDF format and available to download from the community association's website. Although intended initially for locals to use, when eventually launched the aim will be to attract visitors from outside the Chilterns, with a view to helping the local economy.

The marketing was originally proposed as a joint project for the revitalisation groups within the former

Chiltern District Council area but its implementation will now need to be discussed between the community boards that cover the same area.



Underpass lighting - Beel Close to Marygold Walk

Obtaining the formal approval of Transport for London (TfL) proved to be a protracted exercise.

However, a draft licence has now been received from TfL and we are therefore hopeful that the contract for the work can soon be confirmed.



Nature friendly village

The four patches of wildflowers have presented us with good displays over the summer. Work has now started on plans for further 'nature friendly' projects for 2021 and these will be reported in a future newsletter, once finalised.

In the meantime, arrangements are being made to plant spring bulbs in the

four wildflower plots, so that we have a spring display before the wildflowers take over.



Good neighbour initiative

The current priority for the Little Chalfont Good Neighbours group is to seek to make sure that the community is prepared to deal with any spike or second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

Even closer working with the coronavirus Facebook help group will soon be in place, including a sufficient number of volunteers.

Please read the COVID-19 leaflet that has been delivered alongside this newsletter.

With the very clear benefits of having neighbourhood watch, and other road groups, having been evidenced during the pandemic to date, a start is also proposed on the objective of creating a village-wide network of road groups. ■

Little Chalfont Community Association updates

LCCA website: www.littlechalfont.org.uk

Farewell to Tom Robertson

The community association was pleased to be able to mark Tom's retirement on 29 August 2020, the afternoon after he closed his butcher's shop for the last time.

Many of the people who worked with Tom on community projects over the years welcomed him and wife Jeannette (pictured) at a small gathering in the nature park. Those attending, several of whom had moved away from the village and returned especially, joined the community association in presenting him with gifts to remind him of his time in Chenies Parade.



The occasion was also used to recognise his support and generosity to the community by awarding him lifetime honorary membership of the LCCA.

Tom was held in high regard by his customers and, although they were unable to join the gathering due to the coronavirus restrictions, nevertheless demonstrated their feelings in large numbers by making sure that he had their thanks and best wishes before the shop closed.

Christmas lights

The usual preparations are already underway and it is currently planned to switch on the lights on Sunday 29 November 2020.

These preparations include a check of the power supply infrastructure and the testing of the lights in order to address any failures or damage, so that they can be replaced or repaired.

The display of lights will be the same as last year, including the lights on the four Chenies Parade verge trees. Sadly, vandals have damaged some of the lights and we are expecting to have to replace a few of the strings of lights.

As mentioned in our July newsletter, we may need to run an

appeal for funds, although the amount needed will not be known until January 2021. We shall cover this in our January newsletter.

Treasurer required

Due to other work and personal commitments, we will sadly be losing our treasurer, Mari McLoughlin, at the end of the year.

This is a crucial role for the association and one that can be undertaken by anyone with accountancy skills and perhaps ideal for someone who has recently retired or looking to retire in the near future.

Without a treasurer, it would be difficult for us to operate and we invite as many expressions of interest as possible at this time.

This would initially be without commitment, so that the extent of the role can be explored.

To learn more, without commitment, please contact our chairman, Roger Funk on 01494 762260 or he can be emailed at chairman@littlechalfont.org.uk. ■

Remembrance Sunday

For the past six years, Little Chalfont has held its own Remembrance Sunday parade service at the war memorial by the village green.

Covid-19 restrictions mean that this year the event will be scaled down, by exactly how much was not known at the time of writing.

However, the traditional parade of uniformed organisations is very unlikely to take place.

We hope that there will be at least a minimal ceremony, involving presentations of wreaths, commencing shortly before 11.00am on Sunday 8 November 2020. ■

New member of staff

The parish council welcomes Sharon Chapman to our team as a part time finance clerk

About Little Chalfont Parish Council

Parish councillors



Brian Drew
Chairman



Mike Crowe
Vice chairman



Chris Ingham CMG
Planning committee
chairman



David Rafferty
Planning committee
vice chairman



David Alexander



Ian Griffiths



Michael Parker



Vinny Patel



Janet Walford OBE
Newsletter editor

Newsletter distribution

The parish council is indebted to Adrian Lockyer, membership secretary of the community association, for organising the distribution of the newsletters and to the volunteers who deliver them, ensuring that all homes and businesses in Little Chalfont receive a copy.

Parish council meetings

Parish council general meetings: Usually held on the second Wednesday of each month, except for August, in Little Chalfont Village Hall in Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont, commencing at 7.30pm. The meetings are always open to the public, so why not come along to a meeting and see your parish council in action?

Local residents have the opportunity to express their views and to ask the council for support in relation to various matters. The next meeting will be held on 11 November 2020.

Planning committee meetings: Usually held every four weeks, starting at 7pm or 7.30pm – please check website or notice boards for details. At these meetings you can hear discussions on planning applications for Little Chalfont, comment on any that are of interest to you, and hear whether the parish council agrees that a planning application should go ahead. The next meeting of the planning committee will be on 4 November 2020.

Note: All council meetings are currently being held via Zoom. Details of how to join the meetings are given on our website.

Parish council office

The parish council office is located at the rear of the village hall in Cokes Lane. Contact details for enquiries:

TELEPHONE: 01494 766655. If unattended, you may leave a message on the answerphone and we will respond as soon as possible.

EMAIL: clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk

OFFICE OPENING HOURS:

The council office presently has restricted opening hours. Please phone before visiting.

COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk



Felicity Copp
Parish clerk



Sallie Matthews
Assistant parish
clerk

Any comments or suggestions?

If you have any comments or suggestions to make about this newsletter or its contents, please contact the parish clerk on clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk. We welcome all feedback!