



# **LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER MARCH 2012**

**An Invitation** - The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday May 30<sup>th</sup> at 8.00 p.m.** in the Village Hall.

This is an opportunity to meet local Councillors and learn more about how your Parish Council works. You can hear the Council's plans for the future and make suggestions for further improvements to our village. A guest speaker will be announced nearer the time.

## **Diamond Jubilee Celebrations**

### **Red, White & Blue Jubilee Picnic in Westwood Park**

**On Monday June 4<sup>th</sup>**, you are welcome to join a celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee at the Red, White & Blue Picnic. Open to all residents, the picnic will run from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dress in Red, White & Blue - bring your own food & drink. The event is insured and toilets will be available. Sponsored by Little Chalfont Parish Council and Amersham Round Table.



## **Parking Survey**

Parking is becoming a major issue in Little Chalfont. As a first step in identifying and addressing the priority issues, the Parish Council, with support from the Community Association, intends to carry out a survey. This will include all aspects of parking, both on and off street. The County Council has offered advice on how the survey should be conducted. Volunteers will be required to help gather evidence, take photographs etc. If you would like to get involved, please contact the Parish Clerk (contact details on page 6).

## **Friends of Westwood Park**

The Parish Council's Westwood Park Working Party is considering setting up a group of local people who care about the park and would like to be involved in decisions on future improvements and general care. If you would like to know more, please contact Karen Sterling (Assistant Clerk) Tel. 01494 766555 or e-mail: [clerk2@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk2@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk).

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# Your Parish Councillors



**Brian Drew** - Chairman

Brian has been a member of the Council from the beginning, having been elected in 2007 and 2011. He was elected Chairman in December 2009.



**Michael Dear** - Vice-Chairman

Michael was co-opted to the Council in July 2010 and successfully stood for election in May 2011. He is also Vice-Chairman of the Planning Committee.



**Lesley Hunt** - Chairman, Planning Committee

Lesley was co-opted in February 2009 and successfully stood for election in May 2011.



**John Hinkly**

John was elected to the Council in May 2011.



**Michael Parker**

Michael was co-opted to the Council in July 2011.



**Vinny Patel**

Vinny was co-opted to the Council in November 2010 and successfully stood for election in May 2011.



**David Rafferty**

David was elected in May 2011. He had previously been a Councillor on Amersham Town Council from 1995 to 2007.



## This could be you

There is one vacancy on the Council. If you would be interested in learning about the duties and responsibilities of being a Parish Councillor, please contact the Parish Clerk.

## Parish Clerk

**Janet Mason**



Janet was appointed to the position of Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer in April 2008.

## Assistant Parish Clerk

**Karen Sterling**

Karen was appointed in December 2008.

## Parish Council Finances

The Parish Council's main source of income comes from the precept - the amount we ask Chiltern District to collect each year. For the past two years the precept has been set at £208,433 and it will remain frozen for a third year (2012/13). This figure equates to approximately £66 per year for a band 'D' property and about £110 per year for band 'G'.

Despite an RPI rise of over 10% during this period, the Council did not think it was appropriate to request an increase to the precept, partly due to the current economic climate but also because the Council has made significant savings through its contract tendering process and it continues to negotiate good value for money on one-off projects. Income is also received from hiring out the Village Hall, the sports pitches and tennis courts at Westwood Park.

The main regular items of spending are:

**Grounds maintenance** - this includes work on the sports pitches, garden areas and the children's playground at Westwood Park. Other sites owned and/or maintained by the Council are the land at Finch Lane, the Village Hall, the Village Green and adjacent "Triangle" planted area. This year the Council has also cleared overgrown footpaths and verges in the village at the request of local residents. In addition, a programme of tree maintenance is ongoing.

**Repairs and Maintenance** - the Village Hall and the Westwood Park sports pavilion are popular and well-used venues. However, they are quite old and require constant monitoring and maintenance to ensure the comfort and safety of our users. This year, the inside of the main hall has been repainted and the pavilion is soon to have some electrical upgrading and new flooring in the kitchen. The not insignificant water, gas and electricity charges on these properties are also met. The approach road to Westwood Park and the car-park have been re-surfaced at a total cost of £12,000.

**Administration** - This includes staff salaries (the Council has two part-time staff), office expenses and costs associated with running committees, working parties and the statutory functions of the Council.

**Street lighting** – The Parish Council owns 349 footpath lights which require electricity plus routine electrical and structural maintenance.

**Special Project** - In addition to normal outgoings, the Council has, over the past year, improved the facilities in Westwood Park. It successfully applied for a grant of £50,000 to install new play equipment for the 8 - 13 age group and decided to take this opportunity to refurbish the existing younger children's play equipment and move it nearer the car park. New fencing was also required and a small picnic area incorporated. In addition to the grant, the cost was £40,000. The facilities have been a huge success and many families now visit the park on a regular basis.

**Reserves** - Subject to the preparation of accounts for audit, it is expected that on 31 March 2012 the Council's reserves will stand at approximately £280,000, equivalent to a little over one year's precept at its current level.

## Village Day - Saturday June 16th 2012

(Organised by the Community Association)



Last year's Fun Run gets underway



A good crowd enjoys a performance on the 2011 stage

After a very successful event last year, we are pleased that Alison Smith has again agreed to organise the 2012 Day. The changes in Bank Holidays, because of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, have resulted in a decision to hold Village Day a week later than usual, on June 16th.

The day will start with a Fun Run in Westwood Park at 9.30 a.m. The main events will take place on and around the Village Green between 12.00 noon and 4.00 p.m. There will be a selection of stalls including community groups, food and drink, etc.. As last year, there will be performances on the Little Chalfont Stage throughout the afternoon.

For more information and offers of help on the day, please contact Alison -

Tel. 01494 766785 or 07711 022807

e-mail - [a405smith@btinternet.com](mailto:a405smith@btinternet.com)

### Garden Share Scheme

The Parish Council has not yet been able to provide allotments although discussions continue on finding a suitable space.

Amersham in Transition is working with Little Chalfont Parish Council to help satisfy the demand and help more people to grow their own fruit and vegetables.

Together, they are facilitating a **Garden Share** scheme, allowing people with large gardens who cannot or do not want to make full use of them, to share a plot with someone who would like to 'grow their own' but has no space. In return, the hosts might get a share of the produce grown, or perhaps another part of their garden maintained. Similar schemes are working successfully around the country.



Catriona Troth from Amersham in Transition with the Chairman of the Parish Council

If you are interested in the scheme, either as a gardener looking for space or a garden owner with land to spare, you can register your interest by emailing [info@amershamintransition.org.uk](mailto:info@amershamintransition.org.uk) or telephoning the Parish Clerk.

When enough people are interested in the scheme, Amersham in Transition will host an event where people can meet socially and discuss any issues.

### ***Your views are important.***

Please let us know what you would like the Council to do (or at least try to do) by:

- Sending comments to the Parish Clerk by letter or e-mail
- Speaking in the short public session at a Parish Council meeting

## Little Chalfont Youth Club

The Youth Club was established at the beginning of 2010 and, after a quiet start, now regularly attracts up to 30 children, mostly aged between 8 and 13. It meets in Bell Lane School on Friday evenings from 6.00 - 8.00 p.m.



**Simon Damery**

Simon and Kim Damery took on the responsibility for running the Club from the beginning and the Parish Council appreciates their dedication and hard work. They now have a small band of helpers (mostly parents of children who attend). Club nights therefore have sufficient adults on hand to take care of the various activities. All club leaders and helpers are CRB checked and they undertake various other training to ensure the safety of members.

A small management committee oversees the club without involvement in normal club activities.

**However, the Club does need some help.** The most important vacancy is that of Chairperson of the management committee. Roger Funk performed this role for the first two years but always made it clear this was a temporary situation and has now resigned due to other commitments. While the Club can function in the short term with no Chairperson, it is essential a replacement is found fairly soon. If you feel you might be able to step in to this role, please contact the Treasurer, Colin Steele (Tel. 01494 762857), who will be very willing to give you information on the responsibilities etc.

Additional help in the running of the Club would also be welcomed, especially from anyone who has experience as a Youth Club leader/assistant. If you would like to visit the Club to see how it runs, please contact - Simon Damery - (Tel 07801 81766).

## Digital Switch-over

Don't forget. From **4 – 18 April 2012** the television signals from the Crystal Palace transmitter will be switching over to digital. The BBC's Switchover Help Scheme provides older and disabled people with everything they need to switch to digital. Call free on 0800 40 85 900 or visit [helpscheme.co.uk](http://helpscheme.co.uk).

In Little Chalfont we also have some volunteers that older or disabled people can contact to help ensure that no one misses out on making the necessary changes. Pairs of sixth form students from Dr Challoner's High School have trained to help with retuning and attaching free view boxes (but note they will **not** carry out any electrical work). To arrange a visit at a mutually convenient time please call the school on 01494 763296 and leave your name, address and a contact number.

**Parish Council meetings** are held in the Village Hall \* and are open to the public although, occasionally, confidential items are discussed in private.

Full Council meetings are usually held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. There is no meeting in August.

At the beginning of the meeting there is a 10 minute period when members of the public can speak on any relevant subject.

Minutes of all meetings are published on the Council's web site. Minutes and agendas are displayed on the notice boards outside the Village Hall and on Chenies Parade.

Dates of future meetings are on the Council's web site.

\* A small number of meetings are held in the Community Library (next to the Village Hall)

## **Parish Council's Planning Committee**

Planning applications are decided in this area by Chiltern District Council, but the Parish Council has a duty to comment on local applications and is consulted on wider planning policy. All Councillors are members of the Planning Committee and are allocated applications. They usually visit the site before reporting to the Planning Committee which meets every three weeks.

A number of residents have taken the opportunity to address the Committee, in the ten minutes allowed at the beginning of each meeting, about planning applications which may affect them.

Agendas for all meetings are published on the Council's notice boards (outside the Village Hall and on Chenies Parade) at least three working days prior to the meeting.

**Waste Transfer Station** - the Planning Committee has recommended that an application, for a waste transfer station on London Road, be rejected.

## **Parish Council Office:**

This is located at the back of the Village Hall in Cokes Lane.

Please call if you have any queries. The telephone number is 01494 766655.

If unattended, please leave a message on the answerphone and a response will be made as soon as possible.

You can also e-mail - [clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk).

The office is normally open from 9.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m. Monday – Friday.

**The Council's web site is: [www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk](http://www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk)**

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