

LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL

Newsletter – Spring 2021



Our new village community centre Plans to include local library

Local residents will no doubt remember that our plans to replace our crumbling village hall with a new community centre were turned down last year, firstly by Chiltern District Council planning department and subsequently on appeal.

But we have not given up and, since the appeal failed, the parish council has been exploring various alternative options for a new building.

What are the options?

We could, of course, try refurbishing the present hall, but it is already almost 70 years old and trying to make it last for any reasonable time would simply be wasting money.

We could add a new extension, but that would not solve the problems of the current dilapidated hall, which would have to be dealt with eventually and would cost even more to put right or replace by then.

After careful consideration the parish council has decided to explore the option of building a new community centre that will incorporate a village hall, meeting rooms, the parish council offices, and the local library.

The greatly-valued community library is also getting old, is increasingly expensive to run, and has run out of space to provide all



The village hall and community library as they are today

the facilities that local residents have come to appreciate. It, too, will therefore need replacing before long.

So, what next?

With the agreement of the trustees of the community library, the parish council feels that the best way forward would, therefore, be to incorporate the library within the new community centre.

This would provide considerably more space than the two buildings currently take up: there is the gap between the two buildings, for example, plus the land behind both, that could potentially be used.

The parish council has now briefed the architects to provide a feasibility study for a new community centre on the present site, incorporating the village hall and the library in a single building.

The design may have to be smaller than the previous one that was refused planning permission, and therefore we will not be able to provide all the many facilities that we tried to accommodate previously.

However, we believe that these new plans will meet most of the needs of local residents and will become a focal point of local events and activities in the village for many years to come. ■

**You are invited to attend the
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**To be held via zoom meeting on
Wednesday 28 April 2021 at 7.30pm**

Joining details: ID: 883 4396 3759 ♦ Passcode: 110 149

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**Because of covid-19 restrictions on live meetings, there will be
no guest speakers at this year's annual meeting.**

**The meeting will, instead, concentrate on the parish
council's work over the past year and our plans for
the future of the village.**

Members of the public will have plenty of opportunities to ask questions of councillors at the meeting. Alternatively, you may submit your questions in writing before the meeting, via email to: clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk or post them in the letterbox next to the front door of the village hall. Please include your name and address. If you do not want your name and address made public, please state this.

Amersham Community Board

Also covering Little Chalfont

The Amersham Community Board continues to develop and, as reported in the community association's update in its January newsletter, working/focus groups have been set up for most of the chosen priorities for the current year to 31 March 2021.

It is through these groups that the real engagement with communities takes place. In addition they bring together different organisations to address current issues, actions and solutions now being considered on a board area basis, rather than individual communities in isolation.

Two further working groups have been formed in recent months. These are for transport and for green issues. The latter will start to look at climate change and air pollution initiatives that could be adopted at a local level, within the overall strategy adopted by the county.

To ensure that Little Chalfont is involved, there are representatives of either the community association or parish council on each of the working groups and, in some cases, both are represented alongside other Little Chalfont organisations or interested residents.

There is insufficient space here to report on all the progress made but

this can be found in the minutes of the last board meeting that took place on 18 February 2021, together with copies of the presentations. These include reports on each of the priorities and progress on the new Chiltern Lifestyle Centre, being built in Amersham on the Hill, which is on schedule for completion in September 2021.

These can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/3fbxdp3h> and you can also watch a recording of the meeting, should you wish to see how the board operates.

The elections in May 2021 could result in some changes to councillor representatives but this should not delay progress, as the working groups will continue to operate without interruption.

There is also to be a newsletter from the board itself in April 2021 and readers will be able to access a pdf copy via a link on the home page of

www.littlechalfont.org.uk.

Finally, and specifically for Little Chalfont, the community association and parish council are working with the economic development team of Bucks Council and other business-focused organisations to develop initiatives that will ensure the long term vitality of our village centre. ■



Cricket in Westwood Park

On Saturday afternoons in the summer last year you may have seen cricket being played in Westwood Park. One of the teams will be from Chorleywood Cricket Club (CWCC) and will either be our 3rd or 4th X1s, playing a visiting team in the Hertfordshire League.

We are a family orientated club and these teams will often have a lot of our junior players involved with several father and son combinations playing on one of the most attractive grounds in the league.

There are lots of ways to join in – not only playing but umpiring and scoring too, so if you have ever thought of participating, or your daughter or son has and would like to join in, there is a game or role for everyone and you



Howzat!! The Chorleywood Cricket Club in action

will be most welcome.

Recently, the club partnered with a local charity, Mission EmployAble, which seeks to teach employability skills to young adults with learning difficulties. Together we have applied for permission to build a new cricket pavilion at our Chorleywood grounds, which will be largely staffed by people trained by Mission EmployAble.

The original 1960s building, which is in a bad state, is due to be demolished in March 2021.

From the chairman



This will be the last time that I write this column as, after 14 years as a parish councillor, with over half of them as chairman, I have decided not to seek re-election to the council.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to have served the community in this way. I was one of the small group of people who campaigned for our own parish council and was delighted when it was established in 2007.

During those years, I have been proud of the additions and improvements made to the village.

These include the play area and the multi-purpose games area in Westwood Park, the war memorial on the village green and the improvements to the Nightingales Corner area. I am especially delighted that one of the earliest proposed projects, lighting the Beel Close underpass, will be completed before I leave.

The chairman of the council can do little without the support of fellow councillors and staff. I have been extremely fortunate to have had people around me who share my desire to make Little Chalfont a good place to live and work. My thanks to all of them.

My one regret is that we do not yet have a new community centre in the village, but I hope, before too long, this ambition of so many people will be realised.

I do not know who will be members of the new council in May, but I wish them well and look forward to seeing further improvements to the village during the next few years. ■

Brian Drew

The new pavilion will enable us to broaden our cricket offering to include opportunities for women and girls, disabled and mixed cricket, in all formats of the game.

We hope to see you when we start playing cricket again at Westwood Park later this year. If you would like information about our operations at Westwood Park, please contact info@cwccricket.org or call 01923 284529. ■

Nature park update

Spring has sprung

During the last lockdown, many people made regular use of the nature park as a haven of quiet to exercise, picnic, play or just sit quietly and listen to the kites whistling overhead.

The daffodils have started to bloom and soon the meadow will begin to show signs of growth.

We are pleased to report that our wonderful ancient hornbeam, which was partially uprooted in storms during the past winter, is showing signs of recovery. The tree was



New shoots from ancient hornbeam (left). Sheltering in a tepee (right)



but that didn't stop the kids from enjoying every minute of their visit.

The tepee in the woodland area is now beginning to look like a proper shelter, and our picture shows the Gomez family enjoying the ad hoc construction that some handy visitors have put together.

● The nature park management group has announced that it is in the process of securing fully functional CCTV cameras for the nature park.

The parish council is grateful to the Amersham Community Board, which

pollarded after it was blown over, to give it a better chance of recovery.

Our picture shows the first new shoots appearing on one of the branches and we hope that the tree will go on giving pleasure to visitors for many more years to come.

The friends of the nature park have been hard at work during the spring, getting the park ready for the summer.

Because of all the rain we had during the past early part of this year, parts of the park became very muddy,

approved a grant from Buckinghamshire Council of £4,400 towards the total cost of £7,200.

It is regrettable that we have to install such equipment but, sadly, we have had some incidences of vandalism and anti social behaviour in the park.

The park is meant for the tranquil appreciation of nature. We need to ensure that we do all we can to keep it a safe place for all visitors, old and young, to enjoy. ■

Westwood Park news

Open all areas

After a difficult covid-19 year for all of us, Westwood Park coped well with the demands on it from the local residents.

A prolonged period of rain earlier in the year left parts of the park in a quagmire. But some dry, though cold early spring days brought some welcome sunshine, as our picture shows. The park quickly dried to a point where parts of the children's play area, which were completely surrounded by liquid mud a few days before, became useable again.

Thank you to all the people who observed the Covid-19 regulations and did not use the games area or tennis courts while they were closed.



The parish council took the decision not to lock these areas but, instead, to display closure advice signs. This was because, in previous lockdowns, the access points were vandalised by people intent on illegally using the locked areas.

The subsequent damage had to be repaired at local residents' expense. As a result of this wanton vandalism the parish council made a request to Thames Valley Police for regular patrols to Westwood Park for enforcement purposes.

Briefly...

One month free parking

Parking charges across all council owned car parks, including Snells Wood, have been waived from 12 April to 12 May 2021 inclusive, to encourage people back to car parks and shops.

● We are also extremely grateful to Cytiva for continuing to allow local residents to park in its front car park, opposite Chenies Parade, 7 days a week from 8am-6pm, excluding bank holidays.

This extra free parking will continue as long as Cytiva has no need of the front car park for its own staff and may change at any time.

Speeding problem

Unfortunately drivers are still driving recklessly fast on village roads.

The parish council therefore hopes to acquire some new movable vehicle activation signs (MVAS) that will flash up a driver's exact speed rather than illuminate the speed limit.

Hopefully this will help drivers to realise just how fast they are going, and encourage them to slow down.

Streetlights

The programme to convert all parish council owned lamps to LED is now complete, except for a handful of lights that need special attention.

As previously announced, an interest free loan has enabled the work to be completed over a short period. Hopefully, lamp failures will now be far less frequent, but residents are asked to report any problems to the council office, quoting the location and the number on the lamp post.

With the improving weather and the end of lockdown by the summer we hope to upgrade the tennis court fencing and introduce bigger capacity waste bins to cope with the increased demand of visitors. Unfortunately the games area shows signs of root damage to the ground and we hope to repair and modify this over the coming months.

To address the car park issues we will be seeking advice on a different type of surfacing that whilst maintaining its rural appearance gives a more resilient surface. The parish council hopes you all enjoy Westwood Park at its best in the spring and summer months. ■

Local development plans

Risk to green belt

A local plan sets out a local authority's policies and proposals for land use in its area.

The plan identifies land for new housing or economic developments, and gives guidance for use, alongside government policies, in deciding planning applications.

Chiltern and South Bucks (CSB) District Councils produced a new draft local plan shortly before they were abolished in April 2020.

That plan included controversial use of green belt land for housing.

CSB District Councils' role as planning authorities was taken over by the new Buckinghamshire Council, which withdrew the CSB draft local plan in October 2020 because of a dispute with the government's planning inspectorate.

Buckinghamshire Council will

now include our district in its new countywide local plan, which will be issued in 2024/2025.

Our local green belt

All this means that our district will have no up-to-date local plan for three or four years.

Without such a plan there is some risk that developers might make opportunistic planning applications for green belt sites, hoping that appeals inspectors would then overturn any refusals by Buckinghamshire Council.

So far there has been no such application for the site between Lodge Lane and Burton's Lane, shown in our picture above, which our community fought to protect when it was listed for development in the now defunct CSB plan.



Buckinghamshire local plan

Buckinghamshire Council has begun public work on the new county local plan by holding meetings with groups of parish councils. At the meetings the planners make presentations and gather feedback about the wishes and concerns of local communities.

The parish council is taking part, consulting the LCCA committee, and will keep residents informed through the website savelittlechalfont.org.uk and the Save Little Chalfont Facebook page. ■

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

Our farmers market started about 12 years ago, following a survey of local residents to find out what they wanted to see in the village, and a farmer's market was one of the top requests.

Most of the food and drink sold at the market is produced within a 30 mile radius of the market, which means that you can be sure that you are buying products from the people who have grown, reared, baked and made them, all to the highest standards.

Buying at farmers markets helps to support local farmers and producers – there are no middlemen involved.



Although the number of stalls was restricted during the recent lockdowns, recently we have seen more stalls in the market, and our picture (left) shows just how popular it was during the March market.

Here we profile two more individual regular stallholders:

K&S Chickens

Established in 2009, husband and wife team Kevin and Sharon Doyle (pictured) decided to go into free



range chickens. The breed of chickens that they use is called Ross. The birds originally came from Scotland and are bred specifically for their meat.

The Doyles keep about 20 chickens at their smallholding in Cookham, near Maidenhead.

The free range eggs that they sell in the Little Chalfont Farmers Market are obtained from T Rayner, an egg producer near to their smallholding.

Little Chalfont Farmers Market

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

Saturday 8 May

Saturday 12 June

Saturday 10 July

Saturday 14 August

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

Fat Man Chilli

Paul Davies, shown in our picture, started the company in 2006.

After a boozy but bland dinner with his best friend, they came up with the idea of starting their own chilli sauce company, and Fat Man Chilli was born.



Over the years the range has grown to a wide variety of products.

The partner has now moved on, but Paul continues to run the company from his offices in Harrow.

He grows all his own chillies, but buys his spices and other ingredients from local spice shops in his area. ■

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



Community improvement plan (CIP)

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

Nature friendly village



By the time you read this, three of the wildflower patches should have a display of spring bulb flowers and these will be followed by the seeded wildflowers.

The Chenies Parade verge patch does not have any spring bulbs, so its wildflower display will be something to look forward to later on in the spring.

Encouraging visitors



As we begin to get the pandemic under control, it is proposed, in the near future, to start work on preparing PDFs of walks in and around the village.

This is not an isolated project but part of the 'Visit Chilterns Strategy' that was initiated by the seven revitalisation groups that cover the former Chiltern District Council area. Little Chalfont's

Revitalisation Group is incorporated into the community association.

Underpass lighting - Beel Close to Marygold Walk



SUCCESS AT LAST! Finally, after 10 years, work to install lighting and CCTV is planned to be completed by the end of April 2021, providing a much safer walk for all residents who have been reluctant to use the underpass in the dark.

The parish council has mostly funded it, but there were grants of £4,000 from the former Chiltern District Council and £6,000 from Bucks County Council's Local Area Forum.

Additionally the community association contributed £1,000.

Little Chalfont Good Neighbours



The team continues to respond to requests for covid-19 help and will maintain its group of volunteers until the autumn, at the very least. It has also prepared itself to assist anyone in our community wishing to know whom to contact for more extensive support resulting from the pandemic.

Whether this is a service supplied by

Bucks Council or help from a local voluntary group, Helen Tyers (01494 762395) will know whom to contact.

Alongside this, and drawing on the excellent way that the community has come together to help its neighbours, work has begun on encouraging more of our streets and roads to become members of Neighbourhood Watch or to even set up a less formal network.

Although now a priority of Amersham Community Board under the 'We are stronger together' banner, it has always been the principal objective of Little Chalfont Good Neighbours from the outset.

Litter picking



Thanks again to all those who took part in the village clean up last November – It was a great success, especially as it was organised with social distancing rules in operation.

A number of people took part, many using the activity as part of their daily exercise walk. Unfortunately, the irresponsibility of a minority of people has meant that there is again a great deal of litter around.

The parish council will need to discuss more litter picks after the May elections. ■

Little Chalfont Community Association news

LCCA website: www.littlechalfont.org.uk

Most of our activities in the first quarter of this year are reported elsewhere in this newsletter.

The lockdown and the progress being made towards getting on top of the pandemic has resulted in a review of the help being offered through Little Chalfont Good Neighbours (see community improvement plan above) and working with the Amersham Community Board, through its working groups, has led to research and planning for future initiatives.

Committee and volunteers

Although delighted to again have a secretary for the LCCA, we continue to be without a treasurer and other roles, as mentioned in our last newsletter, remain vacant. Not all these roles require committee involvement and if willing to give a little of your time to

help enhance the ever growing community spirit in the village, why not explore what is available by having a chat with our chairman, Roger Funk, on 01494 762260.

Village day

We have already decided not to hold village day this year, as not everyone will have been vaccinated by early June and caution will still be the watchword.

There has been some demand to hold something similar, later in the year and we are prepared to consider this.

However, we would need a small team of volunteers to organise it, assuming that it would be allowed, and invite anyone interested to contact us.

Dementia friendly village plan

The Little Chalfont Good Neighbours team has recently decided to lead a coordinated effort that will result in our becoming recognised as a dementia friendly village.

We would like to hear from anyone experiencing memory loss or carers of those with dementia, so that support and activities can be planned for when we are really on top of the pandemic.

Our shops and businesses will also have a part to play. Please contact Helen Tyers on 01494 762395 or email her at goodneighbours@littlechalfont.org.uk.

Any one of us can become a 'dementia friend' – read more at www.dementiafriends.org.uk/ and if you are already a 'dementia friend' or would like to learn more, please contact Helen in the first instance. ■

Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan, DBE, MP

Just before going to press, we were very sorry to learn of the passing earlier this month of our long-serving MP, the Right Honourable Dame Cheryl Gillan.

Her work for this community over 29 years has been of huge benefit to residents of all political views. Her campaigning against HS2 was instrumental in



Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan, MP
21 April 1952 – 4 April 2021

several more miles of the line being buried in a tunnel, thereby lessening the impact of the railway on our local AONB.

The parish council offers its deepest sympathy to Dame Cheryl's family. ■

About Little Chalfont Parish Council

Parish councillors (as at publication April 2021)



Brian Drew
Chairman



Mike Crowe
Vice chairman



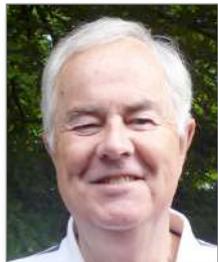
Chris Ingham CMG
Planning committee
chairman



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 19 May 2021.

Planning committee meetings: Usually held every four weeks, starting at 7 pm or 7.30 pm – see website or notice boards for details. The committee considers planning applications made for Little Chalfont and advises Bucks Council, the planning authority, of any local or community issues that it should take into account. You can make comments, then hear the committee's discussion. The next meeting will be on 21 April 2021.

Note: The next parish council meeting will be held via Zoom. Details of how to join 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



Sharon Chapman
Accounts assistant

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.