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Chalfont St Peter

Village Voice ~ February 2010

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MANY people have expressed their appreciation of the contribution the Haywardens Michael Stevens and Chris Barham made to the village, with spreading the grit during the heavy snow. This is usually done by County, but they were under pressure so delivered a load of grit to our two stalwarts and they got on with the job. People said it was good to see that things were actually being done to make a difference where possible and though obviously many roads were not able to be treated at least many did have grit thanks to our lads. With the sad loss of Jim Fleming last year, it has been a difficult time for the Haywardens, as they are short staffed but still have to keep the commons and play areas in order, as well as clearing litter from the Village. If we can all be vigilant about leaving litter around, it would make it easier for them.

THERE is another Police surgery on Wednesday, 3rd February from 11am to 2pm at Budgens, which gives you a chance to voice any concerns that you may have about local issues.

Cheryl Gillan, MP for Chesham and Amersham, writes about a highly important current local issue:

LIKE many Chalfont St Peter residents, I really value our Green Belt and want to see it preserved. I do not want to see the unique character of our towns and villages altered by over-development. Members of Parliament cannot and should not take decisions over planning, which are properly delegated to local planning authorities. However, I have campaigned against the extra numbers of houses which are being imposed by central government because I do not think these can be absorbed without detriment to the village. Chiltern District Council will be holding a public consultation on the draft Core Strategy which covers housing so please do look at the planning portal on

JUGGLER'S CAFÉ offers Coffee cake and chat with free creche available Inspirational talks and parenting tips 10am-11.30am every Thursday during spring term at Gold Hill Baptist Church, Gold Hill Common East. Tel: 01753 887173

Special events with Pop-In talks: Words of Wisdom.

Feb 4 Grass is always greener

Feb 11 Don't let the sun go down on your anger

Feb 18 Half Term

Feb 25 A nagging wife is like a dripping tap

Mar 4 Don't look a gift horse in the mouth

Mar 11 You reap what you sow

Mar 18 Do as you would be done by

Mar 25 Easter Celebration

For more details please contact Katrina Reading on 01753 88717



their website (www.chiltern.gov.uk) after 2 February to take part and make your views known. Please rest assured that this issue is highly important to me and to residents who can find out the latest on my website, www.cherylgillan.co.uk.

CAREERS SPRINGBOARD is the Chilterns, South Bucks & High Wycombe Self Help Group for Managers and Professionals Seeking Work. Careers Springboard meetings take place 7.15 for 7.30pm each Monday at St Andrews United Reformed Church Hall, Packhorse Road Gerrards Cross. New members are always welcome – Membership - free.

Feb 1 "Who says you can't be a lion tamer?!" Exploring new career options and pursuing your dreams!

Feb 8 Networking - Making and keeping contacts – an essential ingredient to an effective and sustainable job search.

Feb 15 Get to know *your* skills. Your skills are your key assets in your job search. This session is about realising your true value, discovering your hidden talents and creating your key skills profile as the basis for your job search.

Feb 22 Using technology to support your job search - Making the web work for you and an introduction to the LinkedIn Group for Careers Springboard members

Mar 1 Networking in action - Polishing your networking skills in live practice activities.

Mar 8 Working independently - Exploring the option of a career in interim management or consultancy.

THE next discussion on the Core Strategy will be at **the Cabinet meeting at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 2nd February in the Council Chamber at Chiltern District Council offices, King George V Road, Amersham, HP6 5AW.** Please make a note of this in your diary now. Parking is available (at a price) in the Civic Centre car park opposite the Council Offices and in the Community Association and Chiltern Pools car parks off Chiltern Avenue.

The above meeting was only advisory. **The Cabinet meeting at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 2nd February is much more important.** This is when the Cabinet will make the real decisions on what to change. We, the Sense4csp committee, and probably you as well, have written to cabinet members asking them to keep the numbers down. Please make every effort to attend, to ensure they do so. This is in the middle of the working day, so **if you are unable to attend yourself, please can you persuade a relative, neighbour or friend to attend on your behalf.** Representatives of Sense for Chalfont St Peter will be in the foyer and the Council Chamber to advise you.

CHALFONT St Peter Parish Council announces a Public Meeting to present the results of the Village Survey and discuss the proposed developments in Chalfont St Peter at Holy Cross. Cheryl Gillan MP for Chesham & Amersham will be present to see the results of the Survey and hear the views of villagers. Date : 13th February 2010 Time : 10.30am Venue : Chalfonts Community College Narcot Lane, CSP SL9 8TP <http://www.chalfonts.org/>
PLEASE NOTE : NO PARKING IN PINETREE CLOSE

THE Gerrards Cross Flower Club meets next on February 17, when Coral Gardener will present "Shades of the Season", in the Colston Hall, The Memorial Centre, East Common, Gerrards Cross at 2.15pm. Guests are always welcome and of course new members. For more details telephone Pam Houchen: 01753 884190 or Chris Edgerton: 01753 884940.

REPORT on the Housing and Planning Overview Committee meeting at Chiltern District Council Offices on 21st January.

The debate was very measured. The Chairman opened by explaining that there would anyway be a further six week period of consultation with the public after the Cabinet had made any changes arising from this meeting. The officers and Nick Rose and Don Phillips extolled the supposed benefits of the Core Strategy, that it does provide a basis for making planning decisions, replacing the now out-of-date 1997 Adopted Local Plan. They also expressed concern about the downside of failing to agree the Core Strategy, that we (Chiltern District) would lose appeals (lose doubly by having to pay costs and still have the development built) and that we might be forced to find the land for yet another five years of new houses.

They told us that the South East Regional plan is now statutory law. It could not be swept away by an incoming government. That would require new primary legislation. The officers felt that Chiltern had been let off very lightly. Because of our Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty we had been given the fourth lowest target in the south east.

On the subject of relocating schools or hospitals, Carol Castle said that CDC cannot make it happen. The health or education authorities and the landowners had to propose such developments and none had. The Cabinet had decided not build in the Green Belt because residents were always against it. Overall the officers felt that the new Core Strategy as proposed was the least bad option.

All four of the Chalfont St Peter Councillors who are not in the Cabinet spoke. **Geoff Peters (Central ward)** said that the draft Core Strategy was not yet fit to be approved. The officers and Cabinet need to make their case and explain the sanctions more clearly and without jargon. He urged the public to participate in the forthcoming consultation.

John Wertheim (Austenwood ward) pointed out that the government had decreed that "... densities below 30 dwellings per hectare must be justified." This is more than twice the current figure. It has ruined the Packhorse Road and must be reviewed. He said that the infrastructure should come first as houses can be built faster than schools and sewers can be enlarged.

Isobel Darby (Gold Hill ward) said we needed a plan. Without it there would be anarchy. Developers were already using the draft Core Strategy as "emerging policy". The March 2010 version was better than the June 2009 one but it was still not good enough. Developers would use the numbers as upper limits. Let's be brave. Let's go for a land swap with the school.

David Meacock (Chalfont Common ward) criticised the Core Strategy. He said that it claimed to want not to change the District but doubled densities. It claimed to want sustainable development but Newlands Park was miles from anywhere and would not reduce traffic. It said option 3 was chosen because it had the least impact on existing housing, but that was not true of the Grange site.

All parties agreed that the problem lies with central government which is enforcing unwanted high densities. The government's standards for public consultation were deeply flawed.

CHALFONT St Peter Garden Club will meet at 8pm on Wednesday, February 17 in the Parish Church Hall, Church Lane, to hear Linda Smith talk on Ponds, plants and wildlife. The Club also arranges outings to gardens of interest and it's well worth becoming a Garden Club member because they offer perks to members and provide garden products at discount. Their website is www.gardenclub.org.uk. For membership enquiries call Richard on 01494 871308 or for further information about meetings contact Nigel on 01494 873839.

CHANGES to bus services in Chiltern and South Bucks: Two bus services operating in the Chiltern and South Bucks area will be changing. The 305 and 353 will have revised routes and timetables. Service 305, which is contracted to Transport for Buckinghamshire will now be operated by Jason Tours. Journeys between Beaconsfield, the Chalfonts and Gerrards Cross are largely similar with some slight time changes. Apart from one return journey at peak times the 305 will no longer serve High Wycombe, but passengers wishing to travel between High Wycombe, Beaconsfield, the Chalfonts and Uxbridge can still catch Carousel

Buses' routes A30, A40 and 740, which operate up to every half hour.

Service 353 will be operated commercially by Arriva the Shires and will run hourly Monday to Fridays finishing at around 7pm. It will run between Slough, Gerrards Cross, the Chalfonts and Amersham. The bus will no longer call at Berkhamsted, but passengers who wish to travel between Berkhamsted, Chesham and Amersham can catch Arriva's Route 62 which is being extended to Berkhamsted hourly.

On both services concessionary fares pass holders will be able to use their cards as normal.

For timetable information please call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or go to

www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk

Further information contact: Amanda Back Transport for Buckinghamshire Email: aback@buckscc.gov.uk Telephone: 01296 387671 Fax: 01296 383363 County Hall, Walton Street Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1UY

COUNTY is to release £2m from Buckinghamshire County Council reserves in response to the urgent and immediate need to repair potholes which have inevitably appeared all over the county following the recent snow and icy conditions.

County Leader, David Shakespeare, said:

"Exceptional times call for exceptional measures, and this is such a time, so I will be transferring £2 million from our reserves so we can get our roads fit for purpose as soon as possible.

"We are in a position to act quickly because we have been prudent in maintaining a good level of reserves, which we can call upon in times of need.

"These repairs must be carried out as a matter of urgency. The longer we wait, the worse potholes will become. It is imperative that we get these repairs underway as quickly as possible.

"Six extra highways maintenance gangs were drafted in earlier in January, bringing the total to 15 gangs out on the roads, repairing 25 -30 potholes a day - that's around 2000 potholes repaired per week across the county. This extra money will enable us to increase both the quantity and quality of these repairs."

Members of the public can report potholes on 0845 230 2882. For more information please visit the Buckinghamshire County Council website:

www.buckscc.gov.uk/winterdriving

Further information please contact: Viv Saunders,

Communications Officer Tel: 01296 382673

Fax: 01296 382005 Email:

vsaunders@buckscc.gov.uk

THE Road Safety Team of Transport for Buckinghamshire is working in partnership with the 'Chepping 16 plus' young driver scheme to promote their popular pre-driver course.

The next course will be held during February half term. There is an evening presentation on Thursday 11th February 2010 from 6.15pm - 9.00pm, where they will see a presentation by the Fire service and have an opportunity to practice the theory and hazard perception tests. This is followed by an all day session (9.00am-4.30pm) on Monday 15th February 2010.

The venue is Derehams Sports Centre, Loudwater, High Wycombe and the course costs £50 for the two days. It is open to 16 - 18 year olds

The course introduces novice and young learner drivers to driving and road safety. It includes car handling in a safe, non-highway location, carried out by experienced local DSA Approved Driving Instructors. Attendees will be shown procedures for obtaining a licence and preparation for the DSA theory and practical Driving Tests. There will also be presentations by representatives from official bodies

For more details about the course, or to request a booking form contact:-

Julie Martin on 01628 523235 or Mick Lewis on 0793 955 7542

FRIENDS OF Chiltern Open Air Museum – WINTER TALKS

Wednesday 24 February – **"Birds of the Colne Valley" by Steve Carter**

Wednesday 24 March – **"Past & Present" Work of the CVAHS Chess & Misbourne Valley Landscape Characterisation Group"**, by Richard Hoyle

Talks take place in the Mary Smithells Room, Chalfont St Peter Community Centre, Gravel Hill at 8 pm. A small admission charge of £2.50 is made - £2 for Friends of the Museum. Light refreshments are available. All welcome – pre-booking not necessary.

FAMILY is the focus with the launch of the new Buckinghamshire family information service. Belly dancing, basketball and the chance to learn a new skill will be part of the launch of the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (FIS) at two free family fun days being held this weekend (Saturday 23 January) at Aylesbury and High Wycombe.

The FIS is a new service which will create a 'one stop shop' for information and advice on a wide range of activities, events and services available to families with children up to the age of 19 living in Buckinghamshire. Areas covered as part of the service include childcare, family leisure activities and things to do, as well as advice on disabilities, benefits, health, schools, colleges, work and volunteering.

The all-day events, being held at Friars Square, Aylesbury and Eden, High Wycombe, will feature interactive taster activities, performances and

demonstrations from some of the organisations registered with the FIS.

Information stalls will be present with Connexions, Thames Valley Police, Children's Centres, Youth Focus, the Library service, Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service and Aylesbury & Amersham College among the participants. Rebecca Varatharajah, the overall winner of the Causeway Buckinghamshire Young People of the Year awards, along with some of the other finalists, will be attending the events. Rebecca is a sixth-form student who volunteers much of her spare time to help others at school and in her local community, as well as being an elected member of the UK Youth Parliament. Families attending the family fun days will receive an FIS card, which will entitle them to a 10% discount at some of the Aylesbury and High Wycombe town centre food and retail outlets for the whole of Saturday. The card is designed to be kept as an easy reference for contact details for the new service.

As well as the family fun days, a number of events are being held at schools and Children's Centres throughout the county. These include activities specially designed for babies and pre-school children at Chesham, Burnham and Buckingham Children's Centres; taster sessions for children on drama, crafts, martial arts and dance at selected primary schools and food tasting and information fairs tailored for young people at selected secondary schools.

The FIS was formerly the Children's Information Service and successfully provided advice and support to parents with younger children. The FIS has now expanded the scope of the information it holds to include guidance and information for young people of up to 19 years and their parents and carers. The FIS is accessible by phone, email, text and a new dedicated website, www.bucksfamilyinfo.org, which includes an online directory which can be searched by postcode, keyword or category.

Find out more about the launch week events and what the Family Information Service has to offer by contacting them by phone on 0845 688 4944 (9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday), email familyinfo@buckscc.gov.uk, visit www.bucksfamilyinfo.org or text 07786 202920 with your question.

FIGURES published in January on the achievements of pupils in Buckinghamshire in GCSE examinations and other equivalent qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4 (KS4) show that results have improved yet again for the year.

The latest Achievement and Attainment Tables published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families show that Buckinghamshire came top of all shire authorities in the country for GCSE or equivalent results, with 65.4% per cent of our pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics, at the end of KS4 - an increase of 2% when compared with last year and 14.7% higher than this year's national average. Our results are also the highest when compared with those of similar councils

known as our statistical neighbours.

Eight schools in Buckinghamshire were identified as National Challenge schools in 2007. The majority of these schools have improved their performance further in 2009 and only two are still below the threshold of

30% of pupils gaining 5+ A*- C passes including English and mathematics. Six of our schools - Aylesbury High, Beaconsfield High, Dr Challoner's Grammar, Dr Challoner's High, Royal Latin and Wycombe High - achieved 100 per cent of their pupils gaining five or more grades A* to C including English and mathematics. A number of schools have been particularly successful in supporting their students to make good progress from entry compared to similar pupils (as measured by Key Stage 2-4 Contextual Value Added measure) and are in the top 25% of all schools nationally. These schools are: Dr Challoner's Grammar, Waddesdon Church of England, Alfriston, Stony Dean and Wendover House.

Furthermore, five of our schools achieved 100% of their pupils making expected progress in English from KS2 to KS4 (Aylesbury High, Beaconsfield High, Dr Challoner's High, Sir Henry Floyd Grammar and Sir William Borlase's Grammar) and a further two schools achieved 100% of their pupils making expected progress in mathematics (Aylesbury Grammar, Dr Challoner's Grammar).

Results in the post-16 attainment tables for Buckinghamshire schools and colleges are also considerably higher than the national averages. Both the average QCDA point score per exam entry and per candidate for GCE/VCE A/AS or equivalent examinations in 2009 were the highest when compared with those of similar councils known as our statistical neighbours and also when compared with other shire authorities.

EVENTS happening at New Jordans in March: for **Change4Chalfont Group**.

Sunday March 14th at 3pm Esther Cavett Concert, Piano and Soprano, with refreshments afterwards. Esther has performed here previously and returns due to popular demand. She will be performing a short concert of musical pieces which are yet to be confirmed.

Saturday March 6th from 1.30pm 'How Green is Your Day?' Would you like to reduce your energy bills and carbon footprint? Unsure of a way forward? Or feeling dazed and confused? Come to the Solar Daze event.

Our planned day of activities are designed to engage and explore with the whole family ways in which to live sustainably, while coming together within our communities, having fun and saving money.

A selection of the activities taking place are: electric car rides, an interactive wall of comments, jokes, caption competitions, and a bicycle clinic. As well as an Animation Workshop for those 6 years and above, a talk will be given by David Matthews CEO of the Solar Trade Association. Explore ways forward with Low Carbon Jordans and Change4Chalfont, and join us for a community supper and team quiz afterwards.

Venue: Jordans Quaker Meeting House, Welders Lane, Jordans, HP9 2SN

Tickets for March 6th are £10 with supper, £5 without, concessions for those under 12, and unwaged.

Bucks Choices4me - helping young people to make their option choices

Young people in Buckinghamshire can find out more about their future learning options at 'Bucks Choices4me' information events at Amersham and Wycombe College (Chesham Campus) on February 8 and Aylesbury College on February 11.

Aimed at young people in years 8, 9 and 11, the events will focus on Diplomas, the new national programme that widens the choices available to young people to gain the skills they need to succeed in work and life. Developed with employers, schools, colleges and universities, Diplomas provide a route into further or higher education or employment, combining learning with practical experience currently in 10 different subject lines across Buckinghamshire.

Natalie Ellis, Buckinghamshire's 14-19 Entitlement Co-ordinator, said: "The events will include drama productions and interactive touch screens and opportunities to discuss options with student ambassadors, tutors and Connexions Personal Advisers."

Young people and their parents or carers can turn up any time between 4pm and 9pm on either day. These information events, originally scheduled in January, were postponed owing to adverse weather. For more information young people can contact their Connexions Personal Adviser in school or call 0845 313 3413 or alternatively visit www.buckschoices4me.com to search for courses and training opportunities by subject and provider.