

## Chalfont St Peter Village Voice - December 2012

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Throughout the coming month, regular updates can be seen on [www.chalfontstpeter.com/villagevoice](http://www.chalfontstpeter.com/villagevoice)

**CHRISTMAS** Fun Night will take place on the evening of **Friday 7th December between 6pm and 9pm**. The format will be the same as the last few years in that Market Place will be closed to traffic from around 4.30pm until 9.30pm. A kiddies fun fair will operate in the precinct which will necessitate closing the precinct car park from midday, but the car park in Church Lane will be open and accessible throughout the day and evening.



The Parish Church Hall will hold the Parish Church Xmas Fayre on the evening and there will be carol singing in the Parish Church. There will be schools carol singing on the main stage from 6pm. Entertainment, including the Chalfont Wind Band and a vocal group from Gold Hill Church will take place on a stage located at the steps to Budgens/Bishops House. These steps will therefore not be able to be used from the morning of the event. The ramp access into Budgens and Bishops House will, of course be open.

The last few years have seen an excellent community event with around half the village in attendance. The majority of shopkeepers and businesses embrace the event and put on special activities, with competitions and "giveaways" on the evening and benefit hugely from the exposure and foot traffic. There will be circa 40 stall pitches up Marketplace and there are a few remaining for sale at £30 with a discount to £25 for local community or charity groups. The event is supported by three sponsors: The Chalfont St Peter Parish Council, Fairweather Insurance and the Chalfont St Peter Chamber of Commerce.

As always volunteers are required to help with stewarding and clearing up afterwards and anyone prepared to offer can contact Michael Day: [enquiries@feastofstpeter.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@feastofstpeter.org.uk) or by phone on 07717 295369.

**CHERYL GILLAN, MP** was accompanied by Peter Hardy, Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport on a visit to the gang operating the velocity patcher working in Coleshill, where she declared the operatives 'Heroes of the Road'.

The velocity patcher is the latest innovation in technology that is successfully tackling potholes in a bid to improve conditions for drivers and cyclists. Since April nearly 20,000 potholes have been repaired in the south of the county alone.

The efficiency of the operation is gained by initially using a hose to blast the pothole with air, to force out any loose material, dirt or water. A bitumen emulsion bond coat is then forced deep into every crack of the pothole. Finally, the chippings are fired at speed through a bitumen spray into the pothole. The fact that the chippings are sprayed individually helps create a stronger bond than with other methods.

The trained operatives are able to repair both CAT 1 potholes along with any CAT 2 whilst in the one location, making it particularly useful for repairing roads with a larger number of potholes, whilst keeping disruption to traffic on the network to a minimum.

**DO** you want to have to go to **Stoke Mandeville** as your local hospital? If not please go along to the NHS meeting at Burnham on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 1.30-4.30 and have your say. To book your place call 0800 148 8572 or visit [www.berkshire.nhs.uk/shapingthefuture](http://www.berkshire.nhs.uk/shapingthefuture) The consultation document is available 0118 982 2709 or [STFteam@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:STFteam@berkshire.nhs.uk) If you can't make the meeting, fill in the consultation form.

**THE** Sleeping Beauty pantomime at the Community Centre (**7 – 9 December**) is shaping up to be a Christmas winner. To ensure you don't miss out get your tickets as soon as possible. St Peter Players are brilliant entertainers and this is going to be a must for you and your family to get Christmas underway. Details on [www.stpeterplayers.co.uk](http://www.stpeterplayers.co.uk) You can book via the box office 07928 161419.

**VOPAG AT CHRISTMAS...**Go along to the Community Centre on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December and join the village older people. There will be mince pies and sherry and singing from Chalfont Academy pupils. Seasonal raffle prizes..£1 on entry.

**Please note that the first Vopag Meeting of 2013 is on Tuesday, 15th January.**

**CHALFONT** St Peter Garden Club Christmas celebration is in the Church Hall 7.45 for 8pm, on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December. Tickets are £8 per person, to include hot chicken supper, glass of wine or a soft drink. Claire de Carle will demonstrate how to make a quick festive flower arrangement in a terracotta flower pot, everything will be provided. This is a fun social evening and visitors are welcome. Tickets can be obtained

from 01753 889153.

**NEWS** report from Chalfont St.Peter W.I. (Gerrards Cross and chalfont St.Peter area)

We have been busy lately. We were the hostesses at the Misbourne Valley Group Meeting.

Our choice of speaker went down very well. Mick Casson , retired Reg.Sergeant Major, Yeoman Warder and brilliant drummer, gave a very amusing talk about his life. He has promised to come and give us part 2 as time ran out. The tea went down well too!

We are very pleased to have a new President. Maureen Dobbs. We wish her well and will give all the help she needs.

We were Happy to take a cake to the splendid "change for Chalfont " people who were planting a second orchard in the village, this time near the community Centre. It was a little something to sustain the workers. Our latest speaker gave an interesting talk on the "History of Pinewood studios." It was a shame that his film show was on the blink so we had to do without.

We go to Waddesdon Manor to see the Christmas lights - fingers crossed that the rain goes away for us.

Next month we have our Christmas Lunch and a talk on "Santa's Grotto" from our old friend Charles Oakes.

We have a varied programme in store for next year so DO think about joining us.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the Church Hall.

**AT** the AGM in November of **Chalfont Common WI**, Janet Schofield stepped down as president after a very successful 3 years at the helm. The group has thrived during her stewardship, with many new members and lots of different and varied outings as well as various regular clubs continuing with ever increasing membership. She was thanked for all her hard work and good leadership. Marian Cooper was inaugurated as the new president and all wished her well for the coming year. Brenda Aldworth stepped down from the committee and Sheila Woolgar was welcomed, as she took her place.

There was group meeting in October when they had a very funny and interesting talk from a Tower of London Beefeater. The meeting as usual was well attended and a delicious tea enjoyed afterwards, thanks to Chalfont St Peter Afternoon Ladies.

The beetle drive and lunch was a great success and another one is planned in the New Year. Several of members went to Watersmeet theatre in Rickmansworth to see a great performance by the Harrow Light Opera company of Oliver. The following week members had a trip to London Colney shopping centre, where they managed to spend lots of money and enjoy a sociable lunch. The members helped the British Legion selling poppies in the village and then on the 11<sup>th</sup> joined them for the poppy day parade through the village followed by a service in the church.

The rehearsals for their performance of Snow White for the Christmas meeting are well under way. A tree was sponsored in the new village orchard and members had great fun on Saturday helping with the planting. Let's hope they get lots of fruit in the years to come.

Meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month in the Tony Graham Room at the community centre 7.30 for 7.45. If you would like to join this thriving group of ladies just pop along or ring Chris on 01494 872133 for more information.

**AT** the November meeting, St Joseph's Furniture Market donated £350 to the Chalfont Heights Scout camp, £350 to the Samaritans, £300 to the Red Cross and £100 to St Joseph's Youth Club for the annual Senior Citizens' Christmas Party.

The market is open on Saturdays from 9am to 12.30pm for the sale of good quality furnishing items.

Park in St Joseph's Church Car Park in Austenwood Lane and the entry to the market is from Priory Lane which is adjacent to the car park. [furnituremarket@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:furnituremarket@hotmail.co.uk)

**HEDGERLEY** Historical Society meets next in the Memorial Hall Kiln Lane, SL2 3UZ at 8pm on Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, when Tony Pilmer will present Georgian and Victorian Slough. Visitors welcome.

**GERRARDS** Cross Flower has its AGM on Wednesday, December 12 at 2.15pm in the Colston Hall, Memorial Centre, GX. The occasion will include presentation of the Moul Cup.

**ORCHESTRAL Concerts** 8 pm at St Mary's Parish Church, Amersham



**AMERSHAM  
FESTIVAL  
OF MUSIC**

Amersham Festival Chamber Orchestra,

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2013: Vivaldi Corelli & Rossini

including guest recorder soloist Charlotte Barbour-Concini who reached the recent final of the BBC Young Musician competition



**THANK** you to the dedicated, friendly and efficient volunteers at our CSP Community Library who have been hard at work throughout the year keeping our village library open. It is lovely to see the warm and vibrant place it has become, especially on Friday afternoons when it is over-run with happy toddlers singing nursery rhymes. The library has had more than 500 school children through their doors in the past few months as part of their initiative to encourage young readers, and they are very proud of the popular new books that have purchased to boost their children's stock, and the colourful thematic displays that volunteers have put on to stimulate young children to

read.

Adult readers seem pleased that newly released books are available in the library so much quicker than before, and there has been much praise for the free computer literacy classes and introductory genealogy classes, the regular second hand book sale, the new village information point and the valuable Celfunde local history information gathering sessions that have taken place recently.

If you have not been in to see the community library in action yet, please do yourself a favour and pop in. And if you are able to support their efforts by becoming a Friend of the Library, please visit their website [www.csp-communitylibrary.co.uk](http://www.csp-communitylibrary.co.uk) for more details. 'We can only continue to run, to grow and to improve if we have the encouragement, physical and financial support from our community', says committee member Karen Dickson. 'Please make the effort to show your support if you are able to do so by becoming a Benefactor or our Friend – it will be greatly appreciated!'

The library volunteers will do their best to keep the library open as much as possible over the Christmas break and their opening hours will be as follows:

Christmas Opening Hours:

December 24<sup>th</sup> Monday : Closed  
December 25<sup>th</sup> Tuesday : Closed  
December 26<sup>th</sup> Wednesday : Closed  
December 27<sup>th</sup> Thursday : Closed  
December 28<sup>th</sup> Friday : 10-5 (not open till 7 as usual)  
December 29<sup>th</sup> Saturday : Open 10-1  
December 31<sup>st</sup> Monday : Closed  
January 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday : Closed  
January Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> : 10-5 as normal

**THE** Chalfonts Friendship Club was established locally in May 2009 for people who are retired/ of retirement age to meet to share company. It is focussed on Reaching Out and Promoting Companionship and Sharing in our Community. We get together over a lunchtime meal on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at St Joseph's Parish Centre, Austenwood Common, Chalfont St Peter and we have regular Theatre Trips, Sunday Lunches, Talks on Art, Quiz Evenings, Outings, Days Out & Visits to Stately Homes & Seaside. Retired & living on your own or a couple? Know somebody who is alone or in need of company? All welcome – Interested. or know someone who might be?

Contacts: Pat Kelly on 01494 875264 - Charles Watters on 07966 349945- Mary Cross on 01494 875264

Recent Activities:

- Ø Lunch at the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre
- Ø Open-air Theatre, Beaconsfield, to see Macbeth
- Ø Visit to Kensington Palace, London
- Ø Trips to Beck Theatre, and Elgiva Theatre
- Ø Trip to Osborne House, Isle of Wight
- Ø Sunday Lunch at The Bellhouse Hotel

Forthcoming Activities:

- Ø Lunch at the Parish Centre, St Joseph's, CSP
- Ø Theatre trip to Aylesbury to see Great Expectations
- Ø Trip to Winchester Cathedral & Christmas Markets
- Ø Christmas Lunch in CSP
- Ø Sunday Lunch at the Bellhouse Hotel
- Ø Visit to and lunch at Stately Home

**YOUNG** people from Buckinghamshire are helping health services to better understand their needs thanks to Takeover Day 2012.

The Youth Services team at Buckinghamshire County Council invited a group of 12 young people from Alfriston and Mandeville schools to get involved in producing some 'top tips' for health professionals when supporting young people visiting their local surgery or hospital. The students welcomed the opportunity to make their views known.

Laura, from Alfriston School, said: "They should talk to you, it's about me and my health, they should talk to me, it's important not just to talk to my parents, it's about you, you know how you feel, not anybody else - you can say this for yourself." A.J, also from Alfriston School, told us: "It's so important to talk to me, it's me that is ill, not my parents."

And Kyle, from Mandeville School, said: "I wouldn't normally do this type of thing but I'm glad I did and I'm making friends."

One of the conclusions from the day was that children and young people felt that too often healthcare professionals spoke to their parents or guardians instead of them when giving medical care or advice. In separate consultations with disabled children and young people, concerns were expressed by young people about feeling ignored in healthcare consultations.

The students will now work with a designer to produce a set of posters to be circulated locally to raise awareness with children and young people as well as adults in the health profession.

Takeover Day (23 November 2012) is an annual national event run by the Children's Commissioner for England which gives children and young people the chance to work with adults for the day and be involved in decision-making, helping to encourage children and young people's active involvement in their communities.

Valerie Letheren, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, said: "Being able to get young people's views on topics like health is why we take part in events like Takeover Day. It's really important for organisations of all types to try to develop links with young people so we can all better provide services that young people want and need."

**A NEW** Dementia Care Advisory Service to help people living with Dementia and their carers is being introduced in Bucks and Buckinghamshire County Council and NHS Buckinghamshire have contracted Age UK to provide the wide-ranging advice service across the county.

It provides a single point of contact to access advice and aims to support people with dementia to live well in their community, ensuring they are receiving all the help that is available, with a particular focus on early intervention.

It is estimated that 6000 people have dementia in Buckinghamshire with the number predicted to rise to 9000 by 2025, an increase of 44 per cent. But the council believes that as few as a third of those living with the condition, particularly in its early stages, are diagnosed and receiving the proper support.

The Dementia Care Advisor Service will ensure that services are available to any person with a diagnosis of dementia or people who are worried that they may have signs of the condition. It will focus on well-being rather than illness and support people to think through how they can live well. Referrals will come from hospitals, GPs, mental health services, social care and importantly from families concerned about loved ones.

Patricia Birchley, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing at Buckinghamshire County Council, said: "The prevalence of dementia roughly doubles with every five year increase in age in later years, so it is absolutely critical we improve and develop effective services. This new approach is in response to the expected increase in very elderly people over the next ten years."

Giulia Johnson, Chief Executive of Age UK Buckinghamshire, said: "We are delighted that Age UK Buckinghamshire has been awarded the contract. This is a much needed service and we will be working closely with the County Council and other partners to implement and deliver this new venture."

According to the 2011 census just under a quarter of the Buckinghamshire population are over 60. The new

statistics reveal that there has been a 28 per cent increase in the most elderly aged 80 and over, increasing from 18,100 in the 2001 census to 23,100 this time—an extra 5,000 people.

**WHEN** considering how best to make your home secure you need to assume the mind-set of a burglary offender. This article was researched using information from one such ex-offender.

A burglar will look for any signs of weakness in your home. You need to consider what is known as target hardening.

Anyone can do a self-assessment of their home. Here is a simple guide of what to look for and some questions to ask yourself.

Start outside. Look at the front aspect of your home. If the front looks weak to a burglar then they will expect the back to be easy for them too.

**The front gate** is the first psychological barrier to keeping a burglar away.

Is it in good repair? If not then a burglar may believe that your door and window frames might be unmaintained too, making them easy to force.

Will the gate make a noise opening or self-closing shut? If it creaks or slams shut behind me then neighbours may be alerted that someone is entering the property.

**The driveway** will need to be crossed to get to the door and windows.

Is it gravel covered which is noisy to walk on?

Will an outside light come on as I approach the house?

Is there a car on the drive? If you are away the car needn't be yours. Allow a trusted neighbour to park one of theirs on your drive so it looks like you're not away.

**The front perimeter** needs to have a physical barrier to define where your property starts.

Are the front hedges and fences low allowing visibility of the house? Will people see me if I am tampering with your front door or windows?

**Your front door** is the next main line of defence.

Is the entrance well lit?

Do you just have one single cylinder lock on the door? If so then it is quite easy to breach and it would be a good idea to fit a secondary lock.

When you are at home is there a door chain on the inside or a spy hole so you can see who is at the door outside?

**Alarms** are one of the first deterrents to be noticed by burglars.

Do you have an alarm box on the front of your house?

**Signs in your windows** may not be a good idea.

'Beware of the dog' or 'I love cats' advertises that you are less likely to have a burglar alarm or if you do then you may not have set it. Also that you may have left doors or windows open for access by pets. Many dogs are quite docile and the mere presence of one will not put off a determined burglar.

**Windows.**

Have you left any windows open? An open small fan light type window can be enough to reach in through to the handle of the main window, to pass a small child inside or put a wire through to lift the latch on a bigger window.

Are the windows locked?

Can I see straight in or are there curtains or blinds?

Can I see valuables on open display?

Are there valuables on window sills or close to doors within easy reach upon entry?

**Lights**

Are there any lights on inside the property? It is good to leave a light on a timer switch when you are out. Even the light from a fish tank can be a deterrent.

**Cameras.**

- Does the house have CCTV cameras?

**Bins.**

- It is bin day and all the others have been put out for collection apart from yours? Does that mean that you are not there? Could you get someone to do the bins for you in your absence?

**Porches, garages and other low roofs**

- Are there wheelie bins, water butts, drainpipes or similar close to low roofs? These are easy to climb on and once on the roof can I reach any windows?

**Side gates.** I'm less likely to be seen at the back and that gives me more time to get inside.

- Is there a side gate?
- If so then is it kept locked?
- Can I get over or through it easily?

Now take a good look at the back of your home.

**Ladders** are useful for me to access windows and flat roofs. Not only yours but your neighbours too.

- Have any ladders been left outside insecure or have they been put inside or chained / locked to a tree or similar?

**Sheds and outbuildings** are loved by burglars for a number of reasons.

- Is the shed locked?
- Is the hasp fixed with anti-theft screws or can I remove it easily with a standard screwdriver?
- Do the shed windows have bars behind them so that if I remove them I can't climb in through them?
- Are there expensive bikes and tools on view?
- Are they locked or chained up? They may be in a shed but once I'm past the door I can use an insecure bike to make my escape.
- Are there insecure tools which I could use to break into a house with? I might steal your tools and break into some else's house – that could prove a bit embarrassing for you.

**Fences and rear perimeters.** Burglars often garden hop to make good their escape.

- Are the fences high?
- Is there trellis, anti-climb paint or spikes along the top?
- What will I land on when I climb the fence?
- Are there prickly plants along the boundaries?

**Patio doors.**

- How old are they? Most modern ones have multiple locking points whilst older ones are less secure.

**Side and back doors.**

- Have you left a key in the lock on the inside enabling me to smash the glass and unlock the door?

Finally, what should you consider in case I do get in?

**Calendar**

- Have you gone away or are at work leaving dates and work times on display? If I do get into your house a calendar on the wall can often give me a good indication of how long I've got until you are due to come home?

**Car keys and handbags**

- Did you take them upstairs at bedtime or are they nice and handy for me to grab from the hall or kitchen?

**Valuables.** Small items are very desirable to burglars. They are easy to secrete easy to carry, can be quite saleable and are easy to pass on.

- Is your jewellery and personal documentation kept in a location that is not obvious?
- Do you have a safe?

- Are your belongings property marked with Smartwater, UV pen or similar?
- Do you have photographs, serial numbers or receipts for your valuables?
- Are those kept hidden in a tin fireproof box in a not obvious location?

#### **Other considerations**

- Are you sufficiently insured? With the value of precious metals having gone up so much recently some victims are finding that they are not.

So as you can see there is a lot to consider. All of the above may deter a burglar. Much of it you will probably have done already. Some of it is common sense. But even if you take on board one bullet point from the above it will be one more step to lessening the chances of you becoming the next burglary victim.

As the old adage goes.....it is always better to be safe than to be sorry.

An afterthought:

*'Be careful when disposing of packaging or boxes that have contained high value items'*

*For example do not leave packaging outside which will show that you have recently taken delivery of a new television, sound system or similar.*

*The safest thing to do is take such boxes to the local tip or recycling centre.*

This advice is very pertinent with Christmas approaching.

Thank you to all those who take the time to respond to TV Alerts, it is always good to get feedback.

Meantime remember to:

- Report any suspicious activity seen straight away by calling 999.