

Editor: Elaine Quigley 01753 886412
equit.text@virgin.net
www.chalfontstpeter.com/villagevoice



Village Voice March 2010

POTHLES - Cllr Bruce Allen has notified us that WEST HYDE LANE, CHALFONT ST PETER will have a 3 day road closure to facilitate BT Potholing works – 10 March to 12 March 2010

DO you sometimes need provision for B & B to put up guests? Whitewebbs in central Chalfont St Peter could be the answer. Maureen and John Marsh have two comfortable en suite rooms, one double and one twin and can be contacted on whitewebbs@tiscali.co.uk. Tel: 01753 884105.

THANKS to all who supported the RNLI fund raising in Chalfont St Peter. The Chalfont St Peter Branch raised over five and a half thousand pounds last year. The RNLI Flag week will be 12-17 April and the Flag collection in the village will be on 17 April. On October 16, the Christmas card sale will be in the precinct from 9am-1pm and the Quiz will be in the evening at 7pm in the Church Hall. Please put these dates in your diary, especially the quiz night, which is great fun.

CHILTERN Lighthouse Mentoring is an early intervention and prevention programme working with schools/colleges and other referral agencies.

Volunteers mentors (male and female) are sought. Have you the time and patience to listen and support a young person who is going through a difficult time? Would you like to encourage young people to get involved in positive leisure activities including sport? Have you at least 2 hours a week after school or at weekends? Have you the use of a car? Would you be available for training To find out more about our style of mentoring please look at the video on our website www.chilternlighthouse.org Please use the enquiry form on our website (via communities/mentor), Or e-mail your details to Admin@chilternlighthouse.org Or leave a message on 01494 873341 and we will phone you back

MISBOURNE Art Society is a friendly group of local people with one thing in common- an interest in art. They meet at 2.15pm in the **Tony Graham Room** at Chalfont St Peter Community Centre on the **First Saturday** of the month for demonstrations, illustrated lectures & drawing and painting sessions. Here's a taste of our forthcoming events:-

MARCH 6th Talk on Modigliani by Anthony Slinn

APRIL 3rd Portrait in Acrylic - a demonstration by Keith Morton

MAY 1st Creating Sculptures - a talk by John Coppinger

Visitors are welcome at £5 but we also have vacancies for new members at £25 per year.

Remember, an interest in art is all you need. It is not necessary to be an artist!

If you would like to know more, phone Jean Griffith 01494 873722 or simply turn up.

The winner at the Annual Exhibition of the ELAINE BUTLER SALVER was "Amur Leopard" by Heather Smith.

TOTS Sale is on Saturday 6th March from 10-12 in Chalfont St Peter Community Centre with lots of bargains to be had. Tel; 07778 427518 for table bookings/more details.

GERRARDS Cross Methodist Church and St Andrews URC, Gerrards Cross are joining together for a Lenten Bible Study entitled "The Four Gospels How Why Where and When" A series of five weekly studies lead by Rev Nigel Coke-Woods started 25th Feb 2010 and continues to 25th March 2010 at 7-30pm each week at St Andrews URC, Packhorse Road Gerrards Cross. Everyone most welcome

CHALFONT BRIDGE CLUB is remaining affiliated to the EBU. The Club meets every Wednesday at Chalfont St Peter Community Centre at 7.30 pm and visitors are welcome. There is a host system so you can be sure of a game. More information can be found on bridgewebs.com/chalfont.

Contact David Burbidge on 01494 873 590 e-mail: david.burbidge.t21@btinternet.com

THE Friends of Chiltern Open Air Museum's Annual Quiz in on Saturday 20 March - 7.15 for 7.30 prompt start in Chalfont St Peter Church Hall. Tickets; £12 per person (or book a table of 8), to include Fish & Chip Supper. Tea and coffee available, but otherwise please bring your own drink and glasses. Tickets from Richard & Jenny Ogden, 01494 793017 - The event is in aid of Chiltern Open Air Museum

THE Gerrards Cross Flower Club meets on Wednesday, March 17, when Jackie Eyre will present "Step into Spring", 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.

VOPAG meets on Tuesday March 16 in the Parish Council Offices at 10 for Coffee and 10.30 for the talk, to be arranged.

NEWS from Chalfont Common WI. Snow caused the cancellation of the January meeting, so the one in February was eagerly anticipated. Jean Purdy gave a terrific talk about 'Life before Television', a great reminder of all the radio programmes her listeners thought they'd forgotten and much fun was had, seeing who could remember. As a member of the magic circle Jean also did a few tricks from her repertoire. Next month Bob Sacco will talk on The Life and Times of Mr Punch. A fish and chip lunch was enjoyed on 12th February and they hope to hold a lunch every couple of months this year. The outing to the Van Gogh Exhibition and Jeffry Museum was a great success. Preparations for the popular Attic Sale on 13th March in the Community Centre are well under way. There are still a few tables left for hire for anyone interested in selling their unwanted items. There will be the ever popular cake, book and bric a brac stalls and coffee and refreshments will be served during the morning. Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the month at the Tony Graham room at the Chalfont Community Centre 7.30 for 7.45.

CHALFONT St Peter W.I. report that it was so nice to meet up in February, after the snow had caused the cancellation of the January meeting and Mrs. Lyme welcomed a new member Gill Waite and the 2 visitors. Bucks. Federation is planning a 90th Anniversary Celebration Lunch in March and a 90th Celebration London Lunch Cruise in July. Plans are in progress for the long-awaited Highgrove Garden tour on April 9th. Taylors Tea, ever generous, sent a box of Newsletters and 2 boxes of tea. A "fascinator" workshop is arranged for March 18 at Stuart Lodge and Hatstravaganza "the History of the Hat" will be held at Stoke Mandeville in April. The table has been booked for the Feast Day on Gold Hill Common on 26th June.

Photos of Chalfont St.Peter were displayed and Memories were jogged about all the changes that have taken place, good and bad, in the village in our lifetimes. Some ladies could remember all the old shops and pubs which were pulled down to make the Precinct. Very interesting for "Newcomers". Next month, 10th March, an old friend, Mr Charles Oakes, will be talking about "London city of Secrets" and the Display will be "The flower of the month".All welcome .2.15 in the Church Hall.

IN February, Buckinghamshire County Council approved a 2% council tax increase for the coming financial year. Presenting the recommendations, Council Leader David Shakespeare outlined the financial issues facing the authority and how technically demanding this year's budget-setting process had been. He said: "This has been a challenging budget, and I am acutely aware of the impact our decisions have on half a million residents. Continually changing circumstances and a turbulent economic climate have made this the most technically difficult budget I have ever had to deal with.

"For the fifth consecutive year, Buckinghamshire received the lowest Government Finance Settlement of 1.5% - that's £880k in real terms. It's a drop in the ocean for the needs of Buckinghamshire residents when you consider the County's budget requirement for the coming year is £316m.

"This year's budget has come under intense scrutiny, including a robust challenge process by an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. Cabinet Members and their Strategic Directors have had to account for every last penny. There is no slack in this budget, and only prudent and judicious housekeeping has kept the increase as low as 2%, as we were determined that the Government's underfunding of public services wouldn't just get passed on to our council taxpayers." A Budget Consultation which took place last October, although it received a low public response, identified road repairs, older people and education and schools as priority areas.

A letter from the Buckinghamshire Business Group, acknowledging the County Council's continued support for local businesses, was presented to Council. Richard Benz, chairman of the group, spoke of the appreciation of the Council's funding through the Buckinghamshire Economic and Learning Partnership (BELP) and BCC's commitment to paying small and medium enterprises within ten days.

For further information please contact:

Viv Saunders, Communications Officer Tel: 01296 382673 Fax: 01296 382005 Email: vsaunders@buckscc.gov.uk

BUCKS is the first county in the South East to be able to offer every community access to a Children's Centre. All 35 centres are now offering the first of their services, which include a wide range of activities and support for under fives and their families such as Messy Play, Bounce and Rhyme and access to health services. This achievement has been made possible by the hard work of the organisations which run the Centres; Buckinghamshire County Council, Barnardos, The Healthy Living Centre and Disraeli School, as well as significant support from many other partners.

In the next year services are being taken up to the next level and there will be far more on offer. It is critical that services are tailored to the specific needs of each community so staff are consulting with parents to find out if, for example, they want more access to information and advice, help returning to work or just to meet other parents. Services will then be developed accordingly.

The aim is for children under five and their families to receive seamless integrated services and information to ensure that every child gets the best start in life. Since the first centre was set up back in 2003, a great deal has been achieved. An independent survey earlier this year found that more than 94% of families thought the services offered were 'very good'. Some of the comments families made were that 'I have found it a real help, I would be lost without it', 'the staff are very friendly and approachable' and 'we have really benefited from the activities'.

For further information please contact: Lucy Stratton, Tel: 01296 382625 Email: lstratton@buckscc.gov.uk

CHALFONT St Peter garden Club's next meeting is on Wednesday, March 17, in the Church Hall, Chalfont St Peter from 8-10pm with the AGM – followed by Ian Currie – Making sense of the weather. Visitors welcome.

THE village consultation questionnaire that the Parish Council carried out in Nov 2009 had an amazing response, receiving back twice as many as would normally have been expected. This has given the Council a clear description of residents' views about what they do and don't like in the village, allowing it to take action, knowing that it is following the inhabitants' wishes. Regarding the CDC draft Core Strategy proposal, 92% of respondents rejected the high density development proposal on the Holy Cross site and CDC has been made fully aware of the results. As a result, the site has been downgraded to 260 dwellings, but the Parish Council will be seeking further reduction for Chalfont St Peter as well as how CDC intends to make sure that any additional development does not adversely affect the existing problems of traffic congestion and sewage flooding. Letters have gone to CDC, BCC and the nuns to seek ways to obtain the best possible results for the village, including promoting a school land swap. The results of the questionnaire were made available to the village at the Community College on 13 Feb at 10.00 which Cheryl Gillian attended.

Change4Chalfont – next meeting: 8pm Monday 22nd March.

Change4Chalfont is a local group, which aims to work with our community to reduce our impact on climate change and dependence on fossil fuels. We hold an open meeting once a month; the next one is **on Monday 22nd March at 8pm in the Village Hall pub (Jolly Farmer Room)**, and we would be delighted to see you there. This month's "Ten Minute Talk" will investigate some of the science behind climate change and will seek to equip us to respond to sceptics. If you are interested in finding out more, please come along, or contact Robin and Stephanie Summerell on 01753 279855/ Hugh and Erica on mail@stokesneustadt.plus.com.

Change4Chalfont - Film Night: *In Transition* Friday March 26th 8pm This film provides inspiration and motivation to join together and collectively meet the challenges of climate change and peak oil positively rather than with fear or apathy. In the film you will get a sense of the scale of this emerging movement, hearing stories of communities creating their own local currencies, setting up their own pubs, planting trees, growing food together, and celebrating localness. You will see neighbours sharing land, local authorities backing Transition initiatives, and school children reporting the imaginary news in 2030. Instead of the usual dismal account of global warming, this is a story of hope and possibility.

Come and see *In Transition* on **Friday 26th March at 8pm in the Parish Church Hall, Church Lane, Chalfont St Peter**. Have a glass of wine, cup of coffee or tea, and home-made cake. Entrance is free; contributions would be very welcome. We will be showing films on the last Friday of every month at St Peter's Church Hall, Chalfont St Peter. For more information, please contact robin_summerell@yahoo.co.uk

Change4Chalfont launches EcoTeams - Want to reduce your impact on the environment and save money?

Join one of our EcoTeams! EcoTeams (www.ecoteams.org.uk) is a programme designed to help your household improve its energy efficiency, reduce its environmental impact and save resources. EcoTeams are groups of 6-8 people who meet once a month for 5 months. Each leader provides their group with a set of resources to enable them to discuss one topic at each meeting, share information, and effect changes together. They focus on waste, shopping, energy, water and transport. The success of EcoTeams can be judged by their results: on average participants reduce their landfill waste by 20%, heating energy consumption by 21%, water usage by 15%, electricity consumption by 7% and carbon emissions by 17%, **saving an average of £170 per year**. We have 4 trained EcoTeam leaders waiting to welcome new participants. If you would like to join one please contact Stephanie on 01753 279855 or by e-mail: stephanie_summerell@yahoo.co.uk

Correction The Esther Cavett Piano and Soprano Concert on Sunday 14th March is an event organised by New Jordans and not by Change4Chalfont as printed in the last edition.

INNOVATIVE mobile library takes to the road. The newest branch library on wheels from Buckinghamshire County Council drove into service on Saturday 19 December. Like its smaller eco-friendly sibling, which won a national award in May, the new 11-metre long mobile library is environmentally as well as customer friendly. Fifteen solar panels in its roof generate the power to run the on-board electric equipment for most of the year. Eco-friendly materials have been used in the construction of the vehicle, which is fully insulated and uses low-energy fluorescent lights. The library, about the size of a large single-deck bus, features 2,500 books, DVDs, audio books and magazines. Two computers provide free internet access and visitors will be able to read and relax in a small seating area. A retractable canopy and external sound and lighting systems will be used in summer. This large mobile library will serve primarily larger villages such as Denham, Prestwood, Stoke Poges and Waddesdon, spending between one and five hours a week in each community. Mike Colston, Cabinet Member for Adults and Families, said: "Our new generation large mobile libraries are effectively branch libraries on wheels, with the full range of services available to customers. It's also good to know that we are making our vehicles greener, by using renewable energy and having longer stopping times."

OVER 400 people attended the open meeting at the Chalfonts Community College to discuss the changes proposed for the Holy Cross Site and the number of houses that should be put on it, as well as the other uses such as schools and community amenities. Our MP, Cheryl Gillan spoke to the audience after local people had put forward their comments and suggestions. Her opening statement that an incoming Conservative administration would “move quickly, potentially using the executive powers of the Secretary of State, to revoke the Regional Spatial Strategies and abolish the specific targets ahead of primary legislation” was very welcome.

Cheryl castigated the housing targets being driven top down by the current government with no consideration for local feeling. “This is happening right across the country. Not just in Chiltern District.” She had taken the matter to Caroline Spelman, the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and “to the very highest levels in the Conservative Party.”

Top-down “targets have led to the imposition of unsustainable levels of housing. The impact on the infrastructure and environment has been casually dismissed by regional bureaucracy”, she said.

A Conservative government would devolve more responsibility locally. “It will be for local planning authorities to determine the type, scale and location of new developments in accordance with local need and sustainability.” “Even before primary legislation, local authorities will be able to put the brakes on elements of the RSS they find undesirable.” “Local authorities will be able to undo unwanted planning policies imposed on them by the Regional Spatial Strategies.” “However local authorities will not be able to reverse planning permissions already granted.” (All this could lead to a rush of applications before the election.)

Asked by David Martin about the possibility of moving schools onto the Grange site, Cheryl replied that a Conservative Government would make it imperative for the Education and Planning Authorities to co-operate. She thought that would be a good use of the site and she was working to achieve that solution. She knew that BCC were reviewing the situation but they needed to consider funding.

Told by Glyn Taylor that “Our District Councillors have failed us”, she leapt to their defence. “They don’t like what they are being forced to do but they are constrained by the government and the law.”

Cllr John Warder said that the Council was looking forward to better support from Central Government. “We need to be able to decide these things locally.” Regarding the Grange site, he said, “We don’t want to build a new inner city slum.” The site was not ‘educational’ but ‘other amenity space not available for public use’. He said that CDC was aiming to postpone a decision on the draft Core Strategy until after the election when it hoped to be free to follow public opinion. However in the event that there was no clear Conservative majority, CDC would have to decide whether to submit the draft Core Strategy to the Inspectorate at the end of 2010. Therefore we must not vote it down yet.

Summarising, Cheryl Gillan told us: “Keep your foot on the pedal of opposing the draft Core Strategy but don’t scrap it, just in case somehow Labour manages to cling on to power.” Weak as it is, it could still be our best defence against inappropriate development.

Our village team asks: What will happen to the draft Core Strategy and what will happen when planning application is submitted

for the Grange site? We have heard that a planning application is likely to be submitted soon. We will have to act swiftly to submit our comments to the Planning Department. Depending on the details of the application we may need to hold another public meeting. Watch this space.]

EXPEDITION changed our son's life. Young people with additional and special needs, who rose to the challenge of a week's expedition to the Lake District in the autumn, relived their triumphs at a family all-ability day at Green Park, Aston Clinton, on They were joined by other energetic young people and families on a challenging day of activities hosted by the Outdoor Education Team.

But there's one family whose gratitude to the team who took their son on the October adventure trip to the Lakes is still bubbling. Mum Sharon Buchorski, from Wendover, saw changes in her son, Luke, she says she had not seen before. As he tackled activities that included rock climbing, sailing, swimming, horse-riding and mountain treks, Sharon watched a transformation take place. 'For the first time in 15 years I watched a sad, lonely and misunderstood child lacking in self-esteem evolve in front of my very own eyes,' she said. 'He took part in all the activities. The support and encouragement given by all the children and outdoor staff from Green Park spurred Luke on to reach new heights.' Sharon, who travelled with Luke to the adventure week at the Calvert Trust's centre near Keswick, said he came away with increased confidence and independence, more able to make choices and friends. In the middle of Windermere she watched him conquer his fear of swans as others in the boat fed them at close range. Luke and 23 other young people - some with autism, cerebral palsy or learning difficulties – had the opportunity to test their physical and mental skills in a programme of archery, canoeing, raft-building and drumming.

Buckinghamshire County Council Activity Development Worker Geraint Hughes, who accompanied the young people to the Lakes, is a strong believer in outdoor education and has a passion for developing young people's potential.

'This trip was a resounding success and the young people and carers had a fantastic time. All the participants said the trip highlighted just how much they take for granted at home, and learned the importance of teamwork and what they can achieve by working together.'