



LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER MAY 2010

This is the first newsletter from your Parish Council. It is an opportunity to let you know some of the things your Council has been doing and plans for the future. We welcome feedback and hope you will let us know how you think we are doing and what you would like us to do.

An Invitation - The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **Wednesday May 19th at 8.00 p.m.** in the Village Hall. This is an opportunity to learn more about your local Council.

Additionally, we will have three guest speakers:

Cllr. Tim Butcher – one of our two local County Councillors, who will inform us about the Local Area Forum which he chairs. This body was set up by the County Council and includes representatives from local Parishes. Money for the bollards in Burtons Lane and a grant towards equipment in Westwood Park has come via the LAF.

Malcolm Godwin – Rural Towns Co-ordinator, who will tell us about the importance of Market Town Health Checks. Little Chalfont completed its own Health Check 18 months ago.

Inspector Chris Oliver – who is in charge of Neighbourhood Policing in the Chiltern area. Little Chalfont is in a Neighbourhood Action Group along with Amersham-on-the-Hill and Chenies.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions of the speakers and the Parish Council about its responsibilities and actions.

Please come along – a glass of wine or soft drink will be available from 7.30 p.m.

History of the Parish: Established in April 2007 from part of Chalfont St Giles and Amersham acknowledging Little Chalfont as a separate and distinct community. There are two wards: the former part of Chalfont St Giles is called Little Chalfont South ward and the former part of Amersham is called Little Chalfont ward. The first Parish Council was elected in May 2007 with Alan Tate was appointed Chairman. He was succeeded by Francis Wilkinson, who resigned in November 2009 after he moved away from the village.

What Does a Parish Council Do? The powers of a Parish Council are laid down in a number of statutory provisions. In Little Chalfont the Council's main activities include:

Repair and maintenance of land, buildings and recreational facilities (e.g. Village Hall, Westwood Park fields, pitches, tennis courts and playground and the Village Green) and hiring out these facilities where appropriate.

Repair and maintenance of street lights (except those on the A404).

Liaison with District Council, County Council and other bodies regarding matters of concern to the residents of Little Chalfont.

Improving the appearance and facilities of Little Chalfont.

Receiving and making recommendations on planning applications; consulting with residents and organisations about initiatives from government and higher tiers of councils about matters that will impact on Little Chalfont.

Financial management of the council's budget.

Planning Committee: Planning applications are decided, in this area, by Chiltern District Council but every Parish Council has a right and a duty to comment on local applications. Your Parish Council takes this responsibility very seriously and the Planning Committee, which meets every three weeks, discusses all full applications and either objects (giving reasons) or offers no objection. Each Councillor is responsible for a number of roads in the village so he or she can examine each application in depth and report to the committee.

Income: The Council's income is called the precept and is drawn via Chiltern District Council from council tax. The Parish Council is pleased that, following new contracts for maintenance of our open spaces, savings have been made and the precept has been kept to the same as 2009/10. The amount received this year will therefore be £208,433.

What has the Council done?



Farmer's Market established – this was one of the items on the action plan following the Market Town Health Check



The Village Hall has been renovated at an approximate cost of £16,000



Cycle racks have been installed in Chenies Parade - no cost to Council as this was paid for by Bucks County Council.



Bollards have been installed to reduce parking problems in Burtons Lane - again paid for by Bucks CC.



More facilities for young people have been provided in Westwood Park



Co-ordinated planting of replacement trees in Beechwood Avenue paid for by County Councillor Martin Tett's community budget.



Westwood Park

Westwood Park is a fantastic facility for the village and the Parish Council is keen to ensure more people in the village and surrounding area are able to enjoy its benefits.

We have already replaced a children's roundabout, cleaned the tennis courts and installed a games area which includes a football goal plus a basket ball hoop. We are now looking at a number of other initiatives.

As part of that we are currently working in partnership with the Sports Faculty of Bucks New University to investigate how we can enhance the current opportunities on offer. It is important that our local community is at the heart of the planning and YOUR needs are taken into consideration.

Therefore we intend to conduct a survey to find out about your current thoughts on the local recreational ground and what opportunities and facilities you would like to see there in the future.

We are also looking for local volunteers to support the planning, and development of a business plan for this area and to help build our visions and even apply for funding.



If this is an area of expertise or something you would be interested in, please contact Karen Sterling (Assistant Parish Clerk)

Finally, if you haven't been to Westwood Park recently... come and take a look!

Westwood Park Pavilion has been renovated at a cost of approximately £15,000

before

after



Could you be a local Champion?

With the support of Reactivate Bucks, we are looking for a volunteer to be a Community Champion, to help our local community get fit, feel healthier and have fun.

You would promote existing opportunities for people to get active, establish new adult focused activities and help direct people to training opportunities in order to lead activity sessions. Please contact Karen Sterling (Assistant Parish Clerk) for more information.



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

Full Council meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month (except August) at 7.30 p.m.

Planning committee meetings are held every three weeks, usually on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

At the beginning of both meetings there is a 10 minute period when members of the public can speak on any relevant subject. In the past, people have spoken in favour or in opposition to planning applications and on subjects such as vandalism, inconsiderate parking etc.

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

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

Support for other local organisations:

The Council makes financial contributions to other bodies, in particular a substantial grant to Little Chalfont Community Library.

It has also made a donation to the newly formed 'Chalfont Junction Youth Group', a youth club for 8 - 13 year olds which meets at Bell Lane School on Friday evenings.

The Youth Group is in need of volunteers to help the leaders and anyone interested should contact Simon Damery (07801 817666)

Plans for the Future:

The Council cannot resolve all matters alone and, for this reason, works in co-operation with the independent Little Chalfont Community Association.

Together, we will continue to address areas of identified improvements in consultation with the community and endeavour to protect the character of Little Chalfont through the work of the Planning Committee.

Also together, we will continue to act as pressure groups to ensure that issues such as anti-social behaviour, poor roads, parking, speeding problems and litter etc. are resolved.

Facilities at Westwood Park will continue to be improved.

Discussions are taking place in the hope of establishing allotments in the near future.

Your views are important.

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

- Sending comments to the Parish Clerk by letter or e-mail
- Speaking in the short public session at a Parish Council meeting
- Using the message board of the Community Association

www.littlechalfont.org.uk

Your Parish Councillors:

Brian Drew (Chairman)

Gary Smith (Vice Chairman)

Christopher Ingham (Chairman Planning Committee)

Lesley Hunt (Vice Chairman Planning Committee)

Martin Dale Christine Gibbs Peter Martin

One position is currently vacant

Your District Councillors are Don Phillips and Mike Smith

Your County Councillors are Martin Tett and Tim Butcher

Staff: The Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer is Janet Mason and she manages the Council's activities on a day to day basis assisted by Karen Sterling. Both are employed on a part-time basis and are the only direct labour employed by the Council

Parish Council Office:

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

The telephone number is 01494 766655.

Please call if you have any queries or e-mail clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk.

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

The Council's web site is: www.littlechalfont-pc.co.uk

Elections 2011:

The next elections for Parish Councillors will be held in May 2011.

Have you thought about being a Parish Councillor?

There is presently one vacancy on the Council which can be filled by co-option. If you would like to know more about the duties and responsibilities of being a Councillor, contact the Parish Clerk.

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