

LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL

Newsletter – Autumn 2017



Housing development proposals Parish council strongly objects to release of green belt

Proposed development of Burtons Lane/Lodge Lane site

Please read the leaflet accompanying
this newsletter

The accompanying leaflet went to press after this
newsletter so will have more up to date information.

The parish council and the community association
oppose the release of green belt land and fear for
the future of Little Chalfont if such a huge
development is allowed to go ahead.



Area for proposed development
between Burtons Lane and Lodge
Lane shaded in red

Little Chalfont residents will be aware that Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils (C&SB) are under pressure to find space for more housing in their emerging joint local plan.

The latest information shows that, in spite of the vigorous campaign conducted by our community against their proposals, C&SB still intend to release the green belt site between Burtons Lane and Lodge Lane for building up to 1,000 homes.

This new development would increase our current housing stock by up to 30%, changing the whole character of the area.

We will be a village in name only.

So please read the leaflet accompanying this newsletter for details of C&SB's latest update, the action that we are taking and our next public meeting, which we urge you to attend.

The pressure on our already congested roads, the lack of parking at Nightingales Corner and Chenies Parade shops, the overcrowded rail services into London, all will only get worse if such a large development is allowed to go ahead.

Over the past decade Little Chalfont has undergone a proportionally much greater expansion than Amersham, Chesham or Chalfont St Peter.

However, the price of new dwellings here remains so high that the proposed development would do little to help those most in need of a home.

The latest proposals are being taken forward in spite of the campaign run jointly by the parish council and the community association, the overwhelming opposition at the public meetings held in 2016, and over 2,000 letters and emails of protest from Little Chalfont residents in response to two consultations by C&SB.

C&SB still await some of the evidence that they have commissioned from consultants and others, which is being published on their website as it comes in.

Only when it is all in place will they make final decisions on the plan and move to public consultation. ■

Community centre news

The parish council is pleased to announce that, after four years of consultations, a planning application for the proposed new Little Chalfont Community Centre has been submitted for approval.

See page 2 for full details 



From the chairman

My second year continues to bring new challenges.

I am sad to lose Cllr Davis, who reluctantly has given up her position on the parish council owing to other commitments. She has been a great asset to the council, particularly for her financial skills but thankfully has agreed to help out occasionally.

This has created a vacancy on the parish council, so we are looking for another volunteer to join us.

I could not have fulfilled my role this year without the continuing support of the parish clerk and assistant parish clerk and, of course, my other councillor colleagues.

As you can see from the information in this newsletter, our priorities are to protect the village from over development to the best of our ability, and to bring to fruition the building of a new community centre.

Regular users of the village hall number about 1,000 a month, rising to up to 1,400 with the inclusion of one-off bookings. We desperately need a new centre, not only because of the increasingly dilapidated state of the current hall, but also because demand for bookings has outstripped availability.

We occasionally receive criticism of our efforts and it would be helpful if people who feel that they have better ideas would come forward and offer their expertise or become councillors.

I hope that the wild flowers in Bell Lane have brought a smile to your face! If there are other areas that you think would benefit from some brightening up, do let us know.

There really will be a new footpath onto the village green but everything seems to take an agonisingly long time to come to fruition. In order to get the best value for our residents we are obliged to obtain several quotes for each project. This can take a great deal of time chasing quotes, adding to our clerks' already huge workload.

If you have ideas for improving or enhancing things that already exist in the village please let us know. If you are interested in finding out more about getting involved, please contact the parish clerk on 01494 766655, or email clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk

Gill Roberts

Little Chalfont Community Centre Planning application submitted

It is now four years since the first consultation took place regarding the possibility of a new community centre to replace the current dilapidated village hall.

The parish council would like to thank all those who have visited the various exhibitions and given feedback. This has helped our architects to design a building that will serve the community for many years to come and, hopefully, address requirements of the Chiltern District Council.

All three surveys conducted by the parish council have shown overwhelming support for a building of the size being proposed.

On this latter point, over the past four years there have been many discussions with the planning authority on the design of the building. These have had the effect of steering us away from the original design towards something that we think has a realistic chance of being approved.

Two problems

We have had two major problems to deal with. The first is the fact that the land on which the current village hall is built is designated as green belt land, despite the fact that it has been tarmacked over for the past 60 years.

However, it is possible that this may not be the case when the district council's review of the green belt is completed.

The other major problem is that, in order to accommodate the new community centre, we would need to use the scrubland between the current village hall and Snells Wood car park. Despite the fact that it is scrubland, it has been designated as ancient woodland, and a single beech tree in the scrubland is regarded as sacrosanct.

This beech tree is currently very overgrown, in need of care and attention, and is leaning considerably towards the road. Our plans, therefore, needed to ensure that the roots of this beech tree were not affected by the new building. In order to meet these requirements, the new community centre building has been positioned in such a way that there is no threat to the tree.

An artist's impression of the new centre is shown inset. It will have a main hall on the first floor, which will



Artist's impression of the proposed design for the new Little Chalfont Community Centre

include space for a stage. It will also have a kitchen, toilets and storage rooms. A lift will be installed to ensure easy access.

The ground floor will have two smaller rooms that can be combined into one for larger events, and will have a smaller kitchen and further toilets. The parish council office will also be at ground floor level, with a separate entrance.

Parking

Most of the parking for the community centre will be at the rear of the new building but there also will be additional spaces alongside it in the area between the new building and the library. This area will be used for the farmers' market and other events as appropriate.

The planning application has now been submitted to Chiltern District Council for approval, and will almost certainly be decided by committee. We do not yet know the date of that meeting but it is likely to be in the New Year.

If the application is successful we will then need to put the funding in place and appoint contractors.

It is unlikely that the building will be ready for occupation before 2019, but we are sure it will be a great asset to the community. ■

Little Chalfont farmers' market

For winter/spring 2017/18, the farmers' market and craft fair will be held in the village hall from 9am-1pm:

Saturday 9 December 2017

Saturday 12 January 2018

Saturday 10 February 2018

Saturday 10 March 2018

Farmers' market: info@tvfm.org.uk.
Tel: 01235 227266

Craft fair: If you are interested in taking a stall at the craft fair, please contact the organiser, Carolyn Townner on 01895 677455

Speedwatch report

Measures proving effective

The parish council stepped up its speedwatch sessions during the summer months, and results are, as always, revealing.

Patrols have been stationed along Cokes Lane, (from the mini roundabout to the junction with Harewood Road); Nightingales Lane (from Cokes Lane to Harewood Road in both directions); Amersham Road, (from Chessfield Park to Stony Lane in both directions); and Cokes Lane (from junction with Maplefield Lane and Doggetts Wood Lane). In two of the four patrols, motorists were observed exceeding the speed limits, sometimes by as much as 15mph.

Details of the speeding car registrations are sent to the police; these details are entered on their database and the registered keeper of the speeding car is sent a letter informing them that their vehicle has been noted exceeding the speed limit.

A second letter is sent if the vehicle is logged again exceeding the speed limit in any speedwatch area in the Thames

Valley. The registered keeper will be advised that, if the vehicle is caught a third time the information will be passed on to roads policing for further action.

We are pleased to report that, on each occasion that these speedwatch patrols have been operating, members of the public have stopped to congratulate us on the initiative – including two motorists! They have commented that they hope to see the speedwatch in action more often, as residents appreciate the urgent need to curb speeding in the village.

We do need more volunteers, however, to ensure that the patrols are regular. If you are interested in taking part please contact the parish council office on 01494 766 655, or email clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk

It only needs a commitment of a couple of hours a month – the more volunteers we have the more frequent the patrols can be and the more likely we are to make a material difference to traffic speeds. ■

Briefly.....

Free parking days

To help residents with shopping in the run up to Christmas, the parish council has announced that four days of free parking have been agreed for Snells Wood car park. These are: Saturdays 2, 9, 16 and 23 December.

Elizabeth Avenue shops

Paradigm Housing has advised that there has been no progress on development plans for this site.

The 'right of use' of the amenity land at the rear of the shops prevents development of the initial plans, and the parish council is unaware of any progress on alternative development plans.

Your village needs you!

The parish council currently has a vacancy for a new parish councillor. The work is very varied and interesting and requires only a commitment of a few hours a month.

If you would like to be involved in the future of our village, including recommendations on planning applications, the new community centre and many other important issues, please get in touch with the parish clerk on 01494 766655.

Advertising signs in the village

The parish council has recently established a policy on acceptable advertising signage in the village. The main features of the policy relate to acceptable locations; duration of display; organisations permitted to advertise; size of advertising.

Any organisation that installs advertising that does not fit with the policy will be asked to remove the unacceptable signs within two days.

Westwood Park

Latest additions

In an effort to help protect the park pavilion from a recent spate of petty vandalism, the latest additions to the park include security features such as CCTV and security lighting.

The council is also considering the installation of extra security measures to reduce disturbances occurring in the car park area.

Recent additions to the children's play area include replacement balancing logs and new rubber mulch surrounds for the 'Sputnik' and roundabout.



New balancing logs at Westwood Park

Furthermore, extra refuse bins have been installed. The council makes regular inspections of this area to ensure that it is a safe and enjoyable area for children to play. The area is also inspected annually by RoSPA. ■

Is your neighbour ok?

Little Chalfont benefits greatly from its residents associations and neighbourhood watch schemes, but not everyone has someone looking out for them.

The idea of street associations has been put forward to the parish council. The intention is to reduce the specific targeting of older people by organised crime groups and raise awareness of social isolation and

loneliness for the protection of older and more vulnerable residents.

The aim is to create friendly and supportive streets where people look out for one another. The parish council, in conjunction with Little Chalfont Community Association, would like to explore the possibilities of strengthening our already community-minded village.

Our community police team and members of Bucks CC will explain the idea of street associations at a meeting in the village hall on **17 January 2018 at 7.30 pm.**

If you think your street would benefit from this idea, or you want to find out more, please contact Helen Tyers, tyers6sf@btinternet.com. It will then be up to you whether we adopt the idea or are able to strengthen our already flourishing associations. ■

Little Chalfont Nature Park

Changing seasons

The summer months were all that we hoped they would be!

Complementing the greatly increased number of daily visitors were the visits by schools, which are beginning to appreciate the park as a great learning resource.

It was also so good to see families enjoying picnics on warm weekends.

The annual meadow cut was completed successfully in late summer, revealing our anthills. The activity also attracted a special visitor to the park, a



young kestrel, pictured below, perched on the edge of the kite sculpture!

In July, the park was the setting for a challenge under the National Citizen Service scheme. The team successfully completed a full survey of all the trees within the park and also found time to undertake some bramble clearing.

Autumn has brought with it the splendid colours of the beech trees, pictured right.

The winter months are now upon us but don't be deterred from taking a



walk round the park, as it continues to change as each month goes by – there is always something new to see!

Our 'what you can see' information sheet on the notice board at the entrance is changed regularly and can also be downloaded from the website: naturepark.littlechalfont.org.uk ■

Parking restrictions

More changes to come

The parish council has identified, and reported to Transport for Bucks (TfB) for further review, several issues identified following the bedding-in of the wide ranging changes made earlier this year to waiting restrictions throughout the village.

Such a review is consistent with what we understand to be a recently adopted TfB policy of reviewing the impact of major changes to parking restrictions six months to a year after their implementation.

Most of our issues relate to the predictable – and expected – displacement of commuter parking, particularly to Linfields, Elizabeth Avenue and Chessfield Park.

In discussions of these issues with TfB, we discovered the adoption of a Bucks Parking Implementation Plan, in August 2016, that sets out a total of 22 policies and an intended timetable for their implementation.

These changes included the intended phasing out of free limited waiting on street and in limited-waiting bays, albeit with the possibility that limited free-ticketed parking may be allowed.

But, perhaps more controversially, there is the intention to extend 'curfew' restrictions from the currently prevalent one-hour no-waiting restriction – eg, 11am to 12noon – to two hours mid morning and again mid afternoon, 'where appropriate'!

The parish council was not alone in challenging these changes. We are therefore relieved to have been recently advised that the Bucks Parking Implementation Plan is to be reviewed by Bucks County Council Cabinet and that there may be "changes in future policy and direction going forward". ■

The following is the fourth in an occasional series of articles about groups that regularly use the village hall

The Good Companions Group

Little Chalfont Good Companions Club provides an opportunity for companionship and social contact, open to all over 60s in the local area.

At the heart of the club, which has been running for over 20 years, is a recognition of the benefit to older people of being able to get together with their own age group in a warm and convivial atmosphere.

This atmosphere is central to what the volunteers who run the club are trying to achieve and its value to members is shown by the feedback they provide and the friendships that result from being part of it.



Its value to the community is reflected in the generous support it gets from Chiltern District Council, Little Chalfont Parish Council and Little Chalfont Community Association.

There is no joining fee, but there is a small charge of £2 per person at each meeting. This covers refreshments and activities, among which are games and quizzes. There is also occasional entertainment laid on, such as singers, choirs and jazz bands.

The club also arranges speakers on various topics, with recent subjects including the work of McMillan carers and the Roald Dahl nurses who care for children with difficult-to-diagnose illnesses. There are also demonstrations such as flower arranging and Christmas decoration making, in which members participate.

Furthermore, we have outings from time to time to places of interest such as stately homes and there are lunches in local restaurants.

Every year there is a summer strawberry tea, an Easter tea, a Christmas party and a Christmas lunch. Some of these take place in attractive outside venues.

The club meets twice monthly on Thursday afternoons from 2-4pm at the village hall. New members are always very welcome. Anyone interested should phone Mary Phillips on 01494 762277. ■

Developments in the village

Major building works in the centre

Residents cannot have failed to notice quite a bit of redevelopment work being carried out in and around the village in the various GE buildings.

Amersham Place

The GE offices in Amersham Place in the centre of the village are currently being upgraded, and large white boards have surrounded the site for some months. This refurbished office complex will eventually become the main offices for GE Healthcare.

GE has applied for planning permission to turn the green in front of the offices into more car parking space to accommodate the additional staff.

While the parish council would greatly regret the loss of green space in the village, GE has said that it will consider allowing residents to use this parking area at weekends,

a concession that would be greatly appreciated.

Furthermore, the increased staff at Amersham Place will doubtless mean more business for Chenies Parade shops.

The work on Amersham Place is scheduled for completion by the spring of 2018.

Pollards Wood

The staff at Amersham Place has, in the meantime, been relocated at Pollards Wood until the refurbishment is finished. GE will then vacate Pollards Wood; as yet we do not know what will happen to the Pollards Wood offices.

Grove Centre

The Grove Centre in White Lion Road manufactures and distributes a number of medical products used



The white boards surrounding the refurbishment works at GE in the centre of the village

mostly for nuclear medicine imaging procedures.

As can be seen from the White Lion Road, the buildings at the front of the site have been demolished.

It is proposed to keep the present gatehouse and barrier and to build an inner core fence and new gatehouse further away from the White Lion Road. This will provide increased site security and alleviate traffic build up on White Lion Road. ■

Little Chalfont Community Association updates

LCCA website: www.littlechalfont.org.uk

Christmas lights

The Christmas lights in the village are due to be lit on the weekend of **25/26 November** and this year all the small trees will have new warm white lights.

This is the first phase of a three-phase programme of upgrading and extension, initiated and designed by a small team consisting of Rebecca Cargill of Chattertons; Lisa Stockdale of The Flower Boutique; and Sam Tolley of KoHo. The next two phases are planned for 2018 and 2019.

The Christmas lights in the village centre have always been a community

project, led by the community association but with businesses, residents and the parish council all contributing to the costs in different ways.

Full details of the programme and how the funding is to be addressed will be provided in the community association's February 2018 newsletter.

Volunteering opportunities

The community association and the nature park management group both have vacant roles at present, including:

- Village day helpers (see box right for details)
- Meeting notetaker
- Communications and PR
- Community safety
- Planning (LCCA)
- Businesses coordinator (LCCA)

For further information about any of these roles, please contact Roger Funk on 01494 762260 or email chairman@littlechalfont.org.uk

Community improvement plan

The community improvement plan is being developed following consultations with the community

Village day - June 2018

We need your help!

We have some gaps in the team that prepares for Village Day, and are looking for a handful of people who can spare up to a couple of hours a week to help out.

We really need people to raise awareness of the event, encourage the local schools and clubs to take part in competitions and activities, and help local businesses engage in the day.

It's really all about communication, although a creative streak might be useful too! If you are interested in helping to keep Village Day on the local calendar, please do get in touch for an informal chat - no commitment is needed at this point.

Many thanks!

Paul Nicholls and the team

07957 856352

earlier this year. It will replace the former community action plan that was in need of being updated.

There has been a delay in completing the plan and it is now expected to be finalised by the end of the year. It is then the intention to summarise how it will be taken forward in the community association's newsletter, scheduled for February 2018. ■

Small business Saturday

2 December 2017

This is the day of the year when the community makes a special effort to support our shops and traders, and in return, many will have offers to attract you.

Mark the date on your calendars and make that special effort to visit the village shops on that date. There will be free parking all day on 2 December in Snells Wood car park.

Affordable Warmth Network

Established in 1988, the Affordable Warmth Network (AWN) is an independent national charity operating on behalf of Chiltern District and Bucks County Councils.

It provides free, impartial advice and assistance on cutting energy bills, finding cheaper tariffs and heating homes affordably and efficiently.

In some circumstances it can also

offer free home visits from a trained energy adviser, who will carry out minor energy efficiency measures.

These include such things as draught proofing and checking that the most suitable available tariff is being used.

The AWN also has access to grants and financial assistance offered by local authorities and energy companies to help householders pay

less for energy saving measures, such as insulation and boiler replacements, thereby lowering bills.

One of the primary ways in which it does this is through its **Affordable Warmth Helpline** on **0800 107 0044**.

This helpline is free to use, and can give advice on heating homes efficiently and affordably, how to save fuel and reduce bills. ■

About Little Chalfont Parish Council

Parish councillors



*Gill Roberts
Chairman*



*Ian Griffiths
Vice chairman*



*Michael Parker
Planning committee
chairman*



*David Rafferty
Planning committee
vice chairman*



Brian Drew



Chris Ingham CMG



Vinny Patel



Janet Walford OBE

THIS COULD BE YOU!

We are looking for another volunteer to join the parish council.

See page 3 for details

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.

JW/11.17

Parish council meetings

Parish council general meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month, except for August.

The meetings are held at Little Chalfont Village Hall in Cokes Lane, Little Chalfont, commencing at 7.30 pm. 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 frequently take advantage of the opportunity allowed at all meetings for public comments, to express their views and to ask the council for support in relation to various matters.

The next meetings of the parish council will be held on 13 December 2017 and 10 January 2018.

Planning committee meetings are usually held every third Tuesday. At these meetings you can hear discussions of planning applications submitted for Little Chalfont, have the opportunity to comment on specific applications of interest to you and hear whether or not the parish council agrees that a planning application should go ahead.

The next meetings of the planning committee will be on held on 5 December 2017 and 2 January 2018.

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:

Mon, 9am-3pm. Tue-Fri, 9am-1pm.



*Natasha Meldrum
Parish clerk*



*Sallie Matthews
Assistant parish clerk*

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!