

LITTLE CHALFONT PARISH COUNCIL

Newsletter – Spring 2019



Development threat to our green belt 700 homes and other buildings still likely

Draft papers, which have appeared on the agendas of Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils in April and May 2019, show that their emerging local plan still includes a massive development on green belt land adjacent to Little Chalfont.

It appears that two years of well-founded objections by our community, including over 2,000 individual letters from residents in response to past public consultations, have not changed the minds of the planners.

The draft plan says that the land is allocated for residential-led use for approximately 700 homes, a primary school as part of a multi-functioning community hub and 15 pitches for gypsies and travellers.

More details are given in Policy BP SP6, Little Chalfont, in the appendix to the draft plan, which can be found on the website savelittlechalfont.org.uk/key-documents

Once the two councils endorse the draft plan, they intend to publish it for a final public consultation, lasting six weeks, in June and July 2019.



Little Chalfont village - the A404 can be seen in the bottom right hand corner

It will then be submitted to the Secretary of State in September, and examined by a government inspector from December 2019 with a view to approval and adoption in late 2020.

Our action plan

The coordination group, formed by the parish council and the Little Chalfont Community Association and including other residents, is studying the new draft plan and many new documents containing supporting evidence.

Once the plan is published we will distribute a leaflet, probably in early June 2019, giving the dates of the new consultation and our views on how residents can best respond to challenge the proposals.

Objections made previously will not count.

The district councils act on the assumption that all responses to previous consultations have been taken

into account when preparing the latest version of the plan. Therefore, such previous responses will not, **repeat not**, be considered by the government inspector who makes the final decision.

Please remember that, if you wish your views to receive attention, you will need to write again to the council during the period of the new consultation when that is announced.

As usual, the parish council and the community association intend to make a joint response. Please watch savelittlechalfont.org.uk and the Save Little Chalfont Facebook page for updates as the situation develops. ■

Finch Lane

Green space improvements

Some residents may not be aware that Little Chalfont Parish Council looks after the area of green space on Finch Lane, directly opposite the White Lion pub.

The land was originally passed to Amersham Town Council in a bequest. This was subsequently transferred to Little Chalfont Parish

Council when it was formed in 2007. A condition of the bequest was that the area should remain in a natural state.

The willow tree, which sadly died and was removed, will be replaced shortly.

Work will also start on improving the pond, which seems to hold water



The current very sorry looking 'pond' in the green space at the top of Finch Lane

for a few months of the year, dependent on the weather. The work will take place

in a staged way. We hope to show you how the area is looking in the next newsletter. ■



From the chairman

2019 was to have been the last election year for the current parish council. However the formation of a new unitary authority for Bucks in 2020 means that elections have had to be postponed for 12 months.

I am pleased to report that all nine current parish councillors expect to remain in office until a new council can be elected in May 2020.

Your parish council has had a busy six months. At a recent meeting we discussed replacing the current street lighting – excluding the main roads, which are the responsibility of the county council – with LED bulbs.

The bulbs we use at the moment will become obsolete later this year so a change is needed. The potential savings in electricity and maintenance will more than outweigh the initial costs within a few years. LED bulbs also bring environmental advantages. In addition, two local projects were agreed for 2019/2020 at the recent local area forum (LAF).

Firstly funding for a feasibility study was granted to assess traffic safety issues at the junction of Lodge Lane and Burtons Lane. Currently the speed limit on Burtons Lane at this point is 60mph and vision is impaired by a blind bend just before the crossroads.

Secondly the Beel Close/Marigold Walk underpass will be provided with lighting within the tunnel, street lamps near each entrance plus CCTV cameras.

This should improve safety for pedestrians using the underpass, particularly at night. These two projects will be funded by the parish council, the LAF, CDC and the LCCA.

A feasibility study was also conducted last year at the junction of Cokes Lane with Nightingales Lane, the site of several recent traffic accidents because of the very sharp bend. Traffic calming measures will be suggested and hopefully implemented soon.

Finally, as usual the parish council will have a stall on Village Day, so if anyone wants information about the parish council, or wishes to raise any issue please speak to us on the day. We love to hear your comments!

Ian Griffiths

Annual parish council meeting Fascinating talks from two speakers

The Little Chalfont annual parish council annual meeting was held at the village hall on Tuesday 30 April 2019. We were pleased to have two great speakers to address the audience on the evening.

The first speaker was **Gary Grant**, owner of the toyshop chain 'The Entertainer'. We are sure that many residents will know of The Entertainer stores, and may also have shopped there as well.

The Entertainer brand began when the Grants took over the Pram and Toy Bar in Amersham on the Hill in 1981. Since then the company has undergone massive expansion and now has stores nationwide.

At the parish meeting, Gary spoke about his early life in the Little Chalfont and then Amersham neighbourhoods. Despite some early setbacks, he went on to make a big success of his life with the toy stores and his charity, Restore Hope.

The principal aim of the charity is to provide facilities for teaching, training, and leisure activities for those who, because of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty, or social and economic circumstances, have need of such facilities.

The work also includes parenting courses for single mums who may never have had true parenting experiences themselves when they were growing up.

Our second speaker was **Chris Holden** from Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards office. His talk concerned the ever-growing threat and sophistication of scams. In fact, some scams have become so sophisticated that even those who consider themselves computer savvy get caught sometimes.

But the principal target of scammers is the more vulnerable in society. This is especially the case for some elderly people who may live alone and/or have become lonely. Such people are wide open to kindly sounding words from strangers.

Chris gave examples of several scams involving such people who were conned out of tens of thousands of pounds for unnecessary work on their properties. As well as taking the usual precautions to prevent being scammed, he also emphasised the importance of people looking out for neighbours who may be vulnerable. ■

Gary Grant (right) from The Entertainer, talking about charity 'Restore Hope'. Chris Holden (below) from Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards office, talking about scams



● Following our article on scams in the Autumn 2018 newsletter, the parish council has now added a scams link to the parish council website home page.

This can be found at <http://www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk>

Please click on the 'scams information' link and take a look at the informative short videos that have been produced by national companies on scams.

Although mostly light hearted in nature, they carry valuable information on how you could be possibly scammed, and how to avoid it.

Little Chalfont farmers' market

For summer 2019, the farmers' market and craft fair will be held in the village car park and hall from 9am-1pm:

Saturday 8 June

Saturday 13 July

Saturday 10 August (No craft fair)

If you are interested in taking a stall at the farmers' market please contact info@tvfm.org.uk or call 01895 677455. If you are interested in taking a stall at the craft fair please contact Jan Pursall on jan.pursall@ntlworld.com

Westwood Park

Salad days!

The welcome return of some summer days sees Westwood Park coming back to life, with the adjacent Westwood Woods adding to the beauty of this well loved park.

This year we have undertaken a number of maintenance projects. We were able to repaint the pavilion earlier this year and also do some restorative maintenance, which has turned out well.

This last winter was dry compared to the previous year but we are aware of the flooding situation that can occur on the park at the Chessfield Park entrance. Contractors have dug some investigation trenches to determine why the flooding can occur under adverse weather conditions, even though a drainage pipe was

successfully laid about 10 years ago and, until recently functioned well.

We are waiting for a report on what has been found and, on receipt of which we will decide on the appropriate action to be taken.

The parish council has installed a new park bench, kindly sponsored by a local resident. If you would like to sponsor a new bench in the park, please call the parish clerk, who will be happy to supply details of how this may be done.

Parts of the Westwood Park car park are due to be resurfaced with new gravel this year. This will remove the potholes and make the surface of the car park more navigable.

Two temporary toilets for park



The newly painted Westwood Park pavilion

users will be installed at the rear of the pavilion, on an experimental basis, for the school summer holidays. If this proves successful, we would look at providing these facilities on a more permanent basis.

We would like your views, whether positive or negative, on whether you think this idea works. Please email the parish clerk with your comments at clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk ■

Parking update

More restricted parking

Last summer's informal consultation with local residents confirmed the extent of agreement for changes to waiting restrictions in various locations close to the village centre.

These proposals were accepted in principle by Transport for Bucks (TfB), which then conducted a formal 'statutory' consultation, mandatory for any traffic regulation order (TRO), prior to its implementation. A TRO is necessary to ensure that a waiting prohibition/restriction is lawfully enforceable.

This formal survey ran from 6th December 2018 until 3rd January 2019 and the results reconfirmed local support for new parking proposals for the following roads: Chalfont Ave; Snells Wood Court; Cokes Lane; Harewood Road; Yarrowside; Linfields; Chessfield Park.

Having reached agreement, we had to be patient while all the necessary legal and approval processes were completed within Bucks County Council, adverts posted in local papers, supply chain sign delivery issues and adverse weather conditions. Finally the changes were effective from 11 April. ■

Briefly.....

Speedwatch volunteers needed

The local speedwatch sessions have proved very effective, but we really need more volunteers to make this a regular event.

Speeding is a serious problem in parts of our village, so if you would like to help please contact the parish council. Full training will be provided.

Book club at the library

The penultimate Wednesday book group meets at the Little Chalfont Community Library every month at 7:30pm.

Each month members agree on a book to read. They then discuss their opinions, whether positive or negative, at the next meeting, held in a friendly and convivial atmosphere.

If you would like to join the group, please email Sarah Jameson at se.jameson@virginmedia.com or complete the enquiry form available on the library website.

Our new community centre

The parish council has decided to appeal against the CDC decision to refuse planning permission for the proposed new building to replace village hall.

However, it could be several months before an inspector makes a decision.

Little Chalfont emergency plan

Making residents safe



The parish council is currently working on its emergency plan document, which will contain key information and contacts should an incident occur that severely affects Little Chalfont. This could include disruption from very severe weather to any type of major incident.

The document will give key contacts in the village to disseminate information to different parts of the community.

It will also include information about key locations that could be used in the event of a major emergency. In addition, it will list local support, including people with skills such as medical staff, electricians, plumbers,

caterers etc.

We are also looking for volunteers for a 4x4 vehicle group, one of which already works successfully in Chesham. This could be extremely helpful in assisting vulnerable people, for example, in the event of long-term snowfall that could make it very difficult to travel and get essential supplies and medicines.

If you have any of skills listed, or have a suitable vehicle for difficult weather conditions and would be happy to assist in the event of an emergency, please do contact the parish office. ■

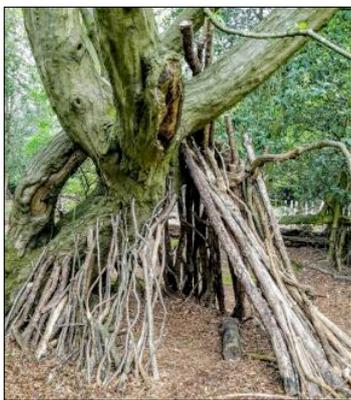
Little Chalfont Nature Park

Spring is here again

Our beautiful nature park continues to develop and attract lots of visitors, feathered, furry and two legged. Now that spring is here birds are busy finding new homes in many of the nest boxes and the bug hotel is providing fine accommodation for its creepy crawlies!

New schools liaison appointed

The management group is keen to get schools more involved in using the park by incorporating it into their syllabuses. We have therefore recently appointed a local resident, Mary Ryder, who has volunteered to take on the important role of schools liaison.



Dens are getting ever more creative in their construction!

The park is a free resource for learning and can provide inspiration for virtually all subjects. It is great to see young artists sketching in the park and budding botanists investigating the flora.

Mathematicians can see numbers in everything around them and literary students can curl up in the storytelling chair and tell their stories or muse on new ones.

Good use is being made of the den-making area as camps regularly appear and the picnic area has been used throughout the winter.

New life everywhere!

The meadow will soon be bursting into life with its abundance of wild flowers, including knapweed, rattle, greater and lesser stitchwort and wild orchids amongst many others.

We would like to instigate a plant survey but need a knowledgeable volunteer to lead the project. We already have some interested volunteers willing to help so you wouldn't be on your own. This would build on the information originally collected before the park opened.

Other activities

The 'friends of the nature park' continue to hold monthly working parties, carrying out general maintenance. Once a week volunteers



The latest donated memorial bench in the nature park

pick up the litter, unfortunately left by some people, to keep the park pristine.

Fundraising to provide hard paths for the park and develop a sensory area continues and although a long time coming, signs should soon be seen in the village directing visitors to the nature park.

We are very grateful for a newly donated memorial bench that was installed just before Easter.

If you haven't visited the park yet, you don't know what you're missing! It provides a little oasis of tranquillity in this busy world and children can run around and explore and create their own adventures.

There are many ways in which you can get involved in the park, so if you want to help in any way with this wonderful resource, please look on the website and get in touch at www.naturepark.littlechalfont.org.uk ■

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

The Chalfont & Amersham Wine Group

We are your local, friendly wine club using Little Chalfont Village Hall as a base.

We meet once a month from 8-10pm where you can enjoy an evening of wine tasting, usually led by a wine merchant, winemaker or other wine expert, together with a nibble of cheese, lots of conversation and exploration in a relaxed, friendly and fun atmosphere.

We started over 20 years ago and have gone from strength to strength thanks to our committed volunteers who ensure that we have interesting and diverse presenters every month.



An enjoyable evening at the Chalfont & Amersham wine group

If you enjoy drinking wines from all over the world and want to discover more but are put off by stuffy wine circles, do check us out on www.chalfamwineclub.org.uk – we would love to hear from you. We cater for all levels of knowledge, from novices to expert, and strive to make our tastings relaxed and enjoyable.

From time to time we organise trips to vineyards, both in the UK and abroad, as well as other

extraordinary events.

Don't miss our special event on Monday 17 June 2019 at 8pm where we have secured a visit from one of the world's top whisky experts, Jim Murray, who will present a range of quality whiskies.

This event is open to non-members and costs just £30 per person. Please email rastein1952@gmail.com for further details.

For more information and to join the club please visit <https://www.chalfamwineclub.org.uk> ■

Blooming Little Chalfont

Let's plant some flowers!

Did you see the recently televised 'Britain in bloom' series, which included an episode devoted to our neighbours, Amersham? Amersham achieved a gold award in last year's competition and we would like to congratulate them on their success.

Could Little Chalfont do something similar? Although the parish does not have the necessary resources to compete in the Britain in bloom event, we could, instead, start with a number of small projects that would improve the look of the village.

For example, we could start by improving the flowerbeds in the children's play area in Westwood Park. These beds were part of the landscaping when the play area

was opened seven years ago, but have been somewhat neglected, as can be seen in the picture.

A small group of volunteers could transform this area in a relatively short time and hopefully continue to maintain the beds in the future.

If this proves successful, the village could benefit from similar help with planting flowers in other areas for the benefit of everyone who lives in the village.

If you feel you would be able to assist in making the well-used play area flowerbeds look even more attractive, or if you have any suggestions for other such projects,



The rather forlorn flowerbeds near the play area at Westwood Park

please telephone the parish clerk, Natasha Meldrum on 01494 766 655, or email her at clerk@littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk.

Or drop by our stand on Village Day to discuss the options. We would love to hear your comments. ■

Little Chalfont Community Association updates

LCCA website: www.littlechalfont.org.uk

Village Day – don't miss out!

The programme, with more to come, includes: • Live Jazz Band • Blossoms Ballet • Taekwondo display • Competitions • Charity Fun Run • Dog show • Bake Off • Raffle • Scarecrows • Harry Potter • Peppa Pig children's quizzes in the library.

Details and entry forms are available to download on the Village Day website page, www.littlechalfont.org.uk/villageday.html and you can keep up to date on our Facebook page, @lcvillageday.

After the success of the raffle last year, so well supported by our shops and businesses with some excellent prizes, there will again be a raffle to help cover the costs of Village Day.

Please note: The car park at the front of GE Healthcare is being taken over for Village Day and will **not** be available for the community to use. However, GE Healthcare has kindly agreed to make its car park at the rear

available, particularly for those wishing to shop in the village during the morning.

Committee vacancies

There are still vacancies on the LCCA committee and should you be willing to give some of your time, even if only a few hours a month, please email chairman@littlechalfont.org.uk to explore the opportunities.

In particular, the secretary's role has still to be filled and offers to help would be greatly appreciated.

The Sugar Loaf Inn

We can now confirm that the Sugar Loaf Inn – to be renamed The Metropolitan – is to be completely refurbished and the aim is to open this summer.

The new tenants are a family concern, adding The Metropolitan to their current portfolio of five pubs, all of which are operated as village/ community pubs. A family member will be managing the pub and moving into the accommodation above.

The proposed alterations have received planning approval and include covered seating at the front, a small function room in the



The Sugar Loaf now (left) and after proposed refurbishment (right)

basement, a coffee house in the extension on the right hand side, and parking at the rear.

The community association and parish council are in touch with the new tenants and the project manager for the freeholders, Charles Wells.

Bearing in mind the site's key position in the village centre, they will be working with them through the refurbishment stage to help minimise any disruption and inconvenience to the community.

Our next newsletter

The next LCCA newsletter will be delivered throughout the village on 6 July. As usual, it will report on Village Day but you can also look forward to articles on a wide range of subjects, including an introduction to the Community Improvement Plan – replacing the former Community Action Plan; a Chiltern wide project to encourage visitors to the Chilterns; and our good neighbour initiative. ■



News from GE Healthcare

We are continuing with plans announced last summer and office-based employees at the Grove Centre have now moved to either its Pollards Wood or Amersham Place site.

Work on the decommissioning of the land at the front of the Grove Centre site is progressing and, as part of this, we regret that we have had to demolish Chilcote House.

Residents may have read that the Biopharma part of GE Healthcare's business has been sold to Danaher; the sale is due to complete towards the end of 2019 after customary approvals.

At this point, some of our employees are expected to transfer to Danaher, but we expect that they will remain located in Amersham.

We are pleased that local residents are finding the car park at Amersham Place useful when visiting the shops at Chenies Parade at the weekends.

We were also delighted to be able to support, together with the Little Chalfont Community Association, the local guides, brownies and rainbows with the essential acquisition of new information packs. ■

About Little Chalfont Parish Council

Parish councillors



*Ian Griffiths
Chairman*



*Mike Crowe
Vice chairman*



*Michael Parker
Planning committee
chairman*



*David Rafferty
Planning committee
vice chairman*



David Alexander



Brian Drew



Chris Ingham CMG



Vinny Patel



*Janet Walford OBE
Newsletter editor*

Parish council meetings

Parish council general meetings: 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 7.30pm. 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 may 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 12 June and 10 July.

Planning committee meetings: Usually held on the second Wednesday of each month, starting at 7pm or 7.30pm – please check website or notice boards for details. At these meetings you can hear discussions on planning applications for Little Chalfont, comment on any that are of interest to you, and hear whether the parish council agrees that a planning application should go ahead. The next meetings of the planning committee will be on held on 12 June and 10 July at 7pm.

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.

COUNCIL WEBSITE: www.littlechalfont-pc.gov.uk



*Natasha
Meldrum
Parish clerk*



*Sallie Matthews
Assistant parish
clerk*

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.

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!