

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES BULLETIN

www.whitchurchonthames.com

JANUARY 2009

Parish Council news

News from the meetings held on Monday 8th December 2008 and Monday 5th January 2009.

Traffic survey

In September Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) carried out a survey to measure the speed of traffic along the High Street and Hardwick Road. Peter Ronalds, area engineer at OCC, attended the meeting and summarised the survey results. He informed the council that the speeding problem is “only a perceived problem”. Applying the OCCs criteria for speeding the survey results show that the village does not have a serious speeding problem.

The Parish Council are unhappy about this as although the mean average speed (during the survey period) was only 29mph some drivers are still breaking the speed limit. This is dangerous for pedestrians, children and the elderly especially, using the narrow pavements that we have in Whitchurch High Street. OCC give very limited solutions:

20 mph speeding limit – some pilot schemes are being carried out in Oxford city and if successful may be introduced in other areas of Oxfordshire. Peter Ronalds advised that a 20mph limit wouldn't be permitted by OCC at the moment. Peter also advised the council that 20mph limits aren't always effective, especially as 20mph isn't a statutory limit so the police couldn't enforce it. Despite this the parish council will request a 20mph limit from OCC

Removal of white lines – this helps to slow traffic as there is the perception that the road is narrower than it actually is. OCC are running six pilot schemes in villages in Oxfordshire where there is already evidence of reduced accident rates. All Cllrs agreed that this could be an effective way of slowing traffic. The Parish Council have already requested the removal of white lines.

Vehicle activated signs - this is no longer an option. The Parish Council had agreed last year to fund the project and had requested the devices from OCC but were encouraged by OCC to delay in favour of a further survey. Once the survey was completed we were informed that the policies had changed and we were no longer able to have any VAS in the village even if the Parish Council were to fund the project!

Toll bridge

Cllr Oppenheimer welcomed the members of public to the meeting who were attending to discuss their objections to the proposed toll increase. Cllr Oppenheimer read through the points in the letter from the parish council to the Department for Transport objecting to the increase. The letter can be viewed at www.whitchurchonthames.com.

Geoff Weir spoke on behalf of the Whitchurch Bridge Company and said he understands the proposal is a motive issue for the village. He suggested that people read the Whitchurch Bridge Company FAQ page of the website and this should help to answer most questions.

The website address is www.whitchurchbridge.com.

A number of questions were asked by members of the public and these were answered by Geoff Weir, the District and County Councillors and the Parish Council. You can view these questions in the minutes which are also published on the village website.

District Councillor Slatter informed the Council that South Oxfordshire District Council have also written to the Department for Transport to request a public inquiry.

The Department for Transport have confirmed they have received the Parish Council's letter objecting to the proposed toll increase. More information will be published in the Bulletin.

Playground maintenance

The Council have arranged for the older climbing frame to be repainted and the graffiti on the fence to be painted over. This work will be carried out when the weather improves.

News from Thames Valley Police

The Council welcomed Mark Bell – the area Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). He briefed the Council on recent crimes in the area involving the theft of tools from vans. He warned that the thieves are professional and probably spend time scoping the target vehicle. He asked for residents to be vigilant and in particular keep an eye out for an Irish male who drives a white transit van and is knocking on doors asking for scrap metal and enquiring about potential work. If you notice anything suspicious please call Thames Valley Police on 08458 505 505. Please take the vehicle registration number and contact the police to get a spot check on the vehicle.

Mark informed that Council that police officers working from Henley police station are driving around Whitchurch most evenings.

He also wants to remind residents to make sure they ask people calling at the door for identification. If they are unsure they can phone the number above.

Village plan report

The Council reviewed and agreed the village plan report.

Cllr Brooks is keen to become involved in the Environmental Group and Cllr Oppenheimer will continue to support the Village Hall Group and Harry Butterworth the roads, pavements and traffic sub committee. The Parish Council praised everyone on the village plan committee for their hard work and will continue to support the work where possible.

District Councillor Report

District Cllr Slatter informed the Council that there have been a few cases of breaches in planning consent recently. These breaches are examined by the planning committee at SODC. If anyone has any concerns they can contact the Parish Council or SODC planning department.

She was pleased to share the news that South Oxfordshire District Council had won 8th place in a competition of 383 councils.

New Planning Applications

4 Whitchurch House, High Street [PO8/E1243/LB](#) - Closure of internal doorway between hallway and lounge - **no strong views**
The Vines – [P08/E1244](#) -Two storey side extension with attached single garage - **no objections** (as there are no objections from the neighbours and it will help to improve the appearance)

31 Swanston Field [P08/E1307/RET](#) – new dwelling on land to the rear of Swanston Field (An amendment of previous Planning Permission P06/E0555 to retain basement/games room)(as amended by drawing no.493/04F accompanying letter from Agent dated 15 December 2008) – **object** (due to overdevelopment and paragraph 12 in design statement which states there will be no windows in the east side)

Planning decisions

4 Whitchurch House, High Street [P08/E1243/LB](#) – closure of internal doorway between hallway and lounge – **granted**
10 Swanston Field - appeal ref: **APP/Q3115/A/08/2083385** - two storey side and rear extension & single storey side garage extension, forming granny annex and additional living space - **appeal allowed and planning permission granted**

Full minutes can be viewed at www.whitchurchonthames.com
You can contact the parish clerk at wotparishclerk@aol.com

Village Plan

The Steering Committee's recommendations were presented to a capacity audience in the Village Hall on 28 November. The reports of the four study groups were summarised by Harry Butterworth (Traffic, Roads & Pavements), Stephen Trinder (Village Hall), Peter Smith (Environment) and Audrey Kingham (Community Activities).

A number of valuable comments were made at the meeting and these have been taken into account in the Plan. A full record has been posted on the web site – www.Whitchurchonthames.com – for those unable to attend. At a later date the study group reports will also be available there, as well as the Village Plan itself.

The Draft Plan was sent to the Parish Council on 31 December in advance of their discussion of it on 5 January. Approval was given and it was agreed to set up sub-committees directly to take forward the Plan's recommendations under the above headings. There remains discussion of the Plan with SODC and OCC, prior to its formal adoption, after which the Plan will be printed and distributed to all households.

We take this opportunity of thanking everyone for their interest in the project – the members of the study groups, the distributors and collectors of the questionnaires and the many others who helped in so many different ways. Our thanks go too to all those completing the questionnaires, offering comments and attending meetings. Such active interest now needs to be converted into support for the Parish Council in its efforts to make the improvements to life in Whitchurch that everyone wants.

Stephen Trinder
Chairman, Steering Committee

The New Year Village Walk, 2008.

Over 100 people and an assortment of dogs took part in the New Year's Day walk organised by the Whitchurch Society.

Our routemaster, Eric Hartley, had organised three itineraries, all starting with a long procession up the hill past the War Memorial to Beech Farm and beyond. There we split into three separate parties; the short route back via Whitchurch Hill, the intermediate route tracing the old Reading to Goring road down to Gatehampton Manor, and the longest route striking out further towards Cold Harbour and Great Chalk Wood, before returning to Whitchurch along the Thames path.

We were blessed with good dry weather and excellent conditions underfoot, and all agreed that it was a most congenial way to bring in the New Year. Many continued to the Ferryboat to enjoy a drink and a warming cup of soup.

Many thanks to Eric (and to his assistants, Mike Scott, Ian Bruce and Peter Hawley) for reconnaissance, signposting and leadership. This was the second Village Walk – an innovation is now a tradition!

Look out for details of the Daffodil Walk to Elvedon Priory in the spring.

Peter Smith

Whitchurch-on-Thames Habitat Study Group (WoTHabs)

Winter Working Parties

If you fancy getting out in the fresh air to a beautiful spot overlooking the village, why not join us on Sunday mornings for some therapeutic scrub burning? Sandra is carrying out a big scrub clearing exercise in the County Wildlife Site at Chalkhills to allow regeneration of the lovely downland flora on part of the chalk hillside. All help, however occasional, is extremely welcome, and will speed up completion of the task before the spring.

Please contact Sandra Parkinson on 984 4031 or sparkinson7@googlemail.com to find out more details.

Wildlife Explorers

A reminder about our next event which we hope to organise for families in the spring - if you would like to be circulated with the details when we have fixed the date, please contact me on 984 4365 or sally.woolhouse@homecall.co.uk.

Calling all **STUDENTS!!**

The trustees of Whitchurch United Charities want to remind all students and families that the Charity has funds available to help with the cost of books and equipment or other educational expenses. Eligible students are young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch. (Note - if you receive the Parish Magazine for St Mary's and St John's churches, you are in the parish and therefore eligible).

Applications are processed twice a year, with the closing dates being 31st Jan and 31st July. However, late applications are considered if the available funds for the previous 6 month period have not been fully allocated.

All applications and decisions are treated in strict confidence by the Trustees.

If you would like more details or an Application form and Notes, please write to:-

Mr Peter Hawley
The Grant Application Secretary
Whitchurch United Charities
3 Whitchurch House
High Street
Whitchurch-on-Thames
Reading RG8 7EP

Our Trains – to and from READING

This summary of the current timetable (until 16 May 2009) is reproduced with the permission of First Great Western but it is not published by them.

Monday to Friday - (OUT) TO: READING (* Tuesday to Friday)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Pang | *0059 | 0428 | 0533 | 0602 | 0630 | 0647 | 0655 | 0717 | 0744 | 0804 | 0832 | 0852 | 0917 | 0947 |
| Pang | 1017 | 1047 | 1117 | 1147 | 1217 | 1247 | 1317 | 1347 | 1417 | 1447 | 1517 | 1547 | 1617 | 1647 |
| Pang | 1717 | 1747 | 1817 | 1847 | 1917 | 1947 | 2017 | 2047 | 2147 | 2217 | 2337 | | | |

Monday to Friday - (HOME) TO: PANGBOURNE

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Rdg | 2350(Su) | 0557 | 0623 | 0653 | 0721 | 0753 | 0823 | 0853 | 0923 | 0953 | 1023 | 1053 | 1123 | 1153 |
| Rdg | 1223 | 1253 | 1323 | 1353 | 1423 | 1453 | 1523 | 1553 | 1623 | 1653 | 1723 | 1756 | 1818 | 1827 |
| Rdg | 1856 | 1917 | 1927 | 1956 | 2025 | 2054 | 2127 | 2157 | 2227 | 2258 | 2340 | 0019 | | |

Saturday - (OUT) TO: READING

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Pang | 0059 | 0547 | 0617 | 0647 | 0717 | 0747 | 0817 | 0847 | 0917 | 0947 | 1017 | 1047 | 1117 |
| Pang | 1147 | 1217 | 1247 | 1317 | 1349 | 1417 | 1447 | 1517 | 1547 | 1617 | 1647 | 1717 | 1747 |
| Pang | 1817 | 1847 | 1917 | 1947 | 2017 | 2047 | 2117 | 2221 | 2351 | | | | |

Saturday - (HOME) TO: PANGBOURNE

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Rdg | 0545 | 0619 | 0702 | 0723 | 0753 | 0825 | 0853 | 0923 | 0953 | 1023 | 1053 | 1123 | 1153 |
| Rdg | 1223 | 1253 | 1323 | 1353 | 1423 | 1453 | 1523 | 1553 | 1623 | 1653 | 1723 | 1753 | 1823 |
| Rdg | 1853 | 1923 | 1953 | 2023 | 2053 | 2123 | 2153 | 2253 | 2349 | | | | |

Sunday - (OUT) TO: READING

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|------|------|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------------------|
| Pang | 0837 | 0941 | 1037 | 1137 | 1237 | 1337 | 1437 | 1537 | 1637 | 1737 | 1837 | 1937 | 2037 | |
| Pang | 2143A | 2151B | 2251 | 2345 | A – Runs from 29 March. | | | | | | | | | B – Runs until 22 March |

Sunday - (HOME) TO: PANGBOURNE

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Rdg | 0848 | 0943 | 1043 | 1143 | 1244 | 1344 | 1444 | 1544 | 1644 | 1744 | 1844 | 1944 | 2044 |
| Rdg | 2147 | 2254 | 2350 | | | | | | | | | | |



WOODCOTE LIBRARY

We're looking forward to displaying Jan Clegg's new quilts and other patchwork and applique works. Those who saw her last exhibition will know how good her sewing is, and can also re-acquaint themselves with the "Village Plan" quilt which is hanging in the classroom area here.

Our new People's Network computers will be familiar to many by the start of the month, but for those who would like some help with the new format or for those starting afresh we are holding a Surfers Session on Friday February 27th. Please book a slot at the library desk, from 10am to 12 noon.

Last, but not least, our new fiction circulating collection is "Reading Escapes".

PS AND we shall be holding a storytime session for 3 to 8 year olds on Thursday 19th February from 10.30 to 11.30 in the morning. Free tickets available from the desk. Come and join us for animal antics!

Wad's Presents their 2009 Pantomime

PUSS IN BOOTS

Great family fun with laughs and boos (and custard pies!!) in plentiful supply, as well as a fantastic collection of foot-tapping, hip-swaying musical numbers.....it will be 100% guaranteed fun and frolics.

Box Office opens Friday 2nd January , Please contact :
Joan Poyser 01491 680573

Woodcote Village Hall

Saturday 24th January Matinee 2.15 pm and Evening 7.30pm

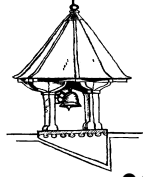
Sunday 25th January Matinee 2.15pm

Friday 30th January Evening 7.30pm.

Saturday 31st January Matinee 2.15pm. and Evening 7.30pm

Ticket Prices £6.00 Adults and £5.00 Children

Goring Heath Parish Charity



January 2009

**The Trustees of GHP Charity would like to wish you all a
Happy New Year.**

Looking back to last year, the hall became very busy with more clubs and activities filling regular weekly slots. But don't worry, that still leaves (most) Friday afternoons or evenings and all day Saturdays and Sundays free for parties! If you would like more information about booking the Hall or details of the clubs etc: then contact me Theresa Elsome on 0118 9842056 or email bnt@waitrose.com

We must not forget the shows regularly organised and presented by the Hall Committee, so if you have not already done so hurry up and book your tickets for **Saturday January 31st** when we shall have the chance to enjoy "**Talking Heads,**" details are shown on the full-page advert.

Later in the year, it will be your chance to enter the increasingly popular **Spring Gardening Show** to be staged on **Saturday April 11th.**

The titles for the photographic section are:-

1. Serenity. 2. The garden in winter. 3. Close up and personal.
Schedules will be available from the end of January.

And so you can plan well in advance and NOT miss the late **Summer Gardening Show**, here is the date for your diary –

Saturday August 29th.

So Goring Heath Parish Hall offers so much to the Community, a large choice of clubs and activities, Keep Fit classes for the over 50s and for a younger group, a choice of two Yoga classes, Pilates, Children's dance, Bridge, a Tots group, Scottish Dance, monthly Woman's Institute meetings, the History Society and the many more activities, such as a Quiz night, Plays and Gardening Shows, all held in the most delightful surroundings. Just come and see!

Theresa Elsome

The Winter Lecture Series

Our unique series of evening lectures brings together leading gardeners and garden designers to give us their perspective on gardening.

The Creation of the Garden at East Ruston

Alan Gray (Garden Owner) on Thursday 12th February.

When Alan Gray and Graham Robeson moved to the Old Vicarage at East Ruston in Norfolk it was a blank canvas. Come along and learn more about the Garden they have created.

Herbs for Senses and Scents

Jekka McVicar (Nursery Owner and Writer) on Thursday 19th February. As Jekka says “When one brushes past a lavender bush, the aroma alone soothes the spirits, and when it flowers and becomes covered in butterflies it is a sight to gladden the eye.”

There are No Right Ways to Garden - Only Alternatives

Mirabel Osler (Gardener and Writer) on Thursday 26th February.

Mirabel Osler will talk to us about the ephemeral qualities of gardens and how there are no right ways to garden only alternatives.

Aberglasney Gardens: The Restoration of an Elizabethan Garden for the 21st Century

Graham Rankin (Garden Director) on Thursday 12th March.

Graham will share with us the restoration of Aberglasney, its gardens and its magnificent house, back to its earlier glory.

The Power of Creative Planting

Chris Marchant (Nursery Owner) on Thursday 19th March

An exploration of how beautiful planting can not only be a feast for the eyes, but may also change the way we feel about a place, or even how we behave towards each other.

Lectures take place at 8.00 pm in the Nelson Mandela Auditorium at the Said Business School. Tickets cost £10.00 (includes a glass of wine) or £45.00 for the series. To book a ticket please call 01865 286690.

Louise Allen

Curator University of Oxford Botanic Garden

Rose Lane Oxford OX1 4AZ

Telephone 01865 286690

louise.allen@obg.ox.ac.uk www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk

PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

WE ARE LOOKING FOR MORE DRIVERS/OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre is a long established (over 30 years) local charity that provides transport for the sick, disabled and infirm living in Pangbourne and the adjacent areas of Purley, Sulham, Tidmarsh, Lower/Upper Basildon, Whitchurch and parts of Tilehurst.

'Pangbourne Volunteers' provides a valuable and essential service for many people who are elderly or disabled and unable to drive who might otherwise have considerable difficulty in keeping medical appointments such as doctor's surgeries, hospitals and day centres.

PLEASE DO JOIN US

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER DOES NOT MEAN TAKING ON ANY UNWELCOME OR HEAVY COMMITMENT. IT SIMPLY MEANS THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO BE ASKED

What would we ask you to do? Our main need is for drivers because most requests are for transport on short journeys to local surgeries, hairdressers, dentists, hospitals, etc. We offer a mileage payment to defray your petrol costs. How much you do is entirely up to you – you can always say "No" if it's not convenient.

As well as the volunteer drivers, the Centre is also looking for volunteers to help in the office which is situated in the newly refurbished Pangbourne Village Hall.

WHITCHURCH UNITED CHARITIES

(Registered Charity No. 264826 of 22.7.1907)

History

Over the centuries, residents in Whitchurch have founded charities under the authority of the Rector and church with various local objects in mind. The earliest was Augustine Knapp's legacy of 1602. He left one pound (say £400 today) to be invested for the 'poor lame blind or impotent parishioners' to be distributed at the discretion of the Churchwardens.

The administration of these by the Rector and Churchwardens was time-consuming and difficult, and in 1907 they were combined and a registered charity created under the authority of the Charity Commissioners, who invest the proceeds and pay the interest to the Trustees.

Over the centuries, the funds have provided coal, winter coats and food vouchers amongst other benefits. However, for some while the trustees have felt that with today's welfare activities, there could be a better use of the funds.

After considerable debate, the Charity Commission was petitioned to agree a scheme whereby grants could be made to assist local students. This was agreed by the Commission in Spring 2003.

The current scheme

Since 1st June 2003, the Trustees of the Whitchurch United Charities have been managing the distribution of the income from the Charity in the form of grants.

The purpose is to assist local students with the funding of essential equipment, such as musical instruments and books, or any other cost associated with an educational need. Eligible students are young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch.

At present, the total income is approximately £400+ p.a. The accounts are vetted by the Charity Commission, and audited annually, with inspection available on request.

In the past few years, the Charity is fortunate to have received two additional bequests, namely the Lady Phoebe Rose Educational Charity and the Peter Minton Educational Bequest.

It is hoped that in future years, as the scheme becomes known, today's parishioners will leave legacies or gifts to increase our capital and consequently to make more income available for distribution.

The Trustees (as at June 2007)

Mrs Jackie Kingsley (Chairman); Mrs Sally Woolhouse (Treasurer/Secretary);

Mr Peter Hawley (Grant Application Secretary); Mrs Jill Bradon; Mr John Dolby;

Mr David Giles; Mrs Sue Matthews; Dr. Rev. Peter Steddon

If you would like to find out more about how we manage the Charity or if you would be interested in becoming a Trustee when a vacancy arises, please contact any of the current Trustees.

Sally Woolhouse

DIARY DATES

Contributions welcome for this column if anyone knows of a date that would be of interest to the village.

JANUARY

WADS Production of

Puss In Boots **Woodcote Village Hall**

Saturday **24th**

Sunday **25th**

Friday **30th**

Saturday **31st**

Talking Heads **Goring Heath Parish Hall**

Saturday **31st**

FEBRUARY

MARCH

Monday **2nd Parish Council Meeting**

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN will be published in March 2009.

Please send your contributions **preferably by e-mail to**

Sarah.pongo@talktalk.net by 5th March 2009

Views of individual contributors
are the views of those contributors,
and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council, or the
editor.