

WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES BULLETIN

www.whitchurchonthames.com

JULY 2007

Meeting of the Parish Council

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday the 9th of July at 8.00 pm in the Village Hall.

In attendance were the Chairman Vincent Aldridge and Councillors Kate Thatcher, Harry Butterworth, Elizabeth Robinson and Nigel Cabeldu, District Cllr Pearl Slatter, and County Cllr John Farrow.

Also present was the Parish Clerk Andrea Gardner.

There were 8 members of the public present.

Parish Clerk

Parish Clerk Email address: clerk@whitchurchonthames.com

Playground

Quotes are being obtained for the repainting of the railings around the playground.

Graffiti

There have been several incidents of graffiti around the village over recent months. Unfortunately the Parish Council is having to spend funds on clearing this up.

Dog Fouling

A number of signs have been placed around the village to remind dog walkers to clean up after their animals. It is an offence and also highly unpleasant to allow your dog to foul in a public area and not clean up after it.

Village Hall

The purchase of the Village Hall is moving, albeit still very slowly. A website will be set up in the near future which will allow all interested parties to comment on the future development and use of the hall.

Village Plan

The Parish Council would like to start the development of a Parish Plan. The idea of such a plan is to involve as many residents as possible in identifying the community's needs and drawing up a plan that prioritises the issues raised for action over a period of time and sets out how they might be tackled. If anybody is interested in

becoming part of a Village Plan working party, please contact either Cllr Harry Butterworth, or the Parish Clerk, Andrea Gardner.

Planning

a) Decisions received

P07/E0390/RET – Wychcotes, High Street -

Replacement conservatory to rear elevation GRANTED

P07/E0442RET and P07/E0418 – Mellow Walls –

Retrospective amendment to application no. P06/E0460.

Change of doors and windows on the single storey extension to the east elevation: and therapy swimming pool and pool equipment house. GRANTED

P07/E0269 – 27 Swanston Field –

Extension to rear dormers at front and rear. GRANTED

Change of name ; Boze Down Vineyard, Hardwick Road renamed Chalkhills.

b) Applications received and considered at meeting

P07/E0804 – Thames Bank House, Whitchurch on Thames –

To erect wrought iron gates and railings to the main house –
NO STRONG VIEWS

P07/E0582 – White House Cottage, Manor Road –

Roof space extension and two storey extension.

Amendment to P06/E1002 and including dormer window to East elevation –
NO STRONG VIEWS

Whitchurch Primary School –

planning application for installation of a synthetic grass sports and play area. – OBJECT

due to amenity considerations.

(Note: all recent planning applications can be seen at any time on www.southoxon.gov.uk)

Finances

The following cheques were agreed for payment.

RM Weavers	June Grass Cutting
Andrea Gardner	May/June salary
Chiltern Society	Additional fees

The Parish council accounts for the year ended March 2007 were agreed and signed.

Crime Statistics

The Parish council has received the following table showing the crime statistics for the village over the last 27 months.

2005/06	Burglary dwelling	Burglary non dwelling	Autocrime	Criminal damage	Theft	Other	Total	Not crime
April-June	1	1	2	1	8	4	17	0
July-sept	1	2	1	2	8	2	16	1
Oct-Dec	2	1	2	3	5	0	13	1
Jan-Mar	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	1
Total	4	4	5	6	23	8	50	3
2006/07								
April-June	0	1	0	4	5	2	12	1
July-sept	1	1	1	3	3	3	12	4
Oct-Dec	1	1	1	2	4	6	15	1
Jan-Mar	1	1	0	3	2	3	10	3
Total	3	4	2	12	14	14	49	9
2007/08								
April-June	1	2	0	1	3	5	12	2
Total to date	1	2	0	1	3	5	12	2

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday the 3rd of September 2007 in the Whitchurch Village Hall at 8.00pm. An agenda and the dates of future meetings will be posted on the Parish Council Notice-board opposite the Greyhound before the next meeting.

Andrea Gardner

A Plan for Our Village?

For some time now it has been suggested that it would be useful to have a written plan for the Village. Initially I was not at all sure that I understood what this meant. Each person in the village would have their own individual idea. Anyway, having volunteered to take a look at it, I had to make a start!

The message I got was that if we are seen by the SODC planning people to have a plan of our own it has to be taken into account alongside their little red book. I don't know how much weight it really can have, but I am assured that other villages have found that it makes a difference. As we seem to be completely ignored at the present time, any little must help!

Our excellent Parish Clerk had found some Village web sites which were attempting to do the same thing. This was interesting, but I felt that they were not sure what it was that they were trying to do. The way I see the difference between the Village Web Site and the Village Plan is that it is similar to the difference between a glossy advertisement for a car and the owner's manual for the same car. The objectives are different.

Hence the thought that the plan should be based on how *we* as villagers think of *our* village. That needed a base document whose impact would be stiffened by a village questionnaire. The hope is that the analysis of the questionnaire would indicate how the village sees itself developing. It then can have some force as the voice of the whole village rather than that of half a dozen individuals, most of whom have never actually been voted onto the PC by the electorate.

(Incidentally you can take that various ways. For example I have been a member of the Parish Council, on and off, for many years but have never faced a Parish election where there have been enough candidates to force a poll. On the other hand there have been plenty of opportunities to vote me off.)

The next steps

I have now written a first draft of what is intended to become the "base document" and have distributed it to the rest of the Parish Council members. While they think about it I am attempting to tackle the questionnaire. This has me a bit bemused. I hate ticking boxes which never seem to ask the question I want to answer. On the other hand if we get several hundred three page essays we are never (at least, not in time for the London Olympics!) going to be able to analyze them sufficiently to make a representative report. I have some ideas that we are working on.

However, it would increase the weight of the resulting plan if it was seen to be produced by a broader group than just the Parish Council. If anyone is interested in joining a task group they can get in touch with me by phone or by email to the editor's email address.

Harry Butterworth

WHITCHURCH VILLAGE HALL

The Parish Council are in the process of buying the Village Hall. Once the sale has gone through, we want the Village to decide what should be done with the Hall in the future, to benefit everyone.

What do you want in your village hall?

What would make you use the village hall?

Why don't you use it at the moment?

What extra facilities do you think the Hall should have?

The Parish Council want to hear all the views and opinions of everyone in the village, so please get in touch.

You can go to the new website www.WhitchurchHall.co.uk, email ideas@WhitchurchHall.co.uk, telephone Kate on 0118 984 4656 or write to Hall Ideas at Rivendell, Hartslock Bridleway, Whitchurch, RG8 7QX.

We really want to know what everyone wants and thinks about the Hall, so please get in touch.

Kate Thatcher

THE WHITCHURCH SOCIETY : THE ART & CRAFT EXHIBITION

The weekend of 17th/18th November 2007

This is a gentle reminder to everyone to get cracking on your entries for this year's show! If you have never entered before, remember that there is a special prize for 1st time entries. This year's theme for the Joyce Voysey prize is "Food". We look forward to some really mouth-watering entries! How about bringing back some ideas with you when on holiday this summer?

I would also like to remind everyone that we welcome exhibits for sale. These are not entered for judging in the classes but it is a good way of turning your surplus masterpieces into useful cash. The commission charged by the Society is 20%.

Our website (www.wotarts.co.uk or via the Village website) will be updated soon with details of the classes, rules of entry etc. for 2007 and **all this information, together with sending-in times, will be printed in full in the next edition of the Bulletin (September).**

Sally Woolhouse (Tel 0118 984 4365).



WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH
TWINNING ASSOCIATION



BOULES EVENING

FRIDAY 27 JULY

7 PM ONWARDS

AT 8 SWANSTON FIELD, WHITCHURCH

Raffle, Food Table, Lager, Wine

All the family welcome

All proceeds towards twinning funds

Visitors from La Bouille

Over the week-end of 19-21 May, a group of 16 people from La Bouille visited Whitchurch. We organised a full week-end of events that were enjoyed by all from both sides of the Channel.

English Tea

Our French visitors arrived in Whitchurch at about 4 p.m. on the Saturday. After meeting and greeting them, we gathered in Goring Heath Parish Hall for a traditional English tea complete with white table cloths and traditional English porcelain tea sets - all beautifully organised by Jenny Plumb.

When everyone was settled, it was time for the welcome speeches. All the speakers paid tribute to Trudy Skidmore who had been a stalwart supporter of the Twinning for many years.

Line Dancing

After the tea, there was a short break to allow our visitors to settle in with their host families, and then we returned to Goring Heath Parish Hall for the evening.

After aperitifs, we watched a demonstration of line dancing, led by Audrey Barclay and her helpers. The more energetic of us then took part, while the rest stood on the sidelines and were entertained by our efforts!

While we re-arranged the furniture (again!) and put the dinner out, Sally Woolhouse got us organised for the competition to match the names to the photos of us as children - not an easy task! The various dishes were greatly enjoyed and at the end of the evening the winner of the competition was announced (Mme Annaick Le Delliou).

The Sussex Downs

On Sunday we rose early for a trip to Sussex. Our first stop was West Dean Gardens which nestles in the rolling Sussex Downs. We enjoyed our picnic lunch in a peaceful spot with a flowing stream, watching sheep grazing contentedly on a gentle slope on the other side of the stream.

We then explored the varied features of the gardens, including the Victorian glasshouses, the walled kitchen gardens and surrealist tree sculptures. All of which made for a relaxed and interesting walk.

Next on our itinerary was Chichester. The central feature of Chichester is the cathedral. We arrived while Evensong was in progress, so we explored the small city's streets and shops while we waited for the service to finish. Once inside the cathedral we were able to appreciate its architecture and the blend of old and modern art for which the cathedral is famous.

Sunday was rounded off with dinner at the host families' homes, with groups getting together to share the evening.

To view photos from the visit, go to www.whitchurchtwinning.org.uk and follow the links to 2007 Photos.

David Robinson -Chairman



Learning Through Play

WHITCHURCH VILLAGE FETE

Saturday 1st September 2007

The Village Fete will be held this year on Sat 1st September,
at Whitchurch Cricket Club, by kind permission of the Club and the
Whitelock family.

Grand Draw: Tea Tent, Beer Tent, Bouncy Castle, Kids Corner:
Stalls and Games!

If you would like to have a stall at the Fete, please contact
Catherine Rawes on 01491 873102

or

Jo Williams on 9842194

WoTHABS – Whitchurch on Thames Habitat Study Group

Home Composting Event

All credit to John Southey for a thought-provoking display, to Martin Parham for his illuminating explanations of composting chemistry and the Allotment Society who showed us composting in progress.

We checked out cool heaps and hotter heaps, taking a few temperatures. The variation was 29-50 degrees Centigrade: clearly things really get cooking in the middle of the heap as the material rots down more rapidly, helped along by occasional stirring. Woody items - those containing lignin, which is the brown as against the green parts of plants, will take longer. So if you want to hasten the process, cut the wood up more so there are more places for the bacteria to enter.

We discussed the different reasons people have for composting waste: whether it is to generate a useful medium for growing plants in or to get rid of waste in a trouble-free way, reducing the need for bonfires or the brown bin. If simple disposal of vegetable waste is your objective, a wormery will do the trick. Think of it as akin to feeding the birds (or the squirrels as it seems to happen!). You put the food into a lidded bin in the garden and the worms (red and dendra little wigglers, not the larger earthworms) devour the lot. You don't even need to buy the worms. You provide the food and the dark, moist conditions and they just turn up.

Maze Picnic

Unfortunately this was rained off. Let's hope for more favourable conditions for a picnic next summer.

Gill Goodwin

THE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

Vegetable growing is in full swing and our new members are proving to be very keen and delighted with their growing efforts!

We have had to venture into ground that hasn't been used as allotments for probably at least 20 years. It is great to be Chairman of such a thriving Society.

Rosamund Heath
984 2358

The Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society

Programme 2007-2008

- May 17th** - Guided towpath walk in Oxford
Led by Mark Davies Meet at Oxford Station
- June 21st** - Visit to Wittenham Clumps and "Timescape"
To be confirmed
- July 19th** - Members' Evening(Goring Heath Parish Hall)
- Sept. 20th** - 50th Anniversary of the closing of
Whitchurch Preparatory School. Not many people know
that Whitchurch House was once a prep school for boys.
Join "old boys" and others who will form our panel.
Peter Hawley (Whitchurch Village Hall)
- Oct. 18th** - Members' Forum including the postponed talk by
Susan Lowery. (Goring Heath Parish Hall)
- Nov. 15th** Bill King makes a welcome return to Goring Heath Parish
Hall to give an illustrated talk on "Dad's Other Army".
Anyone who heard him speak last year will be sure to put
the date in the diary.
- 2008**
- Jan. 15th** - **Members' Evening (Whitchurch Village Hall)**
- Feb. 19th** - **Annual General Meeting Speaker to be announced
(Whitchurch Village Hall)**

CHEESE AND WINE EVENT

Friday September 21st 2007



Goring Heath Parish Hall

come and learn about,
then try a selection of cheese
from **Greys Cheese Shop,**

enjoy wines selected for the evening

to book Tickets Phone 01189842056

WHITCHURCH MAZE

Have you ever visited The Maze and been struck by how tidy and well-manicured the bricks and the grass look? And have you ever wondered who keeps it in such good shape? I'll let you into a well-kept secret – there is a small but friendly band of pixies who meet on the 1st Saturday of every month at 10am in the summer months and they get to work with edgers and clippers and mowers. These pixies would welcome some extra man and woman power to help them in their efforts on the following dates:-

4th August
1st September
6th October

Put these dates on your calendar NOW & come along and help keep your local Maze looking beautiful!

Pete Woolhouse 9844365

REPORT INTO SPECIAL INSPECTION OF HOGWARTS SCHOOL
OF WITCHCRAFT & WIZARDRY BY OFSTED INSPECTORS
JUNE 21st 2007

The special inspection of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in Scotland made by H.M. Inspectors in June 2007 was instituted as a result of a number of concerns raised by a senior member of staff, Professor Severus Snape. These included the educational regime practised at the school, the wellbeing of the students whilst in the care of the school authorities and the suitability of the senior staff including the Head Teacher to run an educational establishment for minors.

Hogwarts school was established many years ago by Professor Albus Dumbledore with the aim of giving gifted but disturbed pre teen and teen aged children an all round education using revolutionary methods. These methods can best be described as Proactive Educational Necromantic Therapy (P.E.N.T.).

Professor Snape initially contacted Ofsted's London Office in October 2007. He subsequently made three personal visits to the offices with documentary, photographic and video evidence to back up his claims. As a result of this it was decided to have a special "snap" inspection of the school on 21st June 2007. This meant the school was given 24 hours notice of the visit by the two H.M. Inspectors: Mr J.W. Untermensch and Ms P.C. Hubbard.

It has to be said that all the allegations made by Professor Snape were fully confirmed by the inspectors' visit. In addition, a number of environmental, health & safety and animal welfare issues have also been highlighted.

The school itself can only be accessed by a special steam train that has been considered obsolete by the rail authorities since 1960. It was the opinion of the inspectors that this was not only an extremely hazardous mode of transport for minors let alone any other passengers, it was also clear that the engine's emissions left an unacceptably large carbon footprint in the atmosphere.

On arrival at the main building of the school which is housed in a large 15th Century Castle the Inspectors were also struck by the large numbers of naked flames being utilised as illumination throughout the school particularly in the refectory. In their opinion these represented an extremely high fire hazard as well as creating a dangerous level of carbon and carbon monoxide emissions. When confronted about this the Head of School Professor Albus Dumbledore asserted that this would not happen since all these naked flames were controlled by special magical forces. The

Inspectors considered this answer to be both flippant and insulting. Considering his advanced years and many other eccentric beliefs, the Inspectors felt Professor Dumbledore to be totally unsuited for his role as leader and mentor of young children and should be replaced immediately.

Of equal concern was another senior member of staff, Professor Minerva McGonagall who also seemed to hold strange educational ideas. The Inspectors found her use of hypnotic suggestion to control her young charges to be a particularly disturbing departure from standard teaching practice. This involved visually persuading the pupils that she could change into a cat at will (shape shifting). The Inspectors considered this cocktail of age-old superstition and modern hypnotic techniques to be psychologically damaging to impressionable young minds.

Health issues were also raised by the large number wild birds, particularly owls that seemed to be flying freely about the interior of the school. It was the opinion of the Inspectors that this posed a definite avian flu hazard.

Animal welfare issues were also raised by the keeping of a large mutant canine in total confinement. This wretched creature was kept chained in a dark room in one of the school's basements by its owner the school caretaker, a rather hirsute gentleman called Mr Rubeus Hagrid. Mr Hagrid seemed proud of the fact that he was able to control this dog whom he called Fluffy by means of an auditory "cosh".

Finally, H.M. Inspectors recommended that the school game of Quidditch a form of aerial volley ball to be banned immediately on not so much health & safety grounds but because of its excessively confrontational and competitive nature. It was felt by the Inspectors that a less aggressive sport such as cricket should be introduced.

In summary, it is the opinion of H.M. Inspectors that Hogwarts is a failing school. Under special measures it has been agreed that Professor Severus Snape should take over as head teacher and Principal. We have every confidence that he will be able to make Hogwarts fit for purpose in no time at all.

Nick Brazil

Woodcote Library

The Big Wild Read starts in July. This year the theme of the summer reading scheme for children is based around wildlife and the environment, so we will give a packet of seeds at the start and then colourful stickers to go in a free wallet as six books are read. There are other gifts along the way, with a certificate and medal awarded at the end. "Tree tokens" will be earned by the children reading books, and these will be used in the Autumn to plant real trees. The scheme continues throughout the school holidays and is a good way to encourage children to keep up their reading out of school. We will have plenty of quizzes and colouring sheets to hand out over the Summer, and will run a storytime in August.

The celebration of 1000 years of Oxfordshire continues, and there are brochures in the library listing events to be held this Summer. We will be receiving a new collection of books by Oxfordshire authors, or set in Oxfordshire at the beginning of the month.

And, of course, the last book Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows is due out on July 21st.

August

We hope that our young readers are enjoying the Big Wild Read, and soon our magic tree will be covered in leaves. There is still time to sign up, receive your wallet and seeds, and start reading the six books over the summer. As usual there will be stickers, colouring sheets and puzzles to collect along the way, and a medal and certificate at the end. Come in to the library to find out more.

Our Storytime will be held on Thursday 16th August - time to be confirmed. The Children's mobile library will be here to host the story telling and there will be a craft session in the library. Tickets will be available in the library from the beginning of the month.

Have you considered joining in with Oxfordshire's celebration of its 1000 years of existence by contributing to the web site? Everyone is welcome to post a portrait for the one thousand faces exhibition which will be touring the County later this year.

More details on www.oxfordshire2007.co.uk.

PANGBOURNE HERITAGE GROUP

The next meeting to which you are all invited is the talk on the 'History of Pangbourne College' by Lionel Stephens in St James the Less church at 7.30pm on WEDNESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER. We hope many of you will come along to listen.

A reminder of the RNLI Quiz Night Supper in conjunction with the Heritage Group on FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER. The subject of the talk preceding the quiz is entitled 'Am I not a Man and a Brother?' Come and be enlightened.

For further information about the group please contact Rosie Nurick on 9842565.

RECYCLING

Aluminium Foil	Bottle tops & Foil	
	Cans - Clean & Crushed	Primary School
Mobile Phones		
Inkjet & Toner Cartridges	tel 984 2828	Primrose Cottage
Stamps		Help the Aged
Glass Bottles and Jars		The Village Hall Car park
Spectacles		Boat House Surgery or Alison Michael
Cardboard, papers, plastics (not polystyrene), tins & cans		Green Box on dustbin day
Cans, bottles, books, clothes, magazines, shoes etc		Savacentre Car Park

The Refuse Centre at Oakley Wood, Crowmarsh Gifford, has facilities for the disposal of: household items, metal, plastic, bottles, paper, batteries, engine oil and green waste.

Any queries call Public Amenities on tel:- 01491 823416

DIARY DATES

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

JULY

27th Boules evening

AUGUST

4TH Maze Tidy

SEPTEMBER

1st Whitchurch Village Fete

1st Maze Tidy

20th History Society meeting

21st Whitchurch Hill Cheese and Wine event

OCTOBER

6th Maze Tidy

18th History Society Meeting

NOVEMBER

15th History Society Meeting

17/18TH Art and Craft Exhibition

BANK HOLIDAY DUSTBIN COLLECTION DATES.

Bins emptied on Thursday 30th August will be emptied on Friday 31st August.
Collections on 27th December and 3rd January 2008 will as normal

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN will be published in SEPTEMBER 2007.

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

Sarah.pongo@talktalk.net by 7th September 2007

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