



# SEER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

[www.seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Our Newsletter is delivered twice a year to all Seer Green households. We also regularly post information on our Notice Board opposite Lamb's Newsagents and on our website.

## VILLAGE BUS SERVICES UPDATE

In January this year, at quite short notice, significant changes were made to the 305 bus service and a new operator introduced. This led to a series of protests by local residents and bus users from both Chalfont St Giles and Seer Green, which received quite wide press coverage. A number of public meetings were organised by the Parish Council and concerned residents to voice their concerns with Bucks CC and discuss improvements to local bus services.

These meetings helped to demonstrate how vital a local bus service is for those not fortunate enough to have access to a car, especially the old and vulnerable. Very soon afterwards, the

new operator gave notice that they will no longer be running the service with effect from May 2010.

At a further meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February a number of options were considered for a new service timetable and residents voted overwhelmingly for an improved 2-hourly service between Beaconsfield and Uxbridge. A formal proposal, supported by the two Parish Councils as well as local District and County Councillors, has been submitted to Bucks CC and specific requests made to try to ensure that the new contract delivers a more reliable long term service arrangement. We will continue to keep residents informed and to work with Bucks CC to try to ensure that improvements are delivered.

## STEPPING OUT

Step out of your front door, turn left or right, and for many villagers there is to be found one of the many footpaths that criss cross or encircle the village. Some walks are short, some medium length others longer giving the opportunity to design a variety of walks of interest.

Whether in the winter with the crunch of fresh snow, or the emerging colours of spring, or hum of a hot summer's day or the reds and browns of autumn each can provide the walker with free exercise and peace of mind.

The SGPC Jubilee Trail (see our web site for details or call our Clerk for a copy of the map) gives the family, couple or individual the opportunity of following the routes that past villagers trod to see friends, take produce to market or

to attend church. Some pass over ancient land boundaries and through royal hunting woods.

Go for a walk and enjoy your village - one with the rare distinction these days of being set in and surrounded by green belt countryside.



*Footpath view from Bottom Lane*

## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY AWARD

This year the Parish Council has introduced a small award to recognise the person judged by the Chairman as having made the most significant contribution to the village community during 2009.

If you know of a deserving recipient you are invited to nominate them. Nominees should be village residents or have strong ties to the Seer Green community; age is no barrier, recipients can be young or old; their contribution might have been towards community spirit or social cohesion in the village, or it might have been to improving or upkeeping the village environment. We would like to hear from you about those unsung heroes whose contribution generally goes unnoticed, as well as those who are known to play a prominent role within our community.

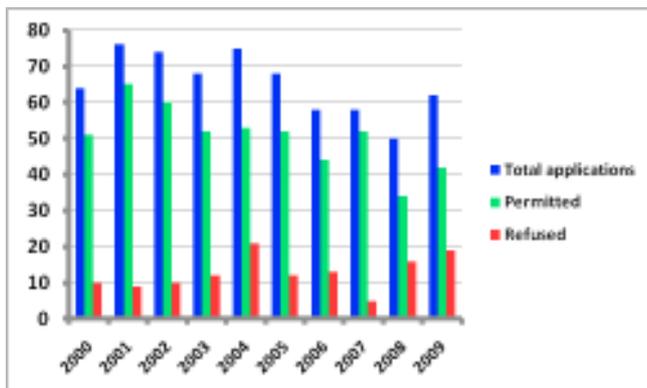
Please send your nomination by post or email to the Parish Clerk (contact details at the end of this newsletter) by 30<sup>th</sup> April. Include the name of your nominee, a brief description of the contribution they have made and why you think they deserve recognition (maximum 200 words), and don't forget to include your name and contact details.

*Book tokens to the value of £50 will be awarded at the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council in May.*



## THE 'NOUGHTIES' - A PLANNING RETROSPECTIVE

In the decade 2000-2009 a total of 653 planning applications for Seer Green were decided upon by Chiltern District Council. The Parish Council has no decision making authority with regards to planning applications, but as a matter of routine is consulted by CDC. The Parish Council reviews all applications and considers them with regards to local and national planning policies, impact on the village environment, our local knowledge, local representation and where necessary, consultation. The decision as to whether to object, support or make no comment is made by the full Council.



The plot shows the total number of applications reviewed by CDC year on year and the numbers permitted and refused. Typically 50-70 applications are submitted per year and typically around 50 are approved and 10-20 refused. Refused applications are often resubmitted after modification. The plot suggests a downward trend in applications and permissions and a slight upward trend in refusals. This might be expected

reflecting the very buoyant housing market in the early 'noughties' and the maturity of the housing stock in Seer Green.

## DOG FOULING

The Parish Council continue to receive complaints from upset residents about the amount of dog fouling on the pavements in the village. Recent complaints have been about dog mess left in the Holy Trinity Church Yard and Cemetery entrance. Please do not leave your dog mess. Pick it up and use one of the four dog waste bins located in the village or just take it home. **Thank you.**

*Constant offenders can be reported to the Dog Warden at the Environmental Health department of Chiltern District Council on 01494 732058.*

## PARKING

At a recent meeting the Parish Council were made aware of the parking issues that were arising in the centre of the village. Residents on Chalfont Road have been frequently inconvenienced by people blocking their driveway to use the local amenities, especially in the area near the postbox. Please can we ask that you do not park on the white lined area at the end of driveways but find an alternative place nearby. The Police have posted leaflets in the area concerned. They would be very grateful if residents could respond with their issues/ concerns regarding the parking.

## GREEN MEADOW PLAY AREA

The play area in Green Meadow is used by many children and offers the opportunity for their relatives and friends to meet and socialise at the same time. The Parish Council is constrained by funding which limits the amount of equipment we can purchase for the 100 or more children that use it daily.

Many of you will have completed a questionnaire we recently issued and we thank everybody for their advice and offers of help to improve the area. It confirmed our view that there is a great desire to see improvements.

Chiltern District Council recently presented the opportunity to apply for a grant to improve play opportunities for the 8 – 13 year olds. We have submitted a proposal and wait to see if we are successful which should be known sometime after the May deadline. We will be required to conform to the design methodology proposed by “Play England” ([www.playengland.org.uk](http://www.playengland.org.uk)) which outlines exciting and inspirational play concepts. Unfortunately there are only two grants available

to the Chiltern District area but if we are lucky enough to win then we will be asking for volunteers to help design the area in consultation with children and residents.

If you wish to help or know of funding sources please contact our Parish Clerk on 01494 874233 or by email: [clerk@seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk)



*Green Meadow Play Area*

## MULTI USE GAMES AREA DECISION

Following an extensive feasibility project led by willing volunteers on the Seer Green Sports Committee, the difficult decision was taken in January by the Parish Council not to support the installation of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at the Recreation Ground. Whilst the Council recognised very strong support from a residents' survey for improved sports facilities in the village (especially for football and tennis), they were concerned at the possible high costs and operating burden of such a large facility.

It is worth noting that Chalfont St Giles Parish Council has recently submitted a new application to install a MUGA at the Bowstridge Lane recreation ground which, if approved, will provide local all-weather facilities. The Parish Council will monitor this scheme and will review the option for a MUGA in Seer Green once some experience is established. In the meantime, we will continue to work with the Sports Committee to deliver improved sports facilities within our available budget. In the near term, our preference would be a more modest facility and we would welcome suggestions from the local community and willing volunteers to help deliver it.

## CHERRY TREES

An important characteristic of Seer Green history was the cherry tree orchard. Sadly many of these trees that provided income to the village in the past have gone. Seer Green, once known as the Cherry Pie village, provided fruit to the London markets. The Council have decided to embark on a programme of selective tree planting on parish property to bring back some of the colour and beauty of the cherry tree to the village.

## POT HOLES

Pot holes continue to be a major issue on roads in Buckinghamshire. Although many have now been filled in Seer Green, unfortunately some of the holes are now reforming and need to be reported again.

If you see a pot hole in the village please contact **Transportation for Buckinghamshire** on **0845 2302882** or log the hole directly onto the Transport Winter Maintenance section of the Bucks County Council website at [http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/sites/bcc/transport/ea\\_Highways\\_On\\_Call.page](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/sites/bcc/transport/ea_Highways_On_Call.page).

## YOUR COUNCIL TAX IN SEER GREEN

All householders pay their council tax to Chiltern District Council, and this includes contributions to Bucks County Council, Thames Valley Police, Chiltern District Council, Bucks Fire Authority and finally Seer Green Parish Council. As you will know, the overall annual charge for this year has increased by 2.1% for a band F house, and this includes 2.0% for Bucks C C, 2.5% for Chiltern District Council, but only 1.5% for Seer Green Parish Council as shown on my demand notice.

In the overall scale of things, the parish councils are by far the smallest spending organisations in the above, and our share of the council tax (known as our precept) amounts this year to £41,500, a small sum for all the duties we have to undertake. Each year we budget carefully and since we are not a rich parish council, and intend to remain debt-free, any one-off expenditure is financed by a surplus on our revenue account.

This year even with such a small increase we hope to make a small surplus.

In recent years these surpluses have allowed us to spend money on refurbishing the recreation car park and the pavilion, as well as smaller amounts on play equipment at Green Meadow . The revenue account pays for administration and our clerk's salary (councillors themselves are unpaid and do not claim any expenses.) Other expenses include keeping the village tidy, grass, tree and hedge cutting on the recreation ground , Green Wood and Green Meadow, and cemetery and street lighting maintenance. We also occasionally contribute to the costs of traffic calming, allotments and the youth of the village.

We hope you feel that we give value for money and note that we have the lowest increase of any of the public sector organisations in our area.

*Dennis Scourfield - Parish Council Treasurer*

## CLEAR CAR CAMPAIGN

### *Launched by Chiltern District Council and Thames Valley Police*

#### **Clearing your car**

A new campaign has been launched in Chiltern in a bid to reduce levels of car crime in the district.

Motorists who leave valuables on display will be sent letters warning their vehicles are at risk from thieves.

Police Community Support Officers from Thames Valley Police and Officers from Chiltern District Council's Community Safety and Civil Enforcement will record details of vulnerable vehicles. Motorists will then be sent a letter indicating where and when the vehicle was spotted and what was left on display alongside some appropriate crime prevention advice.

Thames Valley Police Crime Reduction Advisor, Mike Levine said: "We hope that by encouraging vehicle owners to remove temptation for thieves, this will limit their opportunity to offend. Simply hiding items isn't enough. The glove box or under the seat are the first places they will look for your sat-nav."

#### **Securing your car**

'Lock up your cars' is the message from the Chiltern Police Commander, Ian Hunter, after a recent rise in theft from motor vehicles.

It's not just in car parks or when you are away from home that you should remove all valuables and secure your car. Cars are also vulnerable at home on your driveway, especially if left insecure.

In Chiltern **62%** of vehicles that had items stolen during a three month period were **unlocked** at the time of the incident. (Data is from 1st Oct - 31st Dec 2009). Many criminals are opportunists who travel into the area looking for unlocked cars so to protect yourself make sure that you lock your car and close all the windows before leaving your car unattended.

For further information and advice please visit [www.chiltern.gov.uk/communitysafety](http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/communitysafety) or call the Thames Valley Police non-emergency number on **0845 8 505 505** and ask to speak with your local Crime Reduction Officer.

#### **SEER GREEN PARISH CLERK**

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