



SEER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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.

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

With the last edition of our Newsletter we circulated a brief Parish Questionnaire, designed to gain feedback from local residents on a variety of issues to help set priorities for expenditure and investment by your Parish Council. Unfortunately, the response to the Questionnaire was very disappointing, with fewer than 50 completed forms received from the more than 900 households in the village, a response rate of little more than 5%.

Those people who did respond expressed the highest levels of satisfaction with our management of Village Properties and Services (Jubilee Hall, Cemetery, Recreation Ground, Pavilion, etc). Half of respondents expressed themselves satisfied in this area and there were only a few suggestions for actions or improvements, such as enhancements to the Jubilee Hall, better bus services and support for a village War Memorial.

On the other hand, respondents were least satisfied with Safety and Security in the village, with only 10% stating that they were satisfied in this area. Of the suggestions for actions and improvements offered, particular emphasis was laid on parking near the school and excessive vehicle speeds through the village. People suggested a variety of measures to improve this situation, including speed humps or other traffic calming, vehicle activated warning signs and improved enforcement.

These ideas have all been communicated to the Police and County Council who are considering them. Our local Neighbourhood PC, Gavin McVeigh, has been instrumental in ensuring that these issues are being actively addressed. I am pleased to report that a vehicle activated sign will soon be installed near the school to alert drivers to excessive vehicle speeds.

In other areas, there was support for continuing to improve sporting facilities at the Recreation

Ground, new play facilities at Green Meadow, maintenance of and access to our village footpaths and the creation of a village cherry orchard. Your Parish Council are taking note of the survey results and all suggestions made and we thank those who responded. We will shortly be preparing a new Long Term Plan to take account of the spending priorities emerging from this process.



Vehicle Activated Sign which will soon be operational on School Lane

From the Chairman, Cllr Philip Clarke: It is with some regret that I have decided to stand down as Chairman of the Parish Council after 4 years in the role. Due to the pressure of my professional work, I have also reluctantly decided not to stand for re-election as a Parish Councillor. With the recent loss of two other Councillors, as well as the added responsibility of management of the Jubilee Hall, this will inevitably stretch the Council's ability to deliver the improvements in the village that so many of us would like. Councillor roles are voluntary and they rely on the goodwill of local residents to come forward to offer their services on behalf of the community. With a number of important projects under way, such as the Green Meadow refurbishment, and the threats from external projects such as HS2, it is vital that we have a strong and vibrant Parish Council. I would encourage all residents to consider what they might do to help and to contact the Parish Clerk for further information.

GREEN MEADOW - PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT UPDATE

Since our autumn newsletter, the Parish Council have been actively seeking funding for the refurbishment of Green Meadow.

Seer Green has over 950 households with more than 200 children attending the school. The large and open setting of Green Meadow offers an unparalleled opportunity to promote and inspire creative play from an early age.

The refurbishment aims to offer a modern and imaginative range of facilities which will encourage an active, healthier and stimulating lifestyle for children of all ages and to improve cohesion between children and families in a safe environment in the heart of our village.



Amanda and Chris at the Jolly Cricketers

We have invited 2 companies to devise a play scheme - both have designed different schemes at a cost of around £60k. We will be applying to Veolia, who run the landfill site on the A40 near Beaconsfield, for a larger grant but one of the criteria for obtaining funds from them is for the Parish Council to raise at least 20% of the cost. This is approximately £12,000.

We are pleased to announce that Amanda & Chris at the Jolly Cricketers Pub, have raised £850 towards the project through their Christmas raffle. The Parish Council are providing £6k, which was already budgeted in our long-term plan. We have also been very fortunate to have the support of our neighbour, the Jordans Environment Trust, who donated £1,000. Our total so far stands at £7,850. In addition, if we can get the support of Paradigm residents, we hope to apply to Paradigm Housing's Community Engagement Fund.

The Parish Council is committed to this refurbishment but this is largely dependent on securing the necessary funding and the available manpower from Parish Councillors who are all volunteers. We will continue to look at other design schemes in order to obtain the best high quality play equipment for the money we can raise.

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Amanda & Chris and the Jordans Environment Trust for their support.

JORDANS ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

On 2nd February the Jordans Environment Trust presented a cheque for £1,000 to the Parish Council for the Green Meadow appeal. JET, which was founded in 1973, is a charity which aims to preserve and enhance the natural and built environment within ten miles of Jordans for the benefit of residents and the public. It has benefitted from some generous legacies in the past, and its main activity today is to provide small grants to local initiatives. Recently it has supported the rebuilding of Jordans Meeting House and the refurbishment of the Parish Church Hall.

JET welcomes applications from local organisations with suitable projects, and Alan Sonnex, JET's Secretary, can be contacted on 01494 874536.



Bob Hall, Chairman of Jordans Environment Trust, presents a cheque for £1,000 to Phil Clarke, Chairman, Seer Green Parish Council, and Liz Bates, Parish Clerk.

JUBILEE HALL

The Jubilee Hall is owned by Bucks County Council and, until recently, has been managed by a local team of volunteers. The Parish Council has now become the sole trustee and will provide Councillors to the Jubilee Hall Committee who are tasked to manage and administer the hall for the Jubilee Hall Charity on behalf of the village.

The hall is used extensively during the day by the school and nursery and during the evenings and weekends by local societies, clubs and private hirers. New rates for hire have been introduced from Jan 2011 and they are available on our new website at www.sgjubileehall.org.uk or by contacting our booking secretary David Howkins on 01494 857760.

The Committee have identified a potential programme of works to update and improve the

facilities and to protect the fabric of the building subject to funding constraints.

We look forward to managing this important village amenity and working with all users to provide a congenial environment for educational and social events.

Pam Bacon, who died in January, was until recently a County Councillor and also an active member of Chalfont St Peter Parish Council. For many years she often attended our Parish Council meetings in her capacity as our County Councillor giving us guidance and passing on our views to Bucks County Council. She was kind enough to have donated money from her BCC Community Leaders Fund towards fencing in the Cemetery, safety barriers in Green Meadow and also the first bench on the Recreation Ground.

We shall miss her kindness and advice greatly.

NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR - MANDY THOMAS

By way of introduction, I have lived in this area and its surroundings all my life, with the exception of a few winters spent in Australia and South Africa whilst married to ex-Surrey cricketer, David Thomas. After growing up in Chalfont St Peter and later Beamond End, I then moved to Chalfont St Giles before finally settling in Seer Green in 1987, where my two sons were born and brought up.

Over the years, I have witnessed the growth in population not only of Seer Green, but also of surrounding towns and villages necessitating an increase in property development with resultant threats to Green Belt land as village boundaries expand which also, unless managed properly, can change the very character of the villages which made them so appealing in the first place. A keen horsewoman since childhood, I have probably ridden most of the bridlepaths in an area stretching from West Wycombe to Chorleywood and have come to appreciate the stunningly beautiful and diverse countryside that constitutes 'leafy Bucks'. This has increased my resolve that we must act to protect this heritage by insisting on well planned and controlled expansion with minimum impact on the surroundings.

I feel extremely fortunate to live in such a pleasant and safe environment, and would like to make a personal contribution to the community.

Accordingly, I have joined the Parish Council to help support the hard work they do to ensure that we not only preserve and protect this very special place where we live, but continue to strive to improve the facilities and quality of life for future generations to come.



Cllr Mandy Thomas

THE PARISH COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!

In April only 6 residents put themselves forward as Councillors for the 9 seats available on the Parish Council, leaving 3 immediate vacancies. This will not allow us to sustain the current level of Parish Council activities and we may be forced to cut back on services and projects. This would obviously be disappointing and we hope that some community minded residents will be prepared to come forward to support our work. Many of our projects are for the benefit of the whole community and we would dearly like to see greater community involvement in them. If you have lived in the village for over a year and could give some time, then please contact our Parish Clerk (details overleaf) for more information on becoming a Councillor. Please help us to maintain a vibrant village.

AROUND THE PARISH...

The Parish Council have been working on a number of initiatives to increase safety and improve facilities around the village.

The Vehicle Activated Sign

Bucks County Council has awarded Seer Green Parish Council funding for a Vehicle Activated sign. This will be positioned on School Lane to help reduce the speed of traffic as it enters the village at the junction near the school. The sign is due to be operational this spring.

Salt Bins

A resident had written to the Council early last year to ask if a salt bin could be installed on Orchard Road for the steep hill near Gurnells Road. In November County Councillor Martin Tett invited the Parish Council to apply for a grant for a salt bin under the Community Award Scheme. The Parish Council were successful and received £450. The bin has now been installed.

Motorists also struggled up Bayne Hill in School Lane during the last snowfall before Christmas and many people had to abandon their cars on the hill. The next day a team of residents worked together to push the vehicles up the hill as they were blocking the path of the gritting lorry. The Parish Council therefore agreed to purchase an additional bin for School Lane to help with the gritting of this dangerous area. The new bin will be located near the white gate at the junction with Old Long Grove.

Seating at Recreation Ground

County Cllr Tim Butcher also invited the Parish Council to bid for a Community Leaders grant. The Parish Council decided to put a bid in towards another bench for the Recreation Ground which can be used by dog walkers, football/cricket supporters etc. We were pleased to be awarded the grant and received the £575 for the new bench which has now been installed on the Recreation Ground and we hope will be used by all residents who enjoy the area. *Our thanks to Councillors Martin Tett and Tim Butcher.*

New Allotments

The Allotment Association have an ever increasing waiting list for residents who wish to rent their own allotment. Last year the Parish Council spent £1,000 on clearing disused land to create 4 more allotments which are now being used and enjoyed. Further land is now being cleared to provide 3 more allotments. Charlotte Baggins, one of the new allotment holders

writes:- *"My shed was a year old when I painted it with cuprinol last autumn, marking the end of my first full season as a Seer Green allotmenteer. Beds had been marked, edged, dug, weeded, sown, watered, weeded again and finally harvested & dug over for the winter. My family had eaten well as a reward for all the hard work they have put in with the added promise of summer pudding this year from the soft fruit put in during the winter. I've met fellow allotmentees and had help, advice and encouragement.*

I've spent the winter dreaming over seed catalogues, and having been given a wheelbarrow I've been transporting muck to begin it all again. The scarecrow's in need of a makeover, the lacewings are stirring in the shed where they have overwintered, I hope the shrew is still under the shed away from the circling red kite. I'm busy making bean trenches and as I work the robin serenades me and I know I'm in the best place on earth."



Charlotte and her allotment last summer

Pavilion Showers

The Parish Council and Seer Green Adult Football Club are trying to raise funds to reinstate the showers at the Pavilion which were in a poor condition and had to be closed several years ago. The cost of this project is around £12,000, fundraising is underway and applications for several grants have been submitted.

SEER GREEN PARISH CLERK

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