

SEER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER

All council meeting minutes and other notices are displayed on our notice board opposite Lamb's Newsagents. We also aim to deliver a Newsletter to all village households twice a year.

We hope that you find it informative and would welcome your feedback.

COMMUNITY SHELTER

A Community Shelter is the latest addition to the facilities available in the village and this has recently been installed in Green Meadow. It is expected to be used by a cross-section of the community, from parents minding their younger children whilst they use the play equipment, to older teenagers seeking a safe place to meet, and anyone walking around the village who might value a quiet sheltered spot to sit. It has been carefully sited in Green Meadow to facilitate these uses and to minimise intrusion on neighbouring properties. All users are requested to respect this amenity.

Whilst the concept of a community shelter was first raised by our Community Police Officers PC McVeigh and PCSO Webb, it is the enthusiastic and responsible approach taken by the members of the Wednesday evening Youth Club that has helped to drive it through. The decision on the type of shelter and its location was reached following consultation through this Newsletter, correspondence with a number of residents who expressed both doubts and support for the proposal, and extensive debate of the options at successive Parish Council meetings. Funding has been provided jointly by Seer Green Parish Council and Chiltern District Council. To complete the installation we intend to plant a number of cherry trees around the shelter.



Opening of the shelter on May 9th with PCSO John Webb, members of the Youth Club and Parish Councillors

PARISH COUNCILLORS

The recent Council Elections saw several changes to the Parish Council. Cllr David Matthews stood down as Chairman after five years of loyal service for which the Council is extremely grateful. David remains a Councillor. Cllr Philip Clarke was elected as the new Chairman. Cllr Chris Blackman stood down earlier in the year due to pressure of work and other commitments. Chris has dedicated many years to the Parish Council and we thank him for his contribution and service to the village.

Two new Councillors were also duly elected, to bring us up to a full complement. They are:-

Marcia Lawton: *"I have lived in the village for 16 years. I have one son studying A levels at John Hampden Grammar School. I have been a member of the PTA for both Seer Green Nursery and School and I am currently a Trustee of the Seer Green School Voluntary Fund. I enjoy travel, culture, music and cinema. I have an interest in preserving the local community and hope to help the younger villagers to enjoy and respect their village. I am looking forward to serving the Seer Green Community in whatever way I can."*

Adam Nicholls: *"I moved into the village in 1998 shortly after getting married to Nicola. We live in Gurnells Road by virtue of the fact that a good friend of mine suggested we bought the house next to him! We have 2 boys, Ben and Thomas both attending the local Nursery (for which I am Treasurer) and the local school. I am a production engineer by qualification, although nowadays, I have my own business renovating and refurbishing houses. I am also nearing the end of a fast track course to obtain my licence to practise as a Home Inspector, to provide Home Information Packs (HIP's). On top of all this I also sit as a treasurer on a local residents association and have an allotment at the recreation ground, sandwiched between the chickens and pigs. I like to be involved locally and becoming a Parish Councillor seems the next natural step to ensure I carry on with community work."*

e-PLANNING ARRIVES IN THE CHILTERN

The Government has a major initiative to get local, regional and national government activities onto the Internet and other electronic media. As a result, Chiltern District Council has just gone live with an electronic planning system. This means that you can now submit, view and comment on planning applications over the Internet. If you are thinking of making a planning application, then many architects and agents are now geared up to electronic submission. If you want to comment on a planning application, you can now do it online, by e-mail or you can still send them a letter. The planning 'portal' can be accessed via the Chiltern District Council website (www.chiltern.gov.uk) or directly (and much quicker) at:
https://isa.chiltern.gov.uk/publicaccess/tdc/tdc_home.aspx

If you are not internet-enabled, you can go to the Council offices to view the plans – although you will still have to use one of the Council's computers, as paper copies are no longer available. This new system has not been without problems but we are learning to live with them – the main difficulty being to view large plans on a small computer screen.

On the positive side, a very useful feature of the new system is the ability to find planning information on properties using a map-based interface. On that topic, you might like to know that the Land Registry also has an online database, which means that you can get hold of many legal documents relating to properties (deeds, conveyances, legal charges and even the price the last time the house was sold). Each document will cost a small fee (usually £3) before you can view it. Their system works by addresses and postcodes but there is also a very clever map-based interface, although it is notoriously unreliable.

This Land Registry service is available at:
www.landregisteronline.gov.uk/

If you have any local planning matters that you would like to discuss, the Parish Council would be pleased to advise you. Please contact the Parish Clerk or Phil Clarke on 01494 870512 or philipn.clarke@virgin.net.

COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME

County Councillor Pam Bacon invited the Parish Council to apply for a grant under the Community Award Scheme. For some time, we have been concerned about the safety of children around the swings in Green Meadow and the Chair of the School Nursery had asked, on behalf of the parents, if we would consider installing barriers to stop children running through the path of the swings. This same issue arose during a risk assessment by one of our Councillors and hence we decided to apply through Councillor Bacon for funding for suitable safety equipment.

The Parish Council were successful in their bid and Cllr Bacon awarded the full cost of £632 for the four barriers, which have now been installed. *Our grateful thanks to Councillor Pam Bacon.*



PLANNING AHEAD FOR 2007/2008

Each year the Parish Council approves a budget for its planned income and expenditure during the coming year. At the same time it reviews and updates its longer-term expenditure plans, ensuring that enough money is set aside for those larger outlays, which would be regarded as capital expenditure in a larger organisation.

Our main source of income is our share of the Council Tax, which is known as our "Precept". This year we budgeted for an increase of 2.5%, which is lower than inflation and will amount to £38,400. We receive additional income from renting out the Pavilion on the recreation ground and from bank interest. Our day to day expenditure financed out of this income covers administrative costs (our Parish Clerk), keeping our village tidy, looking after the Pavilion and recreation ground including the allotments, maintaining the village lighting, Green Meadow and cemetery, and helping the residents of the village.

So far as the longer term planning is concerned, our main expenditure this year is the recently installed community shelter. This expenditure was brought forward a year or so since a grant amounting to 50% of its cost was available from the District Council but only prior to April 2007. We have also replaced a number of streetlights this year, and continued to update the facilities at the Pavilion. We are aware of the continuing poor state of the car park surface at the Pavilion, and are taking professional advice on this, but at present a complete new tarmac surface together with work on its foundations is beyond the current finances of the council. For future years we have in mind to buy new play equipment for the younger children on Green Meadow, continue our policy of updating the streetlights, and we hope to set aside a larger sum for the car park referred to above.

We would welcome comments from any villagers as to other schemes we might consider but as we are not an affluent council with large reserves, we are inevitably limited in what we can do and have to look after our resources carefully.

Dennis Scourfield, Parish Council Treasurer

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP (NAG)

Following meetings in local villages with the Police late last year a **NAG** for our area covering Seer Green, Chalfont St. Giles, Coleshill, Penn, Penn Street and Winchmore Hill was established. Seer Green is represented on the NAG by Cllr. David Matthews.

The three priorities expressed at the meetings were:

- Speed of traffic
- Fly tipping & litter
- Anti-social behaviour

Action has initially been on Speed of Traffic and in Seer Green there have been two speed enforcement days and a day when the SID (Speed Indicator Device) has been used. Some of the young people who go to the Wednesday night Youth Club have helped the police in the manning of the SID and they deserve our thanks. As a result of this enforcement, a number of people have been reported for exceeding the speed limit, and others given Fixed Penalty Notices for using a mobile phone whilst driving and for failing to wear a seat belt. The majority of those receiving fines were local residents. Your Parish Council reminds you to drive carefully and within the speed limits in our village.

POLICE UPDATE

Over the past weeks we have seen a noticeable reduction in anti social behaviour and criminal damage. What offences have occurred are known to have been committed by people from outside Seer Green which reflects well on our young people.

Seer Green Wednesday Youth Club continues to thrive offering a variety of activities and facilities for our young people, including sound studio, graffiti art (responsible project with contracts signed) and "circus skills". The Monday groups are also well supported with the younger section attracting increasing numbers. This group sponsor the education of two Kenyan children named Stanley and Veronica, who also receive food while attending school some distance from their homes.

On a more serious note would residents please refrain from leaving bags of recyclable items around the bins when they are full. These are NOT recycled instead these bags are taken to landfill sites! To leave bags of bottles etc. around the bins is FLY TIPPING which is a major priority of our Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG).

Finally PC Gavin McVeigh and I are holding a surgery at the Baptist Church on Tuesday 3rd July from 11.00 to 12.30 pm when we will be pleased to discuss your concerns including the installation of the community shelter.

**John Webb
Police Community Support Officer**

SGPC BYELAWS

Seer Green has a single set of byelaws covering Green Meadow, which were written in 1969. We are now preparing a new set of byelaws to include all the land that your Parish Council manages. We have used byelaws from neighbouring parish councils as a base and added to them from 'model' byelaws that are drafted by DEFRA for use by all parish councils in England.

Once we have agreed in Council the contents they will be checked by a solicitor before we send them to Whitehall for official adoption. Copies will be displayed in appropriate places.

OUR CEMETERY

The cemetery is rightly a place of rest and remembrance, NOT A CAR PARK.

DESIGNATION ORDER FOR SEER GREEN

As reported in the last Newsletter, over the past two years residents have complained to the Parish Council about the unacceptable level of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour in the village. Although the Parish Council has recognised that there has been a considerable improvement in behaviour over the past year, the Parish Council, Chiltern District Council's Community Safety Team and the Police have felt that it is important to ensure that if trouble arises they have the powers to act quickly. Therefore they are progressing a Designation Order for Seer Green.



In September 2001 laws came into force, which provide Local Authorities with powers to restrict drinking in designated places, which are then enforceable by the Police. The effect of this Order is that the Police have the power to require a person not to consume intoxicating liquor where the officer reasonably believes the person is, has or intends to do so, and to surrender any intoxicating liquor or a container containing such liquor. Failure to comply with an Officer's requirements without reasonable excuse is an arrestable offence. A person guilty of such an offence will be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding £500. The order will be progressed through CDC's Licensing Department who will shortly be consulting residents through the local press.

The Order will be signposted, (as above) around the village and will only apply to open spaces and not to buildings.

YOU, CAR DRIVER, HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY

There is, unfortunately, more official evidence that villagers drive many of the cars that exceed village speed limits. The children, elderly, pedestrians, walkers, horse riders, dogs etc. could be you, yours or a neighbour's.

If you injure a person, or an animal, whilst driving it will live with you for the rest of your life. **THINK.**

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

Seer Green has again entered the Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils Best Kept Village Competition. Last year we lost by just a few points to the villages of Stone and Stewkley. May 22nd is the start of judging and the competition runs until the end of July. The village is judged on the overall appearance with particular interest in village halls, playing fields, playgrounds, places of worship and cemeteries so please help to keep the village looking good. If you notice graffiti or footpaths in need of maintenance please call the Parish Clerk.



The Parish Council has recently purchased a new sign to replace the old sign in Holy Trinity Churchyard, which holds the year plaques to remind us of when we last won in 2001. Let's hope we can add 2007 to the list!

SEER GREEN PARISH CLERK

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