



## PROMOTING THE VILLAGE HALLS

Since Christmas the Parish Council has arranged two events at the War Memorial Hall that have brought the community together. On Saturday 15th February, 2014 the hall was packed to see a programme of entertainment and presentations by hall users. "Chorleywood Presents" included all ages from children to the retired. Carol Kristian co-ordinated the event and performances varying from ballet through street dance to belly dancing kept the audience enthralled. The audience were moved by the excerpts from the Minute Books that the Parish Council has, read by Martin Clarkson, from when the Chorleywood community funded and built the hall some 90 years ago. Presentations by Chorleywood Amateur Dramatics Society, CW Choral Society, Chorleywood Decorative and Fine Arts Society, Band Nights a Rockin, and an inter-active quiz from Chorleywood Book Shop completed what proved to be a memorable evening.

On Saturday 15th March, 2014 the Parish Council arranged a Craft fair in the War Memorial Hall. Visitors were able to purchase a wide range of crafts, jewellery, gifts, cards, art and textiles. This event was well supported and is likely to be repeated later in the year.

## BIRD SURVEY

At the request of the Parish Council, the Chorleywood & District Local RSPB Group have been conducting a year-long survey of the bird life on Chorleywood Common. This was needed to establish a base line for the bird population there so that the results of future management plans could be assessed. Over the year 52 different species were recorded and the results have been sent to the Herts. Biological Record Centre.

About half the birds recorded were probably just visiting during migration or were only seen once or twice but the other half were possibly breeding and the bird song heard during early morning walks in the spring was remarkable.

The Group have recommended the placing of nest boxes on the Common for several species of birds and have also suggested the introduction of more berry bearing plants to provide more winter food. Unfortunately, the law does not allow the Parish Council to plant anything on the Common. However it is hoped that the opening up of the woodland and the present management of the woodland margins may result in a natural increase of berry bearing native shrubs.

The Parish Council is very grateful to the RSPB Group for carrying out this survey and a full list of the bird species recorded is available from the Parish Office and will be put on the Parish Council website

**To learn more about the work of the local RSPB Group, contact Carol Smith on 01923 897885**



## DON'T FORGET THE PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 22ND MAY

Councillor's contact details are available from the Parish Council Officers, Parish notice boards, or from the Council's Website.

Parish Office Chorleywood Parish Council, South Lodge, Rickmansworth Road, Chorleywood, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 5SL  
Tel: 01923 285594 Fax: 01923 285633 e-mail: info@chorleywood-pc.gov.uk

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# Chorleywood Matters



Issue No 31 Spring 2014

NEWS & VIEWS FROM CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

## NEWS ON THE CHORLEYWOOD COMMON PROJECT



We know that communication could be improved and have been making efforts to find funding for the Chorleywood Common Project. If successful, this will enable us to improve welcome boards in the permissive parking areas, highlight areas of interest with online guides available on the Parish Council website, encourage learning through interests with art and photography competitions and allow us to create a nature trail for children. We already have funding in place for interpretation boards for Church Pond and Larks Meadow. (This would be a two or three year project and there is much to create from copy writing to illustrations and ideas are welcome).

We hope the result will be that our Common Land heritage will be better explained as well as allowing our residents opportunities to get involved and learn new skills. When a similar project was run in Oxhey woods, residents worked with a green woodsman to create a "Xylofence" from indigenous woods.

Our Rangers have already been out carving mushrooms from tree stumps of storm damaged trees (a great way of allowing mini beasts habitats to remain without looking unsightly!) but there is so much more that could be done...

If you have any spare time and would be interested in getting involved in the project or would simply like some more information, please contact the Parish Office.

We're so lucky to have such a large open space in the centre of our Parish. Our Rangers and volunteers work hard to maintain and enhance its unique grassland habitats which support many species of wildflower, butterflies and moths. It's also a great recreational space used by golfers, cricketers, riders, walkers, schools and families. The Parish Council's role is also to balance all of those demands on the space.

# THE PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT

The Precept is the tax set by the Parish Council to finance its functions and services to the community and it is collected by the District Council on behalf of the Parish Council as part of the Council Tax. It is calculated by dividing the amount required between the number of households in the Parish paying Council Tax. This is called the tax base.

Recent changes to legislation now mean that the way the Council Tax is calculated has changed and now excludes all those households in receipt of housing benefit, thus reducing the tax base and the amount of money received by the Parish Council.

Whilst last year TRDC grant funded the shortfall in its entirety from its own grant from Government, this year they have reduced the grant by 12.13%.

On top of this, the tax base has also reduced, meaning that there are fewer households paying the full contribution of Council Tax which therefore further reduces money for the Precept.

In spite of the difficult financial situation, the Parish Council has, by careful management of its funds, contrived not to increase its precept since 2009. However, the War Memorial Hall, which has received no refurbishment apart from painting and general maintenance since 1960, has now reached the point where it needs major upgrading to modernise its facilities and we have had to raise the precept to pay for this.

Because the calculations for this year's precept have had to be based on a different set of figures from last year, the percentage increase presents a very confusing image of the actual facts.

## The bottom line is:

- Overall, parishioners will be paying 4.5% of their Council Tax towards the services which the Parish Council provides.
- There will be an actual annual increase of £7.36 for a Band D property, which equates to 14p per week.
- Therefore parishioners will be paying £1.28 per household per week (Band D equivalent) to the Parish Council and from this the Council manages to maintain Chorleywood Common, Chorleywood Lawn Cemetery, Grove Wood, three Village Halls, three Allotment sites and the parish paths!

# GRAZING UPDATE



There has been some negative publicity regarding the grazing on Chorleywood Common, most of which is incorrect. The facts are that grazing will be returning to Chorleywood Common after Easter; initially there will be four cows for a short period.

## How it works

A buried shortwave radio signal is transmitted from the generator around the antenna wire which borders the grazing enclosure. The cows wear a compatible receiver on a neck collar. As the animal approaches the antenna wire, the receiver emits an audible warning signal. If this is ignored and the animal continues closer to the wire it will receive a short, safe corrective impulse on its neck which is sufficient to make it retreat.

Field trials have shown that an animal may test the fence 2-4 times before learning to respect the audio warning and not go any closer.

This system has been successfully used at Burnham Beeches and Epping Forest for the past three years without incident and for longer periods in Europe. We are therefore confident with the product.

## Safety

There have been accusations regarding how the Parish Council is managing the safety of the project. The Parish Council takes safety seriously and has all the necessary signage and insurance in place.

Many people have spent a great deal of time and effort making this project work and we are sure that it will succeed.

# REMEMBERING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The Parish Council will be joining with other organisations and individuals in Chorleywood to commemorate the First World War. So far our plans include providing red, white and blue hanging baskets in the shopping centre and continuing the theme outside the parish office on the Chorleywood Road and in the Lawn Cemetery.

We will also be running a competition to find the best commemorative front garden. We'll be sending out details shortly of how to enter. But now is a good time to start planning your red, white and blue front garden for the summer!

The Parish Council will also be working together with the Chorleywood Bookshop to plan a special event at the Chorleywood War Memorial Hall with authors who have written books about the First World War, a period tea party and some surprises. There will be more information soon.

# PERMISSIVE PARKING ON THE COMMON

For a number of years Chorleywood Parish Council has received numerous complaints about the mis-use of the Permissive Parking Areas on the Common. It is evident that although the parking areas are allowed for residents to have "the right of air and exercise", commuters see them as free extension to the Station Car Park. Despite previous attempts by the Parish Council to control this, the problem still continues. So this April we plan to install ticket machines in the two areas where the commuter parking is at its worst, at the War Memorial Hall and Shepherd's Bridge.

- Tickets are free of charge.
- Tickets will only be issued during the period 12 noon until 3.00pm
- Any car found without a ticket between 12.30pm and 3.00pm will be fined
- In the event that you arrive before 12 noon and intend to stay past 12.30pm you will have to return to your car at some convenient point and obtain a ticket

# "PLANNING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER"

The Parish Council is driving a new initiative to compile a Community-led plan for the Parish. The Community Plan will be based upon the views and opinions of the whole community, identifying areas of want or improvement for the Parish, as well as the things that the community wishes to protect or enhance.

The Community Plan process will involve the views of the whole community. In the initial planning stages, the Parish is working with the following groups:

**Chorleywood Business Association**  
**Chorleywood Care**  
**Chorleywood Mums**  
**Chorleywood Residents' Association**  
**Friends of the Common**  
**Loudwater Residents' Association**  
**RVS**

Later in the year you will be asked your views on many aspects of Chorleywood life via a questionnaire. The results will form the drawing of a plan focusing on the future of Chorleywood.

## Why have I received a notice for "Application for designation of a Neighbourhood Area?"

The Community Plan will cover many aspects of Chorleywood life and may include a Neighbourhood Plan (covering planning matters) if this proves important to the residents. It is this element to which the TRDC notice relates as a Neighbourhood Plan is a legal planning document. As such, TRDC is obliged to conduct a period of consultation regarding the boundaries of that Plan. If we are able to combine the Neighbourhood Plan with the Community Plan, only one consultation will be necessary saving both time and money.

**If you have questions regarding the Community Plan please contact the Parish office, or speak to members of the Steering Committee manning the Community Plan stand at the French market on Sunday 11th May, 2014.**