

VILLAGE DAY 2010...



At last this year we got the ideal warm and sunny day for Village Day and it turned out to be the best one yet. Crowds of local residents flocked to the Common and we had more stallholders than ever before. There was a series of great entertainment events in the arena and a huge variety of food and drink to be enjoyed. After a year's unavoidable absence, the dog show was welcomed back by many enthusiastic entrants and the overall prize went to Harriet Shurville and Milo. The Council's "Name the Tractor" competition was judged by Ranger Chris Watts and the tractor now sports the nameplate "Betsy". Our congratulations go to five year old Sam Carroll, who chose the name. Everyone had a great time and we hope to see you all again next year.



Chorleywood Matters



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NEWS & VIEWS FROM CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

How the Council Works: The Role of the Clerk

The ancient title of "Clerk" sometimes causes confusion, suggesting to many people that the role of the Clerk is purely secretarial. Not so!

Basically, in any Parish Council, it is the Councillors as a body who are responsible, under their Chairman, for setting policy and making decisions and the Clerk who carries these out on the Council's behalf. It is the Council which appoints the Clerk who, under local government legislation, is responsible for the administration and management of the Council and the supervision of its staff.

The Clerk of a Parish or Town Council, therefore, is the equivalent of the Chief Executive Officer of a District, County or Unitary authority. However, because Parish and Town Councils vary immensely in size, depending on the size of the community they serve, the workload of the Clerk can also vary enormously.

Being responsible for administration, the Clerk has the practical function of advising the Council, guiding the Chairman on procedure and ensuring Council business is conducted according to local government legislation. Good clerks attend regular training courses to keep themselves up to

date with the many changes in legislation and practise which may affect their Council.

The Clerk is also the Council's "proper officer" and, as such, is in charge of all the Council's financial transactions and accounts and the preparation of these accounts for audit. The Clerk is responsible for the Council staff and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Council Office, preparing agendas and reports for Council meetings, taking the minutes of these meetings and implementing the decisions taken at these meetings.

Chorleywood is a fairly large Parish Council and, in addition to all the tasks mentioned above, our Clerk, Yvonne Merritt, is responsible for nine members of staff (three office staff, three rangers, two caretakers and one cleaner), the maintenance and management of the Parish Office and its equipment, the Common, Grove Wood, three village halls, two cemeteries, three allotment sites, the Rangers' rest room and garage, and all our outdoor vehicles and equipment.

Hardly a purely secretarial job!



LOCAL AREA FORUM

The Chorleywood Local Area Forum will be held on October 11th at the War Memorial Hall from 2.00pm. This new time is being trialled to see if it will encourage more people to attend. It is your opportunity to find out what is happening in our community and to ask questions of councillors and the local police officers.



MORE ALLOTMENTS

In a major effort to reduce the waiting lists for allotment plots, the Council's staff has been working to create a number of new plots from the perimeter areas on all our allotment sites, while still leaving space for tractor access for maintenance. We will be letting these as half-plots so that as many people as possible on the waiting list can benefit. For further information, please contact Claire James at the Parish Office.

HELP! NEW SANTA URGENTLY NEEDED

Our regular Santa Claus has decided to ride his sleigh off into the sunset and a volunteer is needed to take over Santa's Grotto at Late Night Shopping Evening this year, Friday 3rd December. If you feel you could take on this vital role for a few hours at our Christmas community event, please contact Diane Horwood at the Parish Office. Santa costume and any necessary padding will be provided.

Diane would also like to hear from you as soon as possible if you wish to book a site for a stall at this event.

CHORLEYWOOD YOUTH CLUB

Chorleywood Youth Club has been operating successfully for many years out of the Field Study Centre in Chorleywood House Estate. Currently it is open one evening a week to teenagers between the ages of 13 and 19. The Club is run by volunteers who try to offer interesting activities to its members. Funding is difficult but there has been some success recently and the management committee is hoping to expand the opening times to a second evening a week and to open the membership to a younger age group. Chorleywood Parish Council has always been supportive of the Club and one of the Councillors represents the Council on the management committee. The Club is always looking for volunteers so, if you are interested in finding out more about its aims and expansion plans, please contact Cllr. Jackie Worrall or Cllr. Rodney Kipps through the Parish Office.

CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT

The Parish Council will be holding a 'Charity Quiz Night' on Saturday 13th November at the War Memorial Hall. The Quiz Night is aimed at bringing the local community together to raise money for local charities and volunteer groups. There will also be an Auction of Promises in the interval. Each table will support a local charity and all the profit from the evening will be donated to participating organisations in prizes of £500 drawn by lots.

This inaugural event is already fully subscribed but it is intended to hold future events on an annual basis on the third Saturday in November.

If you would like more details, or would like to support the event in the form of 'Promises' or Sponsorship please contact Yvonne Merritt at the Parish Office.



GRAZING UPDATE

The Council is still hoping to return the cattle to the Common in the autumn but after such a dry summer, the exact date and the length of time they will graze is dependent on whether the present rainy spell will stimulate the growth of enough grass to sustain them.

All is ready for them. Post and wire fencing is in place on the boundaries and has been set into the woodland on one side to allow the cattle to shelter from the weather if necessary. On the open grassland boundaries, sockets have been sunk in the ground to take temporary fencing, which will go up when the cattle are put into Lark's Meadow and will be removed when they leave. As before, the fences will have gates and squeeze gaps to allow public access through the grazing area.

Three Rivers, in conjunction with the Countryside Management Service, is also proposing to trial cattle grazing in the grounds of Chorleywood House. Sheep have regularly grazed in the Local Nature Reserve in the grounds from the end of July to the beginning of September for over seven years, helping to keep the grassland area open and improve the habitat. It is hoped that a small herd of cattle might graze one of the meadows on the Estate in the late spring. At present, consultation is ongoing, the closing date is Monday 11th October 2010. For further information, contact CMS officer Petrina Llewellyn on 01727 848168 or email petrina.llewellyn@hertscc.gov.uk

CRICKET NEWS

Shortly after the Parish Council election, the Cricket Club kindly invited the new Council to a presentation to introduce us to the Club Strategy 2010 to 2015, which aims to achieve a sustainable development of the quality of senior and junior cricket, to improve facilities, grow the membership and to encourage the involvement of the membership in support of all aspects of cricket and Club operations.

After a brief introduction about the Club from the President and Youth Cricket Organiser, there followed an entertaining short history of the Club – W.G. Grace played twice on the Common, making a duck and a century! – the presentation moved on to future plans for the ground and the pavilion, outlining three options for each, with the pros and cons and estimated costs. For example, it would be possible to renovate just the square, staged over several years, at an estimated cost of £30K or to realign the wickets diagonally at approximately £40K or, ideally, to move the whole playing area 30m further away from the A404 at an approximated cost of £120-150K. Owing to gradual deterioration of the pitches, the Club thinks that, as a minimum, it is important to start major maintenance work on the square this autumn.

As for the pavilion, major renovation of the existing building is estimated to cost £25-50K, replacement with a new modular timber building £150-200K or a new architect designed building somewhere in the region of £400-500K. A decision on this is still pending, with the replacement option within 2-3 years currently favoured.

The Club acknowledges that any of these plans will require considerable financial support, especially at this time of downturn, and will be looking for local sponsorship for its operations, as well as grants for essential capital investment. The Club is a fully accredited Community Amateur Sports Club, having similar status to a charity in that donations may be gift aided. This allows the Club to recover 20% of any tax paid and the donor, if a higher rate tax payer, may recover tax paid on the sum donated.

