



## CHORLEYWOOD LATE NIGHT SHOPPING

In spite of unpromising weather, the Late Night Shopping Evening was a success with large crowds enjoying the entertainment, the attractive stalls and the excellent food on offer. The award for best window went to the Hospice Shop. The Parish Council's Name the Toy competition was correctly guessed (it was Beaky) by Esme, aged 7, who is now the proud owner of the Teddy. The Council would like to express its thanks to Park Heath Estate Agents and Higgins Butchers for supplying power for the event.

Our next event will be Village Day which will be held on Saturday 10th July. We hope you will be able to join us. Should you require any details or wish to have a stand, please contact Di Horwood at the Parish Office 01923 285594.



## LAURENCE EVANS 1926 -2010

Councillors were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Laurence Evans, previous Chairman and doughty Editor of the Chorleywood Residents' newsletter, after a valiant struggle with blood cell lymphoma. Ever since he first moved into Chorleywood, Laurence had been actively involved in local affairs, having over the years been a leading light in the Chenies Estate Residents Association, then the Chiltern Society and, finally the Chorleywood Residents' Association, where his editorship of the newsletter raised it to a high standard of journalistic excellence, accurate, factual, full of informed comment and thoughtful criticism. His contribution to our community has been immense and he will be sorely missed.

## ELECTION NEWS

Not only will there be a General Election this May, but you will also be able to elect your parish councillors who will serve the Chorleywood Parish Council for the next four years. Seventeen seats will be contested in the five wards namely Cedars, Chenies, Chorleywood East, Chorleywood West, and Quickwood wards. The election is due to take place on the 6th May; however if the General Election is called for the same date the Parish Election will take place on the 27th May. For information on the ward that serves you please look at the Council's website [www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk](http://www.chorleywood-pc.gov.uk) or if you have any questions or queries regarding the election please contact the Parish Office.



# Chorleywood Matters



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NEWS & VIEWS FROM CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

## PRECEPT FOR 2010-2011

The Parish Council, fully aware of the current economic situation has managed to set the precept (money collected by local taxation of Chorleywood residents) at £338,500, only £1,500 higher than last year, an increase of less than 0.5%. In real terms the precept based on a band D property will be increased by 2p for the year with no reduction in the services we provide.

## "IT IS ONLY A BIT OF GRASS AFTER ALL"

"So why all the fuss and why is the Parish Council being so obstructive?"

If it were "only a bit of grass" these questions might be justified but it isn't and they aren't! Besides being a County Heritage Site, the Common has been designated a Local Nature Reserve, containing as it does, three different natural grassland habitats, acid heathland, neutral grassland and chalk meadow, all on one site, reflecting the natural plant communities that have become established perhaps over 1000 years. Nationally such grassland habitats are disappearing and have been identified as a priority within the National Biodiversity Action Plan and Habitats of Principle Importance under the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act. Hence the emphasis on conserving all of the high quality grassland

where it survives, managing it properly and increasing it where possible. All of this is reflected in the Local Nature Reserve status of the Common as well as its recognition as a Wildlife Site accommodating a population of Great Crested Newts which migrate and hibernate in the area of the cricket field and have to be protected.

These designations place legal constraints on the Parish Council as owners, as to what we may or may not legally do on the Common – or legally permit to be done.

The Cricket Club first notified us five years ago that they wanted to move the playing area further away from the A404 for safety reasons and to replace their existing pavilion. Because of the special status of the Common, we have no power to agree to this before various permissions are granted. In January 2009, TRDC granted the Cricket Club planning permission to relocate the cricket table and playing area subject to conditions concerning the protection of acid grassland and the newt population. We are pleased to see that these conditions have now been satisfied and were formally discharged in February 2010. In order to assess the project as a whole, the Parish Council would have liked to have seen a planning application for the rebuilding of the pavilion but to date, one has not been submitted.

Moving the playing area further away from the A404 would inevitably destroy some 2500 square metres of acid grassland. In order to preserve this, the Parish Council has agreed in principle to the Cricket Club's proposal that a similar area of woodland alongside the practise nets should be felled and the ground be prepared for the



### ...cricket club update continued.

translocation of the threatened acid grassland. The Cricket Club will need permission from the Forestry Commission to carry this out and the operator will need a felling licence.

Meanwhile, with valuable help and advice from the Hertfordshire Biological Records Office and the Countryside Management Service we have been considering a proposed Method Statement sent to us by the Cricket Club, which defines precise technical details of how the construction of the new cricket square and outfield would be achieved and the heavy machinery which would be needed. This needs to be agreed by the Parish Council. However, before work can commence, the Cricket Club must apply to DEFRA for permission to carry out works on Common Land. This will include details of planning permission, temporary fencing, other consents already granted, advertisement in the local press and representations from interested parties.

Their application may be decided on written evidence or the Department may decide that a site visit by a Planning Inspector is needed, or to hold an informal meeting of interested parties or even to hold a formal public enquiry conducted by an Inspector. We understand that the time scales involved in obtaining DEFRA consent for the project may vary from 3 to 8 months from the date of application. Should DEFRA refuse the application, the Parish Council cannot override the decision. This can only be done by the Secretary of State.

We hope that we have been able to explain the current situation of the Cricket Club's project within the available space and to have shown that it is not "only a bit of grass" but a "very special bit of grass" and to have outlined the many responsibilities which the Council has towards it.

## COMMON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

Chorleywood has three Conservation Areas, Chorleywood Common, Loudwater and the Station Estate, and each one has different important aspects which add to the overall character that makes Chorleywood what it is.

In its recent appraisal of the Chorleywood Common Conservation Area TRDC stressed the importance of the open rural nature of the Common and the integration of the built form surrounding it which creates an area of architectural interest.

*The oldest buildings, often Grade II Listed, tend to be farm cottages. The arrival of the Metropolitan railway introduced a more urban atmosphere with the development of the areas around Station Approach and on the Station Estate and the village also includes a number of "Arts and Crafts" style buildings. The open and rural integrity of the Common is maintained by the minimal front boundaries to the properties that surround it, with low brick walls, picket fencing or soft vegetation boundaries. The Common occupies high ground within the area and views of it from across the valleys and of the village from within it, all add to the atmosphere.*

The appraisal has identified five zones within the Common Conservation Area, each with their own character.

*The northern section is dominated by the A404. It includes eight Grade II listed buildings and the Cricket Club. The necessary traffic signage detracts from its appearance but this is offset by the trees and shrubs screening the properties along the road and the vista into the Common across the cricket ground.*

*The eastern section along Dog Kennel Lane contains seven Grade II listed buildings. There is an atmosphere of tranquillity and open space when travelling by foot or car and the Common dominates the landscape with hills and valleys adding to its visual appeal.*



*The southern section of the conservation area is formed by Chorleywood Bottom and part of the lower edge of the Common. The character style is predominantly 20th Century and reflects the change following the creation of the Metropolitan Railway, but even so still includes four Grade II listed buildings.*

*The western section covers Station Approach, Homefield Road and Common Road. This area contains three Grade II listed buildings and two that are locally listed. The railway dominates the lower half of this section even though the station itself is not within the conservation area. The buildings would have originally been erected in response to the building of the station. This section includes a diverse selection of properties from the terrace of workmen's cottages that front the Common to the large houses in large plots along Common Road.*

*The fifth section of the Common Conservation Area is the Chorleywood Common itself. The open Common consists of a large expanse of open space covering an area of approximately 200 acres. In addition to the cricket club it also contains, a 9-hole golf course and a permissive horse track. There are also three collections of cottages; Apple Tree Dell, Artichoke Dell and Cherry Tree Dell. The original historic role of the use of the land for grazing has been concealed by the areas of woodland located within the common. The current use of the land is for recreational purposes although the Parish Council has started the gradual re-introduction of grazing for part of the year with the aim of improving the ecological diversity of the plants that occur naturally on chalk grassland.*

Conservation Areas are primarily important in the context of Planning and in particular the design and setting of Development. New homes are always required especially in attractive, vibrant areas. The difficulty comes when weighing demand against the possible adverse impact of a development on an area. Sensitive handling of the problem can produce new homes like the development of Darvell's Yard which might not be to everyone's taste but does not detract from the open atmosphere of the Common. The Planning Authority TRDC will always listen to local concerns and Chorleywood Parish Council's Planning Committee is there to add its voice to residents support or objection to a particular development. If you need more information about any of the Conservation Areas, what the designation means, or any Planning implications, please ask TRDC Planning Department or the Parish Office.

## TANIA IS TOPS

Congratulations to our very popular Chorleywood PCSO, Tania Stabler, who became local PCSO of the year for 2009. Tania was presented with her award at the Neighbourhood Watch annual conference. We on the Parish Council are well aware of how Tania's work in the community, particularly her work with young people, has improved local security in Chorleywood and how well she liaises with all sections of the community. **We are very lucky to have her.**



## 10 YEARS OF THE CHILTERN WAY

The Chiltern Society is celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Chiltern Way with a Walking Festival. The Chiltern Way has become one of England's most popular long-distance footpaths, passing through beautiful and varied countryside and delightful villages. The Society are putting together a varied programme of walks for the anniversary, all led by Society volunteers. Details are available on the Society's website [www.chilternsociety.org.uk/about-ChltnWay.php](http://www.chilternsociety.org.uk/about-ChltnWay.php).

