

## **BLETCHINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

**DECEMBER 2007 and JANUARY 2008**

**Community Speedwatch:** The scheme is now up and running with 5 volunteers trained. **WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS.** If you feel you could give up a couple of hours once or twice a month and would like to join the team of volunteers, please contact either the Parish Clerk or PC Moira Cocks of Surrey Police for further details. Full training will be given.

**Policing Issues:** December was a quiet month for Bletchingley, despite the festive season. Unfortunately, Nutfield seemed to bear the brunt of the vandalism. The regular Countryside Alert Newsletter received from PC Shrapel which covers all areas of Tandridge will be posted on the website at the end of the Neighbourhood Watch Section as well as up on the notice board in the village. All residents are asked to be vigilant and report incidents otherwise the statistics will not represent the true crime figures. The police propose to distribute to all households on a quarterly basis, a new "Safer Neighbourhood Policing Team Newsletter" which it is hoped will be delivered shortly. This will include contact details as well as local updates. The bi-monthly Police Panels will now be held in the Doctor's Surgery in the Village Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the relevant month from 7pm until 8pm. The first is on Monday 11 February 2008.

**Neighbourhood Watch:** The Chairman of Neighbourhood Watch resigned at the AGM held on 8 January 2008. The three Area Co-ordinators would continue the good work despite no replacement Chairman at this time. Our thanks to all in the team for their continued dedication to keeping a watch over Bletchingley. The AGM was very well attended by residents. Refreshments were provided by Inspector Elaine Burtenshaw. PC Nick Shrapel and PCSO Dawn Sheppard were present.

**Dog Fouling:** This is still a very big problem in several locations. Could all dog owners please act responsibly and ensure that they clean up after their dog.

**Parking at Barfields Junction:** This is an ongoing problem with cars being parked too close to the junction and therefore restricting access, not only for residents but also for refuse vehicles etc. Could all residents please ensure that they park considerately.

**St Catherine's School:** The signage issue has not been forgotten and is still being pursued. The recent events surrounding the exclusion of areas, including Bletchingley, from Oxted County School has being objected to by the Parish Council and a joint protest march between Bletchingley St Catherine's and Godstone school was arranged for 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2008. This was very well organised by Godstone school and well attended by Godstone parents as well as a small contingent from St Catherine's school. An alternative proposal has been agreed by county councillors but still needs formal agreement before submitting to the adjudicator for final decision.

**Stychens Lane Playground:** The vandalised bench has now been replaced with a picnic table made from recycled rubber. Hopefully this will enable more residents to enjoy any summer weather we may have with a picnic up at the playground with their children.

**Bus Shelter:** The Parish Council have arranged for the repair of the bus shelter outside the Whyte Harte and this should be undertaken shortly. Only the western end glass panel will be replaced. The other side will be filled in due to the recurring damage to the glass. It appears that the damage to the shelter was done by a vehicle hitting it as opposed to wanton vandalism.

**Youth Shelter:** The idea is still being discussed with a new location in mind, namely between the recycling area and the side entrance to the school. Views are currently being obtained from those most affected by this location. If anyone has any comments/suggestions, please could you send them to the Clerk by letter or e-mail [info@bletchingley.org.uk](mailto:info@bletchingley.org.uk).

**St Catherine's Playground:** Some of you may be aware that discussions have taken place re the suggested move of the playground from Coneybury to the centre of St Catherine's Cross. This has in the large part met with objection. There is a need to update the playground, whether it is relocated or not. Any views would be greatly appreciated.

**Allotments:** Arrangements have been made for the overhanging tree in the hedge bordering Little Common Lane to be removed to hedge level. This will provide more light to allotment 1 and 2 as well as be safer for vehicles parked in Little Common Lane. The water will be turned back on in March.

**Bletchingley in Bloom:** A litter picking day is organised for 9<sup>th</sup> February 2008. It is hoped that a large number of volunteers will assist. Agreement has finally been reached as to the location for the village sign, currently awaiting decision on design. It is proposed to locate the sign in the green between the Red Lion and Stychens Lane. Future plans include the production of a garden effect on the stretch of green furthest from the A25 between The Red Lion and Stychens Lane. If any one knows of any trees, which may have some historic interest, then please contact Pamela Cock to have them included on the Heritage Tree list that is being compiled. Permission is currently being sought for gateway planters constructed out of railway sleepers to be positioned at either end of the village along the A25. Maintenance of Hevers Pond is also under discussion.

**Cemetery:** Recently a memorial which had an additional inscription added to it was replaced on the wrong grave. This was notified to the Clerk who contacted Stonemans. The memorial was correctly placed and a letter of apology sent out to the relatives. DA Landscaping's groundwork maintenance services have been retained for a further period of 3 years, subject to satisfactory subsequent renewal quotes. The wooden cross for the German Airmen has now been removed and placed in The East Surrey Museum. This decision was taken as the bodies of the 3 German Airmen (2 named and 1 unnamed) were exhumed in December 1962 and moved to the German war cemetery in Cannock Chase.

**Minerals Issues:** The decision on the **Tarmac Application** has been deferred for the third time to allow consideration of more data. Even now, more answers are awaited. It is unclear whether it will finally be on the agenda for the next County Planning meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February. **WBB's** sand processing plant retrospective planning application has been submitted. However, as required data has been omitted here too, it has not yet been released. The **Star Energy Gas Project** on Tilburstow Hill is now under way. The field access has been constructed and drilling for the first gas appraisal well should begin soon. Although the well itself is just within Godstone, underground the borehole will travel westwards beneath the fields in Bletchingley. The company assures us that the drilling rig is small and the work should not be too noisy or visually intrusive. Up to three wells may be dug. If they find insufficient gas for worthwhile exploitation, they will remove all works and restore the site. We must wait and see!

**Footpath 506:** Following a Court Order in favour of Bletchingley Parish Council on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2005, the Council is continuing to seek a sale of Wideways 100 High Street Bletchingley to satisfy the costs orders against Mr B Herrtage. The next stage of the enforcement process will be a Hearing at Guildford County Court for an Order for the sale of Wideways 100 High Street Bletchingley. The hearing will be on a date to be determined in February/March 2008.

**Website:** This is now starting to become more of a focal point for events, so please do contact the Clerk if you wish to advertise your club/organisation or any event in the diary or have any news that you feel would benefit the village. Advertising of news and events that are thought to be of benefit to residents and of a non-commercial nature will be free of charge. As most people now have access to computers, it is an ideal central location for people to find out about what is on in the village, but it can only be as informative as the information that is fed in to it.

**Planning:** The Planning Committee has now had two meetings. These will normally meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month. An agenda will be posted on the noticeboard in the week preceding the meeting and on the website. Any residents wishing to object to a planning application need to notify the Clerk in advance of the meetings. A draft Planning Policy, outlining what the Parish Council's role in planning is in the process of being agreed and adopted.

**CCTV:** The proposal for a new CCTV system is still being discussed with Surrey Police. Updates will follow in due course.

Robin Gater – Chairman