

BLETCHINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

MARCH 2011 to JUNE 2011

May Elections – 8 Councillors put their names forward for the elections and as such all were elected unopposed, leaving us with one vacancy which we filled at our meeting on the 13th June 2011 by co-option. We were sorry to say goodbye to Robin Gater who has been on the Council for 11 years and a Chairman for 8 of those. David Martin has also stepped down and will be sorely missed for his in depth knowledge of the buildings in Bletchingley and their planning history. He had been on the Council for 31 years. Ken Bridger stood down but we hope that he will continue to be involved with Neighbourhood Watch. We also said goodbye to Jeanne Moore and Neil Munday who played their own parts on the transport and allotment sides. We welcome Anthony Cock, Dick Kiss, Paul Tarrant and Valerie Leonhardt who are joining returning councillors Robert Trotman, Ann Butler, Sally-anne Ray and Patricia Ann Glenn. We also welcome Katy Potter who joined us following the co-option on the 13th June 2011.

Allotments – All the allotments are under cultivation. There are currently 4 on the waiting list. The Parish Council would like to thank the resident responsible for installing the short section of fencing between the large gate at Little Common Lane and the hedge. Our contractor has now planted some hedging plants on the other side which will hopefully grow up to form a hedge and join up with the existing hedge, thereby filling in that gap. Please remain vigilant on the plots and report any suspicious circumstances or acts of vandalism. Valerie Leonhardt is the new councillor responsible for allotments and is an existing allotment holder at the Stychens Lane site. We are planning to have the Best Kept Allotment Cup competition again this year – details will have been sent out to allotment holders by the end of June.

Bletchingley in Bloom – We are grateful to Bletchingley in Bloom members for continuing to maintain the various projects around the village and will continue to support the team in its efforts to maintain the appearance of the village.

Grange Meadow Crossing – We now have sitting in the Parish Council account a total of £24,087.45 with a small amount of Fatboy Slim funding still to come in. This sum, together with the £15k promised by SCC means that we have enough for the works to be carried out. SCC are however having to have the plans redrafted due to minor changes required relating to the new lighting contract and the location of the speed camera. We had hoped that the works would be completed in time for the Village Fair at the end of June, but this is not to be the case. We are actively pursuing SCC for confirmation of a start date. We would like to thank everyone involved in the fundraising, both on the organisation of the events side and those who contributed. The amount raised within such a short time shows just how much community spirit there is in this village and also how strongly people feel about the need for a crossing. The next local project needing funds is for the new skate park at Grange Meadow.

Skate Ramps – Various fundraising is being undertaken by members of BAG (Bletchingley Action Group) who were instrumental in its original construction. Collection boxes are in the local pubs and shops so please drop in any loose change that you have. Plans are available for its replacement at a cost of around £36k. The Parish Council have confirmed their support for a replacement skate park and are currently reviewing how much it is able to contribute to towards the Skate Park.

Hevers Pond: Members of SARG undertook the amphibian and reptile survey with the help of members of Hawthorns School. The results of the survey are still awaited and will be used on the notice board which is to be erected at the Pond, along with some historical information on the Pond.

Highway Issues – We are shortly to receive £200 from the Tandridge Local Committee which will be put towards the purchase of salt bags for winter maintenance. We are teaming up with Nutfield and hopefully Godstone to increase our buying power as they too are awaiting receipt of a £200 allocation. If anyone is strategically located at junction points and willing to store a salt bag for use on spreading on the junction in times of icy conditions, then please let the Clerk know who will collate the information. It was decided that this method would be better use of the funds provided rather than purchasing a salt bin, which only gets filled twice a year and then gets emptied for personal use rather than on the junctions the salt was intended for.

Church Lane – Earlier this year the sides of Church Lane were finally cut back by a contractor appointed by the Golf Club. This greatly improved the use of Church Lane and it is hoped that this will now be maintained and cut back on a yearly basis. The removal of the Holme Oak in Church Lane has been postponed due to the need to wait for approval for a road closure. If anyone is aware of a suitable location to plant one of the Holme Oak saplings, bearing in mind the size it can reach, then please contact the Parish Clerk. The potholes down Church Lane have also been repaired now by SCC.

Minerals: The Government Inspector's report on the Core Strategy of the Surrey Minerals Plan has now been published. Despite the concerns of the water company regarding the potential pollution of the aquifer lying beneath these sites that supplies our drinking water, Pendell Farm remains identified as the primary source for silica sand in the county and Mercer's Farm on Nutfield Marsh is under threat as a site for building sand. The blight of so much quarrying along the Green Belt corridor beneath the North Downs, even including some of the Surrey Hills AONB, the inappropriate road access on Nutfield Marsh, the possible effects of more heavy traffic on the A25 through Nutfield, Bletchingley and Godstone are all dismissed in the Plan. The findings of the Inspector in this report, which justify the selection of these particular sites above all other alternatives in the County, are a disappointment.

Currently the application to extend North Park Quarry to Pendell is under consultation. Negotiations within the quarry liaison group have taken place, so that this application has now been amended to provide a greater stand-off between the quarry faces and the nearby residences. By 2014 work at North Park would cease and full restoration of the land is expected to be completed by 2016.

Website: This is being regularly updated with events and news. A new section will be included shortly to include details of walks in and around Bletchingley. Please take time out to have a look at what is happening in your village. Anyone who wants to publicise a local event or club or has some local news to impart please contact sally.ray@btinternet.com.

Adult Education Centre: The Parish Council have been made aware of the impending closure of the Adult Education Centre and are currently looking into this.

Sally-anne Ray – Chairman