

Claydon with Clattercote Newsletter

September 2013

PLAY AREA PROJECT PROGRESS

A survey of villagers has revealed that the most popular pieces of equipment in the Play Area are the swings and the climbing frame. A play hut, a roundabout and a basket swing are the most frequent suggestions for new equipment. So far discussions have been held with two equipment suppliers who have both surveyed the site. There is sufficient space in the Play Area to house several more items whilst retaining the existing equipment. 16 respondents indicated that they would use the area more frequently if it were to be enhanced.

The survey was distributed to every house in the village (140) either electronically or in printed form and 32 were returned. The current results are available to view on the village website www.claydonvillage.co.uk. Villagers can still respond by contacting Paul Gallagher on 690119 or paul.gallagher@hotmail.com.

Comments in the survey complimented the Play Area on the safety of the site and equipment, the colourful appearance of the equipment and its fun value and the pleasant setting. Criticisms stressed that nothing has changed for several years with broken items not replaced and there is nothing specifically for toddlers.

At the Parish Council Meeting on 10th September the Play Equipment Sub-Committee obtained approval to press ahead with the enhancement project. At the meeting, concern was expressed that the village insurance premium may be increased significantly, that older children have not been sufficiently considered and that no improvements are recommended for the wider expanse of the Playing Field.

Sources of funding have been investigated and it is expected that 100% of the capital cost will be provided by grants from outside sources. The enthusiastic team will now work on completing their proposals and submitting the grant application forms to the relevant bodies.

It is hoped that the changes will take place next year.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council Meeting on 10th September was attended by County Councillor George Reynolds and 12 members of the public. The following further items were discussed:

ROAD SURFACES AND POTHOLES

The Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways Asset Team, dealing with road edges and verges, has been taking photographs in the area. They will decide whether any repairs constitute value for money. All of the potholes have now been filled but residents are urged to report them to <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/potholes> or 0845 310 1111 when they appear again.

BLUE BRICK PATH

There is considerable weed growth in the section near the post box. It was queried whether the path should be replaced by tarmac, but the Chairman responded that as the blue bricks were part of the village's Victorian heritage, in the past villagers had chosen to retain them. He suggested that the Parish Council may want to consider employing someone to maintain the path when they set the budget for 2014-15.

PLANNING ISSUES

Threeways End

The application for an extension of the garage for conversion to an office has been approved by Cherwell District Council.

Manor Farm Buildings

The immediate neighbours have been informed that a planning application is soon to be submitted for a four bedroom house as an extension of the Lawful Development Certificate on the present building. The Chairman, David Hill, declared an interest and will not be present when the application comes before the Parish Council.

CHURCH ROOM

The Parish Council has submitted the application for the Church Room to become an Asset of Community Value. In a response to a request from the Parish Council for an up to date set of accounts, Michael O'Donovan, the Chairman of the Church Room Committee had responded that it was not appropriate for the Parish Council to be privy to this information. As villagers had been responsible for raising a great deal of money to fund the refurbishment, the Parish Council considered it inappropriate that the committee should withhold this information.

From its 2012-13 budget, the Parish Council is holding £500 designated for the Church Room, on condition that it is set up as a separate charity. The Parochial Church Council's investigation into various options on how the Church Room should be run (not necessarily as a separate charity) is apparently complete and a report will be issued shortly.

At the time of the meeting building work on the disabled toilet was well advanced.

ALLOTMENTS



Thistle and dock seeds ready to be dispersed by the wind to neighbouring plots

Despite reassurances by Councillor Simmons, at the July meeting, that the situation was well under control, the weed growth on several plots is in danger of affecting their neighbours. The Chairman declared that it is not fair that the efforts of those allotment holders who have put in a great deal of work should be undermined.

It was resolved that all of the unkempt plots be cut down. Two current plot holders will be warned before any activity takes place.

All of the outstanding rents have been paid.

NEW HOMES BONUS

It was confirmed that the village is entitled to a New Homes Bonus, as Manor Farm Buildings and Parrots Barn have fulfilled the criteria for Council Tax payments. The amount, to be paid in 2014-15 will be announced in October. Councillor Reynolds warned that although the amount for 2013-14 was around £527 per house, it may be considerably reduced next year.

OXFORD CANAL

The Chairman had written to Mr and Mrs Whitaker of Poplars Farm, Cropredy refuting the claim that the Parish Council and the villagers of Claydon were harassing narrowboat owners on the plots that they sold adjacent to Otter Hollow. He had received a reply stating that they would wait and see if there were any further developments.

BROADBAND

There appears to be little hope of a better broadband service, with the village excluded from the area where phased improvements are currently planned. Villagers are confused by the fact that the village apparently has three broadband champions, Paul Gallagher, Mark Simmons and an unidentified person. Paul had brought the issue to the attention of villagers and sent out a survey, to which there had been 35 respondents. At the meeting it was agreed that Councillor Simmons would seek out a resident with sufficient expertise to devise a plan for the village.

On the following day, at a meeting of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, Sue Smith, the CEO of Cherwell District Council expressed an interest in trying to do something for those areas within Cherwell that had been left out of the current improvement schemes. Information was requested to be fed to CDC in advance of its meeting on 17th September.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – FUNDING & GRANTS

Councillor community budgets

Oxfordshire County Council administers the Big Society Fund through the Councillor Community Budgets (CCB) grant scheme. The CCB grant scheme is based on the principle that councillors are best placed to recognise the needs of their local communities. Each county councillor has a budget to support the projects that matter most to their local communities.

Councillor George Reynolds has a budget of £9000. This equates to about £400 - £500 per village if every village in our division (Wroxton & Hook Norton) is to receive a grant.

The scheme is open to not-for-profit organisations looking to meet a recognised need in their community. It should not have a political or religious purpose and will not be awarded for on-going running or staff costs.

Councillor Reynolds recommended that interested groups should contact him in the first instance (tel. 01295 780479 or email: george.reynolds@oxfordshire.gov.uk) to check the feasibility of their proposal. He has requested that applications be submitted by the end of January 2014 but early applications are encouraged as funding is awarded on a rolling basis.

Successful applicants are expected to comply fully with any monitoring requests from the County Council and must agree to this when signing the funding application form.

Area Stewardship Fund

Each locality has an allocation based on the number of County Councillors in the area. The fund this year can only be spent on highway maintenance activities

Examples of acceptable maintenance activities include: additional maintenance of existing drainage systems (e.g. gully emptying or grip cleaning), additional grass cutting, vegetation maintenance or weed killing, additional winter maintenance provision and additional footpath or carriageway repairs.

Councillor Reynolds stated that there will not be much per village as highway jobs are always very expensive. He requested that if the Parish Council has small jobs to be done he will speak with our Area Steward to find out whether they qualify. This needs to be applied for before the New Year as it takes a long time for work schedules to go through the system.

PARISH COUNCIL GRANTS

The Clerk will be sending grant forms to various organisations within the village. The form will also be made available on the village website. If any organisation would like to be considered for a grant from the 2014-15 budget, **the form must be completed and returned by 31st October.** Although many missed the deadline last year and still received a grant, the Parish Council warned that it is likely to be less sympathetic this time.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Councillor Jones reported that the OCC view appears to be to encourage communities to help themselves, either by finding lifts from their neighbours or to use the more formal Volunteer Connect scheme. There is a charge of 45p per mile for users of the Volunteer Connect Scheme, with total mileage including that from the driver's home.

The Chairman requested a list of all of the contact numbers for the means of transport available to villagers, including the much appreciated County Connect bus service and the Stagecoach 277 service. He also suggested that more villager drivers may be prepared to help with the Claydon Car Service – contact Thelma Tibbetts on 690574. A scheme to put people who are doing the same journey in touch with one another has a website www.oxfordshireliftshare.com.

ANNUAL AUDIT

The Parish Council has experienced difficulty with the Annual Audit as it has fallen foul of a new rule whereby assets must be valued at the full purchase price. Councillors felt it unreasonable that many village assets, still in use, that would have been considered as fully depreciated, have such a high asset value eg. the Games Wall is over 20 years old but is valued at £1800. This has a knock-on effect on the cost of the insurance premium.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Villagers are reminded to be vigilant. The number plates were taken from a car at Clattercote Reservoir Car Park on Saturday 24th August.

POINT TO POINT FARM

Following the query at the Parish Council meeting in July, reported in the last Newsletter, I have been informed that some landscape planting has taken place around the barns.

BUS BREAKDOWNS

There have been three recent known breakdowns of the bus on the 277 service – the last on Monday 2nd September in the village itself. Passengers whose travel has been affected have been sent a *Megarider Gold* ticket as compensation. Stagecoach state that they are acquiring some new vehicles in 2014, so this should mean more reliable buses coming to the 277 route.

Congratulations

to Nicole Purdey on the birth of Cody Raymond Johnson on 29th August weighing in at 7lb 13oz. There are now five generations of the Purdey family, with grandfather Rob, great-grandmother Veronica and great-great grandfather Ray. It is hoped to print a photograph of them all together in the next issue.

Thanks

from Sam Hoggins to everyone who supported the Beer Festival, that he organised at the Brasenose, running from 6th to 8th September. It raised £2300 for the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance Service.

Welcome

To our new vicar, Reverend Hilary Campbell, who will take up her appointment on 1st October.

Diary Dates

OVER SIXTIES FILMS

The next film showing will be

Dustin Hoffman's directorial debut

Quartet

Starring Maggie Smith, Tom Courtenay, Michael Gambon, Billy Connolly and Pauline Collins

at 2.00 p.m. on **Friday 11th October** in the Church Room

The residents of a home for retired opera singers plan a concert on the anniversary of Giuseppe Verdi's birthday to raise funds for their home.

POPPY APPEAL

Anne Hoggins will be collecting for the British Legion Poppy Appeal from **Saturday 23rd October to Saturday 9th November.**

Diary Dates continued

CLAYDON BONFIRE

Saturday 2nd November. Details to be arranged.

CLAYDON HISTORY SOCIETY

Monday 4th November.

The next meeting will take place at 7.30 pm in the Church Room.

PLAYING FIELD TRUSTEE MEETING

Tuesday 12th November at 7.00 pm in the Church Room

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 12th November at 7.30 pm in the Church Room

CHEESE AND WINE EVENING

Friday 29th November

There will be an illustrated talk by Sue Lester on

Cropredy Past and Present

at 7.30 pm in the Church Room, with cheese and wine refreshments.
Tickets will be available from mid-October - £3 for History Society members, £5 for non-members -call 690510.

CHARITY COFFEE MORNING

In aid of the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance on
Saturday 30th November from 10.30 am in the Church Room.

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