



# Gerrards Cross Parish Council

## NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2008

### THREE SUMMER EVENTS FOR EVERYONE



**Chairman Peter Chapman and Councillors Chris Brown, Laraine Campkin and Nick Moss with their children practising for Bike Week**

#### **BIKE WEEK – 14 – 22 June**

Your Parish Council is pleased to announce that we will again be participating in National Bike Week. With an emphasis on family cycling, the Council will be arranging cycling events during the week. Living in South Bucks with its fantastic countryside, many parks and, of course, the Chilterns, cyclists are spoilt for choice.

During the 2 weekends in Bike Week, we will be organizing a number of short bike rides to family attractions such as Black Park and Langley Park. We will also be encouraging using bikes to cycle to school, work, to the shops and to the railway station. You can arrive for your daily activities with no parking problems, no fuel costs and help to keep a cleaner environment.

Riding a bicycle is an invigorating and healthy experience. Bike Week is an opportunity to get your bike out and join us to promote cycling in Gerrards Cross and Buckinghamshire. Please watch our notice boards and parish website for more details.

Chris Brown Chairman, Highways Committee

#### **MULTI-CULTURAL EVENT – 29 JUNE.**

The Parish Council has played a prominent role in helping –with manpower, ideas and financially - South Bucks District Council organise this event at the Memorial Centre. There will be a whole range of different activities from across the world including national

dances, African drumming, arts, martial arts, sports [including Brazilian football] and food and drink from India, Japan and a host of other countries.

Everyone is welcome and it is free. The local schools are playing an active role and there will be lots of opportunities for everybody to get involved, including a competition for the best dressed – in national costume of course. In the lead up to the event there will be several projects taking place within local schools and at the Gerrards Cross library. More information will be displayed nearer the time or if you are interested in getting involved or having a stall [free] on the day contact the Community Development Officer, Tanya Loughran on 01895 837368 or 07825 895494.

#### **GERRARDS CROSS FUN RUN 2008 – SUNDAY, 18 MAY**

The Parish Council is also an active supporter of this very successful community event – on the 4 previous occasions it has been held it has attracted attendances of around 4,000 local people [including 1000+ runners] each time. An important, but secondary, objective is to raise money for Charity and, to date, in excess of £120,000 has been donated. This year the 2 Charities to be supported are the Teenage Cancer Trust and the Sunrise Cancer Unit at High Wycombe.

Further details will be available well before the event.

## **COUNTY COUNCIL WASTE CORE STRATEGY AND POSSIBLE INCINERATOR AT WAPSEYS WOOD**

Public consultation on this Buckinghamshire County Council [BCC] Core Strategy runs from 29 February to 25 April and is of particular concern to Gerrards Cross because it includes Wapseys Wood as a Preferred Option for a site for an incinerator for disposal of Municipal Solid Waste. Wapseys Wood is on the edge of Gerrards Cross on green belt land on the A40, adjacent to the Bell House Hotel, and presently used for landfill.

Municipal Solid Waste includes everyday household waste, now generally disposed of as landfill which produces greenhouse gases and so contributes to climate change. Landfill costs are increasing hugely as charges rise and fines are progressively imposed if reduction targets are not met.

The Government have prescribed the procedure for consultation and encourage the use of the Representative Form for comments. The plan has a target to start the new operation in April 2013. Up to date information will be given on the BCC web site [www.buckscc.gov.uk](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk) and information by email [waste\\_strategy@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:waste_strategy@buckscc.gov.uk)  
David Peters, Vice-Chairman

## **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS AND OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP**

We have had a neighbourhood policing team in Gerrards Cross since the middle of January. Sgt Dominic Williamson, who also covers Beaconsfield, has a team of three officers in Gerrards Cross. They are PC Claire Woodcock and PCSOs Ceri Paul and Matt Bingham.

One of their first actions was to deal with illegal and inconsiderate parking which residents had been complaining about for more than a year.

Suddenly the one hour parking bays were no longer occupied by the same cars all day long and shoppers could easily find a space to park close to the shops. However the all day parking was displaced to residential roads further from the centre where it was legal but annoying to the residents concerned.

Last November the Parish Council recommended to the South Bucks District Council [SBDC] to make the first half hour's parking free in the Gerrards Cross car parks with no charge on Sundays. However SBDC then proposed to remove the half hour parking option charged at 50p and replace this with a minimum of one hour for £1.10. After consultation, SBDC have decided to retain the half hour parking.

There was considerable discussion of parking issues at a well attended public meeting in St James Church Hall on 28 January, when the police initiated the consultation required to form a Neighbourhood Action Group [NAG]. The meeting voted on its top three concerns for action by the police in conjunction with us, the residents of Gerrards Cross.

The top three were burglary, parking and speeding in that order. Our neighbourhood policing team are now setting up the NAG. Please keep an eye on our website and the local press for further details.

Peter Chapman Chairman

## **PROPOSAL FOR EXPANSION OF HEATHROW**

Gerrards Cross Parish Council's Response to the Heathrow consultation

### **AIR QUALITY**

Gerrards Cross Parish Council strongly disagrees that additional flights and passenger numbers at Heathrow can be allowed without an unacceptable level of air pollution in our neighbourhood.

We already have air quality concerns, as measured by South Bucks District Council, in corridors alongside the M40 and M25 motorways which run through our neighbourhood. The Highways Agency predicts that after the widening of the M25 to four lanes the potential deterioration in air quality will be compensated by improvements in vehicle cleanliness but no overall improvement in air quality to an acceptable level is to be expected.

People living here want future technological improvements in aircraft and vehicle cleanliness for their own sake, not so they can be given away again in increased volumes of flights and road transport.

## **NOISE**

The Parish Council strongly disagrees that the extra noise over our area, caused by more flights than at present and the closer proximity of a third runway to our neighbourhood, will be compensated by noise reductions elsewhere. This would require a phasing out of today's aircraft and a phasing in of quieter aircraft which is outside the government's control and might not suit the commercial interests of the aircraft operators. This compensation of noise reduction is doubtful and has yet to be experienced.

The government has already said that it is not willing or able to break international agreements on the non-taxation of aircraft fuel and that it is keen not to see Heathrow's pre-eminence eclipsed by Schipol, Frankfurt or Charles de Gaulle, so it will be in no position to insist on the right proportion of quieter aircraft coming to Heathrow.

## **CONGESTION**

The Parish Council objects not only to the noise and air quality implications of a third runway but also to the extra traffic congestion which will be caused by extra vehicles on the roads in and around our neighbourhood. This congestion will be caused by extra numbers of passengers travelling to and from the airport in road vehicles and by extra workers at Heathrow commuting to and from work through South Bucks.

The Parish Council urges the government to accept that Heathrow is big enough with Terminal 5 and to look at aviation's needs over the next 20-30 years using an airport which is not surrounded by dense housing and which is connected to high-speed rail lines, making its precise location a less critical factor than it is today.

Peter Chapman, Chairman,

## **TESCO Update**

Two major things have happened since Tesco announced their plans to complete the store at a public meeting in Gerrards Cross on July 4 last year.

Tesco has now said it cannot adhere to the timetable proposed then and the store is now scheduled to be completed in September 2010 instead of March 2010.

Secondly, Tesco has now got permission from Network Rail to dismantle the steel structure and work on the site is about to restart. You can expect the steelwork to be dismantled during March. It has to go so that the missing tunnel segments can be replaced and a new reinforced concrete arch can be constructed over the top of the individual segments.

During the last few months of inactivity on the site, Costain, the contractor now engaged to complete the store, and the environmental health officers at South Bucks District Council have agreed how the noise and dust created at the site will be measured, checked and controlled.

Costain has a 24 hour help line for residents who have concerns: 0800 138 5479. The Tesco website [www.tescogerrardscross.co.uk](http://www.tescogerrardscross.co.uk) is also available for information and to register questions and complaints.

The Parish Council has restarted its liaison meetings with Costain and Tesco with invited residents also attending. The action points from the meeting are published on the Parish Council website [www.gerrardscross.gov.uk](http://www.gerrardscross.gov.uk) under "News and Events".

The frequency of these meetings will increase as work gets under way again on the site.

Tesco's planning permission to build the store has no expiry date. However a separate planning permission to use the railway siding to import bulk infill material expired in June 2007. Tesco's application to renew the permission was rejected in February 2008. It is expected that they will reapply when they have Network Rail's approval of their detailed plans for reconstruction of the tunnel.

Peter Chapman, Chairman

## **CHANGES FACING GERRARDS CROSS**

Gerrards Cross has the characteristics of a semi-rural village in the middle of the Green Belt but it is close to London and has excellent transport connections. It is therefore a very attractive place to live, as witnessed by our high house prices. It is a paradox that these attractions today contain the seeds of their own destruction.

Our village is seemingly threatened from all sides. We have the fiasco of Tesco trying to build an

unwanted superstore in the middle of the village and saddling us with a ten year unfinished construction project. We have the county council wanting to build a large-scale incinerator on land in Wapseys Wood which was promised for restoration. As Heathrow is expanded we will get hugely increased airport noise from the third runway. Within Gerrards Cross we are seeing increases in housing density brought about by back garden development opposed by the local council but overruled by central government.

If housebuilding targets for the south-east of England are raised as expected, then we will soon be forced to give up our precious green belt. The metropolitan green belt has been over 60 years the single most effective national planning policy. We must not allow it to be carelessly destroyed.

Nowhere can stay exactly the same and nor should it, but local people should have some say in how change occurs and in stopping unwanted change. A high priority for all councillors – county, district and parish – is the protection and enhancement of the pleasant environment in which we all live, but residents need to understand it is an increasingly difficult task. Peter Hardy, County Councillor for Bulstrode email:phardy@buckscc.gov.uk

### **APPRECIATION OF OUR TWO COMMONS**

Michelle Dublon is the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Wildlife Sites Officer. She has surveyed both East and West Common and found them to be of sufficient importance to be selected in 2007 as Local Wildlife Sites.

This is great news as they are now recognised at county level and they will therefore receive better protection.

The Parish Office will hold copies of the various survey reports, together with plant lists and a tree survey for Bulstrode Park.

Local Wildlife Sites are assessed against specific criteria, such as species rarity and diversity. Sites that have nature conservation value are then designated as a Local Wildlife Sites. The Selection Panel is made up from nature conservation and wildlife specialists.

They found Gerrards Cross Commons to be valuable green space within an urban area, which supports relic acid grassland, with three interesting ponds and secondary woodland. This complex habitat supports a wide range of county

uncommon species and one county rare plant.

Bulstrode Camp, owned by the Parish Council, was also surveyed. This site is the largest hill fort in Buckinghamshire. It has a central grassland area, which supports some acid grassland species. The grassland was found to be short and low on numbers of herbs. The whole area is well used by dog walkers.

Jennifer Woolveridge  
Chairman, Commons Committee

### **VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

THE VOLUNTEER CENTRE, CHILTERN & SOUTH BUCKS 01895 837545

joy.volaction@googlemail.com is looking for volunteers. Also AGE CONCERN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE which provides services for older people, their carers, friends or relative, needs to make contact with those who may need their services. Information and Advice Helpline 01296 431127.

Helpers are needed for Riding for the Disabled, Visiting Older People, Abbeyfield Gerrards Cross, the National Society for Epilepsy, Bucks Association for the Blind, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts Groups, the Chiltern Cheshire Home and the Home Library Service. Volunteers are also required by Careers Springboard to help others get back to work and to advise and support a child or young person in the care of a local authority.

No expertise is required, the hours are flexible and training will be given if required

**THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE  
MEMORIAL CENTRE AT 7PM  
ON WEDNESDAY, 16 APRIL. ALL  
RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.**

**PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE**  
South Lodge, East Common, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD  
Clerk to the Council - Mrs Diana Hepburn-Park

Parish Council Office  
Tel: 01753 888018  
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Website: www.gerrardscross.gov.uk

The Parish Office is open at the following times:

Monday 9.30 am - 1 pm  
Tuesday 9.30 am - 1 pm  
Thursday 9.30 am - 1 pm