



## NEWSLETTER

### SEPTEMBER 2009

#### OUR COMMONS

A number of people were dismayed, early in the summer to see many of the oaks on the Commons seemingly losing their leaves and even more disconcerted while walking beneath affected trees. The culprits were caterpillars, which later, hung down in their hundreds on thin threads, transferring themselves to the clothing of anyone underneath.

We are assured that no permanent harm has been done to the trees.

The play area continues to be one of the most popular places and we have recently modified a swing so that it is more suitable for children, who have a disability.

Something that will add a new dimension to our facilities is the provision of a running route both on East and West Commons. This will enable both groups and individuals to put a structure into their running disciplines and there does seem to be a great deal of interest and support for this project.



Charlotte who is a great fan of the specially adapted swing. Charlotte's mother says 'We are really pleased to have a swing at the park that Charlotte can use and so does not get frustrated stuck in her buggy whilst her sister runs around. It is also great that all the kids can use it.

Something we do from time to time is to review the longer term concepts of our management both for the Commons and the Camp. The replies we received from our questionnaire that went to most people who live close to the Common will be very helpful in this task, which we are to undertake this year.

The conservation volunteers continue to work regularly on a Saturday morning, once a month on a variety of tasks, for which we are most grateful. They will always gladly welcome new helpers, who can obtain all the information about their activities through the Parish Office.

On the Camp there has been a problem with water flooding part of the entrance from Valley Way. Work has taken place to improve the drainage and to provide a series of shallow steps for better access up the fosse.

We are concerned about the number of fires that there have been on the Camp recently and we are most grateful to those residents who have reported them. In dry conditions this can be very dangerous and we are working with the police on the best way of preventing this. Many of you will have seen the notices that the police placed at the entrances for a few weeks, to remind everyone that they are keeping the Camp under observation.

As always we are particularly grateful to those people who help to pick up litter, which can have such an adverse effect on the appearance of the Commons.

#### PROPOSED RUNNING ROUTE

After consultation with a number of interested parties, including Pat Bacon, chairman of the Running Sisters, the Parish Council will be providing a running route across both Commons. This will encompass 1500 metres on East Common and 1000 on West Common, making a total of 2500 metres. The route will be marked by distance posts at 250 metre intervals with approximately half running on existing paths. Foliage, generally brambles, will be cut back where necessary to clear the route.

It is hoped to have the route in use this Autumn. The Council welcomes suggestions for other sporting activities on the Commons.



The Commons Volunteers ready to start work. They meet once a month on East Common at 10.00am. If you would like to join them please contact Ann Mitchell on 01753 882858 or Bill Collins 01753 882959.

## RETIREMENT OF COUNCILLOR ANN MITCHELL

After 39 years of faithful service to the Parish Council, Cllr. Ann Mitchell decided to step down at the age of 90.

Ann has held many positions within the Council over the years, including that of Chairman. She has brought invaluable experience and knowledge, particularly to the Commons Committee where she is still a very active member of the voluntary work party that meets once a month to carry out conservation work on the common. She has also been a strong advocate for the older members of our community with her involvement with Age Concern and was active in setting up a subsidised taxi scheme of which more below. She will be missed.



Ann receiving a bouquet from Council Chairman, David Peters, at a lunch hosted by the Councillors to mark her retirement

## NEW COUNCILLOR CO-OPTED

Paul Davidson has been co-opted to the Council to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of Ann Mitchell. Paul, who has lived in Gerrards Cross since 2005, is a special advisor on Plastics to WRAP, Waste and Resources Action Programme. He was educated at Vyners School, Ickenham and attended Brunel University, Uxbridge as well as the Loughborough University of Technology. His two sons are at local schools. He lists his interests as sailing, 5-a-side football and DIY. Paul says 'I am delighted to have this chance to join the Gerrards Cross Parish Council to contribute in their work of strengthening and enhancing our community.'



New councillor Paul Davidson

The co-option of Paul brings the Council up to its full strength of 12 members, although consideration is being given to appointing Associate Councillors with specialist skills or interests to join working parties. The current Councillors are:-

David Peters, Chairman, Peter Chapman, Vice-Chairman, Chris Brown, Laraine Campkin, Pat Fea, Ian Gordon, Peter Grimes, Madeleine May, Nick Moss, Sabra Sharma, Jennifer Woolveridge.

They can all be contacted via the Parish Council office, alternatively, individual address and telephone number details can be obtained from our website.

## TAXI CONCESSIONARY FARES SCHEME

The Parish Council has successfully operated the Taxi Concessionary Fares Scheme for a number of years. The service is aimed at residents aged 60 or over who live within the Parish of Gerrards Cross and have difficulties in getting to and from appointments at local hospitals and medical services [e.g. Doctors' surgeries, Dentists and Opticians].

We use one approved taxi company and members can obtain a rebate of up to 70% on fares. There is a very simple form to complete, which can be obtained from the Parish Council office, and once this has been approved and a pass issued, you become a member of the scheme and can start using the service.

If you think you or someone you know could benefit from joining this scheme, please contact the Parish Council office, [tel. 01753 888018] and we will be delighted to give you more information or send you an application form.

Note: The King Edward V11 Hospital in Windsor has just been added to the list of approved destinations.

## TESCO CONSTRUCTION SITE

It is now over 4 years since the partial collapse of the tunnel at the Tesco site and over 2 years since Tesco announced their decision to continue with the project, which is now planned to be complete by December 2010.

Residents ask who is checking up on the construction process to ensure that it is being done properly.

South Bucks District Council is responsible for ensuring that the conditions of the planning permission are being adhered to. This includes monitoring the dust and noise coming from the site and they work closely with Costain, Tesco's contractor, on the technical aspects of these issues.

Network Rail approves anything which might affect the operation and the safety of the railway.

Gerrards Cross Parish Council has a working party which liaises with Costain on a regular basis and holds meetings with them every two to three months. The Parish Council has no powers in respect of the construction site but gets good cooperation from Costain and South Bucks District Council. It ensures that residents' interests and concerns are brought to Costain's attention, that we get answers and explanations to queries and that we are kept informed about future phases of construction work.

Over the last year or so the working party has been concerned with noise from night-time working, communications with affected residents, numbers of vehicles accessing the site, the routes used by those vehicles, the wheel washing procedure at the site entrance, the railway siding, the conveyor and the plans for constructing the four-way road junction at the entrance to the new store.

In addition during the last few months, the Parish Council has participated with Costain and South Bucks District Council in reviewing concerns about debris from the site reaching Packhorse Road and creating dust when it dries out. Costain has a road sweeper on standby throughout the working day but shopkeepers have had concerns about the noise and the dust which it produces as it drives past.

Through regular contact with Costain and using feedback from the shopkeepers we are seeking the optimum frequency of sweeping, and volume of water used to suppress dust.

Residents wishing to contact Costain or South Bucks District Council with concerns about the construction should use these numbers:

Costain's site office:

Day 01753 279833  
Night 07824 303400

South Bucks Environmental Health:

Day 01895 837264  
Night 07768 502183 [not full service]

## FOOTPATHS

The Council is currently working with the County Council on a project to extend the footway on Mill Lane to the railway bridge and to The Woodlands. This will make it safer for parents to walk with their children from the Woodlands area to Moreland Drive school.

We are also pleased to say that the County Council has repaired the footway on East Common, allowing wheelchair users from Colston Court and Hartley Court to travel to the town centre. The Council regularly monitors footways in Gerrards Cross to ensure that they are repaired.

New style waste bins have been installed to replace the missing bins on a number of footways in the centre of town. We have received very favourable comments on these from our residents.

To improve access to the footpaths across Wapseys Wood, the Council has discussed with Veolia and the County Council, plans to improve the path that links Hedgerley Lane by Moat Farm to Footpath 13. These improvements will encourage walkers to make more use of the paths across Wapseys Wood between the A40 and Hedgerley Lane.

Parish Councillors are all assigned 2 or 3 footpaths which they inspect regularly to collect litter and report such things as overhanging hedges, undergrowth encroaching on the path and graffiti for appropriate action.



Mill Lane Bridge

## ROAD SAFETY

In our campaign to make our roads safer for road users and pedestrians in Gerrards Cross, we are pleased that the new Vehicle Activated Sign outside St Mary's School in the Packhorse Road has been very effective in reminding drivers to observe the 30mph limit.

We also had very positive feedback on the effectiveness of Temporary Speed Indicator Devices installed on Fulmer Road, the only complaint being that they should be installed permanently. As a result, the Council is currently investigating installing permanent Vehicle Activated Signs on Fulmer Road. We are now focussing on reducing speeding on Windsor Road, where the limit is 30mph, with 2 Temporary Indicators due to be installed shortly.

To reduce speeding on Bulstrode Way, we are awaiting delivery of 2 speed awareness signs to remind drivers of the 30mph speed limit.



Many people are unaware that any road with street lights, such as Bull Lane, Mill Lane, East Common and West Common, automatically has a 30mph speed limit, unless indicated otherwise. We are pleased to note that the County Council will be extending the 40mph speed limit on the Oxford Road a further 250 yards to the Gerrards

Cross western boundary. The current 40mph speed limit on West Common will be reduced to 30mph, while Lower Road will have a new speed limit of 40mph.

As many residents will have seen in the local press recently, the Council is very concerned about the safety of the sections of the Oxford Road, where street lights have been switched off by the County Council. We continue to press for the replacement of missing cats-eyes, better road markings and cutting back vegetation on Oxford Road to improve safety.



Bull Lane

## BIKE WEEK

During the 2009 National Bike Week over 1,800 events took place with a record estimated participants. Gerrards Cross played its part with a Family Bike Ride to Black Park on Sunday 21 June organised by Councillor Chris Brown.

Due to the sunny weather this year, there was a record turnout. After the ride out, we spent an hour by the lake in Black Park with its excellent cafe and children's playground facilities, before returning to the Memorial Centre. National Bike Week 2010 takes place from 13 - 21 June.



Participants about to start out on the Bike Week ride to Black Park

## WAPSEYS WOOD LANDFILL SITE

Veolia, the Waste Operator at the Wapseys Wood and Springfield Landfill sites has now established an independent Helpline that is available 24 hours a day. The number to call is 0800 0482704. This will enable Veolia to respond quickly to issues reported by members of the public. A report of the calls received will be sent to the Parish Council on a regular basis.

Veolia has been working closely with the Environment Agency in making a number of improvements to reduce the odour problems that were reported by many residents last year.

Veolia has set up a website [www.veolia.co.uk/southbucks](http://www.veolia.co.uk/southbucks) which offers people the opportunity to be kept up to date with activities on Wapseys Wood and Springfield Farm Landfill sites. It also includes information about how each site is performing and a series of frequently asked questions.

### PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE

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

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Tel: 01753 888018  
Mobile: 07948 278657

e.mail: [clerk@gerrardscross.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@gerrardscross.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.gerrardscross.gov.uk](http://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