

## **BLETCHINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT**

**AUGUST 2009 to OCTOBER 2009**

**Allotments and Old Allotment Field:** The winner of the Best Kept Allotment Cup this year was Derek Coppard. The Parish Council acted immediately upon receipt of a letter from Thames Water notifying them of their intention to auction the land currently housing the Little Common Lane allotments. The positive negotiation stance taken by the Parish Council resulted in the successful purchase agreement between Thames Water and Bletchingley Parish Council, thereby securing the future of the Little Common Lane Allotments. The purchase of this land does come with covenants, which will be brought to the attention of each plot holder in due course to ensure that these covenants are not breached.

In light of the growing waiting list for allotments, not only in Bletchingley but across the country, the Parish Council have agreed to the creation of an additional 10 plots in the Old Allotment Field, together with associated parking within the field for up to 4 vehicles at a time. Planning permission, whilst not legally required by the Parish Council due to its nature, was sought and obtained from Tandridge District Council. Work will start on the creation of the additional plots once funding is secured.

Funds for both the purchase of the Little Common Lane allotment land and the creation of the additional plots is being sought in the form of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board. In light of the increased costs though, it is envisaged that the rents will be increased by a small amount from April 2010.

The Parish Council could not foresee the possibility of Thames Water selling the allotment land. The Council acted immediately to secure the allotment land for the future benefit of all of its Parishioners. The acquisition of the land has to be paid for. Therefore our 2010 precept will be increased accordingly. The additional sum per household, as from 2010, will be £2.19.”

The water has been turned off at both sites.

**Affordable Housing Survey** – Surrey Community Action are undertaking a survey on the needs of affordable housing in Bletchingley and you are encouraged to complete the forms and return them by the deadline to ensure that an accurate report on the housing needs in the village is available. A report is scheduled to be given to the Parish Council at its February meeting.

**A25 Highway Improvements for Bletchingley** – The Parish Council had made available the plans at the Annual Parish Meeting and also in the Howard Cundey Offices and residents were invited to send in their comments. Those that did, were noted at the meeting on 12 October 2009. The Parish Council put forward their comments to SCC and are awaiting a response. They proposed that the existing bus stop site on the northern side was retained, a new pedestrian crossing be located closer to the junction with Church Lane and one up near Lawrence the Auctioneers. The improvements to the junction of the A25, Church Lane and Outwood Lane were approved.

**Annual Return for 2008/09** – The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was given by the external auditors. The document is available for viewing by contacting the Parish Clerk.

**Bletchingley in Bloom:** The small band making up the core of this team are continuing with the good work around the village and more support is required, whether only for the occasional work party or on a more regular basis. Please contact either Pamela Cock direct or myself for more information.

**Bletchingley Grange Meadow Play Area** – The grand opening of this was held on 21 November 2009 and the site is expected to be a great asset to the village. It is proof of how communities can work together with local councils to achieve a much greater goal than working independently. It is also hoped that this facility may generate new interest in the other surrounding clubs. TDC has installed CCTV at this location to cover the playground and the clubs and once further funds are available TDC have confirmed they will look at improving the parking facilities.

**Christmas Lights:** The Parish Council were approached last year by the Village Fair Committee in relation to Christmas Lights and we gave our full support to the idea. We are led to believe that this year they are now in a position to give a little Christmas light to Bletchingley.

**Hevers Pond:** The Parish Council have returned the agreement with amendments to RH & RW Cluttons and their response is now awaited.

**Minerals:** Sibelco's Dust Monitoring Scheme and Dust Action Plan for North Park Quarry has been long-awaited. It was expected within 6 months of the retrospective permission for the processing plant, which was granted well over a year ago. At long last the Dust Plan has been submitted to the County Planning Authority, but further amendments are anticipated before its final acceptance. The Parish Council is represented on the North Park Quarry Community Liaison Group, which has regular collaborative meetings with Sibelco to discuss the effects of sand extraction on our local environment. Anyone who experiences periodic problems with white dust, which appears to come from the quarry is encouraged to log these episodes. Recording can be a nuisance, but this feedback can help maintain good air quality. Complaint logging forms are currently available from the Parish Council Clerk and will soon be on the village website.

Surrey Minerals Plan, updated from 2003, has now been published, covering mineral provision in Surrey from 2009-2026. Pendell Farm is identified as the future prime source of industrial sand, with Chilmead Farm in Cormongers Lane as a potential secondary source if needed. Mercers Farm on Nutfield Marsh is listed as an important site for building sand. The Plan recognises the need to protect the environmental amenity of the surrounding community, but it could mean detriment such as increased open areas for possible dust emissions, and more heavy goods traffic along the A25. Your Parish Council will be submitting detailed comments and recommendations to the County Planning Authority by the December deadline. In line with this, Sibelco are about to publish their applications to extend the quarry in North Park Farm and begin sand extraction at Pendell Farm. We will be discussing this with Sibelco at the Community Liaison Group meeting next month.

**Parish Plan** - The Parish Council is currently looking for volunteers to be part of a Steering Group to help create a Parish Plan for Bletchingley. A Steering Group should represent the whole of Bletchingley so we are looking for 5-8 people who either live or work in Bletchingley to help shape the main areas of focus for the Parish Plan and help to publicise the plan across the whole community.

**What is a Parish Plan?** A Parish Plan is a way for all villagers to identify how they feel about Bletchingley, what's important in the village and how we want to develop it in the future. This can include everything from affordable housing, public transport, energy efficiency, traffic, crime, care for the elderly, shops or entertainment and much more. It is really only limited by the needs and aspirations of the Parish.

If you would like to be part of the Steering Group or would like more information as to what this would involve and what difference it will make, before committing, we are looking to

organize an Information Seminar at the Village Hall in early January. Please contact [Sally.ray@btinternet.com](mailto:Sally.ray@btinternet.com) for more details or the Parish Clerk.

**Village Gateways** – The Parish Council are in the process of applying for planning permission for the installation of 2 village gateway signs, of similar design to the Godstone gateways located on the M25 roundabout. These will be located at either end of the village on the A25. Funds for this are being sought from the Tandridge Local Committee, County Councillors Allowance but we may have to fund the gateways directly. A local contractor has been contracted to undertake the work once the funds are in place.

**Village Sign and Amenity Beds** – The Parish Council's contractor now cuts the grass in this location to ensure it is kept to an appropriate standard. The feedback on this has been very positive.

**Website:** Village diary events and local news are being updated daily so please do check the Bletchingley website (<http://www.bletchingley.org.uk/> for the latest Parish News and events in Bletchingley. Anyone who wants to publicise a local event or club or has some local news to impart please contact [sally.ray@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.ray@btinternet.com). The Website is also being migrated to a new platform by the end of the year and this will enable us to attach more village photos' and even some video of local events to bring yet more colour and interactivity to the website.

Robin Gater – Chairman