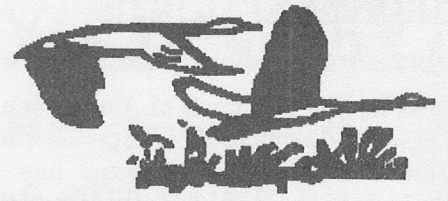




The Langford Life

The Newsletter of
Langford Village Community Association

Issue 19 - September 1998



CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

COMMITTEE

You may recall we announced the members of the new committee in the last newsletter. Since that time, Jay Colden has moved off Langford Village to a new house elsewhere in Bicester. So, to compound the requirement for a volunteer to be our "General" Secretary, we are now in need of a Minutes Secretary for meetings. If you think you could help on the secretarial side but can't type, don't worry because we already have a volunteer for the typing who cannot attend meetings. Jay has offered to continue to assist with the Newsletter for the time being, but, clearly, would like to hand over that job too, especially as she has other responsibilities at Bicester Community College. The Newsletter job could be split to several individuals. The first task is collecting copy for the next Newsletter. The usual contributors are the committee, user groups and a number of local commercial organizations who pay for their entry, although we always welcome offerings on any subject of local interest. The second job is preparing the copy on a computer. All the templates are already prepared and we have images for most of the usual commercial adverts. All you need is a computer, preferably with Microsoft Word, one finger and a reasonable eye. The third job is taking the copy to the printer, collecting the same, counting the sheets out and distributing the bundles to our network of volunteers who deliver. So, if you feel you could help in some small way, we would be very grateful. Please contact me on 241361 if you would like to volunteer.

SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE

Last month, LVCA was asked to complete a questionnaire on behalf of the residents of Langford Village. The intention was to try to make the relevant authorities aware of problem (mainly policing) issues so they could be tackled in an order of priority that would be acceptable to the population. There was insufficient time to canvass responses via the newsletter so an answer was prepared based on matters that had been brought to the attention of committee over the last year. There had been a steady increase in minor vandalism and, if unchecked, this could get worse. This was combined with intimidation of unaccompanied women and young children by teenagers. The lack of facilities for the youth of our town is probably the main contributory factor but residents needed a Community Policeman to turn to if all else failed.

VANDALISM

There have been several incidents of vandalism at the Community Hall during the summer months. Panes of wired glass have been smashed, the gate has been forced and the litter bin has been wrenched off its mountings. These have all cost precious community association funds to put right and inconvenienced groups who use the hall. Some youths have also been coming into the entranceway to the hall and this is intimidating to the users, especially the groups with ladies and young folk. Elsewhere, young trees have been damaged and greenhouse glass smashed. If you have teenagers who roam around, please ask them to give some consideration to others.

AGENDA 21

Agenda 21 is a world-wide effort to encourage sustainable development and to protect the environment for our children. If you cast your mind back to the special January 98 issue of the Newsletter, you may remember the pages on the subject. There is still time to get involved. Cherwell District Council started the ball rolling and this has been followed by the establishment of an Environmental Forum in Bicester. Representatives of LVCA attended the first meeting at the Garth in July. The Forum is attempting to initiate practical projects and activities that will involve most of the community. As a start, the Forum has set up four sub groups. The general headings are: 1. Recycling and management of waste and pollution. 2. Planning issues. 3. Countryside and wildlife. 4. Education and publicity. If you would like to know more or get involved, contact me on 241361. Hopefully I will be able to report on progress after the second Forum on 29 Sep.

GRANT FROM CDC

Earlier on in the year, LVCA committee members attended a Forum held by CDC at which it was announced there was a probability that there may be some money available to help community associations with capital projects. We received an application form in June and we submitted a bid for the cost of some new chairs for the hall. Last week, we heard we had been successful and we expect to receive a cheque for £750 on 29th Sept. We hope to purchase 65 stacking chairs in the next few weeks.

NEXT LVCA COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday 29 Oct 8.pm in the Hall

WHERE AND HOW TO COMPLAIN

From time to time many of us experience problems with noise, or smells, or contractors doing something that they should not etc. We all know the 999 service for emergencies, but what do you do if there is an offending smell that will not go away, if contractors are making a nuisance of themselves out of permitted working hours, or that delivery lorry that turns up at 6 o'clock in the morning and starts unloading bricks or such like? In most cases this will be a problem for Cherwell District Council's Environmental Department.

There is only one telephone number that you need to remember: **01295 25 25 35**

In office hours ask for Environmental Services (or the Planning Department if you have a specific problem).

Out of office hours you will be given a second telephone number to call through which the duty environmental health officer can be contacted. Have a pen and paper handy.

In all cases, don't forget to ask for the name of the person that you speak to in case you have to call back.

Always provide as much information as you can in order that action can be taken. For example if it is a builder or delivery lorry, try to get registration numbers and/or company names. If it is a smell then some idea as to wind direction and where it may be coming from will be a great help. The more information you give, the better the chance of CDC stopping it happening again, even if it is too late to do anything at the time. Help them to help you (and others).

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**Merton Road, Ambrosden,
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(new name but still Maxine in charge)

200 Club - Update

The following are the latest winning numbers

July	1st Prize	Number 29	£25.88
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The draws take place on the third Tuesday of the month. New members are always welcome. The cost is £1 per number, per month payable by cash, cheque or standing order for a minimum of 6 months.

Applications for membership are available from the School Office or ring Trevor Glenney on 250062.

Drapes & Drops

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ENVIRONMENTAL BITS

Planning - Ambrosden Chicken Farm

Bad news for the residents of Ambrosden, and indeed those of you that live in range of the **Faccenda Chicken Farm**. The inspector has **upheld** the appeal. In his report he actually states that residents of **Langford Village might experience discomfort more often!** The Inspector has, however, imposed a number of conditions, including that all of the existing sheds must be upgraded with automatic controls and ridge mounted ventilation before production can start in the new sheds. This will be an interesting time to see if matters do get worse in Langford Village, possibly before the new sheds come on line. It will also be very interesting to see how well Cherwell District Council ensure that these conditions are carried out! I have a copy of the inspector's report if you are interested. In the mean time don't forget to complain if you are effected by the smell. Call CDC (01295-252535) any time. Out of office hours you will be given a second number to call. **Be proactive!!**

Planning - Bicester Field Farm Development

Things are not a lot better for the residents of Redwing Close. You may remember in the last issue that congratulations were in order for the residents of **Redwing and Bramblings** for their show of solidarity in opposing the amended plans to phase one of the Bicester Fields Farm Development. This had resulted in Bicester Town Council recommending rejection of the amended plans. Although Cherwell District Council Planning Committee initially voted to reject the amended plans a second vote was taken and the plans were accepted on a minor technicality, ignoring the real issue. Although a challenge was made to the validity of the second vote, it took over six weeks for CDC to reply, and even then the points on which the challenge was made were not addressed. In the mean time, building has started. **The skirmish may be lost but the battle is far from over!**

First Open Meeting On BFFD

Those of you that made it to the first Update Meeting for the Bicester Fields Farm Development will have witnessed the debate on the amended plans. In fact I think most of you joined in. It appeared to me, and I believe also to others that were there, that CDC admitted that, as such, there were clear planning reasons for the amended plans to be rejected. The meeting was, however, a great success, even if things did not go smoothly for CDC. Other points that CDC could not answer included:

Why semi-detached housing, which is contrary to the development brief, is included in phase two of the housing when the terracing/continuous frontages was pedantically followed for phase one? (A question that will be on the lips of the majority of the residents of Redwing and Bramblings!!)

Why the protective fencing had been erected at the spread of the hedgerows and not one metre

minimum beyond as required in the Development Brief?

Why the topsoil had been removed from the area where the additional screen planting is to take place behind Redwing?

The permitted 'working' hours for Bicester Field Farm Development are:

Monday to Friday	08:00 to 18:00
Saturday	08:00 to 13:00
Sunday & PublicHols	No working

NB: These times refer to noise being emitted from the site but include deliveries. Work can carry on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week providing that the residents of neighbouring areas are not disturbed. Only you can be the judge of that! If you have a problem, see below and "Where and How to Complain" on the opposite page.

The main spine road through the housing development is supposed to be finished by 28 October 1998. Westbury Homes guaranteed that there would be no mud from the site on local roads.

There may be a delay before the sports pitches are brought into proper use. CDC have insisted that the maintenance period for the pitches should be three years in order to allow for potential problems with the drainage to be identified. This is a wise precaution considering that the play area off Merganser Way had to be closed after it turned into a mud bath. Westbury Homes have agreed, but on the proviso that the pitches are not used, otherwise they would have to pay for the day to day pitch maintenance. We questioned this and now CDC and Westbury Homes will now consider if an agreement could be made where CDC pay for the day to day maintenance and Westbury Homes remain liable for any drainage problems (an extended warranty on the drainage so to speak).

There is to be a full survey of the hedgerows followed by a planting programme starting in October 1998. All the protected hedgerows are supposed to be maintained and upgraded as found necessary. We should learn more on what they intend to do about the Dutch Elm Disease then.

CDC gave great assurances that the liaison with the public would continue, and with a well defined Development Brief in place, the environment should be protected and the development well controlled. However, CDC's statement that "if half the brief was followed, it would be an achievement", coupled with the "story so far", does not give a warm feeling that all will be well. If you do have an immediate problem, e.g. noise or environmental damage, then call CDC on 01285 252535 (Planning or Environmental Departments), or direct to Kevin Proctor, the Project Manager for Westbury Homes on 0831 386217 (cell phone) or 01869 245284 (site office).

John Warman
Chairman LVCA Environmental Committee

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