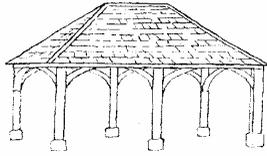


# The Charlbury Chronicle



## Volume 10 Number 4 December 2006

Not only is Charlbury celebrating a 750th Anniversary this year - this issue also marks the tenth birthday of the *Charlbury Chronicle*.

There's no doubt your *Chronicle* keeps abreast of the time! Just when there is a lot of talk in the media after the publication of the Stern Report you will find that Charlburians have already been discussing a raft of issues such as Sustainability (p 6), Trees & Greenhouse Gasses (p 15), Woodland Management (p 14), a low energy light bulb library (p6) and a new business opened in Sheep Street offering advice on environmental matters (p 33). On roughly the same theme, those of you who have been suffering inconvenience with the road works in Park Street might be interested in an account of the days when gas was first brought to the town in 1869 ....

Please look at all our advertisements - we seem to have quite a few new ones this time.

Christmas Late Night Shopping is on two Thursdays, December 7th and 21st, when shops are open until 8pm. To add to the usual festive atmosphere, the Christmas carolers, the mulled wine and the mince pies, there is another excitement this year as The Bell is having a Christmas Mini Market on those two evenings (see ads p 10 & 15 for details). As always, we ask that you make a point of doing as much of your shopping in the town as possible in order to support all our local shops.

Thank you, on this special tenth birthday, to all those who help (or have helped) in the *Chronicle's* preparation and delivery. Thank you, too, to those many people who are kind enough to mention that they enjoy receiving it - it is encouraging to know that our efforts are appreciated. Please continue to send in your articles on whatever subjects you like - they are always welcome.

**May we wish all our readers a Very Merry Christmas  
and a Happy & Healthy New Year**

Lynette Murphy

*Please note that the deadline for copy for the March 2007 edition will be February 1st 2007*

## VISIT OF HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO CHARLBURY ON SEPTEMBER 15TH 2006

On September 15th Charlbury Museum was honoured by a visit from HRH Princess Anne. She was greeted by the Curator Ron Prew, who showed her round the exhibition. She also met members of the Museum Committee Jennifer Bartlett, Ann Gilbert, who showed her the exhibition of Victorian costume, and Barbara Allison, who explained the layout of the town and its connection with the market. The Princess particularly admired the collection of Vic Brackenbury's wood turning, and was also interested in the display of cameras, recognising one (movie) camera as the same model as one owned by the Queen. After leaving the Museum she unveiled a plaque in the Museum Garden to commemorate the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Town Charter. For the occasion members of the Museum Committee wore for the first time the new Charlbury Museum t-shirts.

*Charles Tyzack*



HRH the Princess Royal unveiling the brass plaque on the wall of the Museum. The Chairman of the Town Council is holding a copy of the late Lois Hey's book 'A History of Charlbury' which he then presented to HRH on behalf of the town.



Having just unveiled the plaque to commemorate the occasion, Her Royal Highness talks to Chairman of Charlbury Town Council Nicholas Potter outside the Museum

## VISIT OF HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO CHARLBURY ON SEPTEMBER 15TH 2006



The following letter was received from  
Buckingham Palace on September 19th:

'Dear Mr Potter,

The Princess Royal has asked me to write to thank you for welcoming Her Royal Highness to Charlbury on the occasion of the 750th Anniversary of the Granting of the Royal Charter. Her Royal Highness very much enjoyed having the opportunity of visiting the town and was touched by the warm welcome she received throughout. The Princess was delighted to have the opportunity of visiting the museum and also seeing the exhibition. I have been asked to thank you for the most interesting book on the history of Charlbury and to convey her Royal Highness's thanks for a most enjoyable visit.'

---

A letter was also received from Malcolm Cochrane DL, Vice Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, who accompanied HRH on her visit:

'Dear Nick, Congratulations to you and all your colleagues and helpers for making the visit of Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal to Charlbury such a success. As HRH got into her car she said 'A good visit' and indeed it was. Not a hiccup anywhere and lots of smiling faces. This was entirely due to the planning, briefings and minute attention to detail. A particular extra thank you to Roger (*Roger Clarke, Town Clerk*) and Ron (*Ron Prew, Museum Curator*) and to those that made the museum look so smart, clean and interesting. The visit had all the necessary ingredients — a fascinating museum, a wide variety of interesting people to chat to and the Charlbury crowd did her proud. HRH rarely makes an impromptu speech but she did after unveiling the plaque which is extra confirmation that she enjoyed the visit. Well done Charlbury Town Council.'

---

*The Editor is indebted to Sue Woolley  
and to Priscilla Frost for the photographs*

# VISIT OF HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL TO CHARLBURY ON SEPTEMBER 15TH 2006



The brass plaque with the wording 'This plaque was unveiled by HRH the Princess Royal on 15th September 2006 to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the granting to Charlbury of a Royal Charter by King Henry 111 in 1256' The stone surrounding the plaque was designed and carved by Andy Hopkins of Charlbury.



Charlbury schoolchildren wait outside the Corner House to greet HRH after her visit to the Museum



HRH received a bouquet of flowers from the schoolchildren as she left the Museum garden after unveiling the plaque

**CHARLBURY LIBRARY** welcomes children of all ages. We have a variety of books from board books for babies to fact books to help with the homework. Children's books can be ordered from anywhere in the county and collected at Charlbury free of charge. A broadband computer, filtered for under 15's, is available to keep in touch with friends or help with homework, it can be used free of charge for up to an hour a day (printing costs 20p per A4 page). Dvds and videos are available for a small weekly fee. All children aged 0-4 years can join the Bookstart Book Crawl, collect stickers on each visit to the library and when five stickers have been collected exchange them for a lovely limited edition certificate. There will be a Christmas Story Time in the middle of December for 2 to 5 year olds. I look forward to seeing you all in the library soon - *Penny Price, Manager*

## **Meals on Wheels Volunteers Needed**

There is a very special group of people in Charlbury that I've come to know over the past two years of helping with Meals on Wheels. They are the fifty or so people who prepare and deliver the meals once or twice a month to the 60 or so wonderfully appreciative recipients in Charlbury, Chadlington and Stonesfield. I've also had the very special pleasure of getting to know Diana Griffiths who, for forty years, has coordinated delivery of the meals and frequently stepped in to make deliveries. I have enjoyed being her counterpart and am sad to say she is retiring from the post in January. Now I need a counterpart to help coordinate deliveries. The job requires about 5 hours of volunteer time per month and is incredibly rewarding. We also need people to deliver meals which only requires about an hour once a month. Please contact me to let me know how you can help and I will be happy to answer your questions.

*Marjorie Glasgow 810161*

## **CHARLBURY MEDICAL CENTRE AND THE NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER**

A reader has mentioned that costs of ringing the surgery might be charged at a higher rate under the recently introduced new number. The editor asked the Medical Centre to explain the situation, and the following statement was supplied by the Practice Manager:

'The system is designed to ease communications between patients and their GP by speeding up the whole process of booking an appointment. A survey compared the cost and duration of calls to surgeries before and after the introduction of 0844 numbers and found that the average call duration halved in length after installation of the system. The new 0844 numbers cost 4.2p per minute to call, the same as standard BT local call rates for the first minute. The practice does not make a profit from using the number, but is able to divert funds away from BT in order to improve the service that the practice offers its patients. When needing emergency treatment out of hours, instead of making two phone calls you simply telephone the practice where you will be transferred directly to the out of hours service, with the practice paying for the call. Approximately 300 surgeries across the UK have adopted this new phone system.

This system has cost the partners nearly £30,000 to have installed. **This is not NHS or taxpayers' money.** It is a system made for Doctors' surgeries called "Surgery Line". We have also employed a new receptionist to cope with the higher volume of calls during the day. We hope that our patients can appreciate that we are constantly striving to better our services. We understand that patients may find changes difficult to begin with, but hope that in due course they will find this a positive improvement to their healthcare needs.'

*Wesley Rouse, Practice Manager, Charlbury Medical Centre*

# Sustainable Charlbury

It was all doom and gloom, end of the world as we know it, guilt and possible redemption if we change our ways. No, this was not a meeting of Christian evangelicals - it was the inaugural meeting of Sustainable Charlbury held in the Memorial Hall on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October. The meeting was organised by Charlbury's Liz Reason, an advocate of low carbon living, prompted and supported by Lars Larsen, Anne Miller, Liz Leffman, Mike Flanagan.

About 60 people were present, and speakers included Antony Turner from Carbon Sense ([www.carbonsense.org](http://www.carbonsense.org)) and George Marshall from COIN ([www.coinet.org.uk](http://www.coinet.org.uk)) who spoke about the damage being done to the world's atmosphere, caused mainly by the emission of carbon into the atmosphere by the burning of fossil fuels to enable us to enjoy our lifestyle. About half our carbon emissions come from our houses, with other major contributors to the problem being industry and transport, and the emissions from aircraft. George Marshall spoke of "cognitive dissonance" whereby we all probably understand that our lifestyle is unsustainable, but we are unwilling to do anything much about it. An alarming statement was that the next generation will probably never see snow in Britain! We all split into small groups to discuss possible things which could be done in Charlbury with group reporters feeding back the many ideas which included wearing warmer clothing, setting up a car sharing website, using locally grown produce, investigating local wind generation for electricity, switching to a low carbon electricity supplier, an energy audit of our local housing. There was a general feeling that some of the measures would not just be good for the planet, some, like increased insulation and draught proofing, would be cost effective and make for more comfort.

By the way, try to see Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth"

Although this was an inaugural meeting, there was no formal discussion about the aims and objectives of Sustainable Charlbury, election of officers etc. and the sad thing was that about 3000 Charlbury people were not there.

*Reg James*

## Low Energy Light Bulb Library

If you want to try out Low Energy Light Bulbs in the comfort of your own home why not borrow our Library of Bulbs. There are all shapes, sizes and wattages with full details on costs and where they can be obtained, plus useful websites.

By installing low energy bulbs you cut the energy you use for lighting by 75% so also reducing your carbon emissions by 75%.

Set up by CAWAG and SusCha (see article above).

To borrow the library of bulbs contact Louise Spicer on 01608 810745

## **The title ‘Does Nothing Rhyme With Charlbury?’ is the brainchild of local publisher Jon Carpenter, and was edited by Charlbury resident Rob Stepney**

‘Emmerdale’ actor Freddie Jones and the late playwright David Halliwell are among the contributors to a new anthology of poems about Charlbury. Poems by Charlbury actor Freddie Jones, who plays Sandy Thomas in the ITV soap opera, and ‘Little Malcolm’ author David Halliwell, who died in March, feature in the anthology, alongside work by other residents. Rob Stepney said: ‘This is a collection of poems about Charlbury by anyone, and by Charlbury people about anything. It is remarkable that you can get such a strong and varied body of work from a very small town.’ Subjects covered in the anthology include love, loss, seasons, beer, cricket and anger. One poem, written by Frank Dunn in 1973, celebrates Charlbury’s annual Street Fair; it reads: ‘Lords and ladies, lads and lasses! / If the weather should be fine / Throng the Charlbury street in masses / On September twenty nine.’ Another poem, by David Halliwell, is a dialogue between two lovers who imagine All Saints Church, in Shorthampton, near Charlbury, as the scene of their wedding. The extract was reproduced with permission from his sister Liz Antcliffe and brother Roger. Rob Stepney added that the popularity of the anthology had inspired Jon Carpenter to look into publishing a series of books featuring other towns and villages in Oxfordshire.

*Does Nothing Rhyme With Charlbury?* costs £8.99, £2.50 of which goes to the All Saints Church appeal. It is on sale at Evenlode Books, in Market Street, Charlbury.

**NB** A packed audience at the Memorial Hall on Friday, November 3rd celebrated the publication of the book with words, music and an evening of good company.

## Letters to the Editor

*From Gareth Miller*

I'm sure that many residents of Charlbury are as concerned as I am about the amount of litter to be seen around the entrance to the Co-op, in Brown's Lane and on The Playing Close. What can be done? Well, obviously, parents should teach their children not to drop litter. But can I make one or two other practical suggestions?

- 1 An extra bin to the left of the Co-op entrance. Perhaps even a bin inside the door? Most of the litter is unwanted receipts and discarded wrappers.
- 2 Several large clear notices inside the store "PLEASE DO NOT DROP LITTER".
- 3 If you see litter in the street, pick it up and put it in a bin.
- 4 If you see someone dropping litter, approach them politely and say "Excuse me, I think you've dropped something by mistake." I used to be shy of doing this, but no longer. Charlbury is a charming town, and it is such a shame to see it desecrated in this way. In the old Soviet Union, you were encouraged to admonish someone who dropped litter with the words, "Comrade, you have committed an unsocialist act." That may be going a bit far, but the gist is correct!
- 5 Lastly, could this be discussed by the Town Council? Perhaps they could organise some Litter Police (no, this is all getting too Stalinist).

*Chelwood, Market Street*

*From Caroline Shenton*

Many thanks to those of you who pointed out my 'slip of the keyboard' in last issue's *Chronicle*! Of course, it's not Charlbury's 750th birthday this year - Charlbury is much older than that, having been an Anglo-Saxon settlement. The 1256 Charter is better described as Charlbury's 'coming of age' as a town but (history never being cut and dried) even this is in doubt. That's because a couple of much later local histories mention in passing a Charter granted by King Stephen. However, no record of this document survives so if anyone knows where it might be today or has evidence of it definitely having existed, now is the time to come forward! In the meantime you can still purchase colour photocopies of the 1256 Charter from Evenlode Books in Market Street, or telephone me on 810855 (evenings only). Your £2 will go straight to the Community Centre Appeal.

*Angels Cottage, Market Street*

## A DAY'S LIFE Bill Jones, Newsagent

Work starts in the shop when the wholesalers deposit the newspapers on the doorstep at 5.30 a.m. The amount received has to be checked and the inserts put into the various papers. There are usually about 600 papers and when the magazines arrive, they have to be added to the rounds made up for the paper boys – actually “deliverers” would be a better word as we have more pensioners doing the rounds than boys. There are 12 rounds in Charlbury and deliveries to villages including Chilson, Taston and Spelsbury as well as to the station. Certain outlying properties on Woodstock Rd and Hundley Way have their papers delivered by car. Getting the rounds right is a complicated business and there is a huge amount of paper work involved. We have the car ready to deal with rounds where something has gone wrong but luckily this doesn't happen too often. We also supply the Co-op with papers and magazines, which have to be there for opening time. I used to do the 5.30 am stint but we now have someone who has taken this on, so I come in later. I have no breakfast but will grab something later in the morning from the café. The staff arrive at 8.30 a.m. and my wife, Veronica and I are there to help out as well. There are a variety of things to do. It is important that old stock is removed and the new magazines put on display. The counter can be quite busy and can require a few of us to cover it.

Now that we have the café, we are much busier. Recently we have started to use the courtyard and garden to serve food and drinks in fine weather. We can seat 25; although it is just behind one of the main streets in Charlbury, it is walled and is a haven of peace and tranquillity much appreciated by the customers. We do hot food to take away as well as in the cafe. Pies and pasties are cooked to order. Bread and Danish pastries are available as well as freshly prepared sandwiches. We enjoy meeting people in both the shop and the café and appreciate the support of our regular customers. There are often very lively discussions in the café ranging from local to world affairs. We have an interesting mix of people – journalists, academics, church leaders and even the occasional politician are there, alongside mothers with babies in strollers and retired people planning trips across the channel. For us the café provides a social life of sorts, which is very welcome given the long hours we work.

Organising all this is very different from what I used to do. I was born in Southampton where my father was a dentist. I went to prep school in Southampton and then on to boarding school in Bristol. I ducked out of doing A-levels and went to London, where I worked for a dental company off Wardour St. At 20 years of age I became their youngest rep on the road. I found it easy to talk about the equipment but I moved on to sales in packaging. I was in this for 30 years. I married Veronica and we eventually came to live in Fulbrook, where we have been for 25 years. Veronica wanted to run a shop and thought about going into the antique business. I wanted us to go into something we both could do. We looked at many places but the newsagents in Charlbury offered a mixture of business with the flats above. Charlbury was appealing as it is a good-sized town and there is a fair percentage of newspaper readers – *The Times*, *The Telegraph* and *The Mail* are the most popular papers. Although most newsagents are going out of deliveries, we felt we could provide this service and want to continue with them.

Having lunch on the premises, I usually have a sandwich or a pie and am back at work after 10 minutes. My afternoon is much the same as the morning. There is a lot of computer work to be done, checking the rounds, entering when people are away. The rounds are put up; red indicates no delivery, green shows restarts. Another time-consuming job is putting the stock on the computer and keeping it up to date. At least I don't have to do the bills; that is Veronica's province. At 4.15 p.m. we close the café and the shop closes at 6 o'clock, except on Sunday, when the shop hours are 5.45 a.m. until 1 p.m.

When we get home, we cook a meal and then start work again. This is the time to write letters to suppliers, check deliveries, sort out bar codes. Finally it is time to collapse in front of TV. We have been 10 years in Charlbury and business has got more difficult in that time with profitability dropping. We had drawn up plans to expand the shop, doubling the space. A day before the builders were going to begin, we learnt that the Co-op was coming. The Co-op has made a difference to the centre of the town, the closing of the butcher's shows that. We have an agreement with them to supply papers, magazines and cards but there is no guarantee that this will continue. There is no security but we are committed to Charlbury. Our son, Stuart, works with us some of the time. We ourselves want to stay here until our retirement but we need the support of the community – as do all the shops - to make the business viable.

At the end of the day when I finally get to bed at 11 pm, I put my head on the pillow and go straight to sleep.

*Bill Jones was interviewed by Diana Potten*

## **Bridewell Organic Gardens and Vineyard, Wilcote, near North Leigh**

**Can you help?** Bridewell is a voluntary organisation that provides land-based therapeutic support for people in this area who have a range of health problems, primarily mental health illnesses. You may have visited Bridewell on one of our Open Days and appreciated the tranquil and beautiful setting. In order for our staff to have time to plan the day's activities, we are looking for people to drive our minibus from the garden to Witney on either Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays – either in the morning to pick up people at 9.45 from the Woolgate Car Park or the return journey in the afternoon, leaving the garden at 3 o'clock. If you're interested and are under 70 (the prohibitive insurance costs regrettably prevent us from recruiting drivers over this age) and are willing to take the Oxfordshire County Council minibus test, please contact Alex Taylor on 01993 868445 for more information. We would be delighted to hear from you..

## WOODLAND MANAGEMENT ALONG THE OXFORDSHIRE WAY

If you walk the Oxfordshire Way south of Charlbury you will see a continuation of the management works that began last year. This has mainly been re-coppicing of the smaller hazel and thorn trees. Coppicing is a traditional management technique that was once widely used throughout the country to produce small sized wood for a wide range of uses. After coppicing the hazel and thorn will regrow. Coppicing also allows light into the woodland that will help other plants grow. This section of the Oxfordshire Way passes along the southern boundary of what was once an area of woodland known as Lee's Rest Wood, an ancient woodland copse that covered what is now the two farms of Lees Rest and Beevis Farm. The original copse was part of a much larger area of woodland that formed part of the Royal hunting Forest of Wychwood. Lees Rest Wood was in existence as late as 1847, but had been almost entirely cut down by 1881. It is likely that the woodland along this stretch of the Oxfordshire Way is a remnant of the original Lees Rest Wood. There are a range of tree species that are typical of Wychwood woodlands including, oak, hazel, field maple and elm. Some large beech are also present, as is the less commonly seen shrub – spindle – easily noticed at this time of year by its pink berries. You may have noticed the prominent bank on the western side of the track. This would have been the original boundary of the woodland. Different management techniques are being compared in these areas. The most recently cleared area will be left unfenced to see what impact deer browsing has on regrowth of the coppice. Some new coppice stools have been surrounded by cut thorn to see how effective this is in limiting deer damage. If browsing is severe, the area will be fenced. Additional hazel, maple and spindle will be planted in areas where there are insufficient plants at the moment. This work is part of a long-term management programme for this stretch of woodland. You will also see over the coming months that an adjoining hedge is being laid. This is the work of volunteers working with the Friends of Wychwood Hedgelaying Group. The work is being co-ordinated by the Wychwood Project with the assistance of the Cotswolds Voluntary Wardens and is being funded by private donations and funds raised through the Wychwood Project's Ancient Habitat Programme. If you would like further information or wish to help with practical work in the Wychwood area please contact the Wychwood Project.

*Nick Mottram, Director of the Wychwood Project  
tel: 01993 814143; email [Wychwood@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Wychwood@oxfordshire.gov.uk)*

## NEW POLICE OFFICER FOR CHARLBURY

Please make a note that Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) **Stephanie Blake** will now be working out of the Charlbury Police Office on Wednesdays and Fridays each week. She is based at Chipping Norton.

The opening hours at the Police Office at the Spendlove Centre are: Mondays and Wednesdays 12 noon to 3pm; Fridays 9am to 12 noon.

New volunteers are always needed

## **'TREES ARE OUR ONLY WEAPON AGAINST GREENHOUSE GASSES'**

*in the opinion of Dennis Crockford*

Trees were designed to take care of themselves. They keep cool the same way that we do and give off water through their leaves through evaporation. This air is cooler than the air around it and full of moisture. It goes down to the tree's roots keeping it and the surrounding soil cool. All trees shed their leaves, which fall around it, decompose and create humus which helps to retain the moisture.

The small roots, which soak up the water in the spring and summer, start to die in the late summer or early autumn and reduce the supply of water to the tree, causing the leaves to fall. We used to think it was the frost that made them fall, but now that we do not get late frosts they still fall at the same time. These old dead small hairy roots decompose and form humus which holds water under the ground. The tree starts to grow new roots around Christmas time, so they are ready to provide a good supply of water in the spring and summer for the tree to burst into leaf, flower, fruit and seed. A tree needs a great deal of water - a big chestnut, for example, would evaporate anything from 50 to 75 gallons of water on a hot day. However, that same chestnut with its big roots, trunk, branches, twigs and leaves could hold over 1000 gallons of water, and all the time the leaves are taking greenhouse gasses out of the air and giving out much needed oxygen.

This planet probably needs 5 billion more trees to control global warming; trees are our only weapon against greenhouse gasses. There is this huge shortage because man has been cutting them down and not replacing them for hundreds of years. We need to plant more trees very quickly so that the land will be kept cool and global warming will be controlled.

## **REPORT ON CHARLBURY CEMETERY 2006**

The cemetery continues to be an excellent example of the previous limestone flora of this area. All spring flowers were again outstanding and continued to spread. These were followed by another good year for meadow saxifrage (despite the attention of moles) with 600 flowering stems.

The mowing regime was very successful as Darren Clarke adopted responsibility for either mowing or leaving flowers on the curbed graves. This helped considerably with management. He has reported an increase in the number of slow worm sightings, probably due to improved habitat.

BBOWT have now finished their churchyard scheme, but it is hoped that this will not in any way affect our efforts to keep this area looking so attractive.

*Louise Spicer*

## ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT GAS

*In view of the current gas works in the centre of Charlbury, readers may like to know more of the history of gas in the town, says Charles Tyzack. The following was displayed as part of the Museum's 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition:*

The gas was first brought to Charlbury in 1869, by the Charlbury Gas Company. This was set up by William Albright, with its works and gasometer next to the Railway Station, and that Christmas Charlbury's shops were lit by gas for the first time. In 1871 a Yorkshire engineer, who had been asked to carry out a survey and hoped to provide the gas supply himself, later sued Albright for breach of contract. His defeat at the Oxford Assizes led to a great outburst of Charlbury patriotism. According to *The Oxford Times*: "There being no drum and fife band in Charlbury it was not possible to meet the directors on their return at the railway station, and play them into the town to the tune of 'See the conquering heroes come' or 'Cheer boys, cheer', as many wished, so the church bells were ordered to ring a merry peal in honour of the victory."

A few years later, despite opposition from ratepayers, the streets were also lit. There were 21 gas lamps, together with 9 oil lamps in parts of town, like Crawborough and the Slade, beyond the gas mains. But they were only lit from mid-September to mid-April, for a few hours in the evening (a bit later on Saturdays). On moonlit nights they were not lit at all. The Methodist Chapel and the School soon raised money for gas lighting, and the Parish Church converted from oil lamps to gas in 1885. Minutes of Parish Council Meetings record many complaints about the cost to the ratepayers of street lighting, which rose from £45 a year in 1875, to £70 in 1899. By the 1920s it had risen to £120. In 1906 the supply was taken over by the Mid-Oxon Gas Co., who rebuilt the Works and re-laid and extended the mains (causing chaos in the streets and interruption of supply). They also held an exhibition of gas cookers, to persuade Charlbury to change its ways of cooking, and offered to install penny slot meters free of charge.

Charlbury continued to be illuminated by gaslight until October 1929, when the town was connected to mains electricity for the first time, and the street lights were converted.

### DECEMBER FARMERS' MARKET

Don't miss the Farmers' Market on the Playing Close on Saturday, December 9th from 9am to 1 pm. The Farmers' Market has proved successful in bringing shoppers into Charlbury as well as being a popular local event with residents who appreciate meeting the producers with fresh local produce

## CHARLBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE APPEAL

The Gala Evening at St Mary's on Saturday, September 30th was a great success and we are most grateful to Sue Haffenden and her supporters at CADS for devising and producing a very good evening's entertainment in support of the Appeal. The event produced a very satisfying £917 for our funds and our thanks go to everyone who was involved.

As we go to press, our Appeal stands at nearly £82,000. We were absolutely delighted to receive a grant of £3000 from the Dulverton Trust, another of the Wills Family trusts, to add to the £500 received from the HDH Wills Charitable Trust earlier this year.

We were very pleased to receive a cheque from a group of residents in Nine Acres Close. Earlier this year five families got together to organise a Family Summer BBQ to which all the residents of the Close were invited. It was decided that donations towards the CCCA would be welcomed and as a result £100 was sent to our Treasurer. As one of the organisers, Jill Lark from No 36, said 'We were blessed with glorious weather, and I think it's fair to say that a great time was had by all. It is now lovely to be able to walk down the street and know the names and faces of all our neighbours'.

Now that we have a good sum in the bank, even when there are no Appeal functions taking place our money continues to earn a handsome sum in interest. We are also able to collect Gift Aid on many of the contributions we receive which adds to our total. Our Weekly Draw quietly brings in the money, too. It is a great pity that more people do not join the Draw for just £1 a week – participants often get more than their money back over a period of time and it is a good, inexpensive way of supporting the Appeal. It was specially designed to attract those people who said they could not afford to give much, but sadly there has not been as big a take-up as we had hoped.

We are glad to know that the new Trustees are now in place and are getting down to planning the new Community Centre. We wish them well and look forward to great things from them in the coming months!

Appeal Coordinator: Lynette Murphy (810549)  
Deputy Coordinator: Diana Potten (810991)  
Treasurer: Richard Neville (810594)

# THOMAS GIFFORD'S CHARITY REPORT

*by Chairman Trevor Jones*

The new trustee structure for the Charity is in place at last. The new scheme came into force at the beginning of September and the appropriate notice was put on notice boards and in the *Oxford Mail* to advertise the fact. As a reminder, the trustees are Ian Cox, Willem Hackmann, Lisa Hadfield-Law, Alan Hanks, Trevor Jones, Tony Morgan, Liz Reason, Russell Robson and Steve Vaux.

The new trustees are considering the options for the development of the Spendlove site. We would like to thank all the groups and organisations who have completed questionnaires to help us understand the requirements for additional or improved facilities in Charlbury. We also carried out interviews at the Street Fair and would like to thank those who responded. We would still like to hear from anyone who has constructive ideas about what community facilities are needed and how they should be provided.

The trustees are using the information gathered to determine an updated needs analysis for community facilities. This will help as we discuss with the Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council the various development options to meet the identified needs.

We would like to express our thanks to members of the Sports & Social Club who have re-installed the fencing around the Spendlove site in a way which we hope will stop individuals feeling they need to break through it to take short cuts across the site. It is important to keep the area properly fenced off to avoid accidents, particularly among children.

The trustees wish to say a special thank you to Audrey Hereford who has just retired after 12 years as Secretary – we wish her well. We welcome Annette Cooper as the new Secretary and look forward to her valuable support. Please get in touch with Annette on 810882, or at 11 The Green, if you wish to hold an event on the Playing Close.

Thanks too to Lynette Murphy whose leadership of the Charlbury Community Centre Appeal has resulted in raising over £81,000 to date. The new trustees will be seeking to help the continued success of the Appeal, as the greater the amount raised the more likely it is that a new community centre meeting local needs will be built.

One of the wrought iron benches on the Playing Close has been damaged beyond repair and had to be removed. We are seeking to replace it in a similar style – if anyone wishes to sponsor a replacement seat let me know on 810644 or at [trevor.jones@ophiopogon.com](mailto:trevor.jones@ophiopogon.com)

Don't forget the Farmers Market on the Playing Close on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>.

The trustees look forward to a productive New Year when we hope to bring forward constructive proposals for the Spendlove site.

## **CHARLBURY BEST KEPT GARDENS 2006**

Each year Charlbury Town Council hosts a Best Kept Garden competition. All gardens in the town are judged—the only condition is that they must be visible from the road or foot-path. This year's judging by Charlbury District Horticultural Society took place in late June and early July. The judges looked for gardens which were well designed, with a good variety of plants and a garden that was well kept and plants in good condition. Cups were awarded for the first prize in each category, and the results for 2006 were as follows:

### **A Large Garden — Blandford Cup**

1st: Homestead, The Playing Close

2nd: 3 Woodstock Road

3rd: Coach House, The Slade

### **B Medium Garden — Hort Soc Trophy**

1st: 1 Narrow Lane

2nd: 3 Chartwell Drive

3rd: 34 Hughes Close

### **C Small Garden — Chairman's Vase**

1st: Old Manor House

2nd: 13 Elm Crescent

3rd: 1 Brown's Lane

### **D Individual tub/basket/window boxes — Charlbury Society Shield**

1st: Sunnyside, Church Street

2nd: 6 Sturt Road

3rd: 12 Woodfield Drive

Congratulations to all the winners! The prizes and cups were presented after the Society's Annual Flower & Produce Show in September 2006. Next year's competition will be slightly different and, although the Society will still be judging on behalf of the Town Council, there will be only one prize in each category.

*Geoff Holmberg*

## CHARLBURY STREET FAIR

**WOW !!** I think you will all agree that this year, Charlbury's Charter Year, has been a bumper year in all respects, especially with regard to Street Fair. This year we were able to give the Corner House and Memorial Hall Committee **£11,750** – which is nearly £2000 more than we have ever given before. We would like to give a big thank you to all of who so generously gave of their time, money etc to make it such a huge success. There are too many people to thank – but you know who you are, so a BIG thank you from all the Street Fair Committee

Next year's Open Gardens will be on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June and Street Fair will be on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2007 – so don't you dare be away! The first meeting to organise next year's fair will be on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at 8pm in the Garden Room.

### HELP!!

Some of the existing committee are standing down this year, so we do need **lots** of help and new ideas in organising the fair; it's not too much work if we have lots of people to help – and its good fun too (we go to the pub afterwards!). If we are to continue the success of Street Fair we really do need help. So to all of you, who enjoyed this year's fair, please think about even giving just a few hours of your time. Please don't just read this, and say well maybe I will help – and then forget about it. Contact me **NOW!** I look forward to hearing from you all.

Please contact Susie Finch if you are interested in helping – even if it's only on the day. Phone number is 01608 810861 or by email at [susanna\\_finch@hotmail.com](mailto:susanna_finch@hotmail.com).

*Susie Finch, Street Fair Committee*

## CHARLBURY WEATHER

*John Stanley's quarterly report*

After a record July, **August 2006** was disappointing. Temperatures ranged from 62° on 13th to 81° on 6th, but overall at 69.13° the month was 3.12° below average. This was the 3rd coldest in the 18 year period. Night temperatures ranged from 47° to 61°. **Overall, the summer of 2006 (June to August) averaged 73.93° and was the third warmest in the last 18 years.**

**September 2006** was a record high. Temperatures ranged from 62° on 29th to 79° on 11th. 79° equalled the record for September. Overall, at 68.80° September 2006 was 3.91° above average and was the highest in the 18 year period, beating the previous record set in 1999 by 1.29°. Night temperatures ranged from 45° to 62°.

**October 2006** continued the high temperatures, which ranged from 52° to 66° on 9th and 10th. Overall, the month just failed to equal the October record, averaging 60.16° - the record is 60.19°, set in 1995. Night temperatures ranged from 40° to 56°.

# CLUBS, DRAMA, SPORT, GROUPS

## **CHARLBURY ANGLING CLUB**

Annual Christmas Bingo on Friday 22 December 2006 at Charlbury War Memorial Hall.  
Doors open 6.45pm

Anyone wanting to start angling or brush up on angling skills may be interested in some sessions planned for next year when experienced anglers will pass on their expertise. Equipment can be loaned to those taking part. If you are interested please contact Jane Parsons on 01608 810822.

*Jane Parsons*

## **CHARLBURY SOCIETY**

Charlbury resident Caroline Shenton will speak to the Society about *Charlbury in the Parliamentary Archives* on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December. 7.30 pm in the Memorial Hall.

The hearing loop in the hall has been repaired and a *clip on 'mic'* has been purchased to ensure that everyone attending events in the hall will be able to fully participate.

To enable our Secretary, Lesley, to keep details up to date, it would be helpful if any member who has not yet returned their membership renewal notice and fee of £7.50 could do so. Membership forms and the programme of meetings can be obtained by phoning Brian Murray (819091) or Lesley Deane (810849).

*Brian Murray*

## **WEA CHARLBURY & ENSTONE BRANCH**

The 5-week course on Post Impressionism (tutor Alice Foster), which was scheduled to start on November 8 in the Morris Room from 10 am to noon has now been postponed until February 7 2007, when it will be held in the same venue at the same time. Apologies for this, and we hope those of you who have shown an interest will still be able to attend.

Please note that the Willem Hackmann course 'Art & the Industrial Revolution: from Iron Bridge to the Machine Age' is being held at the Memorial Hall in Chadlington, **NOT in Charlbury**, from 2-4pm for 7 weeks starting on February 7 2007.

We very much hope that a number of you will be interested to attend the Day School entitled 'Everyday life in Ancient Egypt'. It will be held on Saturday March 10 2007 in the Primary School, Charlbury, from 10am to 4 pm, lunch included. The Tutor, Rosalind Janssen is highly recommended. Please note that this course will only be run if sufficient numbers have signed up by at least a week before the first meeting. Further information on all these courses can be obtained by ringing the Secretary, Dawn Colvin on 01608 810545

## **CHARLBURY & DISTRICT GARDEN SOCIETY (formerly known as Charlbury & District Horticultural Society)**

The Charlbury and District Horticultural Society held its AGM and Harvest Supper on 20<sup>th</sup>

October, which was, as usual, a great evening with plenty of food and drink, music and a fine quiz compiled again by John Moore. All members and potential members are invited. The Society has decided to change its name, in order to sound a little less grandiose, and will in future be known as the Charlbury & District Garden Society. In addition our Annual Show will be known as the "Annual Flower and Produce Show" in order to make it clearer what the Show is about and attract more exhibitors and visitors. However, there will still be classes for cookery, handicrafts and photography and we would like to invite all residents of Charlbury, whether members or not, to exhibit something in this Show – there really is something for everyone. The Society holds two other shows each year, the Spring Show in conjunction with the Arts Society at the end of March and our wonderful Summer Show in June, which is dominated by the Roses and Sweet Peas. The Society organises many other activities, including outings and plant sales, and anyone wishing to join should please contact our membership secretary Sue Smith on Charlbury 811007.

*Geoff Holmberg*

### **CALLING ALL SCRABLERS!**

We are a small, friendly group who meet on Thursday afternoons in Charlbury. We play in a rather unorthodox way, but at the same time we play to enjoy the game and still aim to be competitive. If anyone is interested in joining us please contact Mrs June Scott on 01608 811476

*If you wish to place an article in this section please contact  
Julia Caston (810240)*

## **SHED'S GREAT EDINBURGH ADVENTURE**

We set off from Oxford station at 7.30 in the morning, in our Fringe t-shirts, full of excitement and anticipation. Six hours later, after many games of chess, some sleep and much laughter, we were there.

We walked up the ramp from Waverley Station into a thronging mass of people, battled our way up Princes Street and found our Napier University accommodation. This turned out to be excellent and ideally suited to our purpose; self-contained flats, sleeping five in individual rooms, it allowed a perfect level of independence for this senior group.

The first 48 hours was all hard work, getting down to the Venue for 7.30 am for a four hour technical rehearsal and then returning the same day for our first performance. I don't know who was most nervous, the directors or the cast! The Venue was a C Venue (central) and right in the heart of the Fringe. It was wonderful to walk in and see our posters *see page 25* all over the walls, and absolutely fantastic to step on to the stage.

The week settled into a routine. Everyday we headed for the Royal Mile to advertise our show (along with thousands of other performers). We sang on open stages, walked up and down singing and giving out posters, laid on the ground in a heap and held up flyers while Sam Parker played the violin. We were supported by many ex SHED students, friends and family who spent many hours promoting the show.

We all had free passes for C venues (185 stages) and every evening we watched the students go out, looking absolutely fabulous, to watch drama, comedy, dance, accapelo, flamenco and all the Fringe had to offer.

On the Wednesday half the cast received their GCSE results - very happy students and much excitement. We had the day off from the Mile, performed our show and had a late night of celebrations. There was much dancing and singing.

By Saturday we had made many friends and our final audience was full of other Fringe performers (Trish and Sue went on stage behind the cast to sing the opening song). As soon as we came off stage we headed straight for the Mile with six bottles of champagne for a champagne shower. It was the perfect end to the perfect week.

Very tired, SHED returned to Oxford on Saturday afternoon, eight days after we set off. We had done it, it was over, it was fantastic, we're going to do it again!

*Sue Cochrane, Chris Wray, Trish Fraser, Teresa Laughton, SHED Theatre Directors*

Ian Cox went to see SHED's performance at Edinburgh and has written a short review for the *Charlbury Chronicle* under the title 'Saw The Preview, See The Performance':

'I went to see SHED Theatre preview performance of 'Victims Of Freedom'. First impression, a young cast. Strong opening and a good choice of lyric, which set the tone for a timeless piece that could have occurred in any conflict, in any part of the world, over the last 2000 years. Simple but effective staging and very dramatic climax make this a Must See. So relevant to current world events, and frightening in the potential for innocent people to be drawn into other people's conflicts. Wow!

**Cast:** Nicolas Anscombe, Madison Bancroft, Daniel Berry, Jason Brain, Ramsay Cochrane, Christy Cooke, Jon Goldman, Bernard Goyder, Tom Griffiths, Lucy Hadley, Ben Harrison, Jonny Kelly, Matthew Luxmoore, Annie MacPherson, Lydia Miller, Sam Parker, Maggie Quinn, Tako Taal, Reuben Vick, Ally Weller, Holly Whitaker, Verity Woodfield.

"SHED Theatre is now  
in its fifteenth year. Its defining ambition is the **pursuit of excellence through performance**. This particular company of actors has worked together for six years, bringing a powerful mutual commitment to their performances."

*(from the programme notes)*

---

## DECEMBER TOTBITS

**GOOD FOOD AND HOLIDAYS:** You probably noticed that the Co-Op stocked its shelves with Christmas biscuits and sweets and chocolates just in time for the beginning of October, but now that the holiday season is looming near, you may be counting the days until you can actually open all the tins and dig in! (I'm dreaming of a white-chocolate Christmas ...).

On the other hand, the government and Jamie Oliver and just about every child-development guru on the telly, radio, and newspaper are telling us how poorly our children eat these days. Some of the fingers point at advertising, and some point at school dinners, but most of them point right at us ... the mums and dads who provide the choice of food for their children. It's a terrible time of year to be thinking about broccoli and bean sprouts when the McVitie's Victoria Biscuit Selection is calling your name, but there are a couple of good books that might offer you inspiration.

The first is called **The Art of Hiding Vegetables** by Karen Balin. This is a quick read and tells you basically one thing: kids don't need very big portions of fruit or veg to count as one of their 5 servings a day. Toddlers, for example, can fulfil their daily intake with only one floret of broccoli, two strawberries, half a small banana, three slices of cucumber, and a teaspoon of sweetcorn kernels. When I read that, I really felt a load of pressure disappear from my shoulders!

While Balin's book is for the more hard-core fish-and-chips-only child, the second book – **Healthy Eating for Kids** by Anita Bean – is packed with good ideas for getting children more interested in fruit and veg in the first place. She suggests a range of activities such as eating together as a family, planning and cooking some of the meals together, shopping for the fruit and veg together and letting the kids make some choices, and even growing your own so the kids can take pride in the sprouts on their plates. She has a wide range of simple recipes as well as good colour photographs. Both these books are available to borrow from either the library or inter-library loan (ask Penny), or you could buy them through the bookshop. Either place will give you other ideas for similar books – just in time for your Christmas wish list!!!

**ON ANOTHER NOTE:** In the previous issue, I mentioned that I had found a jacket in Church Street. Someone reading Totbits realised that I must have been writing about a jacket that her friend had lost last April. Lo and behold, jacket and owner are now happily reunited, all because of the *Charlbury Chronicle*.

**LITTLE FISHES:** This group for the Under-5s has it all: songs, games, stories, crafts, toys, and snacks – packed into 1 ½ hours each Wednesday morning in term time. You don't have to be someone's mum to bring a child along – childminders, grannies, nannies ... all are encouraged to come down to St Mary's church for 10:30 and enjoy the company, the coffee, and the friendly atmosphere. Best of all, it's free!!! Make a special note of the 13<sup>th</sup> of December and the 10<sup>th</sup> of January – the first will be the Christmas party (a nice time to come along for a taster session), and the second will be when we start up again in the new year. Contact Kate on 811579 for more information.

**PRE-SCHOOL:** The Pre-School is available for birthday parties from 2 p.m. onwards on Saturdays, and at any time on Sundays or during school holidays. For only a £15 fee, you have the use of two rooms (one vinyl floor and one carpeted), child-friendly tables and chairs, a kitchen, and space even for a 10x10 foot bouncy castle! The heating of

rooms can be arranged, if required, for a small extra cost.

Pre-school premises are also available for hire in the afternoons during the week, either on a temporary or regular basis. Why not arrange a visit to see the venue and find out if it's for you? Telephone: 811200.

**Charlbury Pre-school Christmas Bazaar and Raffle will take place on Saturday, 9 December, 2006 in the Corner House, 9 am - 12 noon. There will be Santa's Grotto, cakes, coffees and lots of festive fun! This is a major fund raising event for Pre-school, so please come along.**

**CHILDREN'S YOGA:** Does your child never seem to sit still? Well, children's yoga can teach him or her the benefit of lying quietly as well as moving meditatively, stretching, and strengthening those young bones. Classes run at the Pre-School on Tuesday afternoons, the fees for which go to the Pre-School. The Yoga Club meets at Charlbury School for Years 2-6 on Mondays and Tuesdays after school. Phone Nirosha on 810676 for further details.

**BABY AND TODDLER GROUP:** Though this is generally known as "the toddler group" around town, it's nevertheless open to mums-to-be and very young babies as well as pre-school children. The group meets every Monday during term time, from 9:30-11:30 at the Memorial Hall. Children especially love the chance to run, jump, and ride on toys when the weather is wet and grey – and you'll love the hot cuppa and conversation. £2 per family.

The group would also like to thank the Beer Festival committee (Charlbury Community Project) for its grant of £33.83 which has enabled it to buy new beakers, and to Vincent Pharmacy for its giving a 10% discount on the items

**SPANISH FOR CHILDREN:** The Spanish Club takes place every Saturday at the Old Grammar School in Charlbury (the Pre-School). There are several sessions grouped by age and ability where the aim is to provide an enjoyable environment in which the children can learn basic Spanish. For more information and to arrange a visit to a session, ring Elizabeth on 811128 or e-mail her at [elivergaravera@hotmail.com](mailto:elivergaravera@hotmail.com).

**RHYTHM TIME:** A new music group for babies and toddlers has started up in Chipping Norton on Thursday mornings. It's called "Rhythm Time" which is a local franchise run by Sandra Carter (Tele: 01386 430241). You can find out more about Rhythm Time from their website at <http://www.rtfq.co.uk>.

*TotBits is compiled by Kat Patrick  
you can contact her for further information  
[kat.patrick@alumni.southwestern.edu](mailto:kat.patrick@alumni.southwestern.edu)  
Telephone: 811660*

**Flu Fact Box: Fight the Flu Bug this Winter**  
*Information provided by SE & SW Oxfordshire Primary Care Trusts*

**Tips to avoid catching flu:**

If you are 65 or over, or you suffer from certain chronic illnesses, you are especially at risk. Contact your local GP this autumn for this year's free flu jab

Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing

Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, using a tissue whenever possible

Throw used tissues away promptly in the nearest bin

Where possible, avoid crowded areas at times when many people are catching flu

Avoid sharing drinks and cutlery

In public spaces and schools, disinfect commonly used surfaces

In the workplace, keep phones and desktops clean as they can harbour more germs than a toilet seat

**CORNER HOUSE & MEMORIAL HALL COMMITTEE NEWS**

The Committee is enormously grateful to all those who worked so hard to produce such a wonderful outcome to this year's Street Fair. Their hard work is much appreciated and allows the Committee to carry out essential works to both the Corner House and the Memorial Hall.

The Committee is also delighted to acknowledge the donation made by the Beer Festival toward the creation of the Patio Garden at the Corner House.

There was a very disappointing turn out at the Committee's Annual General Meeting

The new rooms at the Corner House are being fully used. Patrons will be glad to know that some new comfortable chairs are being ordered.

*Anne Gilbert*

# CHARLBURY CHAMBER OF TRADE & COMMERCE

## **New fire regulations shift onus to businesses:**

Under new legislation, all businesses with any employees must now carry out their own fire risk assessment and implement fire safety measures. This applies even if the business is run from private premises. The Charlbury Chamber of Trade and Commerce recognises that this may pose a challenge to small businesses. It is looking into organising an address by a fire safety consultant or fire safety officers to groups of businesses to help in the interpretation of the regulations and the considerable paperwork involved. If your business is affected by the legislation and you think you might benefit from joining with other local businesses, please contact the Chamber via the Secretary, Cally Robson [callyrobson@ideas-into-action.co.uk](mailto:callyrobson@ideas-into-action.co.uk) 01608 811227

## **Closure of John Brain Butchers:**

The Chamber deeply regrets the closure of John Brain Butchers. Charlbury needs local shops for local people. The Chamber has always offered active support to any business in or around Charlbury, especially in supplying produce and services according to local customers' changing needs. The Chamber recognises that there is strong demand for quality meats, especially locally produced and organic cuts, and that other local butchers have sustained viable businesses by meeting customers' changing requirements, while some others have failed. The Chamber will do its best to support butchers or meat suppliers in the area in filling the gap left by the closure of John Brain's family business. We also wish John and his sons well in their future endeavours.

To contact the Chamber, please email or call the Secretary, Cally Robson, at [callyrobson@ideas-into-action.co.uk](mailto:callyrobson@ideas-into-action.co.uk) telephone: 01608 811227

## **The Charlbury Practice**

The Charlbury Practice was founded last year by osteopath Laura Humphreys. During her 13 year career she has worked in London and Gloucester in addition to tutoring at Brookes University. Having noticed a shortage of complementary healthcare available locally, it seemed an obvious step to try to build a team of complementary therapists in Charlbury. Laura felt competent about when to refer to doctors given her extensive osteopathic training, but was not sure when it was best to refer to other members of the healthcare team such as Acupuncturists, Homeopaths, Hypnotherapists and Podiatrists. Hence the aim of The Charlbury Practice is to share information between ourselves regarding the strengths and weaknesses of each therapy in order to better refer patients to the person with the most appropriate expertise. Eventually I would like to extend this to informing Charlbury residents and medical professionals about the relative suitability and successes of each therapy for specific referral.

*Laura Humphreys*

## Oxford Environmental Centre

The Oxford Environmental Centre has recently opened at No 37 Sheep Street, Charlbury, and will be officially opened by David Cameron, M.P on Friday December 15<sup>th</sup> at 4.45pm.

The Oxford Environmental centre offers advice on what residents can do to protect the natural environment. It will give practical help in cutting domestic energy use by undertaking a home energy audit and will review a whole range of alternatives with you. Our aim is to help cut energy consumption and therefore carbon emissions by half for each house.

The centre offers the domestic householder a way of meeting their needs with only a low impact on the environment. The centre is financed from commission on the sale of (mainly UK manufactured) environmental products. It is independent of all utility companies. The centre will sell solar power and hot water systems, wind turbines, timber framed houses, water bore holes, low energy appliances such as light bulbs, ovens and solar and natural light systems, and additives to improve car fuel usage.

A longer-term role of the centre will be to provide education of the true impact that we all have from our own use of energy on global warming and the environment. Please feel free to come in and see us to discuss any of the above issues, obtain further advice and purchase any of the above environmental products. If there are any other environmental products you would like to see us to stock, please let me know.

Please also visit our web-site: [www.oxfordenvironmentcentre.com](http://www.oxfordenvironmentcentre.com), or contact me on 07930-395344 or e-mail [jfraims@btinternet.com](mailto:jfraims@btinternet.com)

*James Robertshaw - Director*

## TOWN CHARTER ANNIVERSARY COMPETITION

The Charlbury Society's responsibility for the Town's Museum also brought other involvements as our community commemorated the 1256 Charter recently. The Society offered, through its 'Art or Article' competition an opportunity for the town's younger element to celebrate in an informal way.

'Celebrate' in the hope that painting or writing would enable our youngsters to regard the Charter as being fun, as well as history! Could they be encouraged to think beyond the solemnity of commemoration? How were the lives and the daily experiences of local people, people just like themselves, affected as time rolled on through years of markets, and the fun of fairs?

Yes, they did celebrate! In mixing fact with some imagination the entries reflected what 1256 and King Henry had set in train. Prizewinners were: **Sevens and under:** Abigail Greenfield, Lauren Leese, Marcus Leese. **Eight to twelves:** Lucy Wardle. Winning entries have been on display in the Corner House and are now in the Museum's archives.

The local Chamber of Trade & Commerce sponsored, with the Society, the prize fund; and the Society's warm thanks are given to all who helped launch and support the competition.

*Harry Speight*

## CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL REPORT - No. 41

*by Councillor Trevor Jones*

**Traffic:** The date of the Public meeting about traffic shown in Charlbury Town Council Report No. 40 had to be changed for a variety of reasons after the *Charlbury Chronicle* had gone to press. The Council would like to apologise for any inconvenience that may have been caused. The Public Meeting took place on 17th November and the Town Council will be considering the outcome at the December Council Meeting.

**Street Lighting:** The County Council will undertake a programme of replacing certain pole bracket lights and those with concrete columns over the next twelve months. All such replacements will be in keeping with their current policies on light pollution, energy consumption etc. The Town Council are grateful to OCC as the proposed replacements will represent an improvement which it had planned but will not now have to fund.

**Cemetery:** The work on the cemetery extension is now complete save for the landscaping (trees etc.) required by the planning consent. This will be undertaken shortly. The Contractors have done a superb job closely monitored by the Council's agents, GWP Consulting of Charlbury.

**Councillor Activities:** Cllr Trevor Jones was appointed to judge the Street Fair floats. Nicolette Lethbridge laid the Town Council wreath at the War Memorial in St. Mary's Church on Remembrance Sunday. Together with the County Councillor and both District Councillors, members of the Town Council and the Clerk had the privilege of being presented to HRH the Princess Royal during her visit to Charlbury on 15 September.

**Royal Visit:** The clerk has some photographs taken at this event. Please contact him if you wish to see them/obtain copies.

**Cotswold Line Promotion Group:** The Council is a member and supporter of the Cotswold Line Promotion Group. Frances Short has stepped down as the Committee member for Charlbury and has been replaced by Geoff Griffiths(811784).

**Trusteeship:** The Town Council ceased to be the Trustee of Thomas Gifford's Charity in September. The Council remains as Trustee of the Corner House and War Memorial Hall and of Nine Acres Recreation Ground. Additionally the Council nominates trustees to the Charlbury Exhibition Foundation, the Charlbury and District Motor Fire Brigade Trust and Charlbury Parish Stock Charity (Long Hedge and Ticknell). Further details may be obtained from the Town Clerk, Roger Clarke, on 810608.

**Meetings:** The details of all Town Council Meetings which are open to the public are on the Town Council Notice Boards outside the Corner House and opposite Five Ways Stores. Minutes of Town Council meetings are available in the library. Members of the public may address the Town Council for up to 5 minutes before Council meetings but must make arrangements to do so with the Town Clerk who can also advise on the attendance at meetings etc..

**Overhanging Branches:** It would be helpful if branches and other vegetation that obstruct pavements were cut back. This is often dangerous by forcing pedestrians to walk on the road or by impairing visibility for both pedestrians and road users. Your assistance would be appreciated.

**Charlbury Town Council would like to wish all residents a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.**

**Report from District Councillor Glena Chadwick (tel: 810555 or email [chadwick@glena.plus.com](mailto:chadwick@glena.plus.com))**

At the October WODC Council meeting, Keith Stone, Council Chairman, said that the highlight of his last few months had been his visit to the 750th Anniversary Celebration at Charlbury, a most enjoyable occasion; it was indeed, many congratulations to Nick Potter and Roger Clarke, the main organisers. To continue the saga of the Spend-love Bring Site; although I reported in the last Chronicle that the situation was a little better I was astonished to read a glowing report of the site in an evaluation of all the area's Bring Sites presented to Council. I made it clear that, as someone who monitored the site regularly (as do other helpful people) this report was not right and there was still much room for improvement. After months of debate and research WODC has decided to bring in the following: recycling collection will still be weekly, other domestic waste fortnightly, waste food collection weekly and green waste will still be chargeable. However, these changes will not come in until 2008. Not all members agree with all of these changes but, like most green issues, the matter is very complicated. We need to reduce the amount going to landfill but not if more 'lorry movements' will produce more carbon emissions. The question of cost is also relevant; WODC's service is one of the top 25% most expensive nationally. On a brighter note, the recycling of Yellow Pages was a success; 14.34 tonnes were collected and saved from landfill.

---

**Report from District Councillor Mike Breakell (tel: 01993 868201) or email [Michael.breakell@aol.com](mailto:Michael.breakell@aol.com)**

The Government recently announced that 45 towns and cities have been confirmed as New Growth Points with the potential to deliver an extra 100,000 new homes, including some low cost homes and new jobs too. In our region this includes places like Reading, Oxford, and Didcot as well as Swindon and the Milton Keynes area. This is good news as £40 million funding for infrastructure and environmental costs will also be provided. Of course this could mean that Oxford will be able to develop the western part of the city and Didcot will expand so the A 34 corridor will need great improvements too. The question then arises over the impact on the Oxford Green Belt and rural communities beyond. Smaller market towns and villages may need some opportunity for growth too and that is where the nub of the issue arises for places like Finstock too for if we are to thrive we need to change too.

Sustainability in Charlbury and its environs is now an ongoing concern. Just what this means for traffic and transport was debated on November 17th, just as Finstock's local history society was exploring the impact of the wartime hospital on the village. Times are changing and we all assume levels of personal mobility that could hardly have been envisaged 60 years ago. Just how we deal with such matters at the District level is difficult, especially when faced with major proposals like the 90 chalets in the woods near Finstock, or mansions near Fawler or Ramsden, or the more intensive residential developments as at Greystones on the Slade.. The truth is that housing is needed but for whom and at what cost? The Environment and Planning Committees at both District and County level struggle with balancing local needs with regional, national, European and global complexities. These important and incredibly difficult decisions try, and often fail to please everybody.