

the kite



A warm welcome



Welcome to the first issue of The Kite, Colney Heath Parish Council's new newsletter. You'll receive The Kite through your letterbox every couple of months, plus you'll be able to read it online on the Parish Council's website. Our aim is to provide a snapshot of what the Parish Council is doing and all that's happening in the Parish that is of interest to residents.

You'll also notice a new Parish Council logo! The logo reflects our community and environment and our refreshed commitment to work for the good of the Parish (you can read more about the thinking behind it on page 3). Our vision is simple and modest: to be a good council. This means representing and actively involving all parts of our community; working positively with voluntary and community groups; articulating community needs through effective communication and plans for the Parish; and to work in partnership with other local authorities and agencies to get the best deal in service delivery for the local community.

We want to create a culture and operate in a way that is: straightforward, open and transparent; effective and properly managed; and positive, approachable and informal (except when formality is required). Communicating with you, the

community, is essential. We appreciate that this communication must be two-way, so we'd welcome your thoughts and ideas. As you may know, parish councillors are unpaid volunteers. Volunteering is a great way to make a difference in your community and meet new people. If you're interested in getting involved in community projects or Parish Council working groups, we'd be delighted to hear from you (you'll find our contact details on the back page).

We hope you enjoy the first edition of The Kite. If you would like to advertise in a future edition (which helps cover the cost of producing the newsletter), you'll find details on page 6. Finally a big thank you to all the groups and individuals who have contributed their parish news.

Craig Tallents, Chair

YOUR DIARY DATES

Parish Council meetings:

Thursdays 23rd November and 14th December at Colney Heath JMI School at 7.30pm. Residents are welcome to attend.



Bonfire Night at Charles

Morris Hall. Saturday 4th November at 6pm. Tickets available from the Plough Pub, Tyttenhanger. They are not sold at the event.



Music Quiz & Bingo Night at

Colney Heath Football Club, on Saturday 11th November starting at 7pm. £5 per person to enter the quiz. Enjoy a fun evening!

Planning a new future for everyone to share in

Our community faces a number of challenges. One of the biggest is the proposals from developers for large and inappropriate housing developments that threaten our green fields and special environment. Another is the Roestock Park (Scout) Hut that is currently standing empty and unused and needs to be made part of our community again. The Parish Council also recognises that communication with residents has to be improved and that we need to better understand residents' needs and concerns.

So, what are we doing? We have several working parties up and running that include a number of residents who have volunteered to assist the Council with their skills, time and enthusiasm. The Planning working party has been working on reviewing planning applications, including the Ellenbrook quarry, preparing for the Planning Inquiry on the 150 houses proposed on Tollgate Road in Colney Heath, and responding to the District Council's Draft Local Plan.

The Roestock Park Hut working party has drafted

works packages to establish what the cost of refurbishment might be. The Environment working party is reviewing the needs of the Common, open spaces and recreation grounds. The Community Organisations working party is planning a meeting of community groups to discuss their needs and plans. Membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group needs to be boosted and re-activated now that the District Council's Local Plan process has started. And, of course, the Communications working party has worked hard on this newsletter!

The Council has established the Budget Committee to review expenditure and prepare the budget for the precept and expenditure for our next financial year. (The 'precept' is the council tax that St Albans District Council collects on behalf of its parish councils and is a hugely important part of a parish council's income.) As you'd expect, the demands on the Parish Council's budget are many, so we'll be working hard to balance priorities to achieve a fair precept and value for money for all residents.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENTS

TOLLGATE ROAD

The Parish Council is participating as a 'Rule 6' party in the Planning Inquiry regarding the refusal by St Albans District Council of the planning application for 150 houses off Tollgate Road by the developer, Vistry Homes Ltd. The Planning working party prepared our evidence and assessed the evidence of the District Council and the developer. The Inquiry started on 19th September and the Inspector's decision is expected by the end of the year. The decision may be a turning point in what some residents have termed 'the Siege of Colney Heath'.

DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

St Albans District Council has approved 45 houses off Boissy Close, a site included in its Draft Local Plan. The plan also includes the Glinwell site on Hatfield Road and Smallford Works. The Parish Council has reviewed the plan and prepared comments which can be viewed on the planning section of the SADC website. The next stage is preparation of the Local Plan, which will be presented for a second round of consultation in 2024.



Ellenbrook Fields © Nick Pettit 2023

ELLENBROOK QUARRY

The application by Brett Aggregates to quarry Ellenbrook Fields was refused by Herts Council and their subsequent appeal was refused following a Planning Inquiry. The Parish Council has worked closely with Smallford Residents' Association and Ellenbrook Residents' Association to object to the proposal, which would see quarrying work over a 40-year period, citing loss of green space, traffic disruption and carcinogenic risks. However, Brett Aggregates has now submitted another planning application to the County Council. So once again, the fight will continue.

The River Colne needs everyone's help!

The management of the River Colne, which flows through the Common, is a priority for the Parish Council. Given its ecological importance as a rare chalk stream, it needs to be managed carefully. Although currently looking pretty sorry for itself because of a lack of water flow and overgrown vegetation (not helped by lots of summer rain and bursts of sunshine), rest assured that all is not doom and gloom. Many rivers in the UK are also suffering, particularly those in the South East, for a number of reasons – and not all to do with misuse by some water companies. The water companies, along with all of us, have a responsibility to rivers and their health.



The previous Parish Council began plans to improve the River Colne on the Common by drafting in Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust to help (as well as with more guidance on the maintenance of the Common). Councillors recently met with Tim Hill of the Trust to begin on a plan of action. In early September, he took the matter on our behalf to the Colne Catchment Action Network to register the Parish Council's desire to restore the health of the River Colne in Colney Heath. We hope that by doing this, Affinity Water will work with us and help fund improvements on the Colne. At the same time, the Parish Council is also looking at things that can be done now to improve the condition of the river such as giving it a 'spring clean' (which we hope can be augmented by local volunteers) and cutting back the tall vegetation that is creeping into the water. The Parish Council is also reviewing the vegetation along the riverbanks. Plants like Himalayan Balsam and Hairy Willowherb, which is actually a weed, are highly invasive and must be managed and there are a number of instances of Tar Spot Fungi on Sycamore leaves, which although not harmful to the tree, can be managed by cutting and clearing.



Common cut backs

The Common has recently had its annual cut and cutting of the shrubbery on The Warren will start soon. This is to maintain the landscape and make sure that the environmental value that it brings to wildlife remains. As well as providing a source of food and shelter, the shrubbery also prevents soil erosion, assists with water regulation and stores carbon to help combat climate change. It's a vital aspect of the Common and we need to look after it!

Ghost ponds emerge



If you're out walking on the Common, do visit The Warren where you'll see two 'ghost ponds' that have been unearthed by The Wildlife

Trust. Although not much to see at the moment, they will, over time, naturally fill from the water table and provide a new home for a variety of flora and fauna, including newts. Watch this space!

Logo lift off!

Introducing any new logo will always create debate, but if done properly, it's one of the best ways to signify positive change. The biggest challenge facing the new Parish Council was finding a symbol common to the whole Parish. After considering some initial ideas, councillors unanimously chose the Red Kite as our new icon – and for very apt reasons. The kite is highly distinctive in the air; we have a number of resident breeding pairs in the Parish; kites use a loud 'mewing' call to communicate with each other; and in the native American Indian tradition, kites are considered as messengers between the past and present worlds. We hope 'our kite' will play a unifying role for residents and become a recognisable part of the new Parish Council.



Kite image © Sven Lachmann (Pixabay)

All aboard the open day!

Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society have been researching and sharing the history of Smallford Station and the Hatfield to St Albans Railway that it served for 10 years. Over the past three years, they have organised a Community Project to Improve the Environment around Smallford Station in collaboration with St Albans District Council and staff and students from Oaklands College. On Sunday 10th September, they held their annual Heritage Open Day, which provided an opportunity to see the exciting improvements that have taken place and included an exhibition and guided walks.

© Roger Gray (SSAWHS) 2023



It proved to be warm and sunny and there was a welcoming and friendly atmosphere all day. Several 'guests' attended, including The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of SADC, the Council Leader and Daisy Cooper, MP for St Albans. A pop-up café, run by Pauline Baycroft and Frances Leonard, provided a variety of hot and cold drinks, as well as lots of delicious homemade pastries and cakes. Items from the café were priceless(!) and visitors were therefore encouraged to make a donation. At the end of the day, the Society had raised a whopping £500! If you'd like to contact the Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society or be added to their email list, send Jeff Lewis, Chair of the Society, an email with your details – info@smallford.org

Walk the Tyttenhanger Loop

If you're looking for a lovely Autumnal walk then the Tyttenhanger Green Loop is perfect for a weekend activity. It's a walk of about 5 miles. Along the way you'll enjoy much of our lovely Parish countryside, the Alban Way where you can discover some of its fascinating history and, if you fancy it, maybe a drink at a couple of pubs. Go to www.hertfordshirewalker.uk and search for Tyttenhanger Green Loop.

RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

4ColneyHeath

4ColneyHeath Residents' Association was established in 2020 as it was felt a voice was needed for residents on a number of 'sites' that had been offered for development in the preparation of St Albans District Council's Draft Local Plan. Much of our time over the past couple of years has gone into fighting off the developers looking to build in Colney Heath. We undertook a number of opinion surveys during 2021 on issues that concerned residents and to establish data on travel for our representations on the planning applications that were affecting the village (one regarding the community governance review also supported our representation to the District Council on the recent Parish Council boundary change). Our opposition to the new housing developers is testament to the residents that live in Colney Heath and give their time and knowledge for free.

Smallford

Our AGM was held in May and we welcomed Sleapshyde residents to the Association, which gives us a bigger voice to comment on the issues we have to deal with. We continue to pressure St Albans Council planning office to enforce the planning condition for Smallford Works requiring the closure of the exit/entrance opposite Sleapshyde Lane upon completion of the new entrance/exit. As well as improving safety for vehicles and pedestrians, it would reduce noise disturbance to local properties.



Smallford Works © Nick Pettit 2023

The one constant fight we have is with Brett Aggregates who want to quarry the old Hatfield Aerodrome, depriving residents of the amenity of Parish and Ellenbrook fields. Despite being rebuffed already, the latest proposal from them is expected to be heard by Herts County Council in the next two months. Do register your thoughts with councillors and your MP. It's important that our elected representatives are in no doubt about local feeling.

A new year that started in the past!



The start of the Autumn term at Colney Heath School has taken us back to the past and, as always, with an eye on the future. We've welcomed back our children and families after the summer break. This year, our new Nursery is offering 30-hour provision, enabling children to join us for a full day. The late summer sunshine meant the children and their families were able to enjoy the outside and indoors on our Stay and Play sessions. As a school, we are fortunate to have such amazing grounds and we plan this year to develop our playtimes for all our pupils. If you can help, please check our newsletters and www.colneyheath.herts.sch.uk

Our Years 5 and 6 were plunged back into Tudor times with a visit from History Off The Page. In order to help the children understand this fascinating era, the school hall became a Tudor court of 1536 – gossip about the King and Queen swirled around the room as the pupils experienced writing with quills, soap making, apothecary skills and a tasty banquet! Lastly, thank you to everyone who supported our Summer Fair, which enables our PTA to help subsidise this vital learning.

THE SCOUTS

Where children can really flourish

Colney Heath Scout Group is very much up and running this Autumn! To give the children the best experience, we are working with the new Parish Council on restoring use of the Scout Hut in Roestock Park. We remain positive that a successful solution can be found. Watch this space!

In Beavers, we currently have 22 boys and girls aged between 5 and 8 years of age. Cubs has 22 members between the ages of 8 and 10-and-a-half. Last but not least, we have 13 Scouts aged between 10 and 14 years old. The Beavers and Cubs have been meeting in the Village Hall. During the Summer term, the Beavers have enjoyed meeting outside, exploring all corners of the village and taking part in all kinds of activities. The Scouts are still meeting with the London Colney Scouts in their hut. Both Cubs and Scouts thoroughly enjoyed their summer camps. Unfortunately, the 'Beavers in Tents' event weekend organised by the County team had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the severe

weather warning of high winds and rain. Sadly, we had a lot of disappointed Beavers.

All sections of the group have plenty of exciting activities planned for this Autumn term and we're looking forward to getting stuck in.



© Pat Cough 2023



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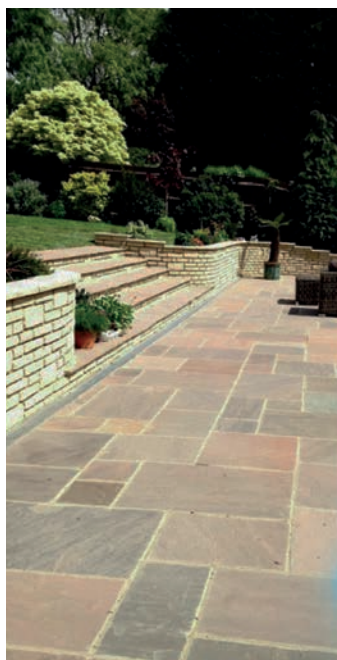
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An inspired, fun evening



© Amanda Furlong 2023

In August, Colney Heath WI replaced its usual meeting with a social event. Susan hosted an evening of 'fun and fizz' in her garden. We were blessed with lovely weather and it gave us all the chance to chat with friends old and new. Glasses were kept topped up and the buffet disappeared quickly as hungry members tucked in! The fun consisted of a Lindt chocolate treasure hunt around the garden (and a chance to explore Susan's delightful garden and exchange gardening tips) and a game of 'Who Am I?'. After some heavy hinting, Walt Disney and Emily Pankhurst were finally guessed! All too soon darkness fell and we headed home. October will see us back in the Village Hall for our regular meetings. Do consider joining the WI; you'll find us very welcoming and your first visit is free! Details can be found at www.colneyheathwi.com

ST MARK'S CHURCH

At your service

St Mark's Church, part of the Church of England, is described as a loving, active evangelical church. You'll find us on the right hand side as you enter Colney Heath Village from the A414 and a warm welcome always awaits. Sunday is our 'big day' of the week and starts at 8.30am with Holy Communion. Morning Worship, at 10.30am, is live streamed online if you cannot attend in person. Our children and young people's groups meet at the same time as this service in the church centre. You can view our digital services through St Mark's YouTube channel or visit our website. If you'd like further information about our services, contact the office on 01727 825 175 or email: office@stmarkscolneyheath.co.uk

The Big Lunch on Tuesday 24th October

Our free event for families to meet and lunch together was a great success. About 130 people attended and enjoyed some delicious hot food followed by numerous activities, games, crafts and a very popular puppet show!



Colney Heath Village Hall

The Village Hall is a busy place with a range of activities for most age groups. Daytimes Tuesday to Friday, Treasure Tots pre-school operates, Tae Kwan Do on Saturday mornings and Different Dogs on Sunday afternoon. Evening activities include Clubbercise and Badminton, Cheryl Fetti's bootcamp, the WI, Cubs and Beavers and more Tae Kwan Do! Saturday afternoons and evenings are available for family and community parties. We also have a smaller studio room which hosts Iris' Art Group and various corporate events. Colney Heath Village Hall is owned by a charity on behalf of the residents and is managed by the trustees. To make a booking or for more information about the Hall, see: colneyheathvillagehall.com



'Baby Sensory' © Nicola Owen 2023

Charles Morris Hall

Like Colney Heath Village Hall, here at the Charles Morris Hall we are popular with classes and activity bookings most days of the week. The hall hosts everything from pilates, yoga, Ki Aikido and karate to Socatots and Baby Sensory classes. On Thursdays, Dawn to Dusk Carers Group meets (giving carers the opportunity to take some vital time out for themselves) and we have a popular watercolour painting workshop on Friday mornings. Saturdays are always very busy with various functions, especially children's parties. The Hall's website is currently being redeveloped so please bear with us; we hope to be online early October.

BACK PAGE SPORT...BACK PAGE SPORT...BACK PAGE SPORT

Colney Heath FC news

Season 23/24 is well underway and all our senior and youth teams have commenced their league programmes. There is a real feeling of optimism that our teams are all showing improvement from last season. Our ladies team is leading the way in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Women's League with three wins from three games. The men's senior sides are both competing well in their respective leagues and the U18s recently notched their first win of the league campaign beating Harpenden 1-0. Off the pitch, we are arranging a series of social events in the pavilion. On Saturday 11th November we are hosting a Music Quiz and Bingo Night starting at 7pm. Entry to the music quiz is £5 per person so get a table together and come and enjoy a fun-packed evening. We will also be hosting the hugely successful annual quiz on behalf of MNDA in the spring of 2024. It's always a highlight of the social year and now in its 5th year, it has raised over £10,000 for charity.

Kumite Karate at Oaklands College

Oaklands Wolves Academy, based at Oaklands College in Smallford, launched the UK's first ever Karate Academy in September. Oaklands Karate Academy will be under the guidance of renowned Karate Kumite (fighting) expert, Carla Burkitt, a distinguished figure in the world of competitive martial arts. Carla holds the esteemed titles of British & Commonwealth Champion, England international, and is a multiple international medallist. With well over a decade of experience competing at the highest levels globally, Carla



Carla Burkitt / Oaklands College 2023

brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the academy, inspiring and guiding students towards their ultimate goals.

The academy is for students who are passionate about Karate to train under the guidance of a world-class instructor. "We are thrilled to introduce the Oaklands Karate Academy, which will serve as a hub for aspiring martial artists to flourish" said Thomas Baker, Academies Team Manager at Oaklands College, "Under the guidance of Carla our students will receive unparalleled training and mentorship. Through the academy, we aim to foster a supportive environment that nurtures their passion for Karate while offering a well-rounded education. The programme will offer students the chance to study a diverse range of curriculums, including Sport, Business, IT, Engineering, Public Services, A Levels, and Multi-Trades and more, while honing their skills in the martial art of Karate."

Colney Heath FC © 2023 Nick Pettit



Keep in touch with the Parish Council

Call or email:

Tel: 01727 825 314 (mobile: 07484 520 070)
Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

Write to: The Clerk to the Council, Colney Heath Parish Council, Highfield Park Visitor Centre, Hill End Lane, St Albans, AL4 0RA

Public opening hours: The Parish Office is open Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm. Staff are part-time so please call before visiting as we want to ensure we are there to meet you.



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