

THE WISTOW WARBLER

Wistow village web-site: www.wistowvillage.info

THE WISTOW VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2009/10

Editorial

First of all I'd like to wish everyone a happy new year for 2010, and I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas.

Secondly, some (possibly) sad news. After a great deal of consideration, I've decided that after 7 years this will be the last year that I will be producing the Warbler, meaning that the Autumn 2010 issue will be the final one that I'll be doing. I originally started doing it in 2003 when I joined the Parish Council; at the time the council didn't want to produce an "official" newsletter, so I decided to do an "unofficial" one covering any topics that I saw fit in addition to Parish Council business, and it's carried on from there. It is certainly not the mouthpiece of the Parish Council.

It's likely that there will be some people who will find this disappointing, and it would be great if someone else would step forward to carry it on rather than it just dying. I have to say that I've enjoyed doing it, and if there is anyone who wants to take it over then please contact me and I'll hand over all the computer files, etc.

John Dransfield

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

Cambridgeshire Police are pleased to report that a record number of motorists were stopped and checked for drink-driving during the Christmas drink drive campaign. Officers stopped more than 15,000 motorists, 5,000 more than last year, and arrested 123 people, compared to 102 arrests the previous year. The Christmas campaign ran from December 1 until December 31, with 1,500 motorists being stopped on New Year's Eve alone.

The police are disappointed to see that there are still a number of motorists who think it is acceptable to drive while under the influence of drink or drugs. But this year they carried out more stop checks than ever before, using intelligence to target known offenders or areas with a particular problem. As a result 5,000 more motorists were stopped this year and there has been a slight increase in the number of arrests.

This work was not just about enforcement but also about reminding motorists that officers are on the roads 24/7 as a deterrent to those contemplating driving under the influence. Although the Christmas and New Year campaign is now over their work will continue as they strive to make the roads safer. Each time someone gets behind the wheel and drives under the influence they are not only risking their own life but also the lives of others.

A NEW SHOP IN THE VILLAGE

Great news! Ray and Shirley Burton are on the point of opening a new farm shop at Hillside Farm on Mill Road in a brand-new purpose-built building; in fact it may well already be open by the time you read this.

They will be selling a range of their own produce plus a selection of other food and non-food items. Their range will include: fruit and vegetables, free-range eggs, tea, coffee, sugar, milk, breakfast cereals, and various tinned foods (fruit, soup, beans, tomatoes, etc). Non-food items will include: pet food, hay, wild bird feed, wood-shavings, logs, kindling, coal, firelighters, and much more.

So that they can better serve you, the plan is to have a suggestion book in the shop where you can indicate the type of things that you'd like them to offer in the future. Where there seems to be a strong demand for anything then the aim will be to try to satisfy that need.

I think it's great that, after all these years without a shop, we now have one again, and Ray and Shirley are to be congratulated for starting this venture.

WISTOW BRIDGE

So, the work on the bridge is completed (or almost completed – hopefully the road signs will be put up shortly) and I have some personal views on the end result. On the plus side, the end result is less detrimental to the approach to the village than I had feared, and the rumble strips and the need to give way when coming down from the Toll will slow traffic entering Bridge Street. The extended footpath is also a good thing. Also, it is nice to have the new signs and road markings as you come into the village from the Kings Ripton direction; this is something that the Parish Council has been requesting for a long time so it's nice to get it done for free.

There are some outstanding things, however. Just over the bridge, on the Toll side, water now collects and forms a small lake which is not too good particularly with this freezing weather; the County Council have been informed and have said that they will sort this out. Also, when putting up the new sign at the Mill Road end, why wasn't the flower basket replaced on the poles? It also seems to me that it was completely unnecessary to clear back the trees on the left as you come down from the Toll. The only relevant sight line is from the new give way marking; the previous trees didn't impact on this at all.

As a follow-up, our 'Bridge man' from Cambs CC is planning to come out shortly to inspect the whole project, including the green, and to review a couple of issues raised by the PC at the last meeting.

FRESH LOCAL PORK

Richard and Patsy Coles at Porch House in Manor Street are due to have fresh pork available later this spring, to be ready in early April. This year the pigs are Hampshires, a nice old rare breed, and they will be available in half-pig portions. A lot of the pigs are already spoken for but if you hurry then you may be lucky. Contact Richard or Patsy on 823542.

LOCAL MOTOR SERVICES

If you are looking for a reliable and friendly service while getting value for money then contact Gary Burton for all your car servicing, MOT and repair needs. Gary promises competitive prices, a

reliable service, no hidden charges, friendly staff, and value for money. This is a family run business with over 15 years experience in the motor trade. You'll find Gary at Orchard View Garage, Hillside Farm, Mill Road, and you can contact him on 07595 507441 or by email at o.v.g@btinternet.com.

SOME UPDATES FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The poor road surface on the Raveley Bends has been discussed with Cambridgeshire County Council Highways department. Highways acknowledge that the ride quality is not satisfactory and are in touch with the contractors. The dressing to finish the road is due to be applied April/May time and a further inspection will be carried out in February to establish whether any further work is required prior to dressing. The Parish Council have requested that warning signs be placed at the junction to advise people of the uneven road.

A number of Allotments are coming available later this year. Six quarter-acre plots will be available for rent with effect from 11th October 2010. If anyone is interested or would like further information then please get in touch with Patsy.

The Parish Council has been approached by BT to ask if they would like to adopt the telephone kiosk for £1. It is no longer viable for BT to retain a telephone in the village due to the very low level of calls (only 35 calls were made from the box in the last 12 months) so it can be adopted for the cost of maintenance and insurance and could then be used as a notice board or such like; all the telephone equipment will be removed. The Parish Council are working towards adopting it but have to take on the electricity supply which, at the moment, is causing a bit of a delay. If anyone has any ideas about what the kiosk could be used for then please get in touch with the Clerk, Patsy Coles, on 823542 or parishclerk@wistovvillage.info.

Huntingdonshire District Council has kindly supplied the Parish Council with 2,000 dog poo bags, free of charge, and these will be given to any dog owners who want them. If you want some then please contact Patsy and they will either be delivered or left out for you to collect.

WAS THIS YOUR DOG?

Just before Christmas a dog got into a private garden in the centre of the village and savaged two free-range chickens to death.

The fact that this happened mid-morning outside the back door of the house, together with the nature of the injuries to the chickens, makes the owner pretty certain that this was the work of a dog rather than a fox. Please remember to keep all dogs under strict control within the village so that incidents of this kind don't happen again.

WISTOW OBTAINS PATHFINDER GRANT FOR THE PLAYING FIELDS

Wistow Parish Council has received a formal offer of funding of £30,000 from Cambridgeshire County Council with a total project value of £35,000 (further grants for the balance from Red Tile Wind Farm Trust) and it is planned to place the order for the new play equipment mid-January 2010. Things are now on course for a construction/implementation date of March 2010, with some shrubs and trees for "natural play" to be planted in October 2010.

The working team, consisting of Parish Councillors Richard Farrar, Clive Williams, Chris Leigh and Jeremy Carter and District Councillor Peter Bucknell, started planning this project back in June 2009. The new equipment will comprise Four Towers with clatter bridge, net bridge, stepping logs, wobble board, climbing wall, fireman pole, activity boards, ladder, hanging hoops, cargo nets, S-climber and disabled access. The project has generated so much interest that it is anticipated there will be something for everyone – youngsters, families and teens!

The manufacturer has made some slight refinements to the natural play elements thanks to Clive Williams, with an excellent outcome. There will be a display of the final concept at the Village Hall by the end of January 2010, as the village children have featured so strongly in the consultations. Hopefully everyone will be patient and understand the need for part-closure when the contractor is on site.

Should you wish to know more, or if you would like to help in any way, then contact Peter Bucknell on 824222 or by email at peter.bucknell@huntsdc.gov.uk Peter and the Parish Council would like to thank you all for your continuing support and look forward to giving you details of the launch date in April 2010, hopefully with our MP in attendance.

CANCER RESEARCH UPDATE

Despite the heavy rain, 30 hardy souls turned out for the carol singing around the Christmas tree. Thanks to everyone who came along, to Jeremy Carter for providing the musical backing, and to Richard Cook for printing extra song sheets. Also, thanks to Father Christmas for finding time in his busy schedule to pay us a visit. Afterwards, an enjoyable time was had at the Three Horseshoes with mince pies and mulled wine generously provided by Julia and Gerry.

Dates for the usual round of events for 2010, ie coffee mornings, pink or blue parties, and fund raising events in the village hall, are still being finalised. Look out for notices around the village. As this year is the 25th year of fund-raising for Cancer Research in Wistow it is hoped to hold a Silver Ball; watch out for details.

Many thanks go to all those people who support the events and contribute so generously and made 2009 another excellent year. There are many Cancer Research UK collection cans placed in shops around the area that are regularly returned full, and the local committee are extremely grateful to supporters in the village for their personal donations and continuing support.

WILL YOU SPONSOR A MARATHON RUNNER?

Rob Cracknell, of Poachers Pocket on Manor Street, will be running this year's London Marathon on 25th April in aid of the charity Sue Ryder Care. He has been set the challenge of raising £2750 and needs everyone's help in raising this amount; any donation, large or small, would be much appreciated.

If you wish to sponsor Rob you can contact him on 07912 967143, visit his "Just Giving" page at www.justgiving.com/Rob-Cracknell, or just put your donation through his letterbox. Many thanks to you all in anticipation.

Forthcoming Events - Dates for your Diaries

No events have been notified so far for 2010.