

April 2013

Find us on the web:
www.hdca.org.uk



Higher Denham Community Association Newsletter

Hall Schedule

- **Monday**
2.15pm - 3.30pm Keep Fit
5.15pm - 6.30pm Circuit Fitness
7.00pm - 10.30pm Line Dancing
- **Tuesday**
6.20pm - 7.20pm Zumba
- **Wednesday**
10.00am - 11.00am, Yoga
2.30pm - 4.00pm Adult Singing Club (most Wednesdays)
7.30pm - 9.00pm Yoga
- **Thursday**
9.45am - 11.15am Yoga
2.15pm - 3.30pm Keep Fit
- **Friday**
11.30am - 12.30pm Zumba Gold
(please note this class does not run on the last Friday of the month)

The Hall can be hired for functions and bookings are made via Sue Kelly on
01895 833842

Dear Residents,

Welcome to the April issue of the Higher Denham CA Newsletter. At the time of writing the weather has taken a definite turn for the better and let's hope it continues with the two Bank Holidays coming up - although I won't be counting on it!

This month you will find an update from the AGM in March which saw a good turnout of residents coming along to hear what we've been up to over the past 12 months. There are also details of the remaining Open Gardens of 2013 and the regular "Social Club Corner" who have a Live Music event planned for this Bank Holiday weekend, Sunday 5th May.

The main item in this Newsletter is the work taking place on the boundary of the community Glebe Field. Everyone coming in and out of Higher Denham in the past few weeks can't have failed to notice the amount of activity in this area and you will find a full account of what's been happening and why from the CA Chairman, David Ward, on Page 3. A number of residents have taken the time to give some really positive feedback on the work that has been done, saying how much better the hedge looks already. The boundary hasn't been touched for some 25 years and the work is long overdue, however it is now in a much better state with the dead and overgrown trees and shrubs being removed, along with heaps of rubbish and litter. Please do take the time to read the plans for this area as we are really excited about how things are progressing and how it will look when it's completed.

Once again the CA has been very fortunate to have a small team of volunteers giving up their spare time over their weekends and evenings to clear the area, with most of them not even living near the Hall to enjoy the benefits of their labour. We would like to sincerely thank these residents, along with those that have stopped by to give words of encouragement when the task seemed never ending and those who provided much needed liquid refreshments on the warmer days.

The next Newsletter will be with you in June, however do visit our website to see our regular updates and to contact us if you have anything you would like to bring to our attention - your comments are always welcome.

Best regards,

Jacqui McGowan - Editor

Community Association AGM - 2013

A good number of residents turned out for the Community Association AGM on 21st March to hear from the Committee about progress over the past year. The CA Chairman David Ward and Treasurer, Ron James, both gave updates and a representative from Bucks CC came along to speak about the plans for Old Rectory Lane. Suggestions for the gardens in front of the Hall were also discussed as was the nursery/child care proposal.

The nominations for election to the Committee were accepted for the forthcoming year:

- Dr Ron James, Wind in the Willows - Treasurer
- Mr Charlie McClelland, Lower Road - Secretary
- Mr David Ward, Upper Road (re-elected as Chairman at the CA April meeting)
- Mrs Jacqui McGowan, Middle Road
- Mrs Sue Kelly, Lower Road
- Mrs Sonia Harris, Middle Road
- Mrs Mairead Carney, Upper Road

Committee members Ms Christine Birtles and Mrs Maureen Dowsett chose not to stand for election again this year and the Chairman thanked them both on behalf of all the residents for their contribution during their time on the committee.

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2013 AGM - Continued

Old Rectory Lane

Wayne Fabian from Bucks County Council Highways Department attended the AGM to give an update on the state of Old Rectory Lane. He apologised for the ongoing situation with the road and was pleased to tell those present that the Lane has been given top priority and will be repaired over the summer, with the drainage issue being addressed at the same time - which is fantastic news! The road will be closed for approximately a week for the repairs to happen and full details will be available nearer the time. The CA will continue to keep you updated via the Newsletter and our website (www.hdca.org.uk). We would urge you to continue to contact BCC as and when the potholes re-appear, so the road is maintained to a reasonable level until the repairs are carried out.

Bill Evans Cup

The Bill Evans Cup was awarded to Diana and Bill Gordon of Lower Road. Both Bill and Di have helped out within our local community for a number of years and the Committee were delighted to recognise them with this well deserved award.

Children's Nursery Proposal

As mentioned in the February newsletter this item was added to the AGM agenda as a private children's nursery had contacted the CA expressing an interest in using the Hall Monday - Friday as a childcare facility.

A lively discussion took place with a number of views being expressed. The main concerns raised were that the building isn't suitable as a childcare facility, the Hall would not be available for general use during the week and that it would be used to make a profit.

The reason for bringing this item to the AGM is being driven by the need in the not too distant future as a way of funding essential major repairs to the Hall. The building is reaching a point where the roof and timber structure will need attention and the associated costs are way beyond the funds the CA has or can make from letting the Hall as it currently does. The Nursery proposal would help generate the required income to meet these costs, and would not be a way of making a profit as was suggested. The Hall would still be available for residents to use every evening and at weekends.

The CA understands the concerns raised by the residents, but has to look longer term. By not doing so the Hall will be in jeopardy and is likely to be unsustainable if plans are not put in place to secure its future.

Fundraising was suggested as an option to help with repairs and although this may help slightly, with only 250 houses in Higher Denham, it will not provide the vast revenue that will be needed. Applying for grants was also raised, however the CA have already been advised these are not so readily available.

The Committee has taken on board all the comments raised and will be discussing the proposal and ways forward over the coming months.

If any residents have any suggestions, thoughts, ideas or experience of similar situations, perhaps in other communities you have lived in or are familiar with, we would really like to hear about them - so please do get in touch.

Beware - Burglars are about!

We have been notified by residents that there have been 2 burglaries within Higher Denham within the past couple of weeks. Please remember to keep your own property secure at all times and also be vigilant to what is happening around you. If you notice anything suspicious do not hesitate to contact the Police. Emergencies should be reported on 999, and non-emergency incidents on 101.

Open Gardens— Ready for Lift off!

Open Gardens returns on **Sunday 19th May, 2pm - 5pm** in support of our local Air Ambulance Fund. The Air Ambulance is a charity costing over £2 million a year to run and receives no financial assistance whatsoever from the government. It is funded entirely by donations from the public and fund raising by its volunteers to enable it to continue the critical role it plays in helping save lives on a daily basis.

Three gardens will be open and a ticket to view all 3 is £4 per Adult. Teas and refreshments will be served throughout the afternoon in the Hall. Please do take the opportunity to spend some time viewing other people's gardens rather than working on your own - a much more enjoyable option while raising funds for a very worth cause!

Calling all Cake Bakers!

The final Open Gardens of 2013 is on **Sunday 9th June**. Di Gordon will be organising the teas in the Hall on the day and would love to hear from you if you can bake or donate a cake to raise funds for our own community gardens. Di can be contacted on **01895 832321**.



Social Club Corner

The Social Club has organised a **Live Music Event** on the community field on **Bank Holiday Sunday, 5th May from 2pm - 6pm**. (If the weather is wet the bands will play in the Hall).

This promises to be a great event with music by "From Dusk til Dawn" and "Jolly Ollie".

Entry: Adults £5.00, under 18's free. The CA will be running a BBQ throughout the afternoon. We hope to see you there!

Funk Music Evening - Singer Nicole Richards and her band return to the Club on **Saturday 1st June** and will be playing a selection of Funk and Jazz - an evening not to be missed for all music lovers. Bar opens at 7pm with music starting at 8.30pm. Free entry. All welcome at both events.





Keeping you Informed.....

Glebe Community Field - Boundary Hedge

Dear Residents,

The need for remedial action along the edge of the field which abuts the road was highlighted to me fairly recently when an area of the field required tarmac around the new basketball hoop. The contractor that turned up was unhappy about having to transport the tarmac in wheelbarrows across the field and showed me a route onto the field, from the road where within 2 minutes their lorry could be driven onto the field. Mindful that this would be Christmas come early for the travelling community, the contractor's request was refused.

When the tarmac work was completed, I took the time to inspect the field/road boundary. What I found was alarming. I have listed the key points below:

1. Although it looked like a barrier, the existing hedge, fence, tree-line in fact offered little or no security to the Glebe field.
2. The peerless fencing, installed a few years ago, had been repeatedly vandalised and was ineffective as a barrier for children using the field.
3. Within the strip, there was an abundance of barbed wire, (every child's favourite toy), a collapsed concrete structure with space enough for a child to crawl into/under it, (more fun), and enough rusty old metal, broken glass and old car parts to injure any inquisitive child lucky enough to have survived the first two hazards.
4. Several of the trees and bushes were dead or rotten, and many had fallen onto others. There was a lot of sideways growth and all the taller trees had grown into each other causing more die back and decay.
5. Ivy had grown into many of the trees which spoils their appearance and makes them susceptible to increased danger of collapse in winter winds.

All in all, the roadside boundary was in a very poor condition. It was not providing a secure barrier and contained many half hidden dangers.

I took these findings to Committee and it was agreed that major work was required. Professional advice was obtained and we were advised that our original idea of laying the existing trees to form a secure hedge was not viable because of the age and state of the existing trees/scrub. This meant that more radical and extensive work was needed. The scale of the task is such that, even at the clearing stage, it has required many volunteers working for long periods. Our thanks are due to these community minded people giving hours of their time for free to help us achieve our aims, which are to:-

1. Provide a secure, childproof fence on the boundary of our communal property;
2. Remove the damaged peerless fencing and dispose of it;
3. Remove all rubbish, barbed wire, concrete structures broken glass and metal;
4. Cut out all rotten, sideways growing or entwined growth and most self seeded scrub;
5. Strip the ivy from the remaining affected trees to reveal their shape and structure;
6. Dig soak ways to take water from road or provide a working ditch;
7. Remove all stumps and level the ground; add new topsoil as required and seed with grass;
8. Augment the existing trees that are worth saving with new trees and shrubs to improve the appearance and the bio diversity, planting these as "islands" rather than a linear hedge;
9. Thereby to provide some attractive screening while leaving the area open and visible enough to prevent vandalism and a recurrence of the massive drug problem that we had in this very area a few years ago, so great care will be taken to provide an excellent visage when the works are completed.

Before the project is completed, it is likely that things will look worse before they look better. In particular, the area may resemble a building site while soak-aways are put in and the low parts are being raised ready for the top soil to be spread over it. Please be patient while this is being done and do keep a careful eye on any toddlers using the play area during this time.

Most of the reaction we have had to the work so far has been positive but some constructive criticism has been received.

The Committee has taken note of all suggestions and where appropriate modified its plans. As always, it is impossible to please all of the people all of the time and in answer to some of the points made we would say;

- a. the original planting was intended as a barrier, not as screen though over time it had grown, into a screen in the summer at least; the new planting will provide some screening but, for the reasons cited above, the Committee believes that some visibility is more important for the good of the whole community;
- b. the trees were not significant for any important wildlife; even so, the clearing work should be complete before any birds nest in it. There is ample wildlife cover in the other boundaries to the Glebe and the adjacent areas, and once complete there will be more diversity of habitat than previously existed;

Cont/d...

- c. the low areas were not constructed to prevent the road from flooding but are the result of raising the rest of the field while the trees alongside the road prevented this area being raised. We will nevertheless put in soak-aways for the benefit of resident road users.
- d. the works are taking longer than at first expected, but from a health and safety perspective the dangers now present, while different, are no greater than when the works started, and it is probably safer as children can now be seen.

The Committee tries to keep in touch with the community in more ways than ever before, and information on our endeavours is currently readily available on our website, and we publish and deliver information in the Newsletter. We welcome suggestions and constructive criticism on any subject that impacts the local residents and remind everyone of the open session that occurs at the start of every Committee Meeting (7.30 pm, 3rd Thursday of each month except August) when you can come and express your views.

Dave Ward
Chairman

www.hdca.org.uk

Despite publicising the new HDCA website in several Newsletters some residents are still not aware that it exists and have been pleasantly surprised when they have stumbled across it while surfing the web.

The website is regularly kept up to date with items of interest and importance to residents of Higher Denham, as well as containing useful links to the CA contact details, Hall information and much, much more.

Please do take a look and let us know what you think.

Monthly Draw

March 2013	Winner (Ticket No.)
1st Prize £15	Mrs Kennedy, Upper Rd (178)
2nd Prize £10	Mrs Chaudhuri, Lower Rd (132)

April 2013	Winner (Ticket No.)
1st Prize £15	Mrs Harrigan, Lower Rd (134)
2nd Prize £10	Mr Dover, Lower Rd (138)

HDCA Committee Contact Details::

CA Email Address: committee_higherdenhamca@hotmail.com

Mr David Ward, Chairman	07870 629114	Dr Ron James, Treasurer	r.james@company-doc.co.uk
Mr Charlie McClelland, Secretary	07785 231155	Mrs Jacqui McGowan	07557 772159
Mrs Sue Kelly	01895 833842	Mrs Sonia Harris	01895 832809
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