



December 2012

Hall Schedule

- **Monday**
10am - 11.30am Toddler Group
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 (including Meditation and Relaxation techniques)
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
6.20pm - 7.20pm Zumba
- **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**

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Dear All,

Welcome to the last Newsletter of 2012. I know this sounds a cliché - but where has the year gone? So much has happened - London got swept away by the excitement of the Olympics, the Queen celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, the Summer was a washout (again) and now Christmas is nearly here.

This issue is as full as ever, with a sad element this month too. Regular readers of the Newsletter will have been following resident Kevin Cosgrove's fundraising for Cancer Research over the past 2 years and his attempt to climb Mont Blanc in September with a group of friends to raise even more. Sadly, Kevin passed away a few weeks ago and you will find a tribute to this amazing man from his wife Marian and daughter Lisa on Page 3.

This month also brings an update from the CA to keep you informed of what's going on behind the scenes, a conclusion regarding the proposed CCTV project, news of the recently launched CA website and others I hope you find of interest.

Finally, as Christmas edges nearer with decorations starting to appear in houses in Higher Denham and with Santa already on the Hall roof, all that remains for me to do is wish you all, on behalf of the Higher Denham CA, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Best regards,

Jacqui McGowan
Editor

Update from the CA - Keeping you Informed

- The shelter being built in the Community Gardens is well underway and we have received numerous comments saying how well it blends in with the existing surroundings. The timber structure and roof are complete and we hope to have the glass sides installed after the Christmas break. A permanent base will be laid in early Spring. It's been great to see the children already using it during the recent wet weather and has to be much better than turning up at school soaking wet!
- Users of the Hall will see the old dividing wall has been replaced with a new modern version and this completes the redecoration of the Hall.
- Hall hire continues to go from strength to strength. If you are planning on holding a celebration, for example a children's birthday party, christening, family gathering etc please do consider using the Hall - it has great facilities with the added bonus of Higher Denham residents enjoying discounted hire rates.
- Plans are in place to provide a new storage area in the Hall for chairs, tables etc. We will keep you updated as these are finalised.
- This year's Firework event was run jointly between the Social Club and the CA and was a huge success. Lots of families turned out to see the bonfire and the fantastic firework display. The CA ran the BBQ and were kept busy feeding a hungry stream of visitors, making a healthy profit towards funds for the Hall and gardens.
- Heavy downpours of rain in the past couple of weeks has caused severe flooding on Old Rectory Lane, making the road at times almost impassable. Now the water level has subsided the road is in a terrible mess, covered in mud and a number of large pot-holes, made more dangerous than usual by being submerged in water or driving in the dark. The CA has written to Bucks County Council to express the view that the current situation is unacceptable and would urge residents to lodge their concerns at: tfb@buckscc.gov.uk or **0845 230 2882**.

Community Gardens

Resident Di Gordan and a small team of helpers have planted 1000's of Spring bulbs in the Community Garden and at the front of the Hall. All that remains is for us to wait for them to appear early in the new year to enjoy a fabulous display of colour. Di would like to thank everyone who came along to help with digging holes and planting the bulbs.



One of the Silver Birch trees outside the Hall blew down in the recent windy weather, giving residents opposite a fright as it landed across Lower Road. Silver Birch has a typical lifespan of 25 years and those remaining are significantly older. Safety has to be a paramount consideration and to ensure they are not a risk to houses, pedestrians and vehicles driving past and the Hall, they will be removed shortly. The trees will be replaced with low growing shrubs and possibly smaller trees on the advice of the Gardening Club.

CCTV - A final outcome

In spite of almost unanimous support from all the residents of Higher Denham, the CCTV team is unable to bring the project to completion. Originally they were advised that a fully compliant set of equipment could be supplied and installed *onto people's homes* for around £35 per household. At that time we were delighted and asked you all for support which you gave. The next step was to closely examine how the equipment would be mounted and installed, and this is where we have hit a problem. Everyone we have spoken to has said "DON'T DO IT" when we have asked about mounting cameras onto householder's chimneys, and using householder's electricity - even through a meter that we would supply.

So that has left us with the option of providing our own poles and getting an electricity supply from somewhere else, and this will TRIPLE the cost of the project. (What could triple the cost? - full story at <http://www.hdca.org.uk/cctv-protection.html>)

Because of that we cannot see how the project can go any further.

Charlie McClelland - CCTV Lead

Social Club Corner

Christmas Eve is always a busy at the Club as families get together to start enjoying the festive break. Club open from **4pm**.

New Years Eve - the Club opens at **8pm** for those wanting to welcome the New Year in with a range of CD music being played throughout the evening. No tickets or entrance fee.

All welcome at both events.

No Jumble ...thank you

A number of items have been left at the Hall doorway recently from residents asking that the CA makes use of them. In previous years the CA ran a Jumble Sale and these items are probably left intended for that purpose. However, the yearly sale no longer takes place, so please can we ask that you do not donate any items of this nature as the CA has no way of recycling them - thank you.

New website for Higher Denham

Some of you may know the Community Association has produced a new website at www.hdca.org.uk.

It's there to give all residents of Higher Denham an easy way to stay abreast of what the Community Association committee is doing, with additional information such as the Hall class schedule, Hall hire information, local bus and train timetables and input taken from Thames Valley Police, plus much more. If you are a local business you can even advertise on it! Please do have a look and send us your feedback.



Plan for the Unexpected

With recent weather-related misfortunes from around the country being so dominant in the news, it is essential that you all have the right insurance. We will continue to offer residents of Higher Denham an extra 10% off our premiums but, most importantly, should the worst happen, we will ensure that you have the right policy in place.

Please take the time to call the office on **01753 882222** or pop in and speak to one of the team for a no obligation quote.



www.fairweatherinsurance.co.uk

The Fairweather Insurance Team would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr Paul Graham, Clerk, Denham Parish Council

Paul will be retiring from his position as Clerk to the Parish Council after 20 years of service at the end of 2012. He has a wealth of knowledge about Denham and has assisted the CA on many occasions over the years and more recently with the shelter proposal. We would like to wish Paul, on behalf of all the residents of Higher Denham, a long and wonderful retirement!

The Late Kevin Cosgrove

A few words about one of world's greatest gentlemen - Kevin Cosgrove. Kevin passed away peacefully at home (Side Road) on the 23rd October. Kevin was always there to help everyone with his inspirational words and lit up a room with his smile and his amazing sense of humour. Higher Denham Social Club will not be the same without him.

Kevin was born on 28th April 1960 at Paddington General Hospital. In his younger years he lived at Locket Road in Wealdstone with his Mum, Dad, brother and two sisters.

When Kevin left school he had a music band called Black Pearl, Kev was on vocals, I am sure many of you have heard his lovely voice singing over the club. Kevin had a very varied career starting as a Butcher at Bishops, progressing to Prudential, and finally an Independent Financial Advisor.

Kevin loved his family; he was happily married to Maz for 18 years. His daughter Lisa and son-in-law Nick made him so overjoyed on the 2nd May 2012 when they gave him a beautiful Granddaughter, Lily.

Most of you know that Kev was inspirational to people of all ages. He has especially supported many of his younger friends to enhance their careers, future prospects and outlook in life.

Kevin was very passionate about his hobbies. He was a superb skier taking on the toughest slopes and even Heli skiing in Canada. He loved scuba diving and had the opportunity to dive at some of the world's top dive sites. He was especially proud to attain his Padi and Advanced Padi diving qualifications. Kev loved to eat fish as well as dive and swim with them so became a great fisherman. In recent years he took up fly fishing, catching huge trout to cook. He was an excellent chef and changed his eating habits in recent years and became of Slimming World Man of the year in 2011 when he achieved his healthy goal weight. Kev also loved Formula 1 and had the opportunity to drive some seriously fast cars over the years.

Kev and Maz moved to Higher Denham 10 years ago and have been so blessed with new friends and neighbours. Many of you will know Kev had a passion for music and brought many live bands to the club. This was especially so over the last couple of years whilst he was Entertainments Manager on the HDSC committee. You probably know he has contributed in a huge way to Party on the Park, mainly with his enthusiasm and endless energy.

Kev lived life to the full always with a smile on his face and laughter in his heart. He was special to so many people. You all, individually, know what Kevin meant to you personally, and you didn't need to guess what he meant to you - You felt it. He had a unique gift of making everyone in his life feel special.

We have all been inspired by Kev and how he has fought this valiant fight right to the end and never losing his wonderful spirit. He never stopped thinking of others and his only wishes were for his friends and family to be united and successful in all that they do.

Thank you for those that attended Kevin's funeral and a 'celebration of Kev's life' at Denham Social Club. Even if you were unable to attend, we absolutely thank everyone for their support, prayers and kind wishes at this emotional time.

We felt that we all did Kevin proud and were overwhelmed with the amount of people that came to pay their respects to our amazing Kevin. Maz and Lisa wish to thank everyone that was responsible for setting up the club for the day. This includes arranging the marquee, working in the club and for the many friends that brought us an abundance of lovely food.

Below is a link to the photo slideshow that we composed. Just to let you know there are 400 photos and it runs for about 35 mins. If you would like to save any images from the slide show you can do so at no cost. The link will remain open for a few months. <http://www.photoshow.com/watch/ry9Dv8te>

Kevin's request for donations for Michael Sobell House instead of flowers has to date raised £2500 which he would have been very pleased with. Thank you very much for your generosity.

On a closing note, we feel that Kev has seen more sights, experienced more things, touched more hearts and made more people smile in his 52 years than many will do in their whole lifetime. We hope you are inspired how Kevin lived his life to the full and that you seize every opportunity to love and laugh, like he did.

The picture (Kevin with wife Maz and Granddaughter Lily) was taken on the 3rd September this year, the day Kev left France to come home.

Marian Cosgrove & Lisa McGill



Neighbourhood Nature Notes - Black Birds, Blackbirds, and Pretty Crows

The weather in 2012 has been bad for all of us, for gardens, and for wildlife, especially birds. The wet, cold April and early summer had a devastating effect on the breeding success of many of our smaller garden birds. Nationally numbers were down by 27% and in my garden by more than 50% I would guess. This was caused mainly by the resulting lack of insects (including butterflies/moths/caterpillars), which is why it's also been a bad year for apples, plums and beans etc; no bees around to pollinate the blossom when the time was right. Without insect grubs to feed to the baby birds many did not make it. Many species that we know as seed eaters, like the finches for example, still feed their young on insects as these are both more concentrated protein and contain vital moisture otherwise unavailable to nestlings. Our own "tame" robins failed to produce any fledglings from a first attempt at nesting and only one from a second go in June, and the sheer hard work of constant foraging was the probable cause of the male's demise as he did not reappear after the mid-summer moult during which robins are very secretive and tend to stay well hidden. Please help the reduced numbers get through the fast approaching winter by putting out appropriate food and, just as important, water.

When I first moved to Higher Denham some 30 years ago there was a large rookery in the tall trees along the edge of Denham Place near the junction of Old Rectory Road and the A 412, though I never spotted any Rooks actually in my garden. These Rooks, large sociable black birds with a conspicuous whitish bare skin area at the base of the beak (Crows have a shiny black beak), have disappeared and been replaced in the last few years by Jackdaws, which although common enough I had not previously seen often round here. Jackdaws, like Rooks, are part of the Crow family and at distance also appear to be black. They are smaller than Rooks and Crows but bigger than Blackbirds, and distinguished at closer range by slate grey heads and upper body. Their call is chirpier than the course calls of Rooks and Crows and noisy groups can now be regularly seen in the village and nearby fields. I have no real idea why the rooks have been replaced by Jackdaws locally. It is true that Rooks are less often seen in urban areas and are virtually absent from London, and the area of absence is growing, suggesting that the A412 is becoming more London like! Rooks always nest in social groups high in trees so, if the nesting site suffered disturbance, that may account for the decline.

Blackbirds (male black with a bright yellow bill; female all brown) are not part of the Crow family despite their plumage colour but are related to the robin and thrushes. The other common members of the Crow family are the black and white Magpie, and by far the prettiest of the group, the Jay (see picture). These handsome birds are less common than other crows, and, although shy, are frequently seen in Higher Denham and will visit bird tables. We have had a resident pair in the garden in recent years and I'm pleased to say they did breed successfully this year and the two young birds are still often in the garden brightening up the dull grey days we've had too many of this autumn.



Readers may remember another breeding success I reported in the spring; two broods of Mandarin ducklings. On 14th Nov. two females and a male appeared in the garden having not seen any all summer and a lone female has visited since. I can't be sure if these were grown up ducklings or original adults but either way it's good they are still around.

Ron James - Wind in the Willows

HDCA Committee Contact Details::

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Monthly Draw

October	Winner (Ticket No.)
1st Prize £15	L Chapman, Side Rd (102)
2nd Prize £10	P Davidson, Lower Rd (3)
November	
1st Prize £15	J & G Blythe, Side Rd (103)
2nd Prize £10	T Thomson, Lower Rd (29)

Useful Numbers:

Thames Valley Police (non-emergency number):	101	Bucks CC Highways:	0845 230 2882
Water Leaks:	0800 376 5325	South Bucks DC:	01895 837200
Denham Parish Council:	01895 834709	Railway Police:	0800 40 50 40