

CHARTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Photo: S Farris - Bramley Apple Tree Planing in No Man's Orchard - see page 5

It's been another busy period for all involved in the Parish Council. We are pleased to announce the completion of a refurbishment of the toilets on Memorial Field, bringing the facilities up to date (See 'Flushed with success!' on page 3).

We have just placed an order for a village sign. This will be located on the grassed area on the A28 near to Station Road. Drawings of the sign are on page 4. We are always keen to use the time and experience of our parishioners where we can. Please see the item on Emergency Planning (page 6) if you would like

to help formulate and support a plan for the time we really hope will not happen! The Parish Council are again entering the South East in Bloom competition in the Parish and Small Cemetery categories.

We anticipate there will be changes at the Paper Mill following the news that the site has been sold. We will of course keep the Parish informed of any potential developments as they become apparent.

Dr Tim Clark,
Chair Chartham Parish Council

Around the Parish

The Primary School and Firs Nursery

The Primary School has been busy, improving the security of the school site with new fencing. This is a substantial investment and hopefully will reduce the damage to school property and especially the highly active forest school initiatives. It is such a shame when scant resources are damaged.

Chartham Primary continues to be a good school after its recent Ofstead visit.

The school has been consulting regarding joining with another academic trust which is seen as a way of bringing more resources. Parish Councillors joined the consultation meeting and heard how this should benefit the pupils and staff.

The Parish Council has provided a grant for new portable warning signs to educate drivers of the need to comply with road markings when parking.

They have also provided a grant to the Firs Nursery to enhance their entry system.

Chartham Hatch - Parking

There have recently been a number of issues with cars parked dangerously around Chartham Hatch. We have had reports of cars parked in front of peoples' driveways, on double yellow lines, too close to road junctions, on pavements meaning that pedestrians have to walk on dangerous sections of road, and in the village hall car park (which is for hall users only).

Please do be considerate and think of others when you are parking around the village. Sadly, some drivers do not respect the speed limit, and nobody would like to see a dangerous accident occur.



Belt up!

We have had some monitoring of the traffic issues by our local Police Officer and two of his PCSO colleagues at the school recently. During the time of the school drop off, it was noted that eight drivers were not wearing seatbelts. It is likely there will be more visits to the village and remember, you can be fined up to £500 if you do not wear a seat belt when you are supposed to. You can also be fined up to £500 if a child under 14 is not in the correct car seat or wearing a seat belt while you are driving.

The police have also had an impact on some of the illegally-ridden off road motorcycles that regularly career around footpaths and woods, seizing one which was subsequently crushed.



Chartham Hatch Village Hall

Flushed with Success!

Our long-planned toilet refurbishment has finally been completed! The project has been finalised only one week behind schedule and within our allocated budget. We have been able to work closely with the contractor, Interfix, who have provided a high standard of finish. Many thanks to Cllr Paul Richards for his expert liaison with the Interfix team. As we were able to access substantial grants from Valencia and the National Lottery Community Fund, we have not had to use much Parish funds.



Photo: C Swire - Cllr Richards, Memorial Field Toilets

As well as more hygienic wall coverings and flooring, the facilities include more eco-friendly lighting and water saving facilities. The toilets are now in individual cubicles, so can be used by males or females and there are baby changing facilities in each cubicle. The disabled access has been improved and there is completely new 'furniture' in all the spaces. There is a new locking system that closes access at set times.

There is also a new bottle filling station accessible outside the building which we hope will prove useful for the many users of the nearby riverside cycle and footpath to Canterbury.

Some of the key changes are not so obvious. We now have enhanced storage for the cleaning materials and better facilities for our hard-working cleaning staff.



Photo: C Swire - Chartham Signal Box

Signal Box

We still await feedback on our proposals to lease the signal box. We are not prepared to give up on this lightly and are saddened that it does appear to need some tender loving care, which we would like to give.

A shed on stilts with its own loo, next to a mainline train service - what's not to like!

Cemetery

There have been reported instances of damage in the Cemetery, with the lock to the vehicle gate being broken several times.

Access to the Cemetery by vehicle is only for funeral vehicles, our agreed contractors or by special arrangement for those blue badge holders who can't access via the wheelchair accessible pedestrian gate.

Please help us keep our place of rest the special place it should be.



Photo: C Swire - Chartham Cemetery

Village Sign

Following a protracted period of planning, we have placed an order for a village sign for Chartham which we plan to locate on the grassed area on the A28 near to Station Road.



Our new sign has been agreed by the Parish Council. In such a beautiful village as ours, the selection was difficult and we've opted for a different image on each side. We hope that you like it. Many thanks to the Cllrs who have worked on bringing the sign to completion and to Canterbury City Council for a grant to cover some of the costs.



Photo: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces Public Relations Division, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

D-Day Commemorations

Thursday 6th June is the 80th Anniversary of the historic D Day landings that eventually led to the end of WW2 in Europe. The Primary School are planning activities with the children, the Village Hall will fly a special flag and there will be a display from the Chartham Archives team in Chartham Hatch Village Hall over the weekend of 8-9th June. Please let the Parish Council know if you are interested in any other events.

Our Communications

Sorry we have not been able to fully inform you what is happening of late. Due to a protracted difficulty in website access and reduced administrative support, we have had difficulties posting our minutes and agendas onto our website. We have managed to post onto our numerous noticeboards but appreciate this is not the most robust or accessible approach. We are volunteers and trying our best. Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible!

Community Grants

We usually announce a second grant cycle in January and would be deciding grants by now. Apologies for this delay due to our website issues.. We'll post details of the next round and are opening the grant period from the end of February to the end of March. The Finance Committee will consider any applications by the end of April.

Tree Planting

The Parish Council has agreed the location and types of trees to be planted around the Memorial Field. They will soon be planted after the loss of several trees last year. We will move forwards to identify further planting over the parish and to apply for grants.

Are you at home a lot and walk regularly on the Memorial Field? Please help to look after the newly planted trees in the Memorial Field. Please email: camilla.swire@chartham-pc.gov.uk

The No Man's Orchard Management Committee recently organised a volunteer morning to plant ten new Bramley apple trees provided with a grant from the Tree Council, obtained by Cllr Sue Farris, a KCC volunteer pond and tree warden, and Simon Doherty from Harbledown.

We are hoping to organise some events to coincide with blossom time in the orchard and would love some more help. If you'd like to get involved or sponsor a tree, please email Sue Farris: susan.farris@chartham-pc.gov.uk



South East in Bloom

Do you have any ideas for how we can improve our South East in Bloom entry for this year?

Can you help plant snowdrops and daffodils over the next few weeks?

Please contact Camilla Swire camilla.swire@chartham-pc.gov.uk if you are able to help.



How to Help Nesting Birds

Please do think about nesting birds when you are starting your spring gardening. Hedges should not be trimmed or cut after 1st March to avoid disturbing them.

The RSPCA gives invaluable advice on this topic on their website: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/wildlife/birds/nests/moving> They also give advice on what to do if you find a baby bird that has fallen out of its nest.

Parish Council Data

The Parish Council has made a major review of how internal data is stored and backed up.

Recent cyber attacks at Canterbury City Council are a reminder and we're doing our best to make our systems robust.

Many thanks to our expert IT consultant Jack Richards for this significant piece of work. Our investment in a monthly package with an IT consultancy provides ongoing support for our IT systems, should any problems occur.

Chartham Parish Magazine

Monthly local news, interesting articles on nature, archive material, railways, corny jokes? All this and much more for just £8 a year delivered to your door if you subscribe, or pick up a copy in our friendly local shops at the cost of 70p per copy.

Chartham Food Banks

Times are financially hard at the moment, and many people are struggling. If you live in Chartham and find yourself in the position of needing some help, we are fortunate to have two food banks locally.

The **Village Pantry** can support you by providing a parcel of food and toiletries. They are now in the Under 1 Roof children's play premises on the A28 near the junction with Howfield Lane. Contact them at CharthamPantry@gmail.com to apply. Visit their website for details of how to complete the online referral form and see how the pantry is run: <https://www.thecitychurch.org.uk/chartham-pantry>



Village Pantry Shelves

The **Care & Share** food bank operates from Chartham Village Hall. They would like to receive donations of food. They can be contacted on 07434 150141 to arrange access.

Emergency Planning

Mr John Gilbert is forming a group to finish an Emergency Plan for the Parish.

Our previous group stalled when key officers in KCC and CCC changed roles and now we are ready to complete this important work.

Please contact John as he is keen to again draw on the enthusiasm and expertise of the community. You can contact him by email:

john.gilbert@chartham-pc.gov.uk



Photo: Richard Nutter - Bluebells, Red Wood Lees, Chartham (Parish Photo Competition Entry)

Fraud Alerts

The police have made us aware of a few scams doing the rounds once again.

People are receiving text messages from supposed family members saying that they have a new phone and can't gain access to their mobile banking, and then asking for money to be forwarded to them.

The second is a call saying that someone is/has been, using your credit card and, to stop the money being removed from your bank account, you are then asked to confirm your card details.

DO NOT FALL FOUL OF A SCAM.

To report any suspicious texts or calls, visit <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/scams>.

If you would like to receive scam alerts and details of other policing issues, you can sign up on the My Community Voice website. This is a messaging service that helps Kent and Medway residents, businesses, and community groups to keep in touch with their local policing teams. The service sends updates about your local area directly from the police officers themselves.

www.mycommunityvoicekent.co.uk/



Chartham Parish Neighbourhood Plan



The Site Options Assessments are now posted on our website, as is the Local Green Spaces document. The draft Plan is now almost completed. It includes a new section for the Chartham Paper Mill site. We have recently had a meeting with the landowners, W&S Recycling and their agents, about its inclusion and await their response.

Alongside this, we have been preparing a Consultation Statement – this key document accompanies the Plan and sets out all of the communications and consultations that have been held since the very beginnings of the neighbourhood plan. It includes every item of publicity and reports that we have generated and will be over 500 pages long.

Once the Strategic Environmental Assessment is completed by government consultants AECOM, we will update the Plan if necessary.

If the Parish Council gives its approval, we will publish the draft neighbourhood plan proposal in a pre-submission consultation **with you** before it is submitted to the local authority for independent examination.

To find out about the Chartham Neighbourhood Plan, or receive regular updates on our progress, visit our website: www.charthamnnp.com



Photo: Thomas Rye - Riverside



Photo: Chartham Paper Mill from the air

Chartham Paper Mill Site

The paper mill site was recently sold to W&S Recycling. The Parish Council intends to keep open communication with them, as work on the site continues and its long-term future is determined. Recently, we were able to engage in a prompt and constructive dialogue with the owners following recent pollution incidents. All transformers have had oil removed and the majority of transformers have been taken off site.

Meanwhile, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) met with W&S Recycling about inclusion of part of the site within the neighbourhood plan. Due to local consultation when the mill went into administration, the Steering Group has much evidence of what the local community thinks. You can find this information on the [home page](#) of the Parish Council website.

The NPSG has given the the new owners full details of the most relevant contacts within the Environment Agency. This will facilitate early and future consultation with the Agency with regards to water management, biodiversity and water quality.

We await to learn the new owner's intention for the site. Development in this location, in the historic centre of the parish, will inevitably have a big impact on its immediate surroundings and beyond.

Parish Clerk

We currently do not have a clerk in post to cover Chenice's maternity leave. The role is being covered by Parish Councillors who are volunteers. Some functions are not being completed as usual, so apologies for any difficulties caused.

We have, however, appointed a temporary consultant clerk as Responsible Financial Officer. A part-time administrative assistant, who will help the Clerk with a wide range of tasks, will soon join the team. We look forward to introducing her in due course.

Budget Precept and Audit

The Parish Council has set its budget for the next year. Whilst the Council has sought not to increase this in previous years, there is a slight increase in the precept this year because of rising prices in many of the items we provide. Many thanks to our consultant clerk for guiding this important piece of work. In the absence of a clerk the Parish Council is seeking further support to complete the audit cycle to prescribed timelines.

Our Local Police Officer

PC Angell is now our local beat officer with responsibility for covering the villages and wards of Wincheap and Thanington, Chartham, Petham, Waltham, Lower Hardres and Nackington, Harbledown. This is a big area to cover but he has already begun to look into local issues and spent the last few months of 2023 investigating crime in our area. Some of his recent work:

- ♦ He recently dealt with anti-social driving in Chartham. He stopped one disqualified rider who was dealt with accordingly.
- ♦ He has been targeting the off-road dirt bikes and is looking to arrange a joint operation with Traffic to target these vehicles.
- ♦ He undertook a parking operation at Chartham Primary school to tackle issues of parking, speeding and seatbelts.

He will be spending as much time as possible on foot, getting to know the area and the people who live there, listening to your concerns and addressing issues when they arise.

PC Angell will be attending the Chartham Village Hall Thursday coffee morning once a month. Do come and say hello.

Contact Chartham Parish Council

Parish Clerk: On maternity leave

Surgery Times: Tuesdays 1-3 and Thursdays 10-12.

Email: clerk@chartham-pc.gov.uk

Office: 01227 738110

Mobile: 07483 906001

The Clerk, The Parish Office,
Chartham Village Hall, Station
Road, Chartham CT4 7HZ

**Chartham Parish Council
Website**

<https://chartham-pc.gov.uk>

**Chartham Parish Council
Facebook**

[https://www.facebook.com/
CharthamParishCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/CharthamParishCouncil)

Local Councillors

Mike Sole

(KCC Councillor for Canterbury South)

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Tel: 07739 486804

Robert Thomas

(KCC Councillor for Canterbury North)

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