

**Published by:**  
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**Parish Council**  
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# The Parish Pump

**Issue No 25**  
**May 2004**

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## EDITORIAL

Six months have elapsed since our last edition of the Pump and once again I would like to send good wishes to all our readers on behalf of everyone at the Parish Council.

I was very pleased to be elected Chairman of the Council again in May and would also like to congratulate Cllr Robert Ridley on his re-election as our Vice Chairman. My thanks go to him and his fellow Councillors for all their work over the past six months.

### Charity Quiz

The Parish Council once again organised a charity quiz night. The Chairman's chosen charity this year was Prostate Cancer Awareness and a grand total of £953.42 was raised for this charity. My thanks go to everyone who organised and participated in this event to make it such a success.

### Community Bus

The Council resolved that as from 1<sup>st</sup> April the Community Bus should have a free fare.

This service has been available to senior citizens for some time now and we hope that more residents will make use of the bus which runs from Croxley to Watford Market every Friday morning. A timetable is included in this publication.

For further information about this service please telephone the Parish Office on 01923 710250.

### Garden Competition

This enjoyable event is once again fast approaching and further details and an entry form for the competition are included within this edition of the Pump. If you enjoy gardening please think about entering the competition and if someone you know has a good garden please encourage them to enter it too.

### Multi Use Games Area

The Parish Council has entered into a partnership with Three Rivers District Council to develop the Barton Way tennis courts into a multi use games area. The construction work is due to start in June and we hope that the MUGA will be ready for use during the school holidays.

The Christmas edition of the Parish Pump will be published in November.

Cliff Vassiliou  
 Chairman, CGPC

Parish Council Office opening times:

Mon-Thurs: 10am – 3pm  
 Fri: 10am – 1pm

## COUNCILLORS

### North Ward:

Sarah Barratt	897870
Ian Bignell	777722
Michael Johns	231203
Hazel Seeley	772696
vacancy	

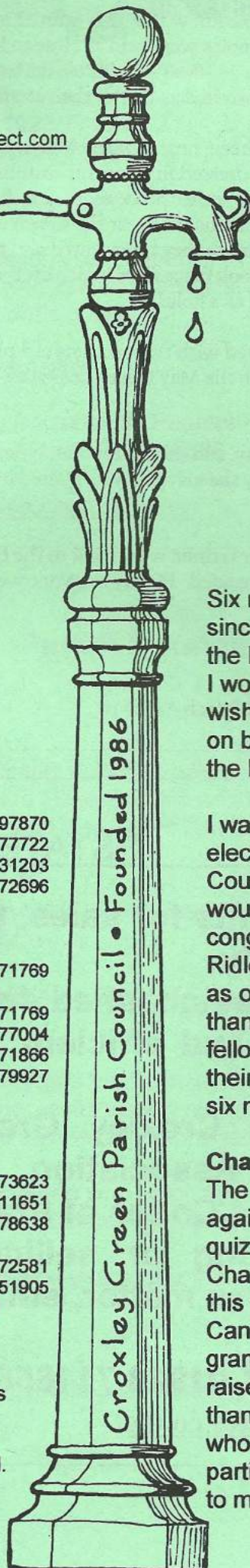
### Croxley Green Ward:

Christine Jefford	771769
(Chairman – E&A Committee)	
Ron Jefford	771769
David Lee	777004
Russell Smith	771866
Cliff Vassiliou	779927
(Chairman of Council)	
vacancy	

### South Ward:

Nik Bennett	773623
Tony Bennett	711651
Robert Ridley	778638
(Vice Chairman of Council)	
Mark Saxon	772581
David Wynne-Jones	251905
(Chairman – P&D Committee)	

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views or policy of the Parish Council.





## Crowning the May Queen – a history of Croxley Revels

It will soon be time for the Croxley Revels again – not many people know that they started just after the First World War. From the early twenties until about 1946 the ceremonies were held as close to May Day as possible, incorporating what was then Empire Day which was on 24<sup>th</sup> May. Of course we had a large empire then and all schoolchildren studied the areas of the world we controlled as part of their studies.

At about 10.30am the schoolchildren went in procession to the Green, near Elmcote Way, accompanied by the Brownies and Guides and Cub Scouts. A group of children were dressed in colourful costumes headed by Britannia and her retinue. When they assembled they waited for another procession – one from Dickinson Guildhouse and one from “Neggie” Wilson’s house (sadly now demolished) near the Coach and Horses. They carried flags and dressed up in the style of the countries of the empire they represented and met at the top of New Road. They then joined another group and a short service took place after which everyone sang patriotic songs. When this was finished all present had part of the day off as a holiday.

In the afternoon they had their May Day celebrations. They started with two sections of a procession – one in front with the outgoing May Queen and her retinue, another with the May Queen designate with her attendants.

The crowning of the May Queen took place, much as it does today, and then there was a feast of country dancing which had been carefully practised for the event. Finally the maypole was plaited by the Guides and Brownies.

When the celebrations were finished the new May queen and her retinue went back to the Guildhouse to celebrate, then there was more dancing over which the Queen presided. Finally everyone went home in early evening after their exciting Croxley May Day.

Cllr David Wynne-Jones

With grateful acknowledgement to Margaret Hobbs, All Saints Church Archivist

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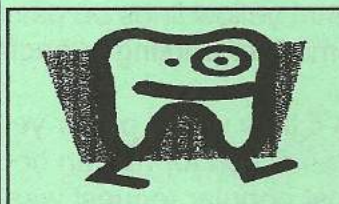
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## **Parish Council Quiz – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2004**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Quiz**

The third annual charity quiz was held at St Oswald's Church Hall and was attended by the local MP, Mr Richard Page, and his wife Mrs Madeleine Page, Mrs Elizabeth Boleat, Chairman of TRDC, together with three local District Councillors – Phil Brading, Kerron Cross and Leonard Spencer.

A very enjoyable evening was had by all with the quiz subjects ranging over eight decades from 1920's to 1990's inclusive.

The amount raised for the Chairman's chosen charity (Prostate Cancer Awareness) was £953.42.

Over the past three years the Parish Council has raised £2749.26 for charity. These events would not be so successful were it not for the efforts of Councillor Christine Jefford, Chairman of the Environment & Amenity Committee, and the hard work entailed.

Many thanks to everyone who helped Christine to arrange the tables, set the questions, assist with the cold super and clearing up afterwards.

We look forward to next year's quiz and your support.

Cllr Hazel Seeley  
Vice Chairman – Environment & Amenity Committee



### Parish Council Surveys

The Parish Council has recently conducted a survey of residents in Winton Crescent concerning parking arrangements in the road. This was undertaken just after TRDC had written to residents proposing that yellow lines be painted on one side of the street in an attempt to solve the problem of commuter parking at each end of the road.

We asked the residents if they would prefer yellow lines, parking spaces instead of grass verges, a "no parking" restriction for half an hour in the middle of the day or a one way system along the road. The most popular request was a half hour no parking restriction during the day. A public meeting was held with Parish Councillors and District Councillor Roger Seabourne who was made aware of public opinion on the matter and relayed the residents' wishes to TRDC officers.

Cllr Robert Ridley

## **CROXLEY ALARM SYSTEMS**

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### **Forward into Spring**

I usually walk my dog, Jessie, at about 8.30am each day along the River Chess, which takes a lot of dedication during the winter months. As the cold begins to bite, scarves and hats are dragged out of the drawer where they have been since last winter.

Some days are lovely - cold but sunny with clear blue skies. On others there are biting winds and heavy rain. On these mornings there's usually a fight between Jessie and I to see who can get back into the comparative warmth of the car first.

But gradually, the willow trees are beginning to green up and the daffodils which have been planted by persons unknown, are flowering. A few ducks have appeared and two white egrets have taken up residence along with the heron on the stretch of river beyond the stone bridge.

Soon it will be warm again and walking the dog will be a pleasure instead of a duty.

Cllr Hazel Seeley



## ONE SO YOUNG.....

"If you want a good night's sleep, never have children..." I remember a friend of mine relating this important piece of information to me about two years ago. The problem is, until it happens to yourself, you never really take such words to heart, nor can you. Sure, you can always *imagine*, or try and empathise, or speak to as many people as you like. But until you actually go through it all yourself, then the term "sleepless nights" has no real meaning.

I think you know what I am building up to here. The other members of the Parish Council certainly do. They have seen me blundering into meetings bleary-eyed and about 10 times more shattered than normal, after about 3 hours sleep the previous night. This strenuous exercise in 'shut-eye denial' started at 11.24 pm precisely on November 1<sup>st</sup> last year when our first son Owen came into the world, joyously and noisily – we have had equal amounts of joy and noise ever since.

Its amazing how your outlook on life changes. You keep telling yourself that 'millions do it', 'you're nothing special'..etc..but the point is that it feels so special, so unique. You start suddenly to wonder and admire all the other parents around you, especially your own. A lot of things that made no sense before suddenly become crystal clear – why did my Mum & Dad fuss and worry about me so much?

Why couldn't they get off my back in my teenage years? After Nov 1<sup>st</sup> last year, I now know. "The night before your first child is born is the last night of your life that you don't worry"; another quote from that same friend of mine. And so true.

Having a child has focused me on the local community more than ever before. Living in Croxley Green, and serving on the Parish Council, I always did take a great interest in the issues of local playing fields, parks and the local environment. But since Owen has arrived, these matters have taken on an even greater resonance. It's an old saying I know, but if we keep our children in mind when we think about local issues, then we won't go far wrong in the future.

Anyway - I'd better sign off now. My son is letting me know in no uncertain terms that there is yet another nappy to change.. and that's an experience I simply can't set down in words.....!!

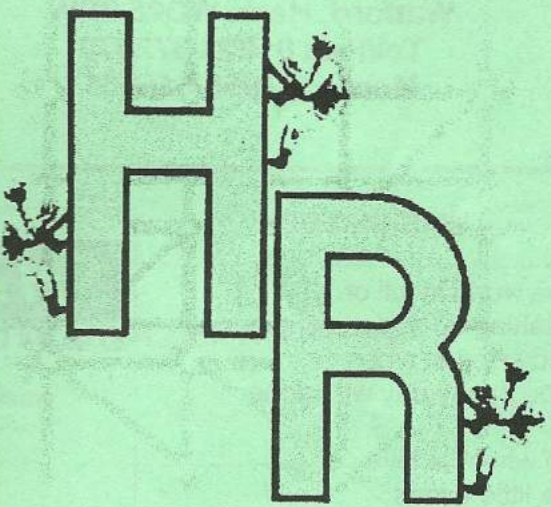
Cllr Russell Smith

### YORKE MEAD SCHOOL 30<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Yorke Mead Primary School in Croxley Green celebrates the 30<sup>th</sup> birthday of the building in Dulwich Way in 2004. Prior to that the School was housed in buildings in Yorke Road, now occupied by Leukemia Research Fund.

We hope to celebrate this birthday with events in the Summer months, although arrangements have not been finalised. We hope that past pupils, staff, parents and governors will be able to join us.

If you have been associated with Yorke Mead in the past and would like to be notified of the details, please let us know by telephoning the School on 01923 778420 or e-mail [admin.yorkemead@thegrid.org.uk](mailto:admin.yorkemead@thegrid.org.uk) and mentioning the 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.



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## **Tennis Wall**

At the time of writing the Parish Council has come up with the idea of building a tennis wall at the Baldwins Lane tennis courts. The wall would be 6-7 feet in height with a course of coloured bricks at net height. This would enable people to go along to the courts and hit a ball against the wall as a form of practice or warming up for a game. Of course anyone on their own could use this and may even find a new tennis partner there as well!

We have written to Three Rivers District Council to ask whether they would be willing to fund such a project and await their reply.

Let us know what you think about this idea.

Cllr Robert Ridley

## **WASHING UP**

The world is full of  
washing up and making beds  
and sex just when I  
thought my day was done

So where is love  
the little things  
you said to me before  
I signed the contract

A state of bliss in  
bearing kids, in washing  
clothes? But still  
I s'pose I'm happy

You don't get drunk  
you stay employed  
I sometimes feel contented

But where then all the poets  
words the prospects for eternity

**PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN  
POETRY MONTHLY**

Cllr Michael Johns

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# 12th Annual Croxley Green Garden Competition 2004

Once again the Parish Council will be holding its annual Garden Competition during July. The competition is now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year and we are hoping to have a good number of entries. Last year the competition attracted several new competitors and we would like to see this repeated.

We are always very impressed by the standard and variety of entries and our Parish Councillors (and some ex-Councillors) always enjoy looking around the gardens during the judging and meeting so many keen gardeners.

Judging this year will take place during the two weeks commencing on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Final judging will take place on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> July. Entry forms should be sent to the Parish Council Office by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July.

If you would like to enter your garden in any of the categories (front garden, small back garden, large back garden or community garden) please complete and return the entry form below. If you have friends or family living in Croxley who enjoy gardening, please encourage them to enter the competition too.

Happy gardening to everyone!

Cllr Christine Jefford  
Chairman, Environment & Amenity Committee

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## CROXLEY GREEN GARDEN COMPETITION 2004 – ENTRY FORM

Mr/Mrs/Miss \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
Company \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone No \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Categories – Please tick where appropriate

### HOUSEHOLD SECTION

Front Garden ☐  
Small Back Garden (less than 60' x 30') ☐  
Large Back Garden (more than 60' x 30') ☐

### BEST FLORAL DISPLAY FRONTING PUBLIC HIGHWAY

Public House ☐  
Shops/Commercial Premises ☐

Completed entry forms to be returned **no later than 9<sup>th</sup> July 2004**  
Croxley Green Parish Council, Community Way, Croxley Green, Herts WD3 3SU



## Multi Use Games Area

Some six years ago the Parish Council put forward the idea of refurbishing the Barton Way tennis courts. TRDC's intention was just to resurface the courts. The two Councils have now entered into a joint venture to develop a Multi Use Games Area on the site, the area of which will be larger than the existing tennis court. TRDC will contribute two thirds of the cost, and the Parish Council will contribute the remaining one third.

The result will be an amenity that can be used by all ages for 5 or 7 a side football, roller hockey, hockey, basketball and netball. It is yours to use and enjoy and we hope that residents will be pleased with the result.

The Parish Council is well aware that such an amenity could be subject to vandalism – so please, if the MUGA does get vandalised and you or your family know who the perpetrators are – report them to TRDC or Croxley Green Parish Council.

Cllr Robert Ridley

## ALL THE HAPPINESS AHEAD

Reclining in our armchairs, over fed  
we learn of floods and earthquakes, millions dead  
switch to a film or football match instead.

In his basket from Habitat,  
sleeps our pampered, black, half-Burmese cat  
curled up in satisfaction, sleek and fat

Our suppers cleared away, we lie in bed  
snug beneath the duvet's feathered spread  
and dream of all the happiness ahead.

Tomorrow's excess of comfort, thick slices toast  
lashings of marmalade, and lots of post  
plans for an outing, possibly to the coast

Though miles beyond our curtains crowds are killed  
and millions die on soil that lies untilled  
fruit falls upon the sward and we are filled.

Cllr David Wynne-Jones

## Eagle Cars Croxley

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Accounts Welcome

Courier Service

Destination	Car	5/6 Seater	7/8 Seater	15 Seat Minibus
Heathrow T1-T3	£27.00	£35.00	£42.00	£60.00
Heathrow T4	£29.00	£37.00	£44.00	£60.00
Luton	£27.00	£35.00	£42.00	£60.00
Gatwick	£56.00	£68.00	£72.00	£100.00
Stansted	£56.00	£68.00	£72.00	£90.00
City Airport	£56.00	£68.00	£72.00	£90.00
City of London	£40.00	£55.00	£70.00	£80.00
West End	£40.00	£55.00	£60.00	£80.00
Euston/Kings X/St Pancras	£35.00	£42.00	£47.00	£75.00
Paddington	£32.00	£40.00	£45.00	£75.00
Liverpool Street	£40.00	£55.00	£60.00	£80.00
Victoria	£40.00	£55.00	£60.00	£80.00
Waterloo	£40.00	£55.00	£60.00	£80.00
Milton Keynes	£45.00	£52.00	£55.00	£70.00
Chessington	£45.00	£52.00	£55.00	£70.00

**Note:** London prices DO NOT INCLUDE congestion charge  
Estate car prices plus £5  
Airport pickups are plus car park fee



## Bricks and Mortar – Now and Then

Reading a copy of a page of the Watford Observer dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 1934, made available from All Saints Archives, I was interested to find some house advertisements and prices:

“Watford Road – a four bedroomed modern house with tiled kitchen and bathroom, independent boiler, laid out garden, brick built garage - £875.”

“Six freehold cottages for sale – Oxhey, Watford – total weekly inclusive rents £3 4s 11½d.”

“An appreciating investment – a modern six roomed house, all services, pleasant position, near schools, shops etc. The Green, Croxley Green - £970.”

How times have changed. As a member of the Planning and Development Committee of your Parish Council I never fail to be amazed by the rocketing prices of property in our area. What multiples of these thirties prices must the above be worth now. Apparently about a million houses were built between the wars –mostly in ribbon development and a great many in “Metroland” to serve the new railway. Certainly Croxley Green was dramatically transformed.

An interesting aspect of the original boom was that semi-detached houses were more expensive (£800) than bungalows (£600) but now the roles have been reversed because of the big gardens the bungalows had.

I know of one bungalow near The Green which was a small building in the sixties but after three or four extensions during the intervening decades is now a large and capacious dwelling. Perhaps this is the answer; rather than moving from one house to another – starter, first home, second home and so on, as we used to love to do in years gone by and which was so wasteful and expensive – the best thing is to sit tight and enlarge the house we live in.

## THE SPORTSMAN

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  - **DOGS WELCOME**
  - **LUNCHTIME PUB FOOD**

Certainly the amount of planning applications nationwide (including Croxley Green) has dramatically increased and is expected to continue to do so.

Personally I am totally in favour of house extension provided they fit in with the surrounding buildings – hip gables and appropriate to neighbouring premises springs to mind.

Certainly your Parish Council's Planning and Development Committee burn the midnight oil twice a month in order that you may receive the golden NGFO (no grounds for objection).

Have you thought of becoming a Parish Councillor? As demonstrated above, the decisions taken can have a dramatic, beneficial effect on the community. Why not join us today?

Cllr David Wynne-Jones



**Croxley Green Parish Council**  
**Invites you to come and have**

# **FUN ON THE GREEN**

**Sunday 18 July 2004**

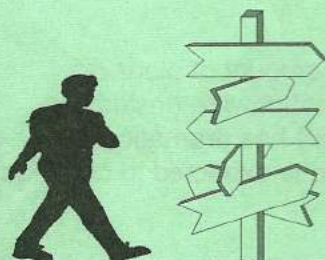
To include

**A Picnic**  
**Bring your own food**

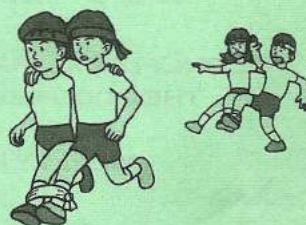


**Informal Games**

**From**  
**2.30pm to 5.30pm**



**Egg and**  
**Spoon Race**



**Just Relax and Enjoy**

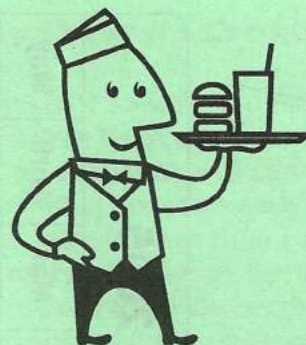


**Parking Available**  
**In front of Stones Orchard – Opposite Coach & Horse Public House**



## Senior Citizens' Good Food Guide

My friend Aileen and I decided that we must have something to look forward to each week during the bleak months of November to March; nothing too expensive but enjoyable nevertheless. Lunch out every Wednesday was our choice. Then to make it more interesting we thought we'd mark the places we visited out of 10.



The area covered was from Croxley to Chorleywood, Flaunden, Rickmansworth, Sarratt and Commonwood. One of our first lunches was Tang's in Rickmansworth, where they do an excellent buffet "eat as much as you like" for a very reasonable price.

After this we seemed to gravitate towards pubs – again usually very good value for money with two exceptions which obviously cannot be named.

We have been relentless in our pursuit of reasonable prices for food and wine. Wine particularly varies quite a lot in price from £2.35 to £2.95, but £2.60 is about the average. Similarly with food – usually around £5 to £7.50, so we chucked in ambience, warmth (well, it was winter) and service into our scoring.

One very bitterly cold day we visited the Black Horse on Chorleywood Common and as we stepped through the door we were greeted by a roaring fire, a warm welcome and a varied menu.

We'll probably carry on our research into the summer as we still have quite a few more pubs to visit and to be honest we really look forward to our Wednesdays. Our six best pubs are listed below (in no particular order):-

The Artichoke, Croxley Green  
Red Lion, Chenies  
Cart and Horses, Commonwood  
Black Horse, Chorleywood  
The Boot, Sarratt  
Half Way House, Rickmansworth

These are our personal choices, and if any reader knows of any other little gems please share them with us.

Cllr Hazel Seeley  
Mrs Aileen Mitchell

### Just a thought

The following notice was spotted by one of our Councillors during a recent trip to Port Faurey, Victoria, Australia.

"A LITTLE LITTER GOES A LONG WAY"

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# Croxley Green Parish Council

Community Way Croxley Green Rickmansworth Herts WD3 3SU

## Notice of Meetings 2004/2005

		2004								2005				
		May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May
Environment & Amenity Committee	TUESDAY		1	6		7	5	2	7	4	1	1	5	
Planning & Development Committee	WEDNESDAY		2	7	4	1	6	3	1	5	2	2	6	
Finance & Administration Committee	THURSDAY	13	10	15		16	14	11	16	13	10	10	14	
Planning & Development Committee	WEDNESDAY		16	21	18	22	20	17	15	19	16	16	20	
Council Meeting	THURSDAY	13 AGM	24	29		30	28	25	23	27	24	31	28	12 AGM

All Meetings are held in the Council Chamber and commence at 8.00pm unless otherwise notified.

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend.

Please note: There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.

May 2004





## Barn Owls and Tawny Owls on Croxley Moor

On the morning of Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February I accompanied Colin Shawyer of the Hawk and Owl Trust down to Croxley Moor. The purpose was to set up a Barn Owl nesting box and to check the progress of the Tawny Owl boxes already there as well as opening and cleaning many of the tit boxes already in position and putting up a few more. Although the barn owl is not a woodland bird, nest boxes are highly successful when placed on a tree around the woodland edge. Already there are several barn owls nesting in boxes just across Tolpits Lane in British Waterways land about a mile away.

We carefully selected our tree, close to the weir on the River Gade near Bywaters Estate and put up the very large box. External barn owl boxes are designed to offer a dark, sheltered chamber which simulates a tree cavity.

Moving on we came to the first of the established tawny owl boxes. There was no owl on the nest but evidence that owls used it for shelter and storage, including owl droppings and several fresh headless wood mice. Our next owl box was even more interesting, with a squirrel's nest over an old owl nest from last year. We thus provide that the birds are using the boxes for both storage and breeding.

We then turned our attention to checking the tit boxes and cleaning them.

Each and every one of the twelve boxes we opened up had been used, some several times. One extraordinary aspect of each box that we noticed, was that one or sometimes two, mummified nesting in full plumage lay dead – probably suffocated in the scramble to get out on the final day.

Several boxes had been used twice so there is obviously room for expansion of the programme to accommodate other species such as the Great Tit, Nuthatch, etc.

Finally we put up several new nesting boxes, strategically located so that they were close to well used paths so the public could observe them.

Our kestrel nest programme has unfortunately had to be abandoned due to lack of suitable poles to place the nests on, but the abundance and variety of birds on the Moor in spring these days owes a place in part to our successful ongoing programme of siting bird boxes in strategic areas. Our thanks to Barry Turner, Treasurer of RSPB Watford and member of our committee for initiating this and to Colin Shawyer of the Hawk and Owl Trust National Conservation and Education Centre, Chalfont St Giles in Buckinghamshire for his expert help and advice. Anyone interested in encouraging hawks and owls to their area should contact him on 01494 876262.

Enjoy the birds this spring and don't forget to feed them using squirrel proof containers.

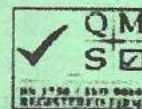
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# Fishing on Croxley Moor



From around mid-June through to mid-March the River Gade on Croxley Moor can be fished for free, whilst the Grand Union Canal can be fished all year round for around £3 per day (tickets available from the bailiff on the bank).

The only necessity for fishing these venues (and all other fresh water venues in England) is a rod licence, which is provided by the Environment Agency and available from most post offices at a cost of £23 for adults and £5 for children over 12. Failure to produce a rod licence when asked by a representative of the Environment Agency is an offence and you can be fined.

The Environment Agency uses this licence money to maintain and preserve rivers, canals and lakes throughout the UK so your money is put to good use, not spent in other areas. Insuring a healthy environment for fish and aquatic insects, birds and plants.

The fishing season runs from mid-June to mid-March giving the fish a three month period to breed uninterrupted by anglers' lines. However, this 'closed season' only applies to rivers and some still waters. In recent years the laws have changed allowing some lakes and canals to be fished out of season, the Grand Union Canal being one of them.

The river provides fishing from the Bywaters Estate to the Metropolitan train line which runs across the canal and river close to the Ebury Way. The stretch between Bywaters and the concrete bridge is most often fished, most probably because walking any further with large amounts of tackle can become arduous. However, the extra walk sometimes pays off due to the tranquility further down the river. This often leads to catching larger fish and spotting more wildlife. When walking down this far you can spot pheasants in the long grass and whilst fishing you will often see kingfishers flashing past like speeding blue bullets. Swans, mallards, coots and moorhens are a common sight in the river or reedbeds, the coots and moorhens quite often being heard rustling and calling before seen. Sometimes if you keep still a heron might land nearby and begin fishing, often more successfully than the anglers. Kestrels can be seen hovering above the Moor, searching for mice and other small prey animals.

The species of fish you are most likely to catch on the river are chub, roach, perch, dace, bream, minnow, gudgeon and pike, but you can occasionally catch grayling in the faster stretches, eels by night and bullheads by turning stones over and cupping them in your hands.

The chub can be caught or seen in the summer by floating bread or dog biscuits on the surface which they sometimes race to eat to beat the ducks to it. Throughout the rest of the year they can be caught on a variety of baits from cheese to slugs.

The smaller fish can be caught using maggots, bread and worms among other baits. A pike can often chase smaller fish when they become hooked, sometimes hooking themselves in the process.

Ledgering (fishing with a fixed bait on the river bed) and float fishing are the easiest ways of fishing the river. Often float fishing a small bait in winter produces better fish than ledgering a large bait so try different methods to be successful.

The canal runs parallel to the river until Lot Mead where the river runs into the canal. The fishing rights to this stretch of the canal are owned by Watford Piscators, a local angling club. So a day ticket fee is payable which at the moment is £3.



The species of fish in the canal are slightly different to those on the river due to its still water environment. The canal does not contain any grayling or bullheads but unlike the river it contains carp, tench, rudd and rufe. Some larger perch can be caught on the canal only a few yards from the bank using lob worms or a bunch of maggots, especially in early to mid spring.

Carp on this stretch of canal grow large, last year a carp of over 20lb was caught about 500m from the bridge. Carp of this size can be very wary, because of their long lives they have learned many of the anglers' tricks making them very hard to catch. A lot of people fish specifically for carp, because they are such a large, powerful and intelligent fish, increasing the challenge of catching something. New baits are being evolved to stay one step ahead of the carp, but sometimes more traditional baits such as bread or worms are very effective.

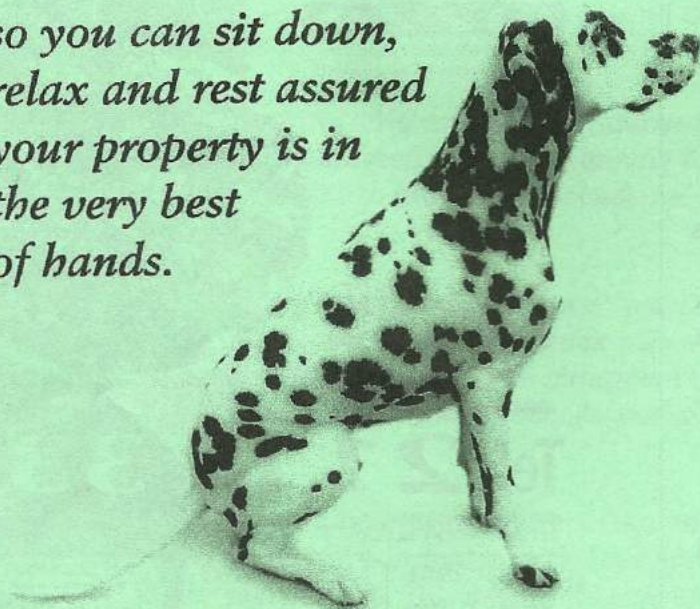
The smaller fish can be caught on the canal using the same baits as for the river. Float fishing is a successful way to fish the canal due to its still or slow moving water.

If you choose to fish on the canal or river at Croxley Moor then please remove all your rubbish. Unwanted line left behind becomes tangled and can trap birds, which may kill them. Don't let your waste harm wildlife. Make sure you buy a rod licence before you go fishing and if you fish the canal have the money ready for your day ticket.

Andrew Goddard  
Assistant Ranger, Croxley Green Parish Council

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## HEDGES AND ORCHARDS

The Green and Stones Orchard are important and well-used areas of Croxley Green. Both are recognised as County Wildlife Sites because of the variety of plants and animals they support, and they contribute to the village feel of the parish. So why cut the hedges down?

### Ancient hedgerows

The hedgerows that border the Green and the orchard have been there for a very long time. This is evident by the banks they sit on and the size and diversity of plants found in them. These hedgerows would have been annually maintained to ensure they were effective barriers to either keep stock in or out, and probably to keep scrumpers out in the case of the orchard!

Regular management of all of the hedgerows has not been carried out for many years and the structure of the hedgerows has changed as a result. Instead of dense low growth, the hedges have become tall and straggly with lots of dead wood. This is not a very good habitat for birds and mammals that need cover to avoid predation and find food. These sections are being identified for restoration.

### Hedgerow management

The attractive hedgerow habitat can be restored though through careful management. The Parish Council have been gradually regenerating lengths of hedgerow adjacent to the Green and the orchard. This involves cutting out much of the dead wood – a large proportion where elm previously dominated – and coppicing the overgrown hedgerow shrubs. **Coppicing** means cutting all of the stems down to between 7 – 15 cm, and allowing them to regrow. This results in the large multi-stem hazel plants currently found throughout the hedgerows of Croxley Green. Increased light encourages the cut stumps to grow.

An established hazel plant can regrow over a metre a year once it has been coppiced! The end result after a few years is a well structured hedge with lots of healthy growth and small flowering plants. On-going maintenance then involves occasional trimming and re-coppicing to maintain the life in the old hazel plants.

### Hedgerow planting

Where there are large gaps, new hedge plants have been put in. These have been carefully chosen to reflect species that are currently found in the area and their relative abundance. Look carefully and you will find new hazel, hawthorn and field maple, with small amounts of dog rose and hornbeam. Although blackthorn is found in the area, it is not recommended to be planted next to valuable meadow habitats. It has a habit of sending out lots of new shoots into the grass and taking over. It can spread out at a rate of a metre a year, making it hard to control and manage the hedgerow.

Rachel Keen  
Countryside Management Service



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## **Remembering the Fox and Hounds – New Road**

I first became acquainted with Croxley Green in 1978 visiting Mavis, who consequently became my wife, and I therefore logically became resident. Our early days together demanded that our pleasures should be simple and a Sunday routine emerged, Mavis put the dinner in the oven and we then walked half a mile across the "rec" to the Fox and Hounds for relaxation and beer.

Time and the brewers have brought changes to most of the traditional pubs in the area, not least the Fox in 1978, 1979 and 1980 as I knew it. The Fox represented a simple village pub image that must have existed for decades, a simple charm totally lacking in sophistication and associated with Abbot Ale.

The front elevation to the Fox then occupied two bays of what must once have been typical New Road housing and set back to its present rear wall. There was one central entrance where, I am told, you could once buy a jug of ale. This entrance opened onto an L-shaped uni-bar with seats and tables to the left where the old boys of Croxley sat and to the right with seating and tables extending to the rear of the bar. The left hand area also contained a bar billiards table. The old boys, who I imagine are now mostly long gone, sat in silence totally absorbed in their beer. The right hand section of the bar was primarily occupied by younger drinkers who we came to know quite well.

Bar billiards is a variation of traditional billiards and is played on a small table with a regular pattern of holes in its surface, designed to entrap a given number of white balls originally set up on the table. The holes are guarded by "mushrooms" intended to defend the holes and prevent scoring. The holes had various values and knocking down a mushroom resulted in a deduction from the otherwise accumulative score. Balls potted were returned to the table and continued in play. The game was one of both skill and luck, making it popular to most of us but particularly myself, as I was totally lacking in skill. The popularity of the game ordained a booking system by piling up the ten pence pieces (one ten pence being the cost of a game) placed on the right hand bottom corner of the cushions. The differences in ensured games of varying length but watching champions such as "Gordan" clock up multi thousand breaks could sometimes be more interesting than playing yourself.

The licensee of the Fox at the time was George (known to some as "Dirty George"), his wife, baby daughter and large dog all assisted George in running the place. George was as much a friend as publican and had the goodwill to provide an occasional free meal to all present at such times as New Year's Eve.

Bar billiards was the prime "socio environmental" activity at the Fox and became of importance in consequence. The game reached an annual climax with a competition organised by George. Gordan, who I mentioned earlier, frequently became champion but there were lesser awards with Mavis one year taking the prize for the highest ladies break, a half bottle of champagne that took some time to materialise.

With the coming of the Fox's first refurbishment George and family, who normally lived upstairs, were banished to a residential portacabin in the car park, with the suggestion of continuing as licensee after the refurbishment. This regrettably never came to pass.

Perhaps my judgement of this time is to some extent coloured by personal past experience but I do feel that a great social aspect of friendship and peace has been lost at the Fox and many other local pubs with the brewers' determination for ready made noisy anti-social entertainment endemic with the pursuit of profit making.

Cllr Michael Johns



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##### 2<sup>ND</sup> JOURNEY

Sycamore Approach	10.00am
Valley Walk (Green)	10.01am
Valley Walk/Beechcroft Ave	10.03am
Frankland Rd/Harvey Rd	10.05am
Chalmers Court	10.08am
All Saints Lane Outside Church	10.10am
Return from Watford	12.30pm

##### 3<sup>RD</sup> JOURNEY

Junction Links Way & Warwick Way	10.30am
Junction Links Way & Dover Way	10.31am
Junction Links Way & Little Green Lane	10.32am
Junction Little Green Lane & Durrants Drive	10.33am
Junction Durrants Drive & Dover Way	10.34am
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## Red Cross Welcome Club

This club was formed several years ago and has been instrumental in entertaining members on several days of the week during the years. Dancing takes place twice a week, bingo and hoi once a week if entertainers are not available. We have sing alongs to the different musicals and organises and group players who attend by request.

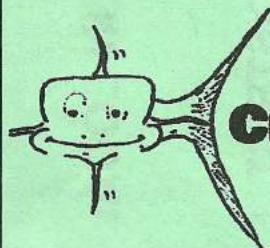
The main purpose of this club is to get people out to meet and make friends, as well as being entertained. There are too many lonely people in this world today through bereavements, etc who are wasting their lives sitting between four walls feeling miserable. We at the club recognise this and invite them to join us. If they are immobile in any way we may be able to help them as we have a team of voluntary drivers with their own cars who will transport them to and from their homes to the club, providing they live in the area.

We invite anybody to come along and see what we have to offer and have a cup of tea with a cake or biscuit with us. If you then feel you would like to join us the fee for the year is £7 – this should not break the bank of anybody today. The atmosphere is the best you could wish for.

Please come and visit, our address is:

The Welcome Club  
British Red Cross Society  
Croxley Green Centre  
Barton Way  
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Tel: 01923 720485 or ring the Chairman, Mr  
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The mode of dress,  
The keywords we used generally  
in conservation underwent diversity

And yet intransigent attitudes established bigotries  
to colour sex to sexuality to class.  
old arduous repressions instigated by religious  
faith  
remain unaltered,  
Kept fervently in place  
by bigoted reactionaries unseen  
unheard of by the populous

So football stays just as before  
"The Opium of the People"  
replacing belief in love and peace

Replacing understandings  
held in nineteen sixty four  
in acquiescent revolution.  
the product of sweet contentment

What sweet deception now

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN PEER POETRY

Cllr Michael Johns



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Public Footpath Signs  
Public Seating  
Quiz Night  
Maintenance of Stones Orchard  
Maintenance of The Green  
Tree Works