



The Parish Pump

The Croxley Green Parish Council's House Magazine

Autumn/Winter 2013

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Letter from the Chairman

This is the first Parish Pump since I became your Chairman. It is an honour to be a chairman of the Parish Council in such a fantastic village. We are so lucky to have a compact village, with a variety of buildings, surrounded by wonderful greenbelt and the canal. Also there is a great community spirit in Croxley Green, which is part of the reason we have lived here for over 30 years.

I hope you have managed to enjoy one of the many events we have had over the summer, including Croxfest, which has just taken place. There were about 3,500 people at any one time on The Green, enjoying the great music and atmosphere. Well done to the Croxley Green Society for organising the event, along with the Revels earlier in the summer of course. Mind you, I'd better be careful here, as I am also part of the Revels team!!

The two charities that we are supporting this year are the Stroke Club, Croxley Green and Linda Jackson Macmillan Centre, Mount Vernon. One third of the collection at Croxfest will go to these charities. Through the

coming months we will be running a number of events to raise money for these charities so please look out of them and support them if you can. The first one will be the Dog Show on the 29 September at Stones Orchard. Others include (hopefully) carol singing in December outside the library, the second Wassail in January, a charity rugby match and another cake sale in the spring to name a few.

This year has seen the Croxley Rail Link project take major steps forward and also we completed the Community Plan survey. There is more about both of these in this issue. I do hope you enjoy reading the Parish Council news and I wish you all the very best for the autumn and winter.

Cllr Chris Mitchell

Record Year for Charity Fundraising 2012/13

I will start with a huge thank you to the people of Croxley Green, on behalf of the Parish Council charities, for the record sum that was raised by you. We were able to

donate a total of £3,651 shared between The Sunnyside Club, Croxley Green and The Peace Hospice, Watford, which is a fantastic result. Now sums like this are not raised without a lot of work and effort: not only by the organisers of the Charity events but also by you in taking the time to support them by attending and donating your money. Without you, none of our fund raising events would have succeeded. I don't want to lose your interest by listing what we did and what was raised at each event; these details are available at the Parish Office if you would like them. I would, however, like to take this opportunity to also thank those who have made this year such a tremendous Charity success. So, thank you to Ellie & Dan at The Sportsman for organising the Charity Quiz Night, to the organisers of Croxfest for the "bucket collection", to all of the Councillors and their friends for organising and putting in so much work to make all of our events so successful this year and for making such a difference to both of our charities.

Cllr Nik Bennett

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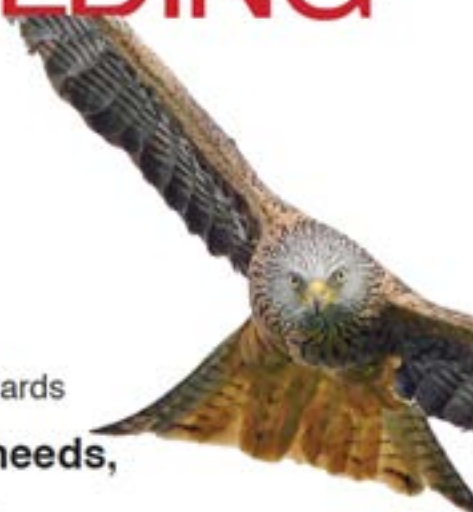
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Council News

Croxley Green Community Plan – what did you tell us?

By now, every household should have received a copy of the survey results, which gave a detailed analysis of how many people had answered which questions as well as the answers they gave, so this gives a clear picture on what the priorities are. However, the numbers are not the whole story. The document was downloaded from the electronic survey and it did not include the comments that many people gave. We are in the process of making a final analysis of them and here is an update.

There were nine questions which required a comment; some were factual, as to which road respondents lived in and where the traffic hotspots were and some asked for opinions and suggestions on how to improve the village. There were no surprises over some issues such as roads, pavements and traffic, however the point of the survey was to confirm the anecdotal evidence and help us in planning and negotiations with the various authorities which manage the village infra-structure. Parish Councils may not have much power but they have a great ability to influence things and the survey results will help us considerably in our campaigns for Croxley Green. Not every question had positive answers and showed where people are unhappy and in some cases why, although the overall response to the survey itself and the questions posed was very positive.

So what was revealed?

Question 28 was about traffic hotspots and Baldwins Lane, Watford Road and the roundabout by Rickmansworth School were the major bottlenecks, with the Shell Garage and New Road also mentioned.

Question 31 told us who lived where, with 99 roads mentioned, so most of Croxley is represented. This is a key issue in representing any arguments as we know that the whole village was covered.

Question 36 asked about the need for more dropped kerbs, although not everyone was in favour of them as it

makes it difficult to park and one resident asked if there could be one outside their house!

Question 47 asked about other leisure provisions and while the analysis is not complete, sports and swimming facilities and extended library hours are showing an early lead.

Question 55 asked about the content on the Parish Council website and events, information about Croxley Green's history and volunteering opportunities were mentioned. There were a number of responses saying they do not have the internet and one which simply said it wasn't necessary.

Question 65 asked about anti-social behaviour and the biggest responses were inconsiderate parking (especially on pavements), dog fouling, speeding and litter.

Question 67 asked about unsafe areas and encouragingly, only 18% who answered felt Croxley had unsafe areas and the major issues were parks, dark alleyways and unlit areas.

Question 68 asked about sites for CCTV cameras, and Croxley Metropolitan station was mentioned, as well as all the shopping parades.

Question 74 asked for constructive comments and while a few people indulged in some criticism of the length of the survey but thankfully still filled it in, others said it was a great idea and welcomed it. The major topics were about housing, building a school, parking, concerns about over-development and the need to protect the green spaces. There were a number of comments on the Parish Council itself, ranging from thanks for a job well done to those who feel it is a waste of money.

The comments section will be edited and published in the next few months. There are about 4,500 comments to consider and we need to capture all the aspects and insights. Some people who filled in the paper survey gave us opinions and comments on questions where there was no white box and these have been captured and will be added to the analysis. These range from adding that the green spaces refresh our spirits to the emptying of litter bins.

On behalf of the Residents' Association, the joint sponsors of the Community Plan, I would like to offer my thanks to everyone who took the time and trouble to fill this in. The first stage is now complete, the full analysis is on its way and this will feed into the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Wendy Jordan

Croxley Rail Link

One of the largest projects to affect Croxley Green for many years is now underway. The Croxley Rail Link, which is a project to connect the Metropolitan Line with the old British Rail Line (now Network Rail) and make it possible for trains to travel to Watford High Street and Junction stations and beyond. The largest single structure will be the new viaduct.

This will cross the Two Bridges area:-



The project has now achieved its full legal status by having the Transport and Works Act formalised and funding in place.

The plan below shows the route it will take.



There will be two new stations called "Cassiobridge" on Ascot Road and "Watford Vicarage Road".

I represented the Parish Council last year at the Public Inquiry. Although we do not object to the scheme, we did have concerns. They were the design of the viaduct, the effect on local businesses and residents and disruption during construction. The Croxley Rail Link project team,

continued on page 5

Dog Waste Bags

For those dog owners who have forgotten or were unaware, bio-degradable dog waste bags are **free** from the Parish Council Offices and we also supply them to the library. Please use them, and the bins around Croxley, to help keep our pavements, footpaths and open spaces clean and free from mess.

Please don't forget to use the **RED waste bins.**



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which is led by Hertfordshire County Council, agreed to consult with the Parish Council on the details of the viaduct before it goes to TRDC for full planning approval. Also, they agreed to keep us informed of progress and let us have contact numbers for the project team when work starts. It has been important to put ourselves forward to help ensure we know what is going on and how it may affect us in Croxley Green.

We had a meeting with the Croxley Rail Link project team in August and heard about the plans to get the project built. The main thing you will see from now on is the survey and investigation works taking place.

There will be some lane closures around the Two Bridges area, however, we are told this will not be in peak times. The surveys will include topographical, utilities and condition of the existing site. There will be ground investigations, which includes drilling boreholes to see exactly what the soil is like in the positions of the new piers for the viaduct. There are also a lot of environmental advance works taking place along the route from Ascot Road towards Watford centre.

Apparently they have found over 500 slowworms and some grass snakes along the route. We are told that this work, along with the detailed design will continue until early 2014. The full construction phase will start by the middle of next year and it will be about 18 months to construct the new link and then a few months commissioning and finally open to the public during the latter part of 2016.

If you want to find out more visit our web site under 'Our Community' which has a link to the Croxley Rail Link project web site. <http://www.croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk/>

Cllr Chris Mitchell

Village Centre Project

Most of you have now heard of our Village Centre project that we have started. For those of you who have not heard about it, here is a little background.

Croxley Green does not have a permanent building to use as a village

hall. The Parish Council (PC) use the community centre as a Village Hall. This is owned by TDRDC, leased by the Croxley Green Community Association (CGCA) and run by the Croxley Green Community Club, which is a thriving enterprise and is the major financial and staffing contributor to the running of the Hall and buildings. The PC support the Community Association as well so the hall can be used for local activities, whilst the Club operates the bar and promotes community activities. The Club operates on a member system - the present committee have done a fantastic job in improving the club, which now has 500 members.

The idea for the village centre project came from the first community plan meeting in 2011, there were many ideas that people came up with. These include;

- Purpose built village hall, with a variety of space for local groups;
- Leisure facilities/centre, including Gym, youth club, swimming pool and space for indoor sports;
- Modern health centre to provide wider range of health facilities;
- Modern meeting place with coffee shops etc;
- Create a community focus.

There are also other potential requirements, including modern offices for the Parish Council.

We wanted to look at what could be achieved in the "central area",



and we appointed Architects to see what is possible. This could be a huge long term project involving many organisations and businesses.

The following points have been

abstracted from the Architects report.

"Our survey of the Study Area showed most of the New Road properties to be built in late Victorian times but with a scattering of infill sites mostly redeveloped in the 1950-1960s, possibly as a result of bomb damage. Whilst the vast majority of buildings are in residential use, there is a wide range of shops and other uses, including the New Road Surgery, seven other health related businesses and the Library. Virtually all the property was occupied and the general state of repair was reasonable. The majority of buildings were of two storeys. The exceptions were three storey post war flats, some of which may be owned by Three Rivers DC (TRDC). There are 20mph speed control measures in New Road which is a bus route.

At the corner of New Road and Barton Way is the Croxley Green Library, which is only now open for public lending for a total of 3 whole days and two half-days a week although it is also open for evening classes. The Red Cross building is used for loaning emergency supplies and training with some letting to other organisations.

To the north of, and parallel to, New Road lies Community Way with a public car park for about 60-70 cars managed by TRDC. To the north side of the car park is the building housing the Parish Council maintenance equipment. At the far end of the car park is the Parish Offices in a prefabricated building and the Community Centre (or Village Hall) dating from the 1970s. To the north of Community Way are well cultivated allotments. To the west of the Community Centre are the playing fields managed by The Croxley Guild and leased from TRDC.

Three Rivers can be said to have the controlling interest over the whole area of Community Way and its property with frontages on the road. There is high demand in the area of Croxley Green for letting of halls for various activities. The Parish Council publishes a list of voluntary organisations but this is not exhaustive and it does not cover

continued on page 7

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evening classes run by educational organisations. The size of the two larger halls in the area (including the Community Centre) limits local letting and events to 120 persons and this is considered too restrictive for larger activities, such as some weddings.

The Community Plan Village Survey

The survey had responses from 28% of all Croxley households. Among many other findings there was strong support for a Village Centre containing Village Hall, Parish Council Offices and a new Health Centre with enhanced facilities.

Opportunities

Our conclusion from our survey and discussions is that little vacant land or empty buildings are available in Croxley Green. The only land potentially available is in public ownership apart from the Vacant Site in Community Way. Cosmetic improvements which to aid road safety could be made to Community Way by introducing speed restriction measures, tree planting on wider verges and possibly a hedge to the allotment fence. All would require cooperation or participation from TRDC.

While the Library/Red Cross buildings could be extended there is the whole issue of ownership and existing usage and the difficulty of dealing with a possibly uncooperative County Council.

The only real opportunities within the capacity of the CGPC and CGCA are presented by extending or redeveloping the Community Centre, including the demolition of the Parish Offices. The opportunities for extension are limited because of the configuration of the buildings on the site.

Conclusions

We have therefore concluded that a Village Centre of about 1400sq m incorporating an enlarged Community Centre, Parish Offices and enlarged Health Centre with supporting car parking could be accommodated within a two storey building on the existing site and with parking on a Vacant Site.

This building would be large enough

to house the aspirations for expansion of all three organisations and allow some subletting."

You can see images of some possible ideas of what can be done on the PC website. So this study showed us that we could provide a new community centre, including a new hall, a medical centre and offices for the PC. There is no room for any other facilities in the central area looked at.

Before proceeding any further we will need to consult further with the Community Association, as they want to be sure that any proposals are in fact going to be beneficial to them. There are many details we need to sort out and this will take place over the next few months. After that we wish to consult with all of you. Following this, a detailed feasibility study will be undertaken based on the ideas we then have. Also we want to be talking to a wider range of people in the village who have an interest in the project.

This also links with the proposed community and neighbourhood plan. The survey has been done with the results sent back to you all. We now need to take the next steps, and by having some definite plans incorporated this is the first step to making them a reality.

This is in the very early stages, so if you have any view on this please email the Parish Council.

Cllr Chris Mitchell

Hobby and Craft Taster Day

Sunday 12 October 2012 saw the latest Hobby and Craft Taster Day held at Little Green School. This has proved to be a very popular family event over the last few years and this was no exception! There was a good range of activities for all ages to try and many children and adults were kept busy with flower arranging, glass painting, card making, jewellery making amongst others. There were also several magic shows from the entertainer for the day Auntie Julie.

Lots of people commented on the good value: they could 'have a go' for a small fee – just enough to cover costs of materials. It was great to see families there who had attended in

previous years: many said the children were very keen to go again once they received the advert from school. This certainly met our objective of engaging families in crafts and hobbies which they could take up at home without too much of an outlay for equipment.

There was also a raffle which raised money for the Parish Council charities – thank you to all those who donated prizes.

Unfortunately we have decided not to run the event this year. Although it has been very successful over the past 7 years, we have struggled to get enough stall holders to make it worthwhile. We are currently looking at different ideas for a new event for families - more about this in the near future!

Thank you to all those who have supported this venture in the past and made it such a success.

Cllrs Janet Martin & Wendy Shafe

Cake Sale 2013

Over 30 people baked a huge selection of cakes, tarts and biscuits for the cake sale with ages of the bakers ranging from 12 to 92 years. The 12 year old made some lovely flapjacks and Michael Hall, who is 92, made some very tasty sausage rolls and mini lemon curd tarts which were very popular.



Unfortunately I was unwell on the day of the event; however my sister and daughter took over and, with the help of other councillors and friends, raised £300.

Thank you to all you wonderful bakers and helpers and to all the people who came to buy the cakes. Hopefully the next Cake Sale will be around Easter 2014.

Cllr Hazel Seeley

Council News

Wassail

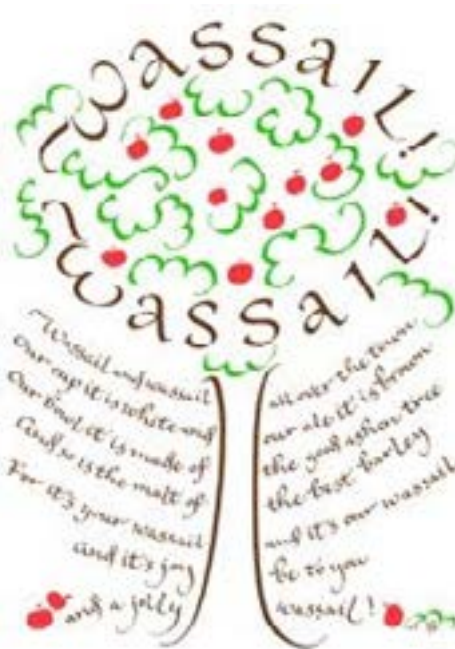
If you had been making your way along the Green on the 17 January last year, at about 8:00pm, you would have seen a large group of people outside the Artichoke public house. The group comprised Morris Dancers, Mummers, folk musicians and residents from Croxley Green and the surrounding area, all gathered together to celebrate Croxley Green's first Wassail ceremony in Stones Orchard.

Just after 8:00pm the group set off, led by the Morris musicians, and made their way in semi-procession to Stones Orchard and, more precisely, tree number 106 which is believed to be the oldest fruit tree in the orchard.

The crowd was greeted and addressed by the Master of Ceremonies and then there was a short speech of welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council after which the ceremony continued in what are fairly traditional lines. The Wassail song was sung, the Wren (a toy one!) was buried and then toast soaked in cider was hung in the branches of the tree, by the King and Queen and then by all of those present who wanted to join in (and as long as the supply of toast lasted!). This was followed by the making of a lot of noise to drive away any "evil spirits!" Then, with the singing of the Croxley Wassail Song (especially composed by Watford folk singer, Chris Lawley), the group returned to the Artichoke where there was more dancing before the evening ended up at the Sportsman public house with more dancing, mumming and singing.

So what was it all about and why was it organised? Wassailing the orchard is a tradition that goes way back in history. It is mainly performed in the West Country as that is where there is the largest

number of orchards, particularly cider orchards. The idea is to give a blessing on the trees for a fruitful harvest. The actual ceremony varies from county to county and village to village, although the core feature of honouring the trees, especially the oldest tree, is kept. The songs will vary and whereas some gatherings number in the hundreds others may be a few locals upholding a long village tradition.



Why have a Wassail in Croxley Green? You will know that there has been a renewed interest in Stones Orchard and the founding of the Friends of Stones Orchard group. This has been encouraged by a national initiative to save and preserve local orchards as they continue to disappear. So, as I was born in Hereford, have a good number of contacts within the local "folk" fraternity and Croxley Green has an orchard it seemed like a very good idea and the magnificent response from young and old proved that it was. It was very pleasing to see families, grandparents, parents, children, singles and couples across a wide age range, all

joining in and enjoying the fun of the Wassailing. The bucket collection held on the evening produced £138.00 for the Parish Council Charity Appeal so good fun helped a good cause!

Special thanks to Mike Stimpson, Squire of Phoenix Morris for adding this to the Side's programme and thanks to the dancers and musicians of Phoenix Morris. Thanks to the Croxley Mummers for their performance and thanks also to Liz and Chris Lawley and Dave Auld who helped me organise the singing (with special thanks to Chris for writing the Croxley Wassail Song). All of these people/groups generously gave their time free of charge. Thanks also to Ellie and Dan at the Sportsman for donating the use of the Shed and thanks to Croxley Green Residents' Association for helping with advertising the event. However, as much as the "folkies" would have enjoyed the evening anyway, very special thanks goes to all of you who turned out in mid-January to see what this was all about, joined in so freely, gave so generously and then requested the same in 2014. A very big "thank-you" from the organisers and we very much hope to see you and even more of your friends and family on the night of **17 January 2014**. Look out for further announcements!



Cllr Dudley Edmunds

Our Community

Senior Citizen's Outing to Eastbourne

On 26 June two coaches full of Croxley senior citizens departed for a day at the seaside in Eastbourne. This trip was organised and funded by your Parish Council.

I would like to point out that this outing is usually over-subscribed and a fair selection is allocated in a random draw.

Because of our poor weather over the weeks leading up to the day citizens were armed with plenty of rain wear, but I had a word with the rain god and, lo and behold, the sun shone all day! They say the sun shines on the righteous – was this a mistake?



A great day was had by all and the local shops benefitted, as did market day. I think the most used shop was a local fish and chip restaurant which indeed was highly praised in letters received by the Council with comments such as 'we had fresh fish and chips accompanied by loads of sunshine'. Also very popular were cream teas on the pier, which I have to say were wonderful! One letter said how much the day had been enjoyed and 'how lucky the seniors of Croxley are' to have this trip on offer to them.

Members of the Parish Council are very pleased that all went well and give particular thanks for the letters endorsing their efforts.

Please note that the Parish Council provides a senior citizen's bus on Friday mornings, picking

up at sheltered homes and various side streets around Croxley and thence to Watford. Details and routes can be found on page 19 or at the Parish Office.

David Neighbour

Croxley Guild of Sport and Social Club

Since the publication of our last issue of the Parish Pump a great deal has happened within the club. But first of all may I please draw your attention to our correct title? It is not 'Croxley Guild Sports Club'; our title is as shown above.

This year the ground and its premises have been improved. The dressing room facilities have been given a thorough clear out and completely redecorated. The plumbing and electrics have been brought up to standard. You will have no doubt seen that the old concrete barriers and cricket training area concrete pad have now been removed. Nets are being erected beside the tennis courts. The club house interior will shortly be given a 'make over' as will the kitchen. All this work is being done by voluntary labour.

All sporting sections within The Guild continue to give some of the best facilities within Three Rivers District Council.

The Bowling Club Section has without doubt one of the best 'greens' in the area. Why not come along and give it a try? I'm sure you will be made most welcome. Bowls is for all ages; not just senior citizens or 'golden oldies'.

The Cricket Section goes from strength to strength. Between our first game on 5 May and 15 September this year, Croxley Guild Cricket Club have played 15 games of which we have won 8 games so far. Not a bad result for a newly formed section. We really

have to thank the Parish Council for their funding of our wicket - thank you.

The Tennis section is without doubt one of the best in the area if not the best. A recent tournament proved very, very successful. There is a thriving senior section as well as a very popular junior section and coaching is offered for all ages. Why not come and have a game? I'm sure Colin and the team would love to see you.

Within the membership of the Tennis Section we have a young member by the name of James Cox who has started up his own business venture of 'restringing' all makes of tennis raquets using the latest strings available eg. Duraflex, Flexaspin, Poly-Plasma and Duralast. His prices are very affordable and he has his own collection service. Why not give this young Croxley entrepreneur a ring? His contact number is 077586 52830.

Our Rugby Section, The Chess Valley Rugby Club, kicked off their season on 14 September with the 1st XV playing Quintin and the 2nd XV against UCSOB 3rd. From the list of future games they will be playing Saracens Amateurs, London Welsh Amateurs, West London and other strong teams.

We now have two Senior Football Teams playing on a Saturday. Regarding the Youth Football, we still have a vacant pitch for Sunday playing. This pitch has been available to the Youth Team since April this year.

The Social Club is now steadily increasing in numbers. The Guild is now becoming a really friendly environment to come and have a social drink with food available from our kitchen. We look forward to seeing you in one or more areas over the coming months.

Clr Frank Brand (Also Secretary of Croxley Guild of Sport)

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4007	Courses / Conferences	0	4006	Protective Clothing	330
4008	Training	500	4008	Training	500
4009	Travel	1,300	4010	Misc Staff Costs	700
4011	Rates	2,897	4012	Water Rates	400
4012	Water Rates	550	4017	Health & Safety	750
4013	Rent	110	4018	Refuse Disposal	0
4014	Light & Heat	2,000	4036	Property Maintenance	500
4016	Janitorial	1,400	4037	Grounds Maintenance	2,100
4017	Health & Safety	270	4041	Equipment Hire	0
4019	Consultancy Fees	2,700	4042	Equipment Maintenance	590
4020	Misc Establishment Costs	400	4046	Equipment Purchased	500
4021	Telephone & Fax	1,600	4051	Vehicle License & Insurance	3,500
4023	Stationery, Printing & Postage	3,800	4055	Fuel & Oil - LS08 WCP	1,300
4025	Insurance	4,400	4060	Fuel & Oil - Groundworks	810
4026	Photocopy Hire / Charges (see 4023)	0	4070	Maintenance - LS08 WCP	540
4027	Computer Software & IT	1,500	4071	Maintenance - Tractor	1,100
4030	Recruitment Advertising	0	4072	Maintenance - Ride on Mower	330
4036	Property Maintenance	1,000		OverHead Expenditure	62,850
4156	Audit Fees - External	1,000	1061	Agency Income - HCC Mtce	0
4157	Audit Fees - Internal	880	1062	Agency Income - TRDC Mrce	0
4158	Accountancy Fees	850	1080	Miscellaneous Income	0
4963	PCSO	28,500		Total Income	0
	New Village Centre	3,000	103	Net Expenditure	62,850
	Balancing figure	267			
	Tfr from Reserves (if required)	0			
	Tfr from Reserves re 4019 Peninsular		107	<u>Grants (incl S137)</u>	
	OverHead Expenditure	125,924	4200	Chairman's Charity Expenditure	3,000
1076	Precept	248,243	4711	S137 Grants	1,000
1080	Miscellaneous Income	14,315		Community Hall Membership Grant	7,100
1090	Interest Received	30		OverHead Expenditure	11,100
	Total Income	262,588	1077	Grants Received	0
101	Net Expenditure	-136,664	1200	Chairmans Charity Income	1,000
				Total Income	1,000
102	<u>Local Democracy</u>		107	Net Expenditure	10,100
4024	Subscriptions/Publications	7,400	150	<u>Community/Village Hall</u>	
4033	Parish Pump Newsletter	5,000	4036	External Decoration	0
4201	Chairman's Allowance	500	4036	Flood Prevention work	0
4251	Election Expenses	1,250		Transfer from reserves	
4300	Events - Revels on the Green	350		OverHead Expenditure	0
	OverHead Expenditure	14,500		Total Income	0
1031	Map Income	0	150	Net Expenditure	0
1051	Advertising Income	1,600			
	Total Income	1,600			
102	Net Expenditure	12,900			

199 F & A Capital & Projects

4175	Sale of Assets	0
4823	Tfr to Vehicle Repl Fund	4,000
4824	Tfr to Equip Repl Fund	3,000
	Depot Extension (Phase 1 - Plans)	3,000
	Transfer from Reserves (Depot Extension Plans)	-3,000

OverHead Expenditure 7,000

199 Net Expenditure 7,000

F & A - Expenditure 221,374
- Income 265,188

Net Expenditure -43,814

Environment & Amenity

Agreed Budget (£)

202 The Green

4042	Equipment Maintenance	0
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OverHead Expenditure 0

202 Net Expenditure 0

203 Open Spaces & Trees

4048	Plants. Shrubs & Trees - General	1,000
4049	Dog Hygiene	10,000
	Tfr ex trees	3,000

OverHead Expenditure 14,000

1077	Grants Received	0
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Total Income 0

203 Net Expenditure 14,000

211 Events

4601	Garden Competition	0
4602	Quiz Night	50
4605	Christmas Lights	10,784
4608	Library Xmas Tree	0
4609	Craft Workshop Day	750
4610	Fireworks on Green	4,500
4611	Senior Citizens Seaside/Outing	1,100
	Boundary Walk Signage	0
4615	Library Xmas Tree (External)	1,700
4616	Picnic in the Park	500
	Wassail	250
	Dog Show	250

Tfr from Reserves re external Xmas tree -350

OverHead Expenditure 19,534

1080	Miscellaneous Income	0
1082	Brown Bin Caddy Liners	400

Total Income 400

211 Net Expenditure 19,134

221 M S C

4042	Equipment Maintenance	1,000
------	-----------------------	-------

OverHead Expenditure 1,000

221 Net Expenditure 1,000

299 E & A Capital & Projects

4932	War Memorial Updating	200
4937	Development of Play Areas	0
4938	Brown Bin Caddy Liners	180
	Queens Diamond Jubilee tree	0
	Local Producers Market	250
	Transfer from Reserves (if required)	0

OverHead Expenditure 630

299 Net Expenditure 630

E & A - Expenditure 35,164
- Income 400

Net Expenditure 34,764

Planning & Development

Agreed Budget (£)

301 Roads & Street Furniture

4042	Equipment Maintenance	0
4043	Salt Bins/Salt	200
4047	Footpath Maintenance	1,000
4050	Bus Shelters	100
4056	Street Trees	0
	CMS Grant for Footpath Maint.	-1,000

OverHead Expenditure 300

301 Net Expenditure 300

302 Community Bus

4702	Community Bus	6,900
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OverHead Expenditure 6,900

302 Net Expenditure 6,900

399 P & D Capital & Projects

	Village Plan Development	1,850
	Carbon Footprint Reduction	500
	Tfr from Reserves (Carbon Footprint ex 2012)	-500

OverHead Expenditure 1,850

399 Net Expenditure 1,850

P & D - Expenditure 9,050
- Income 0

Net Expenditure 9,050

Total Budget Expenditure 265,588

265,588

Net Expenditure 0

Annual Reports

Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 25 April 2013

Chairman's Report

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present to you my report as Chairman of the Parish Council:-

My report this year will be in the form of a "taster menu" to give you a flavour of what has happened. Full details are of course available on our website, so I trust my report will satisfy you and leave you with the feeling that you may want to come back for more.

As you will be aware the present council was formed after the election and by-election in May and July of 2011. I have had the honour to Chair this council since formation, and I am extremely pleased with the progress that we have achieved in so many areas of our community during this period of time. I would advise you that I do not propose to stand again this year for this prestigious role, although I will of course continue in my role as a Parish Councillor.

Our links with the community continue through joint projects, grants and subscriptions to local organisations. The Community Plan is now coming to fruition and you will hear more on this later. Thank you to the Croxley Green Residents' Association for their substantial input on this project. With regard to other joint ventures with the Residents' Association, the Parish Boundary Walk is now established with the signage in place and the "Christmas Tree and Carol singing" event should take place this December following the allocation of the additional funding required, in this year's budget. We have also been able to assist All Saints'

Church this their kitchen renovations. Our subscription to the Croxley Green Society enables both the Revels and Croxfest to continue to take place and both events attract extremely enthusiastic community support. Thank you to everyone involved in staging these community events.

We have also had a Dog Show, a Wassail (to be an annual event), a Picnic in The Park, a Hobbies & Craft Taster Day and we planted an Oak on The Green to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Now you may recall that in October I called an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss any actions that the Parish Council should take following the Noise Abatement Notice served on All Saints' Church. The meeting was well attended, and I thank you all for your attendance. The Council agreed to support the action being taken by the Church. You will now be aware that, following legal advice, the Church will not be pursuing the Appeal.

The prelude to Christmas was again enhanced by the display of festive lighting in our streets, and the New Year was welcomed in by what is now the traditional New Year's Eve firework display, and whilst the weather was a little unkind this year it did not deter the usual phenomenal attendance. The Green, Stones Orchard and our footpaths have continued to receive the attention required to preserve their unique character. Thank you to Jamie and Mark for their hard work to achieve this. As you may know Jamie moved on to pastures new at the latter end of last year and it is hoped that his replacement will be appointed shortly. With regard to The Green and Stones Orchard we are at present investigating the viability of taking ownership of these, and also of other areas

within Croxley Green. Our links with Flowers 4 Croxley continue and I would like to thank them for their hard work in maintaining the flower beds and troughs throughout Croxley Green and the fine displays seen throughout the Olympic year.

The Council's representation at the Rail Link Public Enquiry was invaluable and resulted in lines of communication being opened which will be extremely beneficial to Croxley Green in the planning and construction phases. The pre-feasibility study for the Village Centre Project is also progressing well and you will hear more on this later.

The Council's tradition of charity fund raising has continued this year with the emphasis having changed slightly, from the Chairman's Charities to that of the Parish Council's Charities. I am pleased to report that we have achieved record income, in excess of £3,000; this is to be shared between our chosen charities, the Peace Hospice and the Sunnyside Club. Various events have been held but I would like to single out the Charity Night in December organised by Ellie & Dan at The Sportsman where the amazing sum of £1,155 was raised. Thank you to everyone who was able to support our events throughout the year, both in helping to organise them and in attending them. Don't forget that we still have the Charity Cake Sale this Sunday from 11am at the Village Hall; we hope to see you all there. We also have a brand new event coming up soon, the Producers Market on 11 May from 10am until 2pm in the Parish Council and Community Centre car parks, please will you put that one in your diary too.

Now things like the Parish Council don't just happen, so thank you to Mr Clerk and Amanda for their

Annual Reports

hard work in ensuring that all aspects of the Council continue to run smoothly and efficiently. On the subject of thanks, thank you to the Councillors of Croxley Green Parish Council. You freely give your time, energy and expertise not only in attending our meetings but also those with outside bodies. Additional time is also given to undertake training in connection with your voluntary roles. So a big thank you, to all of you, for your personal commitment to Croxley Green that is helping to keep Croxley Special.

*Cllr Nik Bennett,
Chairman 2012-13*

Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 25 April 2013

Environment & Amenity Committee Report

This Committee has had quite an interesting year. You may remember that we were concerned about the new school being built at the bottom of Baldwins Lane; this is not going to happen now, through lack of funds. I believe that a developer is interested in the site which the Council will be monitoring. In partnership with the Residents' Association, the Boundary Walk was opened and has proved popular with Croxley walkers.

At the present time the Council are in discussion with TRDC about the PC taking full responsibility for The Green and Stones Orchard and it is our hope that this will happen. We are indebted to members of the public who are quick to report anything untoward. For instance, the dreadful mess left during the building at Little Gillions. At one

time I counted 24 vans and cars parked on the verges outside the house. Naturally complaints were made by the Council as well as concerned members of the public to TRDC. The contractors said that they would 'make good' the damage, which didn't happen.

This Committee has received representation from a group of people, wishing to form Friends of Stones Orchard and we are awaiting their further proposals. It is hoped that the position of Senior Ranger will be filled during the next few weeks. Jamie Marlow left the Council's employment last November, but Mark Fox has carried on during a particularly unpleasant winter.

As always, my thanks to members of the E&A committee for their support and hard work during the past year.

Cllr Hazel Seeley, Chairman of the Environment and Amenity Committee 2012-13

Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 25 April 2013

Planning & Development Committee Report

This has been a very busy year, and we successfully fulfilled our aims of getting the Community Plan survey completed, developing a pre-feasibility project to look at developing a new village centre, representing Croxley at the Croxley Rail Link Public Inquiry, great thanks go to Cllr Chris Mitchell for leading on this.

The P&D committee meets twice monthly to consider the planning applications put before TRDC, as CGPC is a statutory consultee. In the majority of plans submitted, they are passed and the householders are able to improve

their properties. Where the Parish Council has objected to plans we are not always successful. In the controversial ones a member of the P&D Committee attends the TRDC Planning Committee to further output its point of view. We have built very good links with both the Committee Members and the Planning Officers at TRDC over the past year.

Training. The Localism Bill was just made law this time last year and enables parishes to develop Neighbourhood Plans. This is a new area and the structures on this activity need to be clearly understood. The Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils had organised some training on this matter which Cllr Martin, Mitchell and I attended.

Rail Link Inquiry. We were very keen that the village was included in the consultee list. Cllr Chris Mitchell attended the Rail Link Inquiry. Close links with the Project Manager at Hertfordshire County Council and two meetings were held where he and the architects came to brief the Parish Council. No decision yet from the Public Inquiry, which was held last October.

The Community Plan. The plan has been developed closely with the Croxley Green Residents' Association (CGRA) and I have invited Barry Grant, Chairman of CGRA, to contribute to this section of the report. My great thanks are due to him and the Steering Committee for their support in getting to this great milestone in planning for the community.

Barry Grant, Chairman of the CGRA stated: We introduced the concept 2 years ago at the CGRA Question Time, Croxley's biggest ever indoor gathering. Later, a public meeting was held and we asked residents to help us identify

key areas of concern and we then formed a local resident steering committee to drive the project forwards. The tricky bit was in finding and phrasing questions that would draw out clear responses. We settled on 74 questions but, in reality, the response options called for over 300 individual answers. It was therefore somewhat miraculous that we received around 1400 responses. We now have a wealth of local resident feedback covering topics over which the PC has differing levels of influence. So what were the response highlights?

- A 50/50 split as to whether people consider Three Rivers District Council takes sufficient account of the character of Croxley Green.
- Overwhelming agreement that outdoor areas should be managed, wherever possible, by the Parish Council.
- Strong support for maintaining our Green Belt, "green" initiatives and enhancing the look of roadside areas.
- Over 3/4 agreed that we couldn't accommodate significantly more housing development and, overall, there was strong agreement that additional housing had already put too much strain on local infrastructure.
- Speeding, congestion, car parking and road safety were major concerns as was the state of our roads. There was scope for looking at improving cycle lanes.
- There was strong support for a new Health Centre offering an increased range in services and for developing a village centre. The concept of a regular market day was highly regarded.

- There was exceedingly strong support for enhancing our local shops.

- The questionnaire revealed a shortfall in the provision of indoor recreational facilities and a strong demand for a public swimming pool, dri-play pitches and a further allotment area within Croxley Green.

- Responses showed that the vast majority relied on The Parish Pump, The Resident and My Croxley News for local information and that more had to be undertaken in getting people to access information via websites.

- There was a 50/50 split when it came to people being prepared to become involved in community projects. The challenge will be to harness the potential volunteer army.

- Over 50% considered Parish Councillors were sufficiently aware of local concerns and feelings although 40% had no opinion. Parish Councillors fared far better in perceived awareness stakes than our District Councillors.

- 2/3rds of respondents did not subscribe to the Neighbourhood Watch OWL service (we need to increase this figure through greater awareness).

Overall, the top priorities are:

1. Protecting and maintaining open spaces and woodlands.
2. Protecting our Green Belt.
3. Improving road surfaces.

There were plenty of extremely useful responses that can be passed on to the Police and emergency services, the library and highways services to assist in service improvement.

Incredibly, nearly 3/4 of respondents would be prepared to

pay a slightly higher Parish Precept of up to £20 to meet some of the needs of Croxley Green. The results gave a clear indication that the Parish Council is held in high esteem by residents and that it should be encouraged to take an even more active role in looking after Croxley Green and the needs of its residents.

Cllr Jordan thanked Barry Grant for his contribution to her report and summarised by saying that 5,000 paper surveys were distributed to every household in Croxley Green to be completed between 6 - 31 January 2013. The total returned was around 1,400, which is a 28% response rate and therefore statistically significant. Approximately half were filled in online and the paper surveys were entered by a dedicated team of volunteers, who all gave their time to enter data. The next stage is to produce an analysis of the responses and to use the evidence gained to develop a strategic and pro-active approach to our planning and to developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

The meeting continued with a presentation of the Croxley Community Plan.

Wendy Jordan

A thank you from a local resident...

Some time ago I was robbed of £400. I had just taken this money out of the Watford bank for a repair. Could I thank all my dog walking friends, especially Tina and her family, as they had a collection to replace the money which I had lost. Thank you also for all the cards and flowers. I am so grateful to have such nice friends in Croxley Green.

Thank you all,

Jessie Wingfield

Our Community

Remembrance and Reflection

It was so good to see around three hundred people at the Croxley Green War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday last year to honour those who fell in war while serving their country. The ceremony was conducted with great dignity and involved a large cross section of the community, from the Chair of Three Rivers District Council and the Chair of the Parish Council to the two Brownies who read such a moving poem.

I was very proud to see the Sea Cadets, Guides, Brownies, Scouts and representatives of the forces all turned out so smartly on parade.

I am lucky enough to live on The Green where I see the war memorial everyday and often look at the names engraved there. I know that there are the names of many families who have lived here for generations. If you have a family name there and you have a story please tell it to me so we can record it.

I know that I sleep safely in my bed because of those who fought and gave their lives. Honouring them for one day in the year is the least we can do and I am glad to have the chance to reflect with my own community.



Cllr Jordan

This year's service of Remembrance will be on Sunday 10 November.

Library Christmas Tree with Carol singing?

The paved area surrounding the library is a very useful space within Croxley Green, but at present sadly under-used. In our budget discussions, the Parish Council allocated funds in order that a Christmas tree, with seasonal lighting, could be installed, hopefully this year. Well, that would give us a useful space with a Christmas tree, so what is missing? Carol singers!



This is where you come in. Having a Christmas tree outside the Library will be a lovely seasonal enhancement. But to make this even better we would like to hear from local groups and schools who would be interested in using the area for Carol singing this Christmas. This is a wonderful opportunity to enhance the community spirit of Croxley Green and to add to the many opportunities that Croxley Green has to offer its residents. If you, or a group you belong to, would be interested in participating in some carol singing during the run-up to Christmas please contact the Parish Office.

Croxley Meats

I was very dismayed to hear from Chris Gardner that he has decided to sell his business at Croxley Meats and that his last

day was 31 August. His many customers who over the years have become his friends will miss him. Chris tells me that he has worked at the shop for 36 years having started as a Saturday boy.

During the past few years he has employed the lovely Michael, quietly smiling in the background. I shall miss the best double act in town and along with everyone else wish Chris the very best in whatever he chooses to do.

Cllr Hazel Seeley

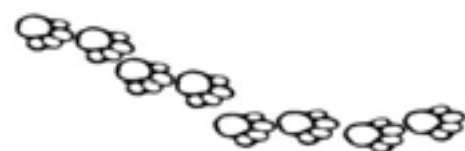
The Adventures of Stanley

Hello, my name is Stanley and I am a Border Terrier. I have just come to live in Croxley with my new owner and to me this is doggy heaven! Why? Because I am what is known as a rescue dog being passed all over the place, not being fed or exercised properly and never knowing where I could settle.

Considering my past, I don't think I am a bad dog; I get on well with adults and children but I am nervous and a little snappy around other dogs.

I am writing this story to let people know that there are many dogs which are mistreated and deserve better than being put down. Charities and rescue centres always need help in finding new homes for dogs so if you are looking for a new dog perhaps visit one of these centres and see if you can find one to suit your family situation.

I hope to let you know how things are going for me in the future but so far the signs are good. I look forward to meeting some of you on my walks around Croxley.



Our Community

Croxfest – Saturday 7 September 2013

Well, despite an early downpour of rain and the odd shower, Croxfest 2013 put together another fantastic day of music for the whole family to enjoy whilst sharing a picnic or tasting the wonderful array of food from the onsite caterer's.

A wide range of music from ten local bands along with "Big" Stu Carter, our very own Croxfest compere, brought the Green alive; entertaining the crowd of all ages throughout the day and early evening.



DeLorean

The popularity of Croxfest continues to exceed our expectations and we have received lots of feedback from many of you so thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us. This is what makes the community of Croxley Green so special!



Stephen Crabtree, the Event Organiser said "Croxfest simply wouldn't happen without the terrific support we get from the local community. We would

particularly like to say a huge thank you to all of our sponsors and partners including The Parish Council and many local businesses. It is also important to thank all of those people who generously volunteered their time to make it possible to put the event on."



The organisers of Croxfest also hosted a collection on the day which, with thanks to the generosity of the public, raised a total of £1,827.72. This will benefit the Parish Council's charities (the local Croxley Green Stroke Club and The Lynda Jackson Cancer Centre at Mount Vernon Hospital), the RAF Air Cadets at Northolt (to support the activities for young people) and Croxfest.

We are sure that there are lots of special memories of Saturday's festival. You can keep those memories going by following all the pictures that have been posted on our website www.croxfest.co.uk, our Facebook page and Twitter.

Thank you for your support and we will see you next year!

Harvey Road School Garden

Harvey Road School Gardening Club had a very busy summer!

The Gardening Club groups grew peas, broad beans and a purple-podded 'Shiraz' mangetout, in the spring and during the summer term they sowed carrots, beetroot, beans, sweetcorn and pumpkins. The children transplanted their beans into large containers which

were taken to homes during the summer holidays so they could be kept well watered. The plants have come back to school laden with beans and the children are now eating 'St. George' Runner beans, Italian 'Firetongue' beans with red speckled pods and French beans. We'll let some pods dry and save the beans to sow next year.



Twice we replanted early potatoes dug up by the badgers but then we realised that it wasn't the potatoes the badgers wanted but that bit of ground to mark their territory so we moved the potatoes by 20cm and they never touched them again! Although the potatoes we harvested were rather small, probably due to the long spell of hot, dry weather, they tasted very good. We're about to dig up our maincrop potatoes which have funny names like 'Kestrel', 'Osprey' and 'Pink Fir Apple'.

A warden from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust visited the school showing the children how to create wildlife habitats around our pond and school grounds. Mark, the Parish Ranger, came along and helped as the children made log piles, put up bird boxes and build pallet 'homes' for insects and creatures.

Our Environment

Last year the Gardening Club took part in the 'Bake your Lawn' project growing wheat. We saved some of the grain and sowed it in a 1.2m² bed this spring. As the wheat grew, the Infants children took delight in measuring themselves against it each week to see if it had grown taller than them. We have now cut down the wheat and the children will find ways to separate the grain and grind it into flour. This will be mixed with white bread flour and used to make some bread rolls.

It's been a busy and fruitful growing year in the School Garden. We have achieved level 2 of the RHS Campaign for School Gardening and we are looking forward to showing some of our vegetables at the School's Harvest Festival.

Christine Cheek - Gardening Club Organiser, Harvey Road School

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Oak Tree

On Sunday 28 October 2012 about 100 residents gathered at the southern end of The Green near All Saints Church to witness the planting of a new oak tree to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. This tree joins many others on The Green planted to mark coronations and jubilees of previous monarchs and it was felt that it was important to mark such an amazing milestone and keep this tradition going.

Rev. Miriam Mugan from All Saints blessed the tree before the then Chairman of the Parish Council, Nik Bennett, placed the first soil onto the roots. He was followed by representatives from all the Croxley Green schools: Isobel Starling and Ben Biss from Malvern Way Infants School; Joshua Smith and Jessica Birt from Harvey Road JMI School; Sara Holton and Sophia Hanson

from Little Green Junior School; Travis Green and Joe Burke from Yorke Mead JMI School and Leah Brown and George Adams from Rickmansworth School. It was fantastic to see all the schools represented in this way and hopefully those who took part in this planting ceremony will look at the tree for many years to come and watch it mature. The planting ceremony was followed by a delicious afternoon tea in the church hall with cakes donated by the Parish Councillors.



Unfortunately, the tree has not had an easy year weather-wise. Soon after the planting the coldest winter for many years began and meant that leaves appeared on the sapling quite late in the spring. Once the leaves were on the branches we had a very hot, dry spell which saw the leaves very quickly wither & turn brown. With much watering from Councillors and local residents (thank you!) a few green leaves appeared so we hope that the tree will survive and hopefully have an easier second year! A plaque similar to those under the other trees will be put

under the tree next year.

Cllr Janet Martin

Flowers 4 Croxley

After such a long cold winter, it was great to see the wonderful display of pansies which lasted for a long time. Although reluctant to take them out, we had to make room for the summer plants to go into the Watford Road beds, barrels, horse trough and station forecourt. These were duly planted up by the committee members and a couple of volunteers and were mostly watered by various shopkeepers, for which we are very grateful.

As the days became hotter and hotter, the Watford Road beds became a problem as they are so exposed and because the plants used unfortunately turned out to be not of the usual high standard. The Parish Council's Ranger was unavailable due to ill health, so Val and Michael took on the task of watering thereby saving about 90% of the plants.

For the first time F4C had their own stall at the Revels and to our delight won the cup for the 'Best Stall'. Decoration of the stall was down to Mandy, Debbie and children at Harvey Road School so thank you to all of them.



We usually do the winter planting in Oct/Nov. If anyone would like to help we would be very grateful. To find out when planting will take place please phone the Parish Council's offices on 01923 710250.

Cllr Hazel Seeley

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The Councillors and staff of Croxley Green Parish Council would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Parish Council Meetings - general public welcome



Meetings start at 8pm

Council meeting - last Thursday of each month
(except May and August)

Annual Parish Meeting - last Thursday in April

Annual General Meeting - second Thursday in May

Environment & Amenity meeting - first Tuesday of each month
(except May and August)

Planning & Development meeting - first and third Wednesday of each month

Finance & Administration meeting - second Thursday of each month
(except August)

EVENTS - dates for your diary

Oct

Sunday 13 October 2013 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Saturday 26 October 2013 - Croxley Great Barn Tour at 11am. Meet in the car park at St Joan of Arc School, Rickmansworth from 10.45am

Nov

Sunday 3 November 2013 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Thursday 14 November 2013 Police Community Support Officer Surgery 12 - 1pm at the Parish Council

Dec

Sunday 8 December 2013 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Tuesday 24 December 2013 - Parish Council office closes at 12.00pm

Tuesday 31 December 2013 - New Year's Eve Fireworks on The Green

Jan

Thursday 2 January 2014 - Parish Council re-opens

Sunday 12 January 2014 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Feb

Sunday 9 February 2014 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Mar

Sunday 9 March 2014 10am - Scrub Bashing at Croxley Common Moor. Meet at the bottom of Mill Lane by Lock 79 or follow the smoke from September.

Apr

Thursday 24 April 2014 at 8pm- Annual Parish Meeting at the Village Hall, Community Way



CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY BUS



DO YOU USE THIS SERVICE?

TO WATFORD TOWN CENTRE – EVERY FRIDAY

1ST JOURNEY

Winton Drive Approach
Shaftsbury Court
Malvern Way/Barton Way
Fuller Way/Barton Way
Hanover House
Sherborne Way/Baptist Church
Return from Watford

9.30am
9.32am
9.34am
9.36am
9.37am
9.40am
12 noon

2ND JOURNEY

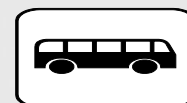
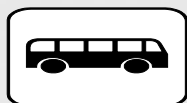
Sycamore Approach
Valley Walk (Green)
Valley Walk/Beechcroft Ave
Frankland Rd/Harvey Rd
Chalmers Court
All Saints Lane (outside church)
New Road
Return from Watford

10.00am
10.01am
10.03am
10.05am
10.08am
10.10am
10.12am
12.30pm

3RD JOURNEY

Junction Links Way & Warwick Way
Junction Links Way & Dover Way
Junction Links Way & Little Green Lane
Junction Little Green Lane & Durrants Drive
Junction Durrants Drive & Dover Way
Kenilworth Drive/Baldwins Lane Footpath
Manor Way
Grove Court
Return from Watford

10.30am
10.31am
10.32am
10.33am
10.34am
10.36am
10.38am
10.40am
1.15pm



FREE SERVICE

*For the exclusive use of Senior Citizens and
persons in sheltered accommodation.
You may be required to show proof of eligibility*

Our Environment

Baldwins Lane Play Area Refurbishment

Thanks to money from Three Rivers District Council and the Parish Council the play area in the recreation ground in Baldwins Lane has had a major facelift! The area has been enlarged and new equipment installed. There was a bit of controversy over the choice of equipment – we had hoped for something very different in style from Barton Way but the equipment that was chosen was of a similar style. Unfortunately the process was too far along to make any major changes but we asked for the mounds to be clumped together and this was agreed to and a bridge is being added to link two of these as a second phase. The work was undertaken and the equipment is now there for everyone to enjoy. There is space for some equipment to be added at a later date and we have ideas of what we think is needed to enhance the play experience of the children. We hope to put money into our budget over the next few years so that extra pieces can be added. Do let us know what else you would like to see. We also have some ideas of how to add more seating/picnic benches to the area to make it more usable – look out for more details in the near future. Another idea is to try to improve the back wall of the garages to improve the built environment, we have some ideas which we are pursuing.

There were some teething problems – some due to the very hot, dry weather during & after installation which meant that the

turf did not establish and trees suffered from lack of water; others were due to supply problems. These have now been sorted out & the trees will be monitored to see how they fare.

The 'Official Opening' took place on Friday 20 September at 4pm.

We hope you enjoy the new equipment and let us know what you think.

Cllr Janet Martin

Life on the Wild Side of Croxley

Some years ago fox hunting was abolished and the masters of the various foxhounds in the country all said that foxes would be extinct within ten years because they were no longer preserved for the chase. They should come to Croxley today – in the evening or at night. There is not a single spot that is not alive with these handsome red animals. Some are so tame that they peer cheekily through windows to try to encourage you to feed them. Badgers were once rare but as many gardeners now know they are everywhere and it requires a very strong fence to keep them from biting chunks out of the lawn or allotments in their search for worms. Deer were once unknown in the parish but now the dainty muntjac and the rather less common larger roe deer are seen daily in the woods and common land.

Red tailed kites have arrived on Croxley Common Moor and can be seen making lazy looping

circles in the sky – for the first time for two hundred years.

The whistling sound of ring tailed parakeets as they flash through the air is becoming increasingly common. I love these cheeky, beautiful birds and think it miraculous that they have managed to leave their home in West Africa and settle here. Some people complain that 'introduced' species should be discouraged. They forget that the Romans brought the hare, pheasant and rabbit to this country and we all accept them without question today.

I like to occasionally live on the 'wild side' in Croxley – in the Spring I get up at 4am to go down to Common Moor to hear the wonderful dawn chorus with the cuckoo and nightingale calling in the background. In the summer months I often enjoy a stroll at about 10pm until midnight when the bats are actively swishing past one's head in their search for insects and the owls are flapping across the face of the moon like giant moths. When one turns the torch into the night it has many mysterious eyes peering in your direction. To enjoy the wild side one should go out (preferably in silent adult pairs plus children) - have strong footwear, a torch, the right clothes for the season and a flash camera plus of course your mobile – in this way you will feel a little bit like David Attenborough as you begin your little adventure quest on the mysterious woodland paths or on the Common Moor of our Croxley Green Nature Trail.

Cllr David Wynne-Jones

Editorial Group

Cllr Janet Martin
Cllr Hazel Seeley
Cllr Wendy Shafe
Cllr David Wynne-Jones
David Allison
Amanda Taft



'Keeping Croxley Special'

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