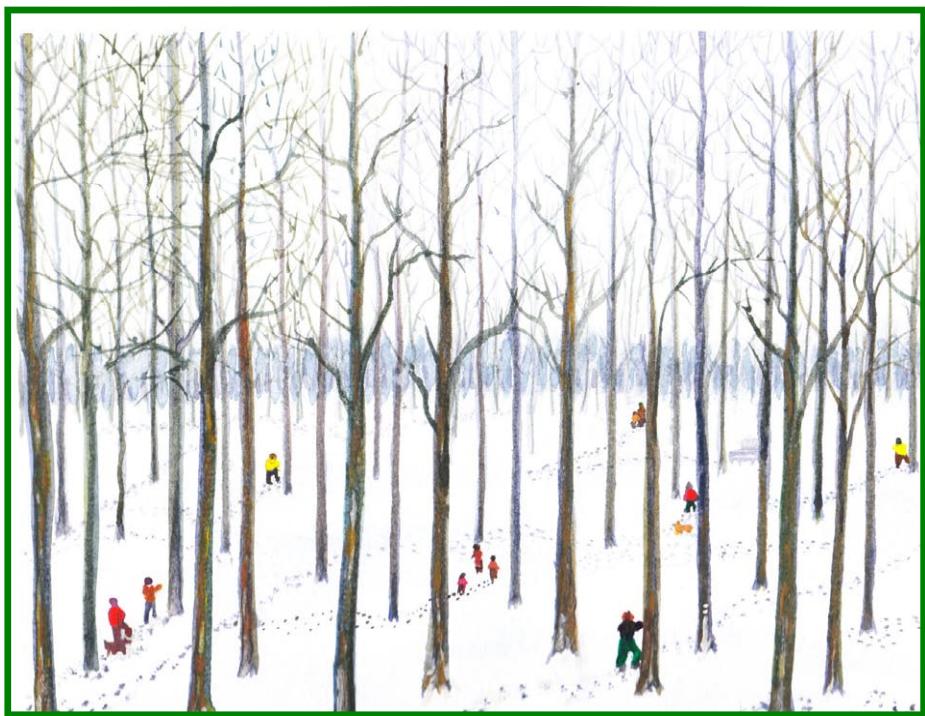




Oakley Green, Fifield & District Community Association

Winter Newsletter

February 2011



www.ogafcap.co.uk



Donations from money raised at the Fifield Fun Day in August 2010 were made to three worthy charities. Read more on page 15

OGAFCA held a social evening with Horse Racing on 26 Nov 2010. Read more on page 15



The bus stop on Oakley Green Road has been moved to a safer location. Read more on page 17

Cover by Maree Gutry
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From the Chairman

First of all, may I start by wishing you all a Happy New Year!

I am pleased to say that membership of the Association is growing week by week. And now the festive season is over, the Association and its volunteers are starting to get back to work representing our community in important matters, implementing the Community Action and Local Business Action Plans and organising social events.

The first meeting of the year of All Members and Volunteers took place on Thursday 20 January 2011 in Braywood Memorial Hall. For those of you who have not come long before, these are the meetings which last about two hours and are held three or four times a year in addition to the AGM in September. They are informal and everyone is invited.

They provide an opportunity for attendees to:

- receive an update on the work of the seven Work Groups and the Association in general
- join one of the seven Work Groups if you have not already volunteered
- come forward with ideas about how to improve our area
- meet and chat with other local residents over a cup of tea
- join the Association

So why not bring your neighbours with you?

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 24 March at 8:00 pm in Braywood Memorial Hall. Hope to see you there.

Grenville Annetts

Dates for your diary

Memorial Hall AGM - 16 March
All Volunteers Meeting 24 March
Street Party - 29 April*
Residents Association AGM - 26 May
Family Ramble - 2 June
Holyport Village Show - 10 September

Details of all these events appear in this newsletter

Redevelopment threatens our rural community

The Oakley Green, Fifield and District Residents Association has been in existence for over 40 years looking after the interests of Fifield and Oakley Green residents.

We have met on five occasions in the past year including an open meeting on 11 November 2010 attended by 30 residents. The guest speaker, Jeffery Pick, Community Watch Administrator, gave an informative and interesting talk on local crime and its possible prevention. In addition, Jeff encouraged people to set up Neighbourhood Watch Schemes. All it needs is one co-ordinator for a group of 20 or so houses. He also encouraged everyone to join Ringmaster, which gives regular information on line about crime in your area; no cost and valuable local information. Please contact me if you need further information.

Recent committee discussion has involved:

- Planning application for gypsy caravans on A308 (there was a public meeting in December).
- Ongoing problems at Wayside Stables, which constantly affect local residents.
- Braywood School and the increasing parking problems.
- 2012 Olympic rowing at Dorney and possible effect on Oakley Green and Fifield.
- Plans for redevelopment of the Bray Studios site and its implications on the local area and Green Belt policy.
- Proposals for the development of the old Emmetts Farm which is adjacent to Bray Studios. Our Chairman has met with the owners and voiced our opinion that the community are not in favour of housing development on the site.

The Bray Studios and Emmetts Farm areas constitute a real threat to the mainly rural aspect of this area and wholesale development is against the Local Area Development Plan of the RBWM (Green Belt). Housing development would virtually join Maidenhead to Windsor!

In addition to the above, other planning problems were also discussed. As you all know an area such as ours is constantly under threat. If you have any questions regarding the above or any other concerns, the committee would like to hear them.

Please note our AGM will take place at Braywood Memorial Hall on Thursday 26 May 2011 at 8pm. Do come and join us and enjoy complimentary wine afterwards. We have a vacancy on the committee so please contact us if you are interested. You will learn a lot about your local area and what goes on!

Rod Ball Vice-Chairman
01753 865730

Other Committee Members:

Bill Collier Chairman 01628 676939
Pat Morrish Secretary 01753 850782
Martin Hall Treasurer
Martin Allen
Elizabeth Mead
Paul Bennett
Mark Lloyd

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BT says 'sorry you can't get broadband'

21st Century, 25 miles from London, 3 miles or so from both Windsor and Maidenhead, the M4 corridor, Silicon Valley UK, near one of the largest trading estates in Europe ... and broadband service is pitiful. With 400 households and at least 70 businesses in our area one would have thought it a viable commercial proposition.

Last year BT's publicity drive for Infinity fibre optic lulled us into a false sense of security, leading us to believe that in September 2010 this would become available and things would improve. All we needed to do was wait a bit. Many residents registered their interest online.

September came and went. Our attempts to find out more have been frustrating. Polite operators can only confirm Maidenhead exchange now has fibre optic. They are unable to explain why we've seen no benefit and can't connect us to anyone who can. BT's website offers no more than "sorry, you can't get it".

Assured that service would improve a local business customer purchased a new line installation - only to discover the new connection provided no more than he was already getting. Apparently the marketing left hand doesn't speak to the engineering right hand. But some information was gleaned from this failure. Apparently all junction boxes along the A308 have been upgraded ... EXCEPT the one at the Fifield Road junction.

This update presented at the last All Volunteers meeting stirred considerable interest. A reporter from the Advertiser was present who has since been trying to get information with no more success. On 24 January we sent letters to the Managing Director of BT Business, the Chairman of BT, and e mails to BT's Director of External Affairs and cllr Bateson (RBWM) who has special interest in "The Big Society". The only response has been a phone call and e mail from the Chairman's office confirming that Windsor will be upgraded in March 2011, reminding us that BT is merely a service provider like many others, and that Openreach are responsible for the hardware.

Openreach's website refers enquiries to the service provider, but their head office address is the same as BT's - rather an effective isolation loop !

To support our efforts would residents with internet please register interest on the BT Infinity website accessed from the Communications

page at www.ogafcap.co.uk or directly at www.bt.com/infinity. This doesn't commit to any upgrade purchase. Enter your phone number in the "Can I get Infinity" box. You will then be offered the opportunity to register interest.

We will keep you updated via the website and in the next newsletter.

Rod Lord

Your newsletter needs your contributions

This newsletter is compiled by volunteers and in order for the content to reflect the voice of the community we need your support! If you would like to comment on any of the issues raised, contribute to the content or make any suggestions, please contact the Communications Work Group via the website or send your comments by post to: OGAFCA, Broadacre House, Coningsby Lane, Fifield, SL6 2PF

Trudi Knight - Editor

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Our children and youth need your support

Following the success of our rambles last year and the year before, we plan to organise another walk from Fifield in the May half term. The date proposed is Thursday 2 June 2011 starting at 4.30 pm. We plan to ramble across the fields spotting wild flowers along the way. All families are very welcome.

Further details will be in the next newsletter.

There are numerous clubs and activities in our area so if your child would like to try ballet, tap, judo, karate, horse riding or even sailing, look for more details on the clubs and activities page on the community website www.ogafcap.co.uk

If you would like to get involved with the Children and Youth Work Group and help organise activities, events and give input for future projects in the local area please contact us.

Robin Howard robin.howard@dawsonhoward.com or
Alison Brayshaw jbrayshaw@btopenworld.com or 07970 020 973

Alison Brayshaw



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How to make your property safe

The police have reported that crime in the Maidenhead area has fallen slightly. Seventy-five percent of all crimes could have been avoided if people had not given the burglars every chance to steal by leaving items in their cars, not locking their cars, leaving windows open or keys in the door at night: burglars have a way to get keys out through the letter box! If we are to cut crime then we must not make it easy for the burglar to strike. Below I have listed some things you can do to make your property as safe as you can.

Fasten all doors and windows securely when you leave your home even if you are going out for a few minutes and before you go to bed. Lock your side gate if you have one, Take all your belongings from the inside of your car and lock your car in the garage before you lock the garage door.

Tall lockable gates, high fences and prickly plants will deter intruders. When you are away for extended periods of time use timers to turn lights and the radio on at selected times during the day and at night, burglars do not only operate at night.

Fit low cost outside lights with sensors so that anyone approaching your property can be seen, this is a good deterrent for burglars. Photograph and mark all your valuables with an ultra violet marker, if you need help with this contact Jeff Pick the neighbourhood watch coordinator at Maidenhead police station.

Use strong padlocks on your garden shed and chain large items together in the shed. A burglar will think twice about trying to cut the chain for fear of making a noise.

Consider fitting an alarm to your garage and shed.

Don't leave garden implements outside in the garden, these are just the tools burglars need to break in.

Organise and participate in a community watch programme to protect your neighbourhood. An alert community is a safe community and if you need help with this please give me a ring 01628 676939.

If you have not already signed up to community messaging, go to <http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/crprev/aboutus-watch.commsq>

Check out home security tips with the help of a special interactive house at www.safer-homes.org

We have a police surgery at the Fifield Inn car park once a month, so if you see a police van in the car park, take the time to talk to the PCSOs. The police are looking for ways to cut expenditure and if we don't use the police surgery we could lose it.

Be safe.

Bill Collier

Please put on your wellies and bring a spade

I'm sure most of you with any interest in our local water problems will be aware of the Environment Work Group's struggles to deal with the very simplest of the eight remaining "wet spots" on our list. This is item two in our report at the speed bump on Fifield Road near Longlea Nursing Home.

We reported in the Autumn Newsletter that Streetcare had finally managed to have a consultation with the Gas utility who thought they may have laid a gas main in this ditch. Streetcare have carried out exploratory work to determine at what depth this might be and there does not appear to be a gas main in the ditch after all. Notice has been issued to the owner of the adjacent field to return it to proper functioning order. There has been no response and Streetcare issued a second letter during the week beginning 31 January 2011. If no response is forthcoming within four weeks the matter will be referred to the Council's Legal Section. We reported to Streetcare that the surface of the road at this spot had become seriously deteriorated. They informed Highways who have carried out patching work. It looks as if there will be further delays so we may again need to form a volunteer work party to do more manual clearance as a temporary holding measure.

Much better news on our next "wet spot", item three in our report, at Braywood Lodge on the Oakley Green Road. Streetcare initially said this was the responsibility of the residents. We stressed that the main problem is a blocked pipe under the roadside verge. Streetcare have now agreed to schedule this pipe to be jetted. It was noted in our report that the outflow of this pipe is impeded by the silted-up ditch bed and I had a site visit with Phillip Mortimer who keeps the rest of this ditch clear. The first section of this ditch as it leaves the pipe on its way to the major water course to the east is not his responsibility. We will be forming another volunteer work party to clear this section before Streetcare can do their work. Phil is an Environment volunteer and has kindly offered to bring his spade!

Item four in our report is Coningsby Lane. We will return to this for further discussions with landowners. There was an assertion that land drainage pipe laid during the installation of the SEW pipeline would somehow solve the problem. Recent wet weather has shown this is not the case. Unfortunately we have lost the opportunity of an offer from

Streetcare early last year for the installation of an underground pipe along the edge of a field. The funding for that is now no longer available.

The site visit with Phil Mortimer continued to look at our item five in the report at a field entrance further east on Oakley Green Road. We have made a proposal for some limited work that could improve this situation and Streetcare have kindly agreed to investigate the feasibility when they carry out the work nearby at Braywood Lodge.

We would like to compile a list of people who might be prepared occasionally to put on their wellies and bring their spade for a couple of hours to various locations. We will contact them when suitable dates and times are set (most likely on Sunday afternoons). Hopefully a few on the list will be able to spare time to turn out for one or other of the work parties. We would be very grateful if any of you who feel this is something you could contribute to would notify us of your willingness.

You can contact us either via the contact button on the Environment page at the community website www.ogafcap.co.uk, by a note to OGAFCA, Broadacre House, Coningsby Lane, Fifield, SL6 2PF or by phoning 01628 627032

Rod Lord

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Memorial Hall supports our community

Braywood War Memorial Hall, situated on the corner of Fifield Road and Forest Green Road was built in memory of those who were killed in the First World War and houses the war memorial plaques for both wars which were taken from Braywood church on its closure. The hall was built by public subscription at a cost of two shilling and sixpence a brick (13p) on land owned by the Clayton family. Sir Fitzroy Clayton, a hero of the Crimean War, lived in Fifield House and is buried in Braywood Cemetery next to Braywood School. The Clayton family sold Fifield House in 1919 to Capt Forester Brittain who also helped fund the construction of the hall. The hall was opened in November 1919 by one of Sir Fitzroy's relatives and has served the needs of the community to this day. The Jubilee Room was added in 1977 to celebrate the Queen's silver jubilee.

In its time the hall has been used for many local events and was the home of Braywood Women's Institute until its closure in 2010. In the 70's the hall was used as a rehearsal studio for the group Edison Light House who had a number one hit with Love Grows (Where My Rosemary Goes). The hall continues to be used on a regular basis reflecting the needs of the times and community.

The hall is run by a management committee which meets 10 times a year. The committee has vacancies and would welcome new members. If anyone would like to join please contact David Embrey on 01628 631179.

The hall committee look forward to seeing everyone at their AGM, to be held on Wednesday 16 March at 8pm in the Memorial Hall.

David Embrey
Hall Chairman

Thank you for the support

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead made a grant to The Community Association of £500 to cover initial set up costs, and to contribute towards running costs and the quarterly newsletter which is delivered to all households. The Association are grateful for the support that they have received.

Helen Howard
Treasurer

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Generous donations made to local charities

On Friday 26 November 2010 the Social and Recreational Work Group organised our third community social and horse racing event in Braywood Memorial Hall.

At the beginning of the evening Andy James, who was the leader of the Fifield Fun Day organising committee thanked local residents for their support for the Fun Day held in August. The weather was not very kind but despite this, there was a good turnout and almost £6000 was raised. Andy then presented cheques for £1850 to representatives of the three organisations they supported in 2010 – Rosie's Rainbow Fund, Thames Hospicecare and the Community Association. (See the photographs in the newsletter and in the photo gallery on the website)

www.ogafcap.co.uk

Andy said that the committee were looking for new members and made a plea for local helpers to come forward. If you are interested please contact us via the website.

Then the fun started. This time we hired a company called Paul Boyce Entertainment to run the video horse racing part of the evening - back after popular demand. There was a licensed bar and as usual, at times you could hardly hear yourself speak as punters cheered on their horses to the winning line! Everyone had great fun and many of us left poorer, hoarse and exhausted.

The Social and Recreational Work Group is already planning further events in 2011- the third annual Food, Wine and Ales Fair in June, another community and horse racing night in the autumn and possibly a barn dance and a craft fair. Of course, we need to make sure that these do not clash or compete with other established local events (e.g. Holyport Fair and Show). Dates and locations of future events will be announced in the quarterly newsletter, the website, posters and fliers.

STOP PRESS – we are planning a Royal Wedding Street Party on 29 April - read more on page 22. To find out more call Louise on 01628 783448 or Grenville on 01628 784441 or click the button on the Home page on the website www.ogafcap.co.uk

Grenville Annettts

RBWM Litter picking dates

Oakley Green Road:

7 February, 28 February, 21 March, 11 April, 2 May

Forest Green Road:

21 February, 14 March, 4 April, 25 April 16 May

Fifield Road, Meadow Way, Stewart Close, Manor Grove:

21 February 4 April 16 May

Coningsby Lane:

7 March, 18 April, 30 May

Further dates for 2011 will be printed in the Spring Newsletter, due to be published in May 2011

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Residents delighted with their new bus stop

Residents on Oakley Green Road catching a number 6 bus to Maidenhead have a much more pleasant and safe area to wait thanks to a brand new bus stop opposite Kimbers Farm. Bus users had complained that the previous site was unsafe as it was close to a bend, had no bus sign and the small waiting area was overgrown. The Roads and Transport Work Group of OGAFCA took up the issue with the council who initially said the site could not be relocated as the council did not own alternative land and set to improving the existing site. RBWM engineering department however condemned the site because of the double white lines down the centre of the road.

The council looked again at where the bus stop could be relocated and found they did own the land where residents wanted it moved to in the first place – opposite Kimbers Farm! Over several months the Roads and Transport Work Group closely worked with the Royal Borough to ensure progress was maintained and agreement was reached on the design.

The new bus stop incorporates many new features. The area is tarmaced with a wheelchair/disabled ramp so access can be easily reached from the opposite side of the road. The pole is coloured green as we are in a rural area (urban areas will have grey poles) and the flag or sign on top of the pole carries a great deal of information, phone numbers, websites, and importantly a unique SMS text code which on dialling from your mobile phone will immediately give in real time the number of minutes to the arrival of the next bus. This has been tested and it works! The bus stop has a printed timetable and the name “Kimbers Farm”. Local users are already expressing their delight with their new bus stop!



Can you believe until one week before going to print this was the waiting area for the bus stop.

Note the double white lines in the centre of the road which was the reason for finally condemning it.

The colour photograph of the new bus stop appears on the inside front cover of the newsletter.

Forum set up for local businesses

The Local Business Action Plan has been published and distributed to 70 companies operating in our area. A letter was also sent inviting those companies to take part in an informal meeting to try to establish if any of the businesses could be of some benefit to each other. Only six companies replied and a forum will be set up for these companies to meet and discuss that possibility.

One of the items to be discussed is viable broadband. Many companies rely on the internet and it appears that Fifield is the only place along the A308 that has not been upgraded to fibre optic cable. The Communications Work Group has been in contact with BT to find out why Fifield has not be upgraded. More can be read about this on page six. Pressure from the business community will add weight to that argument.

If any business has not yet signed up to the forum and would like to then please contact Bill Collier on 01628 676939 or Paula Grevett through the community website www.ogafcap.co.uk

Bill Collier.

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Look out for wild life on this local walk

This walk takes approximately 1hr 30mins and takes you through footpaths, fields, across stiles and along some busy roads so please take care. REMEMBER; - Take nothing but photographs—leave nothing but footprints and keep dogs on a lead.

Start from the Fifield Inn and turn left along Fifield Road, past Stewart Close, Meadow Way on your right, Coningsby Lane on you left, past Manor Grove and Longlea Nursing Home. Continue forward on Fifield Road to pass Wayside Stables. When you reach the junction with Windsor Road cross with extreme care to pass Monkey Island Court flats on your left. Continue onwards down Monkey Island Lane past Tithe Barn Drive to Summerleaze Works and the Bray Marina which is on your right (well worth a detour). After the Bray Water Treatment Works bear left to Bray Lake. Cross a small bridge and pass the car park and continue until you find a café on your left where a welcome cup of coffee awaits. Watch the water skiers and other water sports then continue along the main track, with the lake on your left: keep a good eye out for the wild life on and around the lake, you may be surprised. You will eventually see (or more likely hear) the M4 on your right. Continue forward, cross over a wooden bridge until you reach the Windsor Road. Cross carefully and enter Bray Parish Cemetery. Pass the gravestones then you will reach a swing gate, go through and bear slightly left to another swing gate, enter a large field and continue forward with the hedge on your right. You will now reach two swing gates in the right hand corner of the field. Enter another large field and continue with a fence and hedge on your right, go through swing gate and continue forward until you reach the first of three stiles which lead to Coningsby Lane. Turn left and at the junction with Fifield Road, turn right and return to the Fifield Inn, and a well-deserved pint.

Robin Knock

Volunteers needed

This newsletter is distributed by hand and free of charge four times a year to every household in our community. If you have time to spare and would like to help with distribution please contact the Communications Work Group via the website. Help is needed in the Dedworth and Tarbay Lane area and along the Drift Road.

Editor



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Social History Corner

The following extract was written in 1950 by an unknown member of the Braywood Women's Institute and was submitted by Paul Buckley Estate Manager at New Lodge. The article and links to other historic sites can be found on the community website.

Sparboro' (*the hill near New Lodge*), across which at some time the Roman legions marched, has kept a measure of fame throughout the years – not because its Roman road, but because of its blackberry bushes, and people came from miles around to gather the most abundant berries in the autumn. It was a lovely spot, almost prodigal in its generosity to those who visited it. Here could be found sloes for wine when there was sugar to spare for making wine, crab apples for jolly, more blackberries that could possibly be gathered, and on misty September mornings big fresh mushrooms for those who knew where to look! There were Tinsels for winter decoration slender sprays of scarlet and orange spindle berries, and branches of rosy crab-apple blossom in spring.

It was a wonderful place for birds, and in spring the nests of all well known birds could be found. Moorhens nested in the pond at the bottom of the hill, barn owls in the great hollow oak, the roofed nest of magpie could be seen in the high hedges and blackbirds, thrushes, wrens, chaffinches, bullfinches and many others in the hedges and bushes. Here one could see any number of great spotted woodpeckers and in the spring nightingales sang from the willow copse near the pond. In the winter great flocks of field faros flow chattering among the hawthorns. Scattering the hard white seed of the haws when they had eaten what they had wanted.

Now in the spring of 1950, bulldozers have uprooted bushes, the trees have been cut. The Sparboro' stand bare and desolate, waiting to be ploughed and sown with corn. The corn will probably be more useful but there will be plenty of regrets for the wild beauty of the field the people have known for so long. Will the nightingales recognise their own home with the willows gone and will the field fares find enough berries on the few hedges left untrimmed?

Further extracts from this article will appear in future newsletters.

Art Club continues to flourish

The Art Club started in May 2010 with just four members and has grown to a healthy 12 members who are all ardent painters. We have acquired the services of a qualified tutor who will begin teaching acrylics on 7 February. The course will run for 12 weeks and then progress onto oils, pastels and drawing. After trying all the mediums the members will choose which one they want to use and paint in their own style.

We have just completed an exercise where the members painted a winter scene for the cover of this newsletter. Congratulations go to Maree Gutry whose painting appears on the cover of this issue. Maree comes from New Zealand and had painted in oils but not watercolours, so it shows the great progress she has made since joining the art club. Her husband Murray had never put brush to paper when he started and the painting he submitted won runner up and received a high commendation. The directors of the Community Association judged the paintings not knowing the names of the artists until the final choice had been made.

It is proposed to hold an art exhibition later in the year so watch this space for details.

Bill Collier



29th April
2011

as we haven't been invited to
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