



Oakley Green, Fifield & District Community Association

Winter Newsletter

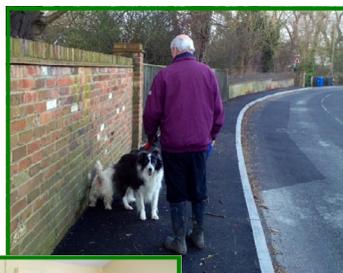
January 2012



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In this issue read about...

...the new footway in Fifield



...plans for another Fun Day



...a festive Christmas Fair



...the launch of the Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan initiative

...another fun social event

...as well as community news and forthcoming OGAFCA social events.

From the Chairman

First of all, a Happy New Year to all our readers! And what a year it promises to be - with The Olympics and The Queen's Jubilee celebrations and other important local activities, such as the Bray Neighbourhood Plan initiative. Hopefully, we will soon all be rid of the nasty and enduring colds that have been going round this warm winter and be fit and ready to enjoy this very significant year.

The work and membership of the Community Association has continued to grow over the past year and we are starting to see some real differences and improvements in our area and environment. Our seven Work Groups undertake most of the work and are always looking for new volunteers, so if you have made a New Year's Resolution to support the local community, they are a perfect place to put your resolution into practice. The most recent successes are covered elsewhere in this edition and I would like to thank our volunteers and spokespersons for their time and efforts in delivering these.

As well as the AGM in September, we hold several All Volunteers and Members meetings each year and this is where anyone can come along and hear about what we are doing and provide input. The next one is scheduled for **Thursday 23 February in Braywood Memorial Hall at 7.30pm**. Everyone is welcome. The Annual General Meeting will take place this year on **Thursday 20 September at 7:30 pm in Braywood Memorial Hall**.

The majority of our members signed up initially for two years and their memberships are up for renewal on 31 March. Subscriptions are an important source of revenue for the Association and remain very good value at £3 for a year and £5 for two years. So we are delivering application forms to every household and business with this newsletter to encourage you to renew and of course, we more than welcome new members!

Hopefully all of you will be aware of the Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan initiative. (See article from Chris Graham – Steering Group Chairman over the page). The consultation process continues: some of you will have attended one or more of the three recent public events held at the end of last year and completed a survey booklet then. But in an effort to try and increase the response from households and businesses in Bray Parish which includes our own Oakley Green,

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Fifield and District Community Association area, a copy of their Survey Booklet will be delivered to every property in the next few weeks. Copies are also available to complete online on their website. It is another chance to have your say and so it is really important that we all take the time to complete the survey so we can influence local development Planning Policy and Direction in the future.

If you wish to become more involved, please consider becoming a Contributor to one of the four Topic Groups - Countryside and Green Belt, Housing and the Built Environment, Transport and Infrastructure and the most recently formed (and therefore in need of more new Contributors) Local Economy Group.

Finally, you will see elsewhere in this edition that we have a very full programme of social events planned for this busy year. These events are an opportunity to have some fun in these testing times, meet up with friends and neighbours and provide another source of income to support the work of your Community Association.

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Into 2012 with the Bray Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Our three Launch Events in November and December 2011, one of which was held in Braywood Hall and run with the help of Fifield residents, generated significant interest and 24 volunteers to be part of our four Topic Groups. By the time you read this, we will have held the Topic Group Kick-Off meeting and begun the real work on the Plan. 2012 will be a very busy year because by December 2012 we expect to have completed the draft Plan. During 2012 you will see a variety of communications and surveys from us, designed to help us gather local opinion, the results from which will be turned into the policies which will guide the future of development in Bray Parish.

We asked everyone who attended the Launch Events to complete a Survey Booklet and by the end of January every household in the Parish of Bray will have been delivered a version of this Survey Booklet. Residents will be able to complete this either in hard copy or online at our website www.brayplan.com. If you have not already completed a Survey, please do so when you receive your copy! Additional copies of the booklet will be available from the Parish Office, (Rear of Holyport War Memorial Hall) Moneyrow Green, Holyport, Maidenhead, SL6 2NA, telephone 01628 777997.

In the meantime we await with interest the outcome of the consultation on the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework which has received much adverse comment in the press recently. You can keep up to date with our activities and read my occasional Chairman's Chat at www.brayplan.com or contact us on brayplan@gmail.com

Chris Graham
Steering Group Chairman

Dates for your diary

OGAFCA All Members and Volunteers Meeting - Thursday 23 Feb
OGAFCA spring newsletter deadline - Sunday 1 April
OGAFCA Jubilee Street Party - Monday 4 June
OGAFCA Family Ramble - Thursday 7 June
Fifield Fun Day - Saturday 11 August
Holyport Village Show - Saturday 8 September
OGAFCA AGM - Thursday 20 September

Another Fun Day planned

We are delighted to report that the village Fun Day last year raised an impressive £5,000 for the chosen charities and we can now confirm that this money has been allocated as follows:

£1,600 to Rosie's Rainbow
£1,600 to Thames Hospicecare
£1,600 to Alexander Devine Children's Trust
£200 to the Oakley Green, Fifield and District Community Association

The biggest attraction was the ever popular Steam Train ride, which, as it took passengers on a journey around the Fun Day ground (and more!) was an exciting experience for parents and children alike. That combined with the usual attractions:- Hedwig and chums, the Dog Show, the Punch & Judy, the Working Gun Dogs demonstration, the Ferret Racing, the Small Animal Farm and many more, made the day a great success.

The whole event had a cosy, country fair atmosphere and we hope to emulate that again this year.

BUT...

It took a great deal of organization so a HUGE thanks go to all our sponsors and the volunteers who, whilst looking serene and in control on the surface, were paddling like mad below!

SO...

If you can spare a few hours this year – the Fun Day will take place on Saturday 11 August 2012, please contact us NOW! Your contribution (time, or money, or anything else!) no matter how small, will help.

YOUR FUN DAY NEEDS YOU!!!!

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or Louise Shenston 01628 783448

Louise Shenston
On behalf of the Fifield Fun Day Committee



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Things begin to move on our roads

The Roads and Transport Work Group are pleased to report a number of recent developments.

Footways

Residents will have seen that we have a new footway in Fifield! The new footway is a continuation of the pre-existing path from outside Fairview Cottage, past Aven Brook to the boundary with Willow Creek. Everything went according to plan for the first phase and the work was finished on time. Pedestrians can now walk safely along this stretch of road – see attached photo of happy resident!

The second phase - Willow Creek to Coningsby Lane is still under discussion, but we have our fingers firmly crossed, particularly as this section is the most precarious!

If negotiations go well, this phase should be agreed and work will begin after April. Once this has been done we will be looking at the other areas highlighted in the survey:

1. The Fifield Road from the Nursing Home down to the A308
2. The Forest Green Road from Ledger Lane to Forest View Cottages and beyond.
3. Oakley Green Road from the junction with the Dedworth Road, north to the A308.

Traffic Speed

Unfortunately we seem to be stuck on red when it comes to traffic speed.

The proposed reduction in the speed limit on Forest Green Road to 40 mph has not yet gone to public consultation, however, Ward Councillor Leo Walters was seen walking in an easterly direction on Forest Green Road on Sunday 8 January 2012 at 14.50 hours, so hopefully he was carrying out his own research into the matter! That time of day is particularly quiet, especially on a Sunday, so unfortunately he may not get a true feeling for the danger to pedestrians, but...

...he did inform us that consultants had been asked to revisit the matter, so we may hear soon. We would welcome comments from anyone who is concerned.

Bus Service

Now that we have a number of new bus shelters and “state of the art” bus stop signs (complete with text messaging services) we intend to work on improving the service itself and will be looking at the possibility of buses running later, on Sunday and on additional routes. Again your comments would be welcomed.

Louise Shenston

Two successful social ‘firsts’

Since the autumn newsletter, we have held two successful social events: both of them “firsts”, in that we have not held them before.

On Saturday 29 October we organised a **Family Social Evening** during which we played Bingo. It was held early in the evening and we laid on some food, with the help of The Fifield Inn (thanks to Helen and Gary). We specifically wanted to try and involve our local children and it worked. The bonus was that we saw a few grandparents for the first time as well! Thanks to Alison Brayshaw who was the main organiser and who has agreed to organise another one next autumn.

And then on Saturday 26 November we organised our first **Christmas Fair**. Our original survey, carried out in 2008, told us that this type of event should be popular. Bill Collier was the main organiser and we had a wide range of stalls selling very high quality products including - Usborne Books - Phoenix Cards - the Pampered Chef (kitchen items) - The Spotty Strawberry (handmade items, baskets boxes etc.) - Julie Benson (handmade jewellery) - Shedcraft (handmade wooden and china products) - Rowena Kelly (hand crafted items) - Carol Ann Spencer (handmade buttons) - Forever Living (beauty products), Marilyn Embery (handmade scarfs etc.), Night Owls (handicrafts), Claire Breadle (homemade jams, handbags and belts). All very impressive and a good place for Christmas shopping!

Grenville Annetts

The history of Braywood

The following is the first of four extracts from an article written in 1950 by a member of the Women's Institute. The article will be serialized over the next four issues of the OGAFCA newsletter. The entire article can be found in the Features section on the OGAFCA website.

In the strict sense of the word, Braywood is not a village at all. It consists of two main parts, Fifield and Oakley Green with Forest Green and Hans Hill making up the outlying parts of the parish. The church and the school are known as Braywood church and Braywood school respectively, but there is no Braywood village. How then did this strange state of affairs come about?

The answer is that Braywood is a new parish, having been taken from Bray parish in 1871 and created a parish of its own. Unlike so many Berkshire villages it has no long tradition of village life, deep rooted from the days of the land loving Saxons, though doubtless many of the Saxon rovers sailed their boats up the Thames and settled in these flat fertile fields by the riverside.

The early history of Braywood is to be found in the records of Bray parish, of which it formed a part less than a hundred years ago. The first authentic mention of Braywood probably occurs in the Domesday book, where Bray is stated to have woods sufficient for 60 pigs. These woods containing enough oaks and beeches to feed 60 pigs on acorns and beech mash all the year, probably covered a big part of what is now the parish of Braywood

A survey of the Manor of Bray dated 1608 includes these commons, a common near Water Oakley, East Oakley Green and Fifield Green. There are no commons now but there is quite a group of cottages at Water Oakley and both Oakley Green and Fifield have both become sizeable hamlets.

When Charles 1 was beheaded, the Manor of Bray was offered for sale by parliament as having belonged to the late King. It was then stated that there were within the Manor, diverse commons and at this time in addition to the commons already mentioned, New Lodge was mentioned as a 'plains lying between Bray Wood and Bray Nayts'.

New Lodge figures largely in the subsequent history of the village; indeed, but for New Lodge and its original owners, we should probably be a part of Bray still.

At this time it was stated that the Beadle of the Manor of Bray had the right to take four loads of wood yearly from Bray woods for executing his office. It had taken Braywood nearly 600 years to graduate from being mentioned as a means of sustenance for 60 pigs to gain fame for supplying the Beadle of Bray with some of his fuel.

Fifield can lay claim to having some share in the beauties of Bray church, for in 1647 it recorded in the church warden's book that Mr Winch of Fifield was paid £1. 12s. 3d for the new 'phaunt'. This seems little enough for the 'phaunt' but the same item records that Waul the joiner was paid the sum of 6d for carrying the font home to his house.



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Good News....Bad News

It's time to take stock of where we are in our attempts to improve the nine "Wet Spots" in our area that the Environment Work Group identified and reported on as part of the Community Action Plan. For those who still aren't aware of that report it's available for download on the web site or as hard copy on request.

The good news is that we hope we have successfully dealt with and signed off on two locations on the list. These were item one at the Cricket Ground on Oakley Green Road, and item three at Braywood Lodge. I say "hope" because we haven't yet had weather conditions that would truly test what's been done.

There's some partially good news for Wet Spot 5 on the Oakley Green Road at the field entrance next to Woodlands and opposite Fifield House. In times of extreme weather water flows out of this entrance onto the road and floods it for a considerable length. Streetcare lived up to their promise to investigate this location with our proposals in mind.

Our first basic recommendation was that the size of the pipe below the footway should be at least doubled. Unfortunately this has not been done, but in the process of jetting this pipe a break was discovered and work was scheduled and carried out to repair the break and install two new roadside gullies at the field entrance. Our minimum proposal was for a grid spanning the full width of the entrance that would feed into the existing pipe. So this is not entirely good news as it is doubtful that these new standard roadside gullies will have more than a brief delaying effect and much of the water volume is likely to simply flow past these gullies. We will of course have to reserve judgement and reassess the situation when we are next subjected to extreme wet weather.

The bad news is that the simplest of all the locations to deal with is still resisting. This is item 2 on our list at the speed bump on Fifield Road near Longlea Nursing Home. OGAFCA volunteers have twice been deployed at this location and will no doubt be required again. After two notices being issued by Streetcare to the owners of the adjacent land we are still no closer to finally getting the ditch re-established. Normally in these situations the matter would long ago have been passed to the Legal Department at RBWM. Unfortunately it seems this department has been in some disarray for a long time and there does not appear to

be any change to this situation on the horizon. In September 2011 Streetcare informed us that "the Council are in the process of appointing a Flood Risk Engineer which should allow the resolution of this issue to be progressed."

The other item of bad news is that there has been no further progress with item 4 on the list at Coningsby Lane. This is a great shame as there are realistic and economic measures that could be taken to make real improvements to this situation. These were studied and proposed as long ago as 2002. Unfortunately a couple of local residents are unhappy about these proposals and it is unlikely that anything further can be achieved until the weather makes this location an obvious problem again as at some point it inevitably will.

That leaves four locations on our list still to deal with. These will require budgets beyond what is normally available. Unfortunately since early signs of enthusiasm from the RBWM "Big Society" Councillor with suggestions of a meeting at the Council offices we have heard absolutely nothing. On 8 October 2011 Theresa May made some local visits to households in Coningsby Lane. Her colleague, Councillor Love was rather surprised to be tackled on the subject of local drainage issues but asked for a follow up email with a summary of the situation and promised to follow up immediately. This was done within ten minutes of his departure, but sadly there has been no response.

In the hope of not seeming too pushy or irritant, we have been waiting patiently for the promised meeting date. Perhaps the time has come to stop waiting but for the moment it is as yet unclear how we might progress the four remaining "Wet Spots".

Rod Lord

RBWM Litter picking dates

dates are approximate and for the week beginning

Fifield: 23 Jan, 5 March, 16 April, 28 May

Oakley Green: 30 Jan, 20 Feb, 12 March, 2 April, 23 April

Don't hold your breath!

It's nearly a year now since Cllr Burbage's office managed to get a response from Openreach High Level Complaints regarding the pitiful state of Broadband in our area and the fact that the cabinet at the junction of the A308 with Fifield Road was the only one not upgraded to Fibre Optic. In that email reply Openreach gave an assurance that the intention was to eventually upgrade this area to Infinity Fibre Optic but that this might take 18 to 24 months. If we take them at their word we should expect to receive a massive improvement sometime between August 2012 and February 2013.

If we've learned anything at all since 2009 it's not to hold your breath.

In early October 2011 Theresa May and her local team had a little outing to Fifield and visited some houses in Coningsby Lane. One household tackled her on the issue of broadband availability in Fifield and she promised to follow up. To her credit a confirmation letter was sent before the end of October to say that she had written to the Chief Executive of BT asking to be updated on what steps were being taken to improve the service. The letter ended with an undertaking to inform the addressees of the response received.

That was nearly three months ago. As I said, it doesn't do to hold your breath!

We have to assume that even if the office of the Chief Executive of BT can fob us off by handing us off to Openreach ... and back again ... they might be less cavalier with the Home Secretary. One would hope a response had been provided by now. We will approach our MP's office and ask if a response has yet been received.

Rod Lord

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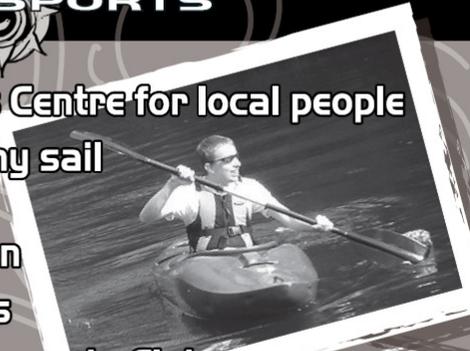
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Art Club holds a successful exhibition

The Oakley Green and Fifield Art Club had a very successful year culminating in an exhibition of the work produced by our budding artists, most of whom had not put brush to paper when they joined in May 2010. Visitors to the exhibition complemented the artists on the very high standard of the work on display. We will be exhibiting again this year - the date advertised in the newsletter.

Classes are held every Monday from 3 pm until 5 pm and beginners watercolour classes are held every Tuesday from 7 pm until 9 pm. Spaces are limited, so if you would like to start to learn to paint or improve your skills contact me by telephone or email.

Bill Collier 01628 676939
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Businesses work together to help growth

The Local Business Work Group has recently acquired two new enthusiastic members and we now look forward to our re-launch in 2012. The initial Network meeting held last year provided us with ideas for future venues, events and seminars.

We have over 100 businesses located within the OGAFCA area and there are several hundred more within the Bray Parish boundary, so there is huge potential for a mutually beneficial Business Forum to act independently and help with the development of local companies. The Forum could assist local businesses with marketing, offer advice on staffing, legal, investment and tax matters. By clubbing together, businesses could influence issues such as utilities and business rates, and generally improving the economic outlook for local companies. The Forum will be driven by members, who, by sharing information and ideas, will help each other grow.

We will be carrying out further research over the next two months, and anticipate organising our first Forum meeting of 2012 in April.

If you have any ideas or wish to join either the Work Group or the Forum, please contact us via the Local Business page on the website.

Paula Grevett and Bill Collier

New Local Planning Work Group to be formed

The Community Association has decided to establish a new Work Group – called Local Planning. As with all of our other existing seven Work Groups, it will be made up of interested volunteers from across our community, representing households and local businesses in our area. The reason for this is to provide a focus for our activities in planning matters. This is especially important right now whilst the very important Bray Neighbourhood Plan initiative is going on. If you wish to join this work group, please let me know.

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Some useful safety information

The non-urgent Police contact number of 0845 8505 505 has now been replaced with the number 101: this costs 15p per call of any length. It can be used to contact our local Police Community Support Officers who are now:

- Fifield and Forest Green: Matt Wingrove and Cosmin Radu
- Oakley Green: Ollie Woodland, Ricky Khaliq and Michelle Walker

In addition PC Graham Slater is responsible for schools and should be contacted on the above number concerning any discussions over Braywood School parking.

For updated information concerning crime mapping in our area, go to www.police.uk and input your postcode.

Don't forget to subscribe to www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org for daily updates and alerts concerning criminal and fraudulent activity in our local area. It is an extremely worthwhile and interesting interactive system with Thames Valley Police.

And finally a community safety concern has been raised by a number of residents. This is an issue that affects most of us, especially those of us who walk: cars parking on verges and footways. The Community Safety Work Group has spoken to the police for advice on this matter. Apparently cars are allowed to park on verges and footways providing they leave enough room for pedestrians, pushchairs and wheelchairs, electric or otherwise, enough room to pass without having to go onto the road. If you have to park on the verge or footway, would you kindly consider the pedestrians and park in a satisfactory position so as to allow them to pass along the footway, which after all is what it is there for.

Many thanks for your future co-operation.

Keep safe!

Paula Grevett and Bill Collier

Many social events planned for 2012

The Social and Recreational Work Group has already started to plan some events for 2012. Look out for more information in future newsletters and on our website nearer the time.

Fourth Race Night – end of March. Punters come along and wildly cheer their horses on. A chance to win (and lose) a few Pounds and have a drink with your family and friends.

Fourth Annual Food, Wine and Ales Fair – end of May. Planning has started and we are checking out weekend dates in late May with local high quality suppliers of great food, quaffable wines and super beers.

Family Rambles – to be organised by Alison Brayshaw in June and August. These involve a nice gentle stroll through our local countryside ending up with refreshments at a local hostelry. Dogs and children especially welcome!

Street Party – The Street Party we held to celebrate the Royal Wedding last April was a huge success, so we are planning a similar event to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee on Monday 4 June, subject to certain permissions from the RBWM Highways Authority.

Autumn Family Social Evening – late October. Based on the success of the first one last year, we are planning on having another Bingo night and early supper.

Christmas Fair – again after the success of last year, we are planning to hold another one at the end of November. Bill Collier will again be the point man on this one – so contact him if you want to have a stall.

If you wish to help out with organising any (or all) of these, please contact us via the Social and Recreational Work Group on the website or telephone 01628 784441.

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Know your rights

It's your insurance policy not the insurers, which means that in the event of an accident, whether or not it's your fault, you are entitled to have your vehicle repaired by a manufacturers' approved repairer to their high standards.

At AAA, we offer a completely free of charge 24hr Accident Management for private individuals and business users, ensuring your vehicle is repaired at our state-of-the-art manufacturers' approved Bodyshop.

With one simple phone call, we will deal with your claim from start to finish. If the accident was not your fault, you have the legal right to a like-for-like replacement vehicle completely free of charge. At fault customers will be provided with a free of charge courtesy car whilst your vehicle is being repaired.

For your free of charge Accident Management Pack, please contact **Noel Matraves** on **01628 777720**.

Berkshire's **premier**
accident repair centre

Auto Technics

107-109 Windsor Road,
Bray, Maidenhead,
Berkshire SL6 2DP

t: 01628 777720

f: 01628 777790

e: enquiries@autotechnics.com



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