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NEWSLETTER

For The Lee, Lee Common, Hunts Green, Kings Ash and Swan Bottom

February 2018

From the Editor

By Richard Dickinson

A very belated Happy New Year from The Lee Newsletter team! Hopefully by the time this drops onto your doormat the sun will have reappeared and there will be some indications of climate change! In fact, we already have 76 minutes of extra daylight when compared to 1st January but given the December we've had it is no surprise that snow features in articles within. We thought however that we would help brighten up the gloom a little with a splash of colour in this edition, with a reminder of some of the flora and fauna that surrounds us.

The lively debate on woodland management continues in the letters section and I was also interested to receive Phil Harrison's observations about the recycling practices of Chiltern District Council. I contacted the Council for a response but despite follow-up emails it was unable to provide a response in time for publication. That got me thinking about the value that Councils are adding in this time of austerity and cuts. For sure, local authority budgets have been cut by central government, much more so than many central departments, but questions remain about the added value of local authorities. Take for example the mobile

library service, which is currently 'out for consultation', a process that inevitably suggests that Bucks. County Council would rather like to shut it down. Does it matter? Well for the 511 people that use it the answer is probably a resounding YES! Those people will tend to be elderly, less mobile, on their own and find it harder to visit the bricks and mortar alternative.

A more profound question however is this: What is the impact on our community of the gradual withdrawal of useful but non-essential services? Each cut must surely diminish the community unless of course volunteers and residents step in to help out – which seems to be the solution that the County Council now want to suggest for the mobile library. I asked to speak to someone at the Council about the service and guess what? It was unable to provide a response in time for publication! There seems to be a recurring theme here and I am left wondering why the people that we elect, and particularly their respective organisations, do not seem willing or able to talk about the quality and type of local services that they run on our behalf.

The editor for the March edition is Peter Archer, so please send material to him by 12th February, by email to theleenewsletter@googlemail.com or if you prefer, hardcopy to Mulberry Cottage, Blackthorne Lane, Ballinger.

Your letters

To the Editor Woodlands revisited

What a pity that some of the responses to John Pope's letter appear to seek to belittle other people's views of what is happening in our local community! Thank you to all the respondees for trying to 'educate' those of us that are not fully aware of matters of 'forestry'.

We feel that in all the matters discussed in recent correspondence one point that affects all walkers in the area has been side-lined. John Pope raises the matter of the 'rutted footpaths' (this was also raised in correspondence in May 2014) and it seems to us that as far as walkers are concerned it is the condition that the footpaths are left in that causes much of the concern. We are sure that everyone who uses the area for walking appreciates the involvement of the landowners in maintaining the beautiful woodlands and are happy to be educated but the condition that some of the footpaths are left in following forestry work makes walking difficult and dangerous for users. The footpaths in Broiler Wood

that were the subject of the correspondence in May 2014 are still in a poor condition some three and half years later!

Whilst the landowners may make these woodlands 'not well-managed they are manicured – brilliant silviculture' we would just like to be able to use the public footpaths safely so that we can enjoy the environment without worrying about breaking a leg or losing a boot (which one of us did recently). Is it really too much for any contractor or forest worker to restore the footpaths to a useable and safe standard after they finish working? Has anyone considered the impression given to visiting walkers who come to see our beautiful AONB?

Peter and Jo Jordan
Lee Gate

To the Editor

What a waste!

With the news channels full of stories and information regarding the damage being done by plastic, particularly in the oceans, and China's decision to stop taking our plastic for recycling, have you ever wondered how the village's careful recycling is handled? On 4th January the collection of the recycling waste was made in the Crocketts Lane/Oxford Street area of Lee Common.

I watched as the operatives took the brown paper boxes full of Christmas detritus and simply emptied them into the blue bins full of bottles, cans and plastic containers and then emptied the total into their lorry. Am I missing something?

Phil Harrison
Lee Common

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To the Editor

Kissing gate mystery

In your December edition you asked to whom – or what – is the new kissing gate on Kings Lane dedicated? The inscription 'Women, Prosecco, Cheese and Secateurs' rather gives this away.

Having very much enjoyed her walking in the Chilterns, the gate has of course been dedicated by Theresa May, MP in recognition of the current state of the Government's negotiations on Brexit and the four key stumbling blocks in reaching an agreement with the EU, namely "Women, Prosecco, Cheese and Secateurs".

In fact the gate is to be known as 'Brexitgate', as although it was designed to allow a free flow of goods and services through the gate in either direction, it was also intended to restrict non-Lee residents from passing through the gate from West to East. However, due to disagreements during the protracted negotiation and construction period, the design has in fact proved faulty; Brexitgate will in fact allow anyone and anything to pass in any direction they like, whenever they like!

The gate is aptly named.

A. Resident
The Lee

To the Editor

I have no idea who dedicated the gate but 'Women, Prosecco, Cheese and Secateurs' were all on my Christmas list. Adrian Mole, age 13¾
P.S. I got three out of four!

To the Editor

Thanks!

Just to say how much I enjoyed the Newsletter Dinner in December and thank you and those involved for including me on the guest list.

People in The Lee have worked very hard to create such a pro-active and friendly community and it is lovely that much of what goes on is available to and shared with the surrounding hamlets of South Heath and Ballinger.

Lynda Cooke
Ballinger

The Lee based dog walker



As from February 2018, I have availability for one more dog to be walked either separately or with others. I also offer home-visits to feed or let out your pets whilst at work or away.

Other services available.
References available on request.

Contact:

Adele: 07547 100312
adelefrancis@rocketmail.com

Chilterns survey

By Emma van Dijk, Chilterns Conservation Board

The Chilterns Conservation Board has launched a survey on the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We want to hear from local organisations and members of the public about what they value about the Chilterns, what their concerns are and what the priorities should be for the future.

The Chilterns AONB, with its dramatic chalk ridges, beautiful valleys, meandering chalk streams and traditional brick and flint houses, spans the four counties of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Sitting on the doorstep of London and with major towns and cities within easy reach it is arguably the most accessible protected landscape in the United Kingdom.

Tell us what you value about this area, what you are concerned about and what you think should be the priorities for the future as we develop our plans to protect this



special landscape over the next five years and beyond.

This survey will form part of our review of the Chilterns AONB Management Plan working with a range of partners. As an important stakeholder in the AONB we are very keen to involve you in this process. A first consultation on a draft plan will take place from May and we will ensure you also have the opportunity to comment at that time.

The link to the survey can be found at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/FutureOfTheChilterns

Once you have completed the survey please do share it so we can gather as many views as possible. All who complete the survey will have the chance to win £50 in vouchers from the Chiltern Brewery to spend on local produce. (*Surely ale! Ed.*)

In high places

By The Editor

A big round of applause goes to Gill Owen-Conway who lives at Lee Common and is a 'befriender' at DrugFAM, a charity specialising in supporting people who have experienced bereavement in the most traumatic of circumstances. Gill has been a tireless supporter and

campaigner for the organisation spending over 780 hours a year – that's an incredible two hours every single day! – volunteering her help, support and expertise.

The Prime Minister recently recognised Gill's dedication saying "Your work with 'DrugFAM' as well as your experience at 'Samaritans' demonstrates your inspiring dedication to providing a listening ear to some of the people in society who need it most. By both extending the organisation's support to include email help and also creating a bereavement support group in High Wycombe, you have given your local community the opportunity to share their experiences without judgement."



Gill, shown here (left) receiving her Point of Light award from Teresa May, is the 841st Point of Light recipient in this country since it began in the UK about four years ago.

The award was first created by the President of the United States to personally recognise people who have gone above and beyond in volunteering and charity work.

Well done Gill – The Lee is proud of you!

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Planning to visit Fromelles in 2018?

From Les amis du Lee

This year will mark 100 years since the end of the First World War and many will be planning to visit the battlefields of France. If so, then you might like to note that the Battle of Fromelles Museum is now offering a new service to individual visitors.

A guided tour of the permanent exhibition of the museum and/or the military cemetery of Pheasant Wood will be offered every 2nd Sunday of the month at 3:00 pm (except February).

For more details and how to book see: www.musee-bataille-fromelles.fr

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The Battle of Fromelles Museum



Meet and greet

By Zoe Berkeley

From London to The Lee

London is often described as 'The big smoke' and you could say it was exactly that we were trying to escape when we decided to move out. Ironically the most poignant thing I remember about arriving in The Lee for the first time is the smell of wood smoke.

It was the 1st November and the doorsteps were laden with intricately carved pumpkins from Halloween the night before. I'd dashed out of the London hospital after my shift to get to our viewing on time and was meeting my partner James there. I

arrived before James and rang him from the doorstep and, as I recall my exact words were "Darling my heart is actually racing." I hadn't even crossed the threshold but something about the quaint street that I had ended up on, following winding roads through lush green fields and autumn trees bursting with rich colour touched with the golden light of the setting sun, had indeed made my heart race. As we moved through the rooms of the cottage we questioned whether a 6'4" man could actually live in a cottage, but that 6'4" man saw the glint in my eye and knew he could embrace the daily potential danger and that we would indeed be happy here.

Just 17 days later and that cottage became our home, embracing life away from the city, embracing the evening smell of the 'big (wood) smoke', having our eyes literally light up when we look up and see a clear sky dotted with stars. Welcoming the smiling faces that always say "Hello" to us when we pass them in the street and the cars that thank you when they stop for you.

With James's background working in the City and me running a cake shop and tea room in London for 10

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years, we both took new directions for more fulfilling and personal careers, James is now a personal trainer and I am training to be a nurse. These new directions meant we weren't tied to London anymore; we had the freedom to don wellies, make friends with our neighbours, notice the seasons change and live on an Oxford Street with just a little less hustle and bustle!

On our first exploration to Great Missenden we got chatting to one of the ladies in a beautiful gift shop when we told her we had just moved to Lee Common, she gasped and said "Oh it's just magical there" and as I write this and see the twinkling Christmas lights that adorn the houses on our street outside my window, I'd have to say... she was absolutely right!

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HS2: coming soon to a field near you!

By Colin Sully, Chairman The Lee Parish Council

Yes, in spite of all the troubles we hear about Carillion, I'm afraid it looks like 2018 is the year when we will finally see some significant activity in our local area as a result of the decision to build HS2.

Construction begins...

In January, HS2 Ltd issued a 'Notice of Works' to 1,470 premises in Great Missenden regarding their intention to start the alterations to the two roundabouts on the A413 at Great

Missenden and to build the haul road from the Link Road roundabout to the Chiltern tunnel portal.

The schedule for this 'enabling' work carried out by Fusion JV is:

- January / February 2018 – ground surveys, design work and safety assessments
- March to May 2018 – detailed design and schedule
- Summer 2018 to February 2019 – alterations to roundabouts, Link Road, safety barriers, etc. and construction of the temporary access haul road as far as the tunnel portal.

There remain issues regarding parking and changes to the Link Road that need to be resolved between HS2 Ltd, Bucks CC and Great Missenden PC. We are advised that full details of the proposed work will be available at a public event in Great Missenden in February (date to be confirmed).

Parish Council discussions

The Lee Parish Council responded in January to the HS2 Chiltern Review Group's draft Detailed Design Principles document (DDP) for building the railway in the AONB.

We commented on:

- noise (the document was light on this impact compared to ecological and visual impacts);
- green bridges (we specifically supported what they had to say on this) and,
- a rather strange proposal to put a new bridleway through the area close to the eastern edge of the high-speed railway!

Also in January, we held a joint-parishes meeting (The Lee, Great Missenden and Wendover) with HS2 Ltd and their contractors, including the joint-venture construction company

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formally known as CEK JV (Carillion-Eiffage-Kier). We were advised that the other two partners in this joint-venture were able (and obliged) to take up any gaps created by the demise of Carillion and that the programme continues as planned.

Consultation... or not?

At this meeting we raised concerns about the lack of real local consultation on the design of the viaducts and other key structures. Not for the first time, there appears to be disagreement as to whether local residents will actually be 'consulted' on design... or simply informed of the proposed 'solution'.

We also requested updates on the latest strategy for spoil movement in the area and on the overall timetable for HS2 work. These were promised for our next meeting in March.

Finally, the joint-parishes have had a formal response from HS2 Ltd to our latest (final?) suggestion that matters construction, environmental, financial and social might be greatly improved by more tunnelling in the AONB. The response, just before Christmas, did not come gift-wrapped: it basically said "we are NOT considering any significant additional tunnelling".

Brace yourselves!

Cricket score

By Trish Swain

Players will start preparing for the new season with indoor nets taking place at the Beacon School in Chesham Bois 8:30 to 10:00 pm every Wednesday night from 7th February through until the end of April.

Junior nets (for Under 10s to U14s) will take place at the same venue

immediately before the adult sessions, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm but during term times only. Everyone is welcome at the nets, whether members of the club or not, and it is an ideal way to have a go at batting and bowling to see how you get on. The adult sessions are £5 each, or £45 for the set if paid in advance. For further details, or if you have any queries, please contact Patrick Walsh (07887 736205) or Ed Boakes (07912 288712).

The Lee Cricket Club is still looking for a new honorary Treasurer, so if you are competent with numbers and spreadsheets and have a little time free then please contact Patrick to find out more.

The Club's AGM is scheduled for Tuesday 13th February 7:45 pm at the clubhouse; do please feel free to come along and discuss all issues relating to the Club.

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Bridge too far?

By Judy Hart et al

This recent hand presented us with a playing challenge. Can you see a better outcome than we achieved?

♠ Q

♥ A K 5

♦ J 8 4 2

♣ A K 10 5 3

♠ 7

♥ Q 10 4 3

♦ A 7 6 3

♣ J 9 8 4

♠ K J 10 9 8 4

♥ -

♦ K Q 10 9 5

♣ Q 6

♠ A 6 5 3 2

♥ J 9 8 7 6 2

♦ -

♣ 7 2

Dealer: North
Vulnerability: None

Our bidding went:

N	E	S	W
1 ♣	1 ♠	Pass	Pass
2 ♦	2 ♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

After an opening lead of 7 ♣ from South, at our table East went one down. How should East have played this hand? See page 24.

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From the Shop

By Symeon Economou

Forward into 2018

Having given a couple of minutes to pat ourselves on the back for the good things about 2017, the Shop Committee spent some time considering the things we could have done better and quite a bit of time looking ahead and planning what aspects we might address to make us better.



Symeon enjoying a little refreshment after a 4:30 am start on the Saturday before Christmas!

Looking back, the efforts of the volunteers were rewarded by the continuing loyalty of our customers which kept sales marginally ahead in 2017. This, combined with an on-target gross margin, gave us a healthy surplus, most of which we will use on the planned improvements.

Identifying what went well should point us to what we could change to

make us better. Once again we had some successful events – Greek Easter, the Flower Show, the Christmas Food and Gift market and Christmas Eve – but the Spanish Food event was a bit of a damp squib, and we think we know the reasons why – our customers like the fresh ‘homemade’ foods rather than glossily packaged, commercial long life foods. This year we are therefore hoping to have a new event in the autumn featuring selected wines and fine cheeses.

Good selection and consistency are also essential, as demonstrated by the success of our flowers, cards, wines and frozen foods. We still don't think we have the right solution for our fruit and vegetables, so we will try to improve what we get from our current supplier whilst casting our net out to find a local one.

We have become increasingly conscious of the environmental aspects of everything we stock. Examples of poor packaging which are evident in the Shop are the single use trays and non-recyclable containers. Over the coming months we plan to develop a permanent policy of questioning everything we have in an effort to make it more environmentally friendly. We will also test a small range of zero-waste products. Whilst there will be legitimate practical issues which hold us back we believe that every little thing we can do helps.

From its first incarnation in the Portakabin, constant efforts have been made to improve and update the Shop and its fixtures and fittings. Through this year we will consider ways we can maximise the use of the space we have, both internally and externally. In general, all of our efforts continue to go

towards making the Shop a valuable and integral part of the whole community. To this end we would like to hear any thoughts our customers have, so please do not hesitate to email me at symeconomou@yahoo.co.uk

Finally, on behalf of everyone who helps to make the Shop what it is, many thanks to all of our customers who make it all worthwhile.

Dogs to note!

By Thames Valley Police

Please keep your dog on a lead when around sheep. Ewes are in season and can easily abort the lamb if stressed. A dog in Holmer Green recently attacked a pregnant ewe and killed both mother and lamb. Please stay on the correct footpaths and keep dogs away from livestock.



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Church News

By Peggy Sear
 Revd David Burgess

I'm writing from the St. Leonard's office to let you know how thankful Penny and David are for your thoughts and prayers over the past few months. They say 'THANK YOU' so very much for your support and understanding through this traumatic time.

I heard recently that David came home for a 24 hour visit to see how he would adapt to home life again. He did very well and is now home on a permanent basis. With medical care and still a very long way to go in terms of physical strength, he remains determined to get back to a normal life. There are going to be ongoing hospital visits and daily medical care at home.

What makes this possible and easier is that they know how much help and support they are getting from each one of you, the community. At the moment visits are not permitted because of infection but one of the things everyone can help with is continued support for them, both by thinking about them and praying for them in their journey forward and David's healing progress.

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Services for February

St John the Baptist

4 th 8:00 ^{am} HC	Revd Alan Davies Old Church
10:00 ^{am} AA	Tony Eccleston
11 th 10:00 ^{am} PC	Revd Geoffrey Howell
14 th 10:00 ^{am} HC	Ash Wednesday Revd Ivor Cornish
18 th 10:00 ^{am} Matins	Lay-led
25 th 10:00 ^{am} PC	Revd Ivor Cornish

HC Holy Communion (said)
PC Parish Communion (sung)
AA All-age service

Contacts: *Vicar:* The Revd David Burgess (01494-837315). *Licensed Lay Minister:* Mr Tony Eccleston (07777-640386). *Churchwardens:* Roderick Neal (01494-837264) and Trevor Pearce (01494-837601). *Verger:* Bill Pearce (01494-785191). *Treasurer:* David Stephenson (01494-867617).

Methodist Church

4 th 10:00 ^{am} AA	Joint Service at St John the Baptist Church
11 th 3:00 ^{pm} HC	Revd Nigel Wright
18 th 3:00 ^{pm}	Margaret Scott Salvation Army
25 th 3:00 ^{pm}	Revd Anne Ellis

Our **Coffee Mornings** continue on Saturday 3rd February 10:30 am to 12 noon. All welcome.

St Mary's, Ballinger

4 th 9:30 ^{am}	Holy Communion
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Notes from a natural garden

By Don Stone

Part II: July - October 2017

Don's record of the amazing diversity and quantity of wildlife in our area continues with a report of the later part of last year. Ed.

July 2nd five Ringlets, numerous Meadow Browns, Commas, Red Admiral and Marbled White on the wing, Chiffchaff sunbathing in a sheltered spot with wings outstretched in the manner of a Blackbird; 3rd first House Martin chicks fledged; 8th at least eight tiny Newts swimming in the ponds; 14th two Linnets drinking from the pond, juvenile Green Woodpecker we've been hearing for days finally puts in an appearance on the lawn; 18th eight juvenile Goldfinches on the lawn, Red Admirals holding territory in the Ivy, will often settle on white clothing as we walk close by; 23rd four Gate Keepers and Small Copper (new species for the garden); 24th three newly fledged Blackbirds; 27th Linnets again; 28th a recently fledged House Martin dead under overhead power cables (second such casualty this year).

August 5th two Ravens over; 10th 60 Goldfinches at The Lee, Cyclamens starting to flower, always like the way the flower appears before the foliage; 13th first sighting of a Silver-washed Fritillary in the garden, Michaelmas Daisy's in flower; 20th Green-veined White, another first for the garden, brings the butterfly list up to eighteen;



Silver-washed Fritillary (August 13th)

21st the Robins have reappeared after their summer moult, 24th Marsh Harrier at Shardloes, Night Heron leaving its daytime roost at a site in North Bucks, Speckled Wood; 28th mixed flock of 60 Swallows/House Martins over the house this evening.

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including Swallows from the five nests in the neighbouring stables (the skies are alive, will soon need air traffic control!!).

September 1st four Wheatears at Lower Bassibones Farm; **2nd** three Whinchats at Liberty's Nature Reserve; two Wheatears at Sly Corner fields; **10th** two Meadow Pipits over Sly Corner fields; **17th** three Chiffchaffs, **22nd** Meadow Pipits roosting overnight in the un-cut hay



Green Woodpecker (July 14th)

meadow at the end of Sly Corner track; **23rd** 40 Swallows and 25 House Martins heading South early morning, Barn Owls present at four sites, (thanks to local farmers for their co-operation and Bucks Bird Club for funding the project); **30th** Yellow-Browed Warbler at Marlow.

October 1st steady stream of House Martins heading West over Swan Bottom throughout the day; **5th** two Song Thrushes on the lawn; **7th** Pair of Stonechats and 21 Lapwings at



Song Thrush (October 8th)

Hyde End; **8th** 16 Meadow Pipits over Sly Corner; a Blackcap, three Chiffchaff, Goldcrest, Chaffinch, Blue Tit, Goldfinch, two Song Thrush and three Blackbirds all using the pond in one half hour spell; **9th** two Marsh tits, 26 Redwings and many migrant Blackbirds frantically darting in and out of the trees, 33 Redwings and two Sky Larks over Swan Bottom (Autumn is truly with us); **10th** 55 Redwings over Swan Bottom; **11th** Chiffchaff and two Redwings at the pond; **12th** three Sky Larks and two House Martins heading East over



Red Admiral (July 2nd)

Swan Bottom; **13th** 20 Canada Geese over; **28th** three Hawfinches over Chesham Moor, 300 Wood Pigeons, 20 Fieldfares and 95 Starlings over Sly Corner; **29th** Cetti's Warbler at Weston Turville Reservoir; **30th** first frost of the Autumn; **31st** 84 Golden Plovers and 27 Lapwings at Hyde End, 24 Chaffinches, 156 Fieldfares, 287 Starling and 369 Redwings heading West over Sly Corner in the space of one hour from 7:25 am.



Berberis Stenophylla

Defensive planting

By the Editor

Chiltern District Council has kindly reminded us of a variety of safety tips to keep our sheds and bikes secure and our neighbourhood safe.

One of the options is to think about what plants you might put in your garden to ward off intruders. I can attest to the fact that Hebe dwarf shrubs are absolutely useless as defensive barricades and were indeed rather *favoured* by the inept burglars that recently visited us, in that they walked over them, rather than on the gravel which was their other option.

So what sort of things are a bit better at warding off your unwelcome visitors?

BERBERIS STENOPHYLLA (BARBERRY)

- Growth: Medium sized shrub, arching habit, evergreen
- Flowers: Yellow in April/May,

blue/black berries in Autumn

- Uses: Hedging or border shrub
- Spike Rating: Excellent foliage and stems, well-armed with spines. (Other varieties of Berberis also available)

MAHONIA MEDIA 'WINTER SUN'

- Growth: Medium sized shrub, attractive evergreen leaves
- Flowers: Erect racemes of scented yellow flowers in winter
- Uses: Border shrub
- Spike Rating: Good, spiny edged foliage (Other varieties of Mahonia also available)



Mahonia Media

PYRACANTHA ORANGE GLOW (FIRETHORN)

- Growth: Medium/large evergreen shrub
- Flowers: White in early summer followed by orange autumn berries
- Uses: Hedging, border or wall shrub
- Spike Rating: Excellent, very spiny stems. (Other varieties of Pyracantha also available)

CHAENOMELES X SUPERBA 'CRIMSON AND GOLD' (JAPONICA)

- Growth: Medium size spreading shrub
- Flowers: Cup shaped red petals with golden stamens, quince fruits
- Uses: Hedging, border or wall shrub
- Spike Rating: Very good, well spined stems (Other varieties of Chaenomeles also available)

ILEX AQUIFOLIUM 'FEROX ARGENTEA' (HEDGEHOG HOLLY)

- Growth: Medium sized evergreen shrub
- Flowers: Not a prominent feature but interesting colourful foliage
- Uses: Hedging or border shrub
- Spike Rating: Very good, tightly packed spines on sides and top of leaves (Other varieties of holly also available)

Other plants that you could also think about include:

RUBUS THIBETANUS - White stemmed Bramble

HIPPOPHAE RHAMNOIDES - Sea Buckhorn, white flowers orange berries. Makes a tough hedge.



Top to Bottom: Pyracantha, Chaenomeles X, Ilex Aquifolium

CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA - Common Hawthorn, May or Quick-thorn. Makes a superb, wildlife friendly hedge.

ULEX EUROPAEUS PLENA - Double flowered Gorse, very prickly. Makes a tough hedge.

Do also remember to lock up the tools in your shed when you have planted all these out and also to secure your treasured garden ornaments!

Lives remembered

John Clibborn

John Clibborn, CMG, as reported in The Times, was a scholar and a spy with a liking for Elgar, red wine and a bench in the sun. He died on 16th December. John lived in Clump House for many years and owned fields around Lee Common. He worked for MI6 spending time overseas including Cyprus, Africa and Washington DC. He never voted but was a wise man with a balanced view of life, saying last year that "Unchecked capitalism leads to grotesque inequality; and unchecked socialism leads to tyranny".

Allan Crawley

On Boxing Day, Allan Crawley sadly passed away. Allan farmed at Chartidge End Farm and in The Lee for more than half a century; he will be known to many and sadly missed. His life-work lives on all around us and is continued by his family: a fine legacy.

Ursula Holden

Also on Boxing night, Mrs. Ursula (Sue) Holden died peacefully in her sleep at home. She had recently moved to Dorset; prior to this she had been a resident of Oxford Street in Lee Common for over 30 years and was greatly involved in village life; particularly the local Ballinger Players Drama group with many memorable performances to her credit. She was a wonderful elegant lady, a true friend and a good neighbour: a real Lee Commoner. She will be sadly missed by all those who knew her.

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The Newsletter annual dinner

By the Editorial Team

The Parish Hall was packed in early December to celebrate the end of a record-breaking year for the Newsletter: more contributors, more pages and more advertisers than ever before, all resulting in more invitations to the now famous Newsletter Dinner. The evening was particularly well-attended with over 60 people sitting down to enjoy a splendid meal.



Speaking at the dinner, Anthea Hartley recalled that the Newsletter's predecessor – 'The Lee Magazine' – was being published in the Parish over 100 years ago and, at that time, contained 'useful tips for dealing with austerity'. Perhaps we should re-start that series?

She also reminded us of the importance of caring for others in a community – especially the elderly.

She invited readers to make contact with her if they would like to find out more about volunteering for 'Contact the Elderly' or the vintage film group. *(See next article.)*



Finally, the announcement that the Newsletter Annual Award for 2017 was being presented to Reina Free was received with great acclaim. The Award goes to her for the great many contributions she has made to the Newsletter over its whole lifetime and also for the service she has put in as a distributor.

Our thanks go to all those who made the Newsletter such a success in 2017 and to those who helped pull together such a splendid evening.

To be or not to be

Anthea Hartley – Group Coordinator,
Contact the Elderly

As I opened the bedroom curtains on Sunday 10th December I was confronted with four inches of pristine snow for as far as I could see across the fields of our farm. It looked beautiful of course... and it was still snowing heavily at 9:00 am. This was to be the



An earlier Contact the Elderly 'gathering'

day of our Contact the Elderly Christmas party. The catering and transport was organised, the Christmas tree decorated, holly wreaths hung on the doors and the choir assembled. It was all systems go – or was it?

By mid-day the snow was still falling and a decision had to be made: was the party to be or not to be – that was the question. Clearly we had no choice – it was not to be. Fallen trees and stranded cars blocked the roads – transporting our elderly guests was simply not an option, it would have been unreasonable to ask our volunteers to drive in such conditions.

Consequently, my freezer now groans under the weight of cakes and

sausage rolls put on 'hold' until next month's Contact the Elderly tea party, and the Christmas cards and gifts were delivered by willing volunteers. It was the first time we had ever had to cancel a tea party in five years, a great shame indeed.

If you know a person living on their own in The Lee or Wendover area, over the age of 75, who has difficulty getting out and about, perhaps they would like to join our Contact the Elderly group.

For full details please phone me on 01494 837372 or email me at bassibones@yahoo.co.uk. If you would like to become a volunteer we'd also love to hear from you.

For details on Contact the Elderly please visit their website at www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk



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The end of the old: beginning of the new

By Reina Free

Nature can be so unpredictable. After the downpours and lots and lots of rain, very unexpectedly we woke up to snow, a deep layer that broke down a branch of our damson tree and two quite big conifers. The field we look down upon is so drenched and soaked with the snow and rain it has become impossible to be ploughed. The life of our farmers can be hard and I often feel concern for them.

It just goes to show that in spite of computers and the like, how very helpless mankind is against the forces of nature. Yet in due time spring will return... but suppose it did not? We expect the trees and hedgerows to spring into leaf.

There does not seem to be much happening nature-wise at the moment but I have spotted huge flocks of crows and some starlings feeding on the leftover barley, resembling clouds when they fly up, fast and swirling.

Misty misty mornings, dreary and damp yet there is a great deal to be thankful for – a lovely stove, enough wood and coal, plenty of food, the shelter of our lovely hilltop house. Peace within, God is good and together with Him we can make it a better world.

The Lee Parish Council News

By Liz van Hullen, Parish Clerk

Parish Council Drop-in

Last year we ran three 'Drop-in' sessions which proved both popular and useful. Topics you raised included road repairs, fly tipping, waste collection, HS2 and parking in Oxford Street... to mention just a few.

The first one for 2018 will be on Saturday 3rd February, in the Parish Hall, 10:00 am to 12 noon.

One of the projects we are keen to move forward through this year is a refurbishment or replacement of the wooden fort in the playground. Initial proposals will be available for you to have a look at the 3rd February drop-in.



Following the meeting with HS2 Ltd and their contractors on 16th January (see page 8), we will also have the latest update on the HS2 construction programme.

Please do take the time to drop-in and see us; we welcome views and comments from our parishioners.

Allotments

Also, have a read of the next article (on page 22) written by one of our allotment holders... and be inspired! We never have plots available for long! However, a couple are available at the moment, so please do get in touch if you are interested.

Pothole repairs

At the Parish Council meetings the Chairman of Bucks County Council (who also happens to be our local Councillor), Tricia Birchley, is keen to remind us that she does campaign hard for improved repairs to our local roads. Lobbying from the Parish Councillors and local residents can only help her case. To report a pothole direct to Transport for Bucks you can use the link below – it only takes a couple of minutes and is by far the quickest way of registering a problem with the people who can do something about it. If it helps to improve the state of our local roads, that is a couple of minutes well spent.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/report-a-problem/report-a-pothole/>

There is also a link on this website page to report defects and obstructions in rural footpaths.

Hedges adjacent to roads and rural footpaths

Finally, may we remind land-owners that hedges on your land are your responsibility. Please do all you can to ensure they are properly cut back, preferably outside of the nesting season, to ensure adequate width and clearance is maintained for road users and pedestrians alike.

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Food for thought

By Sophia and Gary Fowler

The taste of the first strawberry is invariably the definitive moment, an affirmation that despite the back-aching toil, the continuous war against weeds, red ants and slugs, it was all worth it. You cannot buy fruit with such flavour, freshness and texture at Waitrose or Borough Market. In addition, the therapeutic benefits of spending a few hours weeding, watering or chatting with fellow allotmenters are not measured by conventional means but by the first beer, glass of wine or cup of tea after a productive open air session.



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These are not the comments of an enthusiastic beginner, but the sincere assessment of a fifty-something year old who has enjoyed twenty years cultivating a plot on Lee Common Allotments.

Our romance with Lee Common started twenty-two years ago when we moved to Chesham with two young children. Our three year old daughter loved the swings, slides, tunnel and woodland, not to mention Barnaby's patient pony and donkey across the lane. Later, our son would save countless penalties and score many centuries on the impromptu pitch by the gate.

As both my wife and I preferred to eat home grown fruit and vegetables, we decided to take on one of the allotment plots in 1997. With patient guidance and advice from the more experienced allotment holders like John and Gill Chudley, Bill Joiner and Ann Ash, we soon began to crop exceedingly tasty fruit and vegetables and found ourselves hooked. Twenty years on, we're still toiling away and our grown up children are more than happy to taste the produce when they come home to visit.

There are no limits to how well your plot can be cultivated, apart from your time, strength and imagination. Experimenting with new and unusual varieties is a huge part of the fun. One year we were thrilled that pak choi was so easy to grow, but tired of eating it when the crop turned out so generous.

Over the past twenty years, we've had plenty of successes and the occasional failure, but Lee Common grown potatoes, onions, sweetcorn,

beans (all types) and soft fruits are generally the best, and crunchy courgettes, cabbage or carrots far outshine their supermarket imitators.

In addition, we've had some interesting visitors: grass snakes, frogs, colourful slugs and many toddlers wanting to 'help' with harvesting our soft fruit. Overall, it has been a fulfilling experience, much cheaper than gym membership and a welcome distraction from the stresses and strains of the modern office, England batting collapses and Brexit.

If you want to have a go at growing your own food in a convivial setting then allotment spaces are available - contact the Parish Clerk at theleeparishcouncil@hotmail.co.uk or on 758800... and snap one up before they all go!

From the County



By Cllr Tricia Birchley

2018 got off to a brisk start. The cold weather has had Transport for Bucks (TfB) busy filling grit bins and repairing potholes. Many people in Chiltern Ridges have been reporting potholes and I have spent today briefing TfB and planning road resurfacing up to 2021. I am hopeful that in 2018/19 we shall get more done than in previous years and I have also relayed comments from the Parish Council.

Sajid Javid has said that he is encouraged by the excellent progress Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership has made

in creating opportunities for local businesses to grow and prosper. Last year a record number of Bucks companies won the Queen's Award for Export Achievement. I am holding a Reception in February to celebrate their success, to encourage others to apply and representatives from the Office for the Queens Award will be in attendance. If anyone wishes to come along on 22nd February to find out more, do please let me know.

Buckinghamshire Business First has been successful in attracting inward investment, supported by the County Council and as a direct result 80 new companies have moved in, 2,557 jobs have been created, 479 apprentices have been supported and £11 million has been added to the Buckinghamshire economy. Bucks is also an important education centre

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preparing our students for the workplace through our excellent schools and universities. Sir Anthony Seldon, who was guest speaker at the annual council dinner, talked about Buckingham University's plans to increase student numbers, widen its remit following the opening of its Medical school in 2016 and open new courses in Aylesbury and further afield.

No doubt we are all following the collapse of Carillion in the hope that it may persuade the Government to rethink plans for HS2. One can only imagine that it would cost more than the predicted £57 billion at today's reckoning. The County Council is currently working with the parishes to ensure the safety of local roads during the construction period.

As I write, the Council budget for 2018/19 is being finalised with the cost of social care rapidly increasing. Along with other council leaders, Martin Tett has written to Government asking for more money to care for our most needy residents. BCC has always worked closely with local hospitals to reduce bed-blocking and our teams provide intensive after-care at home, with social care accounting for nearly 70% of our gross spend.

Please get in touch if I can help raise your concerns with officers at County Hall: email: pbirchley@buckscc.gov.uk

Bridge too far?

Despite the bad break in trumps, East still needs to take out trumps early, in order to cash in the diamond winners. This makes nine tricks possible.

From the archives (4)

In 2003 *The Lee Newsletter* tried out its own *Agony Aunt* column... *he/she didn't last long but do let the Editor know if you would like to be our new Graham Norton!*

Dear Juno,

I have recently moved into the village and want to change the name of my house. I fancy having a combination of two or more of the following words: 'Manor'; 'Lee'; 'House'; 'The'. What would you advise?

A.L. The Lee

Dear A.L.,

Forget it. Every possible combination of the words you have in mind has already been used – several times.

Dear Juno,

I am worried about the latest E.U. edict which requires me to put a toy in each of my pig pens or face three months' imprisonment. What kind of toys would be most suitable?

J.R. Lee Common

Dear J.R.,

I suggest a Rubic Cube and/or a hula-hoop. And don't worry about the prison sentence – there will be a fluffy toy in your cell.

Dear Juno,

I have a problem with the post-box outside the Guild Room. It permanently

states that the next collection is at 4:00 pm. If I arrive at 4:00 pm or a little after, how do I know if the collection has taken place?

B.N. Hunts Green.

Dear B.N.,

I suggest that you take a handful of pebbles and throw them into the post-box. A sharp metallic sound would indicate that the box is empty and that the post has gone. A dull thump would mean that letters, etc. are still in the box waiting to be collected. If your frustration boils over, then a drastic alternative would be to push a lighted match into the box. The amount of smoke and flame will give you your answer.

Dear Juno,

I understand that a youth in Manchester has been banned from wearing a golf glove because it is the sign of a notorious gang. I am about to take up golf and have noticed that a lot of people wear golf gloves at the local Club.

Should I be concerned?

G.K. Lee Common

Dear G.K.,

You certainly should. It is well-known that people wearing golf gloves will stop at nothing to take your money. You have fallen in with the local mafia and should abandon the idea of golf immediately. Fore!

[If you have an interesting story, photo or article about village history, do let us know and we will be happy to share it with our readers. Ed.]

Litter pickin'

By Pat Chinnery

Our roadsides, hedges and paths are getting over-run again with thoughtlessly thrown litter.

It is really worthwhile to get involved in the 'Litter Pick' morning, which this year will be on Sunday 18th March.

Please think about organising a local group to pick-up at the places you love to go visit... and walk the roads getting there and pick-up those as you go.

Pat Chinnery on 837564 and Ann Ash on 837550 are coordinating the event and would be very pleased to discuss your plans.



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Dear Diary

The fastest way to let everyone in the Parish know about an event you are arranging is to publish it right here in the Newsletter. Contact the editor by the 12th of the previous month (see contact details on page 1).

February

Thursday 1st. The Lee Walking Group. Meet on The Lee Green: 9:30 am.

Saturday 3rd. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

Saturday 3rd. Parish Council Drop-in. 10:00 am to 12 noon. See page 20.

Tuesday 13th. Ballinger Evening WI. 'Film and TV' with Peter Hague: 8:00 pm.

Tuesday 13th. The Lee Cricket Club AGM. See page 9.

Thursday 22nd February. The Arts Society Ballinger. 'Foreigners in London 1520-1677' with Leslie Primo: 8:00 pm. Guests £8.

Coming soon

Thursday 1st March. The Lee Walking Group. Meet on The Lee Green at 9:30 am.

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If you have difficulty getting to your doctor or the hospital, doing your shopping or would like a home visit and a friendly chat, then please ring:

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Mon - Fri: 10 am - 4 pm. Sat: 10 am - 12 noon. Please give us reasonable notice of your requirement to help us organise it.

Thursday 1st March. Ballinger Horticultural Society. 'The Back Gardens of England' with Matthew Biggs: 8:00 pm.

Saturday 3rd March. Coffee Morning at Lee Common Methodist Church.

Tuesday 13th March. Ballinger Evening WI. Spring Supper.

Tuesday 13th March. The Lee Parish Council Meeting at the Parish Hall 7:30 pm.

Sunday 18th March. Annual Litter-picking morning. Please contact Pat Chinnery 837564 or Ann Ash 837550 if you can help on the day. See page 25.

Thursday 29th March. The Arts Society Ballinger. 'Judas: The Wickedest Man Who Ever Lived?' with Janet Robson: 8:00 pm. Guests £8.

Thursday 5th April. Ballinger Horticultural Society. Spring Show.

Tuesday 10th April. Ballinger Evening WI. 'Wild Flowers' with Brenda Harold: 8:00 pm.

Thursday 26th April. The Arts Society Ballinger. 'The Amadeus Myth: Mozart (1756-91) and his world culture' with Sandy Burnett: 8:00 pm. Guests £8.

Directory of local contacts

Ballinger Horticultural Society

Chairperson: Brenda Gover
info@ballingerhorti.co.uk

Ballinger War Memorial Hall

Bookings: Jane Ogden, 837379

Ballinger Evening WI

Contact: Frankie Little, 837659
frankie.little@btinternet.com

Lee Common C of E School

School office, 837267
office@leecommon.bucks.sch.uk

Lee Common Methodist Church

Marian Tomkins, 837479

Lee Common Scouts

Scout Leader Thomas Brockett:
837294 or brockett8@hotmail.com

Leeside Nursery

Melissa Reading, 837719
www.leesidenurseryschool.co.uk

Shop @ The Lee

Symeon Economou, 837195
theleeshop@yahoo.co.uk

St John the Baptist Church

See centre pages.

St Mary's Ballinger

Contact: Anne Ellis, 837247
anne.ellis1004@gmail.com

The Art Society Ballinger

Chairman, Peter Archer, 837933
ballinger@theartsociety.org

The Lee Cricket Club

www.theleecc.org.uk
Secretary, Mike Harris,
07788 345555

The Lee Flower Show

Chairman, Jonathan Batten,
837450

The Lee Newsletter

theleenewsletter@googlemail.com

The Lee Old Church Trust

Secretary: Pam Garner 837501

The Lee Parish Council

Clerk: Liz van Hullen, 758800
theleeparishcouncil@hotmail.co.uk
www.thelee-pc.org.uk

Allotments: Alison Weir, 837529

The Lee Parish Hall Committee

Bookings: Anne Barnett, 837796
Chairman: Tony Lea, 837237

The Leeway

Contact, 837177

Vocal Lees

Jeannette Batten, 837450

The Newsletter

The Lee Newsletter is published 10 times a year and distributed free to all households in the parish... and a little beyond. The views expressed in it are not necessarily those of the Editor.

We welcome original letters and articles of general interest and relevance to The Lee. Copy should be sent to theleenewsletter@googlemail.com or, if on paper, to the Editor of the month (see page 1) by the 12th of each month.

Letters should ideally run to no more than 200 words and articles to no more than 700 words; material may be edited and may appear on the village website www.thelee.org.uk unless consent is specifically withheld. Anonymous contributions are not accepted.

To advertise or place an insert, please contact Paul Apicella on 837377 by the 12th of the previous month.

If you have photographs for publication please contact Jonathan Batten on 837450 or email battenjonathan@hotmail.com.

For queries regarding distribution contact Barnaby Osborne on 837382.

Other members of the Editorial team: Peter Archer, Richard Dickinson, Phil Harrison, Jen Ogley, Adam Speller and Colin Sully.

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To book the Parish Hall or Scout Hut

'phone Anne Barnett on 837796

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