

Newsletter

Winter 2017



NEW PLAYING FIELD EQUIPMENT



If you have visited the playing field by the Village Hall recently you will have seen the new play equipment. These were selected after discussion with children from Birdham School. A new slide is also on the way., and once this is installed we will finish the fencing so that the play area is fully enclosed.

These new apparatus and the new fencing have been paid for from New Homes Bonus money from Chichester District Council

At our September meeting we considered the need to replace the broken goal post; we are never going to host a dedicated football team because we do not have the basic facilities to allow them to participate in a league; and wondered if the existing wooden practice board would suffice, but it was agreed that we would replace **one** goalpost, allowed within our limited budget, to give our youngsters the opportunity to practice their skills with real equipment.

We are now looking for ideas for new community projects for 2018 and one possibility could be that we replace that full size goalpost with smaller goalposts that could be used by teenagers & adults for Five-a-Side, but also by pre-teenagers (Years 6, 7 & 8), as they wouldn't be overwhelmed by the size of them. As yet, we don't know if this would have the support of the majority of residents, nor whether we can afford them, but we intend to discuss this in more detail at our first Council Meeting in the new year.

Basic steps in maintaining of your Ditch or Culvert

This guidance is an introduction to maintaining your watercourse and is aimed at landowners and their agents. You are known as a 'Riparian Owner' if you have a watercourse, ditch, stream river or culvert running alongside or within your property boundary.

The principles of keeping a watercourse well maintained are very simple and the basic responsibility is to ensure "the proper flow of water" by preventing any obstructions. **You should also ensure that it doesn't attract vermin or cause a health hazard.**

FOR OPEN DITCHES, STREAMS AND RIVERS

A) Keep growth of vegetation (trees, weeds, reeds, grass etc) under control

- ◇ When trimming vegetation it is important to consider any impact on biodiversity. Mowing of banks around ditches should be minimised during the animal spawning season of March to mid-July.
- ◇ Some trees may have tree protection orders (TPOs) on them so if in doubt check with your local planning authority.
- ◇ It is recommended to cut only up to just above the water level on one side of the watercourse, leaving the fringe of the bank uncut, thereby maintaining some habitat as well as enabling a free flow of water in the ditch.

b) Keep watercourses free of debris (e.g. litter, grass cuttings, and fallen trees and branches)

- ◇ Remove any physical obstructions such as large rocks, rubble, fallen trees and branches and other waste materials (litter, grass cuttings etc) so that water can flow freely.
- ◇ All non-organic waste should be completely removed off site and disposed of in an appropriate manner.
- ◇ Any green waste resulting from the maintenance of ditches can be left a safe distance from the bank for a few days to allow any organisms to move back into the watercourse, after which the green waste should be removed so it doesn't wash back into the watercourse.
- ◇ Ensure that any disturbed debris does not end up flowing downstream and causing problems for other landowners.

c) Remove excess silt

Silt naturally builds up in watercourses as vegetation dies back each year. It can quickly reduce the capacity of a watercourse or block pipes into or out of the watercourse.

- ◇ Silt should be removed along the length of the ditch to ensure it flows properly in the right direction.
- ◇ If there are any pipes into or out of the ditch you should remove silt to the same level or below the bottom of the pipe(s).

As long as the silt is non-hazardous you can put it on the bank of the watercourse. Depositing silt on top of the banks of the watercourse allows for any organisms to move back into the ditch.

However;

FOR PIPED OR CULVERTED WATERCOURSES

Piped or 'culverted' watercourses are prone to blockage or collapse and will degrade over time. Where they naturally silt up they can be difficult to access and clean. Cleaning the inside of a culvert is likely to cost more than carrying out maintenance of an open watercourse, due to the specialist equipment required to access it.

- ◇ Blockages within the pipe or at the pipe entrance can cause flooding problems. These blockages can be reduced by regular inspection and the removal of debris.
- ◇ Either you or a qualified drainage company should carry out regular inspections and clear any blockages or silt build up as soon as they occur. There are many drainage companies that can inspect and clear culverts.
- ◇ Culvert entrances and exits often have protective grilles to prevent debris entering the pipe and causing blockages. These should be inspected and cleared regularly, especially during the winter or periods of heavy rainfall when debris can accumulate very quickly.
- ◇ The design of screens must be agreed with the District or Borough Council or Environment Agency and permission given prior to installation, as poorly designed screens can cause an obstruction themselves.

Health and Safety must be your top priority when carrying out culvert maintenance, and you should never enter any large culvert without seeking advice.

Dementia Friends is an Alzheimer's Society initiative, aimed at raising awareness of dementia amongst individuals and providing information on how to support people living with dementia in your community. A Dementia Friend learns a little bit more about what it's like to live with dementia and then turns that understanding into action. Anyone of any age can be a Dementia Friend. Whether you attend a 45-60 minute face-to-face Dementia Friends Information Session or watch the online video, Dementia Friends is about learning more about dementia and the small ways you can help.

There are currently 2 million Dementia Friends in the UK. The Alzheimer's Society has a target of creating 4 million Dementia Friends by 2020.

If there is enough interest we could organise a Dementia Friends Information Session in the new year.

Putting Dementia Friends Information Sessions into Practice: North Horsham Parish Council

"Had a great training session last night and we have already been able to put into practice being a Dementia Friend when we had a lady in the office who had forgotten where she lived. We used the techniques learned at the first session and she managed to remember her post code so we walked her home"

Your Local Wildlife Charity Needs You!

Volunteering with the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group (MWHG) could be the perfect antidote to the dark days of winter. It's a great way to keep active, meet new friends, learn new skills and make a difference in your local area. Volunteers from across the parishes on the Peninsula are involved in some fantastic work, surveying wildlife, restoring ponds and creating hedges and meadows. Our work and its legacy depends on local people stepping up and taking pride in their environment. A key part of our work is the ambitious FLOW project (fixing and linking our wetlands) to survey the condition of all the ditches on the Manhood Peninsula and target areas for improvement. Through this work we hope to restore areas for wildlife and help to reduce localised flood risk. Our FLOW volunteers meet at different locations every Friday to carry out conservation improvement work, and it's a great chance to see some of the special, hidden places in our local countryside. Our Field Officer, Chris Drake is always looking for more volunteers to help with surveying ditches and hedgerows also, and this is an opportunity to learn about more about the wildlife on your doorstep and help us target out conservation efforts.

So what does volunteering with MWHG involve? Our volunteering opportunities are varied to suit different interests and abilities, from wildlife surveys and conservation work parties, to helping out at events and local walks. Our volunteers are a diverse group, from students looking to gain work experience and training in conservation, to retired people who enjoy staying active and socialising. As a volunteer, you'll find us a welcoming and supportive group, no special skills or knowledge are necessary to take part, and you don't have to be super-fit either, just keen and interested. You are welcome to bring friends along too.

Volunteering for MWHG couldn't be easier and there's no obligation to make a regular time commitment, so why not come along to one of our weekly events for a taster, we'd love to hear from you. For more information on how you can get involved, please email us on hello@mwhg.org.uk or for an informal chat please ring Rebecca on: 07379 503 033

For more information on the MWHG please see our website www.mwhg.org.uk or follow us on Facebook/Twitter at [mwhg.page](#)

Newsletter

Winter 2017



LITTER BINS AND DOG POOH

As you may have seen in the local press, Chichester District Council are running an anti-litter campaign with fines for offenders. Please help to keep Birdham Clean by not littering. Also be public spirited and pick up litter, especially outside your home and along the main roads.

Dog owners, having picked up after their pets can now leave the bags (biodegradable ones please) in any litter bin.



WARM HOMES INITIATIVE

Chichester District Council have set aside £300,000 to help homeowners who struggle to heat their homes. Their home energy advisors will come out and review your heating and offer interest free loans of up to £5,000 to pay for more energy efficient heating systems and or loft or cavity wall insulation. Please contact Chichester Well being on 01243 521041 or e mail info@chichesterwellbeing.org.uk

VACANCY ON BIRDHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Following a resignation we have an unfilled vacancy. The procedures have been followed and we are now looking to co-opt a new parish councillor. There must be someone living in the village, or has a business within the village, who would like the chance to find out how it all works get involved. At present we have only one lady member, so a female recruit would be most welcome !! Interested ? Please contact our clerk David Siggs. 01243 790402 or email clerk@birdhamparishcouncil.org.uk

Don't forget the Birdham Tea Party

A reminder that all are welcome to the Village Hall for tea and cakes on the **first Tuesday of every month at 3.00pm.**

Key Dates

Parish Council Meetings 15th January, 19th February, 19th March, 16th April 21st May.2018

This newsletter can be viewed on our webpage <http://birdham.org.uk> .or you may like to make comments on our Facebook page.