

# News for the parishes

*Making Aylesbury Vale the best possible place to live and work*



6<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Number 4/2011

## **Clerks – Please share the following information with your Parish Councillors**

### **Theatre in the Villages**

AVDC Community Development has prepared a countywide programme of 32 shows in partnership with local people wishing to promote an event in their village. Each show brings people together, generates funds for the village and provides a great night out.

To find out more about the shows or to learn how to participate in the scheme next year go to [www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/theatreinthevillages](http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/theatreinthevillages) or contact Dan Clucas, AVDC Community Development Officer, at [dclucas@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:dclucas@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk) or call (01296) 585206.

### **Wildflower Meadows**

This summer has seen the culmination of six years hard work by Stewkley Parish Council to create three magnificent wildflower meadows. Through the advice of the AVDC Biodiversity Team and the dedication of villagers, three predominantly grassy fields have become some of the best wildflower meadows in the district. It has been inspirational to see how the meadows have improved and we are honoured to have been involved in the project. The meadows literally buzz with life in the summer like a miniature rainforest.

We have lost 98% of our wildflower meadows in the last 60 years so projects like this are really important to halt the decline in biodiversity. As well as Stewkley several other parish councils have created wildflower meadows in their villages with the help of the AVDC Biodiversity Team. If you would like to explore the possibility of doing the same in your village, please call Matt Dodds and Paul Holton, AVDC Biodiversity Officers, on (01296) 427972.

### **Village SOS**

Village SOS is an exciting new initiative from the Big Lottery Fund and the BBC to revive rural communities. Awards between £10,000 and £30,000 are currently available to kick start businesses and create employment.

Village SOS aims to support inspiring business ideas that bring people together in villages and support activities that tackle the challenges they face.

Applicants who can demonstrate the use of local skills, the area's natural resources, land and buildings will be particularly successful.

To qualify:

- you must be a community enterprise
- your village must be in a rural area and have fewer than 3,000 residents
- only one entry per village

For further information please the community advice line on 0845 434 9123 or visit [www.villagesos.org.uk](http://www.villagesos.org.uk)

## **Sky Ride Local Programme of Bike Rides**

Local bike rides will be taking place on Sundays throughout October to promote the health benefits of cycling. British Cycling are co-ordinating the project supported by AVDC, Bucks Sport and the Primary Care Trust. Details of bike rides across the Vale can be found at [www.goskyride.com/aylesbury](http://www.goskyride.com/aylesbury) For information contact Diana Carlick, Senior Community Development Officer (Strategy), on (01296) 585224.

## **Fundraising Training for the Voluntary and Community Sector**

Attached as a link below, for your information, is the new training programme, which you can pass on to any groups who you might think would benefit from these course. Even if groups have been on courses before, it is worth checking out all the new content.

For more information please contact Lynne Maddocks on (01296) 585364 or Liz Evans on (01296) 585256  
[Aylesbury Vale District Council • Sources of funding advice](#)

## **2010-11 Community Chest Annual Report**

The 2010-11 Community Chest Annual Report is now available to download from the AVDC website:  
<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/community-living/communityvoluntary/funding/community-chest/>

The Community Chest Grants Panel meet on 19th September, to review 7 project applications. The next closing date for Community Chest Project Grants (up to £25,000) is 9th December 2011. Microgrants (up to £1,000) continue to be assessed monthly.

Please contact the Grants Officer, Sarah Rothwell, (01296) 585634, [srothwell@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk](mailto:srothwell@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk) if you have any questions.

## **Queen's Diamond Jubilee and 2012 Olympics**

When budget setting for your 2012-13 precept – if you want to hold an event to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee or Olympics in Spring/Summer 2012, or to support events organised in your area, you need to include this in your figures.

If you don't wish to include these costs in your precept, you will need to plan to cover the costs through reserves, local fundraising, donations and/or in-kind contributions, as AVDC will not have any funding to support parish events.

Contact Officer: Sarah Rothwell, Grants Officer, Aylesbury Vale Community Chest (01296) 585634

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/news/2011/jul/light-beacon-queen-diamond-jubilee/>

## **Would You Like to See More Physical Activity Opportunities for Adults in Your Community?**

The Reactivate Bucks Community Challenge can help. The Community Challenge is a support project which can help people to set up physical activities in their local area.

Whether you'd like to set up a health walk, tai chi class, balance classes for older adults or a local pub football league the projects can help by providing a support pack. The pack includes access to resources such as marketing and poster design alongside templates of any paperwork you may need.

You will also be able to contact a member of our team for help and guidance. Additionally, by taking part in the Community Challenge you may be eligible for funding to help support your new activity.

For details contact Abbi McMullen on (01296) 585340 [amcmullen@buckssport.org](mailto:amcmullen@buckssport.org) or Kirsty Ingham on (01296) 585249 or e-mail or [kingham@buckssport.org](mailto:kingham@buckssport.org)

## **Big Tree Plant**

**1,000,000 new trees to be planted in English urban and residential areas by the end of March 2015.**

The Big Tree Plant is a new campaign to encourage people and communities to plant more trees in England's towns,

cities and neighbourhoods. It is a partnership bringing together national tree-planting organisations and local groups working with Defra and the Forestry Commission to plant trees throughout England.

From April 2011, £4.2m has been available to support community groups to plant trees in towns, cities and residential areas throughout England. The funding is for community and civic groups, or other non-profit organisations to establish community-led tree planting projects in areas that would benefit most.

The trees must be planted in streets or in green places that are open to all to visit or where local people will benefit from them. Whoever owns the land must give permission and support to the project, and there must be a plan to care for trees after they are planted. Groups working in areas where more trees would help to improve residents' quality of life are strongly encouraged to apply for the funding.

To apply for the Big Tree Plant funding you need to download an application form with details of your scheme and return by email to the address given on the form. [www.thebigtreeplant.direct.gov.uk/index](http://www.thebigtreeplant.direct.gov.uk/index)

## **North Bucks Swift & Bat Project**

Funded by the Open Air Laboratories (OPAL), lead by the North Bucks Bat Group ([www.northbucksbatgroup.org.uk](http://www.northbucksbatgroup.org.uk)) and supported by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) this project addresses the recent population declines in swifts and bats. OPAL is a Big Lottery Fund project that aims to encourage people to spend more time outdoors enjoying and studying their local environment. It aims to help inspire and train the next generation of naturalists, as well as produce new data on the state of the environment across England.

The project aims to help local communities form groups to watch out for swifts and bats in their areas. In order to protect these species we first need to find them. If we can locate populations of swifts and bats we can protect them. We can increase nesting and roosting opportunities for colonies and perhaps improve their local foraging habitat. Hopefully this will eventually enable colonies to increase in number and spread out from core areas.

So - why combine the two species? They have a lot in common:

- Swifts and many species of bats are dependant on buildings for roosting and rearing their young. Roost sites are increasingly being lost through modernization of old buildings and also through new building practices and regulations that eliminate the gaps and crevices that these species rely on. This is thought to be a contributing factor in their recent declines.
- Both species return to the same sites to breed year after year and the buildings they have come to rely on in this way are often churches or other historic buildings at the centre of communities. These buildings are in danger of becoming their last refuges in an increasingly urbanized landscape.
- Swifts and bats are insectivores; changes in farming practices over recent decades has resulted in declines in their insect prey.
- They are both most easily observed at dusk or dawn over the summer months: swifts will fly into their roosts at dusk; shortly afterwards the first bats should start to emerge. Volunteer's surveying time can be maximized by one group surveying both species.

Advice and equipment will be available to help local groups in their initial surveys. Swift boxes can be used to provide extra accommodation at existing nest sites and enable a core population to expand into adjacent sites.

If you are interested in joining a swift or bat watch at event please contact [hilary@northbucksbatgroup.org.uk](mailto:hilary@northbucksbatgroup.org.uk). North Bucks Bat Group run events across Aylesbury Vale throughout the year, and these can be found on their web site [www.northbucksbatgroup.org.uk](http://www.northbucksbatgroup.org.uk). Extra events are often arranged at short notice and members of the bat group are informed of these via email or on a members-only Google web page. Alternatively you could join Bucks Bird Club who can be found at <http://bucksbirdclub.co.uk/>.

## **News from Aylesbury Vale Association of Local Councils**

### **AVALC EXECUTIVE**

For the first time in several years AVALC has a full complement of parish and town representatives on the Executive Committee, being :

Dave Barry [Winslow], Bob Carvey [Aston Abbotts], Margaret Crutchfield [Wing], Michael Foote [Weston Turville] Treasurer, John Gilbey [Great Horwood], Nick Heirons [Quainton] Jenny Hunt [Stoke Mandeville] [Chairman], Derrick Isham [Buckingham], Karen Parks [North Marston], John Thornback [Stewkley], Warren Whyte [Buckingham] Vice Chairman, John Wiseman [Stoke Mandeville].

This gives a good beginning for the new term of AVALC in bringing together a diversity of views on the many hot topics and challenging issues currently cramming the agendas of local Councils.

## NEW SECRETARY FOR AVALC

We are pleased to announce that Ann Hooton, former Information and Training Officer for Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils has agreed to join us as our Secretary. Ann also has wide experience as a former Parish Councillor and Clerk. You can now contact AVALC via the new e mail address at [contact@avalc.org](mailto:contact@avalc.org) and we hope in the not too distant future to have our own website. Watch this space!

## AYLESBURY VALE LOCAL PLAN

A hive of activity is taking place in parishes and towns in Aylesbury Vale in order to engage with residents to find out their views on future development in the area. Many have delivered questionnaires which are being analysed through Survey Monkey provided by AVDC, whilst others are having meetings, focus groups and delivering paper questionnaires to residents. The response by parish and town councils to this exercise has been extremely positive with over ninety per cent participating. The way forward for parishes will be about engaging with local communities and for local councils to obtain those views in the decision making process. The process for the Aylesbury Plan is an excellent first step for many in approaching Neighbourhood Councils and Community Led Plans. You have until the end of December in which to conclude your reports.

## BROADBAND IN THE VALE

AVALC through the Aylesbury Vale Local Strategic Partnership on which it has representation, has been lobbying for increased Broadband within the Vale. Many communities throughout suffer because of the inadequate Broadband speeds to meet their needs or cannot connect at all. Work has been going on by Bucks Business First [a group set up by business leaders] and as a result Buckinghamshire is part of a recently announced £530m investment by the Government. Broadband for Buckinghamshire has taken a step forward following talks with Broadband Delivery UK [BDUK] which heads the Government initiative. A local Broadband plan for Aylesbury Vale could be available in early 2012 with new broadband by the end of the year if all goes to plan. It is understood that it is the intention that it will in general tackle rural needs. Once the plan is signed off by Government and match funding is obtained from BCC there will be a real push in getting new Broadband to local communities in the Vale. However, communities themselves will need to demonstrate that the take up will be strong and will be sufficient to make this commercially viable in accordance with EU needs.

## LOANS AND GRANTS

An excellent session organised by AVALC took place in Winslow on 22<sup>nd</sup> September when Stephanie Moffatt from AVDC gave a presentation on ways for local councils to bid for funding for projects and improvements. This was followed by Ann Hooton talking about taking out loans for larger developments. If you were unable to attend this session and would like copies of the presentation or advice on obtaining grants and loans then e mail [contact@avalc.org](mailto:contact@avalc.org).

## FUTURE WORK OF AVALC

At this time of year, the AVALC Executive makes plans for activities for the forthcoming year. We recognise that with the development of the Local Area Forums opportunities exist for learning from partners about work in your area. However, we are keen to continue with our information events if these are seen to be of use to parishes. On some occasions this year sadly these events have not been well subscribed. If you have ideas as to how AVALC can help you, please let us know. Information on training needs would also be useful. We have many new Councillors within the Vale ~ what are your special needs? AVALC does not benefit from receiving a grant or funding and the Executive works in a voluntary capacity. If you have a village hall, community centre or other venue in your community which you would be willing to donate to AVALC for an event please let us know.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 5<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2011

Our Annual General Meeting is to take place in the Rose Room of the Winslow Centre, Park Road, Winslow Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 10 am. We have this year for our Guest Speaker Neil Evans Improvement and Development Manager for the National Association of Local Councils [NALC] so please come along and ask your questions, participate in the discussion and meet up with colleagues from other parishes. Please come along and support your District Association. I look forward to seeing you there.

Jenny Hunt, Chairman  
Aylesbury Vale Association of Local Councils

