

Community Heat Scheme

Key points from the Teams meeting on the 18th January:

- The County Council's policy on Community Energy adopted in March 2023 is [here](#) (see para 2.5.2 in particular). CCC's Climate Change & Environment Strategy [here](#) may also be of interest.
- Government announcement on an extra £6bn for energy efficiency is [here](#). This includes increased budgets for Boiler Upgrade Scheme, Social Housing Decarbonisation Scheme, Green Heat Network Fund, Heat Network Efficiency Scheme and a new £400m scheme for non-means tested, light touch insulation upgrades. There is also a new £500m local authority retrofit scheme (successor for the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2) which will be for both on-gas and off-gas grid homes (EPC D-G rating and low income criteria will still apply). Government is planning a new "Single Front Door" website to guide people to funding they are eligible for and a centralised income/benefits eligibility checking tool for the means-tested schemes linked to DWP and HMRC databases.

The next Teams meeting with CCC will be on the 21st March.

Gigabit Broadband

Gigaclear are actively rolling out full-fibre broadband in Grafham, having started to connect homes from early January, a few weeks ahead of schedule. The Village Hall Committee has successfully applied to Gigaclear for their free community hub service. The fibre has been routed to the Hall and will be fully connected on the 21st February. Gigaclear have encouraged us to extend the free Wi-Fi service throughout the site, and preparations have commenced for connecting the Shop and Pub.

MVAS

For January, the MVAS's were located by Chestnut Close (incoming from Buckden/Perry) and in Breach Road, by the Cinnamon (incoming from Ellington). In both cases, the sensitivity was set too high, asking drivers to slow down ahead of reaching the 30 mph zone, so the data should be discounted. Nonetheless, they will have encouraged drivers to adhere to the speed limit.

PC Report on Trees and Meadow. Carole Baber

Tree maintenance.

1. A survey of Parish Council trees is required to:
 - a) Ensure the long-term health of trees on Grafham PC land.
 - b) Minimise the risk of harm to the public.
 - c) Reduce risk of insurance claims.

Excerpt from Ellington Defendable tree hazard survey:

'Under both civil and criminal law, the owner of land on which a tree stands has responsibilities for the health and safety of those on or near the land and has potential liabilities arising from the falling of a tree or branches from a tree. Civil law gives rise to the duty and potential liability to pay damages in the event of a breach of those duties, whilst criminal law gives rise to the risk of prosecution in the event of an infringement of the

criminal law. All landowners therefore have a statutory duty of care to ensure (as far as is reasonably practical) that every asset, including the trees located on their Estate, is unlikely to cause harm. In practice, this requires a balance between the interests of the owners of trees, those of the people that may be harmed by them and those of the public. Only if there are no trees present is it possible to ensure complete and guaranteed safety'. Of note in the report are sections on the need to avoid damage or disturbance of bats or their roosts because they are legally protected. There is also mention of ivy growing on trees, as it provides a valuable nectar source and habitats for many insects and nesting places for many birds. Ivy cannot harm the tree directly and the idea that it can 'strangle a tree to death' is unfounded. However, in some cases, tree maintenance work may require removal of some ivy. We need to make sure the correct balance is achieved.

Two quotes were obtained for this work:

The Parish Council needs to decide which company to employ. Each one has been asked to provide recommendations for any immediate work and work for the longer term. Both suggested that surveys should be conducted every three years.

2. Cherry tree on Church Road green has not been mapped in our tree policy. It is proposed that we add it.

Meadow

Yellow rattle seeds have been purchased and kept refrigerated. They are ready to sow and a date for a work party is TBC.

Village Hall Bookings and Finances

The Village Hall is currently booked on a weekly basis for 10 sessions, being Line Dancing, Pilates (x2) Band practice (2 hrs), Art Club (3 hrs), Little Fishes (2 hrs), Karate (x3), dance class and Tang Soo Doo.

Tea and Chat is still on the last Thursday of the month and is well supported.

The hall has been busy hosting several children's birthday parties.

The hall is booked for 6 weekly Lent Lunch sessions commencing Monday February 19th A Race Night is to be held on April 20th to fund-raise for village shop repairs, hosted by the Grafham Trout and Grafham Community shop.

The Hall is used on a monthly basis by the Parish Council, Shop Committee and Tea & Chat.

The cost of hiring the Hall from 1st October 2023 is £11 an hour for village use and £16 an hour outside the village. Payment for private events is required when bookings are made.

Highways + Footpaths

- LHI bid was submitted in January for the installation of village gateways.
- I've had a walk around the village and reported potholes and worn road surfaces on the Cambs CC website.
- The drains on Church Road are being cleared of debris today which will hopefully resolve the flooding issue.