



Hawridge and Cholesbury Commons Preservation Society

Newsletter February 2008

I would like to introduce myself as the new chairman of the Society. In her three years as chairman, Lindsay Griffin undertook the job with commitment and enthusiasm and we thank her for everything that she has done for the Commons. We are very pleased to welcome two new committee members, Sue Phillips from Hawridge and John Caple, from Cholesbury.

Litterblitz week will be held from **24 March – 1 April**, before the vegetation hides everything. There will be a supply of black bin bags at the top of Church Path, near the lay-by opposite the school and by the Cricket Club. Rubbish bags should be returned to these points for collection by the Council. Thank you to those who collect rubbish throughout the year; this certainly helps to keep the Commons looking good, but a concerted effort during Litterblitz week still generates plenty of debris. On refuse collection days, dogs, crows and magpies love to break open the bags. During this very windy winter, it has been noticeable that rubbish has been blown far and wide. It is good to see that some people are protecting the bags by bringing them to the verges in the bins. I know it is not always possible, but if you can do this, it will certainly help.

Summer Walk

David Dennis has kindly offered to lead another butterfly walk, which is planned for **11 May**. This will depend on the weather, so contact me (758750) or another committee member if it looks very wet – we will re-schedule the walk. In spite of heavy showers during last summer's walk, we were able to see a number of interesting species in the bright intervals. David is very good at explaining how to distinguish similar species by their flight habits or characteristic markings. In May, we should see different species that are emerging at that time of year. The walk will start at 2pm outside the Full Moon. Last year, we were able to buy from David some excellent laminated identification charts for all the species that occur in the British Isles and we hope to have them again this year for those who wish to buy one. (cost is £3)

The Summer Party

Mr and Mrs Gadsden have very generously offered their garden as the venue for the annual summer party, which will be held on **28 June**. I hope that we have such beautiful weather as we had last year, one of the few dry days of the summer. As well as this being an opportunity for us to meet in an informal way, this is our fund-raising event of the year. In order to raise money towards the upkeep of the Commons, we ask for sponsorship for the major items of expenditure. We are very grateful to the people and organisations that have sponsored us in the past. If any of you have suggestions or offers of help for sponsorship, we would love to hear from you.

Phantom letter-writer

Earlier this year, we were made aware that a strongly worded letter had been placed on a resident's car that was parked near their house. It was illegibly signed, but then typed at the bottom that the letter came from the Commons Preservation Society. We would like to publicly disassociate the Society from any involvement with this ill-considered note and were justifiably angry that anyone should hide anonymously behind our name. If there is ever an issue that concerns us, (and there certainly was no issue here as far as we are concerned) then we would make sure that we discussed the matter amicably. We would never leave a note, let alone such a discourteous one.

Reinstatement of verges

The contractors who have been relaying the pipes on the Common have undertaken to restore the verges to their original state. It will take a while for the soil to settle to a constant level, after which the Society will re-seed the areas with a special seed mix that is compatible with the vegetation already established. Although you may be keen to return your verge to a beautiful greensward, please wait for us to sow the seed.

Membership renewal

Subscriptions, which remain at £7.50 per member, fell due at the AGM in December. For those of you who have forgotten to renew your membership, please take your subscriptions to Mike Fletcher, Ivy Cottage, Cholesbury, Tring, Herts., HP23 6ND.

Linden Bevan-Pritchard (bvanp@care4free.net, telephone 758750)

Spring Flowers

As you may have noticed, there is a good display of snowdrops this year, the main areas being opposite Cholesbury Bottom and between the top ride and the road from Shepherds Cottage to Field View. These areas were swiped by the Society at the end of last year so that we could all enjoy the present display. A single Winter Aconite has also been spotted near the felled beech tree in Hawridge. Although this species is from Southern Europe, it has become naturalised in Britain in woodland areas.

Later in the year, round about April, as well as the bluebells which will be seen in many areas of the Commons, you will find the Cuckoo Flower and Garlic Mustard coming into flower. These are found on the roadsides and edges of grassy areas, and the developing seedpods are the main food plants of the Orange-tip butterfly caterpillars. Also of interest are the Ramsons or Wild Garlic, found near Post Office Cottages in Cholesbury. Again, the Society mowed this area at the end of last year, so that the display would be visible in the Spring.

Isobel Clark