



Thakeham Primary launches its new forest school (see page 5)

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## From the Chairman

Both the major housing developments in the parish are now well-advanced. Construction at Meadowbrook (Water Lane) is now almost complete, with most houses occupied, meanwhile construction at Abingworth Meadows nears its half-way point, with over 30 houses occupied. The Abingworth development is changing the face of central Thakeham with many new families arriving and still more to come, and real progress on the ground with the delivery of Thakeham's new community assets. The Pre School is now occupied and successful. The new village hall should be ready by this summer, and the new shop later in the autumn. The soccer pitches are already in use with changing rooms nearing completion and the cricket field and pavilion should also see use this summer. We are also seeking to use development funding to put in place an arrangement for a Thakeham community minibus that will be part of the existing successful scheme run by West Sussex Minibus Association.

The PC was pleased to be able to set a 'flat rate' precept for the coming year, at a time when other parts of our Council Tax bills have seen large increases. We will aim to minimise precept increases in future, and will seek to make new community facilities self-sustaining as quickly as possible. But while keeping an eye on the purse-strings there are always lots of things that need doing. As the lead piece in this newsletter explains, our top priority at the moment is refurbishing the High Bar Lane playground – see that article for how you can help.

As Cllr Instance's piece on volunteering also reminds us, we can all help to take more responsibility for community matters, by doing things like looking out for vulnerable neighbours, using the Love West Sussex website to report pothole repairs, lending a hand at Village Day, or supporting the new community assets like the Village Hall.

Local parish elections come around in May 2019, let's see more volunteers coming forward please then some of us old hands can take a rest!

**Alan Hunt**  
*Chairman, Thakeham Parish Council*



## Bringing the Wow! Factor back to High Bar Lane playground

As parents in central Thakeham are well aware, over the past couple of years the condition of the 20-year-old wooden play equipment and bark chipping surface at the High Bar Lane playground has deteriorated, and the equipment does not offer children the level of play value now available at other local villages. A survey of young residents last year confirmed the need for a major upgrade and clarified which bits of equipment should stay, and which should be replaced. Their wish-list featured a bigger slide for older kids, and more exciting climbing options. After tendering, the PC has chosen the exciting new play tower above.

So that our young residents can begin enjoying this new facility as soon as possible we have scheduled this work to be done before the 2018 summer school vacation. As you can see, we have gone for high quality, and

the total project cost is a hefty £30K. Having secured some grant funding to add to initial earmarked funds, we have £20K of the project cost covered, but in order to move quickly the PC will be running-down our limited reserves. We therefore need to raise some further funds to this project over coming months. **You can help by making a pledge via a crowdfunding site we have set up: please visit [Chuffed.org](http://Chuffed.org) and search for 'High Bar Lane'.**

This is just the first phase of our ideas for future improvements to this playground, which include overhauling the wild 'nature corner' and the shelter structure, improving the mini-football field, and adding cycle racks and exercise equipment for older teenagers and adults. As and when funds permit!

**Owen Richards**  
*Parish Clerk*

## Village Day

**We need assistance to make this year's Village Day on 15 September something special.** We hope to be celebrating our new parish assets: the Village Hall, Cricket pitch and Pavilion, Football fields and Changing Rooms. It is being organised in conjunction with Thakeham Primary and Thakeham Pre-school who will be fundraising. The Parish wants funds too to assist with our development of the High Bar Lane playground. Given the Abingworth connection we will be adding mushrooms to the rural/vintage theme. If any local crafts person or business want to have a stall please contact us. We would like to hear from bands or other performers who want to be part of the music in the evening too.

**Caroline Instance, Village Day Committee lead** ([caroline.instance@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.instance@btinternet.com))

## Senior residents' club

On a personal note (nothing to do with my Parish Councillor responsibilities) I want to establish a club for our senior residents - particularly those who are less mobile and do not get out much. I would love to hear from you if you would be interested in serving tea and coffee, driving the community minibus, leading activities, fundraising, picking people up in your car etc etc. Some people are aware I am also a trustee of our local charity caring for the elderly AgeUK Horsham They may be able to lend support - but only if they have the funds to do so. It is our Diamond Anniversary this year. Look out for special activities and fundraising events. I even have my own donation page. Please be generous! <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/CarolineInstance>

**Caroline Instance**  
*([caroline.instance@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.instance@btinternet.com))*



## Village Tidy

**A big thanks to volunteers!** The annual Village Tidy was a great success with bags and bags of rubbish cleared from the B2139 which runs through our Parish and adjacent roads. Such a shame that motorists still regularly despoil our beautiful countryside. We also have problems with speeding and inappropriate sized vehicles. Photographs of miscreants welcome!

## Volunteering

**Lots of scientific studies have shown that volunteering is good for you.** What's not to like? Doing something you enjoy and helping yourself at the same time. In the Parish there are lots of volunteering opportunities – you just have to find something that suits you and the time you have spare.

The Community Group will try to advertise openings and help match people. Please get in touch if you want to do something new or have the need for extra pair of hands. Serving on the Community Group itself is yet another opportunity.

**Caroline Instance, Chair of Community Group and Village Day organising group**  
([caroline.instance@bitinternet.com](mailto:caroline.instance@bitinternet.com))



## May Day Walk 7th May

Warmer (and we hope drier) weather is upon us and our thoughts turn to the bluebell



woods and footpaths. Join us for the May Day Walk(s) on Bank Holiday Monday 7 May. Dress for the weather and meet at the Village Hall at 10.00am. Walks of varying lengths, to suit all abilities (including children) will be expertly led by our knowledgeable guides. This year there will be a sparkling treasure hunt for the under 12s with token prizes. If you bring dogs ensure you have a lead as we pass through farmland and some other walkers may be nervous of animals and, of course, bring your own poo bags! Please send us any photographs you take on the day, mainly for the glory of being featured on our website and Facebook page but again, token prizes will be given for the best.

**Norman Prince**  
**Environment Group Chair**

## Contact the Parish Council

**Clerk:** Owen Richards  
**Web:** [www.thakehamparish.co.uk](http://www.thakehamparish.co.uk)  
**Email:** [clerk@thakehamparish.co.uk](mailto:clerk@thakehamparish.co.uk)  
**Telephone:** 01798 815305  
**Office:** Thakeham Parish Council,  
Storrington Road, Thakeham RH20 3EJ  
Councillors' full contact details can be found at:  
<http://thakehamparish.co.uk/councillors>

## ROAD & TRAVEL NEWS

### Traffic Calming

At time of writing (mid-April) the current situation relating to traffic calming in the Abingworth 30mph zone is that the long-awaited vehicle-activated signs have finally been installed, and are due to be powered up shortly. This will be followed by new village 'gateway' features.

In relation to the 'phase 2' proposals for a new 'pinch point' system, a detailed highway engineering scheme was formally submitted to WSCC in late March and as of mid-April was still going through the technical approval process. We will continue to press for works to begin as soon as possible in 2018.

Other related issues include a sudden big upsurge in HGVs carrying aggregate materials using the B2139, which turns out to be related to the Barratt Homes/Paula Rosa site (Water Lane). This not only causes gridlock in the narrow banked sections of the road, but involves these vehicles using the Rock Road mini-roundabout outside the school site. We are asking Barratts to divert this traffic.

If you witness cases of speeding, driving while using a mobile phone or other anti-social driving behaviour, and you have the registration number, report it! [www.operationcrackdown.org](http://www.operationcrackdown.org)

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# Forest school fun for Thakeham Primary School

On March 29th Thakeham Primary School proudly opened their very own Forest school.

The children had been looking forward to this moment for a very long time. Having come from a school site with very little space, everyone was very excited to finally have their own outdoor area to enjoy, learn new skills, find out about wildlife, and to care for the world around them.

Mrs Hoare, one of our teachers, started the idea of having a Forest school where all the children can learn about nature. She was supported by five students from Chichester University, Maddie, Amy, Cindy, Terri and Lauren (fondly known as the 'Forest Fairies'). Together with the help of parents they helped the children transform an overgrown area into a wonderful Forest School complete with fire pit, bug hotel, bird houses, planting and mosaic table using recycled materials. All of this would not have been possible without sponsorship from Abingworth Meadows to buy the teaching and learning resources, fencing, planting and to support some of the Forest School sessions themselves.

We were pleased to have the Forest Fairies return along with Stuart Slade, who will be our Forest School Leader, and Martin Field from Abingworth Homes to officially open the new Forest School. They were joined by staff, children and families who enjoyed toasting marshmallows, drinking hot chocolate and making tree decorations as part of an activity to support work towards a Woodlands Trust Award. It was an exciting event!

Now we have returned to warmer weather, classes will use the Forest School as part of the curriculum to teach Geography, Science and Art as well as Forest School sessions, supporting the school's work on 'Learning for Life' and 'Inspired Learners.'

The project was a good example of what can be achieved when different members of our community work together to turn a dream into a reality!

By Emilia (Year 4) and Jasper (Year 5)



Grand opening



The finished mosaic



One of the areas at Forest school



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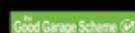
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## COMMUNITY MATTERS

### ■ Village Hall manager role

The new Village Hall, scheduled for delivery this July, needs a hall manager. The Village Hall Trust sees this as a part-time, job-share, for 2 people. Minimum 12 hours per week shared, to cover 6 days per week, minimum of 2 hours per day. Willingness to be flexible about hours and work shifts is vital. Pay rate: £10-£12 per hour, depending on experience. For further details contact John Bearman: johnbearman47@hotmail.com or Ann Wall at info@thakehamvillagehall.co.uk

Meantime, of course, the current hall is available to hire during the daytime for other clubs and activities. Contact Barbara Laker (Bookings Secretary) on 01798 812266.

### ■ Thakeham Gardeners Club

Meets second Monday of each month, 7.30pm, Village Hall. Annual Flower Show, outings and talks. Contact: Linda Turk on 01903 741068.

### ■ Thakeham Bellringers



Based in St. Mary's church, they practice on Wednesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.00 p.m. and organise outings and links with other societies. They welcome anyone who is interested in finding out about ringing, and to see the bells. To find out more visit: <http://thakehamparish.co.uk/thakeham-bellringers>

or contact Christine Hounslow (01798 815993 christinehounslow@hotmail.com) or Roger Watts (01798 813775 / working.cap@btinternet.com).

### ■ Spring Hedge Trimming

Spring is a sensitive time for wildlife. To avoid disrupting bird nesting, residential hedges should not be cut between 01 March and 31 July. Don't be misled: breaking this rule is potentially a reportable crime, and responsibility lies with whoever commissions the work.



### ■ Refuse/Recycling bins

HDC advise that it is better for their new collection vehicles that bins should now be left with handles pointing towards the road.

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## SPORTS CLUBS

### Cricket for all at West Chilmington and Thakeham CC

The Summer is upon us and the 2018 cricket season has begun. We hope that you and your family will join us at the Recreation Ground or, later in the summer, at our new second ground at the Abingworth Development in Thakeham to either watch or play our national summer game. We are first and foremost a village club and we try to offer as many opportunities as possible to everyone in our local area to get involved in cricket.

- For 5-8 year old girls and boys we run fun and action-packed coaching sessions on Friday evenings from 6-7pm and ECB All Stars sessions begin on Tuesday 15th May and run for 8 weeks ([www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars](http://www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars)).
- Coaching for 9-14 year olds takes place on Friday evenings and our 15 and 16 year olds practice on Thursday evenings. All of our junior teams play league matches and participate in cricket festivals and competitions throughout the summer.
- Girls can play in our mixed teams or in our all girls' teams if they prefer.
- Our 3 men's teams play league matches on Saturdays and we also run a friendly Sunday side that plays at some of the most picturesque grounds in Sussex from June-end September.
- We are always keen to attract ladies to join in our practice sessions on Monday evenings and play in T20 and 35 over matches.
- There's always a warm welcome at the club on match days for spectators, so do join us for a cup of tea or a glass of Pimm's over the summer months.

West Chilmington and Thakeham CC [www.wctcc.org.uk](http://www.wctcc.org.uk)

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**Kerry at Eyelevel Design**

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