

ZEBON COPSE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

**Number 8
March 1996**



Your Committee are pleased to bring you another issue of the Newsletter. The main topic for this issue is to give you advance notice of our Annual General Meeting. We have included an article about the Zebon Copse Woodland and also give you some background information on the workings of Crookham Parish Council which is due for re-election on the 2nd May.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL ZEBON COPSE RESIDENTS

All residents of Zebon Copse Estate - even if you are not yet a member of the Association - are warmly invited to attend our Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday 17th April at the Velmead Community Centre on Zebon Copse. Doors will be opened at 8pm for an 8-15 pm start.

We intend to keep the formal part of the meeting as short as possible and then to follow we have two guest speakers: Mr Auty from Hart District Council will talk to us about the proposed new children's play areas and Mr PA Fields, who is Director of the Basingstoke Canal Authority, will give us a talk about the canal. This will be an ideal opportunity to learn about local issues and to ask any questions you may have.

Light refreshments will be served during the evening when you will have a chance to chat to members of the committee and to your neighbours and hopefully you will want to join the Association or renew your membership which only costs £2 per year per household.

Nominations are invited for committee membership to be submitted to the Chairman, Philip Ashton of 1, Daphne Drive, tel. 816182 by not later than 3rd April. Any special items requested to be included on the agenda are to be submitted to Philip by 3rd April. A Statement of Accounts and Minutes of the last AGM will be available for inspection at the meeting.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th July 1pm to 5pm: FAMILY BARBECUE

All residents will be invited to attend our annual Family Barbecue to be held at the **Velmead Community Centre** on Zebon Copse. Keep your diary free for this very popular annual social event - music, good food, refreshments, games and lots more!

COMMITTEE CONTACT NAMES: Chairman - Philip Ashton - 816182;
Vice-chairman and Membership - Nicky Dawson - 626422; Editor - Bob Cornwell - 613186;
Treasurer - David Jackson - 615052; Entertainments - Robert Ney - 625426.

ZEBON COPSE - IT'S YOUR WOODLAND

by Nicky Dawson

Many of you will be aware that the Copse adjoining the Estate is now in the hands of Hampshire County Council's Countryside & Community Department. They will be managing the woodland both for its nature conservation value and for the benefit of the local community.

Rangers from the Countryside Division Northern Area team have been visiting the woodland on a regular basis and have met with members of the Parish Council, local people, school children and adjacent landowners. They have also met with the developers to discuss the implications of future drainage proposals on the Copse as well as the implications of development on badger activity within the Copse.

They have been busy collating botanical, ornithological, entomological and structural information in order to produce a site management plan to direct the management of the Copse for the next 5-16 years.

It is anticipated that the plan will be written and presented to the community sometime in the Spring at a meeting at the Velmead Community Centre. All local residents will be invited to this meeting to have a say in how the Copse is to be managed. It is also hoped that local people will want to get involved in some of the practical tasks - such as re-instatement of traditional woodland management practices (e.g. coppicing) in the south-western part of the Copse and the construction of boardwalks and pathways to facilitate access across the northern and eastern parts of the site.

This is your local woodland and wildlife resource so make sure you have a say when the woodland management plan is presented to you. I have been assured that the date of the meeting will be advertised well in advance by a letter drop to all residents. If you have any concerns or enquiries about the Copse before the meeting please contact the Ranger, Bruce Gwynn, c/o The Rangers House, Cricket Hill Lane, Yateley, Hampshire, GU17 7BB or telephone 01252 874346.

PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS, MAY 2nd

by Peter Crawley, Crookham Parish Council Chairman

On May 2nd you will have the chance to elect a new Parish Council. [This only happens once every four years -Ed] The new estates [Zebon Copse and Grove Farm] have increased the village electorate from 600 to around 1800, so Hart District Council agreed to increase the numbers of councillors from 6 to 8, but the Local Government Commission have refused to confirm the increase because 'it doesn't fit in with their timetable!' The Parish Council are fighting this bit of bureaucratic obstruction, but I don't expect they will succeed in time so the election will probably be for only 6 councillors.

The Parish Council costs you money - a parish rate totalling about £4000 this year. About half of this goes on lighting and to reserves for Village Improvements like the proposed Village Hall, and the rest to pay the Parish Clerk and on administration.

What is the use of a Parish Council? Why can't we let Hart do the administration and save £2000? Why another layer of local government? The short answer is, **because it is LOCAL** and not a bunch of remote officials. The Parish Council does not have many powers, but it has the right to be consulted on all local matters; it is the one way to get the views of Crookham Villagers across. The Council is made up of your neighbours, who do their bit for free. It prods our District Councillors (both from Crondall at the moment, one seat up for election on May 2nd) and our County Councillor. So far it has been free of party politics and has avoided being a third layer of bureaucracy.

Do you feel like being a candidate, to do your bit for your neighbours? Are you fed up with the lack of success the present Council has had in preserving the quality of life? Then get nomination forms from Hart DC Offices, before 28th March and get yourself nominated.

If you want more information ask the clerk or me on 613728 - but in any case vote on May 2nd.

We already have two volunteers from Zebon Copse Estate standing for election - make sure they get your support on May 2nd! - Ed.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ADVICE:

Report anything suspicious or any incidents directly to the police without delay.