

In August 2003 the village held a "Future Needs Day" in order that residents be afforded the opportunity to have their say in the development of village facilities. This led to the formulation of a "Parish Plan". Two years on, after much work behind the scenes, the Parish Plan Monitoring Group have put together this newsletter outlining some of the successful developments arising from the plan and in the interest of balance, some of the ideas that have come to nothing.

HAFWEG

When the Helmdon Village Plan Survey results were analysed there was clear evidence of a widespread interest in, and concern for, all aspects of our local environment, and so a meeting was organised to which all those who had expressed such an interest were invited. At the meeting it was agreed that a formal group should be set up to discuss and act upon the various issues which had been raised in response to the Survey. Those present agreed that it was important to have young people well-represented on the committee and there is now a substantial and very active student group.

It was agreed subsequently that the group should be called the Helmdon, Astwell and Falcutt Wildlife and Environment Group, or HAFWEG. The aim of HAFWEG is basically to promote work and activities which will serve to protect and enhance the environment of Helmdon and the adjacent areas.

To date activities have included:

- ... clearing / tidying the School Conservation Area
- ... a study of local grasses led by Dr Barry Meatyard of The University of Warwick
- ... a talk by John Clewes of the RSPB
- ... clearing / tidying the footpath alongside the allotments to the south of Jenners' Piece. This activity was done in conjunction with the Parish Paths Group.

Fund raising events have included:

- ... a Pub Quiz held in the Bell Inn
- ... a HAFWEG Event held in Helmdon School

All these events have been well supported and our fund-raising has been very successful, providing us with much needed funds for running costs, fees and / or expenses for speakers and the quite expensive insurance cover, which is essential for all our activities.

Anyone interested is most welcome to join the group but non-group members are invited to attend any of our activities, including our group meetings. Our next activity is planned for the 30th August when we will be clearing another area of footpath. The details of this will be published nearer to the time. Our next meeting will be our AGM in October and the details of this will also be published later. Up-to-date information will always be available from the village web-site, or from **Niki Phillips**, Chair of HAFWEG, telephone **768202** or email: **ed.phillips@ntlworld.com**.

HELMDON PRESENTS...

Helmdon Presents... is a group that has been formed to coordinate what we hope will turn out to be a wide range of cultural activities.

We are hoping to arrange outings to theatres and concerts, hold exhibitions of arts and crafts in the village, and are discussing the feasibility of having a film society.

We have secured a touring theatre company to perform "Talking Heads" by Alan Bennett on Saturday 26th November at Helmdon church. Look out for further information around the village nearer the time.

Anyone who has any ideas or suggestions, or would like more information should contact **Christine Bridger** on 760362 or **Morag Underwood** on 768922.

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY

Other issues noted as giving rise for concern at the time of the original survey were:

Better public transport: We now enjoy vastly improved bus services to Brackley & Banbury

More recycling: SNC has recently successfully extended its recycling scheme to the village and surrounding area

Broadband: Thanks to a spirited campaign it's here!

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Whilst serious consideration has been given to all the ideas arising from the survey conducted at the "Future Needs Day", for a variety of reasons a number of suggestions have not come to fruition (yet). Examples include proposals for a village bonfire/firework display and a pancake race, both scuppered by insurance implications. A further non-starter was a gardening club, this time due to lack of support. The possibility of joining forces with the neighbouring club at Sulgrave was investigated, but sadly this too has now folded due to lack of support. You can't win them all!



On Tuesday 9th August members of HAFWEG and the Parish Paths Group combined forces to hold a workparty to cut back the hedge adjacent to the footpath running through the allotments.

PARISH PATHS GROUP

A further positive outcome of the village "Future Needs Day" held in August 2003 is the re-establishment of a "Parish Paths Group" which, in conjunction with Ren Gittens, the parish council's Parish Paths Warden, will endeavour to maintain and improve the many paths in and around the village.

The Parish Paths Warden is appointed by and works in conjunction with the County Council, to monitor the condition of paths and bridleways on a local level. The establishment of a group of volunteers to support Ren in his work will enable us to spread the task of monitoring our wide network of routes. We are also hoping, with the support of the County Council and permission of the relevant landowners, to undertake occasional work parties to repair and improve paths at problem locations.

To this end, we have already completed a survey of the paths in the centre of the village and identified a number of problems, together with possible solutions. We are hoping to hold a number of work parties shortly.

Anyone wishing to lend a hand would be most welcome to join us. Please contact **Ren Gittens** on **768972** or **Mike Barnes** on **760444**.

ABOUT THE P.P.M.G.

Following publication of the Parish Plan, The **Parish Plan Monitoring Group** was established with the aim of ensuring that the plan is implemented. Its role is not to undertake this work itself (the tasks identified will in some cases take much effort and many

years), but to encourage and assist the residents of Helmdon to become involved in shaping the future of their village. To this end it has a small budget to provide seed-funding for suitable projects. For further information please contact **Danny Moody** on **768090**.