

Chairman's Report 2011

I have been the group's Chairman for three years now, and looking back at my notes, I said when appointed that I would agree to be Chairman until anyone more qualified and younger come along and wanted the job. That is still my position. I'm willing to carry on as Chairman for a further year if you wish. Last year we had as Secretary Henricus Peters. Henricus and his wife had an offer to teach in China, and I would like to thank Henricus for the help he gave me. He keeps in touch, on his blog, and Facebook.

Looking back over the last year, for me personally it was one of some pride to be given the honour of being nominated, and then winning the Mayoral Peoples award in May 2010, and I would like to thank the people who nominated me, and all Chesham's volunteers.

During the year the working parties on the third Sunday of the month have attracted new volunteers. I am confident this will continue with the help of our newly revamped website, updated regularly by Andrew Clark. (Do have a look at it). We are also going out during the week to carry out projects; some mentioned below. Georgina will keep you informed.

We carry out litter picks and tidying up throughout Chesham along with our work to do with the river. In September last year we along with Impress the Chess members, Town council workers, and lead by Allen Beechey cleared a section of the river along Holloway Lane, a part of the river that had been neglected for some time. I litter picked along that stretch recently and it is still looking good. We also spent sometime in Meads Water Gardens cutting back the willows, litter picking and tidying up. There are plans this year to keep the gardens looking good all summer. All through the summer months teams of the group have been out clearing Himalayan Balsam from the river's banks. This consists of pulling out the plant before it seeds. We cannot say we are winning but we hope to stop it from spreading down river. Himalayan Balsam as of last year was added to the Wildlife and Countryside Act, meaning that people cultivating it their gardens, allowing it to escape into the countryside can be prosecuted.

People should know that Chesham is Walkers are Welcome Town which had a very successful launch during Heritage weekend last year. The steering group have plenty of ideas to encourage walking in the Chilterns, both for locals and visitors, bringing benefits to the local economy. Chesham Environmental Group works with many other groups, on activities such as fly monitoring, and tree planting, and are represented on a number of committees

A new addition to our assets is the Shelter on the moor. This has been a real blessing and I thank the Town Council and the councillors for allowing us to use the shelter to store our tools. Before we acquired it our tools were stored in my, sorry my wife's van, our former CEG Chairman Ian Freeman's garage and my shed.

Finally, without the help of you the volunteers this group could not operate. I would personally like to thank Georgina for her work in contacting volunteers and for passing on information, Ken, Andrew. I would also like to thank the Town Clerk, Bill Richards, and the councillors for supporting the group, Kathryn, Town Council projects manager, Allen Beechey Chalk stream project manager and Bob Ayers Parks Manager for their help and advice. Thanks to CDC for taking away our black waste sacks. Sorry to anyone else I may have forgotten.