

Dear Residents

Roadworks: Bassett Avenue is being closed on the south side from the Chilworth roundabout to Winchester Road from 12th February. This will result in traffic heading for Southampton being re-routed via Bassett Green Road. Traffic heading north from Southampton will continue to use Bassett Avenue at present. If you are able to stagger your journeys to Southampton during this time, it is recommended that you do so.

Meanwhile, the M27 motorway locally is being resurfaced now for about 8 more weeks, resulting in some motorway traffic being re-routed during the evenings and overnight from junction 3 (Nursling) to Junction 5 (the airport) via Chilworth using the A27. This is the relief road for the M27. See Highways England website for fuller information. <http://roads.highways.gov.uk/roadworks-search>

Boundaries, again: The Borough Council is now considering Parish Council boundaries. Chilworth Parish Council has proposed that no change be made to its boundary with Valley Park: i.e. that the Valley Park residents remain as part of Valley Park even though the Borough Council, under the Borough boundary review proposes that we absorb about 500 Valley Park residents into Chilworth. The Parish Council also proposes that the homes in Castle Lane, from Misslebrook Lane to the North Baddesley traffic lights be retained within Chilworth. The Parish Council has made no other recommendations regarding its boundaries and expects these to remain unchanged. I will advise the outcomes when they have been agreed.

A separate review by the Boundary Commission for England proposes that the existing Chilworth, Nursling & Rownhams ward (without the 500 Valley Park residents) be moved into New Forest East constituency, for parliamentary voting purposes. The Parish Council has strongly objected to this proposal to move it from what is currently Romsey and Southampton North constituency. Although it is expected that MPs won't vote for this proposal because it would reduce the overall number of MPs from 650 to 600, nevertheless, Parliament is charged with reducing the number of MPs so some changes may come about eventually.

Chilworth Hall: The Hall has undergone fantastic major changes over the last few years, thanks to the Hall Management Committee, led by Brian Luff and comprising Gill Holebrook, his deputy, Pat Feighery, who has brought his considerable expertise in the building industry to the project, Donna Jones, who does the bookings, and including the individual expertise of Joan Pryde, Emily Pain, Patricia Smith and others. The Hall is in great demand and the Chilworth community owes them a great debt for the work they have done and continue to do in making this venture so successful. They are proposing to start work on the final phase of the project shortly. More information about what goes on at the Hall can be found on the website www.chilworthhall.org.uk. Do join and keep in touch with the many activities there.

Dates for your diary:

1). *Moviola*: The following, all taking place on Sundays starting at 7:30 prompt, will be shown at the Hall:

25th February, Victoria & Abdul;

25th March, The Mountain Between Us;

22nd April, Film Stars Don't Die in Liverpool

2). *Half term diversions*: - A great range of half-term activities at local Libraries and Winchester Discovery Centre - see www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library and www.hants.gov.uk/shop/home.php?cat=453

3). *Fri 16th Feb – Valentine's Charity Dinner Dance* in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care and the Southampton centre for Cancer Immunology, At Ampfield Golf Club. Tickets £45 from Ray Fishman 075121-151-761

Best wishes, Alison

Please contact me at alisonf@btinternet.com to be on the mailing list for more frequent updates about burglaries, utility failures, local news etc, Tel: 023-8076-9987

Phantom Debt Fraud

Action Fraud has recently experienced an increase in the number of calls to members of the public by fraudsters requesting payments for a “phantom” debt. The fraud involves being cold-called by someone purporting to be a debt collector, bailiff or other type of enforcement agent. The fraudster may claim to be working under instruction of a court, business or other body and suggest they are recovering funds for a non-existent debt.

The fraudsters are requesting payment, sometimes by bank transfer and if refused, they threaten to visit homes or workplaces in order to recover the supposed debt that is owed. In some cases, the victim is also threatened with arrest. From the reports Action Fraud has received, this type of fraud is presently occurring throughout the UK.

It is important to recognise that there are key differences between the various entities who seek to settle debts or outstanding fees in England and Wales. These differences range from the type of debt they will enforce to the legal powers they possess. To learn more, please take a look at some of the helpful information and links on the Step Change Debt Charity website; <https://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/debt-collection/bailiffs-and-debt-collectors-differences.aspx>

Protect Yourself

- Make vigorous checks if you ever get a cold call. Bailiffs for example, should always be able to provide you with a case number and warrant number, along with their name and the court they are calling from; make a note of all details provided to you.
- If you receive a visit from a bailiff, they must always identify themselves as a Court Bailiff at the earliest possible opportunity. Ask to see their identity card which they must carry to prove who they are, this card shows their photograph and identity number. They will also carry the physical warrant showing the debt and endorsed with a court seal.
- If you work for a business and receive a call or visit, be sure to speak with your manager or business owner first. Never pay the debts yourself on behalf of the business you work for; some fraudsters have suggested employees make payment suggesting they can then be reimbursed by their employer when in reality the debt is non-existent.
- Exercise caution believing someone is genuine because you’ve found something on the internet; fraudsters could easily create fake online profiles to make you believe them.
- Double check with the court, company or public body they claim to work for to confirm whether the call is legitimate; if you use a landline make sure you hear the dialling tone prior to dialling as the caller could still be on the line and you could potentially speak to the fraudster(s) to confirm the non-existent debt. Also be sure to independently search for a telephone number to call; never use a number provided by the caller without carrying out your own research.
- Do not feel rushed or intimidated to make a decision based on a phone call. Take five and listen to your instincts.
- If you know you have a debt, keep in regular contact with your creditor and be sure to establish the debt type at the earliest opportunity if you are not aware. This will help you to understand who might be in contact with you regarding any repayments or arrears.

You can report suspicious calls like these to Action Fraud by visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.