

Are you are carer? (28<sup>th</sup> June 2009)

As a member of the Berkhamsted Access Committee, I am concerned that we have been so successful in resolving the needs of disabled residents, that new committee members are not forthcoming.

Have we really resolved all the difficulties that exist?

Is everyone housebound and not needing any help outside?

I'm sure it's just that you don't like to ask. I mean, it's just not British, is it.

Although, I've said it before, the committee is actually organised by the Borough Council and 'chaired' by our very own access officer, John Gavin. It exists to identify problems outside the home and over the years, has achieved many small improvements to help both the young, the not so young, the disabled and, indirectly, the able bodied.

As an example, as I was walking home from the June meeting, I saw a young mother struggling with her push chair up a kerb where, although there were marks for 'County' to install dropped curbs, they still had not been done some 6 months after being requested and marked - mental note to chase up, so you see our Committee does help everyone.

The usual excuse why we have difficulty getting members is they are disabled and find it difficult to attend the quarterly meetings which generally last around an hour, hence this request to carers to give just 4 hours a year to provide 'hands on' input and maybe make difference. I do, what's your excuse?

Whilst on the subject of County - tenuous link, I know, but a lot of thought goes into this. I reported a couple of pot-holes via the Internet reporting system at [www.herts.org](http://www.herts.org). They have an interesting system inasmuch as you report a pothole, someone pops along, marks and a few days later, it/they get filled. The guy who comes to mark obviously has instructions to mark the hole/s reported. Holes even on the other side of the road have to be reported separately. No, I'm not making this up as that is exactly what has had to happen.

The latest edition of the English Heritage magazine explains their current concerns regarding the nations Conservation Areas and why we seem to be neglecting these areas. Did you know we have such things as 'conservation area yellow lines'. They are narrower than the usual two inch wide wide ones, so do not intrude quite so much. At the end of June, Holliday Street had the nice wide ones placed from top to bottom. It sticks out like sore thumb as you come down Gravel Path. English Heritage are suggesting we lobby our Borough Council to create a 'Heritage Champion' as well as obtaining one of their campaign packs.

If you are a member of the Citizens Association or CARAB, it would do no harm to contact them and ask what they are doing to save our very own extensive conservation area. If you are not a member of either organisation, then you now have a good reason to get involved and join (I joined the 'Citizens', and look what happened!).