

HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORTS

2010-2011

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



The past year has seen many significant achievements in the Hothfield parish and this is down to a small group of people who are doing a truly amazing amount of work for their fellow parishioners. These people spend many hours filling in forms, ringing organisations or companies for sponsorships and doing things others don't just to ensure Hothfield has the improving and current fantastic facilities for everyone.

The thing that most annoys others is the unnecessary and unwarranted acts of anti-social and destructive behaviour carried out by the mindless minority of the parish. You know who they are and so do their friends and family. Whilst they may see no harm in their actions do they realise that at the end of the day it is us, the people of Hothfield that must pay for their senseless acts of vandalism and destruction. Contrary to their thinking damage to the MUGA is paid for by the residents, damage to the rubbish bins or the village hall falls to the Parish Council and the Hall Committee to pay for. Light bulbs cost over £300 each at the MUGA and yet when they don't work as someone thought it fun to break them who squeals loudest?

It might surprise some to know the Parish Council does not have limitless funds to pay for this damage. In fact this year funding from the borough was cut by almost a quarter under a redistribution of funds (which the Parish Council objected to but were overruled). The money required to repair these damages comes almost entirely from your Council Tax and the Parish Council do not want to have to raise that to pay for the damage caused by the clueless. The budget set by the Parish Council for the next financial year has seen the amount of money available for some village clubs and activities lowered due to these extra repair costs.

During 2010 the Parish Council was fortunate to secure some monies to begin special activities such as the Youth Project held at the village hall. Other grants have also been obtained throughout the year to improve the hall and the facilities in the parish. I would like to personally thank the man behind many of these grants; Mr Bob Rivers, a true village stalwart. There are also many others that have made an outstanding contribution to the enjoyment of life in our parish and I will be thanking them personally. So the message is simple; please enjoy your parish and all its facilities but if you feel the need to break something then make it the record for leaving. The parish is for people to enjoy not destroy and your Parish Council will continue to improve your amenities and facilities.

Please join me at the Annual Parish Meeting on May 6 at the village hall and meet your new Parish Council.

Larry Krause
2010/ 2011 Hothfield Parish Chairman

REPORT FROM KCC COMMUNITY WARDEN

As a Kent County Council Community Warden working in the village of Hothfield over the last 18 months, I sense that my role is being understood more clearly now by the residents. This statement is proven by the number of phone calls, enquires and requests for assistance that I am getting on a very regular basis. My day to day function is to assist residents when they feel that they need help solving a particular problem. Please do remember that if I am not able to help immediately with the situation, then I can, with your consent, put you in touch with the individual or agency that will be able to help with your concern. This offer of help covers ALL concerns that you may have and is completely confidential. I have contact details for all the County and Borough Councils Departments but do remember that sometimes the solution to the problem takes a little time to filter through. For those residents that may have mislaid my contact details you can call me on 07811271306.

We have seen many positive changes within the village over the last 12 months. To list just a few in no particular order, we now have a very pro-active village hall committee who along with other individuals in the village have achieved a lot in such a short time. They have had the hall fully redecorated by using the Community Payback Scheme, (courtesy of the Community Safety Unit in Tufton Street, Ashford), and have provided new curtains for both the stage area and all the windows throughout. There is an order being placed for new furniture for the benefit and comfort of organisations booking and using the hall. The village hall now has a very healthy bank balance due to the number of events that the committee has successfully organised. New entrance doors have been provided and security has been stepped up by the provision of CCTV cameras around the site. This was felt necessary due to an increase of vandalism being perpetrated by a few individuals who do not realise that they are wasting money that could be put to better use for the benefit of everyone in the village. We have had a successful Summer Fête with another planned for this year.

We have a very dynamic Parish Council who will have been working tirelessly throughout the year to improve the facilities in the village. Many of our Parish Councillors and some others in the village will have been working very hard to obtain money from various funds to upgrade and provide additional services for the benefit of all persons living in Hothfield.

Funding has been sourced from a number of different organisations for the provision of amenities and improvements in the village from which we all now benefit. A wonderful new children's play area, the car park to "Bluebells" children's centre has been made larger and resurfaced, a number of kerbs have been dropped to assist residents crossing the road when using mobility scooters or wheel chairs. We now have speed restriction signs on School Road to warn drivers to consider their speed when passing through the village, and the grass areas on Beech Drive have been removed and replaced with tarmac to improve the overall appearance. Other improvements to the village are in the pipeline and will be addressed as and when money is more readily available.

In conclusion I thank you for your support and ask that you support and use all the services provided for the residents of our village, report things like Anti-Social Behaviour, Vandalism, older person needing help or a visit, Rogue Traders and any other concerns so that we can improve the lifestyle and well-being of all the families living in Hothfield.

Thank You for your support.

D. L. Beckley, KCC Community Warden for Hothfield & Charing

THANET CHARITIES

Hothfield

Once again this year the Thanet Charities has continued its work within the village. The financial situation of the Charity has not improved substantially over the last year but it has still been able to provide a small number of hardship payments on top of the usual voluntary monthly donations.

The Charity also pays the rent for the hire of the Village Hall for the Pastoral coffee mornings held once a month in conjunction with St. Margaret's Church PCC.

Anyone wishing to apply to Thanet Charities for financial aid should submit their request in writing to Mrs. P.A. Guy, Hon, Secretary, Thanet Charities at Garden House, Hothfield for the Trustees consideration

Pat Guy

HOTHFIELD POST OFFICE

Over the last year, Hothfield Post Office has striven to provide the community with a distinctive and humble service.

In order to further improve the services provided by Hothfield Post Office, we have spoken to a number of local residents. They were asked about the variety of products they would like to see in their local store. Taking these opinions into consideration, we have since introduced a range of fresh fruit and vegetables and fresh bakery products to cater for those who cannot make it to the supermarkets and for the villagers' convenience. We hope to see that these changes are well received in our endeavours to improve our services for the community.

Aside from the services provided in the shop, Bina has provided her 'famous' curries for charity fundraisers such as the Church's and Little Chart Cricket Club's 'Quiz and Curry Nights'.

We hope to continue to provide the level of service which satisfies the majority of the community, and hope that the villagers will reciprocate our efforts. We hope to see the villagers' continued support in keeping alive the village's remaining last focal point over the coming year.

Jayesh Patel

TREE WARDEN'S REPORT

The following practical issues have arisen this year and advice and guidance given in Hothfield:

- Advice to residents regarding trees and their maintenance.
- Corresponded with Ashford Borough Council regarding the lifting of some Tree Preservation Orders and regarding the areas covered by 'Conservation'.
- Asked about Tree Preservation Orders and the procedure to be adopted for any work on these trees.
- Completed Tree Warden annual report for British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

Sue Starkings
Hothfield Tree Warden

REPORT OF FRIENDS OF SAINT MARGARET'S CHURCH.

For this relief much thanks! At long last we now have a fully functioning eco-friendly loo; installed as part of the general refurbishment of the western entrance which also features an impressive ringers' gallery, and this we hope will also be put to good use for future concerts and evening entertainments. But for many of the congregation, the most welcome new feature will have been the recently installed sound system and this completes the current programme of improvements, project-managed by Charles Oliver and financed for the most part by the Friends; aided by a loyal army of local supporters from the congregation and Village Hall group. Our sincere thanks to all our volunteers.

There is much more to be done and at the top of the list will be the renovation work on the south aisle roof and porch. There is only a small balance in the fabric fund and we will be looking to the remaining events for 2011 to begin building up the account; starting with the Strawberry Tea and Marsh Warblers Concert on 18th June at 5 pm, so bring along the whole family. (Tickets available soon from the Post Office) We hope fairly shortly to confirm dates for the Harvest Supper and Winter Concert.

Sadly, St Margaret's is losing a true friend. After seven years of tireless and dedicated service to the G7, Group Lindsay is leaving to take up his new appointment in Tenterden. He will be greatly missed by everyone who has had the privilege of working with him. We wish him, Carole and family all possible happiness in their new home – fortunately not too far away to keep in touch.

Graham Warren
Chairman of the Friends of St Margaret's

THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT MARGARET, HOTHFIELD

We have enjoyed another good year in the life of the church in Hothfield. In addition to our participation in the Christian mission of the G7 group of churches of which we are a part, our church life here in this village has been full and productive.

Our usual Sunday attendance is around 20 each Sunday, members of the congregation on a given Sunday drawn from a larger group of church attenders. During 2010 there were six baptisms and five funerals

Thanks to a very generous donation, we were able to buy new hymn books, which have widened our choice of hymns and songs considerably. In September, Messy Church was launched in Bluebells Sure Start Children's Centre. Run by Sue Starkings and a number of volunteers on the last Sunday afternoon of the month, Messy Church extends the church further into the village community. David Wiggins, a member of our congregation, commenced his year's training as an Authorised Lay Minister. Towards the end of the year, a toilet was installed at the rear of the church and a new ringing balcony created, using money raised by the



Friends of St Margaret. This has transformed the west end of the church. Work began on a redesigned history of the church. The Pastoral Group arranged the monthly coffee morning throughout the year, providing delicious cakes to welcome everyone who came along.

During 2010, The Friends of St Margaret held a number of fund-raising events: cake sales, concerts, the Harvest Supper, a Bridge Lunch, and a Curry and Quiz Night.

It is people who make our church community such a faithful, welcoming place. Thank you to them and to everyone who has supported us during 2010.

Lindsay Hammond

HOTHFIELD NEWS

Your village newsletter has been appearing in its current format for a year now. The purchase of a refurbished laser printer has enabled us to produce entirely in-house; all the work of layout, printing, collating, stapling and folding is done here in Hothfield. This has resulted in savings, so that the Paris Council has been asked for a much smaller grant for 2011-2012.

Distribution of Hothfield News continues to be done by a dedicated band of helpers who ensure that you receive your paper on or about the first day of every month. They deserve the grateful thanks of the entire community, and they certainly have mine. Currently, the entire Parish is covered in this way except for Park Drive; if you would be willing to deliver 20 copies there once a month, please give me a call on 01233 629568 or email hothfieldnewsleter@tiscali.co.uk. Please call also if for some reason you are not receiving your monthly copy.

Hothfield News also now has its own website, hothfieldnews.co.uk, where you can find a flip-book version of the latest issue, along with several galleries of photographs of the village and its surroundings.

In the course of the year we have also printed and distributed a number of inserts and supplements, and at Christmas the very successful Hothfield Calendar, which sold exactly a hundred copies and financed a small Christmas present for the distributors.

Hedley Grenfell-Banks
Editor