



# Hothfield News

May 2009

***The Monthly Newsletter by and for the Hothfield Community***

## **HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - Shirley Whittington**

The Annual Parish Meeting and AGM will be held at the village hall on Friday, 8 May. Please come along to hear about the Village Plan which has been drawn up as a result of the consultation process taking place over the last few months. You, the residents of Hothfield, have told us what needs to be done. The Village Plan will reflect what you have said. It should also determine how the precept, that is tax payer money allocated to Hothfield Parish Council by Ashford Borough Council, will be spent.

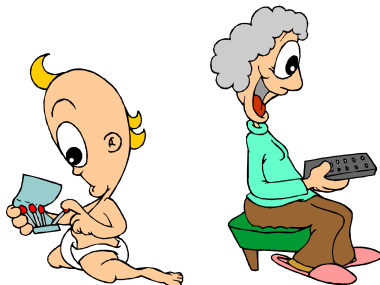


During the meeting there will also be the chance to ask questions about all the activities that have taken place since the last Parish Meeting. Reports from organisers of events and activities are included as a special supplement to this Newsletter.

The meeting proper will start at 7pm. A ploughman's supper will be served at 6.30pm. Do come along to join us.

## **COMMUNITY WARDEN – David Beckley**

Although I have been working as a KCC Community Warden in Hothfield for around 4 months now, I still have local residents asking me what my actual role is. Can I therefore take this opportunity to explain my role as a Warden within your village. First and foremost I must remind you that I am not a Police Officer. I am not employed to work by the Police. I am employed by Kent County Council as a Community Warden to work within the Community for the benefit of the Community. My main role is to provide a high visible presence within the village, and to direct and signpost local residents who have Council related issues, to the relevant agency, department or individual who may be of help to assist with the problem.



To help me carry out this role, I work closely with both your Parish Council and your Village Hall Committee. I am in regular contact with the Bluebells Children's Centre where I occasionally attend to assist at the morning breakfast club. At the request of a concerned parent at this club, I recently gave a short talk to the children on the dangers of playing with matches and cigarette lighters, particularly within the home.

Other areas where my help has been requested are:-

1. Reported and had cleared a number of blocked drains on Beech Drive.

2. Assisted in the massive clear up of the woods on Coach Drive.
3. Reported and had repaired a number of broken street lights.
4. Carried out frequent checks on the MUGA and playing field equipment.
5. Obtained funding for and purchased 15 new covers and tubes for lighting in your village hall.
6. Assisting in the setting up of a Youth Club and activities for secondary school aged pupils, to commence April 2009.
7. Marking and infilling by the Council, the holes in the roads within the village.
8. Looking NOW for names for football teams aged 14 – 16 and 16 – 18 boys and girls, to enter an all Kent football competition. This is due to start with the first knockout heats on Saturday 27 June 2009 commencing at 10.00hrs.



There are of course other concerns occurring within the village that will need to be addressed, such as loose dogs, dog fouling and general litter, particularly within the play areas and on the pavements throughout the village. Can I therefore ask for the assistance of all the residents of Hothfield to overcome these annoying problems.



We are currently in the process of introducing a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme within the Hothfield area. This is a voluntary group of people who would help those less fortunate or needing some assistance in the village. No special training or equipment is required just access to a phone. If you would like to help by becoming a volunteer, please contact me.

As you will appreciate, I can only help with a problem if I know about it. My contact no is 07811 271306. Thank you.



## DO YOU KNOW JOHN MORRIS?

Can anyone in Hothfield help? Pete, a reader from afar, has been researching his family tree and has come across a relative from the Hothfield area. His name is John Morris/Moore and he used to drink in the local pub in the sixties. Does this sound familiar to anyone? If so, please contact Pete on 07971 155 229 – he would be very grateful.

## COMMUNITY POLICE – Chris Miller

The mobile police station will be in the Bluebells Children's Centre car park on Wednesday 13 May 2009 from 2pm to 3.30pm. Present will be PC Chris Miller and Council Warden Dave Beckley. If you wish to speak with either of us or report anything then please visit. Or if you just want to be nosey please feel free. We are also trying a different approach to PACT (Partners and Communities Together) and this is an opportunity for you to come along and give your three PACT priorities for the village to ourselves so we can take them forward to the relevant persons for actioning. If you are not aware of PACT, come along on the day and more will be explained.



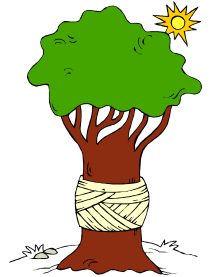
# THANKYOU TO ETHEL - Ed



A very big 'Thank you' to Ethel Haley who, for many years, delivered this newsletter and its predecessor to Chapel Road and the surrounding area as well as to her own street. Ethel is now taking a well earned rest from the more distant areas but we want to record our thanks to her for sterling service over the years. Thank you, Ethel! We are grateful to Diane who has kindly taken on this task.

## HOTHFIELD VETERAN TREE SURVEY - Pauline Fletcher

Over the past year, Bob and I have been making a record of some of the 'veteran' trees growing in Hothfield. This was part of a project run by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) throughout the Ashford Borough over the last two years. We would like to thank all those who gave permission for us to walk over their land to carry out the survey. You may have noticed us measuring some of the bigger trees in and around the village, making notes and taking photographs and wondered what we were up to!



So what is a veteran tree? Well, as you might guess, it is usually old and rather large.



In fact, many are hundreds of years old - and a bit like people - they age over time. As storms and high winds come and go over the years, the odd branch may be damaged, or even torn off as in the Great Storm of 1987, but given time most trees will make new growth, sometimes giving them an unusual or lop-sided shape. This natural aging process leads to a tree which is very good for wildlife. Any areas of dead wood up in the branches provide places for birds such as woodpeckers to make their nest-holes, as well as providing habitat for a wide range of wood-boring insects and beetles. Curiously some of these creatures will only live in wood which has fallen to the ground, so that is useful too – nothing is wasted in nature! Veteran trees often have lichen, mosses and sometimes fungi growing on them as well, making them little nature reserves in their own right.

Hothfield is very fortunate in having several separate areas of veteran trees. The tolls on the Common have many magnificent old beeches and redwoods. The large, old sweet chestnuts which grow with them are also found in large numbers on the Hothfield Heathlands Nature Reserve. And then, of course, we have the old parkland which was once associated with Hothfield Place. Although the 'big house' is long gone, many of the old parkland trees still remain like an echo of times gone by and it is interesting to speculate on what comings and goings they must have witnessed over the years.



In total, Bob and I recorded 163 veteran trees in Hothfield, with over 100 of these being associated with the old parkland. Ashford Borough Council are going to put all of the records collected for the Ashford parishes, including ours for Hothfield, onto a map with dots to show the trees, along with photos. The results of the survey will then be available on both the Council's and BTCV's websites. Also, all of the information will be added to the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt website.

Like our old buildings, these veteran trees are a precious part of our village history and heritage and the fact that they have survived thus far has often been down to the good husbandry of our village landowners. With their continued help, I am sure that we all hope that these magnificent old trees will stand for many years to come.

## VILLAGE HALL QUIZ NIGHT – Caroline Wood

A Quiz Night and Ploughman's Supper will be held on Friday 29 May at 7pm at the Village Hall with proceeds going towards the upkeep of the Hall. Teams of up to six, tickets at £5 per person. Please book tickets by 27 May by phoning Caroline on 01233 630 512.



## HOTHFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY – Chris Rogers

On 18 May we will be holding a public open meeting to which everyone from the village (and beyond) is cordially invited. There will be a public speaker covering a topic of interest to us all, as well as an opportunity to order the Hothfield History books and buy a few old postcards. Please come along to the Village Hall for 7pm on 18 May and share your stories or memories with members of the History Society.



### Hothfield Brownies

Mrs Sutcliffe kindly showed us two photographs from her album showing the Brownies in Hothfield possibly during the 1980s. The first photo shows her daughter and a few other Brownies outside their hut. The hut was built by Dorothy Westmore, the Brown Owl, on West Street on the end of the row

of houses which were once the old school. The spot is now an entrance to the Common and even then the land was part of the common. It's possible that the hut might not have been permitted and it was eventually removed. We have a newspaper cutting which states that Miss Westmore started the Brownies in 1955. Anne Kerr took over 25 years later.



The second photograph shows the brownies on their carnival float, thought to be taken in the 1960s. Can you name any of the girls? If so please contact Chris Rogers or e-mail: [hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com](mailto:hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com) [Apologies if the photos have not come out too well – see note later in the Newsletter. – Ed]

## A BIG THANK YOU – John and Claire Nichols



*What a lovely surprise party we had in the Village Hall to celebrate our Golden Wedding anniversary. We could not believe our eyes at all the people from near and far who had come. A big thank you and especially to our children and grand children who arranged it all, also to Chris Rogers and Sheila for all the memories they gave us with the photographs – so kind of them. Also a thank you to John Collins. What a secret – how did you all manage to keep it from us? We will always remember it.*

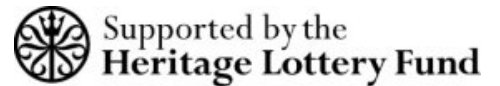
Can we add our congratulations to John and Claire Nichols on their Golden Wedding anniversary. Our spies tell us when they married Ashford Borough Council gave them a Nissen Hut on the Common and then they were the first people to move into the new Council houses in the village - and they've stayed in exactly the same house ever since. John and Claire have been very active in the community ever since, and John has rung the school bell and organised carnivals as well as being playing a key role in the Bowls Club and Village Hall while, among other things, Claire kept the village school clean and tidy. Congratulations to them both!

## A LETTER - Ed

We received a letter from a local resident saying she had taken her nephew to the play area to play football but could not do so because there were used condoms scattered around the area as well as smashed bottles and broken glass. She says it was dangerous and that her nephew could have been injured by the glass or by handling the other unsavoury items. She feels that something should be done about the area as it is used by younger children. **Comments, or a response would, I am sure, be welcome!**



## KENT WILDLIFE TRUST - Ian Rickards Hothfield Heathland Report



After spending the winter hibernating underground or in piles of dead wood our grass snakes will be busy hunting for food and a mate. They are excellent swimmers, and can often be seen hunting in the pools for frogs and tadpoles. Unlike the adder, grass snakes are not poisonous and trap prey with backward facing teeth, before swallowing it whole. Although they can be over a metre in length, an adult grass snake can survive on only 6-7 frogs a year!



Many of our summer birds will have returned from around the world. Hopefully this will include the increasingly rare Tree Pipit. This little bird travels from Africa to find open heaths like Hothfield Heathlands. It has a wonderful display flight, where it jumps from the top of an isolated tree, and parachutes down singing loudly as it goes. Luckily female Tree Pipits find this desperate behaviour rather attractive!

Many heathland insects burrow into the ground, especially in areas where there is exposed sand. One such creature is the Minotaur Beetle. Although only 1.5cm long these beetles dig holes up to 1.5 metres deep (that's nearly 5 foot!!!). The purpose of these tunnels is for laying eggs, which hatch out to eat the rabbit droppings that mum and dad beetle have rolled into their holes. There are lots of these holes across the reserve, look out for holes the size of a finger nail, particularly in short grass or bare sand.

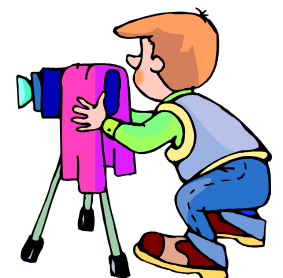


Finally, none of this wildlife would survive if it wasn't for the work of our Ponies and Cattle. The Highland Cattle will be returning this month, eager to carry out more essential conservation works, eating birch seedlings, munching grass and generally keeping the reserve open and teeming with wildlife.

For more information about the wildlife of Hothfield Heathlands or if you would like to get involved in protecting Kents wild areas please get in touch with the Kent Wildlife Trust on 01622 662012 or [www.kentwildlife.org.uk](http://www.kentwildlife.org.uk)

## PHOTOGRAPHS - Ed

We use simple photocopying for this Newsletter which means that quite often photographs will not reproduce very well – sometimes they come out as just a rather dark splotch or at best rather ill defined pictures! For that reason, **generally** we are reluctant to include photos in the newsletter, although we may do on occasions! We have included two photos this time, and are holding our breath!



# ST MARGARET'S CHURCH NEWS – Lindsay Hammond

[www.g7churches.co.uk](http://www.g7churches.co.uk)



## Services for May 2009

Sunday 3 May The Eucharist 9.30am.  
Sunday 10 May The Eucharist 11.00am.  
Sunday 17 May Re:fresh Service Village Hall 11.00am.  
Thursday 21 May Ascension Day The Eucharist 7.30pm.  
Sunday 24 May Holy Communion 9.30am.

## Deaths

Douglas Peck, Hothfield, died on 19 March 2009 aged 82. His funeral took place at the Charing Crematorium on 30 March 2009.

May God enfold Douglas in his tender loving care.

## Lilies for Easter

A big 'Thank You' to those who gave lilies at Easter in memory of a loved one. The church looked lovely and the names were read out of all those for in whose memories the lilies were given.



## JUNK MAIL, LEAFLETS AND PHONE CALLS - Ed

- ◆ If you want to reduce the amount of **junk mail** you receive, contact: *The Mail Preference Service, DMA House, 70 Margaret Street, London W1W 8SS, or 020 7291 3310, or [www.mpsonline.org.uk](http://www.mpsonline.org.uk)*
- ◆ If you want to reduce the amount of **junk leaflets** delivered by the Royal Mail, contact: *Door to Door Opt Outs, Royal Mail, Kingsmead House, Oxpens Road, Oxford, OX1 1RX, or email [optout@royalmail.co.uk](mailto:optout@royalmail.co.uk)*
- ◆ If you want to reduce the amount of **unwanted phone calls** you receive, contact: *Telephone Preference Service, DMA House, 70 Margaret Street, London W1W 8SS, or 020 7291 3320, or [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk)*



...or do what I do and return unwanted post and leaflets to the sender – at their expense!

## HOTHFIELD NEWS

All contributions, letters, comments etc for the newsletter should be sent to the Editor, Chris Twydell, at 37 Coach Drive by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month or by email to [hothfieldnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:hothfieldnewsletter@gmail.com) 01233 635 372. If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter by e mail, or would like a large print copy, please let me know. Thanks.

**AND FINALLY.....** *Have you noticed that everyone seems to moan about the weather – but no one ever does anything about it?*



# Hothfield News

## SPECIAL ANNUAL MEETING SUPPLEMENT

The Annual Village Meeting takes place on Friday 8 May at 7pm (food from 6.30) at the Village Hall and everyone is invited. Local groups have been asked to provide short written reports on their activities over the last year. These are below:

### HOTHFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY – Charles Oliver

The Society is thriving. Chris Rogers and friends organised an excellent 'Story of the Village' exhibition in October. The Village Hall was full all day with probably 400 or so visitors. The committee have been congratulated by many people for arranging a marvellous show which entailed an enormous amount of hard work.



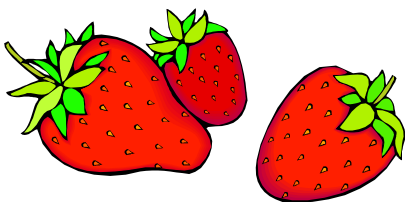
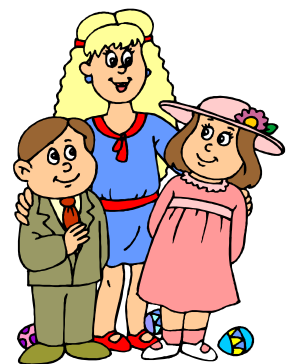
The Russell history book reproduced by Bob Rivers and Hothfield 2000 continue to sell well.

The Annual Meeting will be held in the Village Hall on Monday, 18 May 2009, when I hope we will have a speaker. Please come along and help us with ideas for future progress.

### FRIENDS OF ST MARGARET'S – Graham Warren

Most of our fund-raising actions in recent years have been aimed at building up sufficient funds to generate grant aid for a number of renovation and improvement works, including repairs to the south aisle roof and south door porch, installation of a toilet facility, audio loop and construction of a gallery in the west tower to accommodate the bell ringers.

We now have enough money in the reserve account to contribute around £5,000 to the costs of the works and it is hoped that the Parochial Church Council will be able to secure approval from Canterbury for the complete package in time to go out to tender sometime during the autumn.



In the meantime, it will be business as usual on events for the remainder of 2009 including a Strawberry Tea on 27 June, Harvest Supper on 26 September and a Christmas Tree Festival on 4, 5, and 6 December, the programme including a guest speaker and a recital by

a local choir or orchestra. Anyone who would like to decorate a tree, please contact Anna Rawlings on 01233 620382.

## THANET CHARITIES – Mrs P A Guy

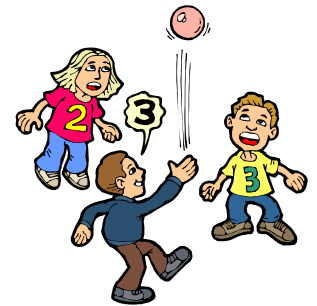


This year, the trustees of Thanet Charities have continued their work by carefully marshalling the Charities' assets in the difficult financial climate which exists at the present time. They have been able to carry on giving small pensions to several long standing village residents, together with some 'one-off' hardship payments to people in need.

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

## MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA) – Peter Patten

The MUGA has proved to be very popular with the young people of the Village. Plans are in hand to more actively promote the facility. We are particularly keen to encourage societies/clubs to use the MUGA. Football continues to be the most popular use of the MUGA, but other facilities such as Tennis, Basketball and Netball are available. Bookings can be made through the Children's Centre or Steve Smith.



## TREE WARDEN - Sue Starkings

I have attended the following courses relating to the Tree Warden's Scheme as follows:



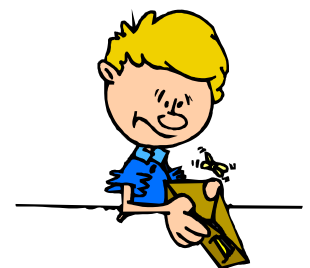
- ◆ Tree Wardens Steering Group for BTCV Meetings
- ◆ Associated Activities regarding Tree Wardens role that I have been involved with are:
- ◆ Veteran trees Surveying – Ashford Borough Council Project in conjunction with the BTCV
- ◆ Presentation to the Young Farmers on the work of the BTCV

I have been involved with the following practical issues 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 BTCV.

## HOTHFIELD EDUCATION FOUNDATION – Charles Oliver

Grants from the Foundation are still available to anyone who has been at Hothfield School. If you need financial help for anything to do with secondary or further education, please get in touch with Mrs Highwood at Alder House, Hothfield. She will then advise you whether she thinks you would be eligible for a grant, but please ask her.



## BLUEBELLS CHILDREN'S CENTRE – Ann Parker

In February around 120 parents/carers and children joined us to for our naming day. Over 70 votes were received for the name Bluebells and this was agreed by KCC Children's Centres Management group at the beginning of March. New children's Centres/Surestart signage will be in place shortly.



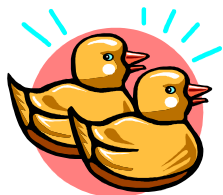
Over the past few months we have developed a range of support services for local families. This includes antenatal birth preparation classes, baby massage, a well baby clinic, sing and sign group followed by messy play for under twos. We have run courses for parents, a toddler group, stay and play drop in opportunities and have provided parents with information on job centre plus and the children's information service.

Also, our Community Involvement Worker has recruited eight parent volunteers to work in the centre. Four of these have recently completed the six week, Surestart volunteer training programme. The volunteers provide support running our groups and with preparation for activities/events.

Recently, the Ashford Twins Club has relocated to Bluebells enabling us to provide support and advice for families with multiple births. On average, Bluebells Children's Centre is working with 115 parents and 145 children each week. We also have the extended school's breakfast club and after school club and will be supporting the development of the youth club by opening Bluebells on one evening a week.



Bluebells is also used by a wide range of local partners for meetings and training events. We are currently advertising for two new members of staff to work as part of our early years team. Having provided a wide range of universal services for local parents, our aim now is to



develop our outreach services. We are working closely with health professionals and other partners to identify families who are not able to get to Bluebells and to offer them some services which will support them and their child/children either in their own home or by providing satellite services in local venues.

We have now developed a governance model for the Ashford Locality Children's Centre. Bluebells has a Steering Group which meets every eight weeks. The Terms of Reference include supporting Bluebells team to meet the desired performance outcomes set by Surestart for their Children's Centres. The group includes health professionals and other partners delivering services in the area, some community members and ideally eight parents with young children from the catchments areas of Challock, Charing and Godington.

## LAKESIDE VILLAGE – Chris Taylor



The year seems to have passed in a flash, so much has happened including the launch of our new branding Care Village UK Ltd. For those who might not be familiar with us, we provide a comprehensive range of care options for the retired which include:

- **Lakeside Gardens** - Independent Living Apartments for sale or rent
- **Lakeside Place** - Assisted Living Apartments also for sale or rent
- **Lakeside Court** - A traditional Residential Home with Elderly Mentally Infirm facility

Set in over 17 acres just off the A20 we also have on site a restaurant, bar, residents' lounges, hairdressers, therapy room, resident's mini bus and well over 50 dedicated staff providing 24 hour cover. We currently have over 60 residents either owning or renting an apartment in Lakeside Gardens or Place (we do have a few vacant and available at present) or living with us in Lakeside Court. Care Village UK also owns and manages similar Villages in the West Country and the North. We also have exciting plans for further developments in East Kent, Essex and Middlesex.



We do have a number of our residents already taking part in events in the Village Hall and we did during the year enjoy a very pleasant visit from Parish Councillors. A number of our residents also took part in the Village Appraisal and we continue to have a wish to support Village life where we can.

Visitors are always welcome so please come and see us. Care Village UK Ltd 01233 714 050. [chris.taylor@carevillageuk.com](mailto:chris.taylor@carevillageuk.com)

## HOTHFIELD MANOR CENTRE – Keith Hutchinson (Centre Manager)

It gives me great pleasure to share with the Parish Council and the Community of Hothfield the developments at the Centre during the last year.



The acquisition of the Centre by Four Seasons Healthcare in October 2007 created a short period of uncertainty for us all. Promises of investment were viewed with a degree of (dare I say) scepticism and the thought that we would feel to be just one small part of one of the largest healthcare providers in the UK.

However what has transpired in the last year has been beyond our expectations. A major refurbishment of the Manor House and bungalows was undertaken during the Autumn. Some of the fixtures and fittings that may well have been familiar to Sir Reginald have been replaced. Bathrooms replaced with the very latest energy efficient and user friendly systems, furniture replaced and a design consultant blended furnishings and decorations to make a very pleasing and comfortable environment for everyone. My persistence to keep the parquet flooring in hall has allowed us to retain some of the character of this mid twentieth century Manor House. We also have a totally new kitchen with loads of gadgets for 'Chef' to play with and provide quality meals (as she has always done) that would make Gordon Ramsey lost for words.



In March this year I got the exciting news that the planned extension that Dr Rassam and I had for many years worked hard to achieve, was to become a reality. Work has started with earnest and it is anticipated that early in 2010 the Centre will have the accommodation and facilities to be a major provider for brain injury rehabilitation in the south-east. We will have not only a hydrotherapy pool and therapy suite, but accommodation for 19 additional patients. The facilities for patients and staff will be the very latest in design,

comfort and therapeutically complementary.

These are indeed exciting times, not only for us here at the Centre, but for Hothfield in general. Whilst clinical staff will probably need to be recruited from further afield, we would ideally like to recruit support staff from the local area. We also see local businesses benefitting from our success, whether it is the village post office, garage or local hotels for visitors. This major boost to the local economy should be warmly welcomed by everyone who has the interest of Hothfield at heart.

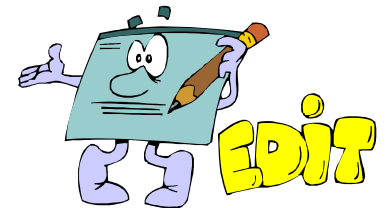


## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER – Chris Twydell

This has been an interesting year with really positive feedback from many local people on the usefulness of the newsletter and the interesting information and articles it has contained. 94% of the people completing the 'appraisal' questionnaires suggested that the newsletter was their main way of getting information about the local community. Although this is encouraging, it may well represent the views of only the people who actually completed the forms, 147 out of the 900 people living in Hothfield. We have to be **so** careful about statistics!



It has been great fun editing the newsletter and the positive feedback has been welcomed. However, that is tempered by the real frustration at some local people (including some of those in public service) and some local groups who just will **not** share information despite frequent requests and reminders – and then get agitated when no one knows about things! But a really big 'Thank You' to everyone who **has** contributed information over the last year. There really is so much positive stuff happening in Hothfield and I certainly have been pleased to play a part in sharing that positive information.



The past year has also been marked with an inordinate amount of correspondence and discussion with the Parish Council over funding. The Parish Council got really worried about the use of the clipart (the pictures) and over the process for paying for the printing. This was resolved only after lots of correspondence and me being quizzed by the Parish Council which had also raised concerns over my inclusion of an anonymous and critical letter. I think we are now back on track and the Parish Council is happy for me to continue editing the newsletter on the current basis.



Finally, I want to record my thanks, and thanks on behalf of everyone in Hothfield, to everyone who has helped with the newsletter in any way. I have thanked already those who have contributed information, but I wanted to thank too family members who have helped with proof reading and the wonderful band of 20 people who deliver the newsletter each month. This is a true community project and one which I hope will continue for a long, long time!

**In addition to the reports above, the Parish Council invited a number of other people and groups to submit reports with no response.**

