

Hothfield News

May 2008

The Monthly Newsletter by and for the Hothfield Community

WELCOME

A special edition this month concentrating on the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 12 May at the Village Hall. Copies of extracts from some of the local groups on what they have been doing over the last year are included. But why not come along to the meeting itself – always interesting and a chance to meet other people and to find out what is planned for the coming year!

FINAL REMINDER! THE ANNUAL HOTHFIELD PARISH MEETING



MONDAY 12 MAY at 7pm
IN THE VILLAGE HALL, PARK DRIVE

A final reminder that everyone is welcome to this opportunity to hear about what has been happening in Hothfield over the last year, and what is planned for the coming twelve months. With information from the Parish, Borough and County Councils, the Village Hall, the Children's Centre, the School and all of our local groups and organisations, this should be a very interesting evening. Just come along either to listen or to talk – up to you! Details from Judith on 01233 733994.

HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL - Shirley Whittington

As there is a vacancy for a new councillor, I thought it would be a good idea to explain what Parish Councillors do and how they are appointed. Why not give it a go?

Who? Hothfield Parish Council is made up of nine local people who are either elected or asked to join. They must be 18 years or older, a British, Commonwealth or European Union citizen, and have lived in Hothfield for the past 12 months

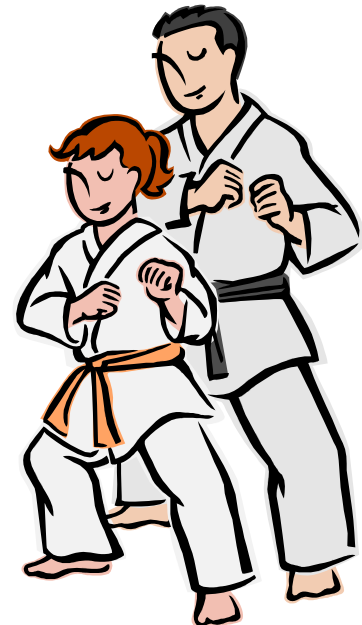
- What?** The Parish Council works on behalf of the local community and has an overall responsibility for the wellbeing of the community by delivering services to meet local needs and by working to improve the quality of parish life.
- When?** The Parish Council meets on the second Monday of each month in the Village Hall at 7pm. Meetings usually last about 2 hours, with the agenda published in advance.
- How?** The money to maintain services comes from your Council Tax. The amount is known as the precept and is allocated to us by Ashford Borough Council

Parish Councillor. Councillors say on average they spend up to 3 hours a week on Parish Council duties - some will spend more time and others less, it all depends on what time they can spare. Of course there is no payment for undertaking these duties, but you will get a great deal of satisfaction! If you would like to know more, without any commitment, please contact the Clerk, Judith Batt, on 01233 733994.

HOTHFIELD MARTIAL ARTS - Philippa Davidson

The Hothfield Martial Arts group meets every Wednesday and Friday from 6pm to 7pm at the Village Hall. At the moment the club has mainly teenagers only but we are trying to encourage adults to come and join in – no upper age limits so come on all you pensioners!

It greatly improves health, co-ordination, fitness, helps destress, exercises all the body without expensive equipment, greatly improves mental control, helps expand your mind, makes you think about what you have in life rather than what you need or want. It helps you appreciate fellow human beings, what is around us, teaches us respect, to be humble and patient. You can make friends along the way, and if you really get into karate (like me), it opens up a whole new understanding of what we are capable of, mentally and physically



The karate side is self defence based only, as we do not believe in competitions. I teach the old ways of karate which is to emphasise true meaning of character, to make yourself a better person. There is so much to learn about traditional martial arts, its never ending. The Hapkido is Korean based martial art, which goes very well with the karate. Again, it is pure self defence practise.

The club started in 2007 and students have just been graded and received their yellow belts. If you like to ask any more questions or pop along to the club, you would be most welcome. My number is 01233 665982.

KENT WILDLIFE TRUST – Kay Schlapp

This year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of Kent Wildlife Trust. As part of the celebrations, KWT's Ashford Group is planning an Open Day at Hothfield Common on Bank Holiday Monday 26 May, from 10.30am to 4.30pm. There will be exhibitions, goods for sale, a quiz for children, and guided walks throughout the day. New boardwalks across the bogs have been installed to improve wheelchair access. Everyone is welcome, and admission is free. Bring a picnic if you like. Dogs should be kept on leads, please.

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH NEWS – Sue Starkings

Church Services for May are as follows:

Sunday 4th May 9.30 am Eucharist Service
Sunday 11th May 11 am Eucharist Service
Sunday 18th May 11 am Service Village Hall (breakfast at 10.30)
Sunday 25th May 9.30 am Parish Communion BCP



Church News

BAPTISM: Isobel Christian Logan

Isobel was baptised on Sunday 6 April 2008 at St. Margaret, Hothfield. *May God make her home Christian and loving*

FUNERAL: Edith Annie Tinson ('Chic')

Edith died on Tuesday 26 February 2008 aged 97. Her funeral took place at Charing Crematorium on 12 March 2008. *May God enfold Edith in his tender love and care.*

Website

From 1 May, you will be able to access the G7 website, where you will discover all kinds of information, including forthcoming events. Simply go to www.g7churches.co.uk The website will continue to evolve, so we'd like to hear what you think about the website and ways in which we might be able to improve it still further. Tim Maddrell has worked really hard to create the website and we thank him for this and his continuing role as the G7 webmaster.

ASCENSION DAY

We celebrate Ascension Day this year on Thursday 1 May. There will be two services in G7: Holy Communion at Charing at 10.00am, and The Eucharist at Egerton at 7.30pm.

MONDAY NIGHT GROUP

The Monday Night Group next meets on Monday 5 May at Westwell Vicarage at 7.30pm to discuss a riveting, but as yet undisclosed, subject. If you've not been before, but would like to come along, then let Lindsay know. The Rev Lindsay Hammond 01233 712576 lindsayhammond@hotmail.co.uk

FAREWELL TO DIANE

We shall say farewell to Diane and bid her God speed on Sunday 11 May with a service of Evensong at 6pm at Egerton. After the service we shall gather in the Millennium Hall for refreshments. This will be a very special occasion and we would like as many people as possible to come along for the service so please make a note of the date and time in your diary.

ARCHDEACON'S VISITATION 2008

This is the occasion when the churchwardens and sidespersons are sworn in and the PCC members will also make declaration of office. This year's Visitation will take place on Wednesday 21 May 2008 at 8.00p.m at All Saints, Lydd.

LETTERS

We received the following letter by post. We debated whether we should try to summarise what was said, but decided to include it in its entirety as it makes a number of points which appear topical. Given the comments made, we have invited Shirley Whittington, Chair of the Parish Council to respond

I don't expect you to print this letter as it is quite long. I would simply like to register my view about Shirley Whittington's piece in the February Hothfield Newsletter about what the village allegedly wants regarding the redevelopment of the Tufton-Bailiffe. I believe that Ashford Borough Council made the right decision not to allow the cramming in of four new luxury houses in this car park. It is interesting to note that Hothfield parish council was invited to take part in a housing needs survey in 2005 but declined to do so. Why? If they had taken part they would know that there is a need for affordable housing in the village. A waiting list already exists for people wanting to move into Hothfield. Surely we should be addressing this as a priority? So why does the parish council promote the idea that the village's priority is for new homes in council tax bands E&F?

What is this 'wish list' that Shirley referred to, who created it, and where has it been published for local people to look at (I can't find it on the Hothfield Parish Council web site)? How many village residents actually asked for the pub to be converted into a house plus four new luxury houses built on top of it? This may have been a genuinely well-intentioned idea thought up by some of the self-elected parish councillors who mainly live in the surrounding rural area but I am concerned that it may have been an attempt to change the social make up of the village.

Look at the villages around Hothfield and see how there pubs provide valuable community services for local people, for young and old, rich and poor alike. I am baffled as to why Hothfield PC supports the continued community use of the old school yet have done nothing to support the pub/restaurant (or any other business in the old pub). These two old buildings are both important in helping to provide valuable community services for Hothfield in their own different ways. We have so few local amenities already that the Parish Council should surely treasure what's left and try to maintain them.

Most villages appear to have a 'Village Design Statement' which is supported by Ashford Borough Council. So instead of the secretive 'wish list' which clearly doesn't reflect what ordinary local people need why isn't there a formal 'Design Statement' setting out what villagers really do need which is properly consulted on and shared with us?

Hothfield Parish Council doesn't always get it right in terms of acting in our best interests. According to their web site incredibly there are nine parish councillors yet none of them have ever approached me to ask what do I think about issues relating to the village. If they wish to do more than simply run their own personal agendas then they should make the effort to talk to ordinary people and listen to what our concerns, needs and ideas actually are. Seeing who these parish councillors are, they could probably do with a shake up and having some down to earth, energetic people being involved.

Yours, Mr Ordinary, Hothfield

Response from Shirley Whittington.....I am grateful to the Editor for sharing this letter with me before going to press. Members of the Parish Council try to do their best although we are aware that we cannot please everyone. However, at the start of every Parish Council meeting there is an opportunity for any member of our community to come along and share problems and/or raise issues with us. The more we can identify/share ideas the better it is for all of us. We also have a vacancy on the Parish Council so here is the perfect opportunity for a 'down to earth and energetic' person to join us and help make a difference. I would certainly be willing to stand down to enable such a person to take my place.

HOTHFIELD NEWS

All contributions, letters, comments etc for the newsletter should be sent to the Editor, Chris Twydell, at 37 Coach Drive by the 15th of each month or by email to 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.

HOTHFIELD ANNUAL MEETING - SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

This meeting is taking place on Monday 12 May at 7.00 at the Village Hall, Park Drive. Everyone is welcome (see the advert at the beginning of this newsletter). At the meeting, local groups will be reporting back on their activities over the last year. The following is just a short summary of some of the main points from the nine groups which have shared their reports with us in advance within the Parish Council's deadline. It is just an edited version so why not come along to the meeting and learn more?

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HOTHFIELD HISTORY SOCIETY - Charles Oliver

Thanks to the enthusiasm of our members, the Society goes from strength to strength. We have produced two books, Hothfield in the 20th Century and the other an explanation of the heraldry on the Tufton tomb. Our plans include a new edition of the history of the Church together with a pamphlet about the water supply in Hothfield.



Bob Rivers has spent many hours making clearer a history of the Village by the Rev Russell in 1900. This book will be available shortly and is a very detailed account of the village from 680 AD until 1900.

Our very successful meeting in the Village Hall in February included a presentation with pictures and papers about the village and an opportunity for discussion. A number of people asked for a repeat of the village exhibition which was held in the School several years ago. I hope we might be able to arrange this.

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ST MARGARET, HOTHFIELD - Lindsay Hammond

The G7 group of churches began the year by presenting a new Mission Plan. Highlights of the year include establishing a link with a group in Sweden, the summer Children's Holiday Club and the Exploring Other Faiths course. The very first Alpha Course attracted an excellent attendance. G7 publicity and information material was given out and work started on its website. Other activities continued faithfully, with people giving a great deal of time and talent to the many expressions of our church life.



There are 33 parishioners on the electoral Roll and a normal Sunday attendance of 20 adults, though the Village Hall services attracts 35 people. During the year there were 5 baptisms, 2 weddings and 11 funerals. The monthly Re:refresh service in the Village Hall has been a success. At Christmas, singers carolled around the Village, having raised almost £100 for charity. A Songs of Praise was held early in January, attracting a good congregation. Several members of the congregation assist with the Charing School Breakfast Club in the Village Hall.

The church has looked fantastic throughout the year, thanks to the team of volunteers. The reredos behind the altar was removed, exposing attractive tiles. Proposed future work includes work to the tower and south porch. Wheelchair access to the church needs to be improved and the provision of toilets is under discussion.

The Friends of St Margaret too have worked very hard, with several fund-raising events. Thanks to everyone in the village community for their continued support of our parish church and its life and activities.

HOTHFIELD NEWS – Chris Twydell



Each month 430 copies of the newsletter are produced and distributed by a wonderful band of volunteers to every single house in Hothfield. Thanks to each of them, to our various proofreaders and advisors. The Newsletter is also sent to a number of outside contacts and organisations and is linked to the Hothfield website. Large size versions are produced for people with poor eyesight although it is frustrating that more people will not ask for these – we can produce as many as necessary!

The first six issues, contained 100 articles from 50 different organisations, groups and individuals and this has been really encouraging. More disappointing, though, has been the absence of any contributions from certain quarters, despite many requests – and then they wonder why no one knows what they are doing!

The newsletter costs just 10p per person per issue - a real bargain! Funding came from Ashford Borough Council (to whom we record our thanks) and from the Parish Council which (intriguingly) decided to use money raised from selling litter bins!

TREE WARDEN'S REPORT - Sue Starkings

I have attended the following courses relating to the Tree Warden's Scheme - Tree Wardens Steering Group for BTCV Meetings. Associated Activities regarding Tree Wardens role that I have been involved with are the Veteran trees Surveying – Ashford Borough Council Project in conjunction with the BTCV and the Involving Your Local Community Course.

I have been involved with advice to residents regarding trees and their maintenance. correspondence 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 and completed the Tree Warden annual report for BTCV.



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FRIENDS OF ST MARGARET'S CHURCH – Graham Warren

Special events since our last report in May 2007 included the summer Strawberry Tea which attracted a good turn-out and the Harvest Supper, jointly funded with the Village Hall. The Race Night and Supper was another winner; again a joint event attracting some 'high rollers' for the tote auction. The Christmas Tree Festival, was a truly impressive display representing a long list of charities and making a perfect back-drop for the evening choral concert.



With the Friends' account currently standing at just over £6,000 we have been able to give thought to contributing to a few projects for Church repairs and improvements. Events for the remainder of 2008 include a Strawberry tea on 28 June (hopefully this time blessed with a few hours sunshine), and a Choristers Concert on 26 July, both at the Church. We are also hoping to help with any events planned by the Children's Centre during the year. Joint events with the Village Hall will again include the Harvest Supper

on 11 October and another Race Night in early November. Friends continue to attend the monthly Family services at the Village Hall, with the now famous bacon rolls. Donations for these go to charity.

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HOTHFIELD EDUCATION FOUNDATION - Charles Oliver

The Education Foundation exists to give grants to those who have attended Hothfield School. In spite of the school now being closed, any one who has been at the school and is now being taught elsewhere can apply for a grant. The grants can cover a wide range of items which may be required for further education or employment. If you think that you may be eligible, please ring Marianne Highwood on 01233 628364. Do take this opportunity, the rules covering the giving of grants may change in future. During 2007 we were able to give grants to a total of £1,400 to five applicants.



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LAKESIDE VILLAGE CHAPEL ROAD HOTHFIELD - Chris Taylor

Having only recently joined The Care Village Group I do not know how involved in Village matters we have been in the past but I can say that both our residents and ourselves wish to engage in the future. 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), and **Lakeside Court** – a traditional Nursing Home and Elderly Mentally Infirm facility, offering residential and respite facilities for short breaks.



Set in over 17 acres we also have on site a small shop, restaurant, bar, residents lounge, hairdressers, therapy room, residents mini bus and of course dedicated staff providing 24 hour cover. We currently have 34 residents either owning or renting an apartment in Lakeside Gardens or Place (we do have

a few vacant and available at present) together with 40 in Lakeside Court.

A number of our residents already take part in events in the Village Hall and we are hoping that more will as we are keen to contribute to Village life. Visitors are always welcome and we look forward to having more general contact and involvement in the future.

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HOTHFIELD FAMILY CENTRE - Karen McKeown

Although not officially open, families are already beginning to use the centre for their children aged 0-5 years. The crèche is almost complete and most of the orders for the Toy Library have been catalogued by extremely helpful parents.

We had an Open Morning for people to see the facilities and it was good to see so many coming through the doors. We have been able to consult a large number of local people and their ideas were presented to the Parish Council. Some of these ideas have been done, whilst others are still in the planning stage. Free Fun Mornings were held in April. Parents are getting more involved in the decisions about the Centre and are hoping to help plan more activities for the summer. So all suggestions, and those with talents waiting to be used, are most welcome to contribute!



From 6 May Health Visitors will be holding clinics from the Family Centre and we hope to get some Health walks over Hothfield Common during the summer.

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BOROUGH COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Neil Wallace

The activities of the Borough Council have been dominated by the continuing development of the town, and the work on the new Local Development Framework. We held a workshop in Hothfield last year, and during the coming summer the ideas and aspirations of the village workshop will be fed back for review. The opinions expressed at the village workshop generally followed the village 'wish list', with a preference for some development of the village to ensure the viability of the community. We have seen the School converted into a child centre with some fantastic facilities, and with very capable staff. During the year we have also seen the opening of the MUGA and from its use, it seems to have been well received.

The Chairman of the Parish Council, myself and Nick Watkin of the Ashford Borough Council



Housing Department recently had a walk around the village looking particularly at areas where we felt that the Borough Council could have an impact. We were disappointed by the rubbish in the woodland beside Coach Drive. It is up to us to stop people from using this as an auxiliary dump. Nick Watkin is investigating how we can get this area cleaned up.

The decision not to grant planning consent for the Old Kings Head was disappointing, and since then the problem has been further compounded by the illegal use of the site. Another application will be made this year for consent to develop the site.