

**Minutes of the Chestfield Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 24 March 2025 at 7pm
at the Women's Institute Hall, Chestfield Road, Chestfield**

1. Present

Parish Cllr Steve Bailey (Chairman)
Parish Cllr Chris Brealy (Vice Chairman)
Parish Cllr Bob Todd
Parish Cllr Lorraine East
Parish Cllr Mike Poole
Parish Clerk, Amanda Sparkes
Deputy Clerk, Chenice Howard-Sparkes
Cllr James Flanagan – Canterbury City Council
Cllr Robert Thomas – KCC Cllr for Chestfield
Plus 7 residents/organisations' representatives.
One observer.

2. Apologies for absence.

Parish Cllr Tricia Chapman
Parish Cllr Richard Spencer-Tanner
Cllr Peter Old – Canterbury City Council
Rev Simon Tillotson, Team Vicar, All Saints Whitstable and St John's Swalecliffe in the Whitstable Team Ministry (but represented at the meeting by Jane Myhill, Children and Families Minister, St John's Swalecliffe and Chestfield.)
Calvin Smith, Chairman Whitstable Rugby Football Club
Paul Gibson, Chairman Chestfield Cricket club (but report provided and read to the meeting)
Dr Robert Jackson, Grasmere Village Residents Association (but report provided and read to the meeting)
Mrs Sharon Goff, President, Chestfield Women's Institute (but report provided and read to the meeting)

3. Welcome from Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Steve Bailey

Cllr Bailey gave a warm welcome.

4. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 25 March 2024

Last year's meeting Minutes may be read on the parish council's website at
<https://chestfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ANNUAL-PARISH-MEETING-Minutes-2024.pdf>

There were some paper copies available at the meeting. Resident David Mann Proposed, and resident Mike Battson seconded that the Minutes were a true record of the meeting.

5. Chairman's report of 2024-2025 (Chairman, Councillor Steve Bailey)

Cllr Steve Bailey, Chairman of Chestfield Parish Council, read his annual report to the meeting, as follows:

In May of last year, I was again honoured to be voted in as Chairman by my peers, and as I have said on many occasions, it is indeed an honour to represent you all in this capacity. One of my first tasks in this new tenure was to meet with our member of parliament Rosie Duffield about our continued ongoing concerns in regards to the proposed new housing developments on the Bodkin and Brooklands Farm sites. Our discussion was very forthright and cordial where I emphasised that whilst we did not want to be seen as NIMBY's, our concerns revolved (and continue to revolve) around the state of existing infrastructure to adequately support the introduction of almost 2,000 new houses and support hubs. With regards to these two specific proposed developments, we have continued to maintain dialogue with both proposed developers which have mostly been very intuitive. It is through such working collaborations that we have been able to convince them to exhibit to the local community and which many residents attended – I would point out that is something that they were not legally bound to do.

As you know, the Canterbury & District Local Plan has been very much on the backburner for a while now, and in May we submitted a very considered response to the City Council

on behalf of the village. It remains to be seen whether this Local District Plan will now ever see the light of day – time will tell –

I would like to thank every member (and of course our clerk) for the professionalism and hard work on putting this together.

In June, I was elected as Chairman of the Canterbury Area of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC), which as a member of the executive committee affords every parish council throughout Kent to be represented by their respective area committee chairman – this also gives us the opportunity to work in closer working harmony with the City and County Councils alike – a position that has become even more relevant in the months to come (but more of that later!...). This appointment in no way detracts from my Parish Council responsibilities. From a personal viewpoint it has brought me closer to the City Council executive team – which can only be good for us all.

In July last year, our clerk Amanda spoke with me about her wanting to cut back on her working hours, and therefore in August we held interviews with two experienced clerks to work alongside Amanda. I am pleased to say that Chenice was the successful applicant, and we very much welcome her into her new deputy clerk role.

On August Bank Holiday, we again held another Community Fun Day which was free for all to attend – we estimate that we had over 500 people attend – 182 of those were children who enjoyed the inflatables and general fun and games. It goes without saying then that we are already in the throes of organising another for the August Bank Holiday. Like I said this was free to all to attend, although I will be writing to local businesses for them to possibly help with sponsorship or donations so as to reduce our outgoings and therefore enable us to help local causes.

Following some unsavoury incidents suffered by our Speedwatch team, we purchased a police-approved body camera to assist with their safety and security. I am sure that you will all agree that the safety of our roads should remain paramount – as should the safety of our Speedwatch team.

Sadly, in September our dear friend David Fitzpatrick passed away after many years as a Parish Councillor. David was a highly respected member of the Parish Council and a great friend to us all and will be greatly missed by us all.

At our September meeting, Richard Spencer-Tanner was co-opted onto the Parish Council. Richard has a wealth of experience working with planning, and is a former Parish council chairman himself.

In October, we organised a village litter pick which produced the usual amount of strewn and discarded rubbish, and which always seems to also produce a surprise ... biggest thing this time around was a car dashboard!

This year, we have also replaced the two benches in the playpark and also installed a brand new noticeboard up at Broomfield Gate following requests from residents. We have also carried out extensive repairs to a stretch of the public footpath which runs through the golf course. This footpath is part of our popular (and well used) circular walk. During these works we identified a further stretch requiring repair, so we will be looking into carrying this out in due course (no pun intended!!).

Going back to the proposed Brooklands development, in October we held an all-day traffic survey on the junction at South Street as part of any future objection to any future planning application being tabled by the developer. This produced some very graphic and interesting information, and served to emphasise the potential impact on our roads once any newly-introduced traffic flow is introduced to our one main village throughfare.

In January we held a consultation event regarding the Parish Council producing our own Neighbourhood Plan. I am pleased to advise that five residents have joined us on our Steering Committee, which is ably chaired by parish councillor Bob Todd, as we feel that it is important for residents to be involved in its creation with our guidance and advice. Although we are able to refer to several approved plans from other areas, this is not a simplistic case of 'copy and paste', but ensuring that we have the right fit for our own needs. I would like to record my personal thanks to those residents who have expressed their interest for the sake of our village.

You will all by now have received a housing needs survey which will greatly assist the production of our plan – we would greatly appreciate you all taking part in this very important survey – and who knows ... you might even win £100 for your 10 minutes of time!

Also, in January we held two volunteer buffets as our way of thanking those unsung heroes that give up their time in various ways, and who help to make us such a successful Parish Council.

This month we had a site meeting with Kent Wildlife Trust alongside Cllr Flanagan at Broomfield Gate woodland regarding tree felling by KWT there. KWT is following tree management and has a forestry commission licence but did admit they could have advised residents about the work first.

Finally, we currently have two vacancies on the Parish Council, so if you are community-minded and wish to join us, please let either myself or Amanda know.

Steve

Steve Bailey, Chairman, Chestfield Parish Council

6. Parish Councillors' Yearly Paragraphs

The parish councillors' 'paragraphs' had been printed as a handout for everyone at the meeting.

Chestfield Parish Council – 2025 Yearly Updates from Your Councillors:

This year, once again, each Councillor has written a small description of their duties and responsibilities, as follows:

Cllr Chris Brealy – Vice Chairman

I have been involved with environmental issues again this year.

I helped with clearing a fallen tree on the Shrub Hill footpath in May. We arranged for a stretch of this footpath to have a new surface installed this month. In September, I helped with the clearance of weeds around the noticeboard next to the letter box in Chestfield Road and I was one of the traffic counters at the junction of South Street and Chestfield Road to collect data for use with planning.

In October I went to the Britton Court Solar Farm consultation to find out about the impact on Chestfield Road and Thornden Wood Road by construction traffic if permission granted.

I also helped with the erection of Christmas Tree, lights, and banner at the church. In January the new tree whips were planted at the Radfall Recreation Ground but a few days later the tree guards were removed. These were swiftly reinstated.

Cllr Tricia Chapman

I have enjoyed another busy year as a Chestfield Parish Councillor and have been involved with the various social events and projects which have taken place throughout the year. Recently, I was part of a working party which were assigned to the job of clearing an area of land under the Chestfield Flyover, cutting back and clearing areas of weeds and brambles. During this operation the drainage gullies were cleared which will hopefully, help to alleviate some of the flooding under the bridge.

I love seeing the blossom and Spring flowering plants come to life at this time of year as the village becomes even more attractive to residents and visitors alike.

As we approach the end of the month and further into Spring it is recommended that trees, hedgerow and shrubbery cutting and pruning should be postponed until August to avoid the disturbance of nesting birds and their young.

I look forward to another year as a Parish Councillor and being involved with the community events which are planned for the summer which will be great fun for all.

Cllr Lorraine East

I visited bus stops along Chestfield Road with a resident and the Clerk to look for possible accessibility improvements - there were some that could be improved and we are exploring this further with Stagecoach and KCC Highways engineers. Watch this space. Some bus stops however, could not be improved as the location did not allow.

The community Herb Garden outside the WI Hall continues to look lovely and is heavily used. I undertook the watering system between colleagues for these.

The old benches in the playpark were removed and replaced with much needed new ones which made from recycled materials need no maintenance.

Flood warden virtual training sessions still go ahead by the Met Office and Kent Community Resilience Team. Don't forget you can report any flood issues to either me or Bob Todd and we will pass these along to the Flood Resilience Team.

Our ever popular litter picks still continue to be a success in the village and the Christmas Carol service is always attended well.

Cllr Robert (Bob) Todd

Planning is a large part of my work on the Parish Council and we have all had to take up the slack in this area with the sad passing of Cllr David Fitzpatrick whose knowledge in this area was invaluable. We continue to work hard to have as much influence as we can on the Strategic sites Brooklands and Bodkin Farm potential developments.

As a Flood warden I continue to attend online briefings and we are looking to get some information out to those who are in flood risk areas. If your house is subject to flooding then do drop me a line.

With other councillors, we look to support the Parish be it assisting on the Fun Day, clearing overgrown areas, litter pick, checking the circular path.

The major focus for me at the end of 2024 and into 2025 has been part of the 11 person team that is developing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Mike Poole

During the year I have been involved in the planning discussions with the potential developers of the two new housing developments within the Parish.

I have also been scrutinising with other Councillors, planning applications submitted to Canterbury City Council. There have been 31 applications validated between April 2024 and March 2025.

More practically I have been involved with the litter pickups and clearing vegetation along footpaths.

With some other Councillors and other local people, I am also involved in the preparation of the new Neighbourhood Plan

Going forward I am looking forward to serving the local community within the Parish Council in as many ways as possible.

Cllr Richard Spencer-Tanner

I joined the Parish Council in September 2024 and have been focused on working with my fellow councillors on various planning issues and concerns impacting the Parish. I am also a member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

7. Report from Kent County Cllr, Cllr Robert Thomas

Cllr Bailey introduced KCC Cllr Robert Thomas and explained this was his last ever meeting as he is not standing again in the May 2025 KCC elections.

Cllr Thomas commented that change is the only constant.

He is Cabinet Member for Environment which has a £100m budget with 95% of that spent on waste and recycling. Waste reforms will be coming to extend producer responsibility for food packaging. And the return of a bottles return scheme to come in two years' time – which will hopefully reduce litter.

KCC is developing a local nature reserve strategy to help reverse a decline in nature and support the planning strategy – this should be finalised in the summer.

KCC is the lead Flood authority and has a strong partnership with the water authorities.

Last year saw a new central government on 04 July 2024 and a critical change now is the local government reorganisation. Kent and Medway was unfortunately not selected for the priority devolution programme.

KCC Cllr Dan Watkins Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care had to save £50m from this budget.

Central government is putting more funding into potholes.

The Entry/Exit system for the EU was meant to come in at the end of last year but has been delayed.

Neutrient neutrality and the impact on Stodmarsh delayed the delivery of housing but the credit system should be due in June or July.

KCC allocated the Church Street playing fields as a Site for a SEND school locally but the proposal has had some issues and a decision is held up pending a village green application.

Cllr Thomas explained he is standing down at the 01 May 2025 KCC elections – he has spent 6 and a half years as a local Kent Councillor, and he commented that it has been a huge privilege to serve in Chestfield. Highlights include the graffiti mural at the underpass, and new tree planting at Radfall Recreation ground. He has given Member grants to village organisations including the cricket club.

Cllr Thomas thanked his fellow elected city and parish councillors and first-class clerks. He said that Chestfield has been his favourite parish council – through the team work of the committee and the willingness of the committee to engage with the community.

8. Reports from Canterbury City Councillor, Cllr James Flanagan

CCC Cllr James Flanagan commented that it had been an incredibly busy year. The Chestfield ward includes the parish of Chestfield but extends into Swalecliffe, Tankerton, and Golden Hill – it is a large ward for the two city councillors, himself and Cllr Peter Old.

Issues responded to included:

- The campaign by the CT5 Forum for a Whitstable Town Council for the whole of the CT5 area excluding Chestfield Parish – the response to the consultation was a No to a Town Council and voted down by CCC.
- A boundary commission review – the name of the ward has been changed to Chestfield and South Tankerton.
- The Canterbury District Local Plan was delayed by changes to the NPPF, and CCC took the opportunity to go out for a call for brownfield sites. The next draft should be out in the Autumn. Cllr Flanagan explained he and Cllr Old have door-knocked most Saturdays seeking residents' views.

Local Government Reorganisation will, in 2027 or 2028, mean that CCC will no longer exist – and nor will KCC also. Kent and Medway will instead have 3 or 4 Unitary councils. So town councils are now back on the agenda as Whitstable, Canterbury and Herne Bay are not parished currently. There are however still so many unknowns with the local government reorganisation.

Cllr Flanagan advised he had worked with KCC Cllr Thomas regarding the Church Street playing fields – a KCC owned site. They had meetings with the Department of Education. If the village green application fails the Department of Education will develop a 12 month feasibility study. The village green application should be heard quite soon now. The SEN school would need 50% of the field. Cllr Flanagan explained he has been seeking residents' views.

CCC has set its budget for 2025-2026. Budgets are under tremendous pressure.

Other local issues that Cllr Flanagan and Cllr Old have worked on are :

- Lots of planning applications and advice given on making representations;
- Potholes;
- Yellow lines – including working with the parish council on the Polo Way scheme that the Joint Transportation Board approved on 18 March 2025;
- Flooding at the underpass/junction of South Street, and
- Missed bin collections.

Cllr Flanagan said it was a pleasure to work with the parish council. He joins the litter picks, quizzes, and the Fun Day – he explained that he has volunteered to be in the stocks again at this year's event.

Cllr Flanagan explained he gave a presentation to the Rotary Club members about what a city Councillor does.

Cllr Flanagan said he is always available to local residents – he puts leaflets through doors, holds surgeries, and is active on social media.

Cllr Flanagan concluded with best wishes to Cllr Thomas, and commented that it has been a pleasure working with him.

9. Reports from local organisations:

The Rotary Club of Chestfield

The Rotary Club of Chestfield President Sue Vargyas read her report to the meeting as follows:

Report Rotary President Chestfield 2024/25

I would like to thank Chestfield Parish Council for letting us use their noticeboards as advertising facilities to promote our many activities over the year.

I cannot believe that my year is nearly over. Our year runs 01 July to 30 June.

Thanks to our hard working members, once again we have raised funds with our regular:
September Golf Competition
November Quiz Night
WJS (Whitstable Junior School) Car Parking
Chestfield Christmas Collection

Thanks to last year's, very talented President Pat Macfarlane, two very successful Craft days were held at The Plough, Swalecliffe, and a local Church Hall. We are hoping to run these again. Also new to our programme, collections at Tesco Superstore during the Christmas period. My main Charities this year are Red Zebra, East Kent Carers and Pilgrims Hospices. We also support Haven, The Food Bank, Catching Lives and any other local Charities that may ask for our help during the Year if we are able.

We took part in 2 joint ventures this year firstly working together with 5 other local Rotary Clubs in July at the Canterbury City Show in Westgate Gardens. All of us hoping to get new members to join our clubs. In August we supported Herne Bay Rotary acting as stewards at Herne Bay Carnival. We continue to keep the Gardens of The Whitstable and Tankerton Hospital tidy and colourful for patients and staff.

Our International support includes Walk for Water at UKC with Primary Schools, TWAM (tools with a mission) Open your Hearts to Bhutan supporting Pem Deki our own Whitstable Bhuddist Monk, Shelterbox and Mercy Ships.

Finally, we enjoy ourselves socially with our Annual Bowling Competition at the Local Bowling Alley, walks, meets at a local Wine bar and currently planning to use The Plough's Bat and Trap court.

We would love to welcome anyone interested in joining us as new members, we meet at The Plough, Swalecliffe for breakfast every Thursday. Four times a year we have an evening meeting to welcome special speakers. No commitment if you come along and see if you enjoy meeting us one morning.

www.chestfieldrotaryclub.org.uk www.facebook.com/ChestfieldRotaryClub

We meet every Thursday at 7.45am for 8.00am and conclude around 8.45am at The Plough Inn, 100 St Johns Road, Swalecliffe, Whitstable, Kent. CT5 2RN.

Sue Vargyas, President, Rotary Club of Chestfield

Saint John the Baptist Church, Swalecliffe and Chestfield 2023

Rev Simon Tillotson had given apologies but Jane Myhill, Children and Families Minister, St John's Swalecliffe and Chestfield read the following report:

Throughout 2024 St John's has continued to offer many activities, events and services, some weekly, others more occasionally and we continue to enjoy being part of such lovely and energetic communities in both Swalecliffe and Chestfield.

Every week we offer a service in our church, just a stone's throw away from the beach and we also offer a mid-week Communion service in the centre on Wednesdays as well as extra services at Easter, Remembrance and Christmas alongside individual services for baptisms, funerals, internment of ashes and occasional weddings. Again, this year we were pleased to welcome Steve Bailey to our Remembrance Day service and hear him read the names from our war memorial.

During 2025 we are planning some occasional services in the WI hall here in Chestfield, the first one being on June 29th. We are hoping this may encourage more Chestfield people along, you'll all be very welcome!

During 2024 we also introduced a new monthly service particularly aimed at families with children although any age is welcome! This is called Messy Church and meets in the centre on St John's Road on the first Saturday of each month, so far this is being well attended and feedback is good.

Alongside our regular church services we also run many other activities for both children and adults, these include...

Coffee Break Tuesdays 10am – mid day, tea, coffee, homemade cake and company.

All ages welcome

- Explorers Tuesdays 2 – 4.30pm in St John’s Garden, Swalecliffe Court Drive.
Activities for children or an opportunity to get your hands dirty and help us grow veg
- Blast afterschool club Wednesdays in term time for primary school aged children
Games, toys, lots of toast to feed the after school hunger pangs as well as a popular tuck shop
- Chatterbox baby and toddler group Fridays in term time between 9.30 -11am
Lots of toys, some craft, a story and song time, healthy snack and plenty of refreshments
- Fareshare Surplus food (at the end of its sell by date) from local supermarkets, available Tuesdays and Fridays at 9am and Wednesdays at 2pm.
- Monthly Market Runs on the first Saturday of each month, a real community event and a great place to grab a bargain!
- Whitstable Toys A recycling scheme for preloved toys, run through Facebook (across Whitstable over 10, 000 books, toys and games for children were rehomed in 2024 for free)
- Whitstable Community Wardrobe Recycling preloved school uniform - During 2024 over 600 children were helped with uniform which amounted to over 3,000 individual items.

Undoubtedly one of our highlights of last year was the return of our Summer Fete and Community Day in St John’s Garden. St John’s Garden, situated along Swalecliffe Court Drive next to the old Rectory, provides us with a large outdoor space for children and people of all ages to enjoy. Last year we built a large shed which has provided us with much needed storage space and we continued to clear more of the overgrown areas but as with every garden there is always plenty more to do! Research into providing toilet facilities on the site continue as it’s proving to be a very difficult issue to conquer despite some generous donations towards this. Money given towards this is safely stored for when a decision is made, thank you for your donation.

To conclude I would like to note our thanks to you all at Chestfield Parish Council for your help and support, both financial donations, space in your regular Parish Magazine and help with delivering our newsletter. Thank you.

Jane Myhill

Children and Families Minister

St John’s Church, Swalecliffe and Chestfield

Rev Simon Tillotson, Team Vicar

All Saints Whitstable and St John's Swalecliffe in the Whitstable Team Ministry

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Maydowns Road Residents’ Association

Mike Poole as Chairman of the Maydowns Road Residents Association gave a report of the Maydowns Road Residents Association:

For those that are unaware, Maydowns Road is an unadopted road and must be maintained by the residents. The Association was set up many years ago with the responsibility of maintaining on behalf of the residents, the road, and the footpaths.

We have a committee of 12 people who meet on a quarterly basis to discuss concerning the road and the immediate surrounding area.

I have recently taken over as chairperson from Mick Clarke who has retired after 15 years’ service.

The road was completely re-surfaced 2018 with tar and granite chippings. This has worked extremely well as we have very few potholes to deal with. However, there are signs of deterioration and the Committee plan to have these parts re surfaced in the coming year at a cost of some £14,000.

We try to enhance the community feel for the road by having a “Maydowns Road Residents List” so we can communicate with each other and we are hoping to set up a WhatsApp Group for the road.

We are keeping a very watch on housing in the area and how this will affect the residents of the Road. We are concerned about the volume of traffic generated along the Chestfield Road and how it becomes more difficult to exit the road with increased traffic and for pedestrians to cross the Thanet Way.

Our other concerns are the use of the sewer in Maydowns Road, designed to handle the sewerage in Maydowns Road now having to deal with the sewerage at the new development at Oxenden Park in Greenhill. My understanding is that this is now operational, and we are waiting to see if there are any issues.

During the year we shall be running our Sunflower Competition to see who can grow the tallest Sunflower

We are encouraging our residents to take part in a street party for the VE Day celebrations by having a table with snacks and drinks at the end of their drive and perhaps some 1940 music.

Thank you.

Mike Poole, Chairman, Maydowns Road Residents Association

Cllr Bailey thanked Mike for his report.

Chestfield Women's Institute

Cllr Lorraine East read the WI President Sharon Goff's report to the meeting as follows:

Chestfield WI 2024 Annual Report

It has been 2 years since becoming President of the Chestfield WI and I have just been re-elected for a third year.

We have had another busy year and have achieved so much.

Two trips

A trip to Dymchurch & Hythe Railway, which was arranged for 22 members and to the Marlowe Theatre trip in October for 19 members.

Newsletter

I keep members updated by writing a Monthly Newsletter, covering WI news and events for the month.

Evening Socials

We held Two Evening Social Events which were open to the Chestfield WI members, local Community, and surrounding areas. The first in July which was just a social gathering. The second event was in November where a WI member demonstrated how to make a festive table decoration. This event was a remarkable success. We are running another Social for this November, theme – decorating a festive candle.

Both these events were open to the Chestfield Community.

Community/Charity Work

Members donated gifts of food and clothes for elderly vulnerable clients of Age UK Herne Bay and Whitstable who serve this area on a number of supportive services like meals at home, dementia support, independent living. The gifts meant that the elderly clients who received a cooked meal on Christmas Day each received a Christmas gift.

Presidents Charity

The Charity for 2024 was a cancer themed 'Hope for Tomorrow' which is a charity that supplies a mobile cancer treatment unit which serves Herne Bay, Kent & Canterbury hospitals which helps locals to have their chemo treatment without going to London. The generosity of Our members raised £855.

Craft Group

Knitted and donated 70 baby cardigans for premature babies which were delivered to both the William Harvey and QEOM hospitals.

Decorated the Hall with poppies during November to commemorate Remembrance Day. Decorated the local post box throughout the year with some fantastic 'toppers.'

Social Groups & Fundraising

Funds received from the Weekly & Monthly WI Groups and Ad Hoc donations which includes the 2024 annual fish & chip quiz evening event. **Combined total raised £5,752.65.**

Easter Fayre

The event in March last year was a first for me as President. An easter egg hunt took place in the garden for 22 children and they absolutely loved it. A great success and we raised just short of £1,500. We are holding another Fayre on the 19th April.

Chestfield Parish Council held a Fun Day where our WI ran a cake stall, hopefully we will be asked again this year.

Our membership has steadily increased throughout the year, we now have 64 members, an increase of 24 members since I first became President, however four members have sadly passed in the past year.

The awareness around the Chestfield WI has increased but it has been hard work, but it has paid off.

The Hall

It takes a considerable amount of fundraising to pay for the upkeep of the Hall – the running cost 2024 totalled £16,800.

The Hall is not just for Our WI, but the wider community and outside independent groups, for example, Chestfield Parish Council, Surgeries for the local Councillors, Polling Day, Police Road Safety, as well as Pilates, Quilt Making, Table Tennis, Spiritualist Church, Meditation groups, line dancing to name a selection.

The outside of the Hall was decorated in April.

The dreadful lamppost just outside the Hall has had a makeover, and a 'topper' added.

Chestfield Parish Council very kindly donated £1,786.79 to pay for the lights in the Hall. I did write to the Chair of the CPC to thank them for their generosity.

Hall Lettings

Bookings increased this year due to publishing our competitive hourly hire rates on Facebook. Whilst the annual amount for Hall lettings was an increase on 2023 figures, we still need to raise funds throughout the year so my promise and aim as President is to continue to promote fundraising and events to help with the running costs.

I want to personally thank Our Chestfield WI Members for all their generosity and to Chestfield Parish Council for their support with funding the replacement lights.

Thank you

Sharon Goff, President Chestfield WI

Chestfield History Society

There was no report from the history society this year.

Chestfield Cricket Club

Cllr Todd read Paul Gibson, Chairman of Chestfield Cricket Club's report to the meeting, as follows:

Chestfield cricket club 2025 Annual Report .

The last 12 months has been again a successful period for the club.

The Senior Men's 1st team gained promotion into Division 1 of the Kent League.

The senior Sunday 1st team were county village champions also.

The club is providing 3 Saturday and 3 Sunday senior teams.

Using Tyler Hill memorial park as a second ground.

The junior section still thrives with 9 teams in various age groups and girls and ladies cricket is growing well.

The Pétanque pistes are being used well with over 100 people through the week in the summer months and half that during the winter.

We continue to host 8/9 weekly and fortnightly community groups doing various activities, providing a safe comfortable environment to enjoy their hobbies.

A fair amount of maintenance has taken place on the winter:

- Having to demolish the old scoreboard building as unsafe and relocate scoreboard.
- Replacing the fence adjacent to Grasmere Road that was forced upon us somewhat.
- Also, safety work to reduce the large trees in the car park.

This has been an expensive winter but these items improve the look of the club no end

The brook has been running well all winter causing us no issues with flooding. Fingers crossed for the future.

Our volunteers and committee continue to work hard to keep the club in a good position and be an asset to the parish.

Thank you to Chestfield Parish Council for its continued support and partnership and looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Paul Gibson, Chestfield Cricket Club Chairman

Grasmere Village Residents Association (GVRA)

Parish Councillor Chris Brealy read Dr Robert Jackson's report to the meeting as follows:

Thank you for your invitation to give a report to the 24 March 2025 Chestfield Parish Council AGM.

The GVRA and its' Committee represent the interests of the 43 properties situated along the unadopted section of Grasmere Road. It has an elected Management Committee of seven and holds an Annual General Meeting at Chestfield Cricket Club each year.

This unadopted section of roadway is a Restricted Byway with no public vehicular rights of way. The GVRA maintains the unadopted roadway and on one occasion in recent years has repaired the bridge decking on the basis of residents' contributions for safety reasons after KCC refused to do so

GVRA is currently concerned about the current state of Government planning policy. There are ongoing reviews on the one hand of local Government structure and on the other planning policy. This is not an encouraging environment for stable and successful planning and decision making

In the Chestfield environs there are two proposed developments of concern to us - Bodkin Farm and Brooklands Farm. We have submitted two substantive objections to CCC on both these proposals.

Bodkin Farm has repeatedly been rejected - including by planning Inspector- in the past for good reason. We believe these have not been addressed in the latest application proposals.

Brooklands Farm has obvious problems in terms of local road capacity and antiquated local drainage provision in a flood risk area.

In terms of journeys to Canterbury there are only two options - through Thornden Wood on the one hand and Blean on the other. Neither of these is suitable for large ongoing peak traffic increases.

More locally, on the Old Thanet Way there are two obviously increasing traffic problem points: the linked Herne Bay Road mini roundabout and the closely linked Chestfield Road roundabout to the west and the complex Greenhill roundabout to the east. In both cases the short narrow links over and under the railway line respectively serve to limit capacity and cause increased queueing.

Assessments of future traffic by prospective developers have already indicated unacceptable future overloading of these roundabout points.

Dr Robert Jackson, GVRA Secretary

10. Update on the Chestfield Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk explained that the area designated extends outside of the parish boundary to include all of the unparished part of the Brooklands Farm potential development site.

Because the area went outside of the parish boundary, CCC had a statutory requirement to go out to consultation on the area. This consultation is running at present and a report will go to CCC Cabinet on 23 April 2025.

Concurrently a Housing Needs Survey has been delivered to every Chestfield household with a closing date of 31 March 2025.

A Steering Group of five residents and three parish councillors has been formed and met three times so far. The group is working on a Vision Statement and potential policies for the Neighbourhood Plan. And also undertaking a Local Green Spaces designation exercise. Residents will be kept updated in the Chestfield magazine each quarter and ultimately be consulted and have a vote on the plan in a referendum.

11. Residents' participation – questions from residents at the meeting

In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the Church Street playing fields SEND school would be in addition to the SEND school proposed at Brooklands Farm. Church Street playing fields SEND school will cater for current need and the Brooklands one cater for future demand. Bodkin Farm would have a secondary school – this is included in the current (as yet undetermined) planning application. Chestfield Parish Council has asked that the land allocated for the school be conditioned for educational use in perpetuity if CCC is minded to grant the application.

Cllr Bailey advised that the parish council has an upcoming meeting with the Brooklands Farm planning team – but there is no planning application for that site yet.

A resident asked for an update on St Joseph's Church. Cllr Bailey explained that it had closed during covid and never reopened. Canon Philip Glandfield has advised that it is not to be sold. The building is currently unsafe and needs £14k works undertaken.

Introduction of Car Parking Charges at Whitstable Medical Practice

Whitstable Medical Practice announced this week that it is introducing a small parking charge of £1 per visit (up to 4 hours) across its Whitstable sites. Since 2009, Whitstable Medical Practice has had access to 90 free parking spaces at Estuary View Medical Centre on land owned by Graham Land & Developments. This arrangement will end this year due to upcoming construction.

96% of patients travel by car, and without new parking, Estuary View would become unviable as a medical facility.

To maintain access, Whitstable Medical Practice is investing £1.25 million in a new overflow car park, which Whitstable Medical Practice must fund themselves. External funding options, including NHS and local authority support, have unfortunately not been available.

Details are:

Charge: £1 per visit (not per hour) covering up to 4 hours of parking.

Grace Period: 10 minutes for drop-offs to ensure no charge.

Exemptions: Blue Badge holders can scan their badge at the machines for free parking.

Payment Options: On entry or exit via coin, contactless, or the SIPPI app (available in app stores).

No need to return the ticket to your car (this is just your receipt).

Implementation Timeline:

First site: Chestfield Medical Centre (April 2025).

Other sites: To follow based on successful rollout.

Clear signage will be in place before charges take effect.

A professional third-party management company, UK Car Park Management Ltd (UKCPM), will oversee parking.

Cllr Bailey explained he and Cllr Flanagan are investigating this and are hoping to have a meeting with Dr Ribchester. There are concerns about impacts on the areas where their car parks are.

Cllr Bailey thanked everyone for attending and gave thanks to the members of Chestfield Parish Council also.

12. For anyone unable to attend the meeting, the Chairman's annual report and Cllrs' paragraphs will be published in the June edition of the Chestfield magazine and Minutes including all reports will also be uploaded to the parish council's website shortly after the meeting.
13. The meeting closed at 8.35pm and light refreshments were then served.