

ANNUAL REPORT OF CHESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF 10TH APRIL, 2006

At the Parish Meeting two years ago, Kathy Budgen outlined proposals for a Parish Plan. An independent steering group was set up, which distributed and collected questionnaires throughout the Parish. On 29th May 2005 this group held an Open Day when they reported the findings of the questionnaires and following this review has been busily drawing up an Action Plan for publication in the very near future. I would like to thank all members of the steering group for their two years work, and particularly to Mrs Sheila Finch who has acted as Chairman and hosted the monthly meetings.

This Action Plan will hopefully provide a Blue Print for future work of the Parish Council over the years ahead and to meet this aim, it is obvious that considerable expenditure is envisaged. Your Council, aware that financial help can be obtained from various sources – often on a match funding basis - decided to build up a reserve towards these costs within the Parish Precept, and at the same time support projects aimed at funding parish facilities. I would commend the Spring Fayre to be held at the Cricket Club ground on Monday 29th May and a Charity Fun Run/Walk to be held in the autumn.

We continue to retain the services of our Community Wardens, partly funded by the Parish Council, who attend each meeting to give us their reports and, when available, the crime statistics. When possible PC Pope also attends our monthly meetings. We also have the benefit of the services of Special Constable Carter.

The year saw a further 67 planning applications – some of them were controversial, drawing many objectors to our council meetings. The Parish Council's observations have been passed on to the City Council, sometimes by verbal objections at City Planning meetings. In this respect you win some and lose some – the City council is the final arbiter.

We had a presentation by Whitstable Junior Football Club and the City Leisure Officer on outline plans they are proposing to upgrade the changing facilities on the recreation ground. Problems relocating to adjacent car parking were raised and suggestions to solve this problem were suggested.

After investigation of a proposal to provide a ball court on the play park, we have accepted an alternative idea for the provision of five a side goal posts on a trial basis, and if successful their purchase.

Street Runner has now been active for two and a half years, and during this year a Table Tennis Club has been set up on the alternate Thursdays. From the relationship between the two, sufficient volunteers have been forthcoming to run the Street Runner scheme, now to be known as Chestfield Youth Club, as the period of external funding has come to an end. We must thank John and Lyn Wickings for their enthusiasm and work in this region.

We have had some frustrations concerning Speedwatch, but I am glad to say that a portable interactive sign and warning sign has now been purchased and the volunteers are awaiting training before the sign is used. In the meantime PC Pope has been using his speed gun and apprehending speeding motorists – many from this parish!

Our village sign was in need of repair and it was decided to have a new design. A competition was run in the village magazine, and Tony Blake was kind enough to suggest an outline. The new sign is now in situ, and the design also adopted for our Parish Council stationery.

The old site of Highgate Filling Station has twice become the venue for Travellers. These have now been moved on and hopefully the development of the site will solve this for the future. The bollards erected under Thanet Bridge seem to have achieved results - thanks to County Councillor Harrison.

A drug awareness evening was very informative to councillors, although regretfully not supported by parishioners!

A bequest by the late Dorothy Perkins has been used to provide a Rose Bed and seats on the Play Park and a contribution towards a bus shelter in Chestfield Road. The seats and shelter are on order.

To keep parishioners abreast of current issues we have issued our current quarterly magazine and since June produced a village website to provide information about Chestfield. The normal reports have been made from Councillors attending meetings on Policing; Amenities; Footpaths and Manston Airport.

I cannot close without my thanks for the support I have had over 5 years from my fellow Councillors. As usual we have had to face some changes and we said farewell to Linda and George Gadd and more recently Keith Dabson. We were pleased to welcome Hilary Roberts and Pearl Freeman to our ranks. At the moment there is one vacancy on Council. The work of Linda Livingstone our Parish Clerk is of the highest standard, enabling all Councillors the support necessary to fulfil their mandate. I wish my successor as Chairman 'All the Best' for the future.

LEN CLAISSE
CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL