

Draft Minutes until approved at the Annual Parish Meeting in 2012

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 28 MARCH 2011**

Present: Parish Cllr Bob Brown (Chairman, Chestfield Parish Council)
Amanda Sparkes (Clerk to the Parish Council, acting as Minutes Secretary)

Speakers

County Cllr John Simmonds, Kent County Council, Finance Cabinet Member
Mr John Graham, Chestfield Rotary Club
Mrs Deborah Johnson, Village Correspondent
Mr Robert Tomlinson, Whitstable Rugby Football Club
Mrs Joan Saunders, President, Swalecliffe with Chestfield Women's Institute
Mr Neal Fowler, Neighbourhood Watch

Other Attendance

City Cllr Jenny Samper

Parish Cllrs Len Claisse, John Parks, Mick Shorter

13 residents

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Cllr Bob Brown welcomed those attending.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were given for:
Parish Cllrs Chapman, Bailey and Goldsack.
Father Kevin St. Aubyn, St. Joseph's Church
Mr and Mrs Wickings, Chestfield Youth Club.
Philip Lennard, Chestfield Rotary Club.
City Cllrs Todd and Thomas.
PC Steve Pope and PCSO Aaron Pedwell.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 24 MAY 2010

It was proposed by Parish Cllr Claisse, seconded by Parish Cllr Shorter, and
AGREED that the minutes were a true record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. GUEST SPEAKER – CLLR JOHN SIMMONDS

Cllr Simmonds thanked the parish council for the invitation to speak at the meeting.
He explained that in 1974 he worked for Lloyds bank in public relations. At that
time a bank clerk in Switzerland got away with £32m in foreign exchange markets
and the bank had to tell this news. Cllr Simmonds explained he learned a lesson at
that time – always tell the worst case scenario. (£18m was subsequently recovered
on insurance.)

i) The Icelandic bank crisis 2008

Cllr Simmonds explained that Kent County Council is one the very largest councils
so can justify being the highest contributor – also at the time the Icelandic banks
were regarded as relatively safe and met top star criteria.

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Cllr Simmonds explained that the Amounts lost were as follows:

£33m – Kent County Council

£16m KCC Pension Fund

£1m Fire Authority

10 other local authorities, including Canterbury City Council, and some charities, and the Audit Commission also lost investments.

So far, KCC have been given £9.1m back (they are classed as a preferential creditor). Cllr Simmonds advised he thinks this is likely to remain the case and they anticipate getting back 92% over the next three years.

Cllr Simmonds confirmed that although it is easy to be wise after the event, the loss has not affected front line services.

ii) KCC Budget

Cllr Simmonds explained the county budget is made up of 2.5bn revenue stream each year, plus a £500m capital fund and a £3bn pension fund. A lot is ring-fenced for schools and education.

Members have achieved a £130m reduction in spending over the last four years already. This year they knew they would have to make further cuts for the next four years.

They had to save 10% this year on a £1bn budget. There have been difficulties due to fuel prices, a rising older population, a 3-fold increase in children's referrals cases, under-funded roads and repairs, salary and wages for care homes staff, and council staff have endured a 2-year pay freeze already.

Cllr Simmonds explained that despite this the county hasn't cut any services, but made changes, for example:

- The Freedom Pass for young people has risen from £50 to £100 per year.
- Free bus travel for young people to attend a grammar or denominational school has always been a discretion not a statutory requirement – KCC will in future ask parents to make a 50% contribution.
- No recruitment has been undertaken recently – the county are holding 400 vacancies – with 1000 positions/jobs to be lost over the next few years.

Different local authorities are choosing different services to change or cut, for example libraries. KCC has 104 libraries, which are being used less so changes are being looked at in this area to adapt to a changing world.

Cllr Simmonds advised KCC do publish every transaction over £500 on their website, in order to be transparent, and every contract over £50k.

iii) The Big Society

Cllr Simmonds explained £5m of seedcorn funding has been set aside in the KCC budget for the Big Society – and criteria is being worked out on how to bid for this. Bids may be invited in the areas of social enterprise, encouraging of businesses into Kent, and for local communities running a KCC service – if the demand is there.

Funding wont necessary always be given as a grant – some may be loans.

Cllr Simmonds also spoke about shared services amongst councils to achieve savings, for example KCC sharing youth work with Canterbury City Council – there is much broader thinking to partnership working. He concluded by inviting residents to tell him where they are doing well and where not so well.

There was a round of applause and the Chairman thanked Cllr Simmonds for his presentation. Cllr Simmonds then answered some questions to clarify his presentation, and also around costs for care home residents versus private residents, and also PFI schemes for schools.

6. REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF CHESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Cllr Bob Brown gave his report, noting the main works of the parish councillors and clerk over the last 12 months. Copies of his report were then circulated to those present at the meeting.

There were no questions and the Chairman's full report is attached as Appendix 1 to these Minutes.

7. REPORT FROM THE CHESTFIELD ROTARY CLUB

Mr Philip Lennard, President of the Rotary Club, had kindly prepared the report but had been unable to attend to present it. In his absence, the Rotary Club Secretary, Mr John Graham attended and read the report to the meeting. He talked of their recent water initiatives with Dutch partners that had raised 55,000 Euros. There was a round of applause at this news.

The Rotary Club full report is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2.

8. REPORT FROM THE KENT GAZETTE LOCAL CORRESPONDENT

Resident Mrs Deborah Johnson talked of her role as the correspondent for the local paper. Her full report is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3. The Chairman thanked her, acknowledging that she was another of the village's unsung heroes, and added that he once spoke to the Editor who said that these columns are what sell the paper!

9. REPORT FROM SWALECLIFFE WITH CHESTFIELD WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

President Mrs Joan Saunders presented her report on the numerous activities of the WI over the last 12 months. There were no questions, and the Chairman thanked Joan for her comprehensive report, which is attached as Appendix 4 to these minutes.

10. REPORT OF THE CANTERBURY AND DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Vice Chairman Neal Fowler presented his comprehensive report which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 5.

11. REPORT OF THE WHITSTABLE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr Bob Tomlinson explained the Club is divided into two sections – The Seniors (with three teams running) and Juniors for 8 – 17 year olds. His full report is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 6 to these Minutes. He explained the Club does value its relationship with the local community and he reminded residents to contact him with any comments or concerns.

12. REPORT FROM CHESTFIELD YOUTH CLUB AND CHESTFIELD WARRIORS TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Linda Wickings and John Wickings had forwarded apologies for tonight's meeting but sent a report. Cllr Brown read this to the meeting and commented that residents are

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very lucky to have such dedicated volunteers and such a very vibrant youth club. he said that the Parish Council very much appreciates and values their work and has recently supported the youth club with a grant for new equipment. The report which is attached as Appendix 7 to the Minutes.

13. REPORT FROM ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

Father Kevin St. Aubyn had given apologies to the meeting but had forwarded a report. This report is attached as Appendix 8 to these Minutes.

14. The Chairman thanked again those who had attended, and also the volunteers who had served refreshments.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Signed.....

Chairman

Date.....

Chairman's Report 2010-11

Appendix 1

CHESTFIELD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, 28 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN CHESTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

This has been a very challenging year during which we have seen a significant change of faces on the Parish Council.

First of all the resignations of John Page, Gerry Bright, Malcolm Bailey, Graham Cooper and Katharine Caloudis.

I would like to thank each of them for their contribution to the work of the Parish Council.

In their place we warmly welcomed Tricia Chapman, Steve Bailey, and John Parks.

Each of these new councillors has not wasted any time in becoming fully involved with the work of the Council. However, we conclude the year with two vacancies that we need to fill urgently.

This year in compiling the Annual report I have been assisted by each Councillor writing about different aspects of the work we have performed. Their reports now follow.

Chestfield Parish Council – yearly update from your councillors

New Councillor - Councillor John Parks - Recently co-opted, I am still in the learning phase for understanding duties and responsibilities. I have, however, been involved in decisions at the monthly meetings. For my portfolio, I have visited a number of planning applications and been undertaking on the job training on these. I have also had classroom-based training in planning responsibilities and look forward to a more prominent role in the future.

Planning - Councillor Len Claisse - I am part of the team of Parish Councillors who visit sites with development proposals. We view the site for suitability and where the proposal is likely to impinge on neighbouring properties make sure that they are aware of the plans, giving them the opportunity to comment as necessary. We have also been involved in Enforcement cases where planning permission has not been sought or granted.

Environment – Councillor Tricia Chapman - I was co-opted last September and my responsibility is environment, which includes being the council's Tree Warden. I attended a Tree Warden training course so that I could gain information necessary in order to carry out my duties effectively. I visit every property within the conservation area where an application has been submitted to reduce or fell trees. My recommendation is then referred back to the Parish Council.

I am in contact with the managers of McDonalds and Sainsburys and intend to contact the manager of Kentucky Fried Chicken when the outlet opens to ensure that the village remains litter free.

I have assisted other councillors on planning application visits and look forward to attending relevant training courses in the future.

Police – Councillor Peter Goldsack - In September 2010 the Parish Council decided it was no longer in the parish interest to renew our contract with Kent Police for a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) specifically to cover Chestfield. Changes in the PCSO contract would have meant that although Chestfield was paying for the PCSO, we would have seen less of his/her presence than previously as the resource would be shared with other areas that needed to be covered.

Nevertheless, Chestfield continues to enjoy good relations with the local Police, although for the past three or four months we have struggled to obtain detailed reports of policing activity in Chestfield. Whilst this was due to a period of sickness, it also reflects on the structural changes in the way Kent Police organise themselves and how they prioritise policing in what is perceived as a low risk crime area. This has also had an adverse impact on the support the police have been able to provide to our Speedwatch volunteers.

Going forward, we are continuing our efforts to ensure we receive regular police reporting and will seek to make sure that Chestfield has adequate police cover.

Neighbourhood Watch – Councillor Mick Shorter - A November meeting was held by Councillor Claisse with “local” NHW co-ordinators and Neal Fowler from the Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch committee. Councillor Shorter also registered as a NHW co-ordinator to set up a watch covering the Churchwood Park development.

The intention is that now we know just who the co-ordinators are, we can arrange for more information sharing to occur. (This had been an issue as the NHW were unwilling to pass on details of just who the co-ordinators were!) The overall long term goal is that of enlarging the NHW schemes to eventually cover as much, if not all, of Chestfield as possible.

Communications - Councillor Mick Shorter - The Parish Council continues to operate a website, the address of which appears on the front of the Parish Magazine. This appears to be operating well but it is impossible to know just how useful this is to residents. The site has received some 28000 hits averaging around 170 per week. I am sure this could be better utilised and would welcome more local village activities making use of this resource.

As far as possible the site is kept as up to date as can be with such things as the Welcome Pack being made freely available for anyone to download as needed. This is hopefully a valuable source of information for would be and existing residents.

Footpaths (Public Rights of Way) - Councillor Mick Shorter - A big thank you to Councillor Claisse for his sterling work in ensuring the parish equipment is kept in full working order. This year due to the unavailability of volunteers we have handed back most of the footpath clearance but Len Claisse and I still do what we can. Could I ask for residents to advise me of foot paths that they use that are in need of clearing and if possible we will try to ensure that they are cleared for residents to make use of our wonderful surroundings.

Speedwatch - Councillor Peter Goldsack - Speedwatch has had a very successful year and I am grateful to all the volunteers who give up their free time to monitor speeding traffic through the village. We currently have nine volunteers although we are always on the look out for more.

A measure of the success and enthusiasm of our Speedwatch volunteers is that we are consistently reporting more instances of speeding vehicles to Kent Police than any other local parish. To assist them in their role, the Parish Council invested in a new radar gun and speed display in October 2010, which is more portable and easier to use. We have also recently agreed with all interested parties to place speedwatch signs at strategic places in the village.

Magazine Distribution – Councillor Len Claisse - With the assistance of John Page I parcel up the quarterly magazines and with help distribute the packages to the distribution group. We are pleased to have a number of dedicated volunteers who deliver the quarterly magazine.

Kent Association of Local Councils - Councillor Len Claisse - The Parish Council is a member of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC). Councillor Bob Brown and I attend quarterly area meetings as well as the Annual General Meeting. The organisation provides a platform for town and parish councils to jointly make representations to other organisations to amend policies

Highways – Councillor Steve Bailey - I joined the Parish Council in October of last year, with no particular remit other than my own desire to serve the Parish in the best way I could. Due to the unfortunate departure of our former Chairman Malcolm Bailey, I took over the responsibilities of Highways Officer.

At present, I continue working towards securing safer road crossing points in the village, particularly one at the recreation ground – unfortunately due to current government financial constraints, these projects are ‘on hold’ at the present time, although they very much remain within our current Parish Plan and thinking.

I continue to both maintain and establish the strong working relationship that the Council has with the Kent Highways Division.

One small success that has been achieved is the curtailment of a roadside car sales pitch in Chestfield Road.

Parish Council Magazine – Steve Bailey - I have also taken over the editorship and advertising management of the Parish Magazine. This was previously a task carried out by

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Peter Goldsack and Bob Brown respectively, and my thanks go to them for their previous efforts, and for making the transition that much easier !

Hopefully, the magazine will not lose its appeal under my charge, and it will continue to provide both informative and helpful items of interest.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving on the Parish Council, and look forward to continuing to help to look after the interests of Chestfield and its parishioners.

Office move – Amanda Sparkes , Parish Clerk - The council had to find alternative office accommodation when the city council wanted to close the Whitstable divisional office. A working party of Councillors looked at alternative venues and a successful move to Office 4, Jagow House, on the Joseph Wilson Industrial Estate next to Tesco was arranged.

Keep warm, stay healthy workshop – Amanda Sparkes , Parish Clerk - The Parish Council was awarded funding from the NEA Warm Home Campaign 2010 to hold a workshop in November around benefits entitlements and information to keep homes and people warm. The invite was kindly posted out to all households in the parish by Canterbury City Council together with information leaflets from the Energy Saving Trust and Kent Benefits Partnership meaning anyone unable to attend was able to make contact direct.

At the event residents met advisors from Warmfront, Lifeline and Kent Benefits Partnership. Canterbury City Council also donated energy efficiency lightbulbs to give away on the day.

Just under 40 members of the public attended our event. Whilst we were not disappointed with the turn out we felt it may have been influenced by the weather forecast of heavy snow for the day (which subsequently bore out as we then went on to have 4 days of snow).

Kent Benefits Partnership received six calls after the invite leaflets had gone out and carried out a full benefit check for each. At the event their advisor saw 15 people and carried out 8 benefit checks. Outcomes include entitlement to Council Tax Benefit and Pension Credit in at least 4 cases.

I will now turn my attention to some of the other activities or projects your Parish Council has undertaken.

Consultation database - With the magazine produced quarterly and some funding streams short-lived, there can be insufficient time to consult and build up evidence of need to support a funding application.

Additionally the parish plan is five years old, with changes since production, both in the parish and population, and there is a need to ensure the 'wish list' then remains the 'wish list' today. The Clerk has therefore created a database of residents willing to participate in consultation initiatives. The first topic for consultation has taken place around 'More trees for the parish?' with work ongoing from that. Any new residents wanting to join the database are welcomed!

Outdoor Gym - This project continues with some progress to date. The city council has given agreement for the siting of the project and cheap maintenance arrangements have been negotiated. The Clerk has secured over 50% of the necessary funding and outcomes of pending grants are awaited.

Training for Councillors - The Clerk set up a shared training course with the clerk to Herne and Broomfield, around 'Planning and Development Control' which was offered to all the parish councils in the Canterbury district, enabling very cost effective training to be run. The 'sold out' event in February was attended by Councillors with a planning responsibility in this and other parishes.

Christmas activities - I would like to thank Joan Saunders and her team for once again organising the Chestfield Parish Annual Christmas Dinner. This involves a great deal of organisation and coordination but that is almost unseen by those who enjoy the meal. We held our annual Christmas Carol service on the 22nd of December outside St Joseph's Church, followed by refreshments in the WI hall. A big thank you to everyone involved in planning and assisting at that event.

Summary

As I said at the beginning this has been a challenging year but thanks to the hard work of my fellow Councillors and our clerk, Amanda Sparkes, it has been a productive year.

There are other achievements, which I have not mentioned in the interest of brevity, and also numerous meetings have been attended by Parish Councillors to represent the concerns of Chestfield. I thank all Parish Councillors for their help in "Serving the Local Community". They all give up their time gladly and freely to make Chestfield the pleasant place it is.

If you really want to know what your Parish Councillors are doing on your behalf, or if you are interested in standing for election in May then please speak to our Clerk or myself.

Bob Brown, Chairman, Chestfield Parish Council

REPORT FROM THE CHESTFIELD ROTARY CLUB

Appendix 2

The Rotary Club of Chestfield continues to grow in strength with 4 additional members joining so far this year & 2 prospective members in the pipeline. This, will bring our numbers to 36 in total. For those who are not aware, we are a dual gender club & meet on Thursday mornings at Chestfield Golf Club at 07.15 for 07.30 and concluding pretty close to 08.30 so that everyone can get away for their busy day ahead.

This year as President, I wanted to focus our fund raising activities on three types of organisations. Firstly, ones that have a "young person element", for example, local schools and colleges - it is the youth of today that will power the future. The second area is to do what we can for local organisations that bring benefits by providing urgently needed help in times of severe distress, for example, the local branch (Whitstable) of the RNLI (we have donated £1000 to them) and Kent Air Ambulance (we have donated £300 to them) . Additionally we have donated £250 to Whitstable Sea Cadets to help in the replacement of the trailer that was stolen last year.

This year, in fact on Friday 25th March at The University of Kent we held a major fundraising activity with local schools from Whitstable, Swalecliffe, Canterbury & the surrounding area where we asked young children to carry 6 litres of water over a distance of 6 Km to replicate what happens in third world countries to get that most basic commodity in life, clean drinking water.

We do these things to try & do our bit to help those less fortunate than ourselves. In order to make the donations above we need to find imaginative ways to raise funds. Two of which this year have been, A formal Black Tie dinner function to celebrate that great British sailor, Admiral Lord Nelson. We held this event in Commissioners House at HM Dockyard – Chatham, the place where HMS Victory was built & where Admiral Lord Nelson was posted for a period of time.

Secondly, in February we had a Valentines Ball at the International study Centre in Canterbury. This was attended by nearly 90 people and resulted in not only everyone having a thoroughly good time but raised circa £1200 in the process.

In conclusion, if anyone would like more information about what we do or potentially interested in joining, please look at our website <http://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.asp?ClubID=1902> or contact me at the following email address. Philiplennard@btinternet.com

REPORT FROM THE KENT GAZETTE LOCAL CORRESPONDENT APPENDIX 3

I have been the local correspondent for the Chestfield and Swalecliffe area for about five years now, following a “friend” suggesting that I apply for the role.

For those who may not be aware there is a community section in the KM local papers where there are local reports for all local communities in the area. Chestfield and Swalecliffe come under Coastal Community News.

It is a free service that the Kent Messenger group give to the local communities. I do my best to put in news every week and I think I have only missed the deadline a couple of times.

Surprisingly I get sent little information on a regular basis and I have to “scrounge” news from clubs and organisations’ websites. This has become increasingly difficult as on a lot of sites you now have to be a member. I have approached all organisations that I am aware of and have let them know about the service but for whatever reason I get little or no response. The school, St John’s and the Scout Group get the gold star for providing information to me. This is the reason that you will see news from them every week.

I am pleasantly surprised at the number, and who, reads the column and feel it is a good way of letting local people what is going on in their community. If you would like something mentioned in the column or know a group who would like an event mentioned then please do let me know.

E-mail deborah.johnson58@btopenworld.com

SWALECLIFFE WITH CHESTFIELD WI REPORT 2010 - 2011

Appendix 4

I am now in my second year as President of the W I. and once again it has been a really busy and successful year. Nothing changes.

As I reported last year our members meet monthly at which they are updated with news and activities involving our own and Federation events. One innovation this year has been the introduction of a monthly newsletter to each member, which is a précis of the monthly minutes plus an ongoing ‘Dates for Your Diary’. This was trialled in May and members were so impressed it is now issued on a monthly basis. We still have a speaker at our monthly meetings and it is amazing what a vast range of topics are covered.

We continue to engage our members in weekly activities such as Art, Craft, Dressmaking, Keep fit and Table Tennis. These Groups meet regularly and at present we are making teddies and jumpers for Ghana, woolly hats for soldiers in Afghanistan and matinee jackets for premature babies. Other activities such as Art, Table Tennis and Keep-Fit are well represented.

Our fund raising activities in the year included a May Fayre, our summer lunch in June, a Strawberry tea in July, Coffee and Doughnut morning in August, an Art Craft and Dressmaking exhibition in September, a Christmas/Autumn Fayre in November and our Christmas lunch in December. However, our biggest success was the Cake stall we held on the Tankerton Slopes during Regatta week. The amount of cakes, pies, flans –all home made by our members – was unbelievable and well received. We sold every last crumb very early and the only complaint was that there was not enough bread pudding. We do have other events in the pipeline which are still in the planning stage.

The Swalecliffe with Chestfield WI continued to support East Kent Federation events. In the past year these have included the choir, quizzes, dabble day, Christmas carol concert and representation at the Federation meetings.

Finally I must thank my committee and members for their continued support and help. It’s thanks to their efforts that events over this year have been well supported and enjoyable. We are a friendly group who meet at 2pm on the second Wednesday of each month except August and would welcome anyone who would be interested in becoming a member. If you are unsure please come along as our guest to find out more about us.

Thank you for listening, Mrs Joan Saunders, President

Appendix 5

**REPORT OF MR NEAL FOWLER
CANTERBURY & DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION**

With fiscal restrictions affecting public service budgets, including those of the police, Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Association is keen to extol the virtues and benefits derived from membership of an active Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) scheme. It remains the case that residents belonging to an active scheme suffer significantly less crime than those who don't.

As a charity, the Association is mindful that the harsh economic climate has potential to adversely affect necessary income and is working hard to ensure that the profile of NHW is maintained to promote practical support from private and public bodies wherever possible. Important close working relationships with the police and the Canterbury Community Safety Partnership continue to add value through attendance at Ward Day/Street Briefing events and participation in community initiatives such as the City Council's Night Time Economy and Student Living focus groups.

Locally, during the past year, the Association has continued to provide support to existing NHW schemes in Chestfield, assisting two new coordinators take up post to ensure survival of schemes which looked likely to otherwise close. In addition, I am pleased to report the commencement of two new NHW schemes in the area, covering Lodge Field Road / Kendal Meadow; and The Leas, Fairlawn, & Green Leas. This brings the total number of households covered by NHW within the Chestfield Parish Council area to 508.

The Association's Committee meet bimonthly to review activities and progress against our Development Plan, which includes aims:- to extend the coverage of NHW through partnership working and; to improve communication with and support of coordinators. In terms of the latter we have revamped our quarterly News Letter, "Watching Brief" to include reports which highlight initiatives undertaken by coordinators to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their schemes. In recent months two such articles have featured the work of Chestfield coordinators, a considerable accolade by any standard.

Notwithstanding the enhancements and expansions of the past year we cannot afford to rest upon our laurels. Although NHW coverage of 508 local households is encouraging there are still many more that could benefit from the security advice and information circulated almost daily by the police and Trading Standards. The Association is grateful to the Parish Council for its support of NHW, both through the Website and the pages of the Parish Magazine, but would welcome opportunity to discuss further promotion of NHW within the community through partnership initiatives.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to contact:

Neal Fowler, Vice Chairman of C&DNHWA

01227 639257 or neal.fowler@talktalk.net

REPORT OF THE WHITSTABLE RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

APPENDIX 6

The current Whitstable Rugby Club was formed in 1981 and celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 2006, the year in which it began its most successful playing year ever. There had been a rugby club in the area for a short period after World War 2, but the game had not been played within the Whitstable area for 35 years prior to 1981.

In 2007, the 1st XV came top of the Kent League and was promoted to the London and South East League, Division 3; in addition, it also reached the semi-final of the RFU Vase National Competition. At the time, the Club was only fielding 2 regular teams each week but had a thriving Minis and Junior section, which trained and played on Sunday mornings.

Since then, the Club has, in many ways, gone from strength to strength. However, the 1st XV found it tough going in London 3, having to travel as far as West Sussex and London for away matches. After 3 seasons, it was relegated in 2010 back to the Kent League, having lost many of its stronger players to higher-ranked teams such as Canterbury, Thanet and Medway.

This season, back in Kent 1, the team has still struggled and to date (March. 28th) has won only two and drawn two matches. However, with many of its current players having risen from the Minis and Junior sections, we have a very young team which, it is hoped, will bear fruit with added maturity and experience in the future.

Up to last season, the Club fielded 4 teams regularly, (now down to 3). Unlike the current 1st Team, however, the 2nd and 3rd XV's are doing well. The 2nds are riding high near the top of the East Kent League, Division 1 and have already reached the League Cup semi-final Final. The 3rd XV are also doing pretty well in their East Kent 2 Division of the same League. If the 1sts are relegated this season (to Kent 2), we hope to bounce back quickly, although it will be difficult.

Over 100 boys and girls from 8 up to 17 years play and enjoy themselves within the Junior sections every Sunday, where friendly but strict monitoring and professional coaching are the order of the day under 10 trained coaches. The more successful boys are, in effect, the seed corn of the senior Rugby Club. Several of the current senior Club players and many of the Minis and Juniors reside in Chestfield.

Floodlights were installed 18 months ago, which are a great help at the training sessions. The main problem currently are the pitches, on London clay, which get waterlogged easily and major drainage work has already been effected to try to reduce the problem of match postponement, which is financially costly and very inconvenient.

The Club invites any one of any age who likes physical exercise and wishes to join the Club to contact us, either directly or by telephone (01227 794343) For the Minis/Juniors contact Head Coach, Paul Kahl (01227 742582) The Club also hosts up to 4 lunches per year for sponsors, ex-players, vice presidents and supporters just before a 1st Team match. They are not restricted just to members. A warm welcome would be provided to anyone interested in coming; it is excellent value.

The Club has an excellent Clubhouse in Chestfield, suitable for social events and can be hired for these purposes. The Club has also been the focus in recent years of the annual 'UK Strongest Man Competition' held each summer at the Chaucer Ground. This has proved to be a very popular attraction for local residents as well as the many holidaymakers who visit the area during the holiday season.

Bob Tomlinson, Press Officer, Whitstable RFC

**REPORT FROM CHESTFIELD YOUTH CLUB
AND CHESTFIELD WARRIORS TABLE TENNIS CLUB**

Appendix 7

On 18 November last year the sounds of Brazil echoed through the village, literally! We had a visit from Samba Pelo Mar, Whitstable's Community Samba Band. The Band brought with them an extensive range of drums, Agogos (double cow bells), Reco reco (scrapers), Tamborims, Chocalho and Ganza (shakers) and encouraged members of the Youth Club, both young and older, to join in. Many thanks to Ann Bates and her colleagues from the Band for making the evening such a very noisy but enjoyable event. It is hoped another session can be arranged for later this year.

As an additional session we took the youth club to the Panto to see Aladdin at the Playhouse Theatre in Whitstable. Again, Whitstable Rotary supported this visit as they did last year and we all had a lovely evening with much laughter. Everyone at the Youth Club would like to say a huge 'thank you' to Whitstable Rotary for inviting us again to a wonderful evening, and of course well done to the Playhouse for putting on such a great show.

Another of our sessions was to include the celebration of the Chinese New Year. Jill and Clare got together some ideas which included making paper dragons. The children were very adept at making these and very artistic in their final decorations. Finished with wooden sticks to support the dragons, whilst the children also enjoyed sampling the culinary Chinese delights prepared by Clare (with her helpers). All in all a good session.

One of our sessions included the trial 'borrowing' of the trendy New Age indoor curling equipment kindly lent to us by Swalecliffe School. Having completed the Risk assessments, Jill managed to transport these to the hall and setup didn't take long. Unfortunately this equipment didn't really hold the attention of the young people so we decided not to proceed with its purchase. During this session we were again visited by a representative from Kent Youth who have been so very supportive of the youth club and its' activities throughout the 6 or 7 years the youth club has been running.

3rd March – saw the introduction of the X-Box Live with Kinect. Loads of fun and games and activities incl Ping Pong ! This went down really well with the children and will run alongside our other activities very nicely. We are pleased to say that the 17th March – Red Nose Day session. CUP CAKES, BISCUITS & CAKES all for sale. All proceeds went to the Charity. The Youth Club managed to raise £54 and a huge thank you must go to our helpers and some of the children for their baking skills, time and the donation of the materials for the cause. Well done.

John and I would like to say a huge thank you also to our loyal and supportive helpers (Clare, Graham and Jill) at the Youth Club for putting in so much of their valued time and effort s into both planning and managing the sessions at the youth club. As a group, we have delivered some really interesting and enjoyable sessions throughout the last 2 years and the club has grown from strength to strength. An enormous amount of personal time and effort has been given to the youth club over the last 7 years and for that we would like to say thank you to our helpers. Also a thank you to the WI for allowing us to use the hall free of charge for such an important facility within our community, thank you.

We would also like to thank all the boys and girls for their support in making our youth club a nice place to come to ...well done everyone.

Local architect Bob Coombes comes to the youth club to share his expertise in the world of Pottery. Bob really came through to show us how amazing this craft really is. Not only was he able to share his skill with the children but he has left the volunteers wanting more of this fabulous creative fun.

Over 2-3 visits the children really took to this charismatic man who showed them exactly what to do and let them all have a turn each on the potter's wheel. Right down to supplying protective clothing and protective flooring, not a scrap went amiss.

In the final session when all of the children and volunteers had made their various pots, we sent them to task with the acrylic paints to see the pots transform into complete works of art. From funky to psychidellic to really tasteful and very useful dressing table pots.

For anyone out there who has not had an opportunity to indulge in this type of creativity, you can get in touch with Bob and join in one of his classes.

This November saw Chestfield Youth Club host it's annual Halloween and Bonfire Night Extravaganza. We're pleased to say it was a Ghoulish success, with our youngsters dressed to impress in Spine-tingling make-up and their most haunting costumes – there were prizes for the Scariest and Best Dressed.

The scene was set with Grisly Jack-o-lanterns, Creepy balloons and Terrifying Volunteers (Woo Ha Ha). The team prepared a bloodcurdling feast of Witches Fingers (Hot Dogs), Goblins Ears (Chicken Nuggets), Skull biscuits and Pumpkin cakes whilst our scary costumed youths tackled the most creepy of quizzes and crosswords, proving their extensive knowledge of all that is Gruesome and Ghastly.

We are all looking forward to our next sessions which are dedicated to the rehearsals of "Chestfield Youth's got talent – Innit" – we are very lucky to have such a talented bunch!

Linda and John Wickings

REPORT OF ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

APPENDIX 8

As stated in last year's report, work was going on at St Joseph's to refurbish the exterior. This was duly completed, the replacement of some windows adding to the projected cost. But the painting was double-coated which should ensure a longer time before such maintenance needs to be repeated.

The annual Christmas Carols drew a good crowd and the Service was shared between the new Anglican Deacon, the Revd Richard Braddy and myself. The new style of Christmas lights on the tree drew several approving comments and also an anonymous letter of appreciation.

The life of the Church continues in the usual manner. The recitation of the Rosary in the traditional months of May and October continues on Wednesday mornings by the parishioners themselves, as do the Stations of the Cross on Wednesdays in Lent.

Our faithful organist Louise was recently blessed with her fourth child and little Oliver was presented to the congregation a few Sundays ago at Mass and welcomed with a round of applause.

Rev. Father Kevin St Aubyn