

Our Community— What Can You Do?

July 2014
Edition

Summer in the City Our Villages

You do not have to travel far to enjoy the summer. Our Parish has a varied and rich environment to be explored for free. From the Thames Riverside, Cliffe Pools and Marshes to public footpaths across the fields and into the woods of Cliffe Woods. The majority of our area is protected at local, regional, national and international levels.

There is also an excellent Play Area in Cliffe, provided and maintained by the Parish Council also one in Cliffe Woods villages, provided and maintained by Medway Council. In both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods there is a youth shelter and, in Cliffe, a Ball Court and Skate Park—all set in large recreation grounds.

Our village halls (the Community Centre in Cliffe Woods and the Memorial Hall in Cliffe) provide all year activities and events, whatever the weather.

St. Helens Church is a grade 1 listed building on the centre of the village community and always worth a visit.

Although it is free and easy to access and mostly a short walk away, but our area can sometimes be abused and misused throughout the year, which spoils it for others. A considerable amount of time and money spent on maintaining what we have by various organisations, including the Parish Council. The Parish have spent a lot of money trying to protect what we have—details in this Clarion.

Go out and enjoy our local environment and let all of us to do our bit to protect and improve it. If we **ALL** respect what we have, it will be there for many more summers and could even be enhanced with community support. If not there is a real danger that it could be lost forever!

See the back page for details about events at the village halls and inside for details of the two village fairs this year.

Cliffe in Bloom

One sign that summer is here is the floral displays in Cliffe along Station Road, Church Street and throughout the village—many resident's gardens also contribute.

Cliffe in Bloom is a voluntary group who provide the planters and hanging baskets in the village. They do a lot of preparation work each year and then after putting up the displays, maintain and water them. The group are entirely self-funded and raise money at events like the Cliffe Fair.



The Parish Council also provide some support for specific funding on request.

Could this be extended to Cliffe Woods? It would take a team of volunteers to do this and commitment. If anybody is interested, please contact the Parish Council and we will put them in contact with others.

Parish Annual Report

The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council organise an Annual Parish Meeting each year in April, on behalf of the local residents. This is an opportunity for the Parish to report on local issues and the local organisations that provide so much for our area, almost entirely on a voluntary basis.

This year we had a detailed presentation on the operations of RSPB in our Parish and the impact on both the local, national and international environment.

The proposals from Bretts to infill Alpha Lake were also unveiled (with a public consultation meeting arranged) - more details inside this Clarion.

The Parish Council also provide an annual report on their activities and finances, including support for the youth in the area, St Helen's Church, the two village halls, allotments and planning which affects our area (although the decision making is with Medway Council's Planning Department or Planning Inspector) - more details in this Clarion.

MAGIC, who have moved into the Bradbury Centre (former Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cerebral Palsy Centre building) also outlined their reasons for moving here and plans for the future of their services for children with autism and their role in the local community.

Other organisations present, or who provided a written report, included :-

Cliffe-at-Hoo Parochial Charity (see item in this Clarion), Friends of North Kent Marshes, Cliffe Woods Community Association (CWCA), Cliffe Memorial Hall, St, Helen's Church, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Police Liaison, Buckland Lake, Cliffe Active Retirement Association, Emmanuel Christian Centre, Cliffe Community Church, Cliffe Woods Colts Football Club, Blue Circle Sailing Club, Cliffe Woods Ladies' Club

This activity represents just a part of what goes on in the Parish, we also have a wide range of other youth organisations present in the area—the full range of Scouts and Guides, now joined by Cliffe Adventurers.

Both local schools provide quality education and after school activities.

The Annual Parish Meetings alternate between Cliffe and Cliffe Woods and the next is planned for Thursday 2nd April 2015 in Cliffe Woods (location to be confirmed).

The meeting is open to all residents and we especially invite representatives of local organisations to give a brief report on their activities. We also look out for any special topics/presentations that would interest our residents.

Mockbeggar Farm Shop Future

Recently the Mockbeggar Farm Shop closed after many decades of service to the local community. Other shops in our villages, especially Cliffe, have struggled under competition from town shops and shopping centres.

Our Parish Council archives contain many pictures of the lost shops in Cliffe—we had a wide range of shops and even one of the first Cooperative stores in the country.

However all is not lost and there is a strong possibility that **the farm shop will re-open with a new format in July**. There is some consultation on the type of goods it could sell on Facebook 'Cliffe Woods Kent'.

In any event, support your local shops, in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods when you can. You never know when you and others in our community might need them.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Play areas are not just for children. In many areas of the country and even locally (Wainscott) fitness equipment has been installed for adults. These can provide fun exercise for all ages and levels of fitness.

Are you interested?—Contact the Parish Council. If there is enough interest we can investigate suitable equipment and grant funding to get it installed in Cliffe and/or Cliffe Woods.

Security Matters

The Parish Council have had to take measures to try and protect the allotments, youth shelter and the ball court facilities at the Cliffe Recreation Ground from anti-social behaviour.

CCTV cameras have been installed in the Small Hall Car Park of the Memorial Hall and a barrier has been installed on the entrance (which will be kept locked when the small hall is not in use and for special events).

This decision was not taken lightly and was discussed in detail with the allotment holders, the Memorial Hall committee and users, police and local residents before implementation. The Parish is aware of the inconvenience this will cause but it is hoped this will reduce damage and perhaps the restrictions can be reduced in time.

There have also been shed break-ins at the allotments and damage to the ball court and youth shelter. Even the CCTV cameras were damaged before they were fully installed.

Care and Concern—Cliffe Woods

The Cliffe Woods Care and Concern Group help monitor and advise on issues with health care in the village and the Doctor's Surgery. Currently there are vacancies on the committee—contact Parish Councillor Sue McDermid for further information—contact details on back page.

Parish Update

Airport Update

A recent conference in London outlined the plans of Transport for London (TfL) and another from the Foster's Partnership outlined their ideas for road and rail links to a new airport at Grain which had been submitted to the Davies Commission,

This showed a motorway standard road from the A2/M2 Junction 1 running between Cliffe and Cliffe Woods to Grain. Rail links were suggested across the Thames on a new Lower Thames Crossing, extended Crossrail, links to HS1, direct to Strood, southbound to the Swanley/Rochester line—so as anticipated a lot of infrastructure through our Parish area.

The Davies Commission will report in July on their draft recommendation on whether the estuary airport should be included in the shortlisted schemes (initially one extra runway at Gatwick or Heathrow). There would then be further consultation and a final decision on shortlisting in September.

Keep an eye on the Parish web site for further updates and :
noestuaryairport.co.uk

www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/mark-reckless/4049

www.rspb.org.uk/noestuaryairport (for letter writing campaign)

www.stoestuaryairport.co.uk (and sign the petition)

Facebook : Say No Estuary Airport (Friends of North Kent Marshes)

Twitter: @Natures_Voice @RSPBNews @stoptheairport

Lodge Hill/Chattenden

After further documentation from the developers, a decision on the Outline Planning Decision is due soon from Medway Council.

There is a lot of opposition to the plans, including the Parish Council, and RSPB are also objecting due to the loss of Nightingale habitat.

The Parish are still concerned about the habitat as well as inadequate road links and little, if any benefit to our area. Habitat mitigation is proposed at Shoeburyness/Foulness and in our mind unproven and inadequate.

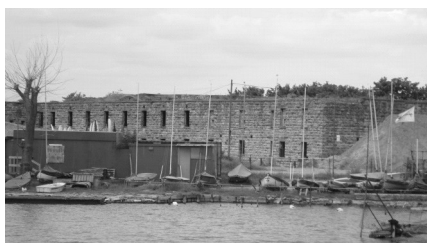
In the meantime a request for a 'scoping opinion' has been submitted to develop the land between Chattenden and Hoo as an alternative. This is a pre-planning stage and suggests 500 houses and community facilities could be built on the site.

This was one part of the 'Extended Hoo Option', previously rejected as a local plan option, which also included a growth of about 33% for Cliffe Woods and 50% + expansion of High Halstow.

Bretts' Alpha Lake Development

A planning application has been submitted to infill Alpha Lake (just south east of Cliffe Fort). This was mentioned at the Annual Parish Meeting and at a Public Exhibition in the Memorial Hall.

On the face of it the plans offer an environmental improvement that would create additional habitat for the wildlife (insects) to support and enhance the local bird population, the setting of Cliffe Fort and surrounding area, effectively increasing the Cliffe Pools site.



However the most

controversial element of the scheme is the removal of the sailing facility, used by local people since 1956. As Bretts own the site and lease the lake to the sailing club, they can remove them whether the development goes ahead or not. At the moment no suitable alternative is being suggested.

The infill would be suitable material from the Thames or future tunnelling developments in London. Bretts would be paid to take this material which would be delivered on-site via the river and not by road.

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Youth Clubs

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Youth Clubs meet on the first Monday in the month at the Cliffe Woods Community Centre and the third Monday of each month at the Cliffe Memorial Hall (Small Hall) at 7pm. They are both equipped with Table Tennis, Snooker/Pool, Table Football, bean bags and music box that can be attached to a phone/iPod etc. There are computer games consoles and TV Monitor.



In Cliffe there is also access to the recreation ground and ball park (when the nights draw in there is an agreement with the Village Club to provide some lighting (on demand)). Adult supervision is via volunteer Parish Councillors and others from the community. It is supported by Medway Council's youth team who often provide drum kit, guitars etc. to supplement the electric keyboards we have.

The ideal is for this to be run by the youths themselves, with adult guidance and control where necessary. Extra activities at the halls and even trips etc. could be organised if there is a demand. Extra nights could be possible with a little extra adult supervision.

However attendance is not what we would like and there is a real risk that the youth clubs would be shut down (especially Cliffe at the moment), so comments (and especially youth, directly or indirectly) would be very welcome.

Parish Council Elections

Parish Councillors are elected every four years and the next election will be in early May 2015. If there are more nominations than places, a ballot is held on the same day as the Medway Unitary Authority elections (and in this case the General Election).

There are eight seats in Cliffe Village Ward and eight in Cliffe Woods Ward (houses to the south of the railway line in Cooling Street are in Cliffe Woods, those north are in Cliffe).

Anybody from the Parish area, or close to the boundary can stand for either of the wards (subject to certain restrictions).

At present there are two vacancies in the Cliffe Woods ward, these positions run until the May elections next year.

If you are interested contact the Parish Clerks, Chair, Vice Chair or any other Parish Councillors (details on back page). There is also information available on our web site :

www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk/html/parish_council.htm

Summer Fairs in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

In addition to school summer fairs that have been held, the communities of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods now have their own fairs each year. Both have a wide range of activities and stalls, with live music and refreshments.

THE CLIFFE WOODS SUMMER FAIR

SATURDAY 19th July at The Community Centre, Parkside
12.00-4.00

CLIFFE WW1 COMMERATION BBQ LUNCH

Cliffe Summer Fayre SATURDAY 9th August on the Buttway
12.30-3.30 Followed by WW1 story telling
in St Helen's Church at 3.30pm

Community Payback

There are plans to do a little community payback and get a group of kids to refurbish the bus shelter at the 6 Bells - just waiting for names of volunteers, we have the relevant approvals and have agreed a sum for materials and tools.

There is an open invitation for youth to get involved and suggest what they want to do - no excuse for 'boredom', via a Youth Parish Council. There is even a budget provision in the Parish Council. If you know anybody in Cliffe or Cliffe Woods that might be interested please let us know.

Planning Enforcement



A frustration for the Parish Council and the residents is when a clear breach of planning has occurred and enforcement action agreed, but little seems to be done. A major example of this was the development at Thameside Terminal in an old quarry at the bottom of Salt Lane. It was an old quarry left by the cement industry and part used as an Petroleum Transfer Depot, transferring fuel from across the river into road tankers which used to travel up and down the B2000 on a regular basis. When road tankers grew in size the depot was abandoned.

The site was eventually sold onto another owner who carried out a series of works without any planning permission being sought or granted. The old oil tanks were removed and the site parcelled up into individual fenced plots served by a new road (with pavement and street lighting), again with no permission.

The operation soon became a nuisance with the number of lorries increasing on the B2000 and it was brought to the attention of Medway Council's Planning Enforcement officers. Eventually enforcement action was taken, but the owner of the site and some of the new operators appealed. Due to a number of legal challenges at the Public Inquiry (where residents, RSPB and the Parish Council, amongst others, made the planning inspector well aware of the problems caused by the site. Although the Planning Inspector postponed the inquiry to gather more information about the wildlife impacts, the owner continued to challenge parts of the decision through the courts. Many years later little change had been made on the site and a number of companies continued to operate.

The Parish Council continued to seek action from Medway Council and although some action had been taken, they were also frustrated. Finally action is beginning to show, The site is now clear of all companies apart from Nationwide Platforms and some clearance work has been carried out. The enforcement notice demanded that operations cease and that site be restored to a natural condition—we will continue to monitor, but at least the lorry traffic from the site has reduced dramatically.



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Are you a local business or do you have an event you would like to publicise?

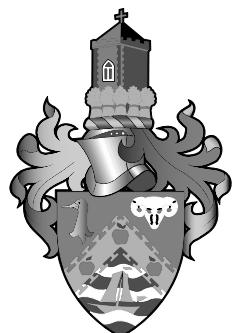
The Clarion is produced around three to four times a year and is delivered to over 2,000 homes and is available online at

www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

If you wish to advertise in the Clarion contact the Clerk by phone or email. Ads start from just £25 per issue.

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Make a splash this Summer!

Blue Circle Sailing Club was founded in 1956 and
enjoys very good sailing and windsurfing conditions
on a 140 acre lake at Cliffe in North Kent.

The facility is shared with Medway Water Sports Trust
who use this location as being ideal for beginners in both
dinghy sailing and canoeing/kayaking.

Located in an attractive and peaceful rural setting the
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Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Council

www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

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Clerks

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Chair Chris Fribbins

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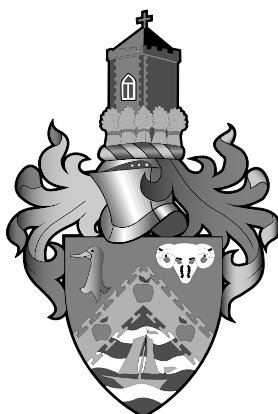
chair@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

Vice-Chair Ken Kentell

52 Englefield Crescent
Cliffe Woods, Rochester, Kent
ME3 8HD

Email:

vicechair@cliffeandcliffewoods-
pc.gov.uk



Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Councillors

Cliffe Village Ward

James Wenban	222620
Lynne Bush	222103
Jim Corrigan	220373
Gill Moore	222205
Colin Elliott	220877
Peter Clements	220681
Joan Darwell	220121
Vivienne Walton	221710

Cliffe Woods Ward

Chris Fribbins	566256
Ken Kentell	221434
Derek Cory	216088
Sue McDermid	220864
Ray Letheren	222224
Ian Petrie	221862
Vacancy x 2	

Cliffe Memorial Hall and Cliffe Woods Community Centre are hosting a number of events in 2014. Apart from the social aspect, these help raise significant funds for maintenance and improvement of the halls.

Hall Bookings

Cliffe Memorial Hall

email: cliffememorial@hotmail.com

Phone: 07510676638

Cliffe Woods Community Centre

email: cliffewoodshall@hotmail.co.uk

Phone: 01474 824367

Regular Events

Cliffe Memorial Hall, Church Street, Cliffe
FARMER'S and CRAFT MARKET (3rd Sunday
of month 9:30 to 1pm)

QUIZ NIGHT 5/9, 31/10, 21/11 & 19/12
7:30pm

CWCA Centre, Parkside, Cliffe Woods

QUIZ NIGHT

(Last Friday of month, except Aug and Dec
7:30)

INDOOR BOOT FAIR

(1st Sunday every month, Oct to Mar exc Jan)

CW Social Club, Parkside, Cliffe Woods

First Saturdays (members only) –

DISCO NIGHT

Third Saturdays (members only)–

ENTERTAINMENT NIGHT

Special Events Calendar

19th July 12pm–4pm

Cliffe Woods Community Centre
CLIFFE WOODS SUMMER FAIR

25th July, Cliffe Memorial Hall

NHS GIVE BLOOD VAN

Saturday 9th August St. Helen's, Buttway Lane

Cliffe WW1 Commemoration BBQ Lunch/
Summer Fayre

Saturday 4th October 7pm Cliffe Memorial Hall

COCKNEY NIGHT with Gordon Bennett
(with Fish & Chip Supper)

Sunday 5th October

Cliffe Woods Community Centre

INDOOR BOOT FAIR 9am
(restart after summer)

Saturday 25th October 7:30pm

Cliffe Woods Community Centre

BARN DANCE

Saturday 22nd November 7:30pm

Cliffe Woods Community Centre

**NEIL DIAMOND & LEGEND TRIBUTE
NIGHT**

Friday 28th November 7:30pm

Cliffe Woods Community Centre

XMAS QUIZ NIGHT

5th December Cliffe Memorial Hall

NHS GIVE BLOOD VAN

6th December Cliffe Memorial Hall

CHRISTMAS FAYRE AND SHOW DAY

Quiz nights, entertainment nights, barn dance in Cliffe Woods Community Centre and Cliffe Memorial Hall require tickets in advance.

Check details of events with the relevant hall.

Cliffe—01634 255299/01634 221718

Cliffe Woods—01634 220864

Who we are and what we do

The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has existed for over 100 years. We are nationally recognised, and the most local level of local government. There are 16 Councillors, (8 for Cliffe Woods and 8 for Cliffe) all who work on a voluntary basis. The Council meets monthly, alternately, in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. There are a small number of committees that also meet to discuss specific issues in more detail before making recommendations to the Parish Council. The Clerks manage the Parish on a day to day basis and the Caretaker looks after the recreation ground and play area in Cliffe and helps keep the Buttway and Cliffe Woods Car Park clean and tidy and helps with general maintenance.

The Parish is funded through the local Council tax. Residents pay an extra amount on top of Medway Council, police and fire services—**this will raise £44,967 in 2014/2015**, and is, for band D, 50p per household per week! We also raise funds from other sources for larger schemes such as the Cliffe Ball Court, Cliffe Play Area, BMX/Skatepark and the allotments and receive a Rural Liaison Grant from Medway Council to spend on other improvements.

We are consulted on planning applications in our Parish as well as local, regional or national issues affecting our area. We also take an active part in liaising with Medway Council, the police and the longer term strategic plans for our area. We also run the Youth Clubs in both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods and work is underway to improve them further. We also support neighbourhood watch schemes, the grass cutting in the churchyard of St. Helen's Church, Cliffe (£1,000 a year) and to support our two village halls (£5,000 a year, each).

Members have to stand for election every four years, if there are more nominations than positions, polling takes place on the same day as the Medway Council elections. (May 2015 is the next date). In between any vacancies can be filled by a by-election if sufficient local electors request it, but more commonly additional members are co-opted. **Why not take a more active part in the community and join us as a Councillor or a non-councillor member of one of our committees (especially the Footpath and Common Land, Youth, and Allotments Committees)? Contact the Clerk or Chair for further details.**