



Your Community— Your Responsibility

Spring Edition 2006

Developer's Plans for
Cliffe
see inside

Youth Area Up and Running

Too often we hear about the negative side of living in our parish and complaints that nothing is done for the kids in our area, now after a lot of work fund raising, planning (with limited resources) the youth multi-sports area is open for business. There will be an official opening in the Spring, so keep an eye out for more information.

It has been built on allotment land, declared surplus to requirements, and is located behind the village club, between the children's play area and the Memorial Hall. It took a lot of fund raising and the Parish Council are grateful to :-

- Mrs Chaplin (local fund raising)
- Brett's Environment Trust
- MHS Charity
- Kent Playing Fields Association
- The Manor Farm Summer Ball
- Andrew's Haulage
- Trenport
- Awards For All
- Awards For Sport
- Medway Council
- Local Medway Councillor's allowance



With the Parish Council picking up the balance and arranging the work. Derek Graves from Cliffe Woods helped coordinate the planning and construction.

What next? - There is active discussions about providing a youth shelter on the Cliffe Recreation Ground (hopefully it can also be used by the football spectators and others). There is also the possibility of a BMX dirt track on the recreation ground and a half-pipe BMX facility in the Cliffe Woods Recreation Ground. We may also consider floodlighting for the youth sports area and it would be good to replace the pavilion that was burnt down some years ago. What do you think? Can you help? With more help these plans, and others can be provided much quicker.

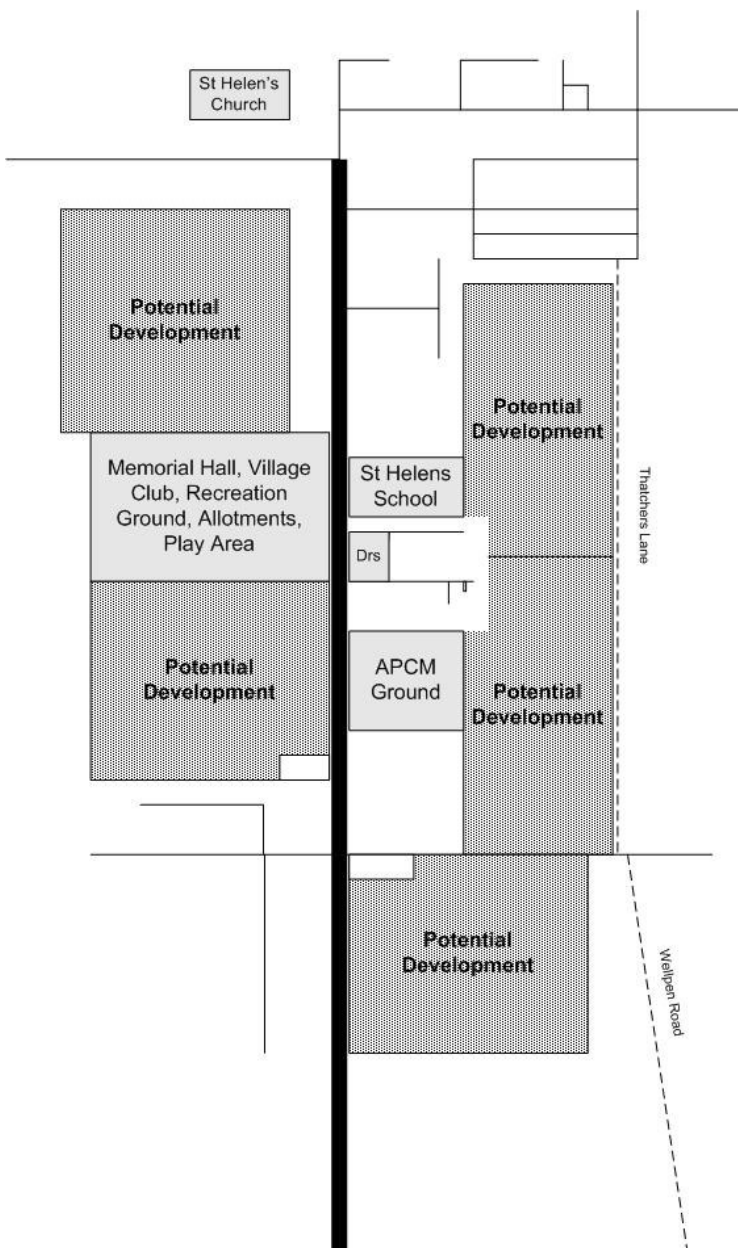
Annual Parish Meeting

Every year the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council organise the Annual Parish Meeting. This is **YOUR** meeting and is a chance to hear what is going on in the local area. As usual it is surprising how much does happen in our Parish with the dedication and support of local people—just like you. There are many unsung members of our local community who help provide and maintain facilities, organise functions and events to provide something for the youngest to the oldest in our community or help protect our environment for future generations. Often they wish they had just a little bit more support and help from the local community—**YOU!**

Your Meeting
 You are invited to :-
**The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods
 Annual Parish Meeting**
6th April 2006, 7:30pm to 9:30pm
**in The Small Hall,
 Cliffe Memorial Hall, Church Street**
**Your chance to have your say about what is
 right and wrong in the parish**

Diagram of Cliffe Village

(not to scale)



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

Developer's Plans For Cliffe

There have been proposals for 100's of additional houses in Cliffe. Six areas, currently fields, have been identified for potential development. These sites have been rejected by Medway Council in the current Local Plan and the new replacement Local Development Framework, which will replace it.

There was an indication that a total of 300 houses could be built on these sites, but current building densities could easily see double that amount. If there is additional pressure for houses in the Medway area, these sites may be considered again!

Over the border in Chattenden there are plans for 5-6,000 houses and 5,000 jobs (5 Primary Schools and a Secondary school as well as other 'small market town facilities'). What impact could this have on the parish? No plans have been submitted yet, but initial discussions are being carried out (you may have seen the questionnaire from Michael Parkes Associates. While the development could be shielded and not visible, there needs to be protection to ensure it does not grow any further—something the planners and developers appear to agree with.

So this is what the developers think, what about you?

The Parish Plan is a document drawn up by the local community to look at what is good and not so good in our local area and draw up action plans for the future. The Parish Council is keen to support this, but it must be driven by the local community.

If you would like to get involved, contact the Vice-Chair Chris Fribbins on 01634 220932, or Email chris@fribbins.cix.co.uk. If there is enough response by March 31st, the parish will be asked to support it and more details will be available at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Why Do It ?

Coverage on Radio Kent and BBC South East TV has tried to paint a bleak picture of Cliffe village. There were claims that "groups of youths" were throwing stones at local bus and commuter coach services. Although these attacks led to damage and danger to drivers and passengers, they were being carried out by a small group (we are told between 13 & 14 years old). The police have a good idea who could have caused this, but without hard evidence, prosecution is difficult.

We have reported before the mindless acts of vandalism that been carried out on the Memorial Hall and the Cliffe recreation ground (pavilion, portacabin replacement and the equipment store). But to put this in context, this is a carried out by a small minority of mindless kids in our area. However we do think this is un-acceptable and will continue to work with the police, Medway Council's youth workers, community wardens as well as the well behaved youths of our area to try and stamp this out.

To the parents of Cliffe, we ask—

Where are your children, what are they up to?

Whose responsibility do you think it is?

Would you like these things done to YOUR property?

To the ALL residents of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods, we ask—

What can you do to help the local community and make it a place where these acts of vandalism are reduced ?

Community News

You Said

In the last issue of the Clarion, we asked for your views on what was good and bad about living in Cliffe & Cliffe Woods and your priorities for action. Thank you to everybody that replied.

It is clear that you treasure the environment and community that we live in. A typical response was remote from the town, but not too remote. Access to major roads, stations and services was also thought to be good by many. On the bad side, vandalism, anti-social behaviour, graffiti and litter were of greatest concern. Lack of youth facilities and poor quality facilities was the next most often mentioned.

Your priorities :- There was little difference between Cliffe, Cliffe Woods and young people (the Youth Club in Cliffe Woods also returned some). In order these were :

- 1) Youth Issues: Lack of Youth Facilities
- 2) Youth Issues: Youth Crime
- 3) Litter/Waste
- 4) Traffic Management (speeding, parking etc.)
- 5) Crime
- 6) Housing: New housing development
- 7) Access to sports and leisure facilities
- 8) Health Issues: Access to Hospital
- 9) Public Transport
- 10) Access to community information
- 11) The local environment
- 12) Access to shops
- 13) Housing: availability of affordable housing
- 14) Health Issues: Access to Doctor
- 15) Availability and access to public green spaces

Special mention was made of difficulties caused by the loss of the Cliffe Post Office. Cliffe residents selected Youth Issues: Lack of Youth Facilities in first place, Traffic Management (speeding, parking etc.) and Litter/Waster in joint second place ahead of Youth Issues: Youth Crime. In Cliffe Woods, Youth Issues: Youth Crime was in first place, followed by Litter/Waste and then Lack of Youth Facilities.

What next?

The Parish Council are responding, within limited resources, to many of the issues raised. We know that Medway Council is also looking at many of these issues as well. What can you do? What is missing is more involvement from the local community. With more help we can do a lot more.

We can protect and improve what is good and take action on what is bad. Contact the Parish Council (details on Page 4) if you want to help – without community involvement this cannot be carried out.

The Parish Council provides support and funds for Youth Clubs, neighbourhood watch schemes, the Cliffe Memorial Hall and Cliffe Woods Community Association etc. But all these need more help from you, the residents of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods— **Together we can achieve a lot more!** If you can help with these we can put you in touch.

Cliffe Carnival

The 2005 carnival was, again, a great success. The event attracted many local residents and people from further afield. Thousands of people came to the Cliffe Recreation Ground and Memorial Hall for arena entertainment, fun fair, charity and community stalls, craft fair and refreshments.

Anti-social behaviour after the event did mar the event and this has contributed to some extent in the decision of the Cliffe Carnival Committee not to organise a carnival in 2006, but they hope to do so in 2007.

As with previous years, the event does not happen on its own and the carnival committee work for most of the year to bring the plans together – new volunteers are always welcome. It takes a lot of work and the Parish Council appreciate their effort. Each year the Parish make a donation of about £1,000 and a loan of £1,000 to help fund the event.

Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Council

www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

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Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Councillors

Cliffe Village Ward

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Joan Darwell | 220121 |
| Thelma Enticknap | 220487 |
| Derek Green | 220240 |
| Lesley Parker | 220503 |
| James Wenban | 222620 |
| Leslie Wicks | 220347 |
| Jaspar Wright | 220184 |
| Roland Mitchell | 222892 |

Cliffe Woods Ward

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Jim Corrigan | 220373 |
| Margaret Emblin | 220904 |
| Dianne Foreman | 221193 |
| Chris Fribbins | 220932 |
| Ken Kentell | 221434 |
| Gill Moore | 222205 |
| Terry Copsey | 220594 |
| One Vacancy | |

Parish Action on Rural Transport

Things are rapidly progressing with Medway's Rural Initiative for Transport (MERIT). The project is working towards the launch of a community transport scheme for Medway's villages in spring 2006. The scheme will use two brand new low floor minibuses, with a group of mainly volunteer drivers. Our first drivers successfully completed their training in January and the buses are due to arrive at the end of March.

They are still working out exactly what services the scheme will be able to provide, but it is likely to include regular excursions like the ones that have already run on a one-off basis to Lakeside and Hastings, and other flexible services aimed at groups with particular needs. They would also like to provide services aimed at young people living in the villages. The minibuses will also be made available for hire for all community and voluntary groups.

The vehicles have sixteen seats and can carry up to three wheelchairs. If your group has someone who is willing to drive the vehicle they can be provided with driver training free of charge, and if not they will contact their pool of volunteers and see if they are available when you want to hire the vehicle.

They still need more volunteers! If you'd be happy to give up a few hours each week or month on an informal basis, why not get in touch? Volunteering is a rewarding way of giving something back to the community, giving you the opportunity to meet people and help make a genuine difference to the lives of rural residents. The Parish Council is actively supporting it and there are local volunteers already, although more would be good.

They are always keen to hear from anyone willing to volunteer as a driver for the scheme, but would also like to speak to anyone who thinks they may be able to help out in another ways – promoting our services in their local area, sitting on our management committee or even by helping as an escort for vulnerable passengers.

To find out more about any aspect of the community transport scheme, speak to Tom Calvert at Medway Council: Telephone 01634 331402
Email rural.projects@medway.gov.uk Website www.medway.gov.uk/merit

Who we are and what we do

The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has existed for over 100 years. There is often confusion with the Churches' Parochial Parish Council, but we are a nationally recognised level of local government. Eight local residents represent Cliffe Woods and eight Cliffe. The council meets each month, alternately, in Cliffe and Cliffe Woods. There are a small number of sub-committees that also meet to investigate and discuss specific issues in more detail before making recommendations to the Parish Council. A clerk manages the parish on a day to day basis and a caretaker looks after the recreation ground and helps keep the Buttway and Cliffe Woods Car Park clear of litter.

The Parish is funded through the local council tax. Residents pay an extra amount on top of the Medway Council, police and fire services—This raises about £16,000 per year, about 7.5p per household, per week!. We also raise funds from other sources for large schemes such as the Cliffe youth sports area and receive a Rural Liaison Grant from Medway Council to spend on improvements in our area.

We are consulted on planning applications in our parish and local, regional or national issues affecting our area. We also take an active part in liaison with Medway Council, the police and the longer term strategic plans for our area.

We also help fund Youth Clubs in both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods—at the moment there are no residents to run one in Cliffe. Regular funds are also available to support neighbourhood watch schemes in the Parish. A large grant and also a loan goes towards the funding of the Cliffe Carnival and we ensure the grass cutting in the churchyard of St. Helen's Church, Cliffe is done.

All 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. Any vacancies can be filled by a by-election, if sufficient local electors request it, but more commonly additional members are selected by the parish council. There is one vacancy currently. **Why not be an even more active member of the community and join us.**