



Our Community — Our Responsibility

Spring Edition
2008

Thameside Terminal Trouble

The Parish Council demanded action when councillors and others saw the amount of civil engineering being carried out on the former Conocco Oil Terminal site in Salt Lane. There had been no planning permission granted or environmental impact assessment carried out, but the site had been divided into a number of plots and businesses setup and running from some of them. This work involved clearing the site of all vegetation, down to bare chalk, extending the base of the former quarry with work on the cliff faces and creation of a new bund on the north side.

The amount of traffic to the site has increased to a level much higher than we used to see when the site was operated as an oil terminal and some of the traffic is large HGVs with plant vehicles overhanging the trailers. The roads from Salt Lane and especially the B2000 through to Cliffe Woods are not wide enough for that traffic and problems continue to be reported when a lorry meets one coming in the opposite direction. We are also concerned about the environmental impact these businesses have on the neighbouring RSPB reserve at Cliffe Pools through noise and light pollution and drainage from the site.

A number of planning applications had been submitted, but then withdrawn before a decision could be made. Medway Council (Highways) had also given a large highway maintenance contract to a company who operate from the site. Last year Medway Council (Planning) investigated the concerns raised by the Parish Council and others and issued enforcement notices on the site owner and the businesses there to cease operations. Appeals against this enforcement have been received from the site owner and some of the operators, and a planning inquiry will be held sometime in June/July. The Parish Council will be raising our concerns at the inquiry and supporting Medway Council's enforcement action.

RSPB Cliffe Pools

We have supported plans for RSPB to build a car park for visitors to Cliffe Pools at the bottom of Salt Lane as this traffic will be mainly cars and a few coaches ó not HGVs.

Bretts Plans to add to traffic problems!

We have also received four planning applications by Bretts to consolidate the 70 HGV vehicles they have permission for across four planning permissions and raise the total to 150 (they admit they are already operating up to 100 per day!). We will be raising a strong objection to this application – because of the volume of HGV movements this would put onto Salt Lane and the B2000, especially through Cliffe Woods.

To object to Brett's plans, email : planning.representations@medway.gov.uk or write to Planning Department, Regeneration and Development Directorate, South Block, Compass Centre, Pembroke, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4YH and quote MC2008/0334,MC2008/0335, MC2008/0336, MC2008/0337. Make sure to include your name and address.

Annual Parish Meeting

Every year the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council organise the Annual Parish Meeting. This is **YOUR** meeting (not a Parish Council 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 ó 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 ó **YOU!**

Your Meeting
You are invited to :-

**The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods
Annual Parish Meeting
Thursday 10th April 2008
7:30pm to 9:30pm
At Cliffe Memorial Hall (Small Hall),
Church Street, Cliffe**

**Your chance to have your say about what is
right and wrong in the parish**

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

Chairman's Report

A new Parish Council was elected in May 2007 and we said goodbye to a number of Parish Councillors, some long serving. Thelma Enticknap, Derek Green and Dianne Foreman had been councillors for many years. Roland Mitchell had joined recently. We thank them for their giving their time to help and support the local community. We made special presentations to Derek and Thelma and also the outgoing Clerk, Chris McLoughlin.



From left to right :Chairm̄ Ken Kentell, Thelma Enticknap, Derek Green and previous clerk Chris McLoughlin

Joining the Parish Council for the first time have been Janet Keates and Priya Fitch, both from Cliffe.

With the retirement of the Parish Clerk, we had to find a replacement. After interviewing a number of applicants, we made an appointment, but after a short time in the job he decided it was not for him. Fortunately another strong applicant did accept our offer of the job and Gavin Meeser has now been in place since last summer. I know he is still finding his feet in the new job and is on a steep learning curve, but the Parish Council are very pleased to have him onboard, with his fresh look at managing the business of the council.

After last year's elections we still have a number of vacancies for Parish Councillors. How about YOU?. We are after local residents to give some time to help support the local community. Contact the Clerk or any other Parish Councillor for information.

Our scheme to provide a recreation area for the youths in Cliffe has proved a success, we are now completing the final stages of the planning permission with some planting. The youth shelter in the Cliffe Woods Recreation Ground has proved to be hit, although the Parish and some residents are divided about the bright red colour. It is certainly visible from the B2000 when driving into Cliffe Woods from Cliffe.

The Parish Council are looking for local projects to support. We had hoped that a scheme to replace the Pavilion on Cliffe Recreation Ground, destroyed by vandalism, would be up and running by now, but it appears this has stalled. We do still hold insurance monies and other grants that can be made available to help local schemes ó and our money can often open the door to further grants from local and national organisations as it shows ñmatching fundsñ and local support and involvement. Contact the Clerk for further information.

Getting Around

Although the amount of car ownership in our Parish is very high, there are still many people that rely on the bus exclusively or for a significant amount of journeys. We are concerned to hear about vandalism to our bus services and, again, the Clarke's Commuter Coach has stopped serving Cliffe in the evening because of vandalism by locals. (If anybody has information about who is doing this, please let the Police know). We have supported the community bus service ó The Villager, for many years ó although local membership and usage of the service has been disappointing (see www.thevillager.org.uk or ring 01634 890100 for more details.

The Arriva services to Strood, Rochester and Chatham are often a source of complaint ó late running, cancellations, fare increases etc. We have complained to Arriva about their cheaper MEDWAY TICKET not covering Cliffe, we have opened up discussions with Arriva to see if this can be extended (perhaps with Parish Council support).

For Cliffe residents an Arriva South East Adult Day Ticket is available for £5.70 per day, allowing travel on most Arriva bus services in Kent and Sussex at any time (weekly and 4 weekly tickets are also available to save more money). Cliffe Woods residents can save even more money with the Medway Adult Day Ticket, it allows travel on any Arriva services in the Medway Ticket zone and is just £4.50 per day, weekly and 4 weekly tickets are also available.

Both tickets offer unlimited travel (multiple Arriva buses) within their zones, so you can travel to Medway Hospital and Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre on the one ticket.

Community News

Allotment Resurrection

Janet Keates joined the Parish Council in May 2007 and has got involved in a number of issues. She has taken a special interest in the Parish Council allotments (behind the Cliffe playground in Church Street). She reports on some of the changes that have already taken place and plans for the future :-

This once busy and productive allotment site had become mostly disused, overgrown and fly tipped and so the Parish Council have launched an ambitious plan to rejuvenate the site and encourage more people to take on plots. Thanks to a huge team effort by the Parish Council, local industry, gardeners, the local volunteer fire brigade, and with the help and advice of Medway Councils Mr Paul Schmoeger things have rapidly changed.

Medway Council offered skips free of charge to clear the fly tipped rubbish and, plot holder, Andy Keates's employer E'on at Kingsnorth Power Station loaned heavy duty horticultural cutting equipment and protective clothing to clear disused plots. Another gardener Doug Arnold also wanted somewhere to relax and grow fruit and vegetables with his family but it turned out his vision to relax by gardening was, like Andy's put off by the state of the allotments. As Doug is a manager of Hewdens,

who provide equipment and plant hire to professional builders and contractors.

Doug offered to help saying he would have a think to see what could be done about the problems on the site.

Hewdens agreed to help and to the



astonishment of all a brand new shiny Hydraulic Excavator arrived one very cold Friday morning complete with Doug as its operator. For the whole weekend Doug and his machine worked, the site has been mostly cleared of brambles, rubbish removed, and large disused heaps of soil redistributed over the site to make it clean, level, attractive and available once more as allotments. The smart, shiny machine unfortunately became dirtier and dirtier. But what a difference all that work has made as 50 plots of rich black soil have been revealed ready for cultivation.

The Parish Council would like to say thank you to everyone for all their hard work, practical advice and generosity. This has secured the future of the site by attracting new plot holders and so ensuring that the allotments remain productive and a central and sociable feature of village life for generations to come. The site has water, is next to a children's playground and will in time have secure storage and an area for communal events such as BBQ's, together with a small car park. We now do have only a very few (4) plots remaining available so if you wish to rent a plot or would like more information please contact Mrs Janet Keates on 01634 222412 as soon as possible.

Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Council

www.cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

Clerk :
Mr Gavin Meeser
12 North Road
Cliffe, Rochester,
Kent, ME3 7UH

Phone:
01634 222748

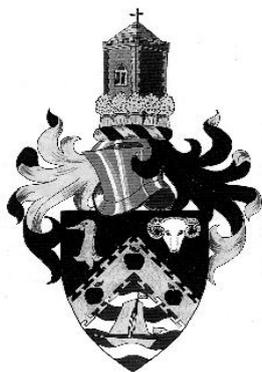
Email :
clerk@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

Chair
Ken Kentell
52 Englefield Crescent
Rochester, Kent, ME3 8HD

Email:
chair@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk

Vice-Chair
Chris Fribbins
5 Englefield Crescent,
Rochester, Kent, ME3 8HB

Email:
vicechair@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk



Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Councillors

Cliffe Village Ward

Joan Darwell	220121
Lesley Parker	220503
James Wenban	222620
Leslie Wicks	220347
Gill Moore	222205
Terry Copsey	220594
Janet Keates	222412
Priya Fitch	221391

Cliffe Woods Ward

Jim Corrigan	220373
Margaret Emblin	220904
Chris Fribbins	220932
Ken Kentell	221434
FOUR Vacancies	

Cliffe Fair 2008

After the success of last year's event, the Cliffe Fair returns on Saturday, 28th June on the Buttway, Cliffe. It is organised by the Friends of North Kent Marshes and St Helen's Church. There will be stalls, craft sales, BBQ and teas. The Parish Council collection of historic photographs will also be on display.

The fair will again be a part of Medway's month long Walking Festival and there will be a number of walks down to the Cliffe Pools to see some of the historic industrial and natural environment.

Do you have any pictures of Cliffe and Cliffe Woods? Even recent pictures will become part of the history of the area. Pictures can be loaned for the event or added to the Parish Council collection. Contact Joan Darwell on 01634 220121, or email joan.darwell@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk, or just bring them along on the day.

If you are interested in transport to the fair, please contact Gill Moore on 01634 222205, or email gill.moore@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk. If there is enough interest we may use The Villager.

St Helen's Churchyard

At the end of last year the Parish Council were happy to grant significant sums to support two projects in St Helen's Churchyard. Despite other grants, both projects were short of the money they needed to complete their paving works during November. Now a quality brick-paved path has been constructed to access the new Memorial in the Churchyard and, as part of the Charnel House project matching paths have been constructed to that building as well.

As part of the Charnel House project, a number of information boards have been put up around Cliffe to highlight various areas and their history. Look out for these boards at St Helen's School, St Helen's Church, Pond Hill and the Buttway.

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 is 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 £17,000 per year, about 8p per household, per week! We also raise funds from other sources for large schemes such as the Cliffe hard surfaced area and have received a Rural Liaison Grant from Medway Council to spend on other improvements, in the past this year it has been stopped!

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 although the one in Cliffe is not currently operating, we would help anybody that wants to get it restarted. Regular funds are also available to support neighbourhood watch schemes in the Parish. We ensure the grass cutting in the churchyard of St. Helen's Church, Cliffe is carried out.

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 are four vacancies currently. **Why not be an even more active member of the community and join us.**