



**Our Community —  
Everybodies Responsibility**

November 2006  
SPECIAL EDITION  
Community Transport for  
Cliffe and Cliffe Woods!  
see inside

**Thursday 16th November  
@ 7:30pm**

**Cliffe Memorial Hall, Church Street, Cliffe**

# **PUBLIC MEETING**

**Vandalism, Graffiti, Anti-Social Behaviour, CRIME**

**Making Cliffe and Cliffe Woods a better place for all**

**What can we do about it?**

***If you Care, Be there!***

Elected representatives and local authority agencies (Police  
Community Safety Team, Youth Services) will be there.

### **What Can Be Done?**

Kim Coker (Hoo Mumø Army and The Hoo Partnership)  
Cliffe Woods Youth Club  
Cliffe Woods Parish Council

### **What can you do to help?**

The solution is in our hands, **IF** we work together and all do our bit!

# Cliffe and Cliffe Woods

## The Villager Has Arrived

Over many years, the Clarion has reported on the transport difficulties many of our residents have. A detailed survey was carried out into the problems and potential solutions and this helped Medway Council with an application for Rural Transport Funding from the Department for Transport. They also appointed a Rural Transport Officer to get the Community Transport scheme up and running.

### InfoPoints

Displays are located in the Cliffe Woods MiniMart and Martin's Newsagents in Cliffe. They contain information about current services as well as the developing MeRIT /Villager(Community Transport) project.

### Excursions

In 2005 a number of trips were organised from Cliffe and Cliffe Woods, other villages on the peninsula and Cuxton & Halling. This summer has seen the delivery of two new VILLAGER buses and more trips have been organised to places such as Canterbury, Whitstable, Lakeside, Romford Market, and Rye Farmer's market as well as the growing use by local community groups who use the buses for their trips.

### The Villager

There are two new Villager mini-buses, which were delivered in July. They have 16 seats (all with inertia seat belts), low floor and fold out ramp for easy access. If arranged in advance, some of the seats can be removed to make room for up to three wheelchairs (all of which are held tight by four safety straps, with an inertia seat belt for the occupant). There is air conditioning and a CD/Radio.



### Volunteers

Drivers are volunteers (driving licences before 1997 include the relevant class to drive the vehicles (16 seats + driver)). A short classroom course, eye test and a brief driving test in a mini-bus are used to ensure drivers are suitable (MIDAS scheme). Drivers also undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check. More drivers are always needed. The Villager is also looking for people who can help maintain the vehicles and also be part of the organisation to help run it - accountancy or finance skills in particular.

### Members

To use the Villager, you have to be a member. Individual and family membership is aimed at those with transport difficulties (no, or limited, access to a car, or problems using the car other than for local journeys). Group membership is also required for group hire. Individual membership is £3 a year, family membership is £10 trips vary, but are usually between £5 and £10 per person. Group membership is £20 per year.

### Future in the community

At present Medway Council are hosting the service, but it is planned for this to move out to a community based group in 2007, who will take on the operation, marketing and future strategy for the project.

### Where do you want to go next.

A series of excursions have been arranged since July this year and further are planned. Ideas are also required about future excursions (places, events - Kent County Show?), or regular trips (weekly shopping, cinema, theatre?) - let them know what journeys you would like to see considered.

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Community News

(Continued from page 2)

## More Information (and joining instructions)



The Villager, Development and Transport, Medway Council,  
Compass Centre, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4YH  
Phone (01634 890100)  
Email  
Web: [www.villager.org.uk](http://www.villager.org.uk)



## A Bridge (or Tunnel) Too Far

You may have seen news articles about a new Lower Thames Crossing recently. The idea of another river crossing down river from the Dartford Crossing has been talked about for decades. The nearest we have had to actual details was when a crossing between Cliffe Fort and Essex was included in the plans for Cliffe Airport (and was noted that this would already be in place before the airport!). In the airport proposal there was also a further crossing to Canvey Island/Benfleet further towards Allhallows.

The main drivers for the crossing are the congestion and projected traffic numbers at Dartford Crossing. Both the South East Regional Assembly and Kent & Essex County Councils feel that an additional crossing is likely to be needed to support the proposed developments in Thames Gateway.

There are also suggestions that this crossing should include rail to connect the Kent and Essex lines, primarily to support freight traffic to and from the Channel Tunnel (without going through or a long way round London).

But any crossing could not stand alone and would need an extensive motorway network to support it (work has just started to widen the A2 between the Cobham junction and Pepper Hill to cope with forecast traffic numbers) south bound and across to the M23, north bound through Essex to the M11 at Stansted eventually part of an outer M25.

### Where would this be?

A number of possible sites have been mentioned between Dartford and the Isle of Sheppey. A discussion document showed a crossing from Sheppey and Grain to Essex, but the airport proposals showed it in the vicinity of Cliffe Fort. Other suggestions have included Higham/Shorne or St. Mary Hoo/All Hallows.

### When could this happen?

The crossing and any preparatory work do not figure in any public spending plans for the Highways Agency or Network Rail, and even now the call is for further investigation rather than design. Even if agreed, it is likely to take at least 10 years, and probably more before any construction could start.

### What is the Parish Council's position?

We will continue to monitor the position, but there are a few questions that we will be asking.

- The congestion (and poor air quality for local residents) at the Dartford Crossing is caused by the toll booths, and then having to squeeze back from 13 to 4 or 5 lanes. Why not remove the tolls and allow the traffic to run free, increasing the capacity of the Dartford crossing at a stroke?
- What allowance is being made for the necessary link roads to service any new crossing and what impact would that have on the existing network (especially the A2) and where would these roads go?
- How would this be funded? It would be an expensive scheme, especially when link roads or major improvements to existing roads are also included. Would this require additional housing and commercial development to provide some of the finance (above and beyond what is already planned)?

Let us know what you think

# Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Council

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Rochester, Kent, ME3 8HB

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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
Roland Mitchell	222892
One Vacancy	

### Cliffe Woods Ward

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

## Residents Lobby Parish Council

At our regular meeting on Thursday, 2nd November at Cliffe Woods School, over 100 residents from both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods attended to raise concern about anti-social behaviour (crime) in the villages and the impact this is having on them.

Residents reported the problems that they had direct knowledge of and the action they had taken to report this to the police and concerns they had with the poor response and perceived lack of action.

Businesses also reported on the direct impact this was having on their income, and the potential for local pubs to be closed down even if the problems were not directly linked to them. Businesses in our area are already under pressure from larger supermarkets and facilities elsewhere, and we have already lost a lot of shops from Cliffe in particular and seen shops in Cliffe Woods become restaurants and take-aways.

There was real concern about the situation and a demand for action.

The Parish Council explained their limited financial resources and limited powers, but said that they were aware of the problems and had brought them to the attention of the police and other agencies. They were always willing to work with people and support any positive action where practical. Previous editions of The Clarion had commented on these problems and asked for individual and community support, but had a very limited response.

The Parish Council agreed to hold a Public Meeting on 16th November, in Cliffe Memorial Hall, to discuss this further and agree a positive way forward. The police, elected representatives and other agencies would be asked to attend. The Parish Council would leaflet both Cliffe and Cliffe Woods about the meeting (this Clarion). **The priority of this meeting would be to discuss positive action by the local community, rather than spend all the time reporting on problems and blaming others—the local community must take responsibility if these problems are to be overcome.**

## Who we are and what we do

The Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council has existed for over 100 years. We are often confused with the Churches Parochial Parish Council, but we are the most local 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 also 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 liaising 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 also fund grass cutting in the churchyard of St. Helen's Church, Cliffe.

All members are unpaid volunteers and 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. The next election will be May 2007. Any vacancies can be filled by a by-election, if sufficient local electors request it, but more commonly additional members are co-opted by the parish council. There are two vacancies currently. **Why not be an even more active member of the community and join us.**