

# SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2011



### Chairman's Report

During my first year as Chairman, I have attempted to serve the parish and to keep Gravesham Borough and Kent County Council fully in touch with the thoughts, concerns and wishes of this parish. Although the Parish Council has limited power we have tried to resolve problems and to use our influence wherever possible. I would like to thank my fellow councillors for serving this year and to make special mention of our Parish Clerk, Theresa Martin, who has shown exceptional dedication in her role for the last 25 years.

The recent parish elections returned all members on the existing parish council bar one who is standing down. We need to fill this vacancy and if any parishioner in Shorne or Lower Shorne is willing to help I would appeal to you to come forward.

Many of you will have noticed the more than usual increase in the amount of the parish precept for the year. This has come about because we were given the unique opportunity of a project that will benefit almost all parishioners. Through the offices of Mike Snelling we were informed that funds could be made available towards the cost of any worthwhile project in the parish. Subsequently Mrs Shove offered to give the parish a metre strip of her property bordering Forge Lane so that a footway could be made to join up with the two existing footways – one from the Shorne Crossroads and the other from Pipes Place to Cob Drive. In order to fund the balance of the funding of the new footway the Parish Council has borrowed the sum of £27,000 from the Public Works Loans Board over a period of ten years. The precept has been increased to cover this loan repayment. Construction of the new footpath will greatly benefit all bus users, parishioners from Lower Shorne and the many residents, together with their children, who take great risks dodging in and out of gateways on their way to school, pre-school or home.

A public meeting was held recently in Shorne to widen our understanding and protest against the threat of the Lower Thames Crossing. The large turnout of about 200 people sent a strong message of public concern in connection with this disastrous and flawed project. We will continue to monitor the situation.

We have completed the final transfer of the land known as Lower Crabbles Wood from KCC to the Parish. As with all legal documentation this matter has taken longer than expected, but the land can now be enjoyed by everyone in the parish.

Legal opinion is being sought in connection with the footway which crosses the railway at Shornemead Crossing leading to Shornemead Fort. This crossing was closed by the railways without consultation in November 2009. We are very hopeful of a positive result eventually.

**Mark Brett - Chairman, Shorne Parish Council**

## COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS



**Planning Applications** - The Parish Council has been consulted on 48 planning applications affecting the parish. The Council registered an objection to 7 of the applications and some of these are listed below:

Methodist Chapel & Hall – The Street – Residential Conversion – The Parish Council supported the application. The Hall was refused because of overlooking – based on the Borough Council’s Residential Layout Standards. The Parish Council considers the Chapel to be important to the history of the village and would wish to see it retained.

Park Pale – Harlex Haulage Services Ltd – The Parish Council objected to the development on Green Belt grounds. Following changes in legislation the development was outside enforcement period. The Borough Council was obliged to grant a conditional consent.

Land adjacent to Green Acres – The Parish Council objected on Green Belt grounds. The application was refused and the subsequent appeal has been dismissed

Boughurst Cottages – Brewers Road – There were two applications. The Council did not object to the application to divide the cottage in two. They were originally two cottages. The Parish Council objected to the proposal to demolish the cottages and redevelop the site. The Council considers the cottages to have some historic interest. They are on the original Brewers Road. There was a proposal for a new access on to Brewers Road which it was considered would be a hazard.

Court Wood – Fences, Shed, Workshop, Pig Pen, Chicken House. The Parish Council objected on Green Belt grounds and because of the destruction of woodland. In 1995 Gravesham placed an Article 4 Direction on the woodland removing the ‘permitted development rights’. The development that has taken place is unlawful. The Council would like to see the development removed and woodland restored.

Queens Farm – Conversion of old farm buildings. The Parish Council supported the application wishing to see the retention of the original buildings, which are of historic interest.

**Forward Planning - Gravesham Local Development Framework** – This has been delayed by the change in Government. The removal of regional plans may be positive, but to date we have not been told what is to replace them. The Council would like to see the reinstatement of the County Structure Plans but that does not look likely.

**The Budget Speech** - There have been disturbing noises coming out of Whitehall. An organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development report was quoted in the press as attacking the Green Belt. It is difficult to see how the Green Belt is the cause of the slump in house building. The problem is economic. Buyers cannot get mortgages to buy property so the builders can’t sell what they build. The banks are building up their reserves and don’t want to take risks offering loans. Interest rates are too low to attract investors to Banks and Building Societies. The Borough Council has had direct experience of the problems with the development of land west of Springhead Road, where the developer cannot sell the houses.

## **Highway Matters** - Hayes Terrace – Traffic calming is still under consideration

The Ridgeway – Speed of Traffic – Following receipt of a petition the Parish Council made representations to the Joint Transport Board. A speed monitor and traffic count was placed on the road and the 85 percentile speed was 37.5 mph. The monitor was setup close to the border with the 40mph limit and the view of the Highway Authority (KCC) was that action could not be justified. It was agreed to ask the police to undertake some speed checks

Post Office Green – Damage to Railings – Contact was made with KCC to remove debris. The Parish Council has been attempting to get repairs carried out using KCC's contractors but the response has been very slow.

Raised Footway – Damage – This has been reported to KCC and we are waiting for repairs to be carried out

## **Meeting with the Highway Authority** – On the 22 October 2010 members of the Parish Council met representatives of KCC Highways and a number of issues were discussed:

Manorfield – Footway – This was the footway adjoining the Village Hall car park and has since been repaired

Salt Bin – Davis Place – After some negotiation it was agreed that this would be provided and it has now been installed.

Brewers Road Bridge – Condition of Carriageway. This has since been repaired

Thong Lane bollards - These were erected without any consultation with the Parish Council. The Council considers them to be unnecessary and a visual intrusion and has raised the issue with the County Council.

Crown Lane – Clearance of overgrowth. Following the meeting the carriageway was cleared.

Chicane in Thong – The Parish Council considers this to be poorly located but it is unlikely any changes will be made in the short term.

**General condition of the roads** - In particular the surfacing in Tanyard Hill, The Ridgeway and Woodlands Lane are in poor condition. Following the meeting, some repairs were carried out to Tanyard Hill. We are still waiting for repairs to be carried to the remainder of Tanyard Hill, The Ridgeway and Woodlands Lane.

## **Lower Thames Crossing – meetings in Higham and Shorne -**

The Neighbourhood Rural Forum arranged a meeting in Higham Memorial Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> February when Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council, spoke on the subject of the Lower Thames Crossing. The County Council had been promoting a route east of Gravesend passing through Shorne.

Approaches were made to the Parish Council suggesting that a meeting should be held in Shorne. The Parish Council responded by holding a meeting in the Village Hall on 17<sup>th</sup> March attended by almost 200 residents. Robin Theobald explained where the crossing might go and the impact such a crossing would have. Richard Knox-Johnston, Chairman of Protect Kent, C.P.R.E also spoke putting the crossing in a wider context.

The informed view at present appears to be that the most likely outcome in the short term will be improvements at the Dartford crossing since this will be the cheapest option.

## **Robin Theobald – Chairman, Planning & Highways Committee**

# FOOTPATHS PROPERTIES AND GREENS

## **FOOTPATHS**

Our network of footpaths has been extensively used throughout the year and we hope that you will continue to make good use of them. We rely upon footpath users to report to us any paths that might need attention so please let us hear from you.

## **RIGHTS OF WAY**

We are seeking legal opinion to establish the legality of the closure of the level crossing at Shornemead, near Hoo Junction.

## **LAND ADJACENT TO GREAT CRABBLES WOOD**

Now that this piece of land has been transferred to the ownership of Shorne Parish Council we will have to look at the security of the area. The damaged fencing near Crutches Lane entrance will shortly be replaced to prohibit the unauthorised entry of vehicles and then maintenance work can be commenced to restore this neglected orchard into a pleasant environment for the enjoyment of parishioners. Access to this land is via Footpaths 321 from the bottom of Bowesden Lane or from Crutches Lane. The bridleway is to be repaired and resurfaced.

## **PLAYGROUNDS**

Our two playgrounds (at Michael Gardens and Mill Hill Lane) continue to receive weekly inspections which highlight the need for any necessary maintenance work. This helps to ensure that the areas are kept safe and pleasant for our youngest parishioners.

## **FLY-TIPPING**

Fly-tipping continues to be a plague, especially along the Parish's lesser used roads like Shorne Ifield Road, Crutches Lane and Shorne Common Rough. The Parish Council is endeavouring to address this problem and would appreciate your continued vigilance in trying to identify the culprits who have no concern for our countryside. Prosecutions have in the past been successful.

## **Brian Wilkinson – Chairman, Footpaths, Properties & Greens Committee**



***Festivities on Shorne Common***

## COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

### **Financial Review**

The National financial situation has again dominated KCC. Reeling from its dire financial legacy, the new government's Comprehensive Spending Review determined that KCC had to find savings of £320 million over four years. This has led to a massive re-structuring exercise with the loss of a minimum of 1000 jobs over the period in order to avoid, as far as possible, severe cuts in front-line services. Hopefully jobs will be shed by natural wastage - albeit there has been a radical shake-up of the senior management structure which will save £700,000 pa. However, in common with many other Councils Gravesham will not be increasing Council Tax for 2011/12.

### **Highways Issues/Complaints**

Highways issues have continued to dominate my "postbag". Once again the severe weather has created numerous potholes across the whole of Kent (and the Country!). There is not the capital monies available to resurface roads (the best option in many cases), but another "pothole blitz" is planned in the near future with the aid of a special £5 million grant. Over the past year - 31,000 potholes have been filled in Kent.

The high hopes we had in Kent (and in my case for Meopham School and the two Grammar schools in Gravesend) for the total rebuild of secondary schools through the BSF (Building Schools for the Future) programme were shattered, when those schools were amongst the cancellations, because no cash had been provided by the previous government for funding. There has now been a Court Case concerning this - with KCC being one of a number of successful authorities - but the outcome in the context of available cash remains uncertain.

The funds deposited with Icelandic Banks remains a concern - recovery appears to be assured, but very slow.

### **Local & Regeneration Issues**

Gravesham continues to get its very fair share of Capital Projects from KCC- the Cyclopark is now being built on the "old" A2 land, the new Library in Gravesend (£2 million plus) is nearing completion, the Old Town Hall in Gravesend has had a magnificent restoration (£2 million), and KCC is helping to fund our riverside Pontoon.

As I indicated, at this time last year, potentially, the biggest threat to rural Gravesham, and to the whole of Gravesham in the context of intense development, traffic etc., is the proposed Lower Thames Crossing with a preferred route just to the East of Gravesend. It is well known that I disagree with the KCC Leader Paul Carter that this is the only option. I am currently pursuing with other Council Leaders on both sides of the Thames the urgent necessity to remove the toll barriers (charges to be taken by way of number plate recognition) so as to judge how much of an impact this would have on traffic flow. At the very least it will buy time for a more comprehensive study. In the meantime, I now understand that central government has reverted to its original plan to undertake investigations into the three options identified by its consultants in 2009, and then to consult with key stakeholders on the result.

**Michael Snelling- KCC Councillor- Gravesham Rural.**



## VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

### Shorne Woods Country Park

The 5 year Heritage Lottery funded project comes to an end this summer so this year has seen the completion of some major work programmes.

The clearance of invasive Sycamore and Rhododendron is complete with only a few isolated pockets left to manage and the final clearance of the wood pasture area on the knoll has taken place. The initial clearance of these areas does make the landscape look very bare but as time passes this will re-establish as open woodland or acid grassland as other areas of the park have done over the last five years. From this year onwards we will just be continuing our annual coppice work in the Sweet Chestnut areas to provide woodchip to heat the visitor's centre and to sell as firewood and kindling. We will also be cutting the last pockets of Sycamore.

The biodiversity of the woods has been constantly improving as the open space and increased diversity in the age of trees has improved through the cutting of the ride network and coppice areas. Buzzards, sparrow hawks and peregrine falcons have been spotted in the park. The rides have allowed butterflies to spread throughout the park with White Admirals being found in 9 of the 13 compartments in the park.

The archaeology project has now finished at Shorne and the Shorne Heritage Society, run by volunteers, has been set up as part of the legacy of the project to continue the excellent work that the Community Archaeologists have managed over the last 5 years.

Environmental education sessions at the park are sold out for the summer season and we gained sponsorship from network rail for outdoor protection wear for pre-school children involved in the forest schools programme.



### Shorne Church of England Primary School

It has been another action packed year at Shorne School. Our popularity remains high and we have a full intake of children due to start school in our reception class in September 2011.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> March we had an interim OFSTED Inspection visit. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress we had made since our full inspection in December 2009. I am pleased to say that we were deemed to be making good progress, with good capacity for sustained improvement.

One of our main aims this year has been to strengthen our links with the church and raise our profile as a school with a distinctively Christian ethos. We have encouraged families to participate in more church services and events. The parish harvest festival was good example of increased attendance by the school. This year the children were invited to parade their harvest offerings directly from the school to the church. After the service, an eagerly anticipated conker competition took place in the churchyard. Families have been invited to attend the all age worship services on the first Sunday of each month and parents are now welcome to all the festivals and celebrations that the school holds in the church.

We continue to provide a variety of sports, drama, musical and outdoor adventurous opportunities through clubs, trips and visiting theatre companies. We have FOSS to thank for the enormous amount of fund raising they do for the school, without which we would not be able to give the children such a wide range of enjoyable experiences.

One of the highlights of our year was undoubtedly the celebrations that took place for the Royal Wedding on 29<sup>th</sup> April. With all the children wearing red, white and blue, a huge street party took place on the playground. The children tucked into food and drinks and the party finished with a brief outdoor disco. All the children were presented with Royal Wedding coin as a memento of the day.

This has been a good year for the school and we are all looking forward to next year for the build up to the Olympics and celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

### ***An afternoon of village celebration on Shorne Common***



## **Shorne Cottage Garden Society**

- February** The AGM was well supported. There was a good entry in the snowdrop competition. This competition and refreshments have now become part of the AGM evening. Harold and Barbara Manley gave a very interesting talk on Bee Keeping.
- March** Tony Osbourne spoke on Butterflies and their food plants
- April** The Spring Show achieved another high entry, prompting praise from the judge, Jim Buttress, on the quality and presentation of the exhibits.
- May** A visit to Highgrove was a great success
- June** Entries for the Summer Show were much improved this year. There was a large entry in the cookery classes and overall the show was most attractive.
- July** Muriel Treacher spoke about Flowers in the Bible and their symbolism.
- August** 3 National Garden Scheme gardens were visited. These outings were well supported, as were the tea and cakes.
- September** Although the Autumn Show had a very good entry in most classes there were unfortunately no quality gladioli or dahlias
- October** David Johnson spoke on growing onions and shallots at this social evening which was followed by nibbles and drinks (appreciation to Hillary and Gaye)
- November** The Annual Supper and Presentation of Trophies brought a successful year to a conclusion.

## STAGES

Another STAGES' year has flown past as we celebrate our fourth birthday! And another successful and busy year it has been. We ended the year with 227 members, up from 218 in 2009 and already have 226 signed up for 2011.

During 2010 we organised 64 events as compared with 47 in the previous year. These included 11 Main Meetings, 14 London plays/shows, two quizzes, seven concerts, seven visits to places of interest including Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament, nine restaurant visits, five day tours, four visits to art galleries as well as the odd sporting event! 1304 people attended events other than Main Meetings and quizzes, suggesting an average of 26 per event and that the average STAGES' member (if there is such a person!) took part in six events during the year.

Attendance at the 11 monthly Main Meetings was also good. 173 members attended at least one meeting. An average of 77 members attended per meeting with the largest number being 89 at last year's AGM. We donated £500 to our two nominated charities for 2010, Help for Heroes and the Kent Air Ambulance. At the AGM in February it was decided that for 2011, our nominated good cause would be the heating fund for the Shorne Village Hall and we have already donated £500 for this.

The programme this year continues at a similar pace and despite good intentions of trying to limit the number of events to a manageable four per month, we have already run 14 up to the end of March, have seven planned for April and six for May!



## Shorne Short Mat Bowls Club

2010 has again been a very successful year for the Club. We meet in the Village Hall every Wednesday evening and play on mats the length of the Hall. We currently have 37 members and anybody wishing to join is welcome. No previous experience necessary. Equipment and tuition are provided to all newcomers, regardless of age or sex.

Occasionally we play friendly matches against other Clubs including SHORNARA and have a bi-annual bowls fixture against the Rochester & Cobham Golf Club. We also play in the Maidstone Triples League. This gives us the opportunity to compete at various venues against different opponents and gain a wider experience from playing on other surfaces. We also have a programme of Internal competition and the keenly contested trophies are presented to the winners at our Annual Dinner and Dance.

Our Annual Dance with a live band is always a great success and is well supported by both club members and other local residents. Our other social activities include a Christmas Party and for the last couple of years, in Spring, we have gone out for a Sunday pub lunch which has been enjoyed by all.

As Chairman I would like to thank, the officers, the Committee members and all others who help with the smooth running of the Club which has now been going for 25 years. The Club has made a donation to the Village Hall Management Committee towards the cost of the heating fund.

## First Shorne Scout Group

Another fantastic year. The Group attended the usual parades, the first being, Shorne Civic Service, Remembrance Parade/Service and lastly St. George's Day Parade.

### Our Sections

**Beavers** – had an experimental sleepover in October which blew us away literally! To complete their air activities badge, this also included a trip to the helicopter aerodrome at Rochester.

They have learnt about compass' and grid references which cumulated in a challenging Easter egg hunt that was greatly enjoyed. The Beavers learnt about different cultures, food and religion and had two evenings when they made and ate the food from another country as well as learning about the differences and similarities in our faiths. They visited Strood Fire Station as part of our safety badge, competed in the district cross country, achieving 3rd place overall. The District Sports Day saw us placed in many of the group races. A great result for Shorne.

**The cub pack** A very busy programme. In the last year we have had 4 camps/ sleepovers, including a 2 night cub camp and an older cub camp with a seven mile hike. We have visited Hastings, Howletts Wild Animal Park, Detling showground (where the Chief Scout Bear Grylls popped in by helicopter) and have twice visited the theatre - for the panto and a gang show. The cubs have tried roller skating, bowling and orienteering, made model cars and pancakes, walked to Shornemead Fort, played games at Jeskyns and cycled around the Country Park. They have completed an assault course for their fitness challenge, played battleships for their map reader badge and flown in the astrodome for their astronomer badge. In the last year the cubs have earned **297** badges including four Chief Scouts Silver Awards, the highest award for Cub Scouts.

**Scouts** won the District Camp craft /District Hike - a 25km overnight challenge based around Maidstone - the Kontiki District Raft building and race – won the Scout section for best raft – and won the J P Bond District Camping and Cooking Competition with a mixed young persons team. Had a week long Summer Camp in the New Forest with many activities - High Ropes, Mountain Biking, Cliff Hike despite nearly being washed out twice. The older Scouts took part in 4-day Hill walking course in North Wales in October and also in the Lake District at Easter.

**Royal wedding celebration**, what a great and memorable afternoon. Dave Pullen piped to open the event and as he did the sun came out. What fun and games we had including fancy dress, skittles and Tug of war.



## Sheila Theobald School of Dancing

At the end of the autumn term we unfortunately had to cancel our usual Christmas disco for the younger pupils, due to the snow. It is hoped that there may be time on the timetable to organise something in the Summer term as an alternative. In December 2010 we organised a coach trip to the theatre to see Mama Mia. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and if you haven't seen this musical yet, we would recommend it to anyone who might be thinking of going to see a London show. It's funny, colourful and the music is bright and catchy, and we were all up on our feet clapping and dancing for the last song and encore.

In January 2011 the term began again and we returned to examination work. In March 2011 we had 1 day of Ballet examinations and in May we have 2 days of Tap and Modern examinations. In July we also have 2 days of Ballet examinations. We also have had school Assessments each term.

We are very proud of one of our Grade 4 ballet pupils, Toby Robson who auditioned for and has been offered a place at White Lodge, The Royal Ballet Lower School.

In April 2011 some of our senior girls danced at the Mayor's Ball at the Woodville Halls. The theme was 'Swing' and so we performed a number to The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B!

In the summer term we will be holding our 'Open Week' when parents of our pupils are invited into the school to watch their children in action and view their progress. Some of our pupils from Shorne School may be dancing at the school's summer fete. In September we will resume our examination timetable in all the dance disciplines for another busy year ahead.



## Northfleet and District Probus Club

Our membership is slightly down on last year. We currently have 73 members including three Honorary Members. We have recruited four new members since May 2010. Members pay an annual fee of £10.00p, and at each meeting £2.00p which includes a cup of coffee and a biscuit and helps to cover the cost of the speakers.

Northfleet & District PROBUS Club is a very friendly club and always extends a warm welcome to those who wish to become members. To become a member a male has to be 60 years or over and must have fully or partially retired from a normal profession or business - hence the name PRO (Profession) and BUS (Business). PROBUS is a non-political, non-sectarian and non-racial organisation. The clubs are run independently by the members on a non-profit making basis and aim to provide their members with an opportunity to meet regularly and socially for the exchange of views and enjoyment of common interests.

The club members meet on every other Tuesday at 10.00 a.m. and enjoy a talk on a wide range of very interesting subjects given by experienced speakers. Once a year, in April, we have a Lady's Morning to listen to a talk specifically for our wives/partners, and four times a year we hold our Luncheons which are very well attended.

## Shorne Parish Church - St Peter & St Paul

The parish church's most visible activity is public worship: both regular Sunday and weekday services and those such as weddings, funerals and baptisms which are an important part of parishioners' lives. Major services such as those at church festivals and the civic and remembrance services were well supported by parishioners.

A mixture of traditional and less formal regular services are provided and everybody with a Christian faith or interest in it, whatever denomination, is welcome. During the year our vicar, Glyn Ackerley, started new informal "cafe style" worship every third Sunday at 4 pm.

The church has a good working relationship with the primary school supporting the spiritual life of the school and welcoming special school services in the church. Another important contribution to parish life is the parish magazine which welcomed a new editor, Frazer Westmorland, in 2010.

Other activities have continued such as the "pop-in" coffee mornings, a new monthly "tea & chat", a lent course, bible study and other social activities. During the year a team of bellringers was re-established and is now practicing regularly.

The parish responded magnificently to a recent appeal for more regular giving but despite this a substantial deficit is expected in 2011. The church council is grateful for the support it receives from the parish and from the Parish Council including the reception after the civic service.



## Early Retirement Club

The Club was chaired through another successful year by Tony Farnham. Roger Endean continued as Treasurer and his commitment to this task enabled us to purchase necessary equipment and finish the year in a good financial position.

We have enjoyed a wide range of good quality speakers. Keith Saunderson our Speaker Secretary always seems able to acquire good new speakers as well as arranging the return of popular ones. His job is very important to the success of the Club.

Our average turnout at meetings continues to stay at around 40 members and our total membership stands at 50. We are always pleased to welcome new members. After the talks and Club business an average of 15 members usually stop for a very reasonable lunch provided by Gloria Ashby.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> April we raised money for the hall by holding a Band Concert. This was very well attended and raised the amazing sum of £642.50. Thanks to Stan Hannigan and Charles Oliver for their sterling efforts. A buffet was provided by Gloria and her team. A further Band Concert will be held in September.

Our summer lunch and re-scheduled Christmas Dinner (due to the adverse weather conditions in December) were well attended and successful events and we are planning to continue these. Although we did not arrange any trip this year several of our members were able to join trips run by PROBUS. These were very enjoyable and we would like to thank PROBUS for their hospitality.

## Flower Arrangers

Shorne Flower Arrangers meet on the last Thursday of the month at Shorne Village Hall. The Club is affiliated to the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies (NAFAS) and presents a programme of workshops and demonstrations. We have 30 members and look forward to welcoming anyone who loves flowers. The club provides an opportunity for people to be creative, make friends and raise money for charity. During the past year we have supported Shorne Parish Church and The Ellenor Lions Hospice. In 2011 Shorne Flower Arrangers celebrate their sapphire (45<sup>th</sup>) anniversary.

This season we have featured workshops on themes including foliage manipulation; pave floral designs; decorative boxes and ribbons and a collaborative workshop depicting well known tunes. There was also a mini demonstration by Sue Oaten and a talk by Susan Shaw about the NAFAS Kent exhibit at the Chelsea Flower Show. In September the club staged the Harvest Flower Flowers at Shorne Parish Church, opening to the public from Friday to Sunday. Our annual club competition was to interpret the title of a nursery rhyme and included classes for miniature and petite designs. Renowned arranger Linda Shackleton gave us a stunning demonstration which was well supported.

Two of our members, Marion Healey and Sheila Williams, entered the Club Class at the NAFAS Area Show and achieved second prize.

### ***A demonstration of leaf manipulation***



## Shorne Football Clubs

**The Rose & Crown** – After winning the division last season the Rose and Crown began the season with a promising start but faltered and ended up by finishing mid-table. They did however reach two semi-finals in the cup competitions and continued to get a strong squad of players turning up each week and using the local Rose and Crown pub.

**A & Z Shorne Football Club** had their first season playing at the recreation ground and loved the facilities and big pitch available in the village. They managed to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league and reached the Reporter cup final which they narrowly lost to Spartans FC. In the head to head matches between the two Shorne Clubs, the Rose and Crown managed to win both games, so still had local bragging rights despite finishing lower in the league.

With two adult teams now paying rent the clubs have managed to improve the club house at the recreation ground by painting and fixing up the changing rooms. In the summer we hope to improve and seed the pitch so as to provide a better playing surface for the teams.

We are looking to encourage some younger local players to the teams and will be pre-season training at the recreation ground from August.

## Dickens Country Protection Society

The Society has had another busy year, although, due to the ambient economic climate, the number of local planning applications being submitted has been low. However we have continued our basic work of monitoring these as they bring about creeping change.

During the past year there were several newspaper articles about estuary airports, additional river crossings, new Thames flood barrier and tidal power schemes which we kept under continuous review. The various Thames Gateway projects, already approved through the planning systems, continue to be slowly rolled out and result in increased traffic and loss of open space. Other items that have received particular attention include:

- The Chattenden and Lodge Hill redevelopment projects
- Tree preservation orders and condition of ponds in various locations, particularly Upnor Pond for which the Society has applied for several restoration grants.
- Conversion of garages into habitable rooms with consequent loss of off-road parking places
- Network Rail's closure of the pedestrian crossing point at Queens's Farm, which has cut off access from Shorne to the canal and riverbank.

### **Upnor Pond Restoration:**

Chris Fribbins, our Vice-Chairman undertook considerable work applying for grants and encouraging other persons/official bodies to restore the pond. The major work took place over two weekends in early November to dredge out the pond and remove excess rushes and choking weed, and to plant hedging saplings etc.

### **Lower Thames Crossing:**

After many months of rumour there has recently been publicity and local meetings after Kent County Council suggested a location between Gravesend and Shorne that would have a great adverse impact on this area.

On lighter matters:

- The Society was active at several local exhibitions, fetes and fairs, eg. RSPB at Bromley, Gravesend and Higham Libraries and Cliffe Church
- The Society's annual Barn Dance held at Buckland Farm continues to be very popular
- Updated merchandise is now available with a new design for notelets, tea-towels and shopping bags

### ***Shorne under threat?***



## Shorne Village Hall

This year the Management Committee has concentrated on upgrading the Hall. It is some 20 years since the heating was overhauled and recently it has been showing signs of fatigue with a high cost for maintenance. New gas convector radiators have now been put in place and a replacement boiler will be installed in early August. A grant was obtained from Kent County Council which will pay for half the cost of the new boiler and cavity wall and loft insulation, work also to take place in August. We are very grateful to the village organisations and individuals who have contributed to the funding of this upgrading. It is heart warming to know that residents and organisations alike have a keen pride in their Village Hall and its continued use. As Chairman I would like to give thanks to all members of the Management Committee and staff who have helped to ensure another successful year for the Village Hall.

### ***50th wedding anniversary celebration in Shorne Village Hall***



## Shorne & Thong WI

We started our year with our annual meeting in the Methodist Hall thanks to the generosity of the owner as the Village Hall was being used for the elections.

During the year speakers have entertained us with subjects as diverse as the history of buttons, seaside piers, buying an oast house and old Gravesend. We have had many food treats including strawberries, homemade Scones and cream and Ploughman's Lunches made by our hard working Treasurer and helpers. Our Christmas Lunch had to be postponed to January owing to the snow, but Pauline Atherton entertained us with some glorious flower arrangements with a Christmas theme.

This year we knitted 32 hats for Service men & women in Afghanistan. We have a very good craft group who meet in the village hall making cards and boxes from new & recycled material. Anyone can come and join us you don't have to be a member. We have a monthly Luncheon Club that meet in the Rose & Crown and our darts, whist and quiz teams enjoy competing in the District and Federation events. Last year Shorne won the Best Attendance Award in the district with 78.3%.

## Friends of Shorne School

We had another successful and enjoyable fundraising year for Shorne School with our main events being the Summer Fete, the Christmas Bazaar and the Candlelit Ball. We also helped with the organisation of the school's Royal Wedding street party, which was a lovely and memorable experience for the children. The money raised last year enabled us to redecorate and refurbish two junior classrooms. This year, we are hoping to raise sufficient funds to do the same for the remaining classrooms and adjoining areas.

We would like to thank everybody in the community for all their help and support. We could not achieve what we do without your enthusiasm and generosity. We hope to see you all at our Summer Fete on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June - gates open at noon. We would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Family / Church BBQ at the school on the 9<sup>th</sup> July, between 4-8pm.

## Shorne Village Pre-School

We are happy to report that another successful year for our Pre-school and we ended the July term with a picnic at Shorne Country Park that was attended by the staff together with most of our children's families. A lovely day was enjoyed by everyone and will be repeated in 2011. The autumn term saw our children planting bulbs and winter flowering pansies in our outside play area and we are glad to say all the plants survived the snow and so did we. Except for one day we managed to stay open. This goes to show what a dedicated staff we have and budding gardeners. Our Nativity play was another great success as we ended 2010.

We started 2011 on a high as we can proudly report that we had our OFSTED inspection on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2011 and have achieved OUTSTANDING, gaining Grade 1 in every aspect of our Record of Inspection Judgments. This is due to sheer hard work and dedication from all staff and management to make Shorne Village Pre-School a wonderful environment for all our children where they can enjoy every minute of time spent with us and take away lots of happy memories. Long may we continue!

### *Shorne Village Hairdressers at Work*



## Shorne History Group

Tony Austin gave his last report as retiring Chairman of the local history group which meets on the third Thursday of each month from October to April. The Group has a membership of over 50.

The AGM was held on 21 October 2010 and following the formal business of the meeting, Andrew Mayfield of Kent County Council gave an update on the archaeological works being carried out on Randall Manor in Shorne Country Park.

At the 18<sup>th</sup> November meeting Philip Lawrence talked to the group on 'A Panorama of Surnames' which was about the history and significance of different surnames.

The Christmas meeting is an opportunity for members of the group to share personal stories of life in Shorne and to have a drink with the Chairman. This was due to take place on 16 December but unfortunately had to be cancelled due to poor weather.

The first meeting of the New Year was held on 20 January 2011 when the Rod le Gear talked about 'Underground Kent', giving a comprehensive history on the Dene Holes in Kent.

On 17 February Richard Filmer talked about Traditional Kentish Trades, Crafts and Industries.

The March and April meetings were unfortunately cancelled. The March meeting because there was a special meeting held in the Village Hall regarding the route proposed by Kent County Council of a Lower Thames Crossing. It was felt that most members of the group would be at that meeting so the decision was taken to cancel. The talk would have been by Denise Baldwin and Katherine Harding on 'The Life and Times of Douglas Macmillan' the founder of the Macmillan Cancer Relief Fund. The April meeting was cancelled due to the installation of a new heating system in the Village Hall. This meeting would have been the last of the current season and the talk was to be by Diana Rimel on 'Sir Joseph Bazalgette – Cholera, Sewers, Pumping Stations, Embankments and Bridges.' We hope to rearrange both these cancelled talks in the 2011/12 season.

## Shorne Active Retirement Association

Bryan Smith gave his first report as Chairman, following on from Malcolm Carter, who has led the Association so successfully for the past five years.

Early in the year, SHORNARA celebrated its 10th Anniversary with a delightful lunch and entertainment at Mid Kent Golf Club. Approximately 90 members attended together with all the previous Chairpersons and their partners.

Over the last year, speakers have attended our monthly members' meetings to talk to audiences of well over 120 members on each occasion. Topics have included Big Cats, UK Armed Forces, Benedictine Monks, Antique Road Show, Police Dogs, Prison Service and Village Signs.

Our regular activities continue to be very popular with ever growing numbers. These include Tea Dances [monthly], Short Mat Bowls [weekly] and 10 Pin Bowling [fortnightly]. We also have a luncheon club visiting local hostelrys which is proving to be a winner. During the year we have also held two enjoyable Quiz nights.

Some of our other visits have included the Royal Albert Hall for concerts, Sheffield Park Garden, Southend Air Show, Suffolk Coastal Tour, Guildford Cathedral, Portsmouth, the local Gurdwara Temple and the Brighton Ice Show. We have also had a weekend away at Bracklesham Bay and the Club has just returned from a successful holiday to Tynemouth in Northumberland.

With a programme as varied and interesting as this, no wonder we have a maximum membership of 200 and a short waiting list. We are always open to new ideas and will do our utmost to provide an interesting and varied programme in the coming year.



## Northfleet and District Ladies Probus Club

We are a club for retired Ladies who meet on the first Thursday of every month except December when we meet on the first Friday. The Club is open to anyone interested in attending and we are a very friendly group. We usually have a speaker and the selected subjects vary widely. Twice a year we have a lunch when we invite guests to join us. Anyone wishing to join should see the contact at the back of this report.

**PEOPLE / ORGANISATIONS CONTRIBUTING TO THIS REPORT**  
 Reports on these organisations were presented at the Annual Parish Assembly  
 on 12th May 2011 or have subsequently been received

County Councillor for Shorne	Mr M Snelling	812404
Shorne Woods Country Park	Mr T Bell	823800
Shorne C of E Primary School	Mrs C Conroy	822312
Shorne Cottage Garden Society	Mr D Baker	01634 710169
STAGES	Dr. J Grace	822647
First Shorne Scout Group	Mr G Busbridge	569512
Northfleet & District Probus Club	Mr A Weller	560230
Sheila Theobald School of Dancing	Mrs S Theobald	534659
Shorne Short Mat Bowls	Mr P Curtis	822605
Shorne Parish Church	Revd. G. Ackerley	822239
Early Retirement Club	Mr R Winter	822361
Shorne Flower Arrangers	Mrs R Moore	824177
Dickens Country Protection Society	Mrs S Lindley	823179
Shorne Village Pre-school	Mrs J Bennett	357872
	Mrs S Wightwick	362229
Shorne History Group	Mr T Austin	355524
SHORNARA	Mr B Smith	357678
Ladies Probus	Mrs S Ellwood	351144
Shorne Village Hall	Mrs G Ashby	82 2874
Shorne Football Clubs	Mr L Moore	01634 252327
Friends of Shorne School	Mrs L Sewell	07812 060946
Shorne & Thong Womens' Institute	Mrs W Windiate	822031

**SHORNE PARISH COUNCIL - 2011**

<b>Chairman</b>	Mr M Brett	Tel. 356163	<a href="mailto:markbrett@blueyonder.co.uk">markbrett@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Mr B Wilkinson	536131	<a href="mailto:brian.wilkinson@blueyonder.co.uk">brian.wilkinson@blueyonder.co.uk</a>
<b>Members</b>	Mr J Bugg	823642	<a href="mailto:jrbugg@hotmail.com">jrbugg@hotmail.com</a>
	Mr D Hart	352481	<a href="mailto:hart485@btinternet.com">hart485@btinternet.com</a>
	Mr J Pooley	822049	<a href="mailto:barb.and.john@btinternet.com">barb.and.john@btinternet.com</a>
	Mrs H Shove	822937	
	Mr R Theobald	823674	<a href="mailto:robin.theobald@btopenworld.com">robin.theobald@btopenworld.com</a>
<b>Clerk</b>	Mrs T Martin	320824	<a href="mailto:shorne.parish@yahoo.co.uk">shorne.parish@yahoo.co.uk</a>

Parishioners are always welcome to attend both the full Parish Council and Committee meetings and these generally take place on alternate Thursday evenings from 7.45. A full list of dates can be obtained from the Parish Clerk.

The date of our next **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** is **Thursday, 17th May 2012** at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. All village organizations are most welcome to present their annual report at this meeting. All reports will be printed in the Annual Parish Report for 2012. Copy of more than 250 words in length may be edited to fit available space.