



# **Detling Parish Council**

## **Annual Report 2010 /11**



## **PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS**

### **May 2010 to May 2011**

Geoffrey Cosgrove  
Elected 2000

Chairman 2001 to present  
Highways,

John Clayton  
Elected 2003

Police Liaison

Michael Denny  
Co-Opted 2008

Neighbourhood Watch

Mark Housden  
Elected 2003

Finance  
Village Youth, Planning Committee

Janice Kennard  
Elected 2003

Grants

Gavin McLaggan  
Elected 1988

Vice – Chairman  
Planning Committee, KAPC, KIG

Jean Roberts  
Elected 2006

Planning Committee

#### **CLERK TO THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Mrs Sherrie Babington 01634 - 867173  
[www.detlingparish.co.uk](http://www.detlingparish.co.uk)

#### **MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**

Hugh Robertson MP

#### **KENT COUNTY COUNCIL COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Jenny Whittle

#### **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCILLOR**

Cllr John Horne

#### **COMMUNITY POLICE**

PSAO Lindsay Woods

#### **LOCAL PRESS REPRESENTATIVE**

Mr Richard Cronin

#### **SOLICITORS**

Gulland & Gulland, Maidstone

#### **BANKERS**

Co-Operative

#### **AUDITORS**

Audit Commission

#### **INSURANCE**

Allianz Cornhill Insurance

**Photographs: Jenny Cosgrove**

Front cover: The Larches  
Back cover: Painting of Detling Stores  
By kind permission of Ida Fermor

# **FOREWORD**

This is our tenth publication and it is hoped that this Annual Report helps the village keep in touch with all that has gone on throughout the year.

Last year was an interesting time. Our significant achievement was the purchase at auction of the land behind Hockers Lane behind the houses and alongside the CTRL. We used the publicly contributed reserve fund that we have kept separate to the village finances for over 20 years, this gives an indication of just how long Detling has been campaigning for an open space. This was important in that the community through the Parish Council now has access to three pieces of land that should remain for the use and enjoyment of all villagers for many years to come.

At the other end of the spectrum we attended and supported other Parishes in negotiating with the Borough Council, who along with the government and Kent County Council all announced huge budget cuts and this was going to impact Detling through a 30% reduction in our income, via the Concurrent Functions grant. We have a choice, either reduce our services or pass the additional costs directly onto the parishioners. Our choice at the moment is to reduce our expenditure. The Parish Councillors have never taken payment from the Parish for their duties and so the newly created post of Warden was cancelled and we are looking to make saving elsewhere. Detling has always been run efficiently and we will look to make more use of grants for future projects.

We were pleased to give the Villager of the Year award to Mrs Tikki Gulland, who has consistently worked hard for the village over a number of years and was overdue in being recognised for her contribution to village life.

The worst part of the year came in December 2010 when the Village Stores closed its doors for the last time. This was a devastating blow as nearly 140 years of this key village facility and service came to an end. The shop had been a focus for many a year and its owner Mike Tamsett had kept the shop open in all weathers and through many a difficulty thoroughly earning his MBE in 2002 for his community efforts.

This is more difficult for a community which has now lost both its school and shop, we still have the pub and village hall and we must all work together to make sure that Detling maintains its spirit for future generations.

We were also heavily involved in the KIG public enquiry during 2009 but after the General Election we were pleased to hear that in August 2010 the Secretary of State refused permission for this awful development so close to the village. But we still fight on as this has led to a need for us to have our say in the consultation of the Local Development framework.

The Parish Council had to say goodbye to Gavin McLaggan, a Parish Councillor since 1988 and its chairman from 1992 to 2001 who was standing down from the Parish at the 2011 elections. Gavin has given very distinguished service to the village for over 23 years and has been a well known and respected figure of village life for so long. Gavin's achievements over the years have been many; he was the inspiration behind our Millennium Statue and has been a key figure in the Village Hall as well as all the campaigning on behalf of the village, which we know has taken considerable personal time and effort.

We wish him all the very best for the future as we know we will be seeing him around for many years to come.

We also said goodbye to Jean Roberts, who was also standing down from the Parish Council after one term of 5 years. Jean made a very useful contribution to the Planning Committee represented the village on a number of countryside matters.

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# **THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Established: 1884

The Detling Parish Council represents an electorate of 621 people on the electoral roll living in 337 houses.

The Parish is 6.16km long and varies between 250m to 1.42km wide, extending from the M20 through the village over the North Downs Scarp, roughly centring on Scragged Oak Road and extending towards the M2 in the north.

Detling is bordered to the South and West by Boxley Parish, to the East by Thurnham and the North by Stockbury and Bredhurst Parishes.

The Parish Council is composed of seven councillors. Elections are held every four years with the next election being held in May 2011. We meet in the Committee Room of the Detling Village Hall at 7.15pm on the first Tuesday of each month except January and August. Additionally, our AGM and Annual meeting with the Parish are held around the third week in May.

All meetings are open to the public and press. The council have benefited from a good level of support and attendance over the year.

Since the last election in 2007, there have been 44 Council meetings; the overall attendance rate of each councillor has been recorded as:

Geoff Cosgrove	32 Meetings	
John Clayton	36 Meetings	
Mike Denny	28 Meetings	(Out of 35 Meetings)
Mark Housden	32 Meetings	
Janice Kennard	38 Meetings	
Gavin McLaggan	39 Meetings	Not seeking re-election in May 11
Jean Roberts	33 Meetings	Not seeking re-election in May 11

Over the past year, this gives an average attendance rate of 79% to each meeting, a decrease from 86% over the previous year. This gives an average meeting attendance of 82% over the four year period.

The Parish has a permanent Planning Committee, which meets at 7pm, prior to each main Council meeting.

The Council is an equal opportunities employer with one part-time employee, our Parish Clerk, Sherrie Babington. Sherrie has now been in the post since June 1998, working from home on behalf of the Parish. We share her services with the Parishes of Thurnham, Hoo and Leeds.

The Parish also benefits from the regular reporting of one of Kent Messenger's local correspondents; Richard Cronin, who keeps the village in the news on a weekly basis.

The Council has in place the following Policies and Procedures, in accordance with its Standing Orders, which are revised on a regular basis.

Equal Opportunities  
Disability Policy  
Financial Risk Assessment

Code of Conduct  
Complaints Procedure  
Parish Elections



## **Population of Detling**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
1801	253	126	127
1811	281	136	145
1821	321	166	155
1831	372	204	168
1841	318	179	139
1851	353	185	168
1861	344	162	182
1871	319	156	163
1881	336	161	175
1891	331	161	170
1901	289	136	153
1911	270	129	141
1921	281	132	149
1931	252	116	136
1941	No Census owing to World War II		
1951	596	289	307
1961	748	373	375
1971	712	367	345
1981	792	405	387
1991	781	399	382
2001	777	380	397
2011			

With thanks to ONS  
Geography, National Statistics

## **Quality Parish Council**

Awarded: 2008

Detling Parish Council was awarded the prestigious Quality Council Status in September 2008. Achieving Quality Status demonstrates that the Council meets certain standards expected from an effective, representative and active Parish Council.

The tests exceed the statutory duties and require the council to be properly managed, have effective communications, uphold high standards of conduct, work closely or in partnership with voluntary and community groups and other authorities, and to have a qualified Clerk.

There were numerous tests we had to pass. These included a Council that had all stood for election, a Clerk that was qualified plus a number of others including the regular meetings and the publication of our Annual Report.

It is of great credit to all of Detling's Councillors to have persevered to bring this accreditation about.

So, what does this mean for Detling? Well, the scheme was set up to ensure that Parishes were up to the standards expected by government.

It therefore follows that a Quality Parish has some added weight to its representation to Borough and County Councils, in its push for improved services. There was a hope that we could take on some of the services now provided by Maidstone Borough Council, so we could ensure that they are carried out to our standards and satisfaction. But that is still in discussion, however this does not detract from the fact that Detling is one of the few Parish Councils to have achieved this sought after accreditation.

# **VILLAGER OF THE YEAR**

Established: 2005

The Parish Council presented the community award for a person from Detling, who has made a significant contribution towards the life of the village.

We were pleased that Mrs Tikki Gulland was nominated and the Parish Council was extremely pleased to recommend this award in recognition of her voluntary help within the community.

David Humphrey volunteered to create the superb illuminated presentation certificate and the presentation was made by John Clayton.

The citation read:

“This year the Parish Council was pleased to award Mrs Tikki Gulland, the Villager of the Year Award for 2010.

Tikki has made a tremendous contribution to the Village in many ways.

She is perhaps best known for the annual organisation of the, now famous, Search for the Christchild, each Christmas Eve, which attracts hundreds of people. The time and effort Tikki puts into the co-ordination of this event each year is outstanding, not only does it involve the residents of the village and bringing the village together, but it also attracts many families who travel considerable distances to attend and therefore puts Detling Village ‘on the map’ and it is to her credit that this event has now proved so popular.

Christmas is a very busy time for Tikki as she also organises and has led the village carol singing over the past eight years as well as being a regular member of the church choir.

This, coupled with her extensive involvement in local charity work in and around the village, where she organises the Christmas Shoe Box scheme, as well as being a local co-ordinator for the Christian Aid collections together with time for the NSPCC during the year, ensures that these activities are quietly and efficiently organised.

Tikki also contributes to village events such as the Sponsored cycle, the Christmas Fair as well as regularly walking for Kent churches

Tikki has been a member of the Parochial Parish Council for the past 15 years as well as being an active member of the Friends of Detling Church and through this, she has made significant contributions to the village church, both in administration and fund raising. On a personal note she has been particularly involved in the family services, in welcoming Detling’s younger members to the congregation and involving them in many of the services. Tikki also creates fantastic floral arrangements in the church and is a key member of the Baptismal Ministry Team.

Tikki and her family also host village events, such as the welcome lunches for new people in the village and in particular they throw open their house and garden to support a number of Detling Players outdoor rehearsals and productions. She also is involved in the publicity for such events and this year she is chair of this very active and well respected village organisation.

When she has time Tikki visits the local pre-school group, as she did when Detling had a village school and conducts the living stories with the children.

We are sure there is other work Tikki does for the village, which we are not aware of or have not mentioned here, but overall we feel she makes a significant contribution to Detling and she can be described as a great ambassador for the village and so the Parish Council is very pleased to recognise her efforts, which so deserves our appreciation at this time.”

For this coming year, 2011 we will be pleased to receive nominations by September.

Past recipients of this award have been:

Mrs Tikki Gulland	2010	Presented by: Mr John Clayton
Mr John Monk	2009	Presented by: Mr Geoff Cosgrove TD
Mrs Margaret Cooke	2008	Presented by: Mike Tamsett MBE
Mrs Leslie Savage	2007	Presented by: Reverend Elizabeth Attawell
Mrs Thelma Ford	2006	Presented by: Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart CBE
Mrs Pat Follett	2005	Presented by: Mr Geoff Cosgrove TD

## **Parish Chairmen**

Term of Office	Years in Office	Chairman
1884 - 1899	15	W F Mercer
1899 - 1904	5	J N Badcock
1904 - 1913	9	R Cooke
1913 - 1927	14	W J Naylor
1927 - 1931	4	Charles Brown
1931 - 1946	15	F Croft
1946 - 1968	22	A Hooker
1968 - 1973	5	Stanley E Rowe
1973 - 1988	15	Norman Bingham
1988 - 1992	4	Alan J Cooke
1992 – 2001	10	Gavin McLaggan
2001 - Present	11	Geoff Cosgrove

## **Parish Warden**

Contact: Parish Clerk

Established: 2009 - 2011

This year has been difficult following the Borough Council's announcement that they were making up to 30% cuts in service and they would be passing this on to Parishes by reducing their precept over a couple of years by this margin.

We did not manage to get the Parish Warden work off to a good start and so we decided that after a probationary period we could not afford to continue with this post.



# **PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

## **Planning**

Gavin McLaggan, Chairman of the Planning Committee

01622 - 738109

The Parish Council was consulted on 20 Planning Applications this year.

The Council made objections to 8 of the Planning Applications, concerning the following sites:-

The Stables, Harple Farm, Harple Lane, Detling.  
Longfield, Harple Lane, Detling.

Purplehill Works, White Hill Road, Detling  
14 Queensway, Detling  
East Court, Pilgrims Way, Detling.  
Lynch Bank Farm Barn, Detling Hill.  
Astor Pavilion, Kent County Showground, Detling.  
Oakhurst, Scragged Oak Road, Detling.

## **KIG – Joint Parishes Group (JPG)**

Contact: John Horne

Established: 2007

### **THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK--for Maidstone Borough:**

The JPG was originally set up with the aim of forcefully presenting the collective views of some 14 Parish Councils both before and at the KIG Public Inquiry. Collectively, at the Pre-Inquiry discussions, the JPG wielded a resonant and effective voice with MBC and other agencies. We achieved an accreditation that would not otherwise have been accorded. [Rule 6 party to the Inquiry].

Now we face new challenges with the development of the Maidstone Borough core strategy and the forthcoming publication of the Local Development Framework. Public consultation is scheduled for the Autumn (2011), before the LDF goes to public inquiry before an Inspector (Summer 2012).

Accordingly, 12 Parishes (including Detling) have re-grouped to form the new JPG. We had presentations from various consultants and selected Richard Eastham of Fera Urbanism. Richard has commenced work. At the end of June there were two days of full meetings with the participating Parishes followed by a plenary session.

For example, the topic headings covered: housing, employment, schools, shops, services and the community. Then infrastructure, transport, water and sewage disposal, landscape settings and parks & gardens. Features within your village: architecture and layout.

Currently, we are engaged in a scoping study to set the parameters of what is important to the Parishes. There will be later investigation to see, for example, how this might be progressed through neighbourhood plans and a collective representation for the core strategy.

The work has commenced.

## Web Site

Contact: Parish Clerk

Established: 2005

[www.detlingparish.co.uk](http://www.detlingparish.co.uk)

The Parish Councils website is now fully operational and holds valuable information for the parishioners of Detling.

All village organisations are invited to contribute to this site, for further information please contact the Parish Clerk on 01634 867173 or email [detlingparishcouncil@sherriebabington.co.uk](mailto:detlingparishcouncil@sherriebabington.co.uk).

## THE VILLAGE HALL

Registered Charity No. 269784

Contact: Richard Alexander

Established: 1976

01622 - 858361

### **Objectives and Activities of the Charity**

The object of the charity is to maintain the Village Hall for the communal benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish and its surrounds. The Committee aims to provide excellent Hall facilities at an affordable cost to voluntary bodies serving the community as well as "outside" organizations. The charity employs a Caretaker and a Booking Clerk and depends on the voluntary help of its Committee Members for upkeep and repairs.

### **Achievements and Performance of the Charity**

The Hall continues to be well used and it fair to say that there are an average of two bookings every day. Feedback from hirers, whether they be "Village" or outside, continues to be favourable.

This may, to a large part, be attributable to our having taken on a Caretaker, in partnership with her husband, to look after the Hall and ensure that it is kept in best condition; not only in keeping it clean but ensuring that any defects are rectified as soon as they are noticed. The Meeting Room carpet was giving some concern, but after a deep clean by an outside contractor, they are now able to maintain its cleanliness. Both have a genuine interest in the Hall and thus we are fortunate in having been able to find such individuals.

As always, I am very pleased to be able to publicly thank the Members of the Committee for their considerable input into the running and maintenance of the Hall as without their help, it would not be possible to maintain the Hall in such an excellent state. Each Member has their own expertise which they are able to apply to the great benefit of the Hall.

There have been no substantial changes to the Hall during the year, but plans are in hand to upgrade some of the equipment we are able to provide for the use of Hirers and these should enhance their hiring experience. Many of the Hirers have been with us for many years, but it pleasing to note that we have been able to attract a number of new ones and hopefully this will continue.

Mention should also be made of the Christmas Fair which, this year, was rather dampened by snow, ice and cold (a fantastic effort from three individuals cleared the car park) but, under the guidance and considerable organization of Penny Day, it was a most enjoyable event and all who attended felt it was another successful Fair.

Again, I would like to thank the Parish Council for their support during the year.

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*In response to the request for more information about the Detling A to Z, now mounted on the end in the Village Hall, we are able to publish some of the stories behind the display. It is also worth recording that the original tiles were unveiled on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1994 and a second unveiling, after the fire, was on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1999.*

**Margaret Cooke:**

This was a grant funded art project called 'A Rising Down' for small villages in the North Downs as a way to bring art/craft classes etc to rural residents who, because of their isolation from towns could not benefit from the provision of evening classes and art facilities available in the towns and suburbs, I think. Also it is a way to record and preserve the history and special habitat for wild life uniquely found in this ancient and beautiful part of Kent. Each village is enhanced with a unique point of interest for tourists and visitors exploring the countryside. Each village was allocated an artist who works in one particular medium. Detling's was Pat Johnson from Clapham Common who works with enamels. While Stockbury had a woodcarver, Bredgar a stained glass artist, Hucking has clay tiles in its church; Milstead had ceramic tiles and so on.

The first stage was a public meeting hosted by the Parish Council in the village hall. Everybody had been asked to hand in their suggestions for the alphabet pictures. The artists work was on display. This was very well attended and everybody made suggestions as to what each letter should represented for Detling. The final choice was then decided by a majority vote.

Pat Johnson subsequently explored the village and took photos, I believe, and drew her suggested designs for each letter.

The Meeting Room at the Village Hall became the venue for classes in enamelling and her electric kiln was set up on the stage area. These classes were free and anyone could drop in at any time in the morning or evening in January 1994 on Wednesdays. We were shown how to apply the colours in powder form to the copper base of the tiles and this would then be melted overnight in the kiln, and some magical effects seemed to happen. It was extremely difficult to achieve the fine details for the picture tiles, so we were involved in the coloured tiles framing the mural and could also make a small experimental off-cut to take home and keep. We were delighted to recognise people and places in the finished tiles – our black dog Arthur appeared both outside the Village Shop and the A249 crossing (before the days of Jade's Crossing); Caroline Grimble is the girl on the stile for North Downs Way and Tom Stymest the 'Young Farmer'.

There was a lovely reception in the Village Hall for the unveiling ceremony. Les Huggett, the longest serving Parish Councillor, performed the ceremony on April 30 1994 and read out a poem he had especially written for the occasion. I also remember a reception in Maidstone Museum at Easter, which all the artists attended and the village projects were put on display. Postcards were on sale of each project, Detling's depicted Janet Norfolk conducting the Detling Singers!

**Gavin McLaggan:**

The project was financially assisted by S.E. Arts, Maidstone and Swale Borough Councils, KCC Arts & Libraries, Kent Rural Community Council and supported by Kent Trust for Nature Conservation and The Mid Kent Downs Advisory Group.

**Monica Watkins:**

Sometime during the mid-nineties, I can't recall the exact date, I remember Pat Johnson coming in to Detling School to take several workshops with the children.

There were three classes and on her first visit she talked to each class, explaining that she planned to make a pictorial A–Z of Detling and asking the children for their help in choosing a subject to represent each letter. The classes worked with their own teachers before Pat's second visit to come up with an alphabetical list. Some letters were very difficult!

Pat explained to the older children about the enamel tiles "would last forever" and she was proved almost right on Friday 13th June 1998 when fire swept through the Village Hall. Almost all of the tiles survived the heat.

It was not possible to do the enamelling in school but each child was helped to paint and decorate a card of their own choice of subject, the same size as the real thing.

All the topic ideas were submitted to Pat and her selection committee who finally chose the A–Z for the Village Hall tiles. The children were very pleased to see their green school uniform jerseys on the ‘U’ for uniform tile. Several of the ideas worked on in the school were used in the final A–Z.

A book displaying the pictures of the enamelled A – Z tiles, one on each page, was made and kept in the school library.

### **Les Huggett’s poem:**

A For our Actors of drama group fame  
B For the barn at the top of the lane  
Cricket’s the ‘C’ of our village team  
D Just for Detling on maps to be seen  
Environment ‘E’ the Larches of note  
F For the foxes not now so remote  
Garden Society makes letter ‘G’  
H Detling Singers in sweet harmony  
I For our Inn, a wonderful sight  
J For the bird seen often in flight  
K County Showground at the top of the hill  
L Church’s lectern that history renown’s  
St. Martin’s, our church, portrays letter ‘M’  
North Downs Way follows with the next letter ‘N’  
O For the oast house once used for hops  
P The Post Office where everyone shops  
Q Stands for Quarry, digging out chalk  
R For the railway that’s caused so much talk  
The Street is the area used for the ‘S’  
T Is the gateway that’s Tudor, no less  
U Our school uniform, green and it’s grey  
V Village Hall used for sport and display  
W For war and the aircraft that flew and water to combat the fire as it grew  
X For the cross-roads that cuts us in two  
Y For the yew tree, church evergreens  
Z In the Street, the buzz of machines.

That’s the alphabet’s end, every letter is there,  
With its story you’ve now been regaled,  
Then finally all that I had to declare  
For the first time ‘twas truly unveiled

But then came the fire, the flames and the smoke,  
In ruins the letters all lay  
Mid the debris and rubble at one single stroke,  
Their future looked bleak and looked grey,

Then phoenix like out of the ashes they rose,  
All polished and cleaned and de-scaled,  
Now back on the wall in the light where it shows,  
Are the letters, and once more, unveiled.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

During the course of the year the Parish Council has been very pro-active in its liaison with external authorities and bodies.

Kent County Council  
Maidstone Borough Council  
Kent Association of Local Councils

Kent County Showground  
English Nature  
British Trust of Conservation Volunteers

The Maidstone Police  
Maidstone Area Mobile Library  
Campaign for the Protection of Rural England

Kent Wildlife Trust  
Action Communities in Rural Kent  
Kent Men of Trees

Of our more regular contacts and partnerships we maintain close working relationships with our Member of Parliament Hugh Robertson MP and Maidstone Borough Councillor John Horne.

### **Hugh Robertson MP**

Elected: 2001

01622 - 851616

The past year has, as always, been a busy one for me as Detling's Member of Parliament. It started with the General Election so this is a good opportunity to thank all of those of you who voted for me. In addition, after the announcement of the Coalition government, I was lucky enough to be appointed Minister for Sport and The Olympics.

The key local issue over the preceding twelve months has been KIG. The period between the election and the announcement of the Inspectors decision in July was marked by intense lobbying of the Department of Communities and Local Government. Fortunately, this proved unnecessary as the Inspectors report rejected the development comprehensively. His main reason was the damage that the development would do to the Special Landscape Area which was welcome news to everyone living on the eastern side of Maidstone. Further good news came one month ago when Maidstone Borough Council agreed unanimously not to develop land around Junction 8. Having fought hard to achieve this outcome, I am absolutely delighted but we must keep up our guard against further attempts in the future.

Sadly, in late October, my Constituency Office in Lenham burnt down possibly as part of a series of arson attacks on businesses in the area. This made for an extremely difficult period in the latter part of the year and over Christmas but I am now re-established just around the corner. The new address is, 12 The Square, Lenham, ME17 2PQ (Tel 01622 851616) and my office is, approximately, just above the library.

This year is going to be a busy one for me as Minister for London 2012 and my last piece of advice, to all of you, is to buy a ticket. It is going to be a fantastic national celebration which will be easily accessible for Kent via the high speed link at Ebbsfleet – so please come along and enjoy the greatest competition in the world!

### **A very tough budget but some good news...**

KCC had a 7 hour budget meeting in February 2011 when Members agreed to £95m of savings from a £950m net revenue budget (excluding schools). I am very pleased to say that despite having to achieve massive savings of 10 per cent, we have managed for 2011-12 to:

- **Freeze the KCC element of your Council Tax bill**
- **Protect the Highways maintenance budget** (potholes etc)
- **Maintain the eligibility criteria for older people accessing vital social care services to “moderate”.** Kent County Council is now one of only 26 out of 148 councils that now fund social care for older people in “moderate” need. Other councils have raised the threshold to “critical” only following central government funding cuts.
- **Keep open all 97 Children’s Centres in Kent**, whilst many other councils are consulting on closing centres to save funding.
- **Protect the Kent Freedom Pass, enabling 11-16 year olds in Kent attending Kent schools to free bus travel.** We have doubled the administrative charge from £50 to £100 in order to continue with the scheme, but this still represents an annual saving for parents for each child using the Freedom Pass **of around £300**. Children and young people can use this pass during evenings, weekends and during school holidays as well as during the school run.
- **Protect my Member Community Grant of £10,000 and Member Highway Fund of £25,000 so that I can continue to support local schemes in my Division.** In the last year I have funded a traffic survey to record the vast number of vehicles using the village as a “rat-run” to use this as an evidence base for highways alterations. This information has been used to design a scheme to “build out” the Hockers Lane junction (and replace the awful Amico barrier with something in keeping with village design) to deter vehicles from using the lane as a short-cut. I have worked closely with Parish Councillors on the design of this scheme and will fund it from my Member Highway Fund.

We will achieve the £95m savings through using our reserves, generating income by selling services to other councils and agencies and redesigning our current services so we achieve the very best value for money. 1500 posts at KCC will also be going over the next four years and £20m saved from staff benefits. There will obviously be some things that we will not be able to fund; for example, traffic calming schemes will not be financially supported unless there is a real need demonstrated by a particularly high record of personal accidents.

### **Highways**

A new “Find and Fix” contract started on 18 April under which a Kent based company, Mason Ltd, will undertake high quality repairs on potholes in the parish. This follows on from last Summer’s exercise when a Detling-based company, Steadline, did some very good repairs around the borough. Safety critical defects will be passed to Mason Ltd to repair. The Find and Fix operation includes patching in Hermitage Lane, Broader Lane, Scragged Oak and Hockers Lane will be patched in the next 2 or 3 weeks. I am pressing for **Church Lane** to be resurfaced due to its poor condition and have been advised that it is currently being considered for a surface treatment as it keeps breaking up with the emergence of shallow potholes.

In November 2010 I chaired a meeting attended by Stockbury, Detling and Thurnham Parish Councillors, Borough Councillors, Kent Highways officers, the Police, an MBC Parking officer and the Chief Executive of the County Showground to discuss how we could jointly resolve ongoing problems relating to the A249 in relation to noise from the Showground impacting on residents of Scragged Oak Road, highways issues and lobbying for a much needed roundabout by the Showground. I will continue to press for progress on all these issues over the coming year and I am delighted that Chris Evernden has joined the Parish Council as my link on this.



### **Kent International Gateway**

I was delighted that on 5 August 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government rejected AXA's proposals to build a massive freight interchange and warehousing over a beautiful 250 hectare site north of Bearsted. I worked with particularly closely with the Stop KIG group, Hugh Robertson MP and Members and officers across KCC and MBC and our joint efforts paid off. I am now working with both authorities to prepare an application to the Government agency Natural England to extend the Kent Downs AONB to include much or part of this land. This process could be complex and protracted, so in the meantime MBC will offer special protection to this land in their Local Development Framework through a specific statement that they do not wish to see any development on it.

### **Maternity Matters**

On 23 December 2010, the Secretary of State for Health announced his decision to centralise consultant-led maternity services at the new PFI Pembury Hospital, thus depriving expectant parents of an essential service in the County Town and the largest district in Kent. The current A21 links are very poor – single line carriageway between Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells is wholly inadequate for transporting expectant mothers should they require medical intervention. As a member of the KCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in January 2011 I tabled a motion which was backed by Members, calling for the Health Secretary to defer his plans until the new GP commissioning plans had been put in place. As Maidstone GPs have overwhelmingly called for retention of consultant-led maternity services at Maidstone, it would make sense to allow them to decide the future. The Health Secretary has rejected this request but the battle continues!

### **Vulnerable Children**

On a personal note, in January 2011 I was appointed Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services with the specific brief of transforming provision of safeguarding and services for looked after children from inadequate to outstanding in the next 2-4 years. This follows a very critical Ofsted report published in November 2010 that rated KCC's services for vulnerable children as inadequate. My late mother grew up in care with 20+ foster placements and a 5 year period in a children's home that she hated. I therefore have a real passion and commitment to turn around the service so that Kent's children in need get the support and intervention required to protect them from abuse and neglect and to have the opportunity to achieve as well as we would wish for our own children.

NEWS.....The new Detling respite facility in the old school building will open on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011, but a date for the "official" opening will be announced shortly.

## **Councillor John Horne Our Borough Councillor**

Elected: 2001-2011

### **Detling Conservation area Management Plan:**

The management plan was adopted by MBC on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010. There are proposals within it to extend the area to include the whole of East Court and South View Lodge.

Later in November the planning committee refused permission for additional development at East Court on the grounds that it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the Kent Downs AONB. The Planning Inspectorate have now allowed the appeal and noted in passing that the change to the Conservation Area had not yet taken place.

### **PARISH PLANS AND DESIGN STATEMENTS:**

Detling has done more than most in preparing with the community a Parish Plan, then a Design Statement and finally a Vision for Detling with the concepts and ideas for a sustainable future. All this sets out a cohesive plan which the community wish to see in the development of Detling.

In a word; MBC decline to adopt it as an official planning document. I have raised this on many occasions with MBC. I wrote to the Chief Planner in the Dept for Communities & Local Government.

In reply; *"I am happy to reassure you on this matter. The status of parish plans and village design statements remains unaltered. They are not part of the formal development plan though they are capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals. The weight to be apportioned to them is a matter for the decision maker to assess in each case."*

*Communities should not expect to prepare plans independently from the local planning authority and then have them adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD), but where communities wish to use SPDs as part of their approach, they should work with the local planning authority from the outset."*

Detling have worked with MBC from the outset. Accordingly, at the last LDDAG meeting I particularly raised these issues, which are being taken forward by the Leisure & Prosperity OSC.

#### **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (LDF): core strategy;**

I have been a member of the Local Development Document Advisory Group in developing the strategies for the Local Development Framework. There are huge issues for consideration; not least what infrastructure will actually be available. The LDF will set out the community framework within which we will live until 2026. It will go to public consultation from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 17<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

Upon its adoption will hinge all the future planning policies of MBC. It is vital that your voice and that of the Parishes are clearly heard in this consultation.

I will shortly announce proposals to assist you to take forward this aspect.

#### **WATER INQUIRY:**

Last May I represented the District Leaders of Kent at the Inquiry into the Water Resources Management Plan of the South East Water Company. I was pleased to be joined at the opening by Cllr. McLaggan from Detling. You can see the full Report on the DEFRA website. Put simply; we have a water supply problem in Kent. At present some 40% of our water is imported from outside the county. How will the water supply meet the demands of the future and projected increased needs in the County for both residential and business use.

#### **The A249 matters:**

I was grateful to KCC Cllr Jenny Whittle for bringing together all the Officers concerned with traffic and safety on the A249 at a meeting last November. At least we now know the areas of responsibility and certain co-ordination was agreed.

I have taken the opportunity of a recent planning application at the Showground to remind MBC officers of the needs of the community on Scragged Oak Road and the need for an informative for an events "hot-line" to resolve event incidents on the spot.

#### **THANK YOU:**

My term of office on MBC will end in May this year. I will not be re-standing for election to MBC.

May I thank you all, for your friendship and great courtesy to me during the last ten years.

As the local person, it has been a great privilege for me to represent a Parish that is just that bit special.

I am most grateful.

All my very best wishes,

## **The A249 Action Group**

Contact: Lyle Cathcart

Established: 2003

It is disappointing to report that little positive action has been taken by Kent Highway Services, other than white lining and signage, to address the continuing safety concerns of all residents and users of the A249 through the Parishes of Detling, Thurnham, and Stockbury. The Crash Data released for 2008, 2009 and 2010 indicate that the number of injury crashes along the A249 between the M20 & M2 are reducing year by year [2008 - 31no, 2009 - 29no, 2010 - 19no] but are still costing in excess of £1m for 2010. Dividing the A249 from the M20 to Detling Aerodrome, and from the Detling Aerodrome to the M2 shows that during 2008 the split was 7 to 31, for 2009 8 to 21, and 2010 10 to 9 respectively. The Safety Review published during 2009 indicated that the majority of crashes were caused by excessive speed. Notwithstanding this factual evidence the Authorities claim that no adjustment of the current speed limits are necessary! This is not accepted by the A249 Action Group.

The Traffic Management of visitors to the major events at the Kent County Showground is also to be reviewed as it is considered that the current arrangements could be improved especially for the local businesses and residents.

The regular closure of the A249 for Crash Investigation is also to be discussed with the Authorities and a meeting has been requested with the Chief Constable to resolve the restrictions of access to local businesses and residents during the closures.

County Councillor Jenny Whittle is being of great assistance in progressing the objectives of the A249 Action Group and we thank her for her interest in our concerns.

It is anticipated future meetings are to be held during the summer of 2011 and we sincerely hope we will be able to present a more positive report next year,

## **PARISH OPEN SPACES**

The Parish is dissected by a network of 24 separate footpaths, bridleways and byways totalling 10.7km in length.

There are an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways in the Parish, in varying condition and with good and poor way markings. A survey of all paths is still to be conducted in conjunction with KCC's Parish Paths Partnership, as the starting point of a proper maintenance plan.

## **The Larches**

Contact: Alison Ruyter

Medway and Mid-Kent Downs Area Warden

Established: 1976

July 2010 saw the start of Kent Wildlife Trust's management of the Larches Nature Reserve full time. I was thrilled to be assigned this beautiful reserve as it is somewhere I had walked with my parents as a child. We began by employing two new part time assistant wardens to help with the management of the reserve. Michael Pound and Sarah Tree, who was later offered full time work elsewhere and replaced by Tarnya Fisher. They all have an excellent knowledge of wildlife and conservation practices and we were very pleased to get them. They are undertaking weekly patrols, doing litter collections, weeding, surveys and writing newsletters depending on the time of year as well as supporting the volunteer team.

The first job on the nature reserve itself was to clear the remains of the flailing work that had been done the previous year. Some of the dead vegetation was quite thick in areas and we felt that clearing it would give the chalk grassland the best possible chance of a quick recovery. We began a Larches volunteer team in September. It meets on the first Monday of the month. We have about 6 to 10 people who come out regularly now. They certainly didn't mind playing 'pick up sticks' as they called it when the following spring brought an excellent coverage of grass and herb species.

During the winter we undertook more sycamore control both with volunteers wielding bowsaws, and with staff on chainsaws for the bigger trees. We plan to continue to have a couple of volunteer days a year dedicated to this. We began some of the over stood hazel coppice towards the hermitage lane end of the site in the dead of winter, using the stems to edge the main paths. It is hoped the extra light will encourage a better ground flora and the thinning and coppicing will re-invigorate the trees themselves.

Regrowth control within the chalk downland area was continued in the winter by two of our Shetland cattle, Jack and Bill. They very much enjoy eating trees and scrubby regrowth so are ideal for restoration grazing. The dry spring put pay to plans for grazing the site during the spring flush which would have helped us get a head start on the scrub regrowth and Rosebay Willowherb, while leaving the more important plants to flower later in the year without being swamped. By the time the weed species were really getting going so was everything else, having waited so long for the rain.

This summer we have been concentrating on repairing and improving the access points around the reserve. With a generous pot of money from local horse riders we were able to source and lay stone and wood chip with an underlay around the bridle stiles. These will take a while to bed in but we have been able to find a continual supply of wood chip locally so hopefully really soggy bits can continue to be filled in as required. There are brand new steps up onto the plateau from the east and an improved path to the west. We have also been trying our best to keep up with any vandalism as it happens.

In between times the volunteers have been undertaking vegetation surveying and orchid mapping to establish a baseline level of plant quality that we can build on over the coming years. We found a reasonable number of important indicator plants which was encouraging. One of our volunteers is an expert on Yew trees and has very much enjoyed recording some of the many excellent Yews we have on this site. The reserve also forms part of an adder monitoring program running this summer looking at how adders use woodland sites, (being led by the Countryside Partnership).

In the office, staff have been working on updating the management plan and looking at the potential to apply for higher level stewardship, an agri-environment scheme that will contribute towards the ongoing costs of maintaining and enhancing the grassland areas.

Plans for the autumn/winter coming include continuing with the coppicing of hazel and felling of sycamore and Norway maple, regrowth clearance in the grazing paddocks, livestock grazing, small scale scrub clearance in the end glade to maintain its diversity and if we have time we would like to begin some ride edge coppice to improve the paths for butterflies, dragonflies and moths.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tim Bell for all his help and support in this hand over year. It has been invaluable for helping us settle into this new role.

## **Horish Wood**

Contact: Geoff Cosgrove

Purchased for the Parish: 2005

01622 – 630462

There is not a lot to report this year, John Monk, as usual has been busy working in the woods to maintain access and keep the woods and grassland tidy. All the fencing has now been completed to the A249 and we have added some rabbit mesh alongside the fence to the motorway, but everyone must still be careful if they let their dogs run free.

The wood and grassland are now becoming established and this will be an excellent facility for years to come.

Just a note for all village areas and that is a plea to keep things tidy, pick up dog mess and put it in the litter bins provided around the village. We understand that if dog mess is bagged it can go into the ordinary litter bins.

## **Rear of Hockers Lane**

Contact: Geoff Cosgrove

Purchased for the Parish: 2010

01622 – 630462

In November, we became aware that this piece of land was coming up for auction and the Parish Council decided that it would be a very useful addition for the community.

The purchase of this land adds to the green corridor along the village's southern boundary and will form a buffer between the housing, the CTRL and the Motorway. It is also an enclosed site and very good for walking being within very easy reach of the village.

We used the long safeguarded "Open Spaces Fund", which we have kept ring fenced for nearly 20 years waiting for the right opportunity to spend as the money was donated by the public wanting the Parish to find an open space in the village. So this is a community area.

The field consists of two mounds, which are made from the surplus material dug out when the Channel Rail link was constructed. There is a large gas main running through the centre of the site and we have numerous maintenance obligations from CTRL to maintain the site as a landscaped area.

The field was originally owned by Joyce Cooke, whose father built many of the original houses in Hockers Lane.

Once again, John Monk has stepped up to the task of clearing the banks, opening up paths, cutting grass and once again turning it into a very nice area to walk and enjoy the flowers and trees.

We think that this field should have a name and the Parish Council organised a competition to name this field, which should be decided in October 2011.

## **Scragged Oak Viewpoint**

Contact: Parish Clerk

Established: 2002

Scragged Oak Viewpoint is the triangle of land between Scragged Oak Road and the A249 containing beech woodland and chalk grassland known for its biodiversity and glorious views over the Kent countryside. In the 1990s the area became an eyesore and a place for fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour.

Kent Highways have granted Detling Parish Council a formal 'licence to cultivate' and the council is now managing the site. The viewpoint is now one of Kent Wildlife Trusts roadside nature reserves

# **Bredhurst Woodland Action Group**

Contact: Vanessa Jones

Established: 2005

07813 - 785940

Bredhurst Woodland Action Group (BWAG) continues to attract more members and funding secured for Bredhurst Woods since BWAG began in 2005 to March 2011 is nearly £113,000.

Improvements made throughout the year include essential tree maintenance work to cut back dangerous and overhang branches, further coppicing and more path restoration making the area more accessible for horse riders and walkers.

BWAG continues to participate with the 'Bats on the Downs' project. The project, organised by Medway Valley Countryside Partnership and the Kent Bat Group, is examining data collected from the North Downs and partner groups in France. In 2010 colleagues from France visited the UK and conducted a bat survey of Bredhurst Woods where several species were identified.

Regular reptile monitoring events are held and Bredhurst Woods is one of only two sites in Kent where black adders can frequently be found.

BWAG planted 200m of hedging which will provide an excellent habitat for dormice, birds and other animals. Dormice surveys are regularly carried out which has established that we have a thriving community of Dormice in Bredhurst Woods.

New interpretation boards were installed thanks to funding provided by Bredhurst WI and the Mid Kent Downs Countryside Partnership Fund.

Fund raising events included the annual Carol Concert, which raised £1,564 and the Bluebell and Cream Tea weekend attracted 174 guests and raised £1,500 and, despite torrential rain, 53 riders took part in the BWAG Sponsored Horse Ride raising over £1,100. The course, approximately a 10 mile circuit, took participants over private land through Bredhurst, Boxley and Detling.

BWAG was invited to speak at the Natural Connections Conference held at the University of London. Academics and eminent environmentalists heard how Bredhurst Woods has been transformed from an unpleasant site full of fly-tipping and very little wildlife to an area used daily by many people and thriving with wildlife. The presentation was warmly received and the audience appreciated the achievements of BWAG and resulted in many offers of assistance.

At the AGM in May two Trustees stood down; Melanie Fooks, Treasurer since the group was formed in 2005, and Membership Secretary, Ann Callen, who has moved to Australia. They are replaced by Dr Kevyn Wightman, who has her PhD in Forestry and Roy Hopkins, an ex-Forestry Commission manager.

If you wish to know more about the work of BWAG, please visit [www.bwag.org.uk](http://www.bwag.org.uk) or call Vanessa Jones on 07813 785940.

## **Quiet Lanes**

Contact: Mike Denny and Jean Roberts

Established: 2004

Detling and surrounding parishes are located in an area of largely unspoiled natural beauty dissected by a network of narrow lanes. Unfortunately many of these lanes are suffering from improper use which is destroying verges, disfiguring the environment and threatens the safety of pedestrians and other road users.

The Quiet Lanes scheme aims to set up a network of lanes where the attitudes and behaviour of vehicle drivers are sensitised, verges are restored, and walking, cycling and horse riding are



encouraged. A scheme already operates in parts of Britain and including an area south of Maidstone. Under the auspices of the Mid Kent Downs Steering Group this now covers the 14 parishes north of Maidstone, including Detling.

An outline proposal has been prepared piloted on the Pilgrims Way, which passes through five local parishes, and approved by the Mid Kent Downs Steering Group. The project includes ideas for improving the appearance and safety of the lane through speed limits, planting and road narrowing, with designated passing places and pinch-points. The project has been taken to Kent Highways who have been asked to help take this forward; unfortunately they have been slow to respond in a constructive way.

## **CONSERVATION AREA**

The concept of conservation areas was introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, but the relevant legislation is now contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. This places a duty on local authorities to designate conservation areas where appropriate. Conservation Areas are defined in the legislation as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”

The Street from just above the Cock Horse Inn down to Hockers Lane has been designated a Conservation Area. This means that the overall appearance of the heart of the village is special and needs to be preserved.

Maidstone Borough Council has adopted a Management Plan for the Conservation Area after consulting the Parish Council. The boundaries of the Conservation Area have been expanded at the northern end of The Street.

Unfortunately due to the budgetary restrictions of the Borough Council any implementation of the recommendations contained within the Conservation Area Appraisal have been put on hold.

## **The Village Stores**

Contact: Mike Tamsett MBE

Established: 1870's - 2010

01622 – 738935

It was such a shame that this year saw the closing of the village shop.

The Parish Council wasn't able to get involved in the takeover of the shop itself as it did not have the skills or ability to run a commercial enterprise as this was viewed as a conflict of interest. However, behind the scenes we tried to broker deals with the Cock Horse and other local people to keep the shop going or to maintain some of the key services, such as the post office and lottery.

But despite our efforts and still, after nearly two years on the market the shop was not being sold and Mike had to make the hard decision to close at Christmas 2010. We are all very sad to see the fate of the shop come to this and we believe that despite a few further exploratory plans to start a community shop and split up the property these have not come to anything to date.

# **Kent County Showground**

Contact: Gill Collins

Established: 1923

01622 - 630975



## **FARMING TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT THE KENT COUNTY SHOW 15, 16, 17 JULY**

This year the Kent County Agricultural Society have been working hard to ensure that visitors to this year's Show on Friday 15 – Sunday 17 July, will come away with a better understanding of food and farming in the 'Garden of England'.

Why Farming Matters in Kent works to provide a strong message of farming within the County and to others about the industry. It aims to communicate all the aspects of farming to educate people about the importance of understanding horticulture, agriculture and forestry. Visitors will be able to walk through a living orchard of Braeburn trees and a commercial strawberry poly-tunnel showcasing table top production.

The large marquee in the centre of the 2000sqm will host a number of fruit related activities. The cookery demonstration area with a full kitchen and seating area will feature recipes using English fruit. In between demonstrations the Bramley Campaign will be providing visitors with samples of delicious apple pie using the famous Bramley apple which celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year.

The outside area will have a wonderful display of livestock with piglets, lambs, turkeys and calves as well as Sheep Shearing demonstrations and an auction hosted by Lambert and Foster and Hobbs Parker and organised by the NFU.

In 2011 the Kent County Showground continued its 'CHILDREN GO FREE' campaign which has proved very popular with families feeling the pinch during this economic downturn.

The displays and attractions include Titan the Robot, The Bolddogs Lings, The Flying Gunners Motorcycle Display Team, The Devils Horsemen and a Spitfire Air Display. Full details of all the displays and competitions can be found on the website. [www.kenshowground.co.uk](http://www.kenshowground.co.uk).

The Kent Showground celebrated the official launch of the newly refurbished Clive Emson Conference Centre on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June. Over 400 guests attended the event which showcased the improved 1700sqm exhibition space.

Chairman of the Kent County Agricultural Society, George Jessel, DL started the proceedings by thanking his Board of Directors and in particular Glyn Charlton the Financial Director who had kept a close eye on the 1.2million pound budget and Alison Wallington the Events Manager who is responsible for marketing the centre.

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, Allan Willett CMG CVO as a great supporter of the Kent Showground was delighted to be asked to officially open the Clive Emson Conference Centre. As he was approaching his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in August he felt it was fitting that one of his last public duties brought him back to what he recognised as the hub for all that is best in the County. Allan Willett unveiled a plaque that will be mounted in the new building to mark the occasion.

The refurbishment of the building has converted a twenty eight year old, earth floored barn into a modern conference, entertainment and exhibition centre. The hall has a clear span exhibition space of over 1,700 sq metres measuring 36m by 48m with a ridge height of 7m and an eaves height of 3.6m. There is a viewing gallery and at the far end a cargo door to admit HGV lorries. The entire space is fully lit, has under floor cabling and is fitted with modern communication technologies. There is commercial kitchen space capable for catering for up to 1,000 people. The new building has full disabled access, including a platform lift to the first floor meeting rooms and business centre.

Log on to the new website: [www.kentshow.co.uk](http://www.kentshow.co.uk) or call 01622 630975



Sheep Judging at the County Show 2011

## **PARISH ORGANISATIONS**

The Parish has for its size a very active and varied social life. Here are the annual reports of our Parish Organisations:

### **Detling Badminton Club**

Contact: Mark Chase

Established: 1976

01622 - 736818

The club has been in existence for many years now and although we were once a thriving club competing in local leagues, the popularity of the sport has declined recently. Seven of us now regularly turn out on Sunday evenings 8-10 p.m. at the Detling Village Hall.

Badminton is a good way of keeping fit and having a good deal of fun along the way. We are always on the lookout for new people to come and join us so if you fancy a go why not come along.

## **Detling Short Mat Bowls Club**

Contact: David French

Established: 1984

01622 - 750369

The past year has been fairly busy with our participation in the Maidstone Triples League and some members playing in Kent County Competitions. During this year the Club has achieved the top place in Division 2 in the League after a number of hard fought games and the Club has now been promoted to the 1st Division for the next season.

The Club has also triumphed in a series of Knockout Competition held within the League and won The Ted Messer Cup on Sunday 25th April.

This cup was donated to the League by a gentleman who was a founder member in setting up Short Mat Bowls Clubs in the South East, Ted unfortunately passed away last year after a long illness but his contribution to the game is remembered by this competition.

The Bowls Club meet every Monday evening in the Village Hall at 7.30pm until 10pm.

For further information please contact myself on (01622 750369) or pop in on Monday evenings for a chat or just watch to see if Short Mat Bowls is for you.

We look forward to seeing you.

## **The Detling Players**

Contact: Jenny Pember

Established: 1975

01622 - 753562

Tikki Gulland (Chair 2010 – 2011)

**[www.detlingplayers.co.uk](http://www.detlingplayers.co.uk)**

We are the Detling Players based in Detling and surrounding districts.

Last November the Players successfully produced Grimm Tales which took place in the village hall. It was a huge success. It was directed by Juliet Miles-Lea and involved a good number of Players, both young and old.

The Players also joined in Search for the Christ Child and The Detling Singers Christmas Concert.

The Players also supported the Detling Christmas Fair with their annual bottle stall.

The Players are very keen to encourage young local members. To join in a players show you don't have to be an actor. It can be great fun helping back stage with props or costumes, set building or even serving interval refreshments. In a production, everyone is part of a friendly team; it has to work that way.

For further information about the Players and future productions contact Jenny Pember (details above).

## **The Detling Singers**

Contact: Edward Rubie

Established: 1974

01622 - 880404

[www.detlingsingers.co.uk](http://www.detlingsingers.co.uk)

2010 was another busy year for The Detling Singers, we performed at the following venues:

June	-	An entertainment at Hadlow College.
July	-	A celebration of Cherry Weekend at Lynsted Church.
August	-	Music for a Summer Evening at Bapchild Church.
October	-	Music for an Autumn Evening at Detling Church.
December	-	Christmas Concert. in Detling Village Hall. An entertainment at Upchurch W.I's Christmas celebration. Carols at The Heart of Kent Hospice.

We were again fortunate in having Kerne Clemence to accompany the choir on the piano this year, the solo pieces he played at several of the concerts were very much appreciated. He made the most of the new digital piano and its full sized keyboard.

A major concert for Westerham Church at their flower festival had to be cancelled by the organisers. We are hoping their invitation will resurface in the future.

Due to the unexpected snow in November and December, of our planned Christmas concert for Maidstone Mencap was also cancelled. Another disappointment as we always look forward to entertaining them at Cobtree Hall in Mote Park.

Looking ahead in 2011, our programme includes:

- A summer concert in lovely Boxley Church on **Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2011** to which Detling residents will be most welcome. *For more details 01622 630231*
- At popular request, the Christmas Concert in Detling Village Hall is planned for **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2011**. A highlight this year will be a return appearance by Fairfax Brass. *For more details 01622 880404*

New singers are welcome, we meet to sing on Monday evenings in the old school hall, new songs are learnt and old favourites revisited. A warm welcome awaits anyone interested in joining us for an introductory evening of part singing. The choir has vacancies for sopranos, altos, tenors and bases.

## **Detling Friends Of Heart Of Kent Hospice (Dfhkh)**

Contact: Pat Dale

Established: 1987 - 2004

01622 - 737577

The Friends concluded their remarkable fund raising efforts as an organised group five years ago, but they have continued to keep in touch and hold the occasional coffee morning.

## **Detling Church**

Contact: Rev'd Susan Hollins  
Submitted by: David Humfrey

Established: 13<sup>th</sup> Century

01622 – 758606

The number registered on the electoral role at the end of 2010 was 50. The average attendance at services during the year was 26, with substantially higher at festivals and special services. Weekly service times were changed from Palm Sunday, to 10.30am allowing three priests to 'rotate' between the benefice churches. All Age services also continued for families and young people.

The two Churchwardens have again shouldered the heavy burdens of responsibility with efficiency and determination dealing not only with Church matters, but also with the continued management and security of the vacant Detling Primary School buildings.

Specific developments in the year have included:

1. Heating and lighting: After the harsh winter of 2009/10, deficiencies in both systems were addressed. New long life/low energy lighting has produced a marked improvement, and

under pew heating has been extended to the choir stalls, but without continual and expensive use, the church remains rather cold. This is being monitored.

2. Extra services: 'Hands on Church' – Monthly services for young children altering between Detling and Boxley have been held.
3. Facing our continued financial problems, our fund-raising campaign 'Open Doors at St Martin's has been extended to 3 Sunday afternoon cream teas in the churchyard, with an additional tea and sale on the anniversary of D Day. The programme also included an organ recital, a concert by the Detling Singers and the 'Taste of Christmas' sale of Christmas fare and crafts.
4. The church choir has continued to develop under the enthusiastic leadership of our organist, Mr T Cathcart, and has contributed new music for services. A well supported candle-lit carol service was held before Christmas.
5. A combined benefice PCC's 'Away Day' was held at Aylesford Priory in October.
6. The bible study group met regularly under the leadership of Mr B Follett, who also organised a Lent course.
7. Our Detling News editor, Sir Richard Alexander Bt, retired in December after 16 years of loyal service. The PCC expressed its grateful thanks with a gift. Mr John Faller has taken over the editorship.

#### **Other Activities:**

Detling Companions – this group continues to provide contact with the elderly, bereaved and sick bringing house visits, quarterly tea parties in the village hall, and coffee mornings in the house of members of the committee. Transport is arranged for hospital visits, Doctors appointments and collection of prescriptions.

Christmas Eve Event – the annual event 'Search for the Christ Child' was again held but, owing to bad weather, the entire event was again staged in the church. This was well supported with over 200 attending.

## **Friends Of Detling Church**

Submitted by: June Eckton

Established: 1989

The F.O.D.C. continues with its sociable events to provide funds towards providing essential maintenance and improvements to our historic church building, keeping it in a good state of repair as a feature of historic, aesthetic and religious interest for the village and passing visitors.

We are grateful to all who give their time, hard work and money for the continuance of this essential task.

Our supporters number over 80 and in the last year we raised a total of £1199. We have had another enjoyable and successful year. Looking back, we started with the popular Annual Quiz Night in the Village Hall, and this is to be held again on May 7 2011 under the gifted Question Master, John Munson.

Our chairman, Tikki Gulland, was honoured in December to receive the "Villager of the Year" award from the Parish Council.



At the Detling D-Day celebrations on June 6 we had a plant stall.

The Welcome Lunch in the summer was another event we hold regularly, but not to raise funds, just as a way to give newcomers an opportunity to meet in delightful surroundings, to realise we are a very friendly village, and Detling has a while range of sociable activities going on in different venues.

A Silent Auction in September was also a good evening, what bargains were there! More bargains too at our two stalls at the Detling Christmas Fair.

John Eckton, our longstanding Treasurer and publicity designer, has stepped down recently, but thankfully John Owen has volunteered as Treasurer.

We are very grateful to the late Mavis Owen who left instructions that all money donated in her memory at her funeral should go to the Friends of Detling Church. We are delighted that Detling W.I. has decided to support the F.O.D.C. as their charity of the year 2011.

## **The Detling Companions**

Contact: Gill Humfrey

Established: 2003

01622 - 730139

We continue to hold our quarterly tea parties in the Village Hall and are always glad to see new people who get a warm welcome. We are open to anyone over 50. We are always entertained with music and we have various speakers, slide shows and a raffle is held to defray the cost of hiring the hall.

The committee all work hard to make the afternoons a success and provide a good afternoon tea. We have held Coffee and Chat mornings in the home of one of the committee but these have been taken over by opening the Church on alternate Wednesday mornings for coffee mornings as so many people in the village do miss the shop which was a good meeting place.

As part of our continuing care in the community we have visited the elderly and infirm and run errands or collect prescriptions if required as well as making friendly hospital visits on occasions. We value the use of the hall very much.

## **The Detling Society**

Contact: John Owen

Established: 1982

01622 - 737940

The Detling Society continues to hold meetings on the first Monday of each month in the period from October to April. Membership is about 15, with many members attending every meeting and we welcome a useful number of non-member visitors.

The Society tries to present programmes of local interest, and during the 2010-11 season we have had presentations on "History of industry in Northfleet", "How the Ida Fermor Design business started", "Kent Wildlife Heritage Foundation", "Old Maidstone", "Fifty years of local history", "Flora Exotica", and "Oberammergau revisited".

The programme for 2011-12 starts on 3 October, and will be at our usual venue, the Committee Room of Detling Village Hall. The programme for 2011-12 has not yet been arranged.

## ***Yoga in Detling – dispelling some myths!***

There are so many styles of yoga available nowadays; you could almost say there is a style to suit everyone. My own interest in yoga (as practitioner and teacher) continues to grow and develop along with my understanding of the subject. In the last 12 months I have been drawn to the message that yoga is meant to be healing. Timothy McCall, MD, a board-certified specialist in internal medicine in America, and author, writes in 'Yoga as Medicine':

'As someone who has been an MD for over 20 years, I can tell you that yoga is quite simply the most powerful system of overall health and well-being I have ever seen.'

I recently attended a 2-day intensive workshop on anatomy and yoga with Julie Gudmestad, an American teacher, and therapist of 30 years, who for many years has worked to integrate the healing powers of yoga with her Western medical knowledge. Julie believes that yoga should be healing and that the practice of yoga can provide a balance between strength and flexibility, building endurance, and developing self-awareness through precise movement, posture and breath.

It is Julie's belief that the ability to slow down and stay present is an important aspect of healing, and that yoga encourages a mindful state that can heal people emotionally as well as physically. The workshop was an inspiration and reinforced my belief that yoga is not about getting into pretzel-like positions but about helping our bodies and our minds deal with today's pace of life and the stresses and strains it imposes on us.

I would therefore like to share a simple, but (in my view) effective meditation practice that you can do virtually anytime, anywhere, and that may help you strip the top layer of tension to counter everyday stress and tightness. (The practice is derived from one in Eric Harrison's 'Teach Yourself to Meditate' book - any errors of commission or omission are mine). You can do this simple **Meditation Practice** sitting or lying down, or you can simply pause any everyday activity (if safe) like working at your desk or in the garden, standing in a queue, etc.

Whatever you are doing tell yourself to 'freeze'. Hold your posture but not your breath. Don't change anything initially, just scan your body and notice what the body is feeling: where it is holding on, what is tight; notice how you are breathing. When you are ready just say to yourself 'melt' or 'relax' and start to make small adjustments to help your body relax: release the jaw, drop the shoulders, soften the abdomen, relax the hands. Refine the adjustments. Take a few deeper breaths as and when you want to. Allow your breathing to be as comfortable as possible – your own natural rhythm. This exercise can last anything from 1-3 minutes but can be longer if you have the time and you continue to find areas to soften, to release, to relax even more. Become aware of any awareness or feeling of relaxation, and when ready continue with your daily life.

Lindsay

I run weekly classes on Tuesdays in Detling Village Hall, and in Boxley Road. For further details please contact Lindsay on [lindsay.yoga@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindsay.yoga@hotmail.co.uk), or on 07881 553 100.

# **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The parish council is able to raise money directly from the public in order to carry out its functions. Its powers to do this are found in Section 150 of the Local Government Act 1972.

This money is raised through the rates and is known as the Precept. It currently represents only about 3% of a householder's total rates bill. The splits for a band E property are about:

Kent County Council	69 %	an increase of	0.0% over 2010
Police Authority	9 %	an increase of	0.0% over 2010
Fire Authority	5 %	an increase of	0.0% over 2010
Maidstone Borough Council	15 %	an increase of	0.0% over 2010
Detling Parish Council	3%	an increase of	9.3% over 2010

Our precept also equates to £48.54 per house or £26.34 per electorate or about 7.2p per person per day. For the 2011/12 financial year we voted to increase our precept to £18519, this is an increase of £2,160 over the previous year, in line with inflation as the Councillors are keen to keep the precept as low as possible whilst raising money outside of the Parish for all our projects and schemes. One of the reasons for such a large increase this year is that the Borough Council reduced its Concurrent Functions Grant to the parishes by 30%, a loss of income amounting to £1662.

This precept is only 65% of the parish's annual income. The other money comes from specific grants.

Our other main source of income comes from the Borough Council's Concurrent Functions Fund, this is a fund awarded to the more rural parishes of the Borough to use for a number of local activities and projects. We are able to do many things from this source but are aware that this fund is not secure and is being phased out over the next few years.

The councillors have also agreed not to draw general attendance expenses for their work on the parish council and give their time free.

## **Supporting Notes to Accounts Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**

### **Assets - Value over £1,000.00 only.**

Village Hall  
Horish Wood  
Old School Playing Field  
Bus Shelter

### **Borrowings.**

As at the close of business on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 there were no loans to the Council outstanding.

### **Leases.**

Detling Village Hall is leased to the Detling Village Hall Committee from 1975 until 2025. Rent is one pound per annum.

Car parking spaces at the Village Hall are rented to Kent County Council for ten pounds per annum.

Seeboard Wayleave. £8.19 payable every four years.

### **Debtors.**

VAT £2,427.82

**Creditors**

Audit Fees £1,100.00

**Outstanding Cheques.**

There were no outstanding cheques.

**Tenancies.**

None.

**Service Expenditure**

Concurrent Functions Grant of £6,060.00 received from Maidstone Borough Council.

**Advertising and Publicity.**

Monthly Newsletter.

**Pensions.**

The Council made no pension contributions during the year.

**Earmarked reserves.**

The Cooperative Account is an earmarked reserve for a recreation field for the Village. This fund was previously been known as the Playing Field Fund. This year we spent the majority of this fund on the land behind Hockers Lane. Whilst not a recreation field, which was given to the Parish by Kent County Council it is an appropriate use of this money as it is a field for the community as a whole

**DETLING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**  
**ACCOUNT**  
**FOR YEAR ENDED 31st**  
**MARCH 2010**

	<b><u>Year ended</u></b> <b><u>31st March</u></b> <b><u>2010</u></b>		<b><u>Year ended</u></b> <b><u>31st March</u></b> <b><u>2009</u></b>	
	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>				
<i>Precept</i>		15,939.00		13,311.00
<i>Interest</i>		69.27		521.72
<i>Service Income</i>		6,060.00		5,890.00
 <i>VAT</i>		1,208.42		1,948.88
<i>Rents/Hire Fees</i>		0.00		0.00
<i>Parish Plan Income</i>		0.00		0.00
<i>Other Income</i>		552.45		31.38
<i>Grants</i>		9,465.00		2,286.00
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>		<b><u>33,294.14</u></b>		<b><u>23,988.98</u></b>
 <b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>				
<i>General Administration</i>	14,759.79		14,359.40	
<i>Service Expenditure</i>	5,544.34		5,890.00	
<i>VAT</i>	1,208.42		1,948.88	
<i>The Old School Field</i>	6,074.67		0.00	
<i>Other</i>	939.61		7,148.25	
<i>W/off unrecoverable debtors</i>	0.00		0.00	
<b><u>Total Expenditure</u></b>		<b><u>28,526.83</u></b>		<b><u>29,346.53</u></b>
 <b>SURPLUS/-DEFICIT</b>		<b><u>4,767.31</u></b>		<b><u>-5,357.55</u></b>

**DETLING PARISH**  
**COUNCIL**

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**FOR YEAR ENDED 31st**  
**MARCH 2010**

	<b><u>Year</u></b> <b><u>Ended</u></b> <b><u>31st March</u></b> <b><u>2010</u></b>		<b><u>Year Ended</u></b> <b><u>31st March</u></b> <b><u>2009</u></b>	
	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>
<b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>
<b><u>LONG TERM ASSETS</u></b>				
<i>Investments</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Long term Debts</i>	<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>	
		<b>0.00</b>		<b>0.00</b>
<b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b>				
<i>Stocks &amp; Shares</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Re-imburseable VAT</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Debtors</i>	2,427.82		3,649.55	
<i>Temporary Lendings</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Payments in Advance</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Cash in Hand</i>	<u>34,842.21</u>		<u>28,253.17</u>	
	<b>37,270.03</b>		<b>31,902.72</b>	
<b><u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b>				
<i>Creditors</i>	1,100.00		500.00	
<i>Temporary Loans</i>	0.00		0.00	
<i>Bank Overdraft</i>	<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>	
	<b>1,100.00</b>		<b>500.00</b>	
<b><u>Current Assets less Liabilities</u></b>		<b><u>36,170.03</u></b>		<b><u>31,402.72</u></b>
<b><u>REPRESENTED BY:</u></b>				
<i>General Fund Brought Forward</i>	15,186.84		20,971.40	
<i>Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year</i>	4,767.31		-5,357.55	
<i>Transfer to Earmarked Reserves</i>	-98.21		-427.01	
		<b>19,855.94</b>		<b>15,186.84</b>
<i>Earmarked Reserves</i>	16,215.88		15,788.87	
<i>Interest on Reserves in Year</i>	98.21		427.01	
		<b><u>16,314.09</u></b>		<b><u>16,215.88</u></b>
		<b><u>36,170.03</u></b>		<b><u>31,402.72</u></b>





Hermon