

Hilltop News

An HCA (Canterbury) Community Service publication

Registered Charity No 1096781

January 2014

Issue 2014 / 1

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Hilltop Contacts

Hilltop News editor
Trisha Cheeseworth
761642

trishainkent@aol.com

Columnist
Joan Gower
451492

Chairman of Trustees

Sarah Guest 765703
chairman@hilltopca.co.uk

Treasurer

Richard Armishaw
treasurer@hilltopca.co.uk

Hall Booking

Terry Maple 761329
4 New House Close
terry.maple@hilltopca.co.uk

Trustees

Jan Armishaw
Richard Armishaw
Roger Cheeseworth
Trisha Cheeseworth
Sarah Guest
Terry Maple
Fiona Roche
Dave Sackett
John Richardson

Hilltop Hall Lease granted at Last

A basic synopsis of the agreement reached is as follows:-

- 35 year lease with a peppercorn rent.
- HCA are responsible for the insurance, upkeep of the hall and the payment of all rates and services.
- HCA retain the right to rebuild should we so wish and if funds are available at any time during the lease.
- The PCC retain the option to use the hall for services at a few set times during the year.
- The lease is fully renewable on same terms for a further 35 years should HCA so wish with the proviso (if not happened already) that a plan is in place to either re-build the existing hall or to spend a significant sum in refurbishment.

We hope and are confident that funds by way of grants are still available - a route that was always denied us until we either had the freehold or a lease upon the property in the name of which the monies were being applied for.

The 1st part of the hard work is now complete.

We now put the next stage to you the local community.

It is your hall for you to manage and run.

What do you want for the continued use of this asset for our community?

Ask yourself how can I get involved, what interests, skills or time can I put in?

Be as proud as we are to be part of your local and unique community.

Come along to any of our main advertised committee meetings, just to sit and listen, meet your neighbours and hopefully feel free to join in. We are very keen to hear from you with any ideas you may have, or help you can give with events at the hall which also of course is available to hire for parties, groups or other functions. Just get in touch with our booking secretary **Terry Maple on 01227 761329 for details. Looking forward to seeing you all at the hall or at any events very soon. Terry.**

We thought it would never happen!!

It's only taken nearly 14 years - an all time record according to our solicitor, but with dogged determination we have been finally granted the lease for the hall. Initial tentative meetings and discussions with the PCC started in 2000 when we asked if they would ever consider selling the freehold of the hall, to be retained for use by the community to the then newly formed Hilltop Community Association. It was announced to the



community that we were interested in getting a lease for the hall which received total and enthusiastic support. Following numerous meetings and discussions it gradually became apparent that whilst the freehold would never be granted, a lease though could possibly be an option. Progress hasn't been helped due to not only PCC chairman changes (the local vicar takes this role) but changes of PCC solicitors and even a change in chairmanship of our own Community Association. During the years we were lucky enough to be granted charity status, which has undoubtedly helped us in our quest. We were extremely fortunate following some networking meetings and discussions with advisors from the Association of Rural Community Association, with whom we are members, to be given introductions to their own specialist solicitor, who then agreed to take on our case and work with us through the process whilst acting on our behalf. A sub-committee was then formed who would be responsible for the negotiation of the lease (Terry Maple, Richard Armishaw and Roger Cheeseworth). This group were tasked with the administration of the process and would at all times report to, and be acting on behalf of the Trustees of the Charity. Talks and negotiations were then opened with the PCC. Morale at this stage was obviously high with this first exciting step in the process. We all thought, rather naively perhaps, that it would be plain sailing from thereon in and within a few months or a year at most we would have control of the building for the community, which would then in turn release funds by way of grants to enable refurbishment and or extensions to our hall. Unfortunately at this point it just seemed to grind to a halt and the process stopped for what appeared to be years. It proved quite embarrassing at times when asked questions by the community enquiring what was happening with lease that we had all **Continued on back page.....**

Diary of Events

Weekly Events:

Friday Evening Social

All welcome for a chat

Monthly Events:

Craft & Chat afternoon

Second Tuesday of month
14.00 all welcome

Coffee Morning

Last Thursday of month
10:30 just come along

Wellness Clinic

Wed Feb 12th 10:00
Wed Feb 13th 19:30
Wed Mar 12th at 10:00
Wed Mar 12th at 19:30

Coming Events:

HCA Main Committee

Wed Feb 19th at 19:30

HCA AGM

March 5th at 19:30

Trustees meeting

Tue Feb 25th at 19:30
Wed Mar 19th at 19:30

Beer & Brains Quiz Night

Sat Mar 1st 19:00

Church Service

Sun Mar 2nd at 18:00

Hilltop news copy deadline

Thurs Mar 27th / items to
Trisha

Remember you can book the hall
for your own use. Just contact
Terry Maple on 01227 761329

Hall Hire Charges

Private Parties and Functions:

HCA Residents: £10:00 per hour
Non-Residents: £12:50 per hour
Security and damage Deposit
£20:00 CASH

Returned after 7 days if no damage,
cleaning required etc.

Business / Exhibition Uses:

Details on Hire Charges available
on application.

Joan Gower's Nature Notes

Happy New Year to all. Didn't we have a mild Autumn and right into December apart from one day in November when it turned suddenly very cold. What a shock to have to turn the heating on. Fortunately the milder weather returned the next day. The sparrowhawk which comes regularly to a neighbours garden is still sitting there waiting for prey to come to him instead of doing the usual thing hiding in the foliage and surprising them. There seems to be a shortage of birds at the moment. In fact a week or two I was talking to a neighbour who mentioned that to me. At that time I said to her that I had not even seen a blackbird for a long time. On arriving home the first thing I saw was a blackbird. Loads of house sparrows and dunnocks but apart from that blue and great tits and the odd blackbird, not even any starlings which usually come in their hundreds from the continent in the autumn to escape the cold, and I have not seen greenfinch for months. There is a cotoneaster on a neighbours wall with masses of berries



which have hardly been touched. Together with the haws there will be a lot of food in the winter. Sadly a little owl was found in the lane. Back in the early autumn there was a small mammal darting out from the undergrowth to grab seed that the birds had dropped. Shortly after it was joined by another which was much bolder and came right up to the French windows giving my daughter and I time to identify them. They were bank voles and I got a great deal of pleasure watching them. Unfortunately one day when I went out there was a very strong smell of fox and we have not seen them since. I see from the last letter that I had lost plants in the long dry spell last summer and how glad I was when it rained shortly after it rained on the replacements I had planted. How it rained. At one point I thought I had Niagara falls outside my back door. It came into the porch and as is always the case in this community I rang a neighbour who came to my assistance in twenty minutes and diagnosed and cured a blocked down pipe. A great place to live. Trouble the rain did not stop. Lucky we are up this high. For years I have had a single chrysanthemum which flowers late in the year. I usually bring in a few as I like them so much, and gradually throw the very last ones out a few at a time they die off. Doing the same this year I finally had to throw the last one out on the second of January, on the same day a neighbour found a celandine while walking her dog. During the weeks before Christmas bulbs in the garden pushed through the ground in their dozens and I knew that there were snowdrops in bud out in the back garden with the heads dropped and yellow winter jasmine, a strongly scented viburnum and my autumn flowering cherry is flowering. Walking down the path to the church a forsythia has a few flowers and we saw a single brave primrose. Spring is on its way.



PS What a delight to read that the lease on the hall has been agreed and granted. All the efforts by Colin Smith during his office as Chairman and subsequently by the present Trustees have made this possible for the residents of Hilltop a great community to live in and be part of. Joan Gower.



Easter Fayre

At St Faiths Hall, New House Lane
Saturday 5th April 11am - 1pm



Stalls: Tombola, Raffle, Cakes,
Refreshments- Goods for sale

Competitions:

Easter Bonnet/Hat: Adults £1:00 per entry Children 50p per entry

Entry forms available from Cheryl Ives 01227 760707

Miniature Easter Garden in a Biscuit Tin entry Children 50p on day

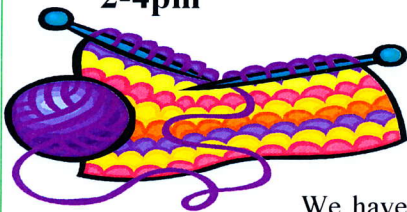
Other try your luck games on the day

Prizes for winners!

Please come along and make it a super event for everyone.

**Update on social/craft
afternoons held on second
Tuesday of each month**

2-4pm



We have just held the fourth meeting of the above and are pleased to report that it seems to be very successful. The aim was to provide a social occasion with a group of friendly people, have a 'cuppa' and enjoy a couple of hours doing whatever takes our fancy!

This has taken the form firstly of plenty of laughter and chatter which we are all good at also some skills shearing such as knitting, crochet, patchwork etc. Some ladies do crosswords, read, share ideas but most of all relax and enjoy doing whatever! We do have one lady who would love to play scrabble, so if you are keen to do this, please get in touch. If you haven't yet been along please give us a try, no need to make a commitment simply turn up whenever you can. We would like to thank John Richardson for very kindly putting our tables and chairs out and then putting them away again after our sessions which is such a great help. Carole Davies.



Hilltop Community Christmas Fayre

The Hilltop Community Christmas Fayre was a great success although it seems a long while ago now. There were plenty of people and lots of enthusiasm from the stallholders—a Tombola, Treasure Map, Name the Teddy, Jan's Bargain Buys, Cakes and of course Refreshments. The Christmas Draw took place with wonderful prizes including £100:00 hamper and £100:00 in cash, plus other money prizes. There were lots of orders for Tracy Smith's lovely floral art. The highlight of the day was the arrival of Father Christmas and his Elf, directly from Lapland—this was his first stop! He rode up the lane on his 'sleigh' giving sweets to the children amid great applause. He then retired to his cosy lit grotto to speak individually to the children and give them a present, making a mental note of their wish lists. The hall looked great with the decorations and the Christmas tree lit up. A marvellous atmosphere and very appropriate for the festive season. Our thanks go to everyone who gave time goods and effort for this event, but most of all a big Thank You to the community for coming along and spending your cash and joining in the fun. Well done everyone. Now for the magical bit !

**HO!HO!
HO!**

**TOTAL
RAISED
£1093.**



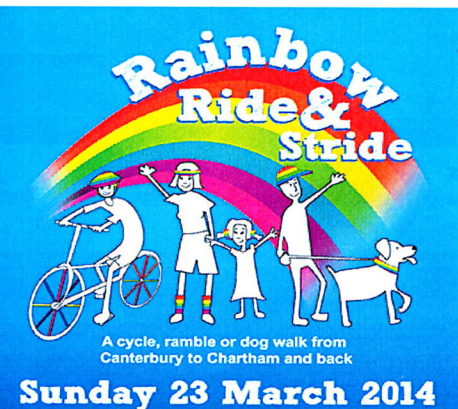
Don't forget the Community Taxi!

This subsidised service runs every Wednesday from Hilltop to Canterbury Bus Station, leaving St Faith's Hall at 10.00 am and returning at 1.00pm....

ONLY £2 per single journey

For the sake of keeping the taxi going for our regulars who do not have transport, please, please consider using it, even if it's only once in a while.

Phone Longleys Taxis on 01227 710777 to book your seat You can book at anytime up to 9.00am on the morning of your journey



If you have any questions you can email the team: deb-arah.kellond@pilgrimshospices.org or call 01227 812621

From your Parish Council



Councillor
Graham Page

Chairman TWPC

01227 462508



Sarah Guest

Chairman
Hilltop Trustees

01227 765703

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Since the last report, the legal process over the sale of Hambrook Marshes is still awaiting finalisation, but hopefully matters will soon be resolved, and the area will remain to provide a delight to all for generations to come. The Parish Council has arranged for a handrail to be provided for the safety of people using the steps in the bank in New House Close. This work should be started by the end of January - weather permitting. If you can think of any way that your area could be improved - however small, do let us know. The website Community Transport page is to be updated, to include mention of the Community Taxi service that operates in the South Ward. Should you not have had the opportunity to look at our website, please do so. It is a feast of information and contains an excellent history of the parish, compiled originally by the late Charles Day and Professor Clive Church, both past Chairmen of the Parish Council. If you are not able to come to our parish council meetings, the minutes of previous meetings are always posted on the website once agreed as correct. I look forward to updating you all again in the next edition of this newsletter, hopefully by that time, the sale of Hambrook Marshes will be finalised.

Graham Page

Apology-

The photograph in the last issue shown of the Harvest Basket Cake was baked and intricately decorated by Anita Rubins.



Editor—Trisha Cheeseworth
01227 761642

been so confident and excited about. We could never get anyone to talk. Then when at long last an initial lease was proposed and tabled by the PCC, it contained such unreasonable and restrictive terms and conditions we at that stage could never have considered entertaining it on behalf of our community. We were left with little option but to draft and prepare our own version of a lease which we would find acceptable and put this forward as a proposal for negotiation. There then followed many a late night burning the midnight oil, many in-house meetings and messages going back and forth between us and our legal advisor. Finally we had a draft proposal able to be submitted and put on the table as our opening gambit document. More years of inactivity followed with just the very occasional meetings and discussions amending and agreeing points and terms in our version of the lease. Eventually during 2012 we reached agreement over the terms between us and the PCC that we were each able to accept. The solicitors then had their turn, bouncing the document between them, the PCC and us. You would think that was it wouldn't you? Oh no - The Charity Commission have to confirm that it meets with their rules and give sanction for it to be granted. Just a formality we were told as it is an agreement between two charities. So - a year later and we are still waiting (apparently they lost the first submission and then we think the second got lost on the bottom of a pile in some little back office somewhere). We, our solicitor and the PCC were tearing our hair out and getting continually frustrated at the lack of progress but no matter how any of us chased we could not gain any progress. Finally late in 2013 we had the lease: agreed - drafted - checked - confirmed: that we could all feel happy to sign. It all seemed a little bit of an anticlimax but we know the really hard work is now only just starting. It is now that we really need your ideas and support.

By the way.....

- When Albert Tolputt's father built the two bungalows, one to sell and one (Iffin Croft, 28 New House Close) for Albert and Laura when they got married, the road was called **Iffin Lane**. This might interest to people researching Iffin Lane. Reg Oulton

Which month was the wettest in 2013?



I think most people would say 'December', but in fact it was October, at least that is what our recordings at Iffin Cottages in Iffin Lane show. For the past 5 years I have kept daily records of maximum and minimum temperatures and rainfall. Rainfall in October was 143.4mm. (5.65") compared with 125.1mm in December. June was the driest month, with only 12.7mm recorded. The maximum temperature of 31.5°C (88.7°F) was recorded on 1 August, only just beating the 31.1°C of 22 July, which was followed by a storm. The month with the highest average temperature was July, at 23.9°C. The minimum temperature of -4.9°C was in January, the month in which we also had a few days of snow; we measured a depth on our lawn of 3.5". However, we also had -4.6°C in April! Overall 2013 was mild compared with 2012, when we recorded -10.8°C in February. The total rainfall for 2013 of 707.9mm (27.9") was less than the total for 2012, which was 757.4mm (29.8").

Summary for the year

- Max temp 31.5°C (August)
 - Min temp -4.9°C (January)
 - Max rain in a day 45.1mm (Oct. 11)
 - Most days no rain 19 days (July)
 - Total rainfall 707.9mm**
- Weather report from Hilary Spoon

100club@hilltopca.co.uk

100 Club Winners November, December & January

Prize	November	December (Bonus)	January
£50	Terry Davies	Iris Purdy(£100)	Joan Gower
£30	Barbara Markham	Chris Silk(£60)	Sarah Hearnden
£20	John Richardson	Audrey Allen(£40)	Maureen Forge
£10	Maureen Hillman	Terry Maple(£20)	Veronica Pringle



Freak weather brings down tree in New House Lane