

10/05/2012

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Hilary and Barry Whiting with Peter Hobbs

PD2023633

## Villagers dig in to help

VILLAGERS gathered at Bridge recreation ground on Saturday to plant flowers and an oak tree, as well as have a general tidy-up.

The day was organised by parish councillor Sue Hodges and the oak was planted for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Barbara Beinder, who lives in the

High Street, was among those who attended.

She said: "We also had a general tidying up of the recreation ground and planted flowers."

The recreation ground will play host to Bridge's jubilee celebrations where there will be a village picnic on June 3.



## Children's time capsule at housing scheme

CHILDREN from Bridge and Patrixbourne primary school have buried a time capsule at the site of the village's affordable housing scheme.

The ceremony took place in Brickfield Close where eight new homes owned by the Southern Housing Group have recently been completed.

From left, parish council chairman John Hill, Southern Housing regional director Guy Collar and school council members Hyu, Daniel and Lily bury the time capsule

Picture: Paul Dennis PD2028745

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Among the contents were two photo albums from the school, a CD of the school choir, a parish council newsletter, a copy of the church newsletter, a mobile phone, details of the Queen's Jubilee and Olympics and a copy of this paper.

Parish council chairman John Hill said: "We wanted to provide a picture of Bridge and what was going on in the country in 2012 which is a pretty special year."

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15.11.2012

## THE PROFESSIONALS

## IN CHARGE OF THE NHS HEALTH BUDGET

Meet the  
doctors  
with  
£263m  
to spend



**by Ed Targett**

etargett@thekmgroupp.co.uk

A GROUP of doctors is gearing up to take over a £263 million NHS budget for the Canterbury area.

The Canterbury and Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group (C4G) will be responsible for allocating money, resources and services across Canterbury, Whitstable, Herne Bay, Faversham, Ash and Sandwich – an area with a registered practice population of 209,764.

It will take over commissioning responsibility from the NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust under changes enacted after the contested Health and Social Care Act 2012 was made law earlier this year.

The controversial bill moved funding powers to GPs and was opposed outright by the British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing. The government claimed it would empower health professionals and reduce bureaucracy.

In an exclusive interview with the Gazette, C4G's chairman Dr Mark Jones said the group would "involve patients more" and denied there was "any intention whatsoever of sweeping cuts".

The father-of-two, who has been a GP in the Canterbury area for 25 years, said: "We are realising that we are going to have to work in a different way. There is the expectation that we will achieve more, on a smaller budget."

"There is always a danger that others will start talking about cuts and we'll be talking about providing the best service for patients with the funding that is available."

"So the way we would hope to do that properly is by engaging with patients and telling them

**THE NUMBERS**

- The budget: £262,933,929
- The patients: 209,764
- The practices: 23
- The board: 9

what is possible and that will be one of the core differences of Clinical Commissioning Groups compared to Primary Care Trusts."

Dr Jones claimed the group – which comprises 23 practices – was well-equipped to take over responsibilities.

He said: "The current group of GPs started before the current NHS reforms. There was something called 'practice based commissioning' (PBC) beforehand, which was the involvement of

GPs and nurses in commissioning.

"We had a local PBC group working within the Primary Care Trust which was, by and large, the current C4G group. If you go back further, Canterbury and Coastal GPs have a history of working together, coming together as a consortium for out-of-hours services, so we have a long background of working together."

"There is no underestimating the significance of the change. At times there is no doubt it can feel daunting, but the picture is much more positive than has been painted."

"Really for me there remain all of the issues of running a health service – they would have been there whether it was a PCT or a CCG – but there is the opportunity now for clinical engagement; the CCG is its member practices, and it is also bringing in patients as partners."

"We have a very active process and plan, we have Friends of C4G, we have a patient reference group, we have a lay member representing patients."

"The patient group includes representation from all the practices, it includes members from voluntary and community groups, the student union, friends of all of the hospitals, Age UK, the pensioner's forum."

# Private providers may be used more

THE Department for Health hopes the transformation of the NHS programme will deliver £20 billion of efficiency savings by 2014/15.

Anne Belworthy, chairman of Canterbury District Pensioners Forum, said: "This huge saving is making our local GPs look at saving money and consider using private companies that may from the outset be cheaper to run a particular service than our local NHS hospital or community services."

"Already local MRI and diagnostic services are being put out to tender."

"You may not know that you are using a private provider because they work in your local hospital or GP practice."

"It is very convenient for people to pop along to local surgeries for cataract or minor surgery, but this is usually carried out by a private contractor, or go along on a Sunday for a scan but if in the future the investment for these services goes into private



**Anne Belworthy, chairman of the Canterbury District Pensioners Forum**

companies, accountable to shareholders, who's to say what they will charge?

"For as the money bypasses the NHS, people will not be trained by it to provide an alternative service to the private one – as time goes on many services will become contracted out from the NHS to private providers."

■ Dr Mark Jones, C4G chairman, a GP in Canterbury since 1987



■ Dr Simon Lundy, Faversham representative, GP in the town since 1999



■ Dr Helene Armstrong, Sandwich and Ash, a partner at Ash Surgery since 1991



■ Dr Alyson Bowhay, Cant rural, health promotion and health prevention



■ Dr John Ribchester, Canterbury representative, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust co-chairman. He has also been the PCT's Urgent Care Clinical Commissioner.



■ Dr Jeremy Carter, Herne Bay representative, a GP in Herne Bay since 2004



■ Dr Geoffrey Jones, Canterbury representative, a GP in the city since 1985



■ Jenny Bostock, patient and clinical engagement, nurse and manager at University Medical Centre since 2006



■ Dr Richard Browning, salaried GP representative, GP at Bridge since 2005



Feb 16 2012

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# Pupils part of twinning celebration

CHILDREN joined civic dignitaries from both sides of the Channel at Canterbury's Guildhall on Friday to witness the official signing of the twinning agreement between Bridge and the French town of St Andre-lez-Lille.

During the ceremony members of the choir from Bridge and Patrixbourne CE Primary School sang to the guests, including Canterbury's Lord Mayor Cllr Ian Thomas, the French delegation and Canterbury MP Julian Brazier.

It was in 2009 that the school's head, Ren Chinnadurai, and Louise Tasou, chairman of Bridge Twinning Association, first began talks with St Andre which led to the twinning.

Mrs Tasou thanked members of her committee, Brigitte Ward, Rene Renault and Alan Atkinson, for all their help and encouragement.

Guests were welcomed to the Guildhall by John Hill, chairman of Bridge Parish Council, who said



**The signing of agreements during the twinning ceremony between Bridge and St Andre held in The Guildhall on Friday morning**

Picture: Chris Davey PD1990199

he looked forward to the contacts and exchanges that would be made through the twinning.

The Mayor of St Andre, Olivier Henno, said twinning agreements

were not symbolical or theoretical partnerships but made a huge contribution to the social and cultural life of a community.

He added: "This twinning

agreement contributes modestly, but surely, to encouraging a spirit of curiosity and tolerance which are inherent to the cultural exchanges we are about to embark on.



A 4x4 is the latest vehicle to overshoot the A2 slip road at Bekesbourne Lane, Bridge

# Safety fears after new car crash at end of slip road

## EXCLUSIVE

by Adam Williams  
awilliams@thekmgroup.co.uk

FOR the fourth time in six weeks a car has overshoot the slip road on the A2 at Bridge.

Villagers and campaigners have renewed calls for improved safety measures after a 4x4 crashed on Bekesbourne Road at the weekend.

Former Bridge parish councillor Mark Esdale has been lobbying Kent Highways Services for changes to the road layout after this paper carried pictures in the last two weeks of similar accidents.

Mr Esdale, from High Street, Bridge, wants three things to happen.

He said: "Black and white checker boards need to replace signs which were knocked down in accidents either side of the slip road, at the end of November.

"These are used frequently where there's a T-junction on to a busy road at the end.



Mark Esdale says drastic changes are needed to the road layout

"There's an optical illusion when you first approach the signs and you think they're passing above you. But, all of a sudden they're on you if you're driving too fast.

"Rumble strips would be another positive measure, but highways officers say the length of the road is too short.

"Even just a couple of strips at the top end would reinforce the need to slow down.

"Another sign on the apex of the two roads to show it splits from the A2 would also make it clearer to people they are leaving a dual carriageway.

"All these accidents happen at night and a lot of people I've spoken to say the problem happens when their sat-nav still thinks they're driving along the A2.

"People don't immediately think to slow down and that's why you see so many overshooting the road."

Mr Esdale says the issue has been long-running and his previous attempts to get highways officers from Canterbury City Council, Kent County Council and the Highways Agency to the site to accept responsibility have been fruitless.

He has also made inquiries under the Freedom of Information Act as to why the missing road signs have not been replaced.

Kent Highways Services had not commented as we went to press.

■ See letters on page 10

## another crash at black spot

LAST year saw the number of vehicles failing to stop at the give-way junction at the end of the slip road off of the A2 at Bridge and careering across the road, crashing through the road signs and into the woods opposite reach double figures (The Car Could Have Rolled Down The Bank Onto The A2, Kentish Gazette, January 5).

Fortunately no one has been seriously



**SO CLOSE:** Another car crashed at the top of the A2 Bridge slip road after failing to stop in time at the T-junction

12.1.2012

The editor welcomes letters on any topical subject, but reserves the right to edit them. Letters must include your name and address. Send letters to The Editor, Gazette House, 5-8 Boorman Way, Estuary View Business Park, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3SE fax 01227 7

injured or killed. Less than 24 hours into 2012, yet another vehicle did the same.

With the number of these accidents escalating over the years it can only be a matter of time before there is a serious accident involving innocent traffic crossing in either direction along Bekesbourne Road/Bifrons Hill.

Action must surely be taken immediately to make sure that there will not be a devastating outcome involving this junction.

*Stuart Kollhoff, Dering Close, Bridge, Canterbury*

■ WITH regard to the accidents at the A2 slip road/Bridge T-junction.

It isn't rocket science to work out that, despite the number of signs leading up to this notorious junction, there is clearly still a problem.

I have always maintained it would probably be better to put some high-visibility cones or something similar on the far side of the junction. Perhaps that would stop vehicles in their tracks.

*Mr Griggs, Aerodrome Road, Bekesbourne*

■ LET'S get things clear. There is no such thing as a dangerous road or junction.

That is just an age-old excuse for people driving beyond their ability.

This junction is clearly signed and the big

tree in front of you should give you a clue that one has to turn right or left at the top of the slip road.

Not long ago there were complaints that there were too many signs, causing confusion.

Well, slow down a little, as it only takes a few seconds to read and digest them.

Perhaps the answer is anybody that overshoots should lock the car up and throw the keys away, making the roads safer for all concerned.

Another article dealt with an accident on the M2, a straight section of dual carriageway, so this will now be classed as a dangerous road?

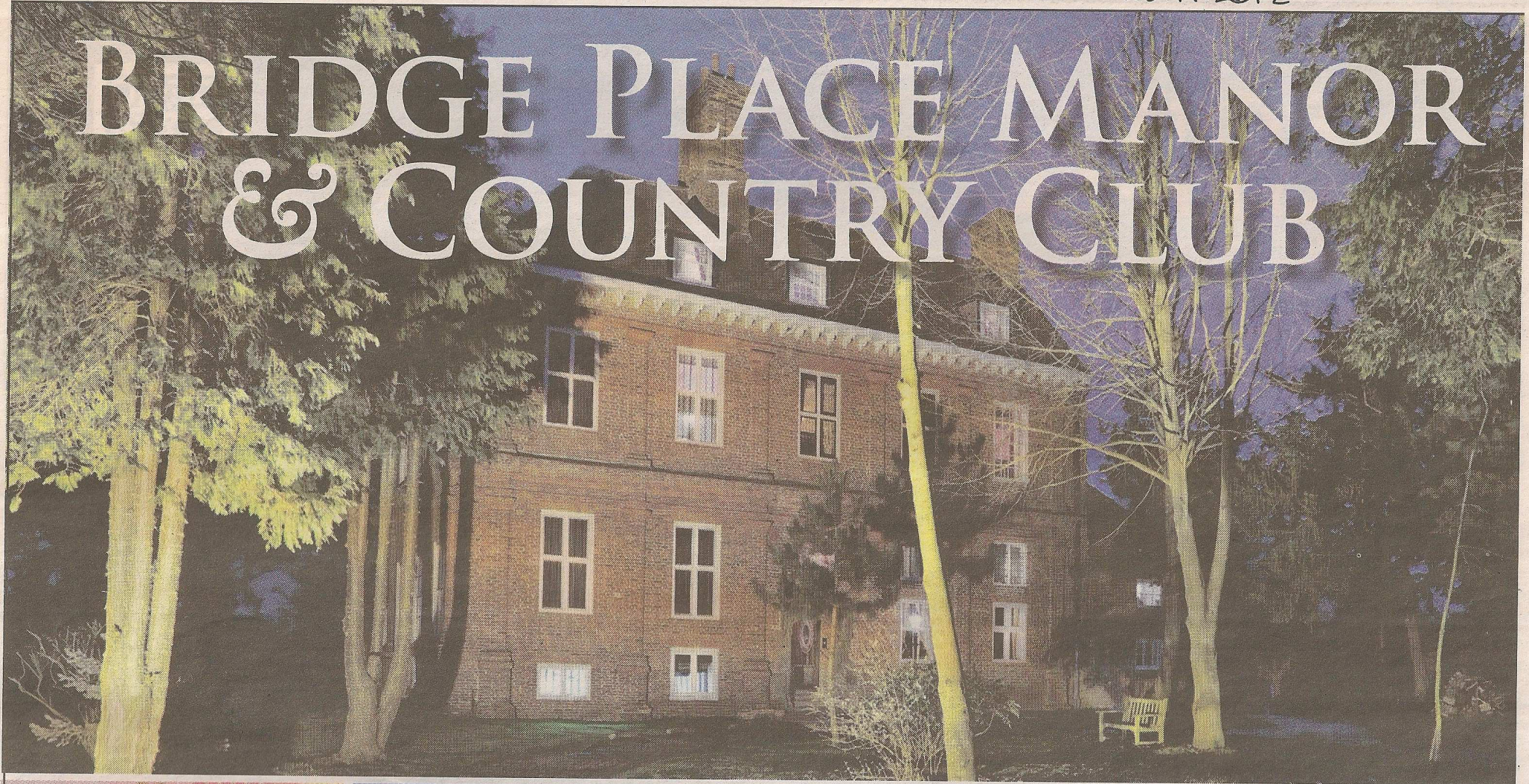
The modern car is so easy to drive, for want of a better term, that the concept of speed is lost and only becomes apparent when things go wrong.

In most cases it is a lack of concentration by a driver sitting in a comfortable little cocoon thinking about all things other than the road ahead.

*P.J. Hogben, Perry Lane, Wingham*

23.11.2012

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# 'We need communities not housing estates'

15.3.2012



Alex Perkins

by Alex Claridge  
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THOUSANDS of homes are being proposed for land around Canterbury, a planning document reveals.

Land in an area called the south east quadrant is being suggested to take 3,500 homes while other rural areas are being mooted as sites for up to 150 homes.

Developers proposed the locations as part of the city council's process for drawing up the Local Plan – the planning strategy for the district for the next 20 years.

Alex Perkins, the leader of the Lib Dem group on the council, believes people should be conscious of the plans being put forward. He said: "I'm not opposed



to the fact that we need to build houses or to expand but I think people need to be aware that this is the plan for the next 20 years.

"The council wants to massively expand Canterbury to the south east to basically fill in the area between the city and Bridge.

"People may be blissfully unaware that this lovely rural area is going to change.

"These are all just proposals at the moment but I think what is really important is that we don't just build housing estates – we build communities.

"Communities have parks, a school, a social centre and so on. It is something we are bad at doing in this country."

The plans have been suggested by developers for Canterbury City Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

### Developed

The aim of the assessment is to identify sites which could be developed but not all of those put forward will be realised.

Planners will assess each site against a number of factors including the council's overall

strategy for the district, environmental concerns and infrastructure issues. Certain sites in the countryside have already been discounted as contrary to planning national planning policy.

A number of smaller sites are no more than areas of garages, while some areas have been put forward as ripe for development but without any more details about what could be built on them.

■ Log on to <http://tinyurl.com/6tahqag> for a full list of proposed sites across the Canterbury City Council district



## Claims are overstated

CITY council leader John Gilbey has accused Cllr Perkins of exaggerating the threat to the countryside.

He said: "I think he is making a mountain out of a molehill and his claims of urban sprawl between South Canterbury and Bridge are overstated. To say this number of homes are being planned is just wrong.

"The fact is that as an authority we have an obligation to identify land for new housing development.

"But there are many stages to go through over the next six to eight months to finalise the recommendations and some areas will inevitably be quickly eliminated by officers on technical grounds.

"We have a working group, which I chair, and numerous council committee to consider proposals."

## Council hopes document will be ready by the autumn

THE city council is keen to press ahead with drawing up its plan for the district. It says that in the coming months it will examine technical evidence and the results of consultation in deciding the scale and location of development needed for the next 20 years.

By the autumn, it will have produced a document for wider consultation.

The council states: "It is expected that the document will closely resemble a local plan. It will therefore set out the planning strategy for the

district; identify sites; put forward policies to assist in the consideration of individual development proposals; and establish policies to protect the best of the local environment."

The council hopes to adopt the final plan by April 2014.