

## Chairman's message



Good day to everyone. I do hope you and yours are safe and well. This edition includes good news. The media comprehensively covers bad news. I have also included a personal message from myself.

The good news is that tomorrow 15th of April 2023, I realise how lucky I am to celebrate my 87th birthday. Since 22nd March 2017 I have been Founder/Chairman of the Steering Group of Health and Business in Thanet. I'm passionate about its important purpose and view this as giving back my voluntary time to our Thanet Communities. "Sounds a bit corny but ..... Do you think I have earned my retirement from 'giving back' to Thanet Local Communities? "

The advice given to Kent County Council Public Health and I on 22nd March 2017 from Thanet's 'Shakers and Movers' was "Brian, now we all need to gain the support and backing of a top-level Steering Group of Statutory Agencies, (LA's and NHS), Thanet Business Representatives and Thanet's Voluntary Sector."

On 11th October 2017 I invited senior managers from the key organisations and the suggested Steering Group was formed.

**Please submit your articles to feature in our next edition by 1st June 2023 to [brad@thinkhealthyme.co.uk](mailto:brad@thinkhealthyme.co.uk) Your support and commitment is key to keeping this newsletter going.**

### MY PLEDGE:

The selected steering group of Health and Business "HABIT" agreed to the terms of reference to address the health and equality needs of the then 141,000 population of Thanet. In January 2018 we met at the Kent Innovation Centre. Together we all committed to the aims and objectives outlined clearly in the terms of reference. In early 2020 COVID-19 arrived. The steering group allowed without a decision to abandon the terms of reference. Now in 2023, the pandemic is behind us although its effects linger.

Fortunately, a progressive organisation named New Local has organised a high-profile conference at the Guildhall London on 23rd May 2023. It is named "Stronger Things". The objective is to determine how our communities can build stronger places through 'community power'. One key goal is to lead towards Community Led Healthcare through partnership. Two Think Healthy Me Directors including myself have registered. We plan to be there.

My pledge is that although I'm not the Leader of Kent Council, Leader of Thanet District Council or MD of NHS Kent and Medway CCG, whilst I continue to live in this wonderful world I will remain as a 'Thanet 'Active' Community Leader' committed to the HABITS terms of reference to improve the Health and Well-Being of the population. It is my hope that someone will step forward to take over leadership. I'm happy to coordinate the transition. **Brian Urwin**

The purpose of this newsletter is to:

- Share good wellbeing business practice
- Making Thanet a happier place to live, work and visit
- Strengthen communication in Thanet by putting 'unity' into community
- Share good news, business initiatives and uplifting Thanet community experiences
- Encourage next generation involvement and share opportunities

## WESTCLIFF PARK BEFRIENDING



Westcliff Park is a private gated development located on The Royal Esplanade, Ramsgate. Our neighbours occupy around 46 homes, most of them self-owned. We are fortunate to have a diverse group of residents of various ages with many interesting 'life stories.' Quite a percentage of neighbours are in their 70's, 80's and 90's. It appears that once people settle here many choose a healthie lifestyle and tend to stay. This is helped by our location of being in a park setting with lots of trees and wild life. There is a strong community spirit . Also because of being by the sea the air is fresh, it is in a park setting, with lots of trees and nature. In view of neighbour's concerns about climate change and their concerns about future generations and their well-being a small group of residents decided to introduce an ongoing biodiversity project and involve residents. We agreed to build small ponds, including one deeper one, plant wild flowers and build bird and bat boxes. This seemed to spark the interest of our neighbours and many got involved. The percentage of involved neighbours rose from around 25% to 84% which was unexpected and most pleasing, in terms of raising 'Community Spirit'. Our neighbours have named the project Urban Oasis.

Our befriending group started small, and gradually grew naturally with neighbours who lived in Westcliff Park and attracted other neighbours from outside. We have found that a good size of group is between 10 and 12. We meet regularly on a Friday morning at the boating pool Royal Esplanade at 1130hrs each week. Attendance is free with numbers varying between 4 and 10 or 12. Conversations never seem to lack interesting topics that are wide and diverse and often informative and helpful.

We also have special occasions to celebrate birthdays. In the summer we meet within the grounds of Westcliff Park and always open up the social occasion to the wider Westcliff Park Community. On nice summer days these get-to-gathers normally last for several hours and are very sociable.

In conclusion, the Pandemic proved to be a 'negative' experience. The Befriending group benefits, for those involved, have proved 'positive'. A bonus is that the HABITS steering group goal of putting UNITY into commUNITY is being achieved. **Brian Urwin & Babette Dobson**

## Thanet Community Event

HABIT members will be outside the Primark store and in the community hub at Westwood Cross on Saturday 22 April 10-3 alongside representatives from Kent Fire & Rescue Service and South East Coast Ambulance Service to raise awareness of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how to use a defibrillator. There'll be demonstrations and an opportunity to sign a petition for more defibrillators to be provided in Thanet to help save lives.

Brian Urwin will be there in support of this initiative. Brian is himself a cardiac arrest survivor who gives his time voluntarily to help others in the community with a wide range of health-related issues but he is particularly keen to help people to survive heart attacks. Please come along and chat with the team, sign the petition and learn how to save lives.

