

November 2019

Dear Resident,

The 50th Chipstead & Hooley Annual Bonfire Night - 2019

"I am pleased to report that this year's event on Saturday 2nd November, was very well attended. The preparations began with strong winds and driving rain, which did not bode well for the main event later in the day. Nevertheless, my dedicated and loyal small band of volunteers rose to the task of preparing The Meads for the commemorative 50th. There is always so much to do and we would dearly love to have more helpers to ease the time pressure!"

The above is the first paragraph of my report to readers of The Chipstead Parish Magazine following our annual bonfire and firework event which was held on The Meads.

Whether you love or detest the tradition of fireworks, you will probably have a view as to whether this event should be staged in the future. The main reason you have received this letter is because my committee consists of too small a number to contemplate staging it again. We must have the commitment of more volunteers, ideally able-bodied but not necessarily, to be able to take on the many and varied tasks during the months leading up to the day itself. You do not have to be good at everything, just be willing and able to help as part of a team.

The tasks I refer to are not only putting up fencing or signage or humping tables borrowed from the rugby club, but communication through advertising and social media, and consideration of how best to plan for the safety of our spectators, old and young, from arrival to departure. This year, due to dedication and organisation, my small team established a facebook platform to spread the word about Chipstead's spectacular display and to make discounted advance tickets available. I can confirm that we engage professional pyrotechnicians to organise the fireworks and therefore be reassured that you will not be involved with handling explosives etc.

We now need more community-minded residents to step forward and offer their time and ideas in order to ensure this event continues into the future. If we do not find support NOW from within our community, then this event will not be possible next year or beyond and will become simply a distant memory in years to come.

If this letter inspires you to want to get involved, please make yourself known to me, by emailing me your contact details to the address below, by no later than 15th December 2019.

Thank you.

David Selfe

Chairman – Chipstead & Hooley Bonfire Association

Email: davidrselfe@gmail.com