

The Heron

25.09.2024

Dear Readers,

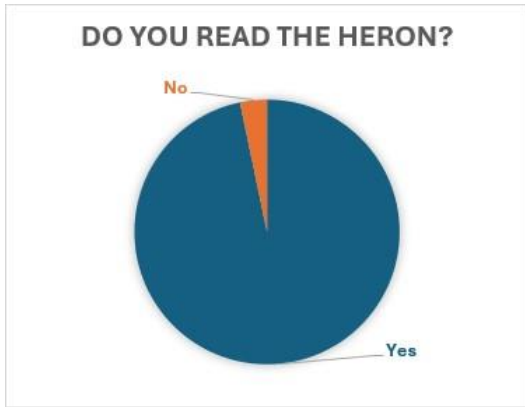
On Tuesday 24th September we held our Annual General Meeting. We reflected on the year and discussed next steps for our community magazine. We were grateful for the readers that came to the meeting to give their support.

It has been an eventful year with its fair share of ups and downs. Reflecting back over the past 12 months, one thing that I am so proud of is the teamwork and solidarity that has been so evident in the meetings I have chaired with both the Editorial and Executive committee; and when we held our special meeting to adopt the Charities commission constitution. We are indebted to our deliverers, printers, proof readers, Lewis for his IT support, those that help with organising fund-raising events and contribute articles. It is a real team in every sense of the word. I would also like to mention our subscribers, advertisers and parish council colleagues who have been patient and understanding when we suspended 'The Heron' back in April.

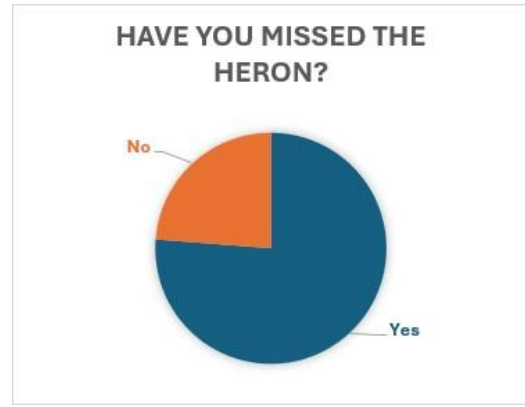
We had repeatedly advertised to see if anyone else from our community would be able to support the publishing role. Despite requests going out via the Heron, notice boards, social media and word of mouth, no one was forthcoming. This coupled with our members own work commitments and personal circumstances, led to the magazine stopping in April. The break enabled everyone involved to have a rest, rethink and take stock.

We have in the interim carried out a survey, knocking on doors to find out what our readers thought. We wished to ascertain local people's views regarding continuing with 'The Heron' and to see if we could find any more volunteers, especially on the publishing side of things.

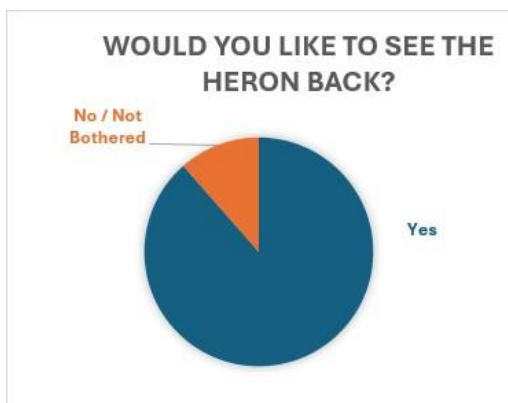
We knocked on 152 doors and 122 people gave their views. We covered addresses in Tips End, Euximoor, 16 Foot Bank, Padgett's Road, Upwell Road, Green Lane, The Croft, Fen View, Brimstone Close, Crown Avenue, Wayside Estate as well as the Dun Cow, Breakfast club on a Friday morning and Coffee and Cake on a Thursday afternoon at our Christchurch Community Centre.



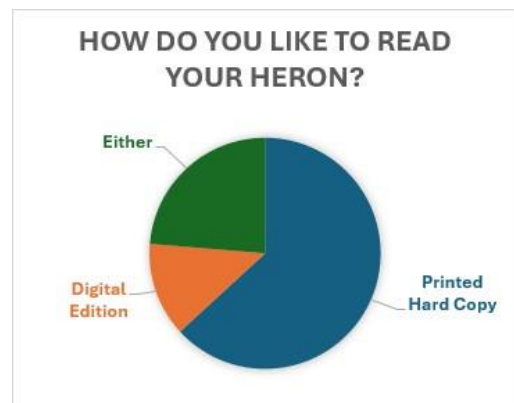
97% said they read the Heron



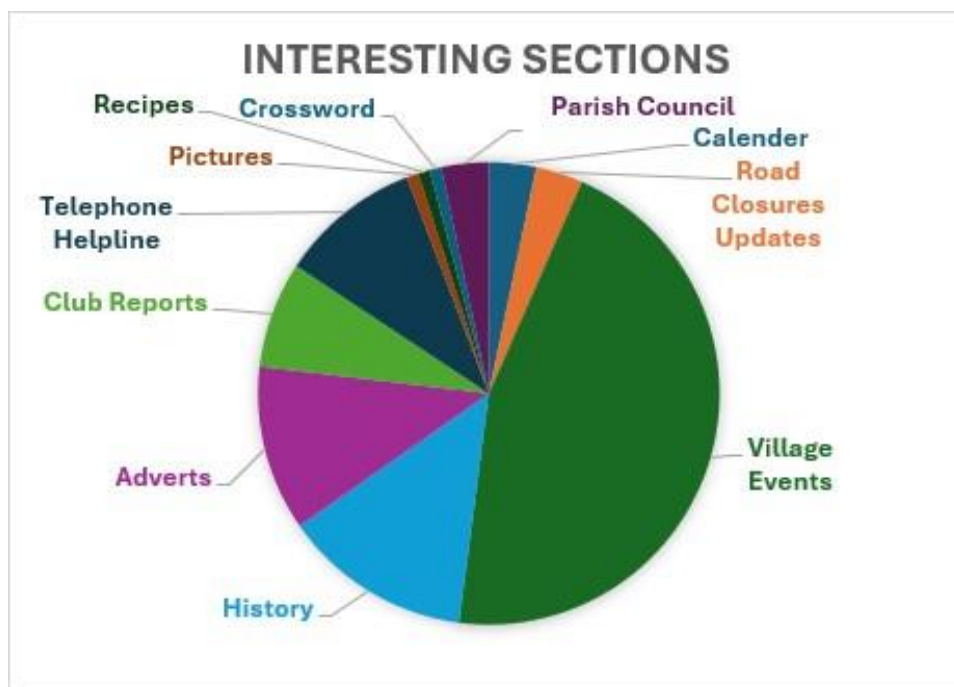
76% said they had missed it



89% said they would welcome it's return



59% preferred to read a hard copy



Sections of the Heron readers preferred

During the AGM meeting we elected our Executive Committee which now comprises of 8 trustees. Please see below for names and responsibilities.

Chair	Lorna Kirk
Secretary	Denise Freeland
Treasurer	Elaine Reed-Hughes
Editor	Clive Benjamin
Publisher	Elaine Reed-Hughes
Advertising/Social Media	Kerry Cooper
Fundraising Lead	Pat Rigby
Grants Lead	Liz Scott
(TBC)	Tracy Giles-Benjamin

Our intentions and relaunch of The Heron

I am delighted to be able to share that we will continue to produce The Heron. Six editions will be published each year, one every 2 months. This we feel is manageable with the human resources that we have. We are still hoping someone will come forward to help with the publishing. Elaine is happy to continue with this role but only temporarily until additional help can be found. Our next edition will be published and ready for December 2024. You can then expect to receive 'The Heron' for the months of February, April, June, August, October and December each year.


The magazine continues under the Charities Commission constitution framework and over the next couple of months we will take the next steps to request to become a charity. The Heron will continue to be offered as a hard copy although it can also be accessed in digital format www.theheron.info Here you can find the current issue and past issues.

Look out in the coming months for a laminated copy of helpful contact numbers to keep as a reference. Many of you from the survey shared that you found the 'community Information' and 'useful telephone numbers' page really useful. We are looking to develop a Facebook page and a 'what's on' digital page where you can keep up to date with forthcoming village events as well as them being published in our bi-monthly magazine. Our community notice boards will also help to keep you informed.

We will be writing to all our stakeholders explaining the terms of how we can continue and seeing what role they would be able to play in the new set up. We really hope they will continue with their support.

Just as a reminder if you have any questions please email them to us at enquiries@theheron.info. This is the best place to have your questions answered by the people that are 'in the know' and on the committee.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorna Kirk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in "Kirk".

Lorna Kirk (Chair of the Heron Executive Committee)