

East howe churchyard

The Community took back control following vandalism and fly-tipping: Cllr Dennis Gritt, Alan Keeping, Ted Taylor and Deirdre Redstone went down to see the East Howe Graveyard after it was reported at a Panel meeting that a portaloo had been put in the middle of a grave! Dennis dealt with the matter and it was removed. It was immediately obvious, as we looked around, that the churchyard was a hidden little historical gem which was being used as a haven for drinking and drugs and a dumping ground for household rubbish. As a Crime Prevention Panel, with the permission and support of Graham Barber, we decided to do something about it, as follows: The site was overgrown with brambles, trees growing out of the graves and it had been used as a dumping ground, drug taking and drinking and totally disrespected. In fact we were faced with a daunting task and a jungle to clear. One particular edifice at the end of the churchyard looked just like a tree, until all the ivy was carefully pruned apart to reveal a very large memorial edifice by Mike Mooney and his Youth Offending Team . The Community Pay Back Team also helped initially with the heavier work and strimming the grass , which was wonderful in order to find where all the graves were hidden. We found the grave of 'Bessie Still' in the middle of a bush and several unmarked graves that were not listed on the church records. Thanks to Rodney Haskell and his research into all the old Kinson/East Howe families, we have now identified all the graves listed, plus three extra burials. Thanks to all the hard work by the volunteers and the local community who have given up many hours to help and the young people in the Youth Offending Team, we have managed to reach our target of making a huge difference before the cold weather sets in. We still have a great deal to do, but it is really marvellous that so much has been achieved since the middle of August 2014. Below is