

**WEST WICKHAM CARPET BOWLS CLUB**  
**Report to West Wickham Annual Parish Meeting May 2015**

This year ill health has rather taken its toll of our members and we have had depleted numbers recently, even to the extent that sometimes we are failing to cover the cost of the weekly hire of the hall. We have members from Balsham, Horseheath and Haverhill as well as West Wickham but we would very much like more to help keep us going. Despite this, our evening meetings are very enjoyable social occasions with some not-too-strenuous exercise thrown in. Carpet bowls is easy to learn, suitable for all ages and abilities and all the equipment is provided. Put together with a friendly bunch of people, what's not to like? We have still been able to maintain our programme of friendly matches against local clubs, even though we've had to draft in 'foreigners' sometimes to make up numbers and we've had the usual mixed bag of results. Do come along and join us. You will be given a warm welcome.

Janet Morris  
Secretary

**WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB**  
**Report to West Wickham Annual Parish Meeting May 2015**

We have had our usual programme of talks over the autumn and spring on such diverse subject as the history of Little Bradley, village life in the First World War, the Linton doctor and antiquarian, William Mortlock Palmer and river and railway transport in East Anglia. Last summer we had a walk along the Sturmer village trail and visited the castle site at Castle Camps. This summer we are visiting Little Bradley and the Ashdon Museum. The work on identifying the men from the First World War is almost complete and will be placed in the church.

The report on the 2013 Big Village Dig was finally received and the results presented to everybody last August. The enthusiasm of those taking part has encouraged us to continue the project with Dig2 over the weekend of 11 & 12 July when we hope to open 6 test pits in the fields to the north and west of the church. The voluntary group Rheesearch has already done a geophysical survey of one of the fields and is returning to do the other shortly. We have been very pleased to get a small grant from Cambridge Antiquarian Society to buy some tools for Dig2 and we are being supported by Jigsaw Cambridgeshire, a lottery funded project to encourage and support community archaeology projects like ours.

The proposed move of Cambridgeshire Archives from Shire Hall and more particularly the Cambridgeshire Collection from the Central Library to Ely is causing concern in the local history community. It is hard to argue against the move of Cambs Archives as the storage facilities at Shire Hall have been condemned by The National Archives but the much-used, much-loved Cambs Collection is being moved on purely financial reasons (the closing of the Library third floor for use by private enterprise, reduction in opening hours and staffing for instance) regardless of where the bulk of the users come from and the poor public transport links. Although Ely is on a train link from Cambridge, it is far from easy to get there by public transport from the south and west of the county and this will severely impact on the study of local history (including by those in the two universities in the city) and will have an undoubted impact on the growth of the collection.

As a Club, we now have members from Horseheath and Weston Colville but as always we would welcome more interest from West Wickham.

Janet Morris  
Secretary

**West Wickham & District Gardening Club**

Report for the Annual Parish Meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015, on the twelve months up to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The Club has continued with its recent innovation of the publication of an occasional *Newsletter* produced by Janet Morris, and last year's change of prize in the Christmas Raffle, to gift tokens to be used at local nurseries, was well received and will be continued. In addition, the Club is testing the water by offering tea and cake at its two major public events, the Annual Plant Sale and the Annual Show; so far the reaction has been favourable.

Both these major established events are held in the Village Hall, the Plant Sale in May and the Annual Show in August. The Plant Sale plays a central role in the life of the Club because, as well as producing a fine range of inexpensive plants which can be bought by members and friends, it is the main source of

the income with which the Club pays for its speakers. It is thus highly gratifying that the 2014 Sale produced a record income. The Annual Show plays an equally central role in the life of the Club, in this case allowing members to display, and to win small prizes for, their own horticultural and domestic achievements. It is thus also very satisfactory that the 2014 Show sustained the previous year's large increase both in the overall number of entries and also in the number of children's entries. The Show makes its contribution to the Club's finances through the concluding auction of the exhibits, conducted by Peter Grieve, and through the Show Raffle, organised by Sheila Hampton – and as she and her husband are leaving the area, it is appropriate to acknowledge with gratitude the contribution which they have both made over many years. We are also grateful for the continuing major contribution made by the Morris family to both the Plant Sale and the Show

Between these two events the Club organised its usual summer outings. Two were Monday evening outings to nearby gardens – one in June to Gretta Bredin's garden at Dullingham and the second to Catherine Horwood Barwise's garden in Clare. In one case it was the refreshments which were particularly notable, and in the other the garden was most striking. The third outing was the Annual Trip, which in 2014 was a coach trip to Kew Gardens, which was well supported and a most enjoyable and interesting event – once again organised by Janet Morris, to whom the Club is most grateful. Despite the 2014 success, the viability of the Annual Trip is causing some concern (finding a date and a venue which suits almost half the Club's members is not easy!), and we are therefore investigating the possibility of teaming up with a neighbouring gardening club for this activity.

The Club's Programme Secretary, Rosemary Yallop, once again arranged a fascinating variety of monthly Monday evening talks running from early autumn to late spring, these being arguably the most important part of the Club's activities. The talks ranged from the practical (a talk on pruning) to the relatively artistic (a talk on Monet and waterlilies) and included wide ranging talks on the remarkable potato family and on the origins and families of plants. In the midst of these we held the Christmas meeting, which took the form of a quiz organised by Andrew and Janet Morris. Happily, I can once again report that all these meetings were well attended, and the presentations well received.

The Club's most practical activity continues to be the very popular group purchase of seeds (through which members are able to buy seeds at considerably discounted prices). This time consuming operation (which for many years was conducted by Sue Thurston) has this year been shouldered by Jean Martin, who has as Trading Officer thus resumed the invaluable service which she has given to the Club for many years in the past; we are most grateful to her, as dealing with seed suppliers is not always easy and the role of Trading Officer is sometimes thank less.

The membership of the Club remains broadly stable; some long serving members move away from the area (such as the Hamptons mentioned above) but new members continue to be recruited and made welcome, and in this way the Club continues to serve as a useful venue for new residents to meet their fellow villagers and to integrate into local life. The finances of the Club remain healthy, with members' subscriptions, the Christmas Raffle and the Plant Sale all contributing to fund the Speaker programme and the hire of the Village Hall for Club events. And the Club's finances continue to be managed by Andrew Morris in his role of Club Treasurer; once again the Club is much indebted to him for this valuable and time consuming work. The Club's 2014 Annual General Meeting re-elected the serving officers to continue for another year.

Arthur Mawby (chairman)

## **West Wickham Village Hall**

### **Report to Parish Council**

**18<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

#### **Usage**

The hall continues to be well used from within and outside of the village.

Daisy Chains continue with their daily sessions during the school term. The KenYuKan club are using the hall twice weekly and Karate club weekly. The village Carpet Bowls, History and Gardening clubs all continue solidly and are represented on the Village Hall committee. There have also been many sports hire and party bookings during the year.

A post office will soon be opening in at the hall, details to follow in the Village Voice and on the village website.

#### **Health and Safety**

Health and Safety (H&S) continues to be a priority for the committee and regular checks have been performed, in addition to asking all regular users to report any concerns, so that they can be investigated and assessed promptly. We also make use of the fact that the preschool is Ofsted regulated and is required to carry out a daily H&S check.

#### **Committee**

The Committee met four times during the calendar year and these have been productive sessions, quite often featuring lively debates, and some laughs too!

We are actively seeking someone with bookkeeping or accountancy skills to take over as Treasurer, as Paul Donert has given us notice that he would like to eventually step down from this role after many years of service. Please contact the Chairman if you are willing to consider this role.

#### **Maintenance**

Maintenance has been the main focus for the committee this year; the hall and reception area were repainted, replacement window blinds were fitted, and the wooden floor has also been resurfaced (at a cost of £2916). The windows are now being cleaned regularly and the hall is looking great inside and out!

We are not anticipating carrying out any major maintenance work in the year ahead.

Richard Grenville has addressed a number of smaller maintenance jobs during the year and Nadine Warner continues to do a great job with the cleaning of the hall.

#### **Finances**

The hall made a moderate loss in the year to 31 March 2014, due to the significant cost of the replacement ceiling lights, concessions made to the preschool to help them over some financial difficulties, and a lack of fundraising.

The cost of the recent floor resurfacing will appear in the accounts to 31 March 2015 (to be signed off at the AGM later this year), which will result in a break-even year at best. To help address our future finances, a decision was taken at the 2014 AGM to increase fees by 10% for non-village hirers.

#### **Fundraising**

No fundraising events were held this year. Fundraising activities are currently on hold but the committee is open to any ideas and particularly offers of help in this area.

#### **Website**

The website (<http://westwickham.org>) content continues to grow steadily. The majority of bookings for the hall are now made through the online booking process.

**Miscellaneous** The AGM will be held in September/October at the hall. Please come along this year to show your support and help us make the hall an even better asset for the village. The committee welcomes all offers of help!

**Nick Salter, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee**