

PARISH MEETING REPORTS FOR 2020 2021.

Chairman's Report to the West Wickham Annual Parish Meeting 2021.

I would like to thank all the Parish, District and County Councillors for their generous time and effort that they give so freely to the West Wickham Parish, especially in these challenging times. So many of our Parishioners like the Parish Council have had to adapt to a completely new way of operating and existing during the Covid pandemic, we are meeting in person for the first time in such a long time, hopefully a sign that a good degree of normality can be achieved in the not-too-distant future. Like so many, the changes 'forced' upon the Parish Council have created challenges, but also highlighted opportunities to improve our effectiveness and make us more efficient.

We are so lucky to live in a Parish where so many people have a sense of community, when the pandemic broke, Di Licence on behalf of The Parish Council and Nicky Cornish on behalf of the PCC volunteered to head up a Parish support network. A call went out for volunteers and the response was humbling. Di and Nicky have done a tremendous job of ensuring that if support was required it was given quietly and efficiently using the volunteers where necessary. Thank you to everyone that has been involved.

All our community societies and groups have been impacted heavily and much needed social contact has been lost, with hope this will all change shortly. Thank you to all those that are responsible in organising these valuable community activities. Sadly, as reported in the May edition of the Village Voice, Daisy Chains Pre-School will be closing at the end of the summer term after 40 years. Sue Harrow has been instrumental in running the Pre-School for over 20 of those years, over 1000 children! How can we thank Sue, her team and all those involved enough? The Village Hall is such a valuable and important community asset, my thanks go to the Village Hall Management Committee and Trevor Hall who chairs the VHMC, not only have they maintained the fabric of the Hall community but improved it, the next major investment will be updating the heating system. With Daisy Chains closing there will be a need to secure extra daytime bookings, the PC is also exploring the possibility of an extension, at this stage we are looking at feasibility, costs and need.

I am personally looking forward to visiting the Hall for the next available Pub Hub and the Village party that is planned for the 4th of September. Thanks go to the social committee Di Licence, Nicci Trudgeon and Di Hazelhurst for organising this.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is now in the consultation phase, hopefully we are getting closer to completion. To get this far has taken so many volunteer hours, possibly thousands, from the working group this is very much appreciated by the Parish Council and will assist greatly in any future development that takes place in the Parish. Dave Sargeant who chairs the group has my thanks and admiration for his tenacity and dedication to detail.

The Village Voice is supported by your Parish Council, and it is an excellent resource for all. Thank you to the editors Andrew Morris and Sue Thurston along with all other contributors and helpers. Sue has decided to 'retire' after nearly 20 years as joint editor, thank you for your huge contribution, Anna Fairhead has kindly volunteered to join the editorial team, we wish her well. The Village Voice is available in digital form on the Parish website westwickham.org. Alex Schuilenburg does a fantastic job of managing the website, it is a

valuable source of information and a way of keeping up to date. As a Parish Council I feel we need to review our communication methods with all Parishioners, Allen Hazelhurst has kindly agreed to lead the review on behalf of the PC. For the avoidance of any doubt the PC is committed to keeping the Village Voice in its hard copy format and delivered to your door.

As a Council, we continue to set the precept at around £65 per household, currently this should give us a small annual surplus to allow for the unexpected, along with our ongoing commitments. (Maintaining the Rec and play area, assisting with St Marys upkeep, the Village Voice, Age Concern Warden, Parish Nurse) as with general expenses incurred.

Thank you to Marcus Cornish, who ably assists as our Vice Chair and recently he kindly organised the ‘mole’ drainage of the Rec and is our unofficial liaison officer with all our local landowners, who do so much for the Parish. Also my thanks to Peter Grieve who looks after all things environmental and writes the wonderful Nature Notes reminding us how lucky we are to live in such a wonderful spot that should not be taken for granted or littered on.

Jenny Richards our Parish Clerk has done another year’s sterling work on behalf of West Wickham, and we are truly grateful for her experience and professionalism.

Your Parish council meets six times during the year, all Parishioners are most welcome and encouraged to attend

Patrick Charlton

Chair West Wickham Parish Council

23rd May 2021

West Wickham Village Hall

Delayed Annual Report to West Wickham Parish Council

May 2021

Summary of Items contained in the Report

- The Management Committee has met regularly.
All trustees are entered on the Charity Commissioners’ website
All trustees make significant contribution to running the hall.
- All equipment has been inspected and relevant certificates are up to date.
Electrical systems have been upgraded to meet latest regulations.
- The financial position is good with adequate reserves of money.
Income has been reduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
The hall has received a small business grant from the government which is used to meet additional costs due to the pandemic.
- Reserves have been used to carry out maintenance, painting and upgrading equipment.
- A contract cleaner has been engaged to ensure a high standard of cleaning is carried out to meet the hall’s COVID Secure status for controlled use of the hall. The service provided has been very good.
- Wi-Fi and closed circuit television systems have been installed.

- The heating system needs replacement due to the failure of some radiators and there being no spares available.
- The Management Committee is trying to reduce the hall's carbon footprint.
- Lighting upgrades are taking place and grants are being sought for fitting solar panels on the roof.

Trustees Meetings

The Village Hall Management Committee have met 9 times since the last AGM in October 2019. The last 6 meetings have been via ZOOM.

The AGM scheduled for the end of September will be deferred due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The October meeting minuted the reason for the deferment and the Annual Financial Statement will be produced and the Charity Commission Annual Report will be forwarded in due course.

Committee

A full Committee has been in place since the revised constitution was adopted by the Charity Commission on 21-1-20. Attendance at meetings has been very good.

One committee member is stood down in October but his position will be taken over by another member who will represent 2 clubs until a new representative is nominated by the club. The record of the current Trustees has been amended on the Charity Commission website.

Safety

Deficiencies highlighted in the electrical survey carried out in August 2019 were all rectified this year and the opportunity was taken to upgrade the emergency lighting to the current required standard. The fire detection system was also upgraded and an additional circuit added to extend the monitoring to the bar, store room and lobby.

Both electrical distribution boxes were replaced and all circuits are now provided with MCB protection.

Financial

The account with the Cambridge building Society was closed and the money transferred to the Lloyds Treasurer's Account.

The money in the Santander Account remains at approximately £700 but the account remains blocked. Extensive communication with Santander has taken place to remove the block but it is hoped that this will be resolved soon and the money will be transferred to the Lloyds account and the Santander account will be closed.

The Hall received £10,000 as a small business grant from the Government to cover expenses and provide support during the Coronavirus pandemic. This money has been placed in a Lloyds Saving account and is only used to cover all expenditure incurred due to the pandemic such as contract cleaning and sanitising consumables.

The Financial Statement for the year ending 31 March 2020 is attached and has been included in the Annual return to the Charity Commission.

The Statement shows an increased income of £11,445 but also an increased expenditure of £13,891 indicating a reduction of funds of £2446 over the period.

The last financial year ended on 31 March 2021 will show a significant reduction in reserves due to the loss of income due to the Coronavirus pandemic and a substantial expenditure in carrying out repairs and painting of the hall internally and externally.

Income

Income has been reduced by the closure of the hall due to the Coronavirus lockdown.

Daisy Chains has managed to open at times during the pandemic but all other users have not been able to use the hall.

Daisy Chains will be closing down in July due to lack of children of pre-school age in the area. The Management Committee will be investigating ways increasing local use of the hall and possible future marketing.

Cleaning

The Coronavirus pandemic has prompted a review of how the hall is cleaned. The *ad hoc* cleaning by a local resident has been replaced by engaging a contract cleaning company which can ensure the standard of cleaning provided will enable us to meet the Government Guidelines to ensure the hall is deemed "Covid Secure". The standard of cleaning has been very good.

Maintenance

All redundant items of equipment have been removed from the main store and new trollies purchased for storing the chairs. A revised inventory of equipment is being prepared.

The kitchen, bar, toilets and lobby have all been decorated along with the wall area under the dado rail in the main hall.

Externally, all doors, windows, soffits, fascias and the entrance canopy have been painted and the gutters have been cleared of debris.

Two defective windows have been replaced.

A significant number of minor repairs have been undertaken by the Management team and the "outstanding defects" list has been cleared significantly.

Wi-Fi

Cambridge Wi-Fi have installed a hub inside the hall which provides free access to the internet throughout Cambridgeshire for those people who register on the system.

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)

A CCTV system comprising of 4 cameras has been installed covering the external approaches to the hall. The views are recorded to a video recorder in the hall and the content will only be viewed in case of any incident or acts of vandalism. The hall has enrolled with the Information Commissioners so we can hold this data.

Upgrades

The hall applied for a grant from the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Zero Carbon Communities fund. The application was for £14,862 for the installation of a roof mounted Photo-Voltaic array. The purpose of the installation is to reduce our energy consumption from the grid which is presently in the region of £3,200 per year.

The application was unsuccessful but a further grant application for the same installation will be made in 2021.

The electric radiators throughout the hall are obsolete and 2 units have failed and another has 1 element broken.

A quote has been obtained for replacing all the units with Dimplex convector radiators at a cost of £3,000.

An alternative quote is being sought to replace the convector radiators with infra-red heaters which are more efficient.

The main hall lighting is mainly fluorescent units with only the emergency lights converted to LED units. A quote for replacing the remaining fluorescent units with LEDs is £5,000.

To undertake any of these upgrades will need some degree of grant funding which is presently under investigation.

Additional Facilities

In normal circumstances the hall is well used but at times it can be difficult to secure a meeting room.

The Parish Council with the support of the management Committee are considering the building of an extension to provide additional meeting and social space for the hall.

This will be the subject of wider consultation with the community.

REPORT FROM DAISYCHAINS PRESCHOOL - Sue Harrow

Daisychains has been a preschool, in one form or another, for over 40 years now but the time has come to call an end to its existence. We have been running at a considerable loss now for approx 2 years. Covid has put an end to our fundraising, and younger people with young families do not seem to be moving into the area either. This, coupled with the apparent need for wrap around care and the fact that we are actually lucky enough to be "stuck out in the middle of nowhere", has left us with dwindling numbers and being unable to continue. This preschool has been labelled an Outstanding setting (by OFSTED) for a number of years now, and I am proud of that fact, but being outstanding is just not enough these days for a local community preschool and it is my sad task to inform you all that our last day at Daisychains will be 21st July 2021.

Even though we are closing down, this year's group of children have continued to enjoy a varied curriculum and have been able to relish in the fact that we do, indeed, live in the middle of nowhere and this gives them opportunities that many other children do not have access to.

The setting that we use is a fabulous place in which to run a preschool, giving us plenty of space indoors as well as fantastic outdoor spaces in which the children can let off steam. The outside is a really important resource in which we can all learn.

We would like to thank the Parish Council, Village Hall Committee, other users of the hall, and all residents of West Wickham and the surrounding area for the massive support that they have given us over the time that the preschool has existed. Some of you may have had children who attended the setting .

I can think of a few such children, and when I see how they have grown and developed I feel that we did a good job in setting them on the right path when they were toddlers.

Yes, Daisychains has been a valuable commodity for our village and I am very sorry to have to witness it's demise.

Alas, it is time to say goodbye to you all on the the Parish Council. I wish you all well for the future but I just want to leave you with a grateful thought from myself -:

"I am soooooooooo glad that I will not have to compile Daisychain Preschool Reports for meetings anymore. Every cloud has a silver lining"

Sue Harrow, Daisychains Preschool

WEST WICKHAM CARPET BOWLS CLUB

The Club has not met since March 2020. Although it would seem to be possible (at the time of writing) for meetings to resume from the 17 May, the problems associated with keeping members in 6 person bubbles while playing would not be practical. It is hoped to restart after 21 June. New, younger members would be very welcome (and might surprise themselves with how enjoyable carpet bowls is and how good the company) particularly as the physical effort required to clean down and sanitise equipment, chairs, tables etc before and after use may simply make meetings something of a chore rather than a pleasure.

Janet Morris, Secretary

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB

The Club has not met since its AGM in March last year. As membership is not large we decided not to go for the expense of zoom talks ourselves but have made many available through our affiliation to Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Cambs Association for Local History and Jigsaw (for community archaeology groups). These bodies have also produced extra newsletters throughout the year, which have been circulated to our members, keeping the local history community in touch with recent research and items of interest. The Covid-19 restrictions have meant that the final presentation of our test pit community archaeology project has had to be put on hold and no new archaeological work has been possible. We are aiming to restart our regular monthly talks in the Village Hall in October.

Janet Morris, Secretary

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting, 24th May 2021, for the preceding two years.

In the two years since I last reported, the Club has sought to respond to the challenges posed by Covid 19 in as innovative a way as possible, in order to sustain the interest and involvement of its members.

The Club ended its 2018/2019 year positively and in good health. The plant sale in May was very successful (matching the performance of three of the previous four years), and the coach trip to West Acre Gardens and Mannington Hall (which we shared with our neighbouring Balsham club) and our visit to Fornham St. Genevieve were both most enjoyable. Our Annual Show over the August Bank Holiday weekend disappointed a little by attracting fewer exhibitors and visitors, but it included a revitalised and distinctly professional photograph section. Crucially, the Club ended its year in excellent financial health.

The A.G.M. in September 2019 saw the election of an unchanged committee, but ended with the innovation of a talk by one of our members, Sue Boase. In the autumn our Trading Officer, Marian Corbett, again organised the economical bulk purchase of seed for members. Most importantly, from October onwards our Programme Secretary, Rosemary Yallop, once again organised the rich programme of monthly meetings in the Village Hall which are at the heart of the Club's appeal. But of course it all came to a grinding halt in March 2020, in the face of the increasing close-down of our wider society; a formal consultation of our members indicated that the great majority would not attend our scheduled March meeting, and this was accordingly cancelled. In the ensuing months, along with the rest of society we experienced the necessary extension of the lock-down, and therefore our concluding planned event, the 2020 Plant Sale, and all planned summer outings were cancelled. Nevertheless our Show Committee, under its new chair, Sue Thurston, concluded the year on a high note by organising that one aspect of its activity compatible with social distancing, its photographic competition, which was judged by member Ronnie Temple and won by a recent West Wickham resident, Ciaran McNally.

The unprecedented continuation of the lock-down in the autumn of 2020 faced the Club with an existential challenge. The September A.G.M. was postponed – unconstitutionally but in accord with the advice of the Royal Horticultural Society to which the Club is affiliated, and with the retrospective sanction of its members. Though the schedule of monthly meetings booked for autumn and winter also had to be cancelled, the Club was fortunate to receive the offer from member Clive Boase to make a Zoom presentation to his fellow members. Over 60% of our members “attended”, and the presentation was so well received that the Club committee decided to take out a Zoom licence, and from early December onwards the Club has held regular monthly meetings on-line. All these were well received and each was attended by over half our members – though the committee remains mindful of the fact that a (quite small) minority of our members do not have the facility or inclination to “attend” on-

line events. These meetings have also been attended (by invitation) by representative officers of four local gardening clubs, though none of them have yet persuaded their colleagues to emulate our initiative. It should be noted that the successful shift to Zoom meetings has depended on the skill and commitment of two of our committee members – our Programme Secretary who has at no notice produced a new programme of remote monthly presenters, and our technically competent member, Sue Boase, who has set up and managed our Zoom meetings. Two other committee members, Janet and Andrew Morris, have played parallel valuable roles in cutting through isolation by circulating members' garden pictures and other news. Through such innovation and activity the Club has sought to meet the challenge of the last year and to remain in healthy contact with its members.

In the sphere of practical matters, the committee resolved that individual members of the Club would have their membership extended until the next A.G.M. (which we hope can be held later this year) and that no further subscriptions would be called for until then. It is intended that the annual Plant Sale will take place imminently, albeit in a dispersed way which is compatible with continuing social distancing, and it is hoped that by August normality will have returned sufficiently for the conventional Annual Show to be held in the Village Hall. Fundamental to this resumption of regular activity, and to our ability to take out a Zoom licence and to engage presenters, has been the very healthy financial situation of the Club, and for that our long-term Treasurer, Andrew Morris, must be given much credit. Credit must also be given to our committee secretary, Sue Herbert, who has kept on top of and recorded our rather numerous committee meetings and their sometimes complex decisions.

Arthur Mawby (chairman West Wickham & District Gardening Club) 20th May 2021

DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS 2021

DISTRICT COUNCIL – *Geof Harvey*

COVID-19

The key issue this year is, sadly, the same as we reported last year: Covid-19 and all that entails. We would have hoped to be in a changed world by now.

The District Council has been at the heart of providing support for our communities and businesses. All the funding that the government has been pumping into the local economy has been managed and distributed by the Council. To give some idea of the scope of this work since November, the latest round of grants, some £10,570,066, has been distributed to 4,447 local businesses. In addition £3,550,204 has been given out in Hardship Grants.

It is also the District Council that has been providing support and funding to our local community groups who have been doing such sterling work providing practical assistance to those who need it, and who continue to provide this invaluable service. A big thank you to them.

Let's hope that the world will be very different by next year's meeting and we can put this all behind us.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

In preparing its next Local Plan, the District Council has asked for landowners and potential housing developers to put forward parcels of land for consideration to be included as sites for housing in the future. A lot of land has been put forward in our area, none of these sites have been assessed by planners at the council yet, so we don't know if any have any planning merit. The planners are working through all of these sites and will produce a shorter list of sites in the autumn. This will then be consulted on publicly, so this is when everyone will get their say on what they think is and isn't acceptable.

COUNTY COUNCIL – *Henry Batchelor*

SHIRE HALL

The County Council took a decision last year to leave their Cambridge city centre office, Shire Hall, for a new-build facility at Alconbury - the other end of the A14 from us. This caused some local consternation, not least from the staff, some of which aren't keen on the move. Whatever your views on it, the decision has been made and the move confirmed. The update this year is that Shire Hall has now been sold to another party and will be vacated by the County Council this year, in 2021.

A1307

The big news over the last few years, from the Highways department, is that the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), which is formed of the local Cambridgeshire councils plus the university and a few other bodies, has been implementing upgrades to the main road in our area, the A1307. There have been, many, local meetings over the years where people's views on various proposals have been put forward and, to the credit of the GCP, some of the views have been taken into account and implemented.

The upgrades that we have seen so far, from the GCP funding, have been:

- Upgrades to the traffic lights at LVC to make them 'smarter'.
- Installing a bus lane on the dual carriageway on the western approach to Linton
- Upgrading the foot/cycle path between Linton and Hildersham

The upgrades that we can expect to see next are:

- Average speed cameras installed between Haverhill and Linton
- A pedestrian crossing at the Hildersham junction
- A 'greenway' off-road non-motorised user path between Abington and Linton
- A new roundabout at the Bartlow Road junction at Linton
- Remodelling of the Dean Road junction, where a lot of fatalities occur

The detail of most of these changes are still to be finalised, so please do make your opinions heard. Either directly through the GCP local liaison meetings, or via your parish, district or county councillors.