

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SOUTH CERNEY ON WEDNESDAY 19TH MAY 2010

Present: Parish Councillors Mrs F. Chapman, J. Caunce, Mrs E. Chubb, J. Harris, P. Jay, J. Kimberley, P. Nicholas, M. Stuart, Mrs C. Tunbridge, R. Webb; Youth Parish Council Members Joe Lodge and Sinead Peare, Cotswold District Councillors C. Bennett and P. Messenger; Major Bruce Maguire (Welfare Officer, 29 Regiment RLC); Roger Edgar (Chairman, Ann Edwards School Governors); Revd David Bowers Vicar All Hallows Church; Reta-May Matthews and Sue Price (United Reform Church); Mrs A. Stuart (Village Hall Committee); Mary Mychaleckyj (Gloucestershire Youth Service); Emily Hallett (Young Gloucestershire).

Thirty five members of the public and 15 youths were also in attendance.

Cllr M. Stuart opened the meeting at 7.30pm and welcomed all present to the meeting.

APOLOGY

There were apologies from Cllr Mrs Land, Cllr Shaun Parsons (GCC) who was at another meeting, Sgt Richard Smith (Gloucestershire Constabulary).

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Mrs Anne Stuart and seconded by Peter Elphick that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th May 2009 as published were a true record. The meeting was all in favour.

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Stuart had accepted his colleagues proposal at the last meeting of South Cerney with Cerney Wick Parish Council to continue as Chairman for the coming year. In accordance with procedure he signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by Maurice McKee, Clerk to the Parish Council.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

CLLR MIKE STUART, CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – REPORT

There is a danger when preparing a report such as this of appearing to repeat what was said the previous year. So many projects run on for much longer than they should due to the ever increasing amount of red tape and the seeming inability of bureaucrats to see a job finished. An example of this is the ongoing problems we have with Thames Water which has not completed the reinstatement works to the Upper Up playing fields where the new sewer pipe was laid. They have delayed the works and the associated payments for compensation and we will be lucky if the situation has been finalised by this autumn. Granted there is some movement but it is depressing to see situations drag on like this has.

On the credit side, another long term scheme has after over ten years been brought to a successful conclusion with the adoption as a Public Right of Way and the subsequent reopening of the footpath to Ann Edwards School from Upper Up. Liz Pearce must be sincerely thanked for the tenacious way in which she assisted in getting this scheme finished. Also many thanks to all those who gave such helpful evidence at the Public Inquiry in this hall last summer. It is marvellous to see so many people using that pathway.

Another major footpath improvement was the reopening of the Wildmoorway Lane from the River Churn to the canal and beyond that to the Gateway Centre. We worked with GCC PROW and the CWP Society on this and on the replacement of several timber stiles with kissing gates.

Still on the subject of footpaths, this Parish Council has joined forces with our colleagues at Ashton Keynes and Somerford Keynes in a combined effort to have the footpaths at Keynes Country Park adopted as PROWs by GCC and Wiltshire Council thus protecting what we honestly consider to be our moral and legal rights to use them as was intended when the Cotswold Water Park was founded so many years ago. I am sure that Cllr Esmond Jenkins will speak about this in his report so I will leave the detail to him.

This village has a higher than average proportion of young people especially those aged between 11 and 18 but until recently we had virtually nothing for them except sporting facilities. However, the combined efforts of GCC Youth Services and Youth Gloucestershire have resulted in regular sessions

on Monday evenings which is such an improvement. However, due to cuts in funding Youth Gloucestershire could no longer keep Emily Hallett in her role here in Cerney so rather than lose her, Parish Council has undertaken to set aside not only sufficient money to pay her but also to fund various projects that she and Mary will be doing with the young people of our village. Thanks to you both and we will be hearing from you later in this meeting.

Unfortunately, there is a limit on what we can fund and we were unable to commit to paying for the continuation of the Play Ranger scheme when their initial one year period ended. That had been financed by the Big Lottery Fund via the Cotswold Play Partnership. It was a pity but the figures were too high for the relatively small number of very young children liable to benefit.

I cannot omit mention of one of the best things that has been achieved in the past few weeks and I put its importance as high as anything we have done in the past decade and that is the setting up of the Digger Uppers allotments at the Upper Up playing field. From an initial idea suggested by our friend Tony Squire to actually getting the 20 plots cultivated, took only a very few weeks. If you have not seen these gardens do go and have a look. What has been achieved by the group is very impressive but there is still work to be done on fencing and in the digging of a well. Also, the gift of a diesel powered rotavator to the community from our Sri Lankan friend Rohan Jinasena who also let us have a good shredder at a low cost for our composting scheme, has greatly helped the team to get ahead with their cultivations.

To be a Parish Councillor is not everyone's cup of tea! But it is a good job we have a really top class team here in Cerney and although at times we do get more than a bit frustrated by the time it takes to get things done, we have definitely achieved a heck of a lot in this past year. It is impossible to report everything we have achieved but if anyone wants to keep abreast of the records just go to our excellent web site www.southcerney.org and there you will find all the Minutes for not only the past year but also for many years before and a lot more besides.

Despite the amount we have achieved we were able to keep this year's Council Tax precept to within a few pennies of last year's level.

I am always pleased to thank not only all the other Parish Councillors who form our team but also the District and County Councillors for their continuing support. And of course, I cannot fail to say a special thanks to Maurice McKee our Parish Clerk who is a tower of strength to us all and does such top class work for this community.

Finally, in the past few days I and some friends have been working on the preparation of the entry form for the new competition being run by our good chums at GRCC who are trying to find the most Vibrant Village of the Year in Gloucestershire. Now we just had to have a go at that didn't we? We had to complete five sections of the form including "Best community facility", "Best community project/initiative", "Most resilient community", "Healthy and active Community" plus "What makes your village vibrant?" To complete each of those sections using no more than 250 words was a struggle but I am optimistic that we should get through to the next round when some judges actually visit us to see just how vibrant we are. The exercise certainly brought home to me what a tremendously great place South Cerney is to live in.

MARY MYCHALECKYJ (GLOUCESTERSHIRE YOUTH SERVICE) & EMILY HALLETT – SOUTH CERNEY YOUTH GROUP REPORT

This report was proceeded with a presentation showing slides of youth activities. Youngsters were then presented with certificates in recognition of their performance at the various tasks.

The young people in South Cerney had a very busy summer, which included: a residential to Skern Lodge in Devon with other young people from across the Cotswolds; a kayaking and canoeing course at SCOEC; a bushcraft project working with the Cotswold Forest School culminating in an overnight stay in the woods; and still more football tournaments!

As the nights drew in and the weather got colder, we found some indoor activities to keep us all out of the cold. We took the young people to the new climbing wall in Cricklade, as well as holding a session around Diwali and running a trip to go bowling.

After Christmas, the group started concentrating on their contribution to the Water Park's Lantern Project, taking part in lantern-building workshops and getting ready to provide some music on the night.

Over the last 12 months, the young people have gained ASDAN Awards, Gloucestershire Plus Awards and their BCU One Star.

We're moving into summertime again, and the youth group has another busy few months ahead. This summer will mark three years since the youth group in South Cerney was formed, and the group is busier than ever with an increasing number of young people coming along to get involved in the activities.

The Parish Council have also agreed to fund a worker directly for a session a week for one year, meaning the youth group is now a partnership between the Parish Council and Gloucestershire Youth Service.

It's a busy and exciting time for South Cerney Youth Group. The young people have worked incredibly hard and had a lot of fun! We're looking forward to another exciting summer.

The contact mobile telephones are: Emily Hallett South Cerney Parish Council 07792 275173 Mary Mychaleckyj Gloucestershire Youth Service 07825 732511.

Mike Stuart thanked both Emily and Mary for their work with the youngsters.

JOE LODGE, CHAIRMAN OF THE YOUTH PARISH COUNCIL – REPORT

In the last year the Youth Parish Council has continued to work hard putting forward the interests of the youth of the village. It has been a testing year for our small council which has existed with only five committed members. There have been several occasions when we have got our opinion addressed, and as re-writing of the village plan is coming up we will look to add our views on how to address the needs of the youth in the community.

However with Sinead, Mike and I leaving the council due to 'A level' exams followed by University, none of the members of the original council remain and a decision has been made to disband the YPC and look to start again with help from Mary Mychaleckyj (from the Youth Group). We have all learnt a lot in our time on the council. I would like to say that although trying at times, we have all overall enjoyed our time. I would say that due to the hard work of the Youth Councillors past and present over the last five years some definite positive changes have been introduced for the youth, but I really hope our longest legacy as a council is providing a pathway for the youth in the village to get their voices heard.

This is however very much dependant on the continuation of a Youth Council and now further support is being put forward for a restarting of the council with assistance from Mary. However this council will need members and participation from as much of the youth in South Cerney as is possible, so I urge everyone to spread the word and keep an eye out for information in the Cerney News about a youth event this summer, hopefully with the aim of having some fun, and possibly getting a better idea of our needs.

Mike Stuart thanked the founding members for their commitment to the Youth Parish Council. Claire Dowan was sadly missed as an interlocutor between the two groups.

CLLR P. F. MESSENGER, COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL – REPORT

The last year has been the mostly rewarding in many areas. Although residents views in respect of two planning applications being vigorously opposed at committee and upheld against officer recommendations. The Ariel Ski development went ahead at appeal. Also the Friday Island proposed development in due to appeal shortly.

On behalf of Siddington Parish Council an application has been submitted for a Protection Order under the Listed Buildings for the Canal Cottage at Upper Siddington by the Cotswold Canal Trust. This is the first application made as part of my duties to protect Structures and Bridges attached to the Thames and Severn Canal running through our patch.

Worked for well over 12 months helping to create the Siddington Village Plan, during the audit period it became apparent that the Youth of Siddington felt that there is little for them to own as recreational activities in the area, hence a committee was formed and we have commissioned a Navy Cadet Force whose HQ is at Deer Park School. The unit was Commissioned as TS Royal Sovereign in late April, has some 22 enlisted Cadets, all from this area, one cadet from South Cerney, with other training facilities at the Community Fire Station in Cirencester and a water facility on Lake 12, Gloucestershire Youth Training Centre. Counsellor Clive Bennett is Chairman of the Units Management Committee. I am the Regional Officer for Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire and as such have responsibility for seven units in that area I hope this redresses the youth comments that there is little of interest for them to do.

CLLR CLIVE BENNETT, COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL – REPORT

Twelve months ago I moved from a Cabinet role to take over as Chairman of Licensing and was re-elected to that post at the council's annual meeting last week. During the year I have spoken out on planning matters affecting the village and although we cannot win all the time we have had some success.

As many of you may know we have another potentially controversial planning application brewing for the centre of the village. A developer is in the early stages of consultation before submitting a planning application for the land behind The Limes, the old Camas site. There is a public exhibition in the village hall in the near future.

If there are objections to the application, and I am guessing there may be a few, then please put your objections in writing to the District Council's planning department and contact me. It's important that people object on planning grounds. There is no point in objecting simply because you don't like the idea of an extra housing estate in the middle of the village.

No application has been submitted yet so I have no idea of how many houses are proposed or what the access will be. I have been assured by the planning department that any move to use Ham Lane as an entrance would be strongly resisted.

The council's Environmental wardens have been out in the village several times following complaints to me about dog fouling. They are mapping out, dare I say it, the hot spots, and will be making snap out of hour's visits to try to catch the owners who do not clean up after their pets.

The main problem facing the council in the last year has been the same as that facing most people: the financial crisis. We save many thousands each year by sharing a chief executive and other senior officers with West Oxfordshire District Council. Both councils feel the benefit and the savings can be passed on in the form of low council tax increases.

In mid June the council will be revamping the waste collection service and it will mean that from June 14 all of South Cerney will have the bins collected on a Tuesday, not Wednesday as most parts of the village do now. All residents will be getting letters explaining the changes and stickers will be attached to the bins. Any problems just give me a call.

Mike Stuart thanked Cllr Bennett for his support.

MICHAEL STUART, SOUTH CERNEY VILLAGE HALL – REPORT

This past year has been a lot less frenetic than the previous few with regards to the work load for the committee of this Village Hall. Granted we have had the flat roof recovered and a good job was done but apart from that we have joggled along quite gently with not too much stress!

A lot of the way in which we run so smoothly has to be due to two factors. Firstly, the Village Hall management committee continues to be one of the most cooperative and proactive groups in this village and our meetings are always very well attended.

The second factor is of course John Veitch our main man who not only looks after the cleaning and all sorts of maintenance jobs but is very proactive in his promoting the hall for all sorts of bookings. No one knows just how much work John does for this Hall or how much money he saves us with his ability to carry out minor repairs and by knowing so many ways to get jobs done at the right price. John your efforts are greatly appreciated by us all.

I have said it before and will say it again, this committee is envied by many other villages throughout the county and have been held up as a beacon of excellence at numerous GRCC meetings. The two chaps who came to see if we were worthy of the Hall Mark 2 award, naturally reported that we were pretty darned good and I think that a lot of what we do will be copied by the two committees those guys serve on!

A special word of thanks must go to our treasurers Roger and Gill Scott. Between them they have done so much for us not only with their research into obtaining great savings on the insurance premiums but in many other factors. For example, Gill recognised that we had been paying PRS fees to CDC ever since we started the Cerney Cinema despite the fact that we were also paying an annual fee directly to the PRS people themselves. After some time and a lot of negotiations, Gill got us a refund of £133. A job well done.

The way we work on the Cerney Cinema is indicative of a good team. So many people are involved. Some attend every month, such as our Hilary who has raised so much money on the raffles and others

who lend a hand when needed. Recently, several people, including some not on the committee, volunteered to transport the cinema equipment on a rota basis. Thanks to everyone for their support.

Our continued close working with not only Parish Council but also with the two churches and other groups ensures that we are part of a large team to the benefit of the community. Again, we are ahead of many other villages in this aspect. Too many other places have either little or no cooperation between Village halls and parish councils and in fact, there are places where there is downright animosity between them. Let us ensure we continue to maintain the close ties we have here in Cerney.

Barbara Pond GRCC presented the framed Hallmark 2 award to the Chairman Mike Stuart, congratulated the Committee and thanked all volunteers for their hard work and time given to the project.

MAJOR BRUCE MAGUIRE, UNIT WELFARE OFFICER 29 REGT RLC – REPORT

I must again this year thank you for the opportunity for addressing the Annual Parish Meeting on behalf of the CO 29 Regt RLC. Col Bethan is in the last week of her appointment as Commanding Officer and is busy preparing to hand over to Lt Col Anna Kimber who assumes Command of 29 Regt on 1st June. I feel sure that Col Anna will wish me to assure you of the continued cooperation, participation and support of 29 Regt in the life of South Cerney Parish. The Regt takes great pride in our association with you.

As at last year's brief I can say that the Regt has had a very busy year operationally, providing Logistic, Movement and Postal support to Afghanistan. In the guise of 47 AD Sqn we have a virtual permanent presence providing air despatch support. The Headquarters returned earlier this year having run the Theatre Logistic Group for Operation Herrick from Camp Bastion. 59 Movement control Sqn and 80 Postal and Courier Sqn have also recently returned from Operational tours, and later this month 50 Movement Control Sqn will depart to Operation Herrick (Afghanistan). In the Autumn, 88 Postal and Courier Sqn will also deploy.

The Regt has hosted one of the Probus groups and whilst we are always willing to host groups we have to be aware of the Operational tempo of the Regt and the effect extra work has on the down time of the soliders.

As the Welfare Officer my concern is as always closer cooperation with local Youth groups and Civilian/ Military liaison. To that end I am happy to inform you that after last year's successful Regimental Open Day the CO has once again allowed us to open the day to the local area. We are having a small fun fair and a boot sale. The cost of entry will be £3 (parking and a programme) or £10 for a boot fair (£7.50 pre booked). I would like permission to advertise on local parish notice boards and to place directional signs on the lamp posts in the village.

Always conscious that we only have five minutes I hope that I have covered most areas and will happily take any questions from the floor.

Mike Stuart on behalf of the Parish Council gave permission for the notices but requested that they are removed as soon as possible after the event.

Major Maguire highlighted the diversity of the people living at the base. Currently there are 17 different nationalities in 29 Regt. Some of these disparate groups will demonstrate their different lifestyles at the forthcoming open day to be held on 10th July. He continued, explaining that the Silver Stars were now a civilian operated group but still accessible for anyone, at a cost, could apply to partake. For example a facility for free fall parachuting was available. He also encouraged local groups to take advantage of sports facilities at the base where there was expert tuition available. He was always willing to listen to any proposal and could be contacted on 01285 868478. He then informed the meeting that he was due to retire next year but may well continue, if allowed.

Mike Stuart thanked Major Maguire for his report and thanked him for the cooperation given to the community by those on the base.

POLICE REPORT READ BY MIKE STUART

SARA Results

Anti-Social use of cars in the village of South Cerney was highlighted as an issue by the community in early 2009. In particular, inconsiderate parking in the village and parking on footpaths was causing an issue to both other road users and pedestrians. By August 2009, the community reported improvements in anti-social use of cars due to Police actions in relation to these matters.

In August 2009, the community identified anti-social behaviour of youths in the Robert Franklin Way area of South Cerney as a priority. Police immediately began to target youths in the area with increased patrols, use of dispersal notices and appropriate words of advice to users of the play area. By the end of the year, the community reported dramatic decreases in the levels of anti-social behaviour in this area.

We are currently focusing our SARA plan on anti-social behaviour in the Upper Up playing fields. Unfortunately there have been some recent incidents of criminal damage in this area, as well as littering. Police are still carrying out investigations in relation to this and aim to take a pro-active approach, dealing positively with any offences.

Speeding through the village of South Cerney continues to be monitored by Police with regular speed checks in the area. Parking is as also an issue we aim to check regularly in order to keep inconsiderate parking to a minimum.

Police Community Support Officers in the area have been engaging with local youths through a variety of initiatives including tag rugby activities and Speed awareness sessions at Anne Edwards School. We have also taken the opportunity to engage with youths through the local Gooseberry bush holiday and after school club, giving valuable input in relation to the personal safety of young people.

With the introduction of Community Orientated Policing, there have been a number of successful examples of this carried out in the South Cerney area. Victims of crime have been fully compensated for any losses, directly by the offender. Victims have also been given the opportunity to meet with offenders in order to receive a formal apology. We have had very positive feedback from the victims of crime in South Cerney that have engaged in Community Orientated resolutions.

The SCT would like to thank members of the Parish Council for their efforts throughout the year. Many members have been actively involved in the detection of crime, assisting with the reporting of incidents and identification of witnesses. This has had a massive impact on the achievements of the SCT this year.

Statistics

Compared to same three month period last year

Offence Class	Average 2009	Average 2010	% inc/dec
Burglary	25.7	30.0	18%
Robbery	1	0.3	67%
Vehicle Crime	11	14.3	30%
Violence	40.3	44	9%
ASB	185.7	146.3	21%

CLLR SHAUN PARSONS, GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – REPORT READ BY PARISH CLERK

I am sorry not be able to be present with you tonight, this is due to a long standing arrangement to attend a meeting, which I agreed to do long before I learnt of the date for this evening.

I will keep my report fairly brief. As many of you will know the county council accounts for about £407m of net expenditure, and oversees the Dedicated School Grant of some £326m. This compares with a budget of £12.8m for CDC and £105m for the Police Authority.

The current administration in Shire Hall has listened carefully to people's views and the consistent message is that Gloucestershire people want the council to keep council tax low, not to cut services, and not to waste money. The council tax for the current tax year at 2.3% is the lowest council tax rise ever, and below the rate of inflation.

Approximately 80% of the budget is taken up by services provided for Children and Young people and for the Community and Adult Care. This does not leave very much for all the other services the council provides including roads, which I return to below. Additional amounts of money are being budgeted for the placement of increased numbers of vulnerable children into care. There has been a 30% increase in the number of children referred to social services, partly out of the council changing the thresholds with regard to access to social care as a result of the Baby P case. At the time of writing there are just under 500 children for whom the county council acts as corporate parent.

The Adult Care budget is also under pressure, primarily because of the increased number of elderly people living here. Gloucestershire is getting older more quickly than most other places in the UK, by 2025 it is estimated that the number of people living here aged over 75 will increase by 70%.

The county council, along with all other councils is faced with significant service pressures at a time when Whitehall has indicated not only that there is very little additional money available, but also when

they are seeking so called 'efficiency' gains. In Gloucestershire's case savings of £40m have been achieved in the last three years and £60m of further savings are planned to be saved over the next four years, of which £12m has already been banked. This position is most unlikely to change following the change of government.

It will be seen from the above that resources are tight, and nowhere is this more noticeable than when it comes to the state of our roads. For many years Gloucestershire roads have been among some of the worst in the country, so it was pleasing to note that in the autumn of 2009 both our A and B road network had moved up from the fourth quartile into the third and even the condition of our minor roads was seen to be improving. This was a direct result of the council doubling over the previous four years the amount of money it was spending on the road network. However that is the end of the good news for now. The tough winter we have just had has done serious damage to our road network, especially the minor roads. Under these circumstances the first priority is to try and keep the road network open and in this the council has been relatively successful. The council is primarily responsible for keeping the A and B roads open throughout the cold spell, aided by increased salt supplies, until the government took away our ability to re stock pile. It should be noted that following the previous winter the county council had invested in a new salt dome which holds 2,500 tonnes of salt, and also by the 200 snow wardens and 70 farmers with snow ploughs, who were primarily responsible for keeping most of the minor roads open. Thank you all.

However the tough winter and the long period of rain which followed it has done immense damage to our network and though the county council has allocated an extra £1m of monies towards this it is unlikely that any real improvement in the network will be achieved this year. The first priority is to keep the road network open and safe, and therefore resources have been allocated to mending pot holes. So far this year more potholes have been mended than in the whole of last year. Some will say why bother to mend potholes, it is well known that pot hole repairs do not last. All this is true, however the priority is, as said above, to keep the network functioning, so pot holes have to be mended as a priority. In this respect the list of urgent potholes requiring to be mended is reviewed and reprioritised every night. As soon as they can the highway team will return to putting in place longer lasting repairs.

As I promised this is but a brief report and again my apologies for not being with you to answer any questions you may have. If anybody does want to contact me this can always be done through Maurice, or though the county council or direct to myself on 01285 821451, or via e-mail shaun.parsons@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Thank you.

REVD DAVID BOWERS, VICAR ALL HALLOWS CHURCH, SOUTH CERNEY AND HOLY TRINITY, CERNEY WICK

Our churches in South Cerney and Cerney Wick have had another good year of worship, outreach and service. We are now part of a wider benefice which also includes Siddington and Preston and we have adopted this year the name of the Churnside Benefice – less of a mouthful than calling ourselves “The Benefice of South Cerney with Cerney Wick, Siddington and Preston”. The name was chosen as the river runs (just about) through each of our parishes.

I value the help of a good team of colleagues, including five active retired clergy, three Readers, two Readers Emeritus, two Readers in training and a Local Ministry team. The new Local Ministry Team which works throughout the benefice, was officially commissioned last Saturday by the Bishop of Tewkesbury in Gloucester Cathedral. Amongst other things, the Team looks at aspects of our mission and outreach and at our community links and one of its first projects will be an Alpha Course, which will be running here in South Cerney from September.

Our work with children and young people is one of our priorities and last year we began Messy Church, an interactive service with crafts and worship, aimed at very young children and their parents. This has continued and has become a regular part of our church life, meeting on the first Sunday of each month at 4.00pm. Our links with Ann Edwards School and with the Playgroup are also a part of our church life. At the school a team from both our church and the United Church go in each week for “Open the Book”, a programme of Bible stories. During Holy Week the children came into church for Experience Easter, a series of displays about the Holy Week events with an opportunity at each one for activities and reflection. The Church also provides a Bible for each of the children who leave at the end of Year 6.

At the slightly older end of the age spectrum we regularly have services in the community room at Boxbush, including a very popular carol service, and lead communion services each month at Hunters Care home.

Other valued links include the Army Camp, with 29 Regiment coming to All Hallows for Remembrance Sunday and their Carol Service. I enjoy being able to go into the camp for occasions such as special services, including for troops going to Afghanistan, and various regimental occasions. I now have more opportunities there for pastoral work, both with the soldiers and their families, and it is always good to feel so welcomed by them.

In our church building we are about to install a permanent screen and computer projector, something which will enhance what we are able to do in worship, including in Messy Church. The churchyard grass is regularly mown and we are grateful to the Parish Council for their financial support for this. Other churchyard maintenance is carried out by voluntary working parties throughout the year.

Once again we look forward this year to a successful Street Fair weekend, with many community groups taking part. Last year's was particularly successful and we were able to provide an opportunity for many organisations to raise funds. From the church we were able to give £3,000 to a couple working in a community health project in Uganda and £1,000 to Ann Edwards School for their new "spiritual walk area". We were pleased last year generally in church life that we were able to give over 11 % of our income to various causes. Finally, we continue to enjoy our co-operation with the United Church and we look forward to welcoming their new minister, Rev James Taylor, as he takes up his new post next month.

RETA-MAY MATTHEWS, SENIOR STEWARD, SOUTH CERNEY UNITED CHURCH – REPORT

I am once again representing South Cerney United Church as we have been without a minister since August of last year. In the meantime we have been well looked after by the Methodist Circuit and in particular by Rev Keith Burton one of our former ministers. At the end of June we will be welcoming our new minister Rev James Taylor. We will be one of three churches he will be serving and as a newly ordained mature student, this will be his first pastorate. We are looking forward to having James with us and believe he will be a great asset to the community here.

Since our renovations South Cerney United Church has become less of a stand-alone church and has become much more central to the life of this vibrant community. Hopefully with the increased use of our building, most of you will have had an opportunity at one time or another to see the improvements that have been made over recent years. If not, stop in during the Street Fair for a visit. We will be serving teas and coffee and having free children's activities throughout the day. There will also be two Taekwan-do demonstrations and all proceeds from our day will go to Josh Veitch, a young man who is the world champion in his weight category in this sport. Josh is eligible for the 2012 Olympics but must raise most of his own expenses. We will have his medals, trophies etc. on display on the day also.

As regards the building itself, you may occasionally notice a man with a ladder doing odd jobs. This is to keep on top of minor repairs before they become major projects and is being funded mostly by rental income. Some of the extensive activities now being held in our building are listed in the Cerney Newsletter, the Village Directory and most are posted weekly on the double glass doors at our main entrance. They cover everything from children's programs to healthy lifestyle classes and from music to simple socialising; something for everyone.

Although we are first and foremost a place of worship, our doors are not just open on Sundays. We have a very strong sense of community and encourage all who can to come and share in anything we have available for them. We have a very good working relationship with All Hallows Church and also with the Village Hall. Recently I worked with Mike Stuart on an entry form for Vibrant Village of the Year 2010. In it he describes both the Village Hall and the United Church as 'in the heart of the village both geographically and emotionally'. We take that as a huge compliment as that has always been part of our vision. The United Church is probably best known and most appreciated for voluntary support of the elderly and for dedication to the increasingly popular 'Cerney Seedlings' our carers and pre-school children's group which has been running since 1998.

To further enhance what we can do for the community our Methodist Circuit has provided us with a paid Families Worker, Sue Price, whom we are sharing with Cirencester and Tetbury Churches. Sue supports our existing work in theory but her real job is to begin new initiatives to benefit not just our churches but families throughout our communities. Although her initial work here has been through South Cerney United Church she is keen to make contact with the nearby base, the school and other village organisations which benefit young children. Sue's enthusiasm is contagious and her qualifications are numerous. I'd like now to relinquish my remaining time to her so she can tell you from her newsletter what she has already done and her plans for the future in South Cerney.

SUE PRICE, FAMILIES' WORKER, SOUTH CERNEY UNITED CHURCH – REPORT

We hope you had a restful and blessed Easter holiday.

We are starting this newsletter to keep you informed about the exciting new developments that have been planned for families in South Cerney, as a result of the initial needs analysis and 'getting to know you' exercise that Sue, your Families Worker did in March. In order to extend our support to families in South Cerney and surrounding villages we are planning to begin a few new family orientated activities, providing you with other opportunities to get together as Mums and Carers during the week, and have fun!

Getting together for a coffee and a chat when you have children is a challenge. With few facilities around being neither pram nor child-friendly, getting together with other Mums and friends is difficult. Carers' Cafe, open on Thursdays at the United Church in South Cerney from 10-11am offers Mums and Carers and opportunity to meet and have a coffee, relax and chat, whilst the youngsters have a variety of toys and an opportunity to play with other children, as well as a time of singing and action songs to participate in. Just £1 covers coffee and the activities session for the children. These sessions begin 6 May.

If you enjoy art and craft, and would like to participate in a weekly family orientated arts and craft session, why not give the Arts and Craft group at the United Church on Tuesdays a try? There will be exciting activities for children, planned around monthly themes and opportunity to 'get messy' and try out art activities as a family. The group meets between 1-2pm. Just £1 covers the cost of materials and refreshments. These sessions begin 11 May.

Hope to see you at one of the new groups, soon.

ROGER EDGAR, CHAIR OF GOVERNORS, COMMUNITY GOVERNOR, ANN EDWARDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL – REPORT

Personnel

We have seen more changes in staff this year. On the teaching staff Mr Andrew Kirkup has taken a sabbatical enabling him to visit New Zealand with the aim of returning for September 2010. Mrs Lauraine Cheeseman has joined us as a teaching assistant, working in our reception class. The governing body has also seen more changes with Mrs Michelle Guppy taking over as clerk, replacing Mrs Jo Finnegan and Mr Jim Ascough has joined as a parent governor. We have also welcomed a number of residents in as volunteer helpers and they are doing a wonderful job in the school, providing a wide range of support.

Curriculum and SATS

All the children in KS2 and Y2 have taken their optional or statutory SAT's this May and our SAT's results for 2009 were very pleasing. The school continues to offer a good quality of education for its pupils and they receive a broad and balanced curriculum. We have taken the children on numerous trips as part of the wider curriculum and our thanks in particular to the Forest school for allowing our reception children to visit and have great fun with their learning.

Other extra curricular school activities

The school continues to offer a full range of after school clubs including for example, football, netball, tag rugby, cookery, modelling/warhammer club, art and craft, stay and play and judo. These are well attended by the pupils. Our Y4, Y5 and Y6 children have either taken part in or will soon be taking part in residential visits to The Wilderness Centre, Braeside, and Skern Lodge. Our after school club run by Gooseberry Bush and our breakfast club have again proved very popular. Our PTA has organised a wide range of wonderful events that have been enjoyed by the children ranging from discos to film nights and they have been lovely events to attend. Our thanks for all their hard work. We have won sporting events such as the Chance to Shine cricket tournament, tag Rugby festivals and netball tournament. The younger children put on an excellent Christmas play which was enjoyed by all particularly the Cosy Club who saw the preview. The Easter Experience organised by members of the congregation in All Hallows Church was enjoyed by the children and the whole school took part in the annual Christmas service.

Other projects

We have had visits from the Lifestyle Education Bus, Nick Williams the Birdwise man and the children have visited SCOEC. Pupils have taken part in the Dance Festival with a lively performance from 'Grease', and have played a number of sporting fixtures against other schools. We are installing a Spiritual garden over the course of this term and would like to thank you all for the kind donations towards this project. Some of the children have been involved in building a giant mammoth using willow and took part in the lantern event.

All in all another busy year to date where the children have really blossomed, please feel free to come and visit us at any time and to see for yourself what is going on in your local school.

CLLR NICHOLAS – REPORT ON COTSWOLD WATER PARK SOCIETY

As Cllr Esmond Jenkins (CDC) had not attended this Annual Parish Meeting, the Chairman Cllr Stuart invited Cllr Nicholas Vice Chairman of the Parish Council to make a brief report on the activities of the Cotswold Water Park Society Ltd.

Cllr Nicholas said that the administration of the Society had now come to a head. Investigations by Cllr Jenkins (CDC) had been very useful in exposing practices at the Society which were suspect. There was now increased cooperation between the three parishes of Ashton Keynes, Somerford Keynes and South Cerney whose aim was to encourage the Society to be more transparent in its business practices. The best way to enforce change was to widen the membership of the Society to include residents of the Water Park. The Society was originally formed for the benefit of the community but over time this objective has been devalued. Cllr Jenkins had used the Freedom of Information act to extract all sorts of valuable news on the operation of the Society. The objective of the three parishes was to make the Society more representative of the community. Of the two groups which formed the Society the one which managed the biodiversity element was much appreciated and was a worthwhile asset while the overall management would have to be rejigged.

There being no further business Cllr Stuart closed the meeting at 9.07pm.