

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON 28th APRIL 2011 AT 8PM IN THE CHURCH ROOM, WEST WYCOMBE**

PRESENT:

Cllrs Mrs J. Smith (Chairman), Mrs C. Dakin, Mr D. Callaghan, Mr N. Timberlake, Mr N. Harris
Mrs S. Henson, Clerk
Distr Cllrs Mrs J Teesdale (part) and Mr I. Mc Ennis (part)

14 members of the public including
Mr J. Foy and Mr R. Filmore - The National Trust,
Mrs A. Rimmer - Churchwarden West Wycombe PCC,
Mr D. Winterburn, Bucks Free Press local correspondent,
Mrs A. Marks and Mrs K. Cheshire - West Wycombe School
Miss L. Hewitt – Internal Auditor

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Mr R. Seymour, Mr F. Downes, Dist Cllrs Mrs J. Teesdale (part), Mr I McEnnis (part), Mrs M Hilder West Wycombe Estate, Mrs A. Cobb, West Wycombe School.

The Chairman Cllr Mrs Smith welcomed everyone.

West Wycombe Parish Council Chairman's report for year 2010 - 2011

When carried out a parish survey a few years ago there were two things that our residents thought would make a real difference to our parish.

1. A children's playground
2. Allotments.

We are pleased to say that over the past two years we have accomplished both these aims. However, this meant, that after consulting everyone in the parish, we have had to increase our precept (this is the money we receive from your council tax to run the Parish Council), we feel sure that we give good value for your money.

Playing field

We opened our playground with a Fete on September the 11th 2010 in the field known as the Pedestal Playing Field at the junction with Bradenham Road and Cookshall Lane. Planning the playground took a great deal of time and after consulting with the West Wycombe Baby & Toddler Group, Pre School and Combined School with suggested ideas and saving towards it for some years too we were able to place an order and have the equipment installed in time for the summer holidays. Eventually there will be much more in the way of play equipment as it is a three phase project. It is very costly but with more careful planning, we can get to stage two within the next year. It is very pleasing to see children of all ages enjoying the playground we have there at present. We have to check the playground equipment regularly, carry out risk assessments and insure it.

Fete

There hadn't been a Fete in West Wycombe for many years so we decided that, as we lease the field from the West Wycombe Estate, we should use it to promote the new playground and also try and get our community together and for them to appreciate the benefit the area is to our Parish.

We are planning to hold another Fete this year on September 10th.

It was a huge success with the stalls making money for their causes and donating half of their takings to the playground fund. There was a lovely atmosphere and it was great to see so many people enjoying themselves as well as the rivalry between the opposing tug o war teams! We were lucky not only with the weather but that Cllr Bill Bendyshe Brown, The Chairman of Wycombe District Council, opened the Fete for us. He had been to our Parish Council meeting a couple of days earlier and was impressed by the amount of hard work we put into running the Parish and also organising the Fete. He offered to open the Fete for us and stayed for a good few hours, talking to the stall holders and performers.

Allotments

We have now developed 26 full and half size plots. The allotments are in their second season and most of the allotment holders work hard on their plots and are enjoying the fruits of their labours. We plan to have an allotment competition at the Fete this year.

Parish Council Quality Status

We regained our Parish Council Quality Status this past year. The Quality Status awarded to a Parish Council lasts for four years. After that period you have to reapply and go through rigorous tests to prove that you run the Parish Council in the correct way to deserve the honour again. Very few parish councils in the High Wycombe area have Quality Status.

Road safety and Parish Lighting

We have just had three new lights placed in Church Lane, the road leading up to the school. This was a particularly dark area on winter mornings and evenings especially for the children going to and from school. The lights don't look out of place in this attractive spot with the beams shining through the leaves of the trees at this time of the year. We contributed £4000 and obtained further funds to help with the cost of the lights through The Local Area Forum, a group run by BCC to look at local issues, which we attend regularly. We persuaded them to let us have period lamps to match the ones in the High Street, on the triangle and Chorley Road.

Whilst other councils are turning off street lights we feel it important to keep our residents safe. We have looked into low energy bulbs and timers etc but they are prohibitively expensive.

Whilst we are talking about the school children's safety; we are concerned that many parents insist on parking in the High Street when picking up or taking their children to West Wycombe School. This reduces the amount of parking for both residents and for local businesses. The Garden Centre generously allows parents to park there and Bucks County Council provide a school crossing patroller to cross them over the road towards the school. We are concerned about the lack of consideration shown by parents when using the Garden Centre – potential customers must be able to park closer to the buildings and parents should be parking further into the area and also leaving big enough space for the delivery and recycling lorries to access the area safely.

Many schools would love to have the facilities we have here but unfortunately we feel the parents don't appreciate this making the High Street and the Garden Centre Car Park quite dangerous at times.

The Parish Council and West Wycombe Estate paid to have bases created for the glass recycling area - everyone can now visit there without standing in mud.

We have had discussions with Bucks County Council concerning the speed of traffic on our roads and the two serious accidents that happened entering the Village from Piddington / A40. We put in a bid, through our Local Area Forum again, for a vehicle activated speed (VAS) sign for this area and are pleased to say our bid was successful. The sign should be in place very soon. These jobs always take much longer than we would like to come to fruition.

We are negotiating with Chiltern Rail to put VAS signs either side of the Bradenham Road railway bridge to make motorists more aware of their speed when travelling through the parish.

Training

We work closely with Bucks County Council and Wycombe District Council and attend meetings at both these council offices and other venues to make sure any new initiatives or services are available for our parish.

Training is essential with all the proposed new changes that are coming from central government at this time and our councillors and clerk attend training sessions throughout the year.

We respond to numerous consultations from all tiers of government.

Planning

We take every planning application in our Parish seriously and give our views to WDC and follow through when we can see that plans have not been strictly adhered to.

Transport

We have done our best to ensure we have buses serving our community. Perhaps not as many as we or you would like but with other villages having no buses at all we feel lucky to have retained the ones we have.

Cllr Neil Timberlake has a particular interest in public transport and keeps us abreast on all changes to bus companies and timetables in our area and also produced an excellent report on traffic issues affecting our parish for consideration by Bucks County Council.

Affiliated Groups

We belong to the Wycombe Association of Local Councils and the Bucks Association of Local Councils where we meet with councillors and representatives from all over Buckinghamshire to exchange views, ideas and policy.

We attend Local Area Forums along with other Parish Councils in our group namely Stokenchurch, Lane End, Piddington and Wheeler End.

We attend the Rural Forum meetings at WDC to keep up with news from the rural and farming community.

I am on Wycombe District Council's Standards Committee.

I am also on an Executive member of the Bucks Association of Local Councils and a member of our local Neighbourhood Action Group, a police led group consisting of representatives from other local community groups.

We make sure West Wycombe is always represented at every event put on by local authorities.

Elections

On May 5th this year all parish councillors and district councillors are standing for election.

No other people stood for West Wycombe Parish Council except the existing councillors which means we do not have to have an election.

We hope this means people think we are doing a good job and are happy for us to carry on!

Our thanks

Go to our district Councillors Jean Teesdale and Ian McEnnis

They are a great support and keep us abreast of news from WDC.

Frank Downes is not only one of our Parish Councillors but is our County Councillor too. He is a cabinet member at BCC and keeps us informed of BCC news.

Our thanks too, to the members of public who come to our Parish Council meetings each month. We very much appreciate their presence and support.

All your parish councillors bring their personal expertise and experience to serve the community and deserve your thanks.

Parish councillors do not get paid and put in many hours of their time on your behalf.

Roger Seymour for his work on the Burial Ground, Allotments and Pedestal Play Area, Carole Dakin for maintaining links with West Wycombe School, Danny Callaghan for his hard work on the Fete and all matters to do with community cohesion, Neil Harris for his advice on all matters connected with trees and maintaining good communications with the National Trust.

Sharon Henson, our Clerk, works part time for West Wycombe Parish Council. We all acknowledge that it would be difficult to run the council without Sharon's hard work and dedication. Well beyond the call of duty at times. She too deserves your thanks.

I would like to thank all our councillors and Sharon for their unfailing commitment and good humour. It makes meetings so much easier!

I believe we have achieved much over the past few years because we work well as a team and respect each other's views and ideas. We don't always agree with one another but that leads to good debate.

On a personal note, the Parish Council was formed 24 years ago. We will be starting our 25th year in May. I am the only founder member still serving on the Council. 22 years ago I became Chairman and recently I was awarded a Long Service Certificate by the Wycombe District Association of Local Councils and have been given the honour of representing West Wycombe Parish Council at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party later this summer. This invitation was as a result of a nomination by the Buckinghamshire Association of Local Councils. It has been a huge privilege and honour to represent West Wycombe at meetings and events. Over the years I have seen the council grow into the success it is today and that is completely down to the hard work put in by Councillors and Clerk.

Our aim is always for West Wycombe Parish to move forward into the future, confident that the decisions we take, make it a very welcoming, good, safe place to live.

Presentation of the Financial Statement

We have finished our financial year with a lower than normal balance as we spent a large amount of money last year on installing the play equipment in The Pedestal Playing Field and had not increased our Precept for the last two years. West Wycombe Estate, Mike Henson Presentations, our District Councillor Mrs Teesdale and Mrs V. Smith made donations towards the equipment and companies and individuals from within the Parish made donations towards the cost of running our first fete. West Wycombe Estate also made a contribution towards the new concrete bases at the Garden Centre Glass Recycling area. Sadly, this year we also had a higher income for the Burial Ground.

We had to spend money to create the fete: marquees, toilets and entertainers all cost money but ensured that the whole community had a good day and £1400 was raised by the community towards the next phase of the play equipment project.

We contributed £4000 towards the total cost of installing three new street lights in Church Lane and erected new fencing and created the car park in the allotments and The Pedestal Play Area.

We had to spend more money on salt/grit for the salt bin at the Garden Centre due to the prolonged and difficult winter weather conditions.

As we want to be able to install phase two of play equipment in 2012 we felt that we would need to increase our precept. As this was against the general trend of not increasing Council Taxes it was agreed that we would invite every home in the parish to vote on the proposed increase. The overwhelming response was to allow us to put our precept back to £36,000 which will help us to ensure that we can have phase two in 2012.

Mr Jim Foy and Mr Richard Filmore – The National Trust - properties

Mr Foy introduced himself and reported that there are plans to hold a Classic Car Rally in the Park on June 19th, a Meet your Neighbour Day on July 9th and a presentation of Pride and Prejudice on 28th August.

Mr Filmore reported that it is planned that more building works, similar to the level of works carried out last year, will be undertaken in the High Street. Three groups of buildings on the north side of the High Street will undergo routine maintenance. 11, 000 cars go through the High Street every day.

Cllr Neil Harris – The National Trust – open spaces and gardens

Mr Harris reported that the National Trust is trying to get back to its original roots which in 1895 were to provide access to the countryside. Instead of being called Wardens staff will be called Rangers which gives more of an 'outside/land' feel to the work they undertake. They want more people to be aware of the work undertaken by them in the countryside and to get more support from the general population. They have a target of getting 5 million members by 2020 currently it stands at 3.8 million and they want to make everyone feel like a member of the trust. Keen for more people to experience the countryside in their own way and to develop new country pursuits e.g. hang gliding and camping. It is acknowledged that people can suffer Nature Deficit Disorder and if you can get people to visit the countryside and experience the beauty and tranquillity then stress levels can be reduced. He wants to make West Wycombe Hill a safer area to be used as a playground.

There has been some movement of staff and Len Bernamont who has been restoring the Bradenham Manor Gardens is now going to spend 3 days per week as the new Ranger for West Wycombe which will give him a greater opportunity to do more in the Park, the village and on the Hill. He would like to develop a community spirit within the village.

There will be a consultation about usage of West Wycombe Hill and a plan to restore the 18th Century Historic Borrowed Landscape of the Park and the Hill. The Golden Ball and Mausoleum should appear to float over the hill. Since the 1950's the scrub has taken over the hill and it all needs to be opened up by controlling the scrub and removing some of the self set trees. The Hill used to be used for grazing which helped to keep everything under control. Neil will still be managing all the trees.

Cllr Neil Timberlake –West Wycombe Community Library

It has been an interesting year for those of us associated with West Wycombe Community Library! We've had our 15 minutes of fame (and more!); and we've made some significant changes to the way we are structured and governed. The future is looking good, but I will say more about these various aspects a little later in this summary of the year.

We are now in our fifth year as a community library, run by volunteers, and funded from within the community. Doubtless when we opened for business in February 2007 there were those who never could have believed that we would still be here, delivering a public service to the community in 2011. Indeed, doubtless some of those actively involved may have harboured doubts as to our long-term survivability.

But we are here, and we continue to prosper.

We have been supported throughout by the local community who have provided a continuous supply of high-quality and varied donated books, and we are supported by a dedicated team of some twenty active volunteers, who provide librarianship services during the six days a week that the library is open, or who support the work of the library behind the scenes in fundraising or administrative support.

We are grateful for the support of everyone who has contributed to our success.

Indeed such has been the success in terms of book donations, that during the last year we have entered into a partnership arrangement with Waterloo Community Library, in Sierra Leone! Sierra Leone is a land scarred by years of civil war and unrest, now thankfully behind them. There are now huge efforts, supported by the international community, to re-create civic services destroyed during the years of trouble, and we have been very pleased to support the charity Codep's "Build on Books" initiative by passing on to them many of our surplus supplies of donated books.

We are approaching the end of our first five year lease and Service Level Agreement with Buckinghamshire County Council, and have already been in talks regarding the terms of new arrangements that will replace these initial terms. The County Council have been immensely

supportive in this process and it looks very much as though the terms of our new Lease and Service Level Agreement will be somewhat less onerous than the first one.

As you will be aware, since we formed part of that first tranche of community libraries back in 2006 and 2007 the County Council, in common with other local authorities elsewhere in Britain, has sought to involve local communities and volunteer effort in many more libraries, as a means of cutting costs in times of severe financial stringency, and of seeking to involve the community in the delivery and design of public services as part of the wider 'Localism' and 'Big Society' agenda.

As a consequence, we have found ourselves much called upon for advice and information from other libraries the length and breadth of Britain! We have appeared on the BBC Politics Show, on BBC News, we have been filmed (one such film can be seen on YouTube), and our members interviewed for Three Counties Radio, and photographed for the BBC News website. It has at times been quite a whirlwind of publicity, which has all served to keep the name of West Wycombe very much in the public eye.

West Wycombe Community Library is now widely held up as an exemplar of how such libraries can be run and maintained.

The Library continues to be open for six days a week, (9am to 5pm each Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and 9am to 1pm on Wednesdays and Fridays, and from 10am to 1pm on Saturdays) and with Sunday afternoon opening in the summer months once again planned from June to the end of August. The summer Sunday openings, serving cream teas and other delights to tourists and locals alike, are a huge money-spinner for us, and contribute significantly towards meeting the costs of running the library service. We opened last Bank Holiday Monday also and served some 50 customers.

Our book borrowings continue to hold up well, but we always welcome more people! It is good to have a good-news story to report, and we want to share it with more members of the community. The more people use the library, and the more books that are borrowed, the more we are vindicated in our central aim of keeping this valued facility in the heart of the community. Please visit us soon, and tell your friends and neighbours too!

During the hours that the library is open we also feature a tea shop with tea, coffee and cakes. Bacon rolls are served on Friday mornings.

To support our fundraising we also sell a number of small items, such as bags, potted plants, jewellery, chocolates, and surplus books.

Our website – www.westwycombelibrary.org.uk – continues to provide a source of regularly-updated information on the library's programme of activities, and we are grateful too, for the support and co-operation of the parish magazine "Contact", of the Parish Council, and of David Winterburn and the Bucks Free Press for all they do to publicise our activities and raise awareness of the library.

I mentioned earlier that we have made changes to our governance arrangements, and recently held an EGM as well as an AGM in order to enact those changes. We have decided to dissolve the Limited Company which has operated under the umbrella of the original West Wycombe Library Action Group, and instead to adopt the form of a Charitable Trust. There are nine Trustees, who will now control and manage the library as a charitable institution. I am pleased to have become one of the Trustees, and I am delighted to welcome Cllr Danny Callaghan as one of the others! This will mean that the Parish Council will be well-represented in the management of the library for the next two or three years, as a minimum.

At the AGM we were pleased to re-elect Rev Nigel Lacey as Chairman, and Cllr Danny Callaghan has become the Vice-Chairman.

We have a healthy programme of fundraising events planned for the next few months:

We have a Caribbean Afternoon scheduled for later in the year – so watch out for announcements in Contact magazine and elsewhere – and do come along for reggae, good Caribbean food, limbo, and a chilled-out afternoon. We can only hope for Caribbean weather on the day!

We also have a Quiz Night scheduled on Friday 14th October, and a Bingo Night on Tuesday 15th November. These dates are subject to final confirmation.

Some of our fundraising events in the last year have not been as well supported by the community as we might have liked – for example our Christmas Dance made a small LOSS, and our recent Table-Top Sale, whilst profitable, was only JUST profitable, and hardly constituted an adequate return for a lot of hours of work from a number of our volunteers.

Events that were successful included our participation in the Village Christmas Fayre. We urge all members of West Wycombe parish, and those further afield, to continue to support us in this way. Our fundraising events also contribute to the variety and to the jollity of the village social life, and we hope have a value far beyond their importance to us.

Finally – although we are an independent, volunteer-run and volunteer-financed library, we are nevertheless part of the County Council library network. As such, if you have a Bucks County Library card then you are automatically a member of our library, and can borrow items on the same terms as from other libraries. You can borrow books from West Wycombe and return them to other libraries in the county – and vice versa.

We look forward to continuing to provide a library service to West Wycombe, and the wider population of Buckinghamshire, for at least another five years! Thank you.

Cllr Mrs Vicki Smith – Chairman, West Wycombe Community Association - (The Village Hall Management Committee)

The Village Hall has been busy again this year not only with our regular hirers including a new twice weekly dog training class but with single events such as children's parties and quizzes.

Because the Hall is busy it needs a lot of cleaning and maintenance.

We are very grateful to Nicola Yebah and Katie Debono for taking over the Hall cleaning at short notice when our cleaner, Mark Curran died suddenly. We send our best wishes to his wife Tracey, who also cleaned and let the Hall for us, and her children on their tragic loss.

Mrs Maureen Plumridge stepped in to help with the letting of the Hall. Mr and Mrs Plumridge keep a careful eye on the Hall for us and are constantly clearing the car park of litter. We are indebted to them.

We were lucky to find Mrs Meeks who started to clean for us a few months ago.

Because of our mounting electricity bills Mel Webster came up with a system that turns the heater on in the main hall when someone enters and turns off when the last person leaves. We learned that people were leaving the heating on after their session had finished. Hopefully we will have save money with this initiative. We have also had new wiring in the electric room and our appliances PAT tested for safety.

The main hall floor was cleaned and waxed professionally this year. The floor was new in 1996 at a cost of £10,000. It gets a lot of hard wear and needs constant attention to keep it looking good.

The stage end of the main hall needs some decoration and the stairs and upper room are badly in need of refurbishment.

We need to order more crockery because our stock of cups and saucers is much reduced. We would also like to like to replace the chairs in the main hall as soon as possible when funds allow.

We still worry about the windows in the Hall. They do need replacing but we do not have the funds to do this enormous job.

We will be trying to get grants again this coming year for the jobs outstanding but in the present climate (the recession) grants are few and far between.

We have had very few problems with the car park since Central Parking Services took on this area. Central Government are bringing in new rules about private companies removing unauthorised vehicles from private land so we are waiting to see how this will affect the Village Hall arrangements.

We would like to thank Sir Edward Dashwood for continuing to be our President and for the Christmas tree he gives the Village Hall each year. The Parish Council supply the lights for the tree. The Christmas tree certainly makes The Village look festive and welcoming.

I would like to thank Mr Roger Seymour and Mr Mel Webster for looking after the fabric of the building for us again this year. It is a difficult job to know where to start to keep this building ticking over successfully. The building is over 50 years old and with the amount of wear and tear it gets, it is expensive to keep in good order and takes time, careful thought and management.

I would like to thank our Hon Treasurer Mr Graham Wood and our Hon Secretary, Mrs Marion Brown for all their hard work. We couldn't run the Hall without their painstaking paperwork and attention to detail.

My thanks to all the Village Hall Committee for their continued support and commitment to the Village Hall.

The Village Hall Committee's aim is always to keep West Wycombe Village Hall a viable, clean, welcoming environment for people to use.

Mrs Anna Marks Deputy Head - West Wycombe County Combined School

Mrs Cobb sends her apologies as she has been very busy recruiting to ensure a strong team for September.

Over the last two years West Wycombe School has been experiencing a culture change across the school and we are striving to be an excellent school for the children by continuing to raise standards. We have raised expectations by insisting on the correct uniform and equipment, presentation of work in books, consistency throughout the school and a challenging curriculum which encourages independent thinkers.

As a school we continue to be oversubscribed. Foundation Stage will have a full intake again this year and the school enjoys a good reputation in the local and wider community.

The school remains fully staffed and we always have a good response when we recruit, due to the nature of the school.

The July SATs were again successful and we are very proud of our children. We continue to give them challenging targets and know that our children and staff will rise to them.

The governors have become more active and involved in school life and have undertaken training workshops and visits to understand and support the children and staff.

The newly formed Friends' Association has been very proactive and they have embraced their role with great enthusiasm. They have held many successful events already such as the auction, which raised thousands of pounds for the school. The quiz night was extremely popular, as was their Pimms and Pudding night at the village fete in September. They are now planning future events with confidence and the school really appreciates their effort.

In the Easter holidays we held a ground force day, in which the staff and parents kindly volunteered their time to tackle much needed indoor and outdoor jobs around the school. They all worked as a team to improve the facilities and found it so rewarding that they plan to repeat it again in the Summer holidays.

We are holding a very special open evening on the 15th of June to promote our school in the community. We are so proud of our school that we would like to invite the parish council to visit the school in the afternoon so that you can see the children at work. The focus of the day is ICT and the Friend's Association is committed to their fundraising effort to provide the school with the latest technology.

The creative curriculum has been one of our greatest successes. We have developed this further and we now have a whole school overview, mapped back to the national curriculum to ensure curriculum coverage and breadth of study. We start each theme with a hook which excites and interest the children and which draws them into the theme and we end with a celebration to which the parents are invited. This ensures that our parents are constantly invited into our school to participate in their children's learning. We also have whole school themes such as the 2012 Olympics which inspire each class to interact with one another. The feedback from our parents has been extremely positive.

As a result of our head's determined effort on behalf of the children, we were fortunate in securing a place in the creative partnership. The children worked with a film maker to record adverts about recycling and they then used the DVD of all the pieces put together to reflect on their own learning.

The travel plan team has spent a lot of time and effort in promoting road safety and safe parking. The team arranged an assembly for the whole school on road safety and also started a stay safe, be seen campaign for the children – providing fluorescent jackets for the children.

Of course, the greatest asset of the school is the children themselves, who continually strive to do their best and who impress all our visitors with their manners, their behaviour and their enthusiasm for learning.

Staffing update: Miss Rogers is leaving the school to spend more time with her baby daughter. Finally, on a personal note, after many happy years at West Wycombe School, I have finally decided that the time has come for me to retire. The school has gone from strength to strength and I feel confident that it will meet the challenges ahead and equip our children with the necessary skills to deal with a constantly changing world.

The school has an Open day on 15th June.

Mrs A. Rimmer – PCC Secretary - Report on the Churches of West Wycombe 2011.

This has been an active year for the churches in West Wycombe, and our attempts to balance the spiritual side with the very practical side of Church life continue. The congregation numbers are growing gradually, and it's a joy to see a lively Sunday School back again, run by Carole Chambers, with a wide range of ages and loads of enthusiasm.

Rev Nigel Lacey and his dedicated team ensure that our church services are varied and welcome all – there have been many family occasions, happy baptisms and weddings and inevitably sad farewells and we hope that everyone is encouraged to feel part of them. As with many organisations, much of the essential and practical work seems to go on behind the scenes, and much of it done by our Churchwardens. We say a huge Thankyou to Beverley Cope who is standing down this year having been Churchwarden for 9 years, well beyond her initial contract! Malcolm Liddle will be joined as Churchwarden by Veronica Wayman, and we thank them both. The PCC is very much a team, which includes our excellent Treasurer Brian Prosser and our thanks also to Don Currell, our Stewardship Secretary, who has devoted many years to run the scheme and also secure the Gift Aid. Two PCC members represent the parish on the Deanery Synod, and a Local Ministry Team meets regularly to discuss spiritual and social matters. Whereas we don't ever want money matters to be the most important, we have to acknowledge that the parish has to pay approximately £20,000 annually as our Parish share, let alone any other bills and running costs. On a lighter note, we appreciate enormously the huge contribution which our organist Pearl Chubb makes to our services.

There has been much maintenance and improvement work completed in both our churches, from small but significant detail through to works that you just can't miss. The wood and stone floors at St Lawrence are greatly improved after being cleaned and treated, we have purchased new temporary seating which is needed for concerts and other full houses, and we are in the midst of ordering a new dais for the altar there, the current dais is beset by woodworm! The dais and also the wonderful baby grand piano have been purchased from the generous bequest of the late Don Varney which we appreciate enormously. In November we held a Memorial Concert in Don's memory and there have been some wonderful concerts at St Lawrence over the last year, with more to come in 2011. Don's memory will always be with us! We also plan to place a votive stand in St Paul's church in his memory and his generosity also enabled us to fit new, effective (and economical!) heaters there. There is also ongoing pruning work on some of the trees in St Paul's churchyard.

Many of you will know that St Lawrence church has been broken into recently, three times in as many weeks, and the sound system and a small amount of money stolen. This, of course, has saddened many people, as well as putting a strain on the clergy's voices and the congregation's ears! and the PCC are discussing revised security arrangements up at the church in its rather vulnerable position.

The seasonal weather in December meant that church services leading up to and over Christmas were held in St Pauls, and I think although some may have missed the different atmosphere of St Lawrence church, most people thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to be in St Pauls, whilst it also enabled some less-mobile villagers to attend the various services.

Coffee Mornings, Sunday teas and the Tower opening continue to provide entertainment, good food and the opportunity for the local community to meet up and catch up and visitors to enjoy the village and church setting. There is often 'live music' on a Sunday afternoon when a musician will play the piano there, and this is really popular with locals and visitors alike. Many former residents or schoolchildren of West Wycombe return to relive their memories or to visit family graves and that is very special. In October we held a shared Quiz Night with Roger Seymour's fundraising team and it was great fun. We thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the first Village Fete and the Village Christmas evening, and thank everyone involved in their organisation. We see the year ahead particularly as an opportunity to continue building our church family of all ages, and we hope that the year will bring much happiness and success for this very special Parish community.

The Chairman invited everyone to stay and join in with the light refreshments.