

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON 26th APRIL 2012 AT 8PM IN THE CHURCH ROOM, WEST WYCOMBE**

PRESENT:

Cllrs Mrs J. Smith (Chairman), Mr R. Seymour, Mrs C. Dakin, Mr D. Callaghan, Mr N. Timberlake, Mr N. Harris Mrs S. Henson, Clerk

11 members of the public including
Mr J. Foy and Mr L Bernamont - The National Trust,
Mrs A. Rimmer - Churchwarden West Wycombe PCC,
Mrs A. Cobb and Miss Cooper, West Wycombe School

APOLOGIES: Cllrs Mr F. Downes, Dist Cllrs Mrs J. Teesdale, Mr I McEnnis, Mrs M Hilder (West Wycombe Estate)

The Chairman Cllr Mrs Smith welcomed everyone.

Cllr Mrs Vicki Smith, West Wycombe Parish Council Chairman's report for year 2011 -2012

We became a Parish Council 25 years ago this year after a referendum showed that the residents of West Wycombe wanted a Parish Council to look after the interests of the place that they loved and lived in.

At this year's Fete there will be a stall showing all that we have achieved in the past 25 years, from the burial ground, the allotments, the children's playground, street lighting, the zebra and pelican crossings and very many more things that maybe small but have contributed to making life a little safer and easier for our residents . We have worked hard over the years to try and give the whole area that is West Wycombe what was needed to make it a welcoming, safe and good environment to live in.

With the help of some of our residents we are working on another parish plan questionnaire similar to the one we did about 6 years ago. This will go out to all homes in West Wycombe. As the most local form of government we feel this is the way to ensure that we try, where possible, to meet the needs of the residents of our parish and it will also help when we work with other agencies such as the District and County Councils and the police because they can see we have done our best to consult and engage with our electorate.

With much talk of Central Government's idea of Localism bringing policies and decision making closer to the electorate it is difficult for parish councils to know how things will work for them in the future.

We waited for the act to go through Parliament and be made law in November 2011 but The Localism Bill is not much clearer to us now after many seminars and training sessions than it was when it was first proposed.

We are ready to take on the responsibility for some jobs done now by Wycombe District Council and Bucks County Council but not at a cost to our residents. We would not expect our residents to pay council tax to one of the other authorities then do the job for them at a cost to ourselves. Double taxation!

This makes no sense at all but it seems to be what we are being offered at present. Also if local planning can be decided by a number of residents getting together it makes us wonder why we have been democratically elected.

I am sure it will all come out in the wash but at the moment it is quite confusing.

The work of The Parish Council

Much of the everyday work of the Parish Council is to monitor work or sometimes the lack of work, done by BCC and WDC. For instance for months we have asked for our street lights and the pot holes in our roads to be repaired with no real success up to the time of writing this report.

Although after much chasing, the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) was eventually installed on the Piddington approach to the Village.

We look thoroughly at every planning application that comes in from WDC. Knowing the parish as well as we do, our comments to WDC reflect how the application will impact on the area surrounding it. Sometimes we are disappointed that some plans go through that we think shouldn't but understand that WDC can only work to government rules and regulations.

At our meeting every month we discuss things varying from highways issues, the allotments, maintenance of the burial ground and playing field, planning, future plans for our fete, parish finance and items brought up by the members of the public and report back on meetings, forums, training and consultations we have attended during the month.

West Wycombe Fete

We organised our second Fete last September on the Pedestal Playing Field with stall holders again giving us half of their takings towards the play equipment. We were very pleased that the community became involved and turned out to support and help us on the day.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge all the hard work our local National Trust Rangers put into this day too because we wouldn't be able to put on the Fete without the help of the team from Hughenden Manor.

For the past two years the National Trust have successfully put on a "Meet the Neighbours" afternoon in West Wycombe Park, which has been enjoyed by many of us and we have had our Fete in September.

This year we decided to have a joint event with the National Trust and combine the Fete with "Meet the Neighbours" in West Wycombe Park on July 14th and hopefully make a bigger and better occasion to celebrate Her Majesty the Queens Diamond Jubilee Year.

We have set up an events committee who are not only working hard to bring all this together but organising a Beacon Picnic on West Wycombe Hill, near the Mausoleum, on June 4th this year.

We would very much welcome anyone who would like to come and help with these two events.

The Pedestal Playing Field.

A few weeks ago (the beginning of April) in time for the children's Easter holidays, we had another piece of play equipment installed on the Pedestal Playing Field at a cost of over £14,000. It has taken us a time to save for this but by the amount of children seen playing on it, it seems we made a good decision in choosing this particular piece of equipment.

We would very much like to make the pavilion on the playing field safe and useable but at present we do not have funds to do this. We are looking into ways to try and get grants for the large amount of money needed to renovate the building because it cannot be used in its present state. We would love to see football clubs using the field again but they will not come until they can use the pavilion.

The Chorley Road Allotments

After 3 years most allotments are now established and well looked after.

We will be holding an allotment competition at the Fete.

Parish Councillors

Cllr Carole Dakin has decided to step down at the end of this meeting. Carole has been a parish councillor for 10 years and had been our representative on West Wycombe School's Governing body for many years. We have always valued her opinions and ideas and will be sorry to lose her but wish her well for the future.

We gave her a small gift as a token of our appreciation for all her hard work for this parish.

We are at present looking for a new councillor to replace Carole.

Looking towards the future we wanted to make sure that more people became interested in West Wycombe Parish Council, to know how it works and what it means to be a parish councillor. To that end a few months ago we invited Mrs Lisa Cook and Mrs Kate Cheshire, who have done sterling work for the School and the Toddlers Group, to join us as non-voting, un-elected members.

I think they are finding it a bit of a fairly steep learning curve, but they seem to be enjoying the experience and we feel they are an asset to the council. The very first thing they had to bring along was.... a sense of humour!

Each one of our councillors is unpaid and they use their knowledge and personal expertise to serve our community. They give up an enormous amount of their time to attend meetings and seminars etc. They are members of other committees on our behalf and make sure we are represented and are often involved in discussions throughout the High Wycombe area and Buckinghamshire. In fact we will go anywhere if we think there will be information that could affect our parish.

They very much deserve your thanks.

Mrs Sharon Henson, our Parish Clerk and Financial Officer, also deserves your thanks. We parish councillors all know that without Sharon's understanding of parish council law and her experience it would be much harder to run this Parish Council as efficiently as we do. She was given a well-deserved award last year by the Chairman of Wycombe District Council for Services to the Community.

It makes my job as Chairman of the Parish Council much easier knowing I have an enthusiastic team of people who are dedicated to moving West Wycombe along with the times without losing sight of this area's unique character.

Thank you

We would like to thank our Wycombe District Councillors Mrs Jean Teesdale and Mr Ian McEnnis for their support and keeping us informed with news from WDC. Ian has been Chairman of WDC this year but still has had time to involve himself with anything to do with West Wycombe. Frank Downes is one of our parish councillors and also our Bucks County Councillor and we thank him too for his support.

Mr Mike Henson looks after our website and keeps it full of interesting information not just council related but items that will be of use to the community at large.

www.westwycombe.org.uk

We would like to thank the regular members of our community who come along in the rain and cold to our Parish Council meetings, it is much appreciated by us and we value your support. They do say our meetings are better than watching the television!

Affiliated Groups

We belong to the following groups and associations

The Wycombe District Association of Local Councils

Cllr Danny Callaghan is Vice Chairman of this association and Sharon is the Honorary Secretary. This association is open to all parish councils in the High Wycombe Area and gives training and has open discussions on anything related to parish councils.

We belong to The Bucks Association of Local Councils who meets in the County Offices in Aylesbury. Members come from all over Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Cllr Danny Callaghan and I are on the Executive Committee of this group and Danny is also the Vice Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of this group.

This Association also arranges training sessions.

The Marlow and South West Chiltern Local Area Forum

This is a group run by Bucks County Council and where we presented a case to be able to obtain funding for the VAS.

We attend **Wycombe District Council's Rural Forum** meetings because we think it important to keep up with news from the farming community.

I am a member of the **Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG)** a police led group who include members from Lane End, Piddington and Wheeler End and Stokenchurch. We help each other with problems such as anti-social behaviour and parking problems. At these meetings I have asked our police officers to check on the parents parking badly and dangerously around the school and The High Street. They now come regularly to monitor the parking problems at school home times, handing out parking tickets when necessary to persistent offenders.

I have been on **Wycombe District Council's Standard's Committee** for some years.

Cllr Neil Timberlake represents us on the Wycombe Air Park JCC Committee.

So you can see we are very busy making sure West Wycombe Parish Council warrants it's qualification as "A Quality Parish Council". As I have said before we try to make sure every decision we take, makes West Wycombe good place to live.

Presentation of the Financial Statement

The Clerk/RFO issued a set of accounts to everyone present.

We have finished our financial year with a higher than normal balance as we are saving for phase 2 of the play equipment in The Pedestal Playing Field, which was in fact installed during April.

The precept, after public consultation, was increased to allow the second phase to be completed. We received money from our District and County Councilors – this money was to go towards play equipment, bollards to be sited on the pavement in front of The Pedestal and for celebrating the Queens Diamond Jubilee.

Mike Henson Presentations, West Wycombe Community Association and Mrs V. Smith and an anonymous donor made donations towards the equipment. This year we also had a high 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 phase 2 of the play equipment project.

We had to spend more money on salt/grit for the salt bin at the Garden Centre and paid for the recycling area to be concreted. We finished the year with a balance of £16,864.26.

Mr Jim Foy – The National Trust - properties

Buildings

Mr Foy announced that this year sees the start of a 3 year major refurbishment and repair building project to repair and restore our housing stock in the village; a major financial investment will see improvements both externally and internally. We will begin the project with an open day to inform residents of our plans on 21st May.

Events

Running a series of themed guided walks around the Village and Hill as well as 4 main events in the Park – opening the House a month early for a Windsor Chair Exhibition, Classic Cars on Fathers' Day, joining forces with the Parish Council for the Jubilee Fete, and an Open Air Theatre production. Also helping to run the Festive Fayre via the events team.

Mr Len Bernamont– The National Trust – open spaces and gardens

Activity over the past 12 months

Conservation

We have carried out considerable scrub clearance on the Hill working with a new volunteer team. Started work on restoration of the Water Garden in the Park – yew hedges along the canal have been cut back to re-grow as formal hedge and Marcella's Bridge is now re-instated.

Repair work on the Cascade is on-going.

Restoration of the frescos on the East Portico of West Wycombe Park.

Events

Four major events in the Park last year – Civil War re-enactment, Classic Car event, Meet the Neighbour and Open Air Theatre production.

Introducing the West Wycombe Events team to support community events, enable all areas of the village to become part of these events and increasing visitor numbers to the village enabling it to thrive.

Next 12 months

Conservation

Continue to clear scrub and trees to keep grassland area of the Hill open – focus on the yew 'pens' below the mausoleum

Hill Consultation – we will be bringing our 'vision' for the future management of the Hill to locals and visitors by holding some open day events on the Hill and in the village, providing interpretation and allowing everyone to have an input into the discussion.

Continuing work on the Water Garden – opening up the vista from the House to the Temple of Venus and other tree work.

We are also implementing a tree planting plan to restore 20+ specimen trees to the Park and Garden.

Communication

We are creating one West Wycombe Park and Village entry for our member's handbook, encouraging visitors to enjoy all aspects of the property.

We will also be focusing on our web pages for the Park, Village and Hill; providing more information and updating these pages regularly. We will be encouraging local businesses and groups to work in partnership with us to make the most of what the Village has to offer.

Cllr Neil Timberlake –West Wycombe Community Library

Madam Chairman, Members of the West Wycombe Parish Council, and residents and friends of West Wycombe parish.

We are now in our sixth year as a community library, run by volunteers, and funded largely from within the community. We are grateful for the support of everyone who has contributed to our success.

We continue to be the grateful recipients of a continuous supply of high-quality and varied donated books given to us by residents in the local community, 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 have continued our 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.

Much to our amazement (certainly from the vantage point of where we set out from as a community library in 2007) we reached the end of our first five year lease and Service Level Agreement with Buckinghamshire County Council. At the moment we are working on the basis of an interim agreement with Bucks County Council while we jointly seek to agree a new long-term formal second term lease. 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 very much more generous than were the terms of our first five years.

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 part of that process of re-configuration of library provision, the County Council has adopted a new model of co-operation with community libraries, and the net effect is that much more of the share of the overall costs of provision will now be met by the County Council. The County still saves a great deal of money, but the burden is perhaps more equitably shared. For example, in our first five years we were called upon to pay a rent of £2,000 to the County Council for the use of the building (itself a less than commercial rent, it must be said) – now our use of the building will be effectively rent-free. Whereas we once had to arrange the transport for the exchange of books between our library and the County network via High Wycombe, the County Library van now calls regularly and does this book swap for us.

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, this year from May 6th to the end of August Bank Holiday Monday, to align with the longer period of summer opening of West Wycombe House and grounds in 2012. 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.

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. We also offer lunches every weekday afternoon that we are open.

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

I can particularly recommend the chocolates, which I can assure you are rigorously taste-tested every Saturday that I am on duty there!

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 the Bucks Free Press for all they do to publicise our activities and raise awareness of the library.

During the last year we made some significant changes to our governance arrangements. The operation of the library is now undertaken by a charitable trust instead of the company limited by guarantee that used to be the vehicle for doing so. As charitable trustees are effectively a self-

electing body, we came to the conclusion that there was no longer any separate purpose or role for the original West Wycombe Library Action Group with which we had started the whole process, and so this association was dissolved. There are nine Trustees, who now control and manage the library as a charitable institution. I am pleased to be one of them. For this past year we have enjoyed the input of Cllr Danny Callaghan as one of the others! Sadly, this week Danny has announced that he wishes to step down, as he does so much else for the parish council and community. In his place the Trustees earlier this week decided to invite Cllr Jean Teesdale, who did so much to drive the community library group forward in its formative years. We hope that she will agree to become a Trustee – she is already Honorary President of the Trust.

We are sorry to lose Cllr Danny Callaghan, as he has been the source of new ideas and innovations; sometimes challenging us to think differently, but always supportive. We thank him warmly for his services to the library in the last twelve months.

Although our need to raise funds in support of the library is less pressing than it used to be, we still have a programme of events lined up for the year ahead:

We have a Book Sale this coming Saturday (April 28th) from 11am to 3pm in the Church Rooms and Church Loft and will be offering lunches and other good stuff as well as books!

As soon as the licence is confirmed we hope to start selling tickets for our licensed summer raffle which will run throughout the summer. Amongst the prizes already kindly donated are: £100 in cash; a Golf Day for four at the Warwickshire Club (worth around £200); and a family ticket on Chiltern Railways.

The draw for the raffle will be held at our Caribbean Evening on 22nd September 2012 at Radnage Village Hall – so watch out for further announcements about that in Contact magazine and elsewhere – and do come along for reggae, good Caribbean food, limbo, and a chilled-out evening. We can only hope for Caribbean weather on the day!

During the past year we also started a programme of evening illustrated talks on local historical subjects. The three talks so far held were on such diverse subjects as the history of Wycombe Wanderers; the role of the Wycombe area in the early development of aviation in the UK; and the secret code-breaking role of Hughenden Manor during World War II. All three talks were absolutely fascinating, and all were well-attended by people from all across the district, thanks in no small part to the helpful publicity which High Wycombe Library kindly provided.

We are now discussing and researching a further programme of such talks for later in the year.

Other events in the past year that were successful included our participation in the Village Fete and the Village Christmas Fayre. We urge all members of West Wycombe parish, and those further afield, to continue to support those events, and 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. Some people may be of the mistaken belief that because we are an independent charity-run library there is some form of charge or fee to use our library. There absolutely is not – we are free to all residents of Buckinghamshire.

We look forward to continuing to provide a library service to West Wycombe, and the wider population of Buckinghamshire, for many more years to come!

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

I am always pleased to report that West Wycombe Village Hall continues to attract people who want to hire the Hall. The Committee are always aware that to encourage would-be hirers and keep our regular users content, we have to keep the Hall looking at its best. This of course takes a good deal of money and time. There are maintenance jobs forever waiting to be done and just keeping up with these takes most of our resources.

Our main aim is to keep the Hall clean and welcoming.

We had a problem securing a cleaner since Mrs Meeks had to leave through poor health but I am pleased to say that Mrs Pauline Martin started cleaning the Hall in January. She had an enormous task to start with to bring the cleanliness up to the level we expect but she has settled in well and is doing an excellent job.

Mr and Mrs Plumridge continue to keep an eye on the Hall for us, living as they, do next door. This is a great help to the Committee. Mrs Plumridge is our Letting Secretary and Mr Plumridge regularly sweeps the car park and picks up litter. We had a key safe holder, with a new kitchen door lock, installed this year in the hope of keeping the Hall secure.

A few unauthorised people have taken to parking in the Village Hall car park again, all-be-it for short periods. We will monitor the situation through the coming weeks.

We send our thanks to Sir Edward Dashwood who kindly supplied the Christmas tree in our garden again this year and to West Wycombe Parish Council who arrange for the installation of the tree, put the lights on it and keep it lit over the Christmas period. The Christmas tree is much appreciated by all who live in West Wycombe and those who pass through our village.

I have mentioned over the past few years that the upstairs room badly needed an overhaul and to this end Roger Seymour organised Paul Smith to come in over the Christmas period to strip down and paint the walls, put new lino tiles on the stairs, take down the old cupboards and shelves behind the bar and replace with new. We need to buy new flooring when we have the funds to finish the room off. This room will never repay the money spent on it but it does look and feel cleaner and we feel more confident offering the room as a meeting room or bar should people require it.

I should like to thank Roger for all the work he has put into this project and all the other jobs he does for the Hall. It would be impossible for us to manage without his knowledge of the Village Hall.

Mel Webster also has helped again this year with planning jobs and the heating.

Our thanks to too Mrs Marion Brown our Hon Secretary and Graham Wood our Treasurer without whom we couldn't function.

All of the Committee are volunteers and I appreciate their time and interest and support of West Wycombe Village Hall.

This was shown clearly on the evening of the West Wycombe Festive Fayre this year when they ran a tea, coffee and cake stall to raise funds for the Hall.

West Wycombe Village Hall continues to be a valuable asset for West Wycombe and is much used by the wider community of High Wycombe.

Report from Mrs Alison Cobb, Head teacher, West Wycombe Combined School
End of academic year 2010-2012

Our KS2 results at the end of the academic year were very good. Many children did better than we predicted showing accelerated progress over the year. Some of our SEN children also did better than expected.

Our deputy head retired and we held a special event for her which many past and present staff attended. This coincided with our very successful open day on 15 June when we opened the school to parents and invited a number of County advisors as well as people from the local community. Representatives from the governing body and Friends Association also attended. Our visitors were able to tour the school, visit all the classrooms and see some of our ICT work in action. Our children enjoyed being ambassadors.

Academic year 2011-2012

In September we had 202 pupils on roll in the school. The new deputy and senior teacher joined completing the senior leadership team. All staff were working hard in preparation for our imminent Ofsted inspection.

Ofsted Inspection

In February we had our Ofsted inspection where we were judged to be **good**. The full inspection can be found at the following link: www.ofsted.gov.uk/ and search under 'find an inspection'.

Creative Curriculum

Our Creative Curriculum is in its second year now and is still in development. We have a number of themes planned and are keen to develop use of the school grounds and locality. We would like to use our neighbourhood and contacts more in the future. Forthcoming themes include the Olympics and Business and Enterprise units.

Visits and Trips

We always encourage visits and trips and this year the following visits have taken place:

FS – Butterfly World

Year 2 – Maidenhead Synagogue

Year 4 – History of Science Museum/University of Oxford Botanic Gardens

Year 5 – Train journey (Princes Risborough and Chinnor railway)

Year 6 – Hazard Alley

Year 6 – PGL residential at Windmill Hill

Creative Partnerships

Once again we have been involved in a Creative Partnership Project and Year 5 has undertaken a digital photography project with the assistance from a professional photographer. They were involved in making their own films, taking different kinds of shots and learning how to make and edit a film and practice being in a film if they wanted to be an actor. This project followed on from our very successful Year 3 "Reduce, Recycle, Reuse" theme last year.

Mini Enterprise

In March the school took part in Mini Enterprise at Cressex Community School. We competed against ten other primary schools and WE WON! Our task was to produce an Easter themed egg basket. They created a basket with long, floppy bunny ears a funny bunny face! One of the reasons they won was because one of the pupils, whilst selling a basket, was given too much money and she returned it. The children also worked well as a team and listened to each other. They achieved their goal and made a £163 profit.

Roles and responsibilities

During the year, the children have undertaken a number of responsibilities including team captains, school council members, JRSOs, Eco Council representatives, play leaders, office monitors and buddies.

Travel Plan Team

The Travel Plan Team continues to work hard to encourage walking to and from school and providing sensible parking.

School Clubs

We always try to promote extra curricular activities. This academic year we have run the following clubs either at lunch time or after school - Active kids, Karate, Hockey, KS1 and KS2 Choir, Chess, Dance and Cheerleading. Our choir gets involved with the Chamber Choir and also was invited to sing at the Civic Service.

Go4It Award (HTI)

We are currently working towards achieving the Go4It Award, an accreditation from HTI (Heads, Teachers and Industry).

Friends Association

This year we welcomed a new committee for the Friends' Association and thanked the outgoing committee who raised £5,830 for the school during the period May 2009-December 2011. Events over recent months have been a quiz, a pamper evening and a children's disco.

Thank you to everyone for their support.

Report presented by Mrs Henson on behalf of Paula Cox, Supervisor of West Wycombe Pre School

West Wycombe Pre-School Playgroup operates 5 mornings a week from the village hall. We are a committee led, community pre-school with charitable status and we are committed to caring for and fostering the development of local 2 1/2 to 5 years olds. This is our busy time of year when we are running at full capacity with 30 children attending every day.

We are extremely grateful to the other local community projects such as the Pedestal Playground who have created such a wonderful play area at the playing fields. We have visited the playing fields many times over the past two years since the first phase was developed and although we are yet to use the new equipment we very much looking forward to our first visit. We are also very grateful to the West Wycombe Estate for allowing us to use their beautiful grounds for our nature walks; the children always enjoy their trips through the 'magic door'.

We are always on the lookout for local people who would be willing to stand on our committee, particularly if they have any expertise in finance or business administration. If you would like any further information about the pre-school please contact Paula Cox on 07767 422307 email: wwpspg@gmail.com.

Report from Mrs Kate Cheshire – Leader of the Baby and Toddler Group

West Wycombe Baby & Toddler Group, meet in the Church Rooms every Wednesday from 9.30-11.30 during term time.

In the last year we have had 57 families register with our toddler group. They do not all attend each week, the size of the room would not accommodate this, but it is nice to see them return as and when they can make it.

We have introduced a diary of activities to the group including arts & crafts, cookery and messy play. The children's favourite is when we bring in cardboard boxes in lots of different shape and sizes for them to use their imagination!

With the increase in numbers we have been fortunate enough to update and replace a lot of the tired and damaged toys including their storage containers. We also offer a fruit and healthy snack bar each week for the children to come and serve themselves.

We also promote local businesses and their services within the parish on our notice board.

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

It's been another busy year within the church community, at St Lawrence (11.00am Eucharist service on 1st, 2nd and 4th Sunday), St Paul's (8.00am 2nd and 3rd Sunday Prayer Book Communion and 3rd Sunday 11.00am Family Service) and at Piddington (1st Sunday 4.00pm Praise Service). Although the three meeting places are very different, there is a strong link between them all and many of the congregations join in at different places, whether on a weekly or a monthly basis.

There is a very active Parochial Church Council comprising 14 members with all kinds of skills and contributions which meets every two months – in the village pub! The size of the Council is determined by Church of England guidelines depending on the size of the Electoral Roll, with five ex-officio members (Rector, Churchwardens and Deanery Synod representatives) and nine, elected, lay members. The contribution of PCC and congregation members is terrific and a real team effort. All manner of topics are covered at PCC meetings and different interests represented, the Rector's report, worship and local ministry, Deanery Synod matters, finance, fabric & maintenance, Sunday School, and social & fundraising. The Sunday School continues to grow which is great, due to the commitment and creativeness of Carole Chambers and we warmly welcome the children and families who are becoming more involved. Sadly however, we have lost members of the congregation, especially Don Currell who gave so much to church life, and also Paddy Podesta in whose memory there is now a votive stand in St Paul's; there are many passers-by who stop to sit in the church in a few moments of peace and reflection.

There have been many family baptisms, weddings and – sadly – funerals at the two churches, and the Tower and Sunday Teas also continue to attract many visitors and old friends. Some come to visit their special parts of the churchyard, others revisit the Tower and many walkers and families stop for refreshment. We are delighted that the piano bought in Don Varney's memory is played there most Sunday afternoons when the church is open, which is very popular with our visitors too. Pearl Chubb, our organist, makes a huge musical contribution to the life of the churches. Various events of the West Wycombe Chamber Choir, the Wycombe Arts Festival, West Wycombe School children and other musical events in St Lawrence have been truly wonderful. The altar surround and base has been replaced, which is attractive and also enables furniture to be moved more easily for concerts.

We have enjoyed various social and fund-raising events during the year, including a Christian Aid Coffee Morning, Church Teas, Fete stall, Village and Benefice Quiz, a first Poppy Walk raising funds for the British Legion, and at the Christmas festive evening. The Harvest Festival goods and produce were donated to the Saunderton Hostel.

We very much appreciate the support that we have received from the Parish Council regarding the Burial Ground and also the repairs needed to the foot of the War Memorial at St Lawrence, which was placed there in 1925 as a memorial to villagers of West Wycombe.

Money is NOT the main point of church life, but it is a reality, and our Treasurer Brian Prosser does a brilliant job of balancing the funds and books – with three church buildings to maintain as well as an annual £21,000 Parish Share to the High Wycombe Deanery, there are considerable outgoings. We were very sad that there were several break-ins at St Lawrence last summer, when all the loudspeaker and music equipment was stolen as well as a small amount of money. It's not just the theft that hurts but also the desecration involved - however the security system

has been completely and generously reviewed and updated by a local locksmith and his colleagues, builders, decorators and others, which is a real step forward.

The Rector Nigel Lacey will be taking a three month sabbatical break this year from July to September, during which time Veronica Beaumont, Linda Richardson and clergy from the local deanery will be holding the fort, together with the local congregation. We shall all miss Nigel in the church community, but it is a great opportunity and welcome change of focus for him. It will be a challenging and stimulating time for the rest of us too when we shall all be pulling together and no doubt discovering things as we go along!

We have thoroughly enjoyed the various shared events with the village, whether coffee mornings, charity walks, the Village Fete, Quiz Nights, Christmas Festival and much more – and as a congregation, we are always immensely thankful and inspired to be part of such a very special and far-reaching village as West Wycombe.

Report on Thames Valley Police by Cllr Mrs Vicki Smith

The police have recently undertaken work to stop people collecting their children from school parking in the wrong place, although on wet days with no police presence the problem persisted. The police will be speaking to the School Travel Committee about taking down the 'speeding' notices on the A40. Parking problem continue in Church Lane despite the Fire Brigade notices. They have undertaken to try to obtain more of these for distribution within the parishes.

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