

Minutes of WAPPENHAM VILLAGE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY 2017
Held on Wednesday 10th May 2017 at 7:30pm
in Wappenham Village Hall

Approximately 20 members of the public attended the meeting.

1. Parish Council Welcome, apologies and Opening of Annual Assembly

Cllr Hilary Wickham welcomed those present to the meeting, including parishioners, representatives of local organisations and Cllr Peter Davies Apologies had been received from Jane Mordue, Charlotte Supple, Rupert Fordham and Jane Harries, Cllr Ian Morris and PSCO Graham Suppiah.

2. Approval of minutes of Annual Assembly held on 4th May 2016

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of 4th May 2016.

3. Matters Arising from minutes of the Annual Assembly on 4th May 2016

None.

4. Parish Council Chair Annual Report – Cllr Hilary Wickham

It has proved enormously helpful and successful to have a full Council this year of 7 members and I do appreciate all the time and effort they have put into the work in hand.

The financial position is healthy and looked after very efficiently by our Vice Chairman Paul Featherstone who will be reporting in more detail later in the meeting. Our clerk has been aware of all possibilities in acquiring grants for the various new projects initiated. Through these grants this year we have achieved the installation of the Defibrillator and the Speed Radar signs and our next project of the redesign and build of a new website is well underway.

Planning has not been a big issue for us this year. There are now safety signs in place at the Slapton Bridge T Junction but the fencing appears to be only half done and we must follow up on it. The condition of the road to Towcester has certainly improved and after much hassle the new roundabout appears to be greatly favouring traffic from Wappenham and Abthorpe. Freedom of the Parish has been recently mentioned on the Agenda and the merits or not of the plan are still under discussion.

I shall not be standing for re-election at the Annual Parish Meeting next week and so I would like to take this opportunity of personally thanking my fellow Councillors, particularly Paul Featherstone who has been such great support to me over recent years. Our thanks go to Liz Hart who with a busy life has managed to keep us on the straight and narrow and has been involved with the teething problems of the new website. Which reminds me to send our sincerest thanks to Dianne Walsh who originally set up the website and ran it for so many years. Without fail Clive has kept us all in touch with the daily updating of WIZ messages and Jane editing the Newsletter keeps everyone in touch with whats going on in the village - very many thanks to both of you.

Hilary Wickham

Chairman

6. Report from Police – Brackley Rural

Graham Suppiah PCSOs Brackley Safer Community Team.

Below are the reported occurrences for Wappenham from 1st April 2016 to 6th May 2017.

April 2016 – Burglary of Dwelling in Helmdon Road

Sept 2016 – Burglary Non-Dwelling in Abthorpe Road

Sept 2016 - Burglary Non-Dwelling in Abthorpe Road + Theft of trailer

Oct 2016 - Burglary Non-Dwelling in Rectory Way – Theft of lead panels

Nov 2016 – Theft of Number Plates in Highbridge Road

Dec 2016 – Burglary of Dwelling in Helmdon Road

Feb 2017 - Burglary of Dwelling + Theft of vehicle in High Street

For clarification a Dwelling Burglary is of a person's home.

A Non Dwelling Burglary is of a building such as a shed, barn, business premise or garage that has no connecting door to enter the house.

Enquires were completed for all the below occurrences which includes where required, victim visit, house to house enquires, forensic visit and media appeal. All victims were updated of the outcome of their reported occurrence.

Suspects were identified in relation to one of the burglary dwellings and all others listed were filed pending any further information once enquires had been completed

7. Observations from the County Councillor –Cllr Ian Morris

Report detailing County Council Activities 2016/17

This is my fourth report as your County Councillor; the purpose of which is to highlight the activities of the County Council, my role and the current plans that the new Council (after the Election in May) will be following.

Since May of last year I have been a Cabinet Member. The new leader Cllr Heather Smith asked me to take over the Environment, Development and Transport portfolio. A role that takes in Street Lighting, Waste, Highways, Broadband and potholes amongst other things...so not much of a challenge there then. I will return to this as my report progresses.

Some brief headlines follow :-

Since 2013 we have provided safety for 3,100 of the most vulnerable children in the county and at any one time we have 1,000 children we care for.

Our Invaluable fire and Rescue service has attended around 4000 incidents and this number of incidents continues to fall.

Since 2012 we have created 13,474 new school places

Our Library Plus centres are being used more than ever and will have been visited by over 3,000,000 times this year.

Our Country parks have been visited by 2,000,000 people.

We have repaired 40,000 potholes this year alone.

I now wanted to take some time to specifically discuss our highways and our potholes .In Northamptonshire we continue to focus on innovative ways of maintaining and improving the roads, while maximising value for money. This against a backdrop of budgets that are under increased pressure. The public recognises that the roads require a great deal of attention, as surfaces have suffered due to underinvestment in the past and the cumulative effects of severe winters. In recent years we have received additional 'windfall' money from the government for potholes.

August 2014 - £3.3million

January 2013 - £3.7million available for the maintenance over the following two years.

While this is very welcome – it represents a drop in the ocean compared to what is required to bring roads up to a 'good' standard – which we estimate to be more than £350 million. Any highways issues can be reported through Street Doctor at www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/streetdoctor. The more a pothole or a problem is reported the higher up the priority list it goes so do persevere . This winter has been unusually wet and this has caused some worsening conditions on our roads. We gritted the roads 63 times this winter more than last year which may surprise some people and this combined with the rain to cause further damage to our roads . A programme of road repairs will now be rolled out as the weather improves and we should all see a marked improvement over the summer.

The provision of local bus services will continue to be under pressure and where services are underused unlikely to remain in the sort to medium term. This means that innovative work like our total Transport plan for the entire community may take a significant role in protecting and providing local bus services in the future . Essentially this is a ground breaking new venture that will see the County Partnered initially with the University of Northampton and the Northamptonshire Healthcare foundation trust and which will essentially make use of spare vehicles to provide transport for Schools the Health Trust and the university but this could be expanded to include park and ride and eventually new bus routes into rural areas. The cost of the initial exercise is being entirely funded by government and is being closely watched by other counties .

Northamptonshires rollout of superfast Broadband continues at pace. We were one of the first councils to accelerate rural broadband connectivity . Last year over 43,000 premises were connected and 181 new fibre cabinets were deployed across the county . This year 65,000 more premises have been connected. The phase 3 part of the contract with Gigaclear will see further rollout to the rural areas that have up until now not had any broadband or little chance of connection to superfast broadband and by the end of 2017 we should see 98% of properties connected . In particular those properties with

exchange only connections should see a solution that allows them to connect to the network .

In terms of the Council Tax we still have the lowest council Tax in the country despite having to put it up by 4.99 % . This is broken down into the 3% extra we have been allowed to charge for adult social care (£11.7 million) and the 1.9% we are allowed to increase it by without having to go to a referendum. This effectively is saving the taxpayer at least £102 a year compared to the national average.

Regarding our budget . Despite the on going pressures from Adult Social care and Children's services and unprecedented growth in demand for both we have once again balanced our budget and will do so going forward.

Future changes to government funding to 100% retention of business rates by 2020 with no government grant meant that all Local Authorities will have to look at how they operate going forward . This county currently has nine local authorities including the County , Town , Districts and Boroughs and over 400 elected Councillors . I have long been an advocate for some form of unitary authority in this County and this is something that the next administration will have to look at . To be very clear this is not a take over of the Boroughs , Districts and Towns by the County but a redesigning of the entire system . All nine Authorities would cease to exist and a new one would be formed with all new Councillors and officers . The savings to be made and therefore spent on front line services are large and cannot be ignored going forwards . The number of unitary authorities might be up for debate but it is my opinion that one makes the most savings and any more than two begins to water down the savings significantly . whatever model is proposed the people of Northampton would be fully consulted with and ultimately it would be your decision.

I wanted to finish with a mention of the councillors empowerment fund . many if not all of the villages within my division have benefited over the last four years from the annual amount of this fund. It has been reduced this year and next to £5k a year . it is something I will fight to retain going forward.

I can be contacted on Imorris@northamptonshire.gov.uk

OR followed on Twitter cllr Ian Morris @aussielover100

Noted Tove Valley so Co

8. Observations from the District Councillor – Cllr Peter Davies

Finance

The pressure on local government finances continues, as central government strives to reduce its budget deficit. The Revenue Support grant to SNC fell by £600,000 in 2016-17 to £812,000. In the current financial year 2017-18 this is falling again to £287,000 and next year will disappear entirely.

At the same time Rural Services Delivery Grant, recognising that it costs more to deliver services in rural areas, drops from £187,000 to £151,000 this year

Despite these problems SNC achieved a balanced budget for the past year and remains debt-free. Other councils have not fared so well

Joint working

Last year I mentioned the savings that were being made through joint working with Cherwell Council, especially in back office and IT areas. This has been extended to include joint planning teams, legal and senior management. I said last year that savings from joint working amounted to over £3 million so far. Work continues to identify further economies.

A debate is now going on about more wide ranging reorganisation, including the abolition of district councils into mega Unitary Councils, centred on whole counties. Apart from the logistical problem of providing local services from a more distant hub, there is also the issue of council debts - would we want to be linked to other council's debts?

Council Tax

You will have noticed that your Council Tax increased this year. SNC takes just over 11% of the total, for services which include housing, town planning, licensing, refuse collection, recycling, elections, fly tipping, pest control - the list goes on. 70% of Council Tax goes to NCC and 13% to Northants Police and Crime Commissioner. Parish Councils got 2%

Business Rates

The Rating List is updated every 5 years. For SNC there has been an increase of 5.6% in rateable values, reflecting partly the increase in business activity in this part of the county, compared to a national increase of 11%. There has been a lot of comment in the national press about the damaging effect on some businesses. I would just say there is an appeal system in place for anyone who considers they have been assessed unfairly, but any appeal needs to be made early.

New Homes Bonus

The government is reducing the payments from 6 years to 5 in 2017-18, resulting in a loss of £190,000 this year. This will be further reduced to 4 years in 2018-19, meaning a bigger loss of revenue.

The total local community funding allocated to Wappenham is £4,459 of which £3,682 remains unspent

And I should remind you that other funds may be available under the Community Development Capital and Revenue schemes.

The Local Plan

SNC Local Plan Part 2 is currently looking at all village confines. So now is the time to consider if changes in the current boundary need to be made. Mainly it is to tidy up any anomalies but there is also the point that it is easier to get planning permission for building changes inside the village boundary than outside it.

We are all aware of the huge amount of house building in progress around Brackley and soon to be for Towcester as well. The congestion on the A5 through the town centre should be eased with the construction of a relief road from opposite the race course to the A43 south of Towcester, due to begin in 2020.

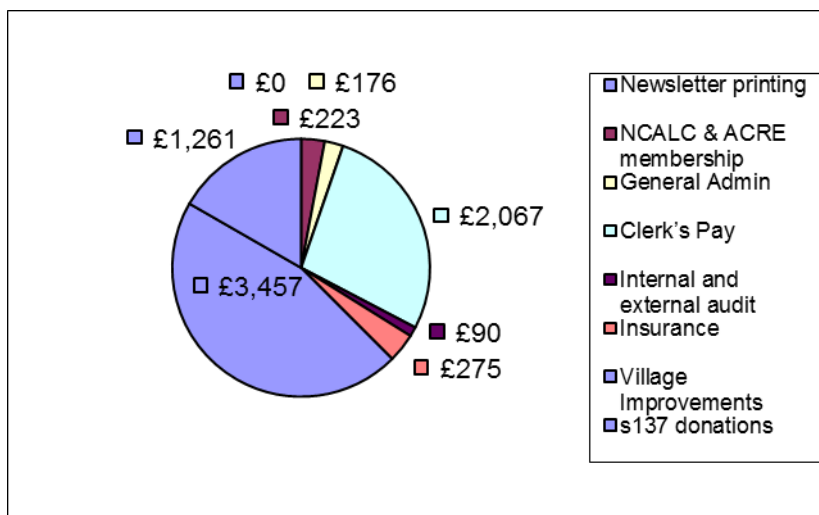
All councils are required to have a 5 year land supply, without which a planning inspector can allow any development on appeal. South Northants has more than that, but still no identified travellers' sites.

Finally I should mention that SNC and Cherwell's joint chief executive Sue Smith retired last month and her replacement Yvonne Rees currently working with Surrey and Essex councils, selected from forty applicants, takes up the post in June.

9. Parish Council Financial Statement for y/e 2017 and budget for y/e 2018 PC – Cllr Paul Featherstone (PC financial internal control officer)

- We closed this year with £2838 in the bank accounts; this compares with last year's £5337 closing figure. The decrease is due to spent monies received the previous year on the Speed Radar Project. The closing figure is back in line with previous years (2015 was £2842.)
- Total expenditure was £7549; this compares with £3160 the previous year. The increase is due two projects being completed: the Speed Radar Device was £2592 with posts costing £570 whilst the defibrillator was £1115. (£657 is due to be reclaimed in VAT from these projects)
- We received £596 from Northants CALC to design a new website and associated costs to be spent in this financial year. On-going costs will need to be budgeted for.
- There were no newsletter costs incurred due to significant advertisers' contributions.
- The precept for 2017-18 is £2,828, up from £2,773 last year; the Parish Council is taking £300 from reserves this year to meet the budgeted expenditure of £3131.
- £100 of this year's budget is set aside for donations to village groups/ organisations.

How Wappenham Parish Council spent your money in y/e 2017



Budgeted v actual expenditure by area and predictions for next year

	Budget 2016/17	Actual 2016/17	Comment	Budget 2017/18
Newsletter printing	0	0	To be reviewed at May meeting	0
NCALC membership	220	223		225
General Admin	268	186		414
Clerk's Pay	1918	2067	Additional for website	1954
Internal and external audit	85	90		93
Insurance	265	275		285
Village improvements	70	3457	Speed Radar Device	70
s137 donations	100	1260	145 on grants (extra for Queen's Birthday)+defib	100

10. To receive the accounts of the Parochial Charities, comments of the Trustees, Parochial Church Council:

Wappenham Thomastide Charity

(formerly known as the Wappenham Pools and Church Charities)

Statement of Accounts for Year 2016/17

Date	Details	Withdrawn	Paid In	Balance (£)
Feb 2016	Balance brought forward			1,705.74
19 Jan 2017	Received from Trustees		800.00	2,505.74
Jan 2017	Withdrawn to cover payments for St Thomastide Grants	361.79		2,143.95

Details of the recipients are confidential but are available to any person – in confidence – nominated by the Parish Council. The Chairman confirms that all awards and gifts were safely received.

Report

Rupert Fordham continued as Chairman of the Trustees for the distribution of the awards, and Phyllis King, Philip King, Rev Carole Peters, Jenny Szczerbowski and Hilary Wickham continued as Trustees.

Over the course of the year no special requests for financial assistance were received.

The sum made available for distribution for the St Thomastide Grants by the Trustees was £800. Two cash awards were made.

As last year, we also made small gifts to a number of residents who it was felt had suffered a period of distress for whatever cause, (perhaps illness, losing a job or family issues). 12 gifts of this nature were delivered, and as before, these were well received.

Again, the Trustees decided not to distribute all the money received, but rather to save some. As a consequence, the charity now has over £2,100 in reserve. The purpose of the charity is to help people in Wappenham who find themselves distressed for whatever reason, and the Trustees would therefore be happy to consider requests, perhaps of a practical nature, during the course of the year, as well as at Christmas time. They would welcome the help of the PCC and the Parish Council in this respect.

As ever the accounts of the charity can be made available to any independent Auditor nominated by the Annual Meeting should this be deemed desirable.

Rupert Fordham, Chairman

January 2017

Report from the Rector

This is my 4th report to the Village Assembly and looking back over the 12 months we have had both good and bad times.

The theft of the lead from our roof was a particular low point and my thanks go to those who launched the over-night security Rota. I am told that the stars and wild life are particularly wonderful at 3 in the morning!

A serious back problem caused me problems this year and meant that some services and activities were curtailed, but I am pleased to report that the medical procedure undertaken on my spine seems to have done the trick and I am back to fighting form!

It has been good to see St Mary the Virgin become more mission orientated over the past year. We have been prepared to stop initiatives that aren't working and even embark on new ones both as a PCC and jointly with other Churches in the Benefice.

Our regular and special services continue to provide varied worship that encompasses both traditional and contemporary styles. Sadly none of our services have seen expansions in regular, tiny congregations, but I am so pleased to say that our "fresh expression" - Village Praise and Prayer is still attracting different worshippers from our community.

Our other regular services, our two Eucharists (on the first and third Sundays) have seen overall numbers remain frustratingly static, even dipping during holiday times, but our new initiative – Breakfast Church – a pastry and bacon butty breakfast with proto relaxed worship in the form of a quiz, children's activities and discussion is proving popular with all ages.

Sadly as a PCC we opted not to continue with our regular monthly Messy Church, instead we shall concentrate on Messy Christingle and Messy Mothering Sunday and we are inviting those who attended our Messy Church to join in at other Messy Churches operating monthly at Helmdon and Syresham.

Outside of our regular service pattern this year we joined forces with neighbouring Parish Lois Weedon and Weston to create a hugely successful "Harvest in the Barn" which saw record numbers attend both the service and the supper and auction that followed. Our grateful thanks go to Sheena and Ashley Warren for allowing us to use their barn.

Wappenham still hosts Benefice Sunday Services as well as their September Patronal celebration, while our Christmas and Easter Services were as great a success as ever. This year we played host to the first stage of our Benefice Palm Sunday Worship with a procession with donkeys from the Village Hall.

This year has not been a busy one for the Occasional Offices we like to hold, with only one baptism, one Wedding, but unfortunately the Church hosted two funerals, both for well loved members of our local community.

We have continued to build on our relationship with St Loys School, where many of our Village children go and as well as taking the regular Tuesday morning assemblies.

On a social note we had a good presence behind the bar at the Beer festival, which reflected in the amount raised and the funds that came back to the Church through a generous donation from our Friends and huge thanks to them for all their tireless fund raising for our steps and now our roof alarm and repairs.

Our Churches could not continue to operate as places of worship without the kind donation of the times of countless volunteers, who clean the church, dress it with wonderful flower displays, tidy and mow the church yard, deliver our magazine and support our services and fundraising efforts – thank you every one of you.

I would also like to offer a very personal thank you here to our Churchwardens and PCC, who have worked alongside me and been very supportive of all we do for Christ in this Parish.

The Future

Sadly, as a Benefice, we cannot be said to be in the rudest of health at the moment. With small congregations and increasing bills such as the Parish Share, the future might be fragile if it was not for the desire across the Benefice to work more closely together, offering support, jointly working on fund raising initiatives and seeking holistic solutions to the problems that beset the rural church.

Our Benefice PCCs have jointly appointed a Working Party, who will investigate solutions to the problems we face and report back to our PCCs later in the year.

Our prayers are with the working party and those who are advising them. I hope we can achieve a Vision and an Action plan for the future of ministry and mission in these parishes and that with this we can work towards a future that furthers God's Kingdom as we serve the Lord and this community in faith and love, here in the Astwell Benefice.

Reverend Carole Peters-King

The Rector St Mary the Virgin, Wappenham.

The Astwell Benefice.

11. Reports from Parish Council Officers and Village Organisations' representatives

Footpaths Report – Mark Speed

Role is to check all footpaths (nearly 70) and note if they are easily accessible. Mark presented his findings of all the footpaths. Some need better signposting and signposting if not a right of way. Dog mess is an issue and he asked for vigilance regarding it. Mark is happy to put signs up. Hilary commented that there was no need to be accessible for dogs.

NNC had asked for a list of most and least used paths which he had completed with Hilary Wickham.

The Friends of St Mary the Virgin, Wappenham. Charity No. 1116889

St Mary the Virgin Wappenham

Friends of St Mary the Virgin Report year ending 2016

Introduction

The Friends continued to raise funds during 2016 whilst awaiting information on the likely cost of our major project, repairing the church tower steps.

Treasurers' Report

The Friends' funds stand at £15,730 (£10,710 in 2015) of which £750 is earmarked for the WC. Income in 2016 was approx. £5,300 and outgoings were approximately £700 for the servicing of the clock. There is also outstanding Gift Aid awaited of approx. £2,500.

Works and Faculties

Tower Steps and north porch roof

Following the Quinquennial Review of 2014, the decision was made to focus primarily on repairs to the tower steps and then tackle the north porch roof. The cost was estimated to be £20,000, approximately £300 a step.

Whilst expert professional advice was sought the Friends began raising money, inviting residents to 'sponsor a step' in memory of a loved one, to be commemorated on a plaque in the Church. Such donations make up the bulk of the monies received. The Faculty was received and applications were made to likely charitable sources, so far with only slight success. Due to the continued generosity of local residents, a final decision to go ahead will be made at the PCC June 2017 meeting.

It was agreed to appoint an architect from the Diocese's approved list to advise on repairs to the north porch roof. Several ideas were being considered for dealing with the drop at the back of the pulpit.

Kitchen and WC

Progress was previously reported in that we have, thanks to the Tove Valley Broadband works, now got a water pipe which runs from the stand

pipe at the gate up into the boiler room. The next stage is to bring water into and drain it out of the Church possibly via a soak away.

Fund-raising events

The Church/Friends participated in the third Wappenham Beer Festival on Saturday 25 June, sharing the proceeds with the Village Hall. This was our major fund-raising event of the year and raised over £715 which had gone towards church maintenance such as upkeep of the Clock.

Thanks also to Di for the continuing sales of Wappenham themed tea towels.

May I thank all the hard working and enthusiastic members of the Friends and our supporters!

Jane Mordue

Friends of St Mary the Virgin Wappenham

Coffee morning report 2017

Set up to provide a regular community get together following the closure of the shop, the coffee morning, held in the first Wednesday of each month, has continued throughout 2016/17 with a continued average attendance between 15 and 25 people. Although set up by Rev Will Adams and facilitated by St Mary's PCC, the Coffee Morning is nominally a secular event for the village.

Although not intended to generate a profit, funds continue to be raised. In October, being close to the 'World's biggest Coffee Morning' event, the proceeds were donated to the Macmillan Cancer Support charity. The year totals amounting to £65.50 for Macmillan and £125 each to the Hope Centre and the Village Hall Committee.

Very many thanks to all the cake bakers and helpers who have worked their magic over the last year. There is always room more helpers, so if you can spare a couple of hours on the first Wednesday of each month or can provide a cake or two, please to not hesitate to contact me or come along and talk to the servers on the day.

Anthony Tucker.

WRA

The playground continues to be mowed on a regular basis along with weed killing and essential maintenance. This included the timber preservative to the equipment and new fence to one side. The last Rospa report noted the basket ball hoop was a hanging risk and so was removed. The equipment itself is getting closer to the end of its expected life and we will need to remove it as there are insufficient funds to replace it.

The insurance has now been reduced by becoming part of the village hall policy and therefore the fund raising efforts are reduced. The committee of four along with others now assist at the beer festival to raise funds in lieu of the village fete which stopped some years back after 7 years being run by the WRA.

We have continued with the Halloween trick or treat but this is purely for the enjoyment of the children and village rather than a fund raising activity.

After 16 years being Chairman and having failed to find any new parents to come in and take on some responsibility (i.e. take on the role), the committee may decide that they cannot continue to run the playground and we would approach the landlord to hand back the land.

Dene Ayres

Wappenham Short Mat Bowls Club

Wappenham Short Mat Bowls Club is now in its 26th year having been formed by Maud Peart in February 1991. The Club has played most Thursday's last year as holidays and available numbers permitted.

The beginning of last year saw a rise in the numbers of players for a short while, however, following the departure of Eliza Bond for pastures new, there are now only an average of six or seven players each week. New players are always welcome, even if you cannot commit to every week.

A good sense of humour helps and the club can provide everything else. So, if you want an enjoyable couple of hours on a Thursday, please come along to the village hall at 2.00 pm and you will be most welcome.

Also, a big thankyou to the PC for the small grant to purchase further equipment which has proved very useful.

Last year was also tinged with sadness with the passing of two former regular players. We said goodbye to Dorothy Abbott and Roger King, both sadly missed.

Anthony Tucker

Wappenham Village Hall

The Village Hall Committee comprises seven active members. Ant Reid is our Chair; Julie Long and myself continue as Treasurer and Secretary respectively and Jane Harries our resident grant procurer.

The hall continues to be well used, not just by local organisations but also by those a little further afield. So far this year we have two bookings from cycling groups using the hall as a refreshment stop; two weddings receptions and a Chapel Fellowship meal. The hall is also the venue for the increasingly popular beer festival, the monthly pub nights and the Church's Big Breakfast. Since last year's meeting the Village Hall Committee has organised two very successful quiz nights and a return visit of the ever popular Pantaloons theatre group with Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Thanks to a generous donation from the Beer Festival we were once again able

to organise another Over 70's Christmas lunch. This was held, for the first time, at The Bull in Towcester and proved to be a very popular choice.

The Committee is currently concerned with the structure of the building particularly the gable wall where a large crack has appeared. We have been advised that it may be caused by the newish toilet extension. Money has been obtained in the form of grants to have a structural survey undertaken and it is hoped that the work will be covered by our insurance.

Ant Reid has removed the plastic and wooden panelling from around the rose window and cleaned away the flies.

All in all the hall continues to be well used and we hope that this year we will be able to resolve some of the ongoing building issues.

Jenny Szczerbowski – Secretary Wappenham Village Hall Committee

Slapton and Wappenham Evangelical Church

Last year we were really pleased to inform you all that we had appointed Trevor Thomas as our full-time pastor. He and Manuela his wife have been a great encouragement to us and they hope to move into Slapton from Rugby very soon so they will be local. I hope many of you have met Trevor as he has been around the village introducing himself to you. Trevor would have loved to come tonight but we have a joint prayer meeting at the Chapel with other churches from all over Northamptonshire to pray and encourage one another.

A lot has happened in the last 12 months. We have had two baptisms. These are adults who have not only become Christians but who have made an open profession of faith and asked to be Baptised.

We have increased the membership of the church to 15 and we have a regular congregation of around 25 people. Some Sundays a lot more join us and we have been nearly full recently on one Sunday.

We have 3 new couples who have joined us in the last year and they are all local too.

Two new children who are under 5 have their own Sunday School lessons, they are such a joy.

We are having a meal in the Village hall on Friday 19th May this is for everyone. I do hope you saw the invitation on Wizz. If you haven't responded and you would like to join us. Please email me in the morning as I need to give all the catering details back to Ann who is providing the main courses. We have an after dinner talk too.

We have our own website you can find us searching on Google and the website is:
www.towcesterevangelical-church.org.uk

You can find out all about our activities and listen to sermons too via the website

Very soon we are going to be delivering to the local villages a copy of Mark's Gospel. This is the shortest of the Gospels and Trevor is going to be going through the whole Gospel on Sundays. You will be able to follow these sermons on our website or of course please come along and hear them live on a Sunday mornings!

We support many missionary societies around the world and have regular updates from them on the encouraging work they are doing. Yesterday we were visited by the Zambesi Mission.

We have our Sunday school on a Sunday morning from 10:45 till 12:00 and a weekly bible Study which Trevor leads on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 in the school room.

If you have not been to church before but feel like you are a Christian or you have some belief in God but not quite sure, now is the time to come along and listen. You will be most welcome.

Richard Kennett

Clive Watt – WIZ

Clive

Clive was thanked by Hilary Wickham and Paul Featherstone for his work.

Newsletter

The newsletter is carrying on as usual, though with the loss of a major advertiser this year due to a change of management. Local businesses, we appreciate your support - you will get valuable publicity and we will be able to finance printing costs. Let me know if you have any ideas for new advertisers, it would save me valuable time knowing about new businesses and others who would value publicity.

Also please tell me if you would like to commemorate an event, or a move - it is your newsletter! And photos are as welcome as articles.

Thanks for everyone's contributions.

Jane Harries

Wappenham website – Dianne Walsh

Hosting

The website is still hosted by Northampton school for boys (NSB) (since 2003.2004). I believe there have been discussions about moving the website to another host (see PC minutes 6 April 2016).

PC documents

Katherine Hart is now uploading PC minutes and Agenda onto the web in line with government good practice. The draft minutes of all Council, Committee and Sub-committee meetings should be published no more than 1 month after the relevant meeting. Agendas and full working papers for all Council, Committee and Sub-committee meetings should be published at least 3 clear days before the relevant meeting.

Future

The website needs a total revamp. This should be done every 2 years and is very much overdue.

A Responsive web design approach needs to be taken to provide an optimal viewing experience across a wide range of device. Smartphones, tablets, etc. This is no longer a design option. Most people view websites on their portable devices as well as desktop computers. The PC will need to find a person/organisation who has the know-how and can design a robust website with engaging and usable web interface.

The current website no longer conforms with the World Wide Web Consortium guidance and good practice. Coding / style for e.g. CSS (cascading style sheets) version used is outdated. I expect that some visitors may not even be able to scroll or view the website properly.

I no longer have the capacity to post contributions, update, modify or redesign, the website. The website is slowly turning into a repository for various community documents. The PC / Village needs to find a new webmaster who can carry out all of these tasks or split the tasks between a web designer and a web content administrator/manager.

12. Refurbishment of the Rose Window

The central rose is to be repaired; it is not decided if this is to be plain or decorated. It was confirmed that the brickwork is original and would not be removed.

13. Open Forum

The possibility of having Andrea Leadsom speak in the village regarding Brexit was mooted; it was suggested it would also be appropriate to have someone with a different view to speak.

Hilary Wickham thanked everyone for attending and contributing to an interesting debate.

The meeting closed at 22.13pm.