

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SOUTH CERNEY ON WEDNESDAY 20TH MAY 2009**

Present: Parish Councillors Mrs F. Chapman, J. Caunce, Mrs E. Chubb, J. Harris, Mrs D. Land, P. Jay, P. Nicholas, M. Stuart, Mrs C. Tunbridge, R. Webb; Youth Parish Council Members Joe Lodge and Sinead Peare, Cotswold District Councillor P. Messenger; Gloucestershire County Councillor S. Parsons; Police Community Sergeant S. McIntyre (Gloucestershire Constabulary); Major Bruce Maguire (Welfare Officer, 29 Regiment RLC); Roger Edgar (Chairman, Ann Edwards School Governors); Revd David Bowers Vicar All Hallows Church, Tony Squire (Church Warden); Reta-May Matthews (United Reform Church); Mrs A. Stuart (Village Hall Committee); Mary Mychalecky (Gloucestershire Youth Service); Emily Hallett (Young Gloucestershire).

Eighteen members of the public were also in attendance.

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

### **APOLOGY**

There were apologies from Cllr Johnno Kimberley who was leading a group of South Cerney Beavers, Cllr Clive Bennett (CDC) who was on vacation, Inspector Phil Offord (Gloucestershire Constabulary) who deputised Sgt McIntyre in his stead and Roger Scott who was on holiday.

### **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by Roger Edgar and seconded by Cllr James Harris that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st May 2008 as published were a true record. The meeting was all in favour.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### **CLLR MIKE STUART, CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL – REPORT**

On reading last year's report and browsing through the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held since last year's Annual Meeting, I can see that South Cerney has had a pretty good year. It is quite a job for your team of Parish Councillors and our clerk Maurice McKee, to keep a community which is as big as most of the market towns in the Cotswolds, ticking over and moving forward. Most of your Parish Councillors are still working and are all volunteers so it is worth while remembering that fact when you consider how much we have achieved on your behalf.

We had a change in personnel as Steve Walker had to resign from his duties on this council when he retired from the Army and moved away. Despite the fact that no one would stand for election for the vacancy, we had six candidates stand for cooption which gave us quite a hard tack as all candidates had much to offer the community. We selected Cllr Johnno Kimberley and he has proved to us that we made the correct choice. I go to a lot of meetings away from this village in the course of my duties and am amazed to hear from other villages how hard a job it is to get people to become involved in community affairs and how so many have such dreadful disputes within their councils. It makes me very proud to be able to say that our village is one where people get involved and do so with enthusiasm and enjoyment. I know you share that opinion with me.

One of the main factors in keeping a Council working well is the Parish Clerk. Maurice McKee has been doing the job for us for well over ten years and knows more about the village than most. It is a nightmare to keep abreast of all the legislation that spews out from Whitehall and from Brussels but Maurice keeps us up to date and along the correct lines. Many thanks, Maurice. Long may you continue to look after us so well.

So what have we achieved in the past year?

The sewage system is now fully operational. That took a lot longer than we anticipated last year. In fact, there are still some final landscaping to be done but that is dependant on dry weather. That undertaking cost Thames Water well over £5 million and I am pretty sure that we would still have been waiting for it to be started if we hadn't had the support of our MP Geoffrey Clifton-Brown who did a lot of backside kicking to get the company to act. I saw Geoffrey last Friday and he

apologised for not being able to be here tonight but I am sure you will all appreciate that overtime is being worked at Westminster at the moment!

As a spin off to the sewage works we worked with GCC PROW and the Cotswold Water Park Society Ltd. to construct the extension to the pathway across the Upper Up playing fields to connect with the new bridge which we call the Shorncliffe Link. Thames Water still has some drainage and improvements to complete but that pathway is open for all users and leads to the bird hides and beyond to Somerford Keynes, Shorncliffe and for the moment at least to Cotswold Country Park. That was one of the requirements of our most recent Village Plan. Try it. The walk is good.

Working with several other agencies and organisations we have completed the MUGA and Youth Shelter at Upper Up. These were designed by our own YPC and we must thank them for their input. Finance for the project came from several sources including the YPC, Landfill tax via Hills of Swindon and also from the Big Lottery via our closely working with Rosemary Lynn and her team at CDC. We have been involved with the CDC in the Cotswold Play Partnership since it was set up some two and a half years ago. That scheme obtained a considerable sum of money from the Big Lottery Fund and we got £5,000 towards our play equipment. This is another example as to how Parish Councils can and should work with other agencies to fund improvements in their communities.

In the past three weeks another initiative generated through the Cotswold Play Partnership has given us the services of the Play Rangers. This will continue for a year and every Tuesday afternoon a large van loaded with play equipment plus at least two fully trained Play Rangers turns up at Upper Up and local children up to about 14 yrs can and do have a whale of a time. This is proving to be a tremendous success through out the CDC area.

Last year it was reported that GCC Youth Services had started work in our village. I am delighted to confirm that Mary and Emily have made a great impact with our young people and we are actively working with these ladies to ensure their efforts can continue. We need a place for them to meet for the winter months and that is a top priority.

Our Grand Opening of the Upper Up facilities was a fun afternoon with so many clubs and organisations taking part including the Silver Stars parachute team dropping in to join us. Thanks again to everyone involved.

It seems from my notes that it is only the young people's welfare we are considering but the Upper Up area is for all age and ability groups to enjoy. Not enough people use field so why not give it a try?

In these days of recession finances are of prime concern. We had set the precept for this current year before the crash really hit but had attempted to reduce the actual level without reducing our planned projects. Unfortunately, the dramatic fall in interest rates on our invested reserves, meant that we had to make a minute increase in the precept, the equivalent to 19p on a type "D" dwelling. I do not think too many householders will moan about that.

Thanks to everyone involved in making South Cerney such a marvellous place to live in.

Now for something not on the agenda!

We used to present a cup to anyone who had been outstanding in village life but we stopped that as so many people in South Cerney qualified every year. However, every now and then we have a situation where someone who has done something special and needs a thank you. Recently a man who we all know retired from a task he had been doing for decades. He carried out his work with such care and attention that is rarely seen these days. I am of course speaking about Jeff Andrews. Jeff has looked after the churchyard for us and although he has hung up his shovel we are delighted that he is staying on the Burial Committee.. I would not burden Jeff to have a silver cup to polish. Instead I want to present on behalf of all of us in South Cerney and Cerney Wick a pair of whisky glasses and a bottle with which to fill them.

Jeff graciously thanked the Chairman for his gift and said that he had no idea why he had been coerced into attending the meeting this evening although now it was clear. He declared that he was completely speechless and thanked everyone again.

## **JOE LODGE, CHAIRMAN OF THE YOUTH PARISH COUNCIL – REPORT**

Chairman, Cllr Stuart introduced Joe Lodge and congratulated him on his recent achievement of being in a team which came in first after covering a 45 mile route in the Ten Tors competition over Dartmoor. Joe added that the team had beaten the school record.

Hello/Good Evening. I am Joe Lodge, Chairperson for the South Cerney Youth Parish Council. Since last year there have been many developments within the council, as you may remember towards the end of the report last year I was almost pleading for some members to be encouraged to join the council. With further promotion of the council we encouraged Alasdair Kennedy to join the council.

There has been more communications between the council and the youth group which has been set up under the Youth Service. We have held one meeting specifically with the purpose to liaise with the group and from which we have gain our two latest members Jasmine Tresadern and Charlotte Tickle.

All of the new members of the group have brought enthusiasm to the group and hopefully they can develop their own skills based around the team work and communication along with enjoying themselves during their work on the council. Along with a re-arrangement of some structural positions within the council this will hopefully allow us to function more efficiently.

So what have we actually done over the last 12 months?

- We have put our funding and backing into the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Upper Up playing fields. I am sure many people are aware of the construction that has been going on this past year.
- We have tried to promote the council and gain more of the youth opinion on public matters.
- Tried to assist the Senior Parish Council on matters which concern the youth of the village.

We are looking to:

- Come up with a new use of the area where the older basketball court stands where it may become more productive land use.
- Get an even larger number of youth in the village involved through promotion including distribution of the promotional materials we have had designed for us by an up and coming graphic designer.
- Look at the possibility of a permanent building for the youth group, other youth activities and the community as a whole, as an alternative to the Village Hall.

Does anyone have any questions about or for the Youth Parish Council?

I will be around at the end if you have any questions you need answering on a one-to-one basis and please excuse members of the council that may need to leave due to other priorities in the exam period.

## **POLICE COMMUNITY SGT STUART McINTYRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE CONSTABULARY – REPORT**

Apologies from Insp Phil Offord as he couldn't make it this evening. He took over from Insp Steve Williams on the INA a few weeks ago. Insp Williams has not gone far, as he is now heading up the Divisional Community Partnership Unit. Insp Offord requested I attend, so cancelled my rest day so that I could attend tonight.

Staff Update – PCSO Dan Sinclair has been sick for quite a few weeks, and will not be back at work for some while. PCSO Mike Owen is on A/L at present. However, due to Dan's longer absence, he is being replaced by Lance Tremayne-Hancock, who is covering the area now, whilst they are both away, and will then be working with Mike on this area. Lance brings with him his experience gained from working in the Cirencester Urban area for the last two years, and has already attended meetings on this patch, and assisted the communities here in the past.

Due to cuts in our county funding, this year we have to lose 56 Police Officers and 24 PCSOs. This will hopefully be done totally through natural wastage. Unfortunately it will be done mostly from the front line, but to date we have not lost anyone from this INA.

Crime figures for past year – Comparing last year (1-4-08–31-3-09) against the year before (1-4-07–31-3-2008). Overall recorded crime total is down 12% from 167 to 147, and detections are up by 27.5% from 29 to 37. So both figures are very much going in the right direction. Particular reductions in reported crime are Burglary and Criminal Damage, which are the two that most affect people and their quality of life. I do have other figures if anybody wants to know them. Please bear in mind that there are some crimes from this period which are still being investigated and so detections from those won't appear on these figures yet.

For your information, in future the Police will not be using Crime figures as much for monitoring purposes, as the Government has changed the way it wants performance measured, and Public Satisfaction will be used a lot more. It has not stated the exact way in which this will be measured, but it will involve survey by post and phone, etc. Hence the launch of the Policing Pledge.

Local priorities – for the information of this meeting, the current local priorities for this area are: parking on the roads in South Cerney; anti social behaviour by the local youths on Siddington Playing Fields, speeding in Trewsbury Lane, Coates.

- Q. Cllr Stuart referred a question which had been raised at a meeting he recently attended at the Army camp about speeding vehicles along the Cirencester Road outside the rear entrance to the base.
- A. Sgt McIntyre said that the RPU, that is the Road Policing Unit, had monitored speeds using the Archer method and found that generally the mean speed was within the limit. There were two occasions where excessive speeds had been recorded but this had been found out to be emergency vehicles attending incidents.
- Q. Cllr Stuart enquired if any progress could be reported on the detection of who had carried out the arson attack on the cricket club pavilion?
- A. Sgt McIntyre said that investigations were continuing but unfortunately were not promising. Enquiries were hampered through lack of evidence. There were no witnesses or CCTV to rely on. Footprints had been found and recorded by Scenes of Crime officers and matches were being sought. Enquiries had determined that a group of overnight campers were in the vicinity at the time and efforts are being made to find them.

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

Thank you all very much for providing me this opportunity to address you all on behalf of the Commanding Officer of 29 Regiment RLC. Lt Col Bethan Targett RLC apologises for her absence as she is currently serving in Afghanistan, Commanding the Theatre Logistic Group Headquarters.

I am Maj Bruce Maguire and am responsible for the welfare of the 29 Regiment RLC Soldiers and their families. A large part of my job involves me looking after the local Military Estate and so I do have frequent relations with some of the local authorities and population. I am also responsible for organising the annual 29 Regt Families' Day that this year will be held on Saturday 20th June. This Families Day is as much about 29 Regt saying thank you to all the families resident in South Cerney as well as our Military families and I extend to you all an open invitation to attend and join in the fun. Some of you will have already seen advertisements for the event through the medium of a leaflet drop and further detail can be gained from the Parish notice boards. I have also left leaflets in various shops in the village and announcements are expected on GWR Radio and in the local Wilts and Glos Standard.

Some of the more astute among you will have noticed as you drive by the camp that last September the Regiment's name changed back to 29 Regt RLC from 29 Postal, Courier and Movement Regt RLC. The change in names came about because we have re-gained 47 Air Dispatch Sqdn back into our establishment and this occurred on 1st October 2008. Many of you will know that 47 AD Sqdn was previously attached to 29 Regt and it is wonderful to have this specialist and high profile Sqdn back where it belongs!

Last year you were briefed about how busy 29 Regt was and this year is no different. 50 Movement Control (MC) and 81 Postal and Courier (PC) Squadrons both returned from Iraq and Afghanistan to South Cerney in Dec 2008 and Apr 2009 respectfully, having successfully completed their Op Tours. No sooner these Sqdn's return then others are trained and lining up ready to deploy. As I mentioned earlier the CO is currently deployed with her Regimental Headquarters (RHQ) Staff in

Afghanistan on a 6 month operational tour and is expected back in Oct. 59 MC Sqdn will start to deploy 50 personnel to Iraq and Afghanistan at the end of this month. They will be closely followed onto Ops by 80 PC Sqdn at the end of September. Those not deployed will continue to be prepared to provide support to other smaller scale Ops and help to maintain the home base and support the movement of some 18,000 troops who transit through the Joint Air Mounting Centre each year. Additionally many of our Soldiers will deploy in support of numerous exercises around the world to locations including the Far East, Middle East, Central America, Canada, South Africa and the USA.

The Regiment continues to pride itself on having its own Parachute Club, the Silver Stars but we are ever conscious of the fact that the noise created by this activity can be a bit irritating to some. We work closely with the Parish Council who monitor local concerns and raise them on your behalf. Only two weeks ago Mr Mike Stuart and the CO Rear Party, Maj Paul Calvert RLC met to discuss the Parachute Club. Mike re-confirmed the Flying Hours that you consider reasonable and we will continue to abide by your wishes.

I am very conscious that this meeting is currently only held annually and that five minutes is not a long time to inform you all of everything that goes on in, or has occurred over the past year. If however, at a later time, you have any questions, or wish to visit the base, by arrangement of course, then please do not hesitate to contact me or Maj (Ret'd) Dave Martin who is due to become the South Cerney Station, Station Staff Officer. Dave has recently retired from the Regular Army after 34 years' service and has been selected to fulfil this key position as a non deployable part of RHQ. Dave will become the main POC for you all and I expect him in post from 1st July 2009. The generation of this appointment should provide some much needed continuity over the coming years and so offer you the best possible interface with 29 Regt RLC.

Finally on behalf of the CO and all of her Officers and Soldiers may I take this opportunity to thank the population of South Cerney for all the help and support we receive from you. Thank you.

Q. Stephen Richardson enquired how members of the public could enter the base for the Families Day?

A. Major Maguire replied that Gate 3 would be opened. Vehicles would be given access and some distance from the entry point a check point would operate.

Q. Mary Mychaleckyj (Gloucestershire Youth Service) enquired how her organisation could help families on the base?

A. Major Maguire answered that all help was welcome as were visits by youngsters of the community. Health and safety measures, risk assessments etc prohibited too much interaction with military hardware but use of some facilities could be arranged. For example it might be possible to provide subsidised parachute jumps.

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

At the Annual Council Meeting on 12th May 2009, the Leader informed us that 2009-2010 and the following years were going to be difficult, the economic climate and the continued reduction of central government funding would force the Council to face difficult decisions. However, the aims of the council remained the same – namely: to keep Council Tax at the lowest possible level; to keep a clean and green environment; to keep the Cotswolds a safe place to live, work and play.

Could I thank Cllr Clive Bennett and Cllr Peter Clarke (CDC) for their leadership and encouragement over the past 12 months? It would have been difficult to carry out my committee responsibilities without their help.

2009 promises to be an exciting but lean year. I am to remain on the Licensing Committee as last year. In addition to this I will continue to attend and take an active part with the Strategic Housing Group of CDC which now after year of experience of housing feel I will be able to take a more active part in the group's work.

I continue to serve on the Cotswold Canal Trust, which has passed through a dramatic 12 months, now with Stroud District Council becoming Lead Partner ended 2008 revitalized and in a far more positive position in respect of tow path and walks planning as well as restoration of the Canal Line. It is my aim in 2009 to apply with the Eastern Group and Parish Councils' help to have protected by English Heritage the Historical Buildings and Structures associated with the Canal, that the



Parishes feel are worthwhile. This will encourage the Canal Trust to improve the Tow Path and walks adjacent to the canal line. In addition keep the structures for future generations.

I have been for some months been on the Steering Group of two of the Water Park parishes who are at various stages of implementing Village Plans. Siddington are about to distribute their questionnaire and it will be exciting to analyse the results of that, particularly to get wider views of the Canal Restoration from Water Park residents.

I have been invited to join the board of Bromford Housing Group Ltd in Wolverhampton as a non executive director. I have to take advice on this from the legal team at CDC. The Bromford Group control several housing forums within the Cotswold district.

My attendance record in council has been published and is as follows: I attended 16 committees out of a possible 16; attended 5 out of a possible 6 sub committees; attended 5 committees as substitute; attended 4 committees as an observer; apologies – 1; absent – nil.

Comment: Cllr Stuart informed the meeting that along with Cllr Jay they had attended a Canal Trust meeting which was enlightening. Cllr Jay reported that 92% of users of canal facilities do not use the water. The overwhelmingly majority used the facilities for all sorts of enjoyment from walking to other pursuits.

### **CLLR CLIVE BENNETT, COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL – REPORT**

Like every other organisation, the district council has suffered during the global credit crisis. Some people might think that local government has been immune from the financial problems that virtually every household in the country has faced. I can assure you that is not the case. Very tough decisions have had to be made exactly the same as in other businesses up and down the country.

In a bid to save money we are working very closely with West Oxfordshire District Council, sharing some services and even sharing a chief executive. His name is David Neudegg and he splits his time between Cirencester and Witney. We pay half his salary and West Oxon pay the other half. This means a big saving for both councils. We are also sharing legal services and building control which again means savings. David is keen to get a grasp of local issues and would be happy to meet members of the parish council for a general chat. He is hoping to visit every ward over the next few months and that would be the ideal time for a chat. (During the day time.) If the parish council can offer a couple of possible dates then I will make the arrangements.

The council aims to join up with Stroud District Council to more effectively combat crime and disorder. Both councils are part of crime and disorder partnerships with several other agencies in the county. It seemed logical to me that instead of having two sets of meetings attended by virtually the same people there could be the one executive group on which both councils could sit. Stroud was very much in favour as it would mean savings in officer time and therefore money.

Talks are well advanced and I hope the new group will start meeting before the end of the year.

These are just a few examples of how local authorities have to work in partnership to keep costs down.

This has meant that CDC was able to set a council tax increase of just 2.9% for this year, which, personally, I think is very good.

I have stepped down from the Cabinet after a period of three years and will be taking over the chairmanship of the Licensing Committee.

As always, if anyone has a problem and they think I can help, then just call me.

### **CLLR SHAUN PARSONS, GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – REPORT**

Cllr Parsons started his report apologising for his late arrival as he had been at another meeting.

He then give a brief review of the budget expenses at GCC. The largest spend was £365 million on services with another £350 million on education. In comparison CDC had a budget of £12 million. The County Council had achieved the lowest rate of increased taxes in the country at 15.7% over four years whereas in comparison the average was over 30%. On the current agenda was a £50 million capital program to provide residential homes for the elderly. The policy however, is to help people stay in their own homes. Another heading was waste which came under two headings:

collection which was by CDC and disposal which was the responsibility of GCC. Historically waste was put into landfill but that was now taxed at a yearly increasing rate of £8 per tonne. It is obvious that GCC will have to find an alternative method of disposal. Incineration he declared was one way. This entailed a high initial cost, especially to set up and would probably need a 30 year contract. The benefit is that the technology is proven. There would be a decision within 2 years on how to manage the problem. On highway problems he was pleased to announce that this year he had not had one complaint about the Spine Road. Overall, small pot holes were a problem as these were repaired using cold tar and did not last. Hot rolling larger areas was proving a better solution and this was increasingly the preferred option. A new initiative being introduced by GCC was to call managers and officers to a meeting to explain inefficiencies and defend complaints about their departments. Although there was no enforcement element the fact that explanations were extracted was producing a dividend. Next he talked about the Water Park which he explained covered an area of 40 square miles. He assured the meeting that the historical access to the newly renamed Cotswold Country Park would continue to exist as far as he is aware. There will be restrictions to the use of permissive paths during the period dusk until dawn because of the threat of vandalism. Consequently access will vary according to the time of year. There is a difficult environment ahead and it is hoped to maintain low taxes. Front line services must not be compromised and savings will be difficult.

Q. Cllr Jay reported that he and his wife had taken part in the zero waste challenge. Non packaged supplies were more expensive as they were mostly available from specialist outlets. Isn't it time that pressure was brought to bear on supermarkets to reduce the amount of packaging used?

A. Cllr Parsons stated that public pressure will create a change in attitude.

Q. Cllr Nicholas informed Cllr Parsons that during the late winter snowy conditions the village had been cut off.

A. Cllr Parsons blamed central government for requisitioning its salt supplies.

Q. Mary Gurney enquired if the proposed incinerator was a green technology.

A. Cllr Parsons assured her that it was very green.

Q. Ron Jeffery complained about the problem of noise from the A419.

A. Cllr Parsons agreed but reminded him that residents had been compensated when the road had been built.

Q. Tony Squire enquired about the provision for youth activities.

A. Cllr Parsons answered that he had received no complaints.

Cllr Mrs Land commented that there was no money available for adoptions which would help to keep elderly in their homes.

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

A couple of weeks ago I realised that it was the first anniversary of my Induction service at All Hallows. I was struck by how quickly the first year had gone – a sign probably of two things: firstly of being busy and, secondly, of enjoying life here. It certainly has been a good experience for Judith and I and I feel very enthusiastic about the future.

One task we have faced since last year has been the merging together our parish with those of Siddington and Preston to form a united benefice. We are making good progress towards this and will start in June a series of joint parochial church council meetings together twice a year. We also hold joint services four times a year.

Here in South Cerney one of the encouraging signs of growth in church life has been with young people. We have had a series of very thought provoking youth services since last autumn and we have begun Messy Church on the first Sunday of each month at 4.00pm. This is aimed at families with young children. For very young children, our under-fives group continues to meet on the first and third Thursdays each month. Last month 9 of our young people were confirmed by the Bishop of Tewkesbury here at All Hallows.

One of our key events each year, of course, is the Street Fair weekend. This time I feel sure we must be due for a dry and warm day on Monday. Last year's was a very wet introduction to the event for me. When the rain was at its most persistent, someone commented, "Well, if you import a

Vicar from Tewkesbury, what do you expect!" I hope this year's Street Fair and Duck Race will be a great time for the whole village and for the many visitors who come.

Can I also put in a quick plug for an event happening at our Vicarage on Sunday, June 28th at 3.00pm. We are having a Garden Party to raise funds for the Bristol Children's Hospital and it will be opened by Laurence and Jackie Llewelyn-Bowen.

In March this year the village was hit by a terrible tragedy with the discovery of the bodies of Jude Richmond and her daughter, Millie in one of the local lakes. About 200 people came together on the following Sunday evening at All Hallows to pray and remember. The knowledge that this had happened was a great comfort to Jude's mother and all the family and they are very grateful for all the love that has been shown by the community in South Cerney. Jude and Millie were buried together at a private ceremony at Letchworth in Hertfordshire on May 1st.

We enjoy a number of links with our wider community and many organisations, not least with our friends at the United Church. We also enjoy our links with 29 Regiment at the Army Camp and look forward once more welcoming them for Remembrance Sunday and for their Carol Service.

Last but not least we appreciate all the links we have with the Parish Council and we would like to thank them for a donation of £3,000 this year which has gone towards church repairs, including a number of graves.

David added that there was a new website being set up and will be operational soon. He encouraged all to log on to [churnsidebenefice.org.uk](http://churnsidebenefice.org.uk) and as always there was an open invitation to attend the vicarage during Mondays.

The Chairman, Cllr Stuart thanked the vicar for his conduct of events during the tragic events mentioned earlier.

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

As the representative from South Cerney United Church I would first like to formally thank the South Cerney Parish Council for the grant it has given us for this third year to support work with the elderly. It is greatly appreciated as we try to reach as many elderly as possible including those from Box Bush and other areas of the village.

Our building is now warm, inviting and easily accessible for young and old alike. Most recently we improved the lighting, replaced the carpeting in the main hall and foyer and installed a loop system. A lectern designed to match the font we purchased last year is now in place and we are hoping to change some of our seating to include chairs with arm rests to make it easier for the less agile to rise from them.

We offer several weekly activities to the community. These are listed in the Cerney Newsletter, the Village Directory and are posted weekly on the double glass doors at our main entrance. Other than two CDC exercise classes, all our activities are run by unpaid volunteers from our church and members of our Circuit churches. We are probably best known and most appreciated in the village for support of the elderly and for dedication to the increasingly popular 'Cerney Seedlings' our parents and toddlers group which has been running since 1998.

All our rooms are available for rental and with a 'Safe from Harm' policy in place we are a popular venue for children's parties. We have a very good relationship with All Hallows Church and we work with them to present a united Christian presence in the village. They use our building and share utility costs and other agreed expenses. Income from rentals also goes into a Joint Church Account to help defray these expenditures. We keep the rental fees in line with those of the Village Hall and help them out when they get double bookings. Most regularly the jazz group 'Blue Notes' meets in our main hall as does 'Barking Mad' a musical drama group. Auditions and rehearsals for 'Trial by Jury' are planned for there as well.

While improving our building, furnishings and rental opportunities, we have not lost sight of the fact that we are first and foremost a place of worship. Our services are open to anyone. We are fully accredited to provide baptism, wedding, funeral and pastoral care services. We keep our eyes and ears open to the needs of those around us and progress accordingly. We try not to be stagnant but to move forward embracing new needs and abandoning older projects which have outlived their



usefulness or are being more successfully run elsewhere in the community. We continue to use our resources wisely. We seek not to be in competition with other local organisations which promote worship, nurture, service and evangelism but to work with them to enhance them and fill in the gaps where necessary. Just as you are invited to share in our community events, you are equally welcome to come and worship with us anytime.

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

We have seen more changes in staff this year. On the teaching staff Miss Gemma Lund has joined us and we have also welcomed Mrs Cathy Parker, Mrs Hazel Gardiner, Mrs Paula Parker and Mrs Michelle Chinnock as teaching assistants. The governing body has also seen more changes with Mrs Michelle Stephenson, Mr Matt McCahill, Mr Mike Powell and Mr Daniel Vesma joining us as parent governors, foundation governors or LEA governors along with the new vicar the Reverend David Bowers. This coming year will be a difficult one as our numbers due to movement at the Gloucester Barracks were lower when our budget is set. However, we are planning such that we are sure there will be no need for a reduction in staff.

### **Curriculum and SATS**

All the children in KS2 and Y2 took their optional or statutory SAT's last week and our SAT's results for last year were very pleasing, with excellent progress being made by children within the school, especially in English and at level 5 in reading, writing and English overall. We are hopeful that the results this year will be as good if not better. The school continues to offer a good quality of education for its pupils and they receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Our last inspection by OFSTED was in November 2007 and we came out as satisfactory overall with some good features. Similarly we had our denominational inspection in February 2008 and we had similar feedback, an award of good overall in how we meet the needs of all learners through our distinctive Christian character, being particularly pleasing.

### **Other extra curricular school activities**

The school continues to offer a full range of after school clubs including for example, football, netball, tag rugby, cricket, rounders, cookery, gardening, newspaper, computer, chess, bug club, scrabble club, modelling/warhammer club, art and craft, stay and play, gymnastics and judo. These are well attended by the pupils. Our Y4, Y5 and Y6 children have either taken part in or will soon be taking part in residential visits to The Wilderness Centre, Braeside, and Skern Lodge. We now offer an after school club from 3pm–6pm run by Gooseberry Bush nursery and take up has been very good. Since September we have run a breakfast club from 8am and this has again proved very popular.

### **Health 4 Schools**

We continue to take part in the above project with a view to increasing children's awareness of growing, cooking and eating their own food and keeping fit. We have installed better cooking equipment in school and each class has access to an area to grow vegetables and plants. Our broad beans and other crops are looking good. Our toastie Tuesday initiative continues to prove very popular and not far behind is our top up Thursday initiative offering a biscuit and a glass of fruit juice. We were awarded Healthy Schools status this year.

### **Other projects**

We have had visits from the Lifestyle Education Bus, various theatre groups, Nick Williams the Birdwise man and the children have visited SCOEC. Pupils taken part in the Dance Festival, schools swimming gala and have played a number of sporting fixtures against other schools. We continue to work closely with the Playgroup, allowing them to use part of our playing field which has been fenced off to allow them more grass area. We have added to our outdoor play equipment over the summer term – the tyre play system has been a wonderful addition and the entrance to the school has been moved to allow better access and exit from school. We have installed a Spiritual walk around the field perimeter and are now considering the spiritual aspects to this area. The grounds of the school are currently being redesigned and planted particularly at the front. We have also had created some willow and hazel structures. We have excellent links with the parish council who have established links with the school and are sponsoring prizes linked to our travel plan. The Walk on Wednesday (WOW) initiative has grown and the children have been very keen to make sure the teachers have the records up to date. This week has been designated Walk all Week (WAW) but with the weather being a bit uncertain we will have to wait and see how the scores increase.

### **School Council**

The School Council is made up of representatives of each class elected by their classmates and meet each week to discuss matters which they consider will improve the school. As Chair of Governors I have been requested to attend their meetings which are quite lively and their ideas can be both practical and sometimes fanciful.

### **MICHAEL STUART, SOUTH CERNEY VILLAGE HALL – REPORT**

These years go by so quickly and it is sometimes difficult to remember what exactly has happened in the past twelve months. In fact quite a lot has gone on in and to the hall in that period.

The most obvious has been the renewal of the thatched ridge which cost over £7,000. The front slope will need doing in a few years time as the surface is wearing far too quickly. Unfortunately the flat roof over the committee room and toilets also is at the end of its useful life and that also will require recovering but we are fortunate in having enough in the kitty to pay for that.

We changed insurers and in so doing reduced the annual premium by almost £1,500 but to comply with the new company's requirements we had to install a smoke alarm system. So we will not really see the saving until this coming year.

We won some useful brownie points with GRCC by being the first village hall in Gloucestershire to be awarded the Hall Mark 1 certificate. That was for passing their investigation as to how we run the place and we found the exercise to be very useful. As to whether we go on to take part 2 and 3 is debatable but we will wait and see.

The Cerney Cinema is proving to be a great social date in the calendar and in the past year has also resulted in our having a very useful profit margin to swell our funds. Mamma Mia was so successful that we held a second showing and almost filled the hall both times.

On the wall over there are five paintings executed by a one time member of the Art Club, David Hoad. Tragically David died far too young and his wife Claire gave the paintings to me to use them in any way I thought fit but to benefit the village. It was agreed that they should go on permanent display here in the hall so we and South Cerney Trust both donated £50 each to the Cutts Charity and that money will be used to buy books etc for local students a cause David would have fully agreed with as he was a teacher.

We are envied by many village halls for the excellent way in which the committee here in South Cerney play such a part in running the hall. We often have a full complement at meetings and the input from everyone is always top class. My great thanks to all concerned and of course to the Parish Council with whom we work so closely. This factor is one that unfortunately is not a common occurrence. John Veitch our man in charge of bookings and cleaning is a gem. I have never met someone who is so committed to a task as he is.

All in all it has been a good year with a small profit made and with increasing bookings the future looks good.

### **MARY MYCHALECKYJ (GLOUCESTERSHIRE YOUTH SERVICE) & EMILY HALLETT (YOUNG GLOUCESTERSHIRE), SOUTH CERNEY YOUTH GROUP – REPORT**

Since last June, the young people of South Cerney have been working hard to build up their youth group and have been participating in everything from community events and volunteering to days out and summer residential.

In the last 12 months the young people of South Cerney have: been away on a summer residential to Buckstone, and had opportunities to try rock climbing, abseiling and pony trekking; been on a summer trip to Alton Towers, and a Christmas trip to the outdoor ice skating rink in Gloucester; taken part in two football tournaments (can came second in one of them!) with a third tournament coming up on Sunday 24th May; played an important role in the Water Park Lantern Project by designing and creating willow lanterns, and by volunteering their time on the day of the event to help with stewarding; taken part in meetings with the Parish Council to look at provision for the young people in South Cerney, and to look at the possibility of finding a home for the youth group; taken part in the opening of the MUGA at Upper Up by providing face painting for the children and raising money for their youth group.

For the last few weeks, we have been working with the young people on building their summer programme and recruiting new young people from around the village. With the help of the young people, we have created our summer programme and drawn up costings for the work.

Due to the current financial situation, we need to ensure all staff costs for our projects are covered. The young people are working very hard completing funding bids for their youth group, so we can gain funding to do these activities.

The young people have also been volunteering their time to their community and to get the opportunity to increase their skills and gain accreditation. Volunteering at summer play schemes and community fun days; volunteering with local youth groups; taking part in Young Gloucestershire's Achieve programme.

Amy and Marcus are both working towards their V 50 Hours certificate with the V Volunteering scheme. Marcus was also nominated in this year's Young Person of the Year 2009 and got through to the final round. He attended an awards ceremony and was recognized along with a group of young people from Gloucestershire for the work he has achieved. Marcus will also be taking part in Platform 2's overseas project, where we will gain the opportunity to work in a developing country for 10 weeks, doing work ranging from building schools to football training with local children.

There being no further business Cllr Stuart closed the meeting at 9.35pm.