

DRAFT MINUTES

Wickwar Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

A meeting was held for the above Council on Thursday 18th May 2017, at the Town Hall commencing at 7.15pm

Attended:

Councillor M Cowley (Chairman)
Councillor I Aldous
Councillor S Isaac
Councillor A Carroll
Councillor G Fielding
Councillor A Pennington

Apologies:

Councillor M Summers
Councillor A Pennington

Ward Councillor M Lewis attended this meeting.

Reports

- 1. Minutes of the last meeting held on the 19th May 2016**
Agreed and signed at this meeting.
- 2. Report Chairman Mr M Summers**
Read out at this meeting. Attached
- 3. Annual Report from the District Ward Councillor**
Read out at this meeting. Attached
- 4. Financial Report to the 31st March 2016**
Read out at this meeting contained in the Chairman's report
- 5. Report from the Alexander Hosea School LEA Governor**
Read out at this meeting. Attached
- 6. Report from representatives of Lower Woods**
Read out at this meeting. Attached
- 7. Report from Neighbourhood Watch representative.**
Read out at this meeting. Attached
- 8. Report from Wickwar Educational Foundation**
Given verbally at this meeting. Transcript attached
- 9. Report from King George V Playing Fields**

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Read out at this meeting. Attached

10. Report from the Community Centre Management

Read out at this meeting. Attached

11. PROW

Included in Chairman's report

12. Police Report

Read out at this meeting. Attached

13. Wickwar open and Closed Cemetery report

Read out at this meeting. Attached

14. Wickwar Village Hall Report

No report received.

15. Wickwar Youth Club

Read out at this meeting. Attached

16. Wickwar Playing Fields Association

Read out at this meeting. Attached

Councillor M Cowley suggested that a working party be formed between the Parish Council and the WPFA, regarding future fundraising.

17. Wickwar out of School Club

No report

18. Wickwar Pre-School

No report

19. Wickwar Allotments Association

Read out at this meeting. Attached

20. Wickwar Wanderers Football Club

Read out at this meeting. Attached

21. Wickwar 1st Beavers Cubs and Scouts

Read out at this meeting. Attached

22. Wickwar Chapel

Read out at this meeting. Attached

23. Any other information the Chairman deems urgent.

None at this meeting.

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Wickwar Parish Council's Chairman's report for the Annual Parish Meeting on 18th May 2017.

At the risk of getting moaned at, I'll repeat a couple of things I said last year. We Councillors and our Clerk are ordinary people from this Parish and do what we do to the best of our abilities, we like to think. O.K., we might err on the odd occasion but, to refer to the expression, isn't that human?!! We are not paid for what we do, except for some travel expenses now and then. We like to think we put our hearts into what we do, because of our genuine interest in doing our best for the Parish. That's not necessarily the best. I've put the thought that if we're doing alright and/or there are no problems I could count on one hand the number of parishioners who attend our monthly meetings. On the other hand.....

Some subjects to comment on, in no particular order:

The Town Hall

Still having work done, though the most important regarding the structure is now complete. We are now considering what's best for the floor under you. We want to put down some form of flooring, but there is a side issue. Councillor Fielding is exploring the possibilities of serious funding to create a new, but sympathetic, interior for this premises, which would include the downstairs becoming the prime meeting room. We have been aware, for some time, that this room does not meet DDA requirements, hence the new thinking. We would not wish to spend on flooring to a full financial extent if the plan changes. We will hold fire until we have further information via Councillor Fielding. By the way, we now have wi-fi.

The King George V Playing Fields

Still available to hire outside the usage by Wickwar Wanderers Football Club. The Council are considering CCTV in view of incidents that have occurred and are looking at costings.

Youth Centre

We've again provided a sizeable sum of money to help the Centre survive a bit longer. Unfortunately, we can't be the sole providers and I would hope their committee manage to rouse enough support to keep going.

Quarry on the Downs Road

Cemex work co-operatively with their surrounding Parishes and complaints are a rarity nowadays. It does, though, acknowledge the success of starting the Liaison Group and how local people can feel inclusive and heard.

Planning Applications

Still to see the impact the expansion at Brimsham Park will have on traffic through the village. Even allowing for that, South Gloucestershire Council (S.G.C.) approved an application for eighty-odd houses on the southern edge of the village, on the Sodbury Road opposite some established properties. The decision to approve seemed to hinge on S.G.C.'s shortage of a five year land bank and the backlash they might get if they had refused permission. Whilst I acknowledge housing is needed, there is always the right place, and time, and I don't think it was here yet. I even think S.G.C. had the same thinking in the recent past. Still, any potential builder will be looking at the conditions attaching to the permission, which might put them off.

The Beacon

Make a note. It will be lit up again next year on 11th November to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War. More will be announced, locally and nationally, as the day gets nearer.

The Buthay

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We are in the process of selling a parcel of land that is (mainly) the grassed area in front of The Old Chapel. The current owner of the residence has approached the Council to say the present means of legal access from the adopted highway in front of the premises is not something mortgage lenders like. We fully appreciate the issue and are now going through the legal requirements to get the parcel of land in a readily saleable condition. Questions have been raised by a parishioner about the Council's ability to achieve a sale, but our solicitor is dealing with those issues, which appear all to be resolvable.

Virgin Media

They came, they've caused a commotion in some places whilst digging up roads and paths but, in the end, they'll be gone. That's all I'm going to say.

Public footpaths and bridleways

Weather permitting, we have walks one Sunday morning each month, except in the depths of winter. They have two main purposes. Firstly, to ensure they remain traversable by keeping them clear of undergrowth, etc. We take shears, secateurs, saws to achieve that. We attach/replace signage where needed. This acts as a means of showing the proper route and, hopefully, prevent trespassing. Secondly, to establish that pathways and bridleways are shown to be walked and prevent their cessation. It is important, especially in this day and age, for people to have as much opportunity as possible to walk/horse ride and experience the lovely countryside we have around us. Check on the notice board here at the Town Hall and also the web site for the actual dates. The more who come the merrier.

Parish News

There seems to have been an air of disapproval at the Parish Council's entries latterly. At the Council's last meeting earlier this month the issue was discussed and some changes were suggested. These will be explored further, with thoughts of trying to bring to the attention of parishioners what functions and limitations there are on how the Council operates. In the main, we Councillors decide what to do and it is expected the Clerk does them. Bear also in mind that the minutes of our meetings are available to read on the web site, so there's little point in summarizing them, but just reiterating the bigger issues.

The High Street

Common with most people, we are concerned at the vastly increased volume of traffic passing through the village. We anticipate that will become a lot worse when further housing is completed at Brimsham Park. In itself, I'm not sure what can be done to tackle the issue, rather try and manage it. We have discussed a reduction of the speed limit through the centre of the village but, as ever, there are pros and cons. Slowing down the traffic may help the flow through the lights, but could well create even longer queues at peak times. We'll be discussing further, also in conjunction with S.G.C. Additionally, the air quality around the traffic lights is currently being monitored. Early indications are that, overall, the quality is acceptable (and I didn't say good) but not so at those peak times. That said, I can think of many other places, especially in Bristol, where the situation is even more depressing. The monitor will be in situ for some months to come and it will be interesting to see if S.G.C. consider something needs to be done. Personally, I suspect not.

Photo competition

We had this inaugural competition last year, based on the inspiration of Councillor Fielding, which was reasonably supported. The worthy winner's brilliant photograph was of the back of the Town Hall with a double rainbow. An inspirational piece of spontaneity. Have a look at it on the web site. Look out for details of the next competition.

Wickwar Parish Council's accounts

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Questions were raised by a parishioner about the way certain financial transactions were being recorded and whether the paperwork was correct. These were investigated by the external auditors, Messrs Grant Thornton, and modest changes were asked to be implemented by them, which are now being done. These changes did not, in essence, affect the accuracy of the accounts and how our Clerk managed them and we were certainly not 'hauled over the coals'. Like I said at the start, we are all ordinary folk and we are learning all the time. When you get a chance to see the accounts and pick out the audit costs, compare what was paid for the previous financial year (the standard cost) and how much for this last financial year. That shows how much extra had to be paid to deal with those questions – your money via the precept.

Therefore, I will confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, our Clerk has undertaken the accounting responsibilities in accordance with regulations, subject to the changes stated above. I am, though, satisfied the accounts truly show the financial activities throughout the last financial year ending 31st March 2017.

To finish, I thank my fellow Councillors for their support and our Clerk, Pat, for all her continued hard work. Also, I thank our South Gloucestershire councillor member for Ladden Brook ward, Marian Lewis, for her valued input and being a conduit for issues we have.

Martin Summers
Chairman
18th May 2017

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Report to Wickwar Village Meeting – 18th May 2017 – Ward Councillor

It has been a pleasure it to work, during this past year, with such an energetic Parish Council. You will have heard from the Chairman's report how much has been achieved in the village during the year.

I should like to commend the village as a whole for the calm and objective way in which the Virgin Cable system works were accepted. It has not been an easy project to manage, but any major problems have been solved as speedily as possible.

Some of you will know that Rangeworthy was selected by our MP Luke Hall as a pilot for his constituency visits by bus to Westminster. This was clearly much enjoyed by all who took up the invitation. It would be his intention to offer the same invitation to all of the villages in S Glos, depending, of course, on the result of the election in June.

Briefly to keep you up to date with what's been going on in South Glos generally:

Devolution: The new West of England Combined Authority has control of a Devolution Deal worth more than £1bn over the next 30 years, with power and money previously administered by Westminster now available locally. The new West of England Regional Mayor, Tim Bowles, will work with the leaders of Bath and N E Somerset Council, South Gloucestershire Council and the Mayor of Bristol, to make decisions over investment and strategy for regional infrastructure including homes, transport, business growth and adult skill provision.

Waste Management: I reported last year that there was a plan going through the consultation period, to reduce the size of the black general waste bins, still collect them fortnightly, but to collect ALL recyclables weekly.

The Waste Strategy has now been agreed and the first part of the planned change is imminent. First the recycling collections will be changed to weekly for all recycling, then once that service is in place, the 240 litre black bins will be swapped for 140 litre black bins. This system has been shown, in other authorities, to be very successful in drawing out more recycling from the waste stream. This is essential to reduce the amount of waste we send to Landfill, and thus keep costs down.

Broadband. This is a problem for some of the more remote farms, and certainly for other villages. But I think not in the main part of Wickwar. Luke Hall's office and I phone regularly for updates, but BT seems unwilling to make promises about which streets/areas can be included in the final list for Phase 2.

Housing developments South Glos still does not have a 5 year land supply which would deliver enough completed homes within 5 years. Developers all over the authority are now submitting applications for sites in and around all our villages, and even if our Planning Officers and Councillors refuse permission, it is often granted on appeal.

Given the housing shortage nationwide, we should all be prepared to accept some new housing in our area, but this will always lead to strain on the infrastructure leading to traffic congestion, pressure on doctors' surgeries, pressure on schools.

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I hope that the new Mayor and the Leaders of the three participating West of England authorities will note the strain on the infrastructure to the north of Bristol, and plan for at least some future developments to be, for example, to the east of Bristol.

Infrastructure: Plans are still going forward for the proposed new motorway link (junction 18A) off Westerleigh Road at Emerson's Green to ease the peak time congestion on the Ring Road.

The new Metrobus route is still under construction, and should be finished sometime this year.

As always, if you have any queries, please contact me.

Marian Lewis – Ward Councillor for Ladden Brook - May 2017

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Highlights of the year 2016-17 at Alexander Hosea for Parish Council meeting - May 2017

1. Ready, steady, go! - Year of physical development and sport

This has provided the curriculum focus for the year and we are hoping to apply for a sports award by the end of the academic year to recognise the quality of our provision at Alexander Hosea.

Launched the year with a Rio Olympic celebration day run by sports provider 'Progressive Sports' last summer.

Began this academic year with the whole school walking up to the High Street to watch the Tour of Britain cycle through the village.

We have run:

- intra-school competitions and awarded certificates to the best sporting class and to children who have most improved their skills each term.

- Inter-school competitions – multi-skills, rugby, cross country etc.

We have had special sporting days led by external providers:

- Hula hoop day

- Skipping

- Wheelchair basketball - Spent a term learning inclusive sports, including boccia, blindfold football etc. which links with our school 'inclusion' value

- Circus skills to come

Children have visited sporting venues – KLB, Clip 'n climb

Our children talented at sports have been part of special training sessions run at KLB, Sports days still to come

2. Learning environments

We have changed the look of our classrooms and corridors– the classrooms are now more natural and immersive learning environments and the corridors more homely, which you can see on our website. We have had classrooms decked out as forests, air balloons, the circus, Greek temples, Hogwarts, frozen worlds etc.

3. Curriculum

Our curriculum is now based on real life projects with children learning the skills required for a final outcome such as a show, museum, art gallery. This ensures learning has a purpose and children are therefore fully engaged.

4. Strategies for teaching and learning

Alongside an inspirational and motivational curriculum, we have spent the year embedding the teaching and learning strategies we have been developing over the last 8 years.

Visits from internationally acclaimed educational consultants, Tom Robson and Andy Cope (the Art of Brilliance) have helped strengthen our practice and further our focus on character education. They have worked with children, parents and staff.

Conclusion

As you can tell, and as always, we have had an extremely busy year and achieved many great things.

This is my last year here as head as I am retiring at the end of the academic year. It has been a privilege to lead Alexander Hosea School during the last 8 ½ years and I have seen many

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children blossom during their time with us. The school has undergone many changes and is in a really good place to hopefully achieve an outstanding, or at least very good judgement from Ofsted next time!

Thank you to the village and Parish Council for their support over the years.

Best wishes for the future

Val

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Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

Lower Woods Nature Reserve

Report for Wickwar Annual Parish Meeting 2017

1. People

Neil Lodge, supported by Lewis, continues to lead, supervise and undertake the vital work of managing Lower Woods both for wildlife conservation and visitors. Their unremitting hard work, skill, knowledge and enthusiasm deserves the thanks of us all.

Neil continues to be well supported by volunteers. Some, in particular John Ryman, work at the woods several days a week. Most of the practical conservation work is concentrated on Thursdays when anything up to eighteen volunteers can be present, undertaking a range of tasks such as coppicing, deer fencing, ride widening, clearance of fallen trees and path maintenance to name but a few.

A lot of practical conservation work is also carried out during corporate 'away days'. For example, this Winter around 70 staff from INTEL helped to clear the edges of extensive lengths of the Walk. This aids corporate team building as well as providing income to GWT and of course helping conservation in Lower Woods.

The Management Group has been re-focused again to better support Neil and improve its communication with Trust HQ staff. It is now known as the Lower Woods Advisory Group meeting bi-monthly and including site visits as part of the meeting to ensure that everyone's knowledge of the woods is up to date and improving.

There is also an active Survey Group that meets regularly throughout the year to undertake surveys of trees and grassland followed by analysis of the results. More specialised surveys of particular species of plants and animals are also undertaken by those with the necessary skills. This work provides the factual background to better inform the ongoing conservation of the woodlands.

2. Ash Dieback

Unfortunately this disease, long anticipated, appeared during early Summer 2016 at multiple locations in the woods and rapidly spread to all ages of Ash. Relatively few larger trees have been killed outright so far but visitors to the woods this Summer will notice many Ash with extensive dead shoots and branches. The trees' survival mechanism is to produce new shoots below where the fungus has taken hold, which in turn also succumb. The tree is gradually overwhelmed and dies, which may take several years for larger trees. Over time visitors will therefore see more and more dead trees. For the most part these will be left as standing deadwood (which has its own wildlife benefits) unless the trees are near areas where the public walk, in which case they will be felled and cleared off paths, etc.

However, other tree species will respond in time to fill the gaps left by the Ash and where desirable planting of significant gaps will also take place, primarily with Oak.

3. Woodland Management

Coppicing last Winter by GWT staff and volunteers was focused on Crews and Sturt, followed by fencing of the coppiced areas to prevent deer browsing of the regrowth of the coppice stools.

The contract firewood coppicers (a long running 'tradition' in the woods) worked this Winter in areas of South Moon Ridings.

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Trench (Ride) clearance, usually back to the woodbanks, has concentrated on Chalkley, Littley New, the Walk and Horton Great trenches. This work greatly benefits a range of wildlife as well as enhancing the visitor experience and the cleared areas are thereafter maintained by annual mowing at an appropriate time, usually late Summer/Autumn.

The mature Poplar in Margery Hay have been thinned to benefit the understorey and ground flora and as part of the policy to progressively remove non-native trees. Prior to Ash Dieback the intention was to remove all the Poplar but with the progressive loss of so many Ash it will be important to maintain woodland canopy where possible with other tree species, including Poplar.

4. Woodland Produce, the Wood Yard and Courses

The wood yard has been re-organised and a new charcoal kiln acquired, which is being used regularly. Our charcoal bags have been re-designed. These are now being sold at the Tortworth farm shop, Hawkesbury village shop and Wotton garden centre, as well as directly from Lower Woods.

Firewood deliveries are now concentrated locally and the plan is to move to selling firewood in bulk with collection only.

The range of woodland products for sale has been increased, available directly from Lower Woods.

Greenwood courses are being run for long-term unemployed adults from Yate Job centre. One corner of the wood yard was cleared to make room for the purchase of a yurt. This provides a valuable indoor facility for meetings, courses, events, etc, and is very much in keeping with its surroundings!

5. Access

The Lodge access track is again in an appalling state with potholes. The previous policy of filling them in has not worked and the decision made to completely regrade and relay the track to a Forestry Commission road specification. Much planning, preparatory work and fundraising is needed to enable this very expensive operation to be carried out. The exact timing is unknown at present but hopefully will be later this year, perhaps with another temporary infill of the holes in the meantime.

All events involving the public have had to be cancelled until the road has been completed as we cannot invite the public into the wood along such a badly damaged section of track. Unfortunately we have to report that on several occasions during the year off-road motorbikes and 4x4s have gained illegal access to the woods by damaging gates and cutting padlocks. Once in the reserve significant damage has been caused to tracks and rides and of course we are then faced with the cost of major repairs and replacements. The police have been informed but the illegal activity continues.

Bill Heslegrave on behalf of Neil Lodge and the Lower Woods Advisory Group
May 2017

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Wickwar Neighbourhood Watch

The Watch has been in existence now for many years but is in need of reinforcements. We receive regular messages from the Avon & Somerset Police NHW Officer Trevor Wilmot about incidents of crime in the area and general crime prevention advice. We have good relations with our PC Lee Bainbridge and PCSO Haley Bromley. We are fortunate to be in a low crime (but not no crime!) area, and reports of incidents in the village are few although there are more relating to a wider area of South Gloucestershire.

However, those of us who have kept the Watch going are reaching the end of the road due to age and infirmity, as I wrote in the April Parish News, and if the Watch is to continue new recruits are needed.

We have therefore called a meeting, advertised in this month's Parish News, next Thursday, 25th May at 7.30 p.m. in the Olive Pollard Room at the Community Centre. Police representatives will be there and will explain the importance of NHW to them. We will be looking to recruit new helpers to get messages to as many village residents as possible, but we would like to raise the Watch activity above this minimum level to one where we look out for each other, especially the elderly who are often targeted by thieves and fraudsters, and communication becomes more two-way.

We are hoping for a good attendance at next week's meeting and a willingness to be actively involved in reviving Wickwar Neighbourhood Watch.

Philip Revill

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Wickwar Educational Foundation – Mr G Teague

Finances for the Wickwar Educational Foundation are in good order. The funds came originally from the Old School House sale. For the benefit of the children who attend or have attended, Alexander Hosea School. The Foundation also funds educational projects for the school.

Funded projects include motivational talk for the children and parents, further educational grants for ex and current students. NADIA support with driving awareness courses, for pre-17-year-old students.

In the last financial year approximately £3000 worth of grants were given. The Foundation has a page on the Wickwar.org web site, where applications forms are available and can be made via email or and in writing.

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King George V Playing Fields Report

The main user of the playing fields is Wickwar Football club. The Cutting of the grass is under the umbrella of the football club during the football season. The cutting during the rest of the year is paid for by the Parish Council. The Play Area and equipment is maintained by the Parish Council and the regular grass cutting gives a well-presented appearance. There have been issues with the wooden basket swing which had to be removed due to the poor condition of the wood but that has recently been replaced by a new metal one at no cost to the parish. The wooden swings have been found to be hazardous due to the wooden supports but the parish are hoping to get them replaced in the near future. All other equipment has passed the annual ROSPA inspection.

Councillor Ian Aldous

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Wickwar Community Centre Report

The Community Centre has had another busy year. We are still encountering the same issues as in previous years, namely, lack of storage space for our two main hirers, Wickwar Pre-school and Wickwar out of School Club.

There has recently been a change in the management of Wickwar pre-school and we wish them every success in the future.

The planned extension for a disabled toilet near the entrance is still on going. There have been concerns regarding the area of land outside the Olive Pollard room which children attending the hirers sessions use in good weather. The Management Committee believe this has now been resolved at a recent meeting with the Alexander Hosea school.

The Community Centre continues to be financially sound and looks forward to a successful future.

Ian Aldous – Chairman Community Centre Management Committee.

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Police report for Wickwar Annual Parish Meeting 18th May 2017

16/01/2017 between 19:30 & 22:10 a vehicle was stolen from Burleigh Way, Wickwar. Offenders gained entry to the unlocked premise and took the vehicle keys from a sideboard. House to house carried out by officer provided a witness who saw the vehicle driving dangerously at 21:20 near to Peg Hill Skate Park.

On this night, a total of five high end vehicles were taken from Wickwar and Yate. Some of these vehicles activated cameras on the M25. The vehicle stolen from Wickwar was recovered in Wiltshire. Forensic evidence was found within the vehicle. Two other vehicles were located in the London area.

23/01/2017-29/01/2017 property broken into in Amberley Way. Occupants away on holiday. CSI located footwear marks at the scene and these have now been placed on a database pending any positive matches.

- All offenders arrested for burglary have their footwear printed, these prints are placed on a computer system and run through the database for any outstanding offences.

04/02/2017 whilst police were on patrol a vehicle containing two occupants were found in the car park of Holly Trinity Church, Wickwar. A positive search was carried out on both the vehicle and occupants. Both occupants received cannabis warnings.

12/04/2017-14/04/2017 front number plate noticed to be missing whilst vehicle parked at The Buthay, Wickwar.

01/05/2017-02/05/2017 3 x sheds were reported to have been broken entered. Various items stolen from within including pushbikes, tools and pressure washer. On liaising with colleagues from Gloucestershire Police, they also suffered the same type of incidents in the same time frame.

A report of a suspicious blue van was received. Registered keeper is not local and enquiries are continuing in the relevant force area.

A number of other calls relating to mental health, domestics and missing persons were also received in the time period of 01/01/2017-16/05/2017.

A number of operations have also taken place in neighbouring areas tackling rouge traders, burglary/theft and drug related crime.

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CEMETERY REPORT 2016/17

The Cemetery is a very peaceful place and always looks lovely in the summer although it does take quite a lot of work to keep it looking that way. People do like to go and sit on the benches in the sunshine.

We are very pleased to have Mr. Howse cutting the grass again for us. There is the odd hiccup now and then but they do a very good job, we are not like some cemeteries which are cut by S Glos to a manicured lawn look, which we are not looking for.. We do however like it to look nice and tidy, so now we have Mr. Howse and Co. remove the grass from the large area and blow the headstones etc free of grass cuttings.

Sadly it got off to a late start this year and the grass was very long and it ended up with equipment failure and the grass having to be left untidy for a short time, which I know did distress some villagers. They however were back up after equipment repaired and did several cuts and it is looking very nice up there again now.

We shall cut a path to the bench and back, in the Closed Cemetery at the end of June. Then cut it all down at the end of the season. We are thinking of extending the cutting times now due to the milder winters and the fact the grass grows so fast and thick up there.

We were going to sow some more wildflower seeds this Spring in the closed area but unfortunately it was too dry and cold then wet so we will see what we have come back up this year as the effects of S Glos cutting the closed area in April a couple of years ago now, meant we had lost a lot but it is still recovering. I will note what re-appears this year and we will see about sowing some more seed for next year.

The two Paul Scarlet trees we have planted by the Sundial in the open cemetery are looking good this year, one is in flower for the first time at the moment and looking lovely, although the Magnolia which has always struggled was this year badly hit with the late frosts and cold winds. So, I will look into replacing that this year with something more suitable.

Pat and I do our health and safety checks on the headstones and so far, none have been laid down since our last check and a lot of the ones we had laid down due to being unsafe have now been fixed by the families as we always write to them if the stone is unstable or needs attention.

We have No major plans at this present time although I do want to meet the tree officer up there this year. I didn't do it last year as The Lime trees on the Stank were cut back, what amazing strong trees they are as this year they are looking fabulous.

Councillor A. Carroll

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Wickwar Youth Centre Report 2017.

Since taking over the Wickwar Youth Centre from South Gloucestershire Council in 2013 the Management Committee has become a Registered Charity to assist them in Fund Raising. It has also become involved with other Youth Organisations in the area in dealing with South Gloucestershire Council and in raising Funds.

The Financial Assistance from South Gloucestershire Council was greatly reduced to £5,000 which is well under the running costs of the Youth Centre, which totals about £15,000. An application was made to Wickwar Parish Council who have kindly given us a Grant of £5,000 this year to assist us in continuing the running of the Youth Centre.

We run the Junior Sessions (Up to 13) on Monday evenings and the Senior Sessions (Over 13) on Wednesday evenings.

We have a new Youth Leader in Rachel Lawrence who took over earlier this year but have recently lost two assistants.

The Youth Leader, together with a Management Member are giving presentations at The Alexander Hosea School to make the children aware of the activities of the Youth Centre.

On a sad note, our ex-Chairman and Trustee Val Johnson passed away earlier this year after a long illness. She will be sadly missed as she was such a champion of young people in the village. Ian Aldous, Trustee.

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Wickwar Speed Watch Report

Wickwar Speed Watch continues, with a great deal of enthusiasm. We have committed volunteers in this village and we believe we are making a difference to the traffic speeds and road safety. We are monitored and trained by the Avon and Somerset Police, who receive our data, they send out letters to offenders. Due, to our new reporting system offenders throughout South Gloucestershire are now on a central data base and can be targeted by the Police more efficiently. We know this happens with some good results.

Grants have been obtained to continue and set up new speed watches in South Gloucestershire.

Thank you to all our volunteers, who do an excellent job. We are obliged to count traffic on our speed watch duties and we are counting up to 1300 cars per hour on some of our sessions. This has risen by over a third in the past 24 months and is set to rise due to the increased house building in the area.

P Trull – Speed Watch Co-ordinator.

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Wickwar Playing Fields Association – Report

CHAIRMAN

Mr J Broad
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VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr J McAleese
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Monday, 15 May 2017

Wickwar Annual Parish Meeting 2016
Good evening,

On behalf of the Trustees of Wickwar Playing Fields Association I would like to provide you with an update of the trusts activities this year.

As an overview the fields are in excellent condition and we are very pleased with the continuous increase in year on year activity. Wickwar Allotments Association is maintaining the allotments in great condition and the plots remain fully subscribed with a healthy waiting list. The Apiary currently contains six hives which are producing good quantities of honey whilst pollenating the orchard and allotments. The orchard trees are producing good

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crops of apples, pears, nuts, plums and for the first time last year quince. The Run England 3-2-1 Trim Trail is getting regular use by runners, joggers and walkers.

Wickwar Wanderers FC is now using both pitches for junior fixtures and regular training sessions. The feedback on the quality of the playing surfaces is very positive from players, coaches and visiting teams. There is a really positive relationship with the football club committee and we would like to thank them for their support.

The annual Wickwar Games and 5K Fun Run was held in July and was once again a roaring success. On behalf of the Games Organising Committee I would like to thank Wickwar Wunners, Friends of Alexander Hosea School, Friends of Wickwar Church, Wickwar Toddlers, Wickwar Pre-school and many individuals for their support and assistance in pulling it all together. A date for your diary: This year's Games will be held on Saturday 15th July.

The highlight this year is undoubtedly the construction of the groundsmans store, it is not a bungalow as many first thought and there is no truth in the rumour we are going to let it out for Air-B&B with pick your own on the allotments.

This time last year we explained that a change in planning permission had been accepted to relocate the building from the east of the allotments to the western end. This was due to the reluctance of Network Rail to provide permission to build over the Wickwar Tunnel. Work commenced on the new store in June last year and due to the excellence of Alan Osmond (AGO Builders) our stonemason, a superb building has been constructed. He worked magic in turning piles of roughly hewn walling stone into such a well-constructed building. All stonework and the installation of the roof were completed before Christmas. In the New Year village resident Dennis Goodland (ABACUS Doors) supplied and installed the three side doors and the roller shutter door to the front of the building. Recently the soakaways have been excavated and painting of the inside is very nearly completed.

We have two outstanding significant pieces of work to complete as and when funding allows. These are the installation of a septic tank and the supply and installation of power to the building. The new building is already in use and we are collecting our assets from temporary storage around the village. Our mower is also now onsite which makes maintaining the fields a great deal easier.

The Trustees would like to thank the very many organisations and individuals whose funding, support and expertise have allowed the fields to prosper again this year. There is a great deal of good will in this village and I think this should be accentuated and celebrated.

If there are any questions please feel free to ask?

Kind regards,

John

John Broad
Chairman
Wickwar Playing Fields Association

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Wickwar Allotment Association Report 2016-2017

Ian Aldous, Chairman

The Wickwar Allotment Association have had another successful year on the allotments situated on The Wickwar Playing Fields Association. We have now been running for 10 years. All the plots are taken and we still have a healthy waiting list. When a plot becomes vacant we let them out on a half plot basis as a full plot requires a great deal of work and young families trying out an allotment for the first time find this more manageable. When we started in 2007 there were 19 full allotments and there remain nine of the original allotment holders still managing their plots.

The hedge surrounding the land, which was planted by the association, has developed very well over the years. It is regularly cut and gives us some security. We have had some minor thefts and damage to the sheds however.

We have had to replace one of the gate posts this year but as always the work is all done by the members.

I believe the enthusiasm of the members is clearly shown at our AGM as we get a turn out of 90% members.

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Wickwar Wanderers Football Club Report for the Parish Council Annual Parish Meeting

Apologies in not being with you tonight but I hope you will find this report informative.

Wickwar Wanderers continue to run teams for both adults and children in the village and local area. We have maintained our status as a Standard Chartered club, this is a recognised FA qualification and guarantees that those involved with the club are well trained in terms of health and safety, child welfare and of course the ability to take our youngsters' football teams.

We are continuing with our policy of providing low cost sport, as we do not want any child not to be able to take part. This policy does mean we rely heavily on our two main fundraising events:-

Football Frolics, which will take place on the 24th June at the KGV field. This will be Frolics' 25th Anniversary and we're hoping it will be another successful occasion, we encourage people to enter with groups of friends and many teams add to the fun by coming in fancy dress, more details and an entry form are available on our website; and

Comedy Night, which will take place on the 18th November at the Community Rooms, again this is a longstanding event which is very popular, selling out for the last few years. Tickets will be available from September.

These fundraising events and help from our sponsors who have provided kit enable us to balance our books for this financial year.

We have found that we have needed to spend a considerable sum on the upkeep of the grass, the regular cutting of the pitches and surrounding fields and also the intensive treatment we have undertaken to improve the two 11 a side pitches. I would like to ask if the parish council could consider making a grant to help with the fertilising and weed treatment of these main pitches again this summer (last year's cost came to £744). This continued treatment should ensure a better playing surface for the footballers and also for all other users of the KGV playing fields.

We start the children in our skills group, there is no lower age band, we're happy to welcome youngsters as soon as they show enough interest in kicking a football. Next season we are hoping to offer youth teams at under 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 18 levels. This year we have had in excess of 150 children involved in football, next year we hope to have even more. The Adult team will again be playing in the Stroud league.

This season the under 18 team many of whom have played for Wickwar Wanderers since they were 7 or 8, celebrated the end of their involvement in youth football by winning the Bristol and Gloucester u18 league cup. Comparing their team photo now with one from when they were the under 9s it is lovely to see so many of the same faces still representing Wickwar.

The majority of the youth teams play on a Saturday morning. For the last two years following the pavilion refurbishment, we have been able to offer hot drinks and bacon rolls which has gone down very well with those watching the football especially when it has been cold and wet, creating a great atmosphere on the field when several teams are playing as well as

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helping to make a little more money for the club and the World Challenge volunteers who manned the refreshment stall.

We are very grateful to all those who volunteer their time and talent to Wickwar Wanderers, and to the Parish Council and the WPFA for providing our facilities and ensuring we continue to have organised sport in the village.

Many Thanks

Michelle Jenkins,
Youth Secretary, Wickwar Wanderers

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Parish Council Annual Meeting Update – Thursday 18th May 2017

The 1st Wickwar Scout Group is now a year old! The year has shot by, with an action-packed programme involving as much adventure as possible. We have camped out, hiked, made bows and arrows, visited Pets At Home, and also our local Fire and Police stations. We had a sleepover at the Church, climbed the Church tower, learnt all about ballooning and skydiving, cooked, lit fires and generally had a lot of fun. We have lots to look forward to, with summer activities involving having new experiences and being outdoors as much as possible.

We are pleased to report that our Beavers, Cubs and Scout Groups are all full, or almost full. We cater for local children aged from 6 to 14 and have an average of 16 children in each group, so in total around 48 members. We also have a wonderful team of 19 adult volunteers and an invaluable support system provided by our members' parents.

We are currently in the process of setting up a Wickwar based local oversight committee, having been supported by the Cromhall Scout Group to date. It has very much been a year of getting up and running, learning the ropes, and has involved quite a lot of juggling.

We are so grateful to the Parish Council, the Church, and the residents of Wickwar for all their support in helping us get this Group up and running. Without that support Scouting in Wickwar would not have been possible.

We maintain a waiting list for new members and are always on the look out for new adult volunteers. If anyone would like to find out more please do not hesitate to contact us.

1stWickwarCubs@gmail.com

Joanna Hellen 07920 282587

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Wickwar Chapel report

The first priority of the Chapel is to promote the Good News of Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins. To that end we hold weekly Services on a Sunday and a Fellowship Hour on the first Wednesday of the month. Occasionally we will have an 'Outreach Tea' on a Sunday afternoon to which special speakers are invited.

Along with that, Coffee Mornings are held every Monday morning and the second Saturday in each month. The aim of these is to raise funds for various Charities (a different one is nominated every month). Other fund raising activities include a Sponsored Walk and a Plant Sale.

The Chapel supports Jewish people living in Israel and we shall be sending out several 'banana boxes' of clothes to them. Two other major events this year are the Flower Festival on the first weekend in September to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the founding of the Chapel, towards which the Parish Council have given a grant of £150 for which we are most grateful.

The theme of the Festival is 'Wickwar Past and Present' and we would warmly invite all to visit the Chapel over that weekend. Also the 'Shoe Box Appeal' is on-going and we hope to see about 200 or so shoe boxes filled and sent to needy people in Romania. This is planned to happen in November.

In closing, may we say that all these fund raising activities are for the benefit of other people through various Charitable Organisations. None of it is to raise money for the Chapel itself. The upkeep of the premises is covered by the Sunday Service offerings and donations from Trust Funds specifically designated for Chapel use.

Kind regards,
John