

## April 2016

### THE PARISH COUNCIL

#### Chairman's Report

##### The Council – Membership

Aynho Parish Council is made up of nine elected councillors and is supported by the Parish Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). In the local elections of May 2015 six residents stood for re-election and were duly elected. The remaining 3 vacancies were filled by co-opting residents who volunteered; namely Julian Maddocks-Born, Chris Reynolds and Jackie Beaumont. I was elected Chair and Cllr Fi Burge Vice Chair by the other members at the AGM in May 2015. In January 2016 Cllr Beaumont resigned from the Council and was replaced by David Dean. Full details of the Council are published on the village website ([www.aynho.org](http://www.aynho.org)).

Although the Parish Council now has a full membership, vacancies do occasionally occur. The main qualification is to live and have an interest in the village. The Parish Council meets on the first Monday of every month, except January & August: meetings last less than two hours! Please contact the clerk (07887 548774 or [Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org](mailto:Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org)) if you are interested in joining.

##### Defibrillator

The defibrillator, bought with funds raised from the Winter Lunch Club, was installed on the front of the Village Hall and has been operational since June 2015. For those who are unsure: "The automated external defibrillator (AED) has been described as the single most important development in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). These devices are now widely available and increasingly used by people, often with little or no training, to re-start the heart of a victim of SCA. Under ideal circumstances, when used very soon after collapse (within two or three minutes), many can survive."

The access code to collect the AED is given out once a call is made to the emergency services. Cllr Anderson would like to arrange VETS – (Volunteer Emergency Telephone Scheme) – which ideally means that in the event of an emergency a volunteer is contacted by the emergency services and asked to collect and deliver the AED to the household with the emergency. The system works by automatically contacting all volunteers on the list simultaneously and the first to answer is asked to assist. If you would like to help or would like more information, please contact Cllr Andy Anderson (0330 113 6008 or [crawfordmedical@lineone.net](mailto:crawfordmedical@lineone.net))

## **Gigaclear**

Gigaclear finished the main installation works for the Ultrafast Fibre Broadband in November 2015. A 'pot' (slightly smaller than a water meter) has been installed at the boundary of all properties within the village - even if you have not opted to use their service. There are some small areas of re-seeding which are still outstanding as part of the snagging list, which should be completed in the next few weeks. In due course a static web page will be added to the village web site setting out broadband options for residents.

To date about 35% of village households have subscribed to Gigaclear's service. The connection speeds, both up and down, are within the top 5% of the UK. The Village Hall has been provided with a free connection until January 2018. Whether you opt to use Gigaclear (a Fibre Optic connection) or remain with broadband provided over the phone line (copper wire eg BT), there is no doubt that as a village we now have fibre optic broadband network which is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and it addresses one of the main concerns raised in the 2014 Village Survey.

## **Maintenance**

The visual appearance of our village is one of the characteristics that residents most appreciate and is one the Parish Council attempts to maintain. There is very limited assistance from NCC – but in the main it is our responsibility. During the past year Cllr Julian Maddocks-Born has joined the PC and taken on responsibility for maintenance and is also undertaking quite a bit of the work himself for which I am most grateful.

I would ask that everyone, where possible, helps with the public areas near to their own homes - eg verges/weeds. The two village clean ups, one in March/April and one in October are part of this effort. My appreciation to those who have helped in the past - but we could always do a better job if there were a few more volunteers! If you are aware of areas which need attention do please either contact the Parish Clerk or go online and google 'Streetdoctor SNC' and follow the links to report the problems directly. You will be surprised how quickly they can respond in some instances!

## **Website & Communications**

During the past twelve months the village's web site ([www.aynho.org](http://www.aynho.org)) has continued to grow as the main focus point of information about the village, its clubs and societies and 'What's On'. It now has over 350 'posts' online and more are added weekly. The web site also provides updates on the workings of the Parish Council and links to the times for St Michael's Church services.

Social media is increasingly being used as part of village communications; the Parish Council regularly 'Tweets' on village related issues and news and there's an increasingly popular Aynho 'village community' group on Facebook. Pinterest is also being used as a gallery of pictures of village life – now and in the past.

Full details including links of Aynho on social media can be found at [www.aynho.org](http://www.aynho.org). If you would like to get involved, such as writing articles for the web site, contributing to Twitter or Pinterest, let us know – everyone is welcome!

I'd like to thank Jill Wightman who continues to manage much of the web content and Kay Anderson who has pushed along the Facebook community page.

Finally, the Parish Clerk maintains a list of emails for e-communications. If you do not get these emails please let Sadie have your email at [Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org](mailto:Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org) - it is not passed onto third parties.

## **Speeding & Highways**

The Village Survey in 2014 highlighted that many residents view traffic volumes and speeds through the village as being an important community concern. There will also probably be increases of traffic during the next few years from HS2 construction and new large-scale housing developments in Banbury and Bicester, these issues are likely to become more acute.

Whilst the Parish Council, NCC and SNC cannot affect any change to the volumes of current traffic, we have the ambition to reduce speeds to safer levels.

The 'chicane' style changes to the B4100 made in 2009 have helped reduce speeds and we're hoping the recent purchase of a mobile Vehicle Speed Activated Sign (VSAS) – installed in the last few months and managed by the Parish Council – will further help reduce speeds. I am grateful for the grant of £1500 from Cllr Ron Sawbridge from his NCC Councillor's fund which assisted the purchase of the speed sign. The intention is to rotate the sign's placement across Croughton Road, Charlton Road and Banbury Road – facing traffic entering the village.

From the first eight weeks of operating the sign, the data collected suggests 10-12,000 vehicles pass through the village on the B4100 every weekday with 85% of traffic travelling below 35mph. There are a few exceptions – mainly between midnight and 06.00am – where average speeds increase and a very few irresponsible drivers enter the village at 60mph+.

Further details of volumes and speeds will be regularly published on the Aynho village web site. Collection of the data will help us lobby NCC for action to help reduce speeds – particularly on the Charlton Road.

## **Parking**

The Village Survey in 2014 highlighted the community concern regarding the lack of parking, especially in the older parts of the village. Comments highlighted various frustrations of residents, especially those relying on street parking who are sometimes unable to park adjacent to their homes. The issue is further complicated in that the Survey also showed residents wanted the PC to take action to reduce parking on verges and in particular the village green.

As in past years the Parish Council has spoken again in recent months with SNC and NCC who can offer no obvious solutions or funds to alleviate this problem. So, being pragmatic, any improvements to parking within the village will need to be identified, funded (if required) and implemented from within the Aynho community. This could also be looking at spaces currently managed by various sub-communities within the village, to explore the opportunities to work together.

To better understand the scope of the problem, the Parish Council has decided to run a simple feedback survey across the affected areas of the village, asking residents how many cars are in the household, how often they have parking problems, (in these instances where do they park) and, hopefully, ask for ideas of how to resolve the issue. In tandem, the Parish Council will canvas local businesses and organisations.

The survey will happen at the end of April/start of May with results and other feedback published in early June. Our hope is that we collectively identify one or two ideas that help alleviate some (or all) of the parking frustrations at no (or low) cost.

If you'd like to get involved with the design and implementation of the survey please contact the Parish Clerk (email [Sadie.patamia@aynho.org](mailto:Sadie.patamia@aynho.org)) by 22-April.

I would like in particular to thank Cllr Leslie Leighton who has led on both the Speed Sign and Parking initiatives for his hard work in the past year.

## Planning

The full list of all planning applications is shown below this report. The Parish Council is consulted by South Northants Council (SNC) on all planning applications and is asked to give a view, based on planning considerations, as to whether an application should be supported or not supported with comments as required. Whilst the views are not binding on SNC Plans, they can have an impact.

## Thanks

Finally I would like to conclude by thanking, firstly, the officials of the Parish Council – namely Sadie Patamia, Clerk, and Roger Wertheimer, RFO, for their hard work during the past year. Lastly I would like to thank my fellow councillors for their contribution and support during the year - which is much appreciated.

## Stephen Brook

### Chairman

01869 811167

## Finance

At 31 March 2015 the Parish Council had £32917 in its bank account (which includes ASRA) and assets to the value of £135,619. The precept for 2016/17 is £21,816 towards a budget of £27,845. The accounts are available for inspection under the usual rules for public funds.

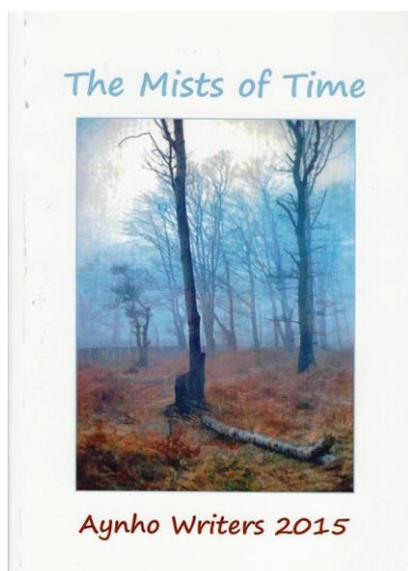
## Planning

This year Aynho Parish Council has considered the following planning applications:

Address	Outline of application	PC Decision	SNC Decision
24 Roundtown	Install two conservation style Velux windows to rear attic roof. Measurement 78 x 118cm.	Support with comments	TBC
The Grammar House, Croughton Road	Listed building consent for internal alterations to bedroom and bathrooms on first and second floors, 3 new conservation rooflights, the repositioning of 1 rooflight, new shower room in roof space, conversion of another store room into a bathroom, remove partitioning wall to enlarge bedroom and repositioning of bathroom on first floor	Support	Approved
College Farm, Banbury Road	Replacement gate on eastern boundary. Re-instate and replace some windows. Internal alterations - remove modern fireplaces and make changes to ground and first floor layout. Tank cellar walls and re-lay existing floor covering in cellar.	Support with comments	Approved
11a The Square	Single storey rear extension	Support	Withdrawn
2 Ivy Cottage Little Lane Aynho	Listed building consent to replace windows 15x from single glazed to flush casement windows and remove 2x painted window finishes and apply recessed block work with matching stone work	Support	Approved
Station Yard, Station Road	Siting of mobile home (retrospective)	Object	Refusal
College Farm, Banbury Road	Removal of fence and gates and erection of new stone wall, piers and gates. Demolition of existing modern garage extension and erection of replacement 3 bay garage extension.	Support with comments	Approved
Wensden Buildings, Charlton Road	Replacement (B1 / B8 use) building with parking and associated works	Object	Approved

Address	Outline of application	PC Decision	SNC Decision
6 Blacksmiths Hill	Replace and widen driveway with paving by a maximum of 1.5 metres	Support	Approved
Aynho Fields, Croughton Road	New dwelling	Object	Withdrawn
8 Bowmens Lea	Single storey rear extension	Support	Approved
Aynhoe Park House	Variation of conditions 2 (drawings) to planning application S/2013/1570/MAF (Three new dwellings, new heritage workshop and associated parking, new gated access and landscape works). To allow a revised house layout with attached garage block and an alteration to access gates	Support	Approved
Aynhoe Park House	Change of use of agricultural land to domestic land, laid to grass as a deer park	Object	Approved

## AYNHO WRITERS



Aynho Writers have continued to meet on the second Saturday morning of the month during the past year. 'The Mists of Time' is our nineteenth annual publication. As 2015 was the seventieth year since the end of the Second World War, the book included a section on members' family memories of the war years. There was much else to enjoy in the book and indeed in all our sessions.

At our annual workshop in October, Mark Davies, an Oxford based historian, author, public speaker and publisher presented a history of non-university Oxford with particular focus on the city's waterways and literary associations.

Several members have either, published books and poems, or followed up their publications by making presentations in the area. Each month we have two topics to choose from but members can read any piece they have written if the topics don't appeal. The resulting variety of responses can be seen on the web page at [www.aynho.org](http://www.aynho.org). The Writers Page is regularly updated. Three

members act as facilitators for four months at a time. We would welcome an infusion of new members and new writing. It is fine to come to a meeting and listen in to see if you'd like to join. This coming year will be a special celebration of our twentieth anniversary.

Our meetings are held in the Village Hall Committee Room from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm every second Saturday of the month.

Contact: Keith McClellan 01869 810346

## AYNHO RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY

We have had another highly successful season, with some excellent presentations done by members of the group. The musical selections have been very varied with both classical and modern styles of music. We continue to have high attendances, however we can cater for new members who will be very welcome to come along and see how we operate. Our invitation to Croughton resulted in one new member, who we were pleased to welcome. The meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

Contact Bob Mann 01869 810264

# AYNHO GARDENING CLUB

In 2015, the Gardening Club continued with its programme of meetings on the second Wednesday of the month from January to November. The meetings are held in the Village Hall and involve a talk on some garden-related subject, or a talk with photographs on a particular garden/gardens of interest. This is followed by refreshments and time for a chat. The talks last year covered a variety of topics from 'How to make Compost' to 'Tulip Time'. We had an enjoyable joint evening with the History Society in May on 'All things to do with Apricots' which was well attended and instructive. The AGM in November was followed by a quiz created by our Programme Organiser, Amanda Limb and proved to be great fun.

During the summer months, generally two trips are organised and last year the Club visited the Lord Leycester Hospital in Warwick along with the Mill Garden on the River Avon. The second trip was to Cliveden in Buckinghamshire in September– both were greatly enjoyed by the Club Members. The evening visit in July was to the garden of Janet Cropley, who has been a great friend of the Gardening Club as well as a regular Speaker; it is a great sadness that she died in early 2016 following a riding accident.

The talks and outings were all well attended and, amazingly, the weather was kind on both trips. The Gardening Club had its usual table at Maytime-in-the-Square selling a large number of plants and some garden tools. This event is one of our main sources of income for the Club and the stall did extremely well on the day.



The Flower and Vegetable show was held towards the end of August and, apart from being an enjoyable village event, proved that many people in the village take a great interest in what they grow in their gardens and that there are a number who have some fine culinary skills. The Gardening Club Committee work very hard to stage this show and it is gratifying when the classes are well subscribed, as they were this year.

The membership of the Club is slightly up on the previous year. New members are always very welcome – members do not need any particular knowledge of gardening techniques or plant names. Information about the Gardening Club can be found in the Newsletter or on the village website or ring Annabel Bellamy (810847) or members on the Committee.

## Email Addresses!

We are aware that many of you have recently changed your email address. The Parish Council will be sending more information out by email – do we have yours? We currently have about 45% of households email addresses. If not please do let Sadie have one by emailing her at [Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org](mailto:Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org) - it will not be passed onto 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.

## **AYNHO SPORTS FIELD AND PAVILION (ASRA) AND THE PAVILION CAFE**

It's been a busy year maintenance-wise at the pavilion and sports field. Funds from the Park Club Draw and the Annual Quiz and Curry night have allowed us to make some improvements to the building in the way of new windows, new heating, a kitchen update and some new flooring. There have also been repairs to the tennis court surround and gates, new signage, new guttering and new shed roofs. Added security measures are also in place after the break in last year.

Brackley Town FC youth teams continue to play throughout the winter months and Evenley Men's Third 11 cricket team on Saturday afternoons during the summer.

We still have a Canasta players group on a Monday afternoon, the Walking for Health groups on a Thursday morning and a regular Mums/Dads and tots informal session on a Friday morning. Anita runs a small café for the walkers from 10 – 1 on a Thursday to which any non-walkers are also welcome. Newcomers are welcome to all these groups. The two bands who have hired the pavilion for practice for many years still continue to play as well. The pavilion is available for hire for private and village functions and is well equipped. A large marquee is also available to hire.

The biodiversity group has been busy on the field this year planting a small orchard adjacent to the driveway, putting up bat and owl boxes and adding insect loving shrubs to the mound. Hopefully the bluebells planted in the stumpery last year will be appearing as you read this! We thank the Biodiversity group for adding all this interest to the field and they have more things planned for the future. It gives me huge pleasure to look out of my window and see the increasing use of the amenity track.

If you are interested in keeping up to date with what is going on at the track and field and pavilion then do join our Aynho Community Group on Facebook where an increasing number of people are posting running, jogging and walking sessions and it's becoming a popular way of informing people about events and opportunities. I know some people are not fond of Facebook but there is no denying it's an effective tool for advising people of everything from items for sale to security alerts and lost pets. We have over 130 members now and its growing daily.

ASRA have a current committee who meet every 3 months or so to manage the facilities and plan events. Our next fundraising event is Maytime in the Square on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May followed by a village Barn Dance in the evening. If you are new to the village come along and meet us or if you are interested in being part of our committee just get in touch or look out in the village newsletter or the Facebook page for the next meeting date and come along.

Finally, my usual plea. Please pick up and dispose of your rubbish at the field and do not take your dogs for a walk on it. Both the field, amenity track and both the play parks are dog free zones for a reason as, although most of us pick up after them, incredibly there are still a few who don't and until they are educated unfortunately we cannot take the risk although it would be lovely to be able to walk our dogs there. If you get this report in time, we have amenity track tidy up afternoon on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April from 2 – 4pm. If you value this facility and would like me to continue to weed-kill it then please come and help sweep it. Bring a broom and a spade if you can.

I will be at the village meeting on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April if anyone wants to talk about ASRA matters.

I can be contacted on 0330 113 6008 (new landline number) or [kaynho@lineone.net](mailto:kaynho@lineone.net) for bookings or anything pavilion or field related.

Kay Anderson, 11 Portway, OX17 3AP

## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, AYNHO

As I look back over the past year, it has had its ups and downs and like the curate's egg been good in parts. So I would like to thank God for the good things and ask him to help in the hard times.

It has been a joy and pleasure to help see Revd. Shemil Mathew grow over this past year and become more confident as a priest serving and leading God's people. Shemil has worked all around the benefice and has tried this past year to establish a midweek Sunday School at Farthinghoe among other benefice duties.

We have held another successful Benefice summer holiday club at All Saints School Croughton, and my grateful thanks to Mrs Helen Goulder for allowing us to use the school. The week ended with a wonderful celebration in church on the Sunday following. My thanks to all the leaders, helpers, cake makers etc. who make it all possible.

As a benefice we have enjoyed much mutual support and encouragement at our monthly services. These take place in rotation around the five villages and are a wonderful opportunity to worship God with others in new and exciting places. Our worship together this year has been enhanced by the voices of the BFC (Benefice Festival Chorus also known unofficially as the Big Friendly Choir). This has included a special Advent service and on Palm Sunday and during Holy Week. My thanks to David Johnston for his help and encouragement with this.

I am very grateful for all who help and support the work of the church, with their time and support. I am very pleased that this past year we have been able to meet all our expenses due to people's generous financial support and had work fund raising. However each year costs go up to run the church and it now costs over £1000 a month to run our churches. To meet the rising costs our churches have held an internal stewardship campaign this past year. I am not sure yet what the results of this are, but I hope the church members will set an example in their financial giving, so that we gain the maximum benefit from the current TAX reclaim allowance available to us. Then we will be in a good position to ask others in our communities to help support in this way, knowing we are not asking them to do anything we are not already doing ourselves.

This Easter we had the joy and pleasure of sharing the experience of Easter with the children from All Saints Croughton School, as they come into church during Holy Week and through a variety of activities got a hands on telling of the Easter Story. If you didn't pop into church when it was open you missed something very exciting.

Also this year we have had some very exciting and stimulating discussions in our two Bible Study series. We have looked at how the Ten Commandments affect our lives and also how our creeds or statements of belief also affect the way we live and respond to life's challenges.

All our churches are keen to grow in number, spirituality and support. This desire has been formulated into short documents called GAP's (Growth Action Plans). We hope that during 2016 we will be able to achieve many of the plans our PCCs have put together.

We have also been busy in maintaining the building for worship and have spent about £150,000 this past year, much of this has been from grants and other funding and my thanks to all who have helped raise the money and oversee the projects. At Hinton we have done a lot of window repairs, at Croughton we have replaced the chancel and nave roofs, at Aynho we are in the middle of some window repairs and at Evenley we are just embarking on installing a new toilet in the tower with many thanks to John for his work on this project.

This year we have supported many charities through our giving, and I am very grateful for all who have particularly helped to support 'Seth's Children's Home' an orphanage in Kenya that I visited with my family last year. This orphanage cares for about 30 children, giving them security, food, clothing and an education. One great initiative for this has been the Friday Soups at Croughton. Thanks to Jane, Richard and all who have helped my making soups. Farthinghoe Church now has

a regular Friday Cuppa and Chat drop in where the coffee, tea and cakes are good and the chat is free.

Around our churches we are lost a few well known and long standing members which have hit our communities hard, but we have also had the pleasure of some new faces coming to join us, often as a result of a move into the area.

For me I am surprised how quickly time has flown as I am reminded that I have now been your rector for nearly 4 years. Although I have no plans to leave at the moment we must acknowledge that Shemil will finish his training next year and then be off to pastures new.

For me 2015 has had some sad times with the death of my father and our dog Gem being put to sleep. But through these I am more convinced than ever that God's love is for all people, those with faith and those with none. For at these critical moments in our lives we find how our faith helps us. I am pleased to be serving this year as an Honorary Chaplin for the USAF base and as the Rural Dean for the Brackley Deanery.

I have been constantly encouraged by those who join Shemil and me each day at Morning Prayer, encouraging us as we pray for the parishes and their people. For the 50 people who shared our Maundy Communion meal, for those who join, play and sing at our Taize worship and many others besides.

I would like to thank all church members who have worked hard this past year in growing their faith, helping in the life of the church, caring for the church building, helping our worship, doing all the quiet jobs in the background and so helped in any way to bring God's Kingdom a step closer. I pray that this coming year we will continue to help, support and encourage one another in our worship, prayer and witness to God's unfailing love in this world.

God Bless you all

Simon

## **AYNHO WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**

Aynho W.I. meets in the Village Hall every third Wednesday of the month with a membership of 29 this year. We have excellent speakers who talk on a diverse number of subjects, both entertaining and educational, with a friendly and sociable atmosphere to encourage new members.

Close ties are kept with surrounding villages, whom we visit at Group Meetings and hold social events together with supporting our own village Maytime in the Square, the Church Fete and the Christmas Party which is always well attended.

Denman College is near Abingdon, which many of our members have attended for courses, run by professional tutors and is open to everyone.

Our President, Barbara Watkins, is very inspirational and committed making belonging to our branch of the W.I. most enjoyable and a pleasure for us all.

Our programme for the year can be found on the Village website.

## **AYNHO BIODIVERSITY GROUP**

This year saw the planting of the Community Orchard on the Aynho Sports Field. A variety of fruit trees have been included in the orchard, including local varieties from Aynho and Deddington. A mixture of apple, pear and plum trees should ensure that there is something for everyone. The Biodiversity Group held a Bat Walk in early September which proved very popular with folk of all ages. We were able to use our bat detector to spot a variety of bats across a number of village locations. Members of the group are continuing to maintain the mounds on the Sports Field and monitor the bat boxes planted around the village. We are pleased to report that the bat box in the Play Area shows clear signs of use.

## **AYNHO SHORT MAT BOWLS**

Aynho Short Mat Bowls Club meets in the village hall every Tuesday afternoon from 2.30 pm. We have 16 members, which is about right for two mats, but are always pleased to see anyone interested in taking part or seeing what goes on. We had a splendid Christmas lunch together and we always stop for tea and coffee during the afternoon, so it isn't all business! We have an annual membership fee of £10 and members pay £1 each afternoon they play to cover the hire of the hall. The club was started in 2001 so this year marks our 15th anniversary.

Doug Ward, Treasurer.

## **AYNHO HEALTH WALKS**

There are three types of health walk on Thursday mornings. All three meet at the pavilion on the sports field at 10.00 am. The Long Walk covers between five and seven miles, takes about two hours and attracts walkers from a wide area as well as from Aynho. We now regularly have sixteen or seventeen walkers on these longer walks. Current walk leaders for these walks are Keith McClellan Ian Wilson Renate Maddox-Born and David Reast. Jenny Powls has also qualified as a walk leader recently. We are also grateful to Graham Archdale for helping back up. There is no charge for the walks.

The medium walks usually have eleven or twelve walkers. These cover about three miles and usually take about an hour and a quarter. There are also weekly track walks for those who, for health reasons, need to be able to rest frequently and to be able to stop without being far from home. Leaders here are Kathy White, Nigel Porter, and Sue and Derek Hales. Walkers can choose whichever walk they wish to take and may change from week to week depending on how they are placed at the time. All three walks have qualified walk leaders and back up leaders and all routes are risk assessed.

We all look forward to arriving back at the pavilion for a cup of tea or coffee, a delicious cake and a good chat. Many of us also have lunch here, ordering our jacket potato before setting off and enjoying it greatly after our exercise. Anita continues to provide all this and create a cheerful, welcoming atmosphere when we get back from our walks.

We celebrated our fourth anniversary in January with a lunch for 40 walkers at the White Horse in Kings Sutton. More details are available on the village website under health walks. There are also regular descriptions of the most recent long walks.

Contact: Keith McClellan 01869 810346

## CANASTA CLUB

The Canasta Club meets at the Pavilion on Monday afternoons at 2.00pm. It is aimed at those who have already played and those that wish to learn. One to one tuition is available for starters, and tactical advice is offered to those wishing to improve their game. Singles and Doubles are played and Tea and Biscuits are provided.

The Club can currently accommodate more players and those interested should either contact the following or turn up at the Pavilion for further information.

Derek Hales ([derek.hales41@gmail.com](mailto:derek.hales41@gmail.com)) or Sue Hales ([sheledams@aol.com](mailto:sheledams@aol.com))

## AYNHO HISTORY SOCIETY

I am delighted to report another varied programme of lectures delivered to the highest standard. We try to link each lecture to current affairs or to the village, if not both. At least one evening is used to present a round-up of the last research into Aynho's past. We guarantee that you will leave our lectures knowing more than when you arrived!

A particular word of thanks is due to those members who continue to pay their annual subscription even when they are unable to attend. Their generosity allows the lectures to be run for the benefit of all. On average a lecture costs £70 to hold so I urge villagers and guests to attend even on a pay as you go basis. Unless numbers increase then the programme will be curtailed; Aynho, you have a choice.

Subjects covered included:

Women in War

Aynho's Apricots - the legend, fact or fiction ?

"Waterloo 200th Anniversary, the crucial defence of Hougoumont"

The History of the Oxford Canal

The Bicycle - its evolution and impact on the World

The Poor Law in C18th England : the crisis in the parishes

Life in Aynho as reported in the newspapers 1800 to 1980's

A History of Oxford University

The 1948 London Olympics, its impact then and now

"Out of Tragedy came forth liberation" evacuations during WW2, military and civilian

The Society continues to provide genealogical information to enquirers from around the world and guided tours to visitors from near and far. We always welcome information with a village connection; please don't think we know it all! And we are always looking for local speakers should you know of anyone with a story to tell. A special thank you to Peter Cole for his unstinting assistance as Secretary and author of the lecture précises posted on the village website.

If you need a little encouragement to get back to history; may I suggest you search for, in my opinion, Aynho's greatest inhabitant, William Peckover.

Rupert Clark – Chairman



View of old Aynho Tea Rooms



View of Roundtown & over Cherwell Valley

## **AYNHO VILLAGE HALL**

We now have a Wi-Fi Ultrafast Broadband connection in the Hall provided by Gigaclear for two years free of charge. It is hoped that clubs and other activities will find this service useful. If anyone would like to run a computer course or a Cyber café that would be very welcome.

The defibrillator is now installed in a box on the front wall of the Hall and a 999 call will provide the code to open the box and give instructions for its use. Much of this facility was paid for by Amanda Limb's Lunch Club.

The Thursday afternoon Post Office in the Hall is now operated by Easington Post Office in Horton View, Banbury. There have been some recent problems with the computer but we hope everyone will give this all the support they can.

After many years of service Val Sutton has retired from the weekly cleaning and this work has now been taken over by Peter Tustain, for which we are most grateful. Ted Sutton continues to be our Health and Safety officer. We welcome Anne Rickard to the committee as representative for the WI.

The bookings have kept up well and Amanda Limb is still doing a good job for us despite having to spend time away and being temporarily unable to run the very popular Thursday Lunch Club.

Twenty new chairs have been purchased to replace the worn ones in the meeting room and Hazel Bradford and Anne Rickard are looking into the possibility of obtaining a grant to help us replace the fifty chairs in the main hall. Once again Sybil Stevens has arranged and paid for our piano to be tuned. We have an on-going problem with a small leak in the roof and arrangements are in hand to fix this and refurbish the front and side exit doors.

Many thanks to all our committee members for helping to run the village hall.

Douglas Ward, Committee Chairman

## **SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

We are living through a period of potential great change in the future shape of local government, so this report is more about the future than the past.

Since 1974, which was the last time local government was reformed; three councils have delivered the different services that comprise local government – Northamptonshire County Council, South Northants District Council and The Parish Council. Changes in the demand for different services and cuts by Government funding have forced Councils to review their organisation and how they can streamline the way they deliver these services. That is why South Northants partnered Cherwell to form a joint management team and to share services that were mutually beneficial – IT, Personnel, Legal, Estate, and Rubbish collection being good examples. It has been evident for some time that many County Councils were struggling with their budgets to deliver services, in particular Social Services. Both Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire County Councils have faced a very difficult time this year in bringing forth a balanced budget, and in Oxfordshire this has resulted in much protest at the cuts they are proposing to balance their books. This has resulted in the Districts across Oxfordshire bringing forth proposals to form 4 unitary authorities to replace the County Council. What is complicating the issue is that both Cherwell and West Oxfordshire have formed partnerships with Councils outside Oxfordshire – Cherwell and SNC and West Oxfordshire with Cotswold District in Gloucestershire. At the moment this is only a concept and no decision has been made but work is now being done to see if such proposals do stand up. Now, as I understand it Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire County Councils are working on proposals for some form of County wide Unitary Authority.

My own take on all this is that I think it inevitable and probably right that the role of the Parish Council should remain but that we should move to some form of Unitary Authority. I think it regrettable that District and County are not working together to come up with the most workable solution. I personally feel that that it is important that it should be based on County boundaries. Firstly because that identifies where we come from. When people ask me where you live most people say Northamptonshire. I would also be very fearful of a unitary authority based on Cherwell and South Northamptonshire. Such an authority would be dominated by the urban areas of Banbury and Bicester and inevitable Banbury in particular would be expanded well into the South Northamptonshire countryside.

For myself I will not be seeking re-election in any future authority so can take a reasonably detached view and will be interested to hear views on an issue in which all of us are directly involved.

Other issues coming through are that at last Brackley is to have a new swimming pool with a new operator taking over the leisure contract from October.

You will have seen the new houses being built on the northern edge of Brackley. Eventually over 2000 houses will be built here. Planning permission has also been granted for over 3000 houses to the south of Towcester. As part of this development a new road will be constructed from the A43 to the A5. This is all part of ensuring that South Northants has a 5 year land supply to deliver the houses that Government consider should be built across our district.

During the next 12 months South Northants will be consulting on a new Local Plan which will mean looking at all the Village envelopes and assessing whether there is a case for some development across the rural areas of the District. If there is to be development in any of our villages I feel it is very important that it is done sensitively and does not undermine the character of our villages and countryside.

John Townsend, Councillor – Little Brook Ward

## **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

I am sorry I am unable to be with you at the Annual Village Meeting but unfortunately I have five APMs on the same evening. Normally at the meeting I would just talk to you generally about the County Council and the budget for 206/17 but before I do this, I am going to clarify the position relating to the reform of local government.

The nation's indebtedness has resulted in a squeeze on County Council Finances over the last few years which has had a huge effect on county councils across the country. The amount that both Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire County Councils have been receiving from the government by way of the Revenue Support Grant has been reducing every year. Both counties have been faced with a situation where income has been decreasing at a time when costs have been rising due to three main factors, the growing elderly population, the increase in the numbers of children in the care of the County Council, and an increasing general population.

There has been a government cap of 2% on the increase that can be made on the council tax so costs have been reduced by linking with other councils to share certain back room services like finance, legal, and human resources. This strategy has been very successful but has its limits and we have now reached this stage. There is an urgent need to reform local government. We just can't afford to continue to have the County Council, the District Councils, and Parish Councils as; apart from being confusing to the public it is extremely uneconomic. The removal of one tier of local government would result in savings by reducing bureaucracy and the costs of democratic decision making, and a single council would be better able to meet the major challenges of a growing and ageing population. One council would be better able to plan for continuing growth in population by combining responsibility for housing, schools, planning, and transport. A single council would reduce the number of CEOs and senior managers who are duplicated across the current arrangements, it would greatly reduce the number of councillors all receiving allowances, and it would also lead to a better utilisation of the building stock.

We need to reform the system before the situation worsens. The government is scheduled to completely remove the present Revenue Support Grant by 2020 which will mean there will be no money for anything other than care for the elderly, disabled, people with learning difficulties, and children in County Council care. These are the demand led services. Local government needs to be reformed in a way which will have a substantial and sustainable impact on costs while maintaining, or preferably improving, the services provided for the electorate.

Residents of both counties will have seen the proposal put forward by the District Councils in Oxfordshire to form four unitary authorities, the most northerly one comprising Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire. I would add here that this proposal was done in secret without reference

to Northamptonshire County Council or Oxfordshire County Council. This would mean that the whole of south Northamptonshire, from Kings Sutton in the south to the border of Northampton Borough, would effectively become part of Oxfordshire. I doubt very much if this would receive much support from the residents of Northamptonshire as it could lead to a massive house building programme which would jeopardise the rural character of this part of Banburyshire. Also, I personally believe that the creation of four unitary authorities will not solve the financial problem as each will require a Chief Executive Officer leading a team of directors and senior management, with considerable duplication of effort and cost across the county. What is needed to solve the present crisis is the formation of unitary authorities large enough to result in a substantial and sustainable reduction in costs.

The seven Northamptonshire MPs have written to the leader of Northamptonshire County Council asking him, and I quote “to start the process of considering options for unitary authorities in our county and a re-organisation of local Government in Northamptonshire. We want local councils that can meet the simultaneous challenges of increased demand for services and reduced funding, and we believe that simplified local government in the form of unitary authorities provides the opportunity to achieve that”. As a result Northamptonshire County Council has commissioned independent research into the options for the reform of local government. In doing this it is very important that the process involves participation by the County Council, the Borough of Northampton, the six District Councils, and all the Parish Councils. The report on this research will be available in the summer and this will then lead to consultation with the residents of Northamptonshire.

Now a few words about the budget for this financial year. The County Council is responsible for the services which are covered by over 70% of the council tax paid by residents. These services include: Adult Social Care with 13,000 people looked after every day plus support for over 6,000 people with learning difficulties; Services for Children and Families with nearly 13,000 children referred each year, over 1,000 children in the care of the County Council plus about 130 unaccompanied asylum seeking children and nearly another 1, 000 children subject to protection plans. These are the two services which cost the most with a combined net budget of £275m. All the other services have a combined net budget cost of £140m and include the Fire and Rescue Service, Highways, Trading Standards, Parks, the Libraries and the Record Office, Waste Management, and the net cost of running the Local Government Shared Services (LGSS). To cover the increased cost of running these services the County Council part of your council tax has increased by 3.95% which includes a special allowance of 2% to be spent specifically to help meet the rising cost of providing care for the elderly.

Finally, I have to report on how I allocated my £7,000 Empowering Councillors’ Allowance in 2015/16. This was as follows: £2,500 towards the cost of a footway at Upper Astrop Road, Kings Sutton; £2,000 towards the cost of a new Children’s Play Park at Farthinghoe; £1,500 towards the cost of a Vehicle Activated Sign at Aynho; £1,000 to cover the distribution cost of ‘Cheney Chatter’ to residents in Middleton Cheney.

If there are any questions please contact me on: [rsawbridge@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:rsawbridge@northamptonshire.gov.uk) or 01869 819669

Ron Sawbridge MBE  
County Councillor for Middleton Cheney Division.



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the apricot village

[www.aynho.org](http://www.aynho.org)