

April 2017

Introduction

We know from previous village surveys that about a third of village residents leave/join the Aynho community every 5 years. If you have come to live in Aynho in the past year you are most welcome. The Parish of Aynho comprises of some 300 households with a population of about 650 of which 550 or so are on the electoral roll. This report is prepared and distributed by the Parish Council and summarises and gives an indication of activities that have taken place over the past 12 months. The reports from the various clubs and societies are printed as submitted.

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). During the past year all 9 members of the Parish Council have continued to serve since May 2016. I was elected Chair and Cllr Fi Burge Vice Chair by the other members at the AGM in May 2016. Full details of the Council membership are published on the village website (www.aynho.org). All the councillors are volunteers and are not paid for their services.

In March 2017 Cllr Maddocks-Born resigned from the Council and we are currently seeking a replacement. 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, Sadie Patamia (07887 548774 or Sadie.Patamia@aynho.org) if you are interested in joining.

Parking

The Village Survey in 2014 highlighted community concern regarding the lack of parking, especially in the older parts of the village. Comments indicated the 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 area.

In summer 2016 the Parish Council conducted 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 asked for ideas of how to resolve the issue.

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. The PC has consulted with various sections of the community in the past few months and we are delighted that the St Michael's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has agreed that from 1 May 2017 residents will be able, subject to a few simple rules, to use their car park adjacent to the Parish Church for overnight parking.

More details will be published on the Aynho website shortly and in forthcoming newsletters. The item will also be discussed at the Annual Village Meeting on 24 April.

Aynho Sports and Recreation Association - ASRA

I would not normally comment on ASRA under the Parish Council section of this report. However, both comments raised in last year's PC Audit, and the impending retirement of Kay Anderson suggests that this is the appropriate place in which to do so. The village is fortunate to own the sports field and pavilion which is a wonderful asset, thus your involvement in its management is both encouraged and sought.

For many years ASRA funds have been held at 'Arm's length' from the PC funds in separate bank accounts, although the PC has had oversight of ASRA's activities. Last year, despite this arrangement operating successfully for several years, the PC were effectively directed by our Auditors either (a) to fully subsume the accounts and thus all decisions on approval of spending would be subject to the full PC rules or (b), ASRA and its facilities should be 'rented' out for a nominal sum to a separate 'management' committee and they would have responsibility for funds. This second option would also mean VAT could not be reclaimed on any purchases.

As you may know, Kay Anderson has decided to stand down from ASRA (see page 6) and at present as there is no formal committee established, willing or able to take on ASRA, the PC has decided the only option is for the PC to subsume fully ASRA's accounts within the PC's. This was completed by 31 March and a separate column will be maintained in the accounts to maintain visibility of ASRA's income and expenditure. However at the time of writing Rachel Moroney and Valerie Taylor are looking to form a new management committee for ASRA – so if you would like to become involved, please make contact with them.

Finally I would like to record formally the PC's appreciation of all that Kay Anderson has done to manage and maintain the facilities over the past sixteen years – it is much appreciated.

Broadband & Gigaclear

As most residents will know, all properties within the village have access to Ultrafast Broadband which is available from Gigaclear with speeds up to 1Gbps. I know from speaking to those who use the service that they would fully recommend it. The service uses Fibre to the Property (FTTP) and does not rely on the use of the copper phone lines which can severely restrict the speed and quality of the service.

Speeding & Highways

We have now had the mobile Vehicle Speed Activated Sign (VSAS) for over 12 months and use it at various points in the village to deter speeding and also for collecting data and vehicle numbers and speeds as vehicle pass the sign.

We have recently asked Highways to install a new post midway down Charlton Road – near the entrance to The Butts Close – so we can collect additional data in order that we can try and persuade NCC Highways to introduce speed calming measures on this road.

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. We have responsibility for the grass areas and NCC Highways for the paths and roads. During the past year Cllr Julian Maddocks-Born continued to be responsibility for maintenance and also undertook quite a bit of the work himself for which I am most grateful. You may have noticed new 'English variety' daffodil bulbs which he planted last Autumn and these have enhanced our village's appearance in the last few weeks.

Whilst most dog owners are conscientious in clearing up after their dogs regrettably there is a small minority who fail to clear up after their dogs have fouled the pavements. Last year the PC purchased some of dog bags and these are available from Kay Anderson to help clear up after your dogs! We would ask that all dog owners act responsibility and remind you that dogs should be kept on a lead on the 'Black Path' which links Butts Close with Portway and passes the Children's playground.

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!

Defibrillator

I would like to thank Amanda Limb and her Winter Lunch Club team for the £200 donation towards the maintenance of the Defibrillator located on the outside of the Village Hall.

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

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.

Finally you can read Cllr Ron Sawbridge's last submission as our County Councillor at the end of this report. I would like to record formally our appreciation for all he has done over his many years as a Councillor, which also includes serving the village on the Parish Council in the past.

Stephen Brook

Chairman

01869 811167

Finance

At 31 March 2017 the Parish Council had £36732 in its bank account and assets to the value of £131844. The precept for 2017/18 is £22252 towards a budget of £23845. The accounts are available for inspection under the usual rules for public funds

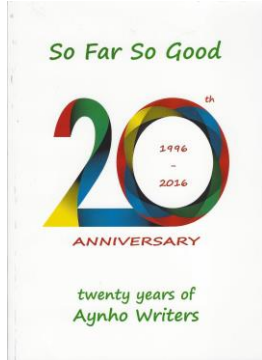
Planning

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

Address	Outline of application	PC Decision	SNC Decision
College Farm Banbury Road	Insertion of new pedestrian gate in existing blocked opening in boundary wall.	Support	TBC
3 The Butts	Front extension with garage conversion, carport .	Support	TBC
16 Portway Gardens	Two storey rear extension	Support	Refusal
10 Roundtown	Replacement timber entrance gates to match existing. Proposed gates inwards open and electronically operated	Support	Approved
The Grammar House, Croughton Road	Glazed screen in entrance area	Support	Approved
32 The Glebe	Conservatory to rear of property	Support with comments	Approved
24 The Glebe Aynho	Extension to dwelling	Support with comments	Approved
Wensden Field House, Charlton Road	Two storey side extension and alteration to the roof to form a new gable end	Support with comments	Approved
Unit 6 Wensden Buildings Charlton Road	Extension to existing building to create new B1/B8 unit and associated parking	Object	Approved
1 Skittle Alley	Wooden garden room/workshop (retrospective)	Support with comments	Approved
21 Blacksmiths Hill	Works to existing flat roof extension to include: Replace two windows, one external door and one internal door. Render external walls. Replace fascia and soffit boards. Replace felt flat roof and provide lead flashings. Replace concrete patio with stone.	Support with comments	Approved
College Farm, Banbury Road	Alterations to existing outbuilding, removal of modern porch and replace with new canopy, alterations to openings (part retrospective)	Support	Approved
2 Charlton Road	Replace windows to front upstairs and downstairs	Object	Refusal
Bortons Farm, 14 Roundtown	Orangery to rear	Support	Approved
The Malt House, 11a The Square	Single storey rear infill extension and incorporation of half a barn.	Support	Approved
11 The Butts	Conversion of garage to form living space. Single storey front and rear extension. Pitched roof over existing garage.	Support	Approved
10 Roundtown	Replacement roof, removal of brick chimney, repairs to walls, removal of garden wall to south east, replacement bi-folding door, new window and alterations to window positioning, new doorway to south east elevation, raise floor levels, remove section of wall, new gateway, new guttering.	Support	Approved
College Farm, Banbury Road	Demolition of existing modern outbuilding. Erection of new pool house to serve existing pool and associated landscaping (resubmission of S/2016/0844/FUL)	Object	Approved
10 Roundtown	Replacement timber windows and front door to the front elevation with heritage glass.	Support	Approved

AYNHO WRITERS

Aynho Writers have continued to meet on the second Saturday morning of the month during the past year. 'So far So Good' is our twentieth annual publication. To celebrate our twentieth Anniversary we included items from our first publication in 1997 by the five original members of the group still with us today. There was much else to enjoy in the book and indeed in all our sessions. We also had a celebration lunch in November, at The White Horse in Kings Sutton.



We were particularly pleased to welcome one new member, and one potential member, both of whose work has brought a breath of fresh air and encouraged us all to be lively in our writing.

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. The Writers Page is regularly updated. Three members act as facilitators for four months at a time. We would still welcome new members and new writing. It is fine to come to a meeting and listen in to see if you'd like to join.

Our meetings are held in the Village Hall Committee Room from 10.00 am to 12.30 pm every second Saturday of the month. Special thanks to Brian and Jayne for continuing to produce such attractive books to publicise our writing.

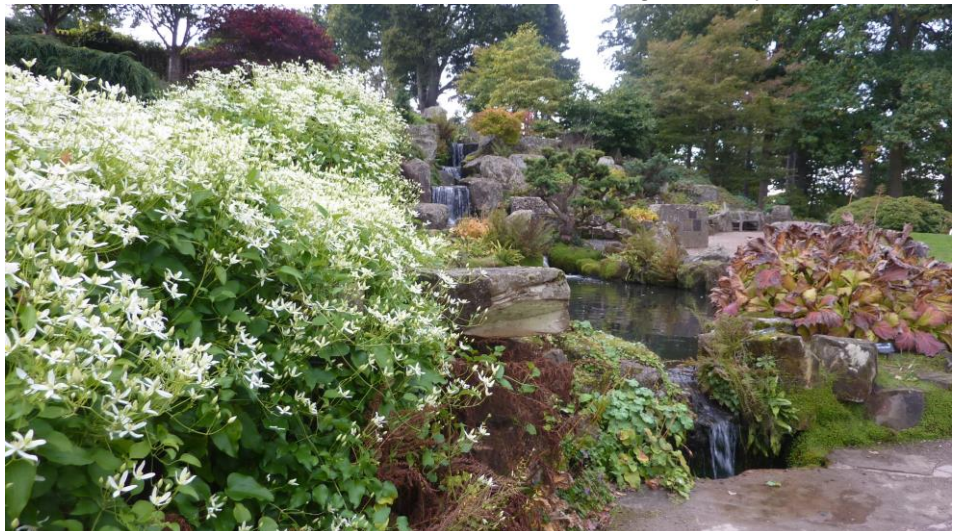
Keith McClellan 01869 810346

AYNHO GARDENING CLUB

In 2016, 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 about 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 'Vegetables All the Year Round' to 'Bagatelle and Giverny'. We also had an enjoyable and fine evening in June where we visited the Friars Well garden in Aynho by kind invitation of Nick and Anne Attenborough. After wandering around and admiring all that had been done in the garden since they moved there, a glass of wine was enjoyed by the members of the Club, in the walled garden.

During the summer months two trips are organised and this year, for its first trip, the Club visited John's Garden and Ashwood Nurseries, near Kingswinford in the West Midlands. The garden was bordered on one side by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. We were taken around the garden by John, who created the garden and was wonderfully knowledgeable and entertaining and afterwards enjoyed visiting the well-stocked Nursery. The second trip was to RHS Wisley in October which was full of autumn colour. Members of the Gardening Club were able to explore everything from the tropical plants in the glasshouses to the more recent addition of the Bowes-Lyon rose garden.

All 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 (kindly supplied by Robin Cox). This event is one of our main sources of income for the Club and the stall did very well on the day. Our thanks go to the Committee members who not only work hard on the stall but also grow a number of the plants.



The Flower and Vegetable show was held earlier than usual in August due to the availability of the main judge. Numbers for the classes were slightly down

on last year, maybe due to it being earlier but Carol McClellan who is the Show Organiser and the Gardening Club Committee worked very hard to stage this show and it ran very smoothly. It is a great village event so in 2017 we would like to encourage as many people to take part as possible.

We are delighted that the membership of the Club is a little up on the previous year. New members are always very welcome to this friendly club – 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 other members on the Committee.

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

It was about sixteen years ago when I dispatched my husband across the field to the old cricket pavilion to find out what was going on. We had only recently moved into the village and there were rumours that maybe houses were going to be built on that lovely field opposite which we had just bought a house. The Sports Field Committee had resigned because of some controversy over the newly built tennis court. What was going on? I babysat my then seven-year-old and awaited said husband's return with news. About two hours later he appeared and said "Well, I appear to be Chairman of a new sports club". This role he promptly handed over to me and I've had it ever since. The sports field and pavilion have played a huge part in our lives from that day. I inherited a large file of colourful sports field history, which makes interesting reading if you ever have a long winter's evening to spare.

But, after sixteen years, I feel it's time to formally step down from the role of pavilion minder. The reins need to be passed on to someone who can breathe some new life into the place. I've run out of steam and have new ventures to move on to now the seven-year-old has left home and the now sixteen-year-old is catching him up.

There have been many highlights and maybe one or two lowlights but, on- the-whole, it's been great. The pavilion has been like my second home. In fact most of my home has ended up in the pavilion. We started off with some much-needed fundraising back in 2001 with Music & Mayhem, when some fifty plus people sat under a sodden wet marquee listening to the band RuffCut and we tore round the field having rides on the back of a trailer and defying every health and safety law. Since then I've been involved in hosting Community Weekends, Farm Walks, Camp Nights, Macmillan coffee mornings and a Macmillan roast lunch, Halloween parties, Christmas parties, Jubilee picnics, Fun Runs, BBQ's, Pre-Edinburgh-Fringe shows, Kids' parties, Treasure Hunts, Morris Dancing, Nature walks, Tree planting, Community theatre rehearsals, Health walks, Football training, Church Fetes, Maintenance weekends, Litter picking, Amenity track construction, Art and Craft courses, Sports days, Jumble sales, Car boot sales and of course the Community Café which I ran for 5 years. Others have hired the place for mindfulness courses, band

practice, health walks, card playing, football presentations, football matches, cricket matches, rounders matches, 18th birthdays, 21st birthdays, Blue Peter Bring & Buy sales, pre-wedding parties, anniversaries, christenings, work reunions, team building, yoga, bat watching, tennis tournaments and coaching, church services, memorial events and many more that I am sure I have forgotten.

The Park Club Draw has been a great community way to fund the maintenance. Since 2001 the pavilion has had a new roof, new windows, two new sheds, new electrics, two new (well new to us) kitchens, new showers and toilets in the changing rooms, a new disabled toilet, new flooring, new décor, new chairs and tables inside, new security, new doors, new outdoor benches (the old ones were stolen), new play equipment (sadly aerial runway now gone), a boules pitch (now a sandpit) and the amenity track, which was a momentous task masterminded by Roger Bradford & Robin Cox and which involved many villagers raking and helping. This has made the pavilion and field so much more accessible and provides a much-needed level surface in the village. It is a genuine joy to see so many people over there when I look out of my window on a sunny weekend afternoon. The biodiversity group have added an orchard and planting; the WI a bench and trees; and one highlight was all the people who sponsored the benches with dedication plaques that are around the track and on the patio and have had so much use. In addition to the Draw, we have had some more recent additional funding by way of Michael Johnson's now legendary quiz nights and we've had many donations in addition to the hire fees paid by the cricket, football, bands and other hirers. The Maytime barn dance and book sales have also provided much-needed funds. I hope you will continue to support the Park Club Draw for the next generation of users.

It is with very mixed feelings that I step down from this role. It won't be easy but it needs to be done and it may take a while for me to adjust to my new role as an observer, so please bear with me. I really hope we can find someone to take it forward come up with some fresh ideas for running the pavilion. Community life is hugely beneficial and important and is what many memories are made of. I will formally step down at the end of May. Any existing bookings or rentals will just carry on as usual until I can hand a key over to whoever wants to take it on. The Parish Council now handle the finances and the bank account will remain in place for the Park Club Draw only. My thanks to all those people who have helped and supported me, too numerous to mention individually except for my good friend Amanda Leigh who has pretty much been there throughout and my lovely hubby Andy for financially supporting my unpaid role for so long!

Kay Anderson.

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, AYNHO

As a community of five villages, this past year we have seen our own share of ups and downs. Several members of our communities have died, some better known than other, but all missed equally by their family and friends. We have also seen communities come together for village fetes and for celebrations of our monarch's birthday.

As a church community we have much to be thankful for too. For those who clean our churches week by week, those who care for the churchyards, those who decorate our churches with flowers, those who serve on parochial Church Council and those who take the office of Church Warden. We can add those who have played the organ, those who have given refreshments, those who have rung the bells, sung in the choirs and benefice festival Chorus (BFC). Those who have distributed news letters, welcomed people at services, this list goes on and on and I thank you all.

As a group of churches we have managed this past year to pay all our bills, the nearly £10,000 to insure our buildings, the £55,000 to pay the cost of ministry, plus heating, lighting and £150,000 of repairs to the windows and roofs. This hasn't been easy, but with generous support and contributions from charities we have paid our way. I am very grateful for all who have supported us, with one off donations, and those who regularly give each week, in a timely and tax efficient manner. Thank you for your support.

We can also give thanks for Shemil and his ministry among us. 2017 sees him come to the end of his training here and he has now started as the Chaplain at Oxford brookes. We must also thank Heather for the work she has done with our young adults Routz, they have met regularly in the Rectory and around

the place and Heather has lead the group and encouraged them as they grow. If they are to continue to grow then she will need some extra help.

Shemil and I have gone into the schools at Croughton and Charlton each week to take a themed assembly and have enjoyed services in church at the start and end of a term. We have also enjoyed inviting the school children at Croughton into church to experience Easter, Pentecost and Harvest, in practical and exciting ways. We also have a team who read the younger children bible stories going under the name of 'Open the Book'. If you would like to join please let me know.

We have also had the fun of the summer holiday club with two special guests from CSI in Melbourne and are very grateful to the head and governors at Croughton school for allowing us to use it in the summer and for all the other thirty strong team of helpers.

Our churches have also seen regular use this year with all but one church having at least three Sunday services each month and then sharing worship with the other churches on the fourth Sunday. Also there is daily prayer in our churches during the week, to which everybody is invited. We have had 20 weddings and blessings and 8 baptisms in our churches, and many funerals as well.

Over 30 people have met regularly for bible studies (Cuppa and Chat) during Lent and autumn and other meet all year round. So as you see, there has been a lot going on and even more to come in 2017. So if you are thinking about what you might do to grow your faith, or what you might do for your church and also for your community. There are many ways to help and much to be done. But thank you one and all for all your heard work in 2016.

May God Bless us all in the coming year.

Simon

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.

Doug Ward, Treasurer.

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) or Sue Hales (sheledams@aol.com)

AYNHO BIODIVERSITY GROUP

The Aynho Biodiversity Group is an informal group, meeting occasionally throughout the year to discuss aspects of biodiversity and conservation issues within the village. Recent years has seen the erecting of bat boxes, planting a community orchard on the Sports Field and planting English daffodil bulbs around the village. Surveys have been conducted in the Church Yard, Aynhoe Park and Sports Field.

AYNHO WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Aynho WI holds monthly meetings in the village on the third Wednesday of the month when our speakers cover a broad range of subjects. These have included talks on bee keeping, tea, historical lime plastering, and the work of pets for therapy. We also like to learn about and support local charities and welcomed members from the Let's Play Project.

We joined in with nationwide discussions on 'Appropriate care in hospitals for people with Dementia' and 'Avoid food waste, address poverty'.



On the lighter side we hosted a group meeting on 'Wicked Women' and attended a similar event in Brackley 'On being Queen Victoria'. Outside visits have been arranged to the theatre in Milton Keynes and for lunch. Our walks have continued weather permitting. There was a very enjoyable garden meeting at the home of Mrs Jan Dogherty where we all relaxed in the evening sunshine.



One member Mrs Margaret Taylor celebrated her 100th birthday and was presented with an album of photographs recording her attendance at many WI activities (beautifully assembled by one member – Mrs Jill Wightman). Sadly Margaret has since passed away as has another member Mrs Jean Townsend reducing our numbers to 29.

Mrs Anne Woodley was awarded the bursary to attend Denman College where she learned how to create stained glass. Aynho WI is a friendly group of ladies to which any new member would be welcome to join us.

Please visit the WI section on the village website for more information and see the programme for 2017.

Mrs Barbara Watkins (Chairman)

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 and David Reast while Graham Archdale and Jim Tipping back up. Unfortunately Renate Maddocks-Born is leaving the village and Ian Wilson is only now recovering from a long standing health problem so we could do with some more leaders. There is no charge for the walks.

The medium walks usually have eleven or twelve walkers. These cover about three miles and take between one and one and a half hours depending on the ability of the participants. These walks are led by Kathy White and Nigel Porter.

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 Geoff Whitmee, Peter Trunk, Sue and Derek Hales and Jenny Powls. 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.

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.

We celebrated our fifth anniversary in January with a lunch for 40 walkers at the Cartwright Hotel. More details are available on the village website under health walks. There are also regular descriptions of the most recent walks.

All three walks have qualified walk leaders and back up leaders and all routes are risk assessed. These walks are part of the Walking for Health scheme and details of walks in the scheme throughout the country are available on their website. There is no charge for the walks.

Contact: Keith McClellan 01869 810346, Kathy White 810418

AYNHO VILLAGE HALL

In September, sadly, we lost the services of our Treasurer, Hazel Bradford, who had to resign for health reasons. Her good work with the grant for new chairs has enabled us to replace the 50 in the main hall with similar chairs to those we purchased for the Committee Room. Thanks are also due to Kathy White who has stepped in to run the accounts while we seek a new Treasurer. We now have an offer for this position.

The floor in the main hall is to be sanded and re-sealed in July this year and we have had electrical work carried out to meet the latest safety standards. The Winter Lunch Club has been very popular thanks to Amanda Limb and Amanda Leigh. The only fly in the ointment is our on-going problem with the louvered cupola on the roof, which occasionally lets water in. The roofing contractor recommends its removal but planning may not permit that and, in any case, it is an attractive architectural feature.

The Parish Council would like us to offer our parking to people who have to park on the village roads. We would like to be helpful but the arrangements for this are likely to be very complicated. We have scheduled bookings which would exclude Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings but the real problem would be with our one-off events and parties. Our hire charges for these range from £60 to £100 and form an important part of our income. We could not expect to make these charges without parking being available. Suggestions for a solution would be welcome.

I thank all the Committee members for their help and support throughout the year.

Douglas Ward.

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 latest 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:

- The Mary Rose - a window into Tudor life at sea
- Recusant papists of the Aynho district: The secret survival of clandestine Catholics in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries
- Beer, sausages and marmalade, a history of Oxford foods in the 19th century
- A guided tour of Aynhoe Park
- The hunt for the North West Passage
- Local archaeology - Hanwell Castle and its "garden of delights"
- Brackley, its history - Iron Age to the Wars of the Roses
- A delve into the Aynho and Cartwright Archives
- Stowe House , a history of opulence and debt

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 why not come to the October meeting, it will be the 100th so a special evening is planned.

Rupert Clark
Chairman

SOUTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

In a time of uncertainty it is difficult to predict the future for Local Government. The only certainty is that change for the way local government is delivered across Northamptonshire is almost inevitable. With austerity the watchword of national government local government funding is limited and it would seem to me that it is inevitable that in one way or another there will be some form of unitary government with an enhanced role for the Parish Councils. Across our boundary in Oxfordshire the County Council have launched their idea for a unitary authority. Most of the District Councils have challenged this proposal. Depending on the outcome in Oxfordshire I predict that Northamptonshire County Council will launch a similar appeal, and again this will be challenged by the Districts. Why should this matter to the residents of Aynho? My own view is that I quite understand the logic of one authority. I only hope that we remain as part of Northamptonshire and don't get consumed into some new authority based on Banbury. Not only will we lose our historic County identity which we have had for the last 1000 years, but I would fear the pressure for the spread of Banbury would inevitably mean a loss to our rural surroundings.

Our County Councillor Ron Sawbridge steps down in May after many years as our County Council representative. Ron and I have worked together on many issues over the years and we all should be grateful for the work he has done, not only as our County Councillor but before that as Chairman of the

Parish Council. You don't get much thanks when you are involved in Local Government, but Ron certainly deserves a big vote of thanks from the residents of Aynho

John Townsend
South Northants Councillor
Little Brook Ward

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The Budget for the financial year 2017/18 was agreed at the County Council Meeting on the 23rd February. Preparation of the Budget has not been easy, with continuing financial pressures reflecting the reduction in the Revenue Support Grant from the government and the rising costs being created mainly by the demand led services: Care for the Elderly and Disabled, and Services for Children and Families. The County Council part of the tax paid by residents has been increased by 5% with over half of this being ring-fenced to fund additional social care costs. The total net budget for the year is £416.8m. This includes £153m for Adult Social Care and £134m for Children, Families, and Education.

It is my continuing firm belief that the financial pressures will not be solved until a single unitary authority is formed. I first raised the need to do this in 2006 and at last, action is being planned to bring it about. To avoid significant costs in doing it, the experience of other authorities is being sought, particularly from our neighbouring counties of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire which have already had studies of the options carried out. The results of these are now out for public consultation. The creation of a Unitary Authority in each of these counties is expected to save at least £100m over the next five years. A proposal to form a unitary council will have to be submitted to the government for approval after public consultation. The government would like the proposal to be supported by the Borough of Northampton, the six District Councils, and the Parish Councils. I don't really think there is much chance of reaching a complete consensus on this in Northamptonshire.

The only other item I'm going to mention, just in case you have heard about it, is the new 'Crystal Palace' which has been built just behind County Hall in Northampton. This opened in March and was built primarily to enable all the County Council staff to be located in one modern energy efficient office block.

This will be my last report to the parishes as I am not standing for re-election on May 4th this year. I was first elected for the Brackley West Division in 2001 and then re-elected for the enlarged Middleton Cheney Division after the boundary changes in 2013. During the sixteen years I have been particularly interested in services for children and education and have been chairman of numerous committees and, in 2011/12, I had the honour of being elected Chairman of the County Council. I have particularly enjoyed my time as a County Councillor and I thank you and all residents for supporting me over the last sixteen years.

Ron Sawbridge MBE



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