

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT 7.30 PM ON THURSDAY 28 APRIL 2022
HELD AT ROWINGTON VILLAGE HALL**

Present

Councillor D Weir Chairman (in the Chair)
Councillor J Coles
Councillor A Marsden
Councillor A Pitt
Councillor B Sandford
Parish Clerk – Nicola Overall

District Councillors – Councillor R Hales & G Illingworth
County Councillor – Councillor J Cooke
3 members of the public

The Chairman, Councillor D Weir welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked those present for taking the time to attend the meeting.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

2. To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29 April 2021

It was proposed by Councillor D Weir and seconded by Councillor J Coles that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 29 April 2021 having been previously circulated, were signed as a true record.

3. Councillor J Cooke - Warwickshire County Council

Coronavirus dominated activities & Services run by WCC in the earlier part of 2021. I have trawled through my reports during the year and made a selection that gives a flavour of WCC's work.

MARCH 2021

Fire and Rescue Service recognised by Fire Inspectorate for Covid community work

Warwickshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) was recognised for its response to the Covid-19 pandemic by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). HMICFRS said they "were impressed" with how WFRS continued with responding to emergency incidents, whilst increasing the support available to help those most vulnerable in the community during the pandemic.

APRIL Families urged to test twice weekly as Covid 19 cases rise in North Warwickshire

Public Health officers urged local communities to get regularly tested and help to avoid transmission by identifying cases with no symptoms. As well as testing, Warwickshire's Director of Public Health Dr Shade Agboola urged local communities to continue to be vigilant and follow government guidance, particularly around social distancing.

Fully trained and qualified counsellors and emotional wellbeing practitioners are available from midday to 10pm, and from 6pm to 10pm at weekends, 365 days a year to provide a much needed out-of-hours service for emotional support in an accessible way. Sessions can be booked in advance, or they can drop in for one-to-one instant text-based chats.

MAY Second round of funding through £1.5million business support grant scheme

WCC invited local small businesses in the retail, hospitality, tourism & leisure sectors and their supply chains to apply for a range of grants in the 2nd round of its Adapt and Diversify Grants.

The scheme was launched to support those businesses most affected by the Covid-19 crisis, and it complemented the Government grants available through the District and Borough Councils.

JUNE Have your say on Transport and Highways Services in Warwickshire

Feedback was sought on a range of issues from the condition of roads and footpaths to the quality of cycling facilities across the County. A questionnaire was sent to a random sample of 3000 Warwickshire residents. The answers would be compared with the views of other members of the public across England and Scotland, as part of the National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction survey.

JULY Residents have chance to share thoughts about parking outside schools.

Inconsiderate, unsafe and illegal parking around schools is an ongoing concern for Head teachers, parents/carers and residents and puts the safety of children, and others, at risk. Partners and organisations are working together to review parking issues outside schools to greater understand and address the problems schools, parents and the wider community experience.

Partners were invited to participate as a parent, carer, school or local resident in a school parking survey. Feedback would help focus efforts, and shape future initiatives to address unsafe and inconsiderate school parking.

<https://forms.office.com/r/jeWYQCC50S>

County council supports businesses with £140 million injection to boost local economy

Warwickshire County Council launched a significant new fund called The Warwickshire Recovery and Investment Fund (WRIF) specifically designed to address the gap that has been identified in the market for access to finance. The aim is to distribute £140m over the next five years, offering loans and other financial investments to existing and new businesses to help their long-term recovery and growth.

AUGUST WCC success in keeping young people in education, employment or training

A recent publication from the Department for Education has shown that, once again, Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is one of the most successful local authorities in the country for ensuring 16 and 17 year old residents are either in education, employment or training.

This year, Warwickshire has 2% of 16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training and 1.9% whose activities were not known. This gives a combined score of 3.8% which compares to the West Midlands average of 5.7% and the England average of 5.5%.

SEPTEMBER Warm hearted Warwickshire residents show support for Afghan families

Warwickshire welcomed a 100 people into the county as part of a Home Office plan. For some it will be a short stay as they make plans to move to be close to friends and family elsewhere in the UK. Others will be with us for longer.

Warwickshire County Council is working with partners in health and the districts and boroughs to ensure the new arrivals remain safe and well. Residents of Warwickshire have been quick to show their compassion and offer support.

OCTOBER Warwickshire youth asked to help make Warwickshire the best it can be

WCC launched a survey specifically for young people to capture their feedback which will feed into the development of a new Council Plan to deliver services as effectively as possible over the next five years. Results of the survey can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/councilplanyp.

As the future of our county, the council is committed to hearing what young people have to say, what matters to them and what they need. Their contributions will be essential to shape the Council Plan and help make Warwickshire the best it can be.

NOVEMBER New look Local SEND Offer set to make a difference in Warwickshire

The Local Offer is a one stop shop for parents and carers and families of children with SEND up to the age of 25 to help them to access clear and accessible information on education, health and social care, training and employment, leisure and support in preparing for adulthood. It aims to provide information and support from early help through to more complex needs.

New site is at - <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/send> feedback to fis@warwickshire.gov.uk

DECEMBER 40,000 Illegal Cigarettes Seized

Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards seized almost 2000 packets of cigarettes and 186 packets of hand rolling tobacco, hidden in shops in Rugby and Nuneaton.

Officers seized illegal cigarettes and tobacco, both counterfeit and non-duty paid, with a combined illegal value of £12,765 (and a value if genuine of approximately £30,000).

You can report the sale of illegal tobacco to Warwickshire Trading Standards via the Central England Trading Standards Authorities anonymous automated hotline: 0300 303 2636 or online: <https://centsa.org.uk/anonymous-hotline/>

JANUARY 2022 Warwickshire residents asked to share views on bus services

Warwickshire residents are being asked by the County Council to share their views on the improvements that need to be made to local bus services in Warwickshire.

More than 1,600 people took part in a consultation last summer to help shape the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which was published in November 2021.

The BSIP set out desired improvements to the bus network in response to the National Bus Strategy which, subject to funding, will encourage more of us to use buses.

This new public [consultation](#) means views are needed again to shape and finalise the next stage of an Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and the first Warwickshire EP Scheme, which must be formally agreed with bus operators by 1 April 2022. The consultation survey is open until 1 February 2022.

FEBRUARY Children's Services have made great improvements according to Ofsted inspection

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has been judged as good in all areas for its children's services according to a recent Ofsted inspection.

The latest inspection, published in a report on 1 February 2022, by Ofsted found that children and families in Warwickshire benefit from consistently good quality services at an early stage, making a real difference to their lives. Ofsted found that WCC social workers listen carefully to children and make sure that children's views inform decision-making. Social workers were found to be building stronger, more trusting relationships with families, giving parents confidence to develop their parenting skills. To see full report go to <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50176757>

Get set for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games in Warwickshire

Warwickshire will be hosting 3 events during the Games period with the Bowl and para-bowls taking place at Leamington's Victoria Park and the cycling road race winding through the historic streets of Warwick.

Information will continue to be added to the website and Warwickshire County Council along with partners in Warwick District Council, will also be holding community engagement sessions, where more details will be shared, plus there will be an opportunity to ask questions about the temporary changes taking place at each location.

Find out how you can Get Set for the Games here: <https://www.birmingham2022.com/getset/>

4. District Councillors G Illingworth & R Hales

Events in the last year have obviously been greatly influenced by Covid but we have taken steps to closer working with Stratford District and your District Councillors have worked with your Parish Council on a number of matters.

Covid has affected the District Council in various ways. For most of the year the majority of office-based officers had to work from home with all the complications of remote working. Outside work by officers and contractors continued and operations such as rubbish and recycling continued as normal. Initially all councillors worked remotely as well and all meetings from Council down were held over Teams links. Interestingly the live coverage on You-Tube was much larger than that usually obtained in a real meeting. In the Autumn the Government required decision making meetings to resume for real. This caused some problems as the Town Hall in Leamington Spa was incapable of holding the entire Council in Covid-safe conditions and alternative sites have had to be used. Smaller meetings such as Planning have been able to continue more normally, but only now we are now returning to the usual arrangements generally.

Of course similar rules applied for your Parish Council and the District councillors were very easily able to join in your distant Zoom meetings, saving much travelling, but we are now back with you.

The other major aspect of Covid was support to the community.

Much of this involved the rapid distribution of various grants from the Government to businesses and organisations affected by the lockdowns. In total Warwick District Council issued about £45 Million of which a proportion came to Rowington. This came to the two Village Halls and various pubs as well as other businesses. The officers at the Council was congratulated on their efficiency in dealing with these distributions. Councillor Richard Hales was the finance portfolio holder dealing with this. During the year we have worked very closely with Stratford District in order to save your money. Not only has there been co-operation between departments but in a number of cases senior officers have shared responsibility between the two councils reducing the numbers involved. Quite apart from the advantages from such co-operation Councillors have been investigating the actual merger into one single District Council for South Warwickshire. In December separate meetings of the two Councils agreed to such a merger but it is now been decided that a full merger is not currently possible.

Part of the common work, which will continue, is a Local Plan for South Warwickshire. The search for land has already started and details of land submitted has already been circulated for consideration. Councillor John Cooke is leading this project as part of his portfolio.

Councillor George Illingworth has led on certain planning matters in the Parish.

Your three District Councillors have played a full part in supporting Rowington by attending your Parish Meetings and following up with relevant actions wherever possible.

5. Chairmans' Report

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting and thank you all for taking the time to attend.

The past year has been difficult with zoom meetings continuing to be held until July when we could meet face to face again. Thanks to our clerk we were able to operate successfully throughout the zoom period with members of the public also continuing to attend meetings via zoom. We have seen a number of changes to the Parish Council with the resignation of Maurice Daw last September, Christine Doolan and more recently, Ian Henderson. I would like to thank them all for their contributions during the course of their involvement, in particular Ian Henderson who stood as Chairman from 2017 until February 2022.

Attending tonight are our local County Councillor John Cooke and our local District Councillors George Illingworth and Richard Hales, who all provide invaluable support and advice.

We currently have a number of vacancies and if anyone is interested in being co-opted onto the Council, please get in touch with us or our Clerk Nicola. It is a great way to find out more about the area and to make a contribution to your community.

Council meetings are normally held every month except January and August and meetings are open to members of the public. The schedule of meetings and the agenda is published on the website and local noticeboards so if you have something to say or are just curious to see what we do, please come along.

Planning

The Parish Council continues to consider planning applications within the parish. Consideration of planning applications is one of the most important issues dealt with by the Parish Council and can often produce lengthy debates on the merits of the various submissions. There is occasional disappointment with the Planning Authority when seemingly relevant comments and objections are submitted by the Parish Council but appear to be disregarded when a planning application is determined.

Playing Field

The playing field to the rear of St Laurence Close continues to be inspected on a weekly basis. A laypersons inspection is undertaken by councillors on a rota and a professional inspection is conducted annually. Planned maintenance is regularly undertaken, and remedial work as required.

The equipment is looking very tired and dated and the Parish Council is at present considering purchase of new play equipment which was the subject of a recent public consultation.

It is proposed that the play equipment will be funded from CIL funding which the Parish Council has received due to the development at Kingswood Green.

Local Infrastructure

The Parish Council often acts as a focal point for the reporting of local issues which are then re-directed to the appropriate department at the District or County Council. Problems constantly arise in relation to potholes, damaged verges, blocked gully's and damaged signage. If you have any issues that should be reported, contact the County Councils Highways Department or our Clerk Nicola or one of your parish councillors.

I would like to highlight a few matters over the past year which the Parish Council has dealt with:

Canal Bridge 41

The condition of canal bridge 41 at Lawsonford was of particular concern and it appeared that no work had been undertaken to strengthen the bridge for some considerable time. The problems with the bridge have been pursued by the Parish Council for 3 years with Severn Trent, the County Council's Highways Department, the District Council and the Canal and River Trust, who was responsible for the bridge appeared to be an issue. Recently the County Council arranged for remedial work to be undertaken. This work necessitated a road closure and temporary weight limit on approaches to the bridge which we are advised will remain to accommodate further discussions between the County Council and the Canal and River Trust on their interpretation of the bridge's condition.

The County Council envisage that at some point in 2022, before the end of the eighteen month temporary weight limit duration, the notice will be lifted and the route returned to its former status allowing heavy goods vehicles to cross it.

I would like to thank Councillor Jane Coles who has been monitoring the condition of the bridge over the past 3 years and progressing this. The bridge is an important asset and a listed monument.

Speeding Traffic – Old Warwick Road

Following complaints by local residents about speeding traffic negotiating the bends by Rowington Church, contact was made with our local MP Jeremy Wright who met on site with Cllr Jane Coles and our Clerk. He agreed to raise matters with the County Council. The Police and Crime Commissioner attended our December Meeting.

The matter has now progressed with an in depth report from the County Council with proposals for improved signage which it is hoped will assist in reducing speeds and greater awareness of hazards by motorists. These proposals are subject to the Parish Council's agreement and will be considered at our next meeting.

Local Facilities

The Parish Council continues to support our two local churches – St Luke's in Lawsonford and St Laurence in Rowington. We also provide financial support to the two village halls and again Ward Councillors are thanked for their assistance and guidance with regard to available sources of grant funding for village halls during lockdown.

Parish Website

The Parish Council website provides contact details for councillors and details for local interest groups, societies and organisations who wish to use this facility. Those groups represented here tonight, please visit the website to ensure your contact details are up to date and please notify our Clerk of any amendments.

The Parish Council has a statutory obligation to make certain information available to the general public and all of these documents can be found on the Parish Council website. It is a very useful communication tool, especially for a parish as widespread as Rowington.

Miscellaneous

The Parish Council is to undertake a further Housing Needs Survey during May and survey forms will be distributed shortly.

Jubilee Celebrations

Three benches are to be purchased to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and these will be sited within the parish.

The Parish Council has established a committee to arrange for a celebration on Sunday 5th June 2022 to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee to which all parishioners will be invited to attend. We are working with the local community and each organisation has been invited to nominate 2 representatives to be co-opted onto the Committee. The celebrations will be funded by the Parish Council and anyone able to volunteer assistance on the day will be made most welcome.

Before I finish, I would like to thank our Clerk Nicola, for keeping us on the straight and narrow and providing advice and assistance to the Parish Council, and also to members for their continued support.

6. Reports from Organisations

Cricket Club – Brian Taylor

Our season has just started and because of the dry weather the ground looks a picture.

We spent a considerable amount of money on the ground and equipment in 2021, much of it attempting to improve safety to our neighbours and to upgrade our equipment. Despite this expenditure we remain solvent through careful stewardship and financial help from the Friends of Rowington Cricket Club and our sponsors. To replenish the coffers we will be holding a Folk Evening on 24/9/22 and an 80's night on 28/1/23 in Rowington Village Hall. Locals will have also seen that we have new sponsors.

Many of our players are now in their 50's so as ever we could do with some young blood. Whilst the benefits will be a few years off, we are running a program of "All Stars" and "Dynamo" cricket coaching sponsored through the ECB, covering primary school age children. We currently have over 30 children registered and there is room for more. In addition, children from 13 onwards and adults are welcome to join us for nets on Thursday evenings and play league cricket on Saturdays. Let us know of anyone that comes to mind.

As part of the local community, we have offered the ground to the Rowington Parish Council to run a fun celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sunday 5th June from 2pm to 6pm.

Old Folks Party Fund - Anne Pitt

We enjoyed seeing each other at our last Committee meeting, Wednesday 26th January 2022, as we all hoped this coming year would see the return of us meeting and enjoying the company of our friends and neighbours, and with this in mind, we have a diary of planned events Our fund-raising tea and cake event at Wren Hall will take place on Sunday 4th September

Allsorts Sale Saturday 1st October

Christmas Luncheon Wednesday 7th December

During the last few weeks our dear friend Mrs Freda O'Toole has had to resign from her role as our Committee Chairman due to family commitments, we wish her continued good health and happiness, she will be greatly missed and fondly remembered. We have welcomed the appointment of Mrs Heather Cole, as our new Chairman, and look forward to her leading our committee.

Rowington Neighbourhood Watch - Anne Pitt, Rowington Co-ordinator

The Safer Neighbourhood Team is made up of officers and PCSOs based in our area, at present these are; Sergeant Danielle Bristow, Constable Joanne Whittaker, PCSOs Marie Gisbourne-Hanks & Paul Coleman.

This year marks our 40 year celebration, which aims to make the area we live in a Safer & Stronger place to be Sharing local information and events can bring about many benefits, not just about crime awareness, its about supporting communities and tackling issues within them. By increasing neighbourliness and community wellbeing, supporting those both vulnerable and lonely, as assistance can be given to those who need it.

Together we can improve the quality of life and the local environment, reduce fear of crime, build community spirit and cohesion, this increases the voice of the community with councils, the police and other organisations.

Jane Ryland – Stephen Williams

Report on the Jane Ryland Charity 2021-22

During the past 12 months the Charity has provided financial assistance to many individuals and bodies, including:-

1. The Old Folks Party Fund for the Christmas lunch
2. Rowington Cricket Club for safety netting
3. Lapworth Surgery for alterations to the premises to comply with Covid requirements
4. Travelling expenses to Covid vaccination centres
5. Chiropody for a number of elderly residents
6. Christmas cheques and other payments to assist with heating and general living expenses.

The Charity has substantial funds available to assist residents of Rowington Parish with recreation and leisure-time activities, educational costs, health support, and general expenses. Further information can be found on Parish notice boards.

Rowington Village Hall

The first few months after last year's annual meeting saw the hall closed by Covid restrictions. These restrictions had a substantial impact on the income from hall lettings, but I am pleased to say that bookings have shown strong growth since we were able to reopen the hall. The hall benefited from Covid grants obtained by our treasurer, Ian Wilson, from the District Council; these grants are very much appreciated in the light of substantial increases in the cost of running and maintaining the hall.

The hall now benefits from an audio/visual system, coupled with a hearing loop. The system was installed without cost to the hall, by virtue of funding provided through the Parish Council out of the community infrastructure levy generated by recent new housing projects in the parish. This has been used by several hirers and will be an important feature for the future. Other improvements included the redecoration of the main rooms in the hall, a new bench by the front doors and a new signboard.

Social events were constrained by Covid restrictions, but the social committee were able to put on a very successful Christmas ball and the annual All Sorts sale. Other planned events had to be cancelled or deferred.

I am grateful for the support of the members of the management committee throughout what has been a long and difficult period in the history of the hall.

Allotment Association – John Greenaway

The allotment holders, along with everyone else I am sure, were glad to return to something resembling normality following the last 2 years of the Corona virus in all its forms.

We have been very busy looking after the allotment grounds and as well as our usual clear up day in September we ordered a skip to enable us to remove much of the rubbish that has built up over the years. This was a relatively large expense for us and so a collection was taken among the members to cover the cost. We also had to spend £70 in mower repairs. This was also a rent review year which resulted in a £44 increase in our ground rent. Reluctantly it was agreed that to cover this plus all our other yearly expenses we would need to put up our plot charges. A full plot now costs £35 and a half plot £25 per annum. In future given we have a full membership we will be left with £72 when our rent is paid. It is unlikely that this amount will be enough to cover the rest of our yearly expenses and so it is possible a further amount may have to be raised.

We were all devastated to hear of the death of our treasurer David Ashcroft. David had been ill for some time and had not been able to spend much time on the allotments he was looking after, in spite of this we were shocked to hear that he had passed away. David was liked and admired by us all, he was extremely knowledgeable in a wide range of subjects not least his love of horticulture. He was always ready to help out or to pass on his expertise and his dry wit and keen sense of humour added to his popularity. We will all miss David greatly and I will no longer benefit from his good sense and help with allotment issues.

Another of our members has been unwell this year. Steve Thorne has decided that for the time being he can't manage all his allotment. We will find someone who will take on half of it so as to allow him to continue to be a member and with our help he will still have a garden to work.

We have two new members who joined us this year Keith Watson has half plot 2 and Louisa Bowe has now taken the other half. We are also in the process of taking on a third new member Pippi Long she will be taking over half plot 7.

We have only just heard that Freda O'Toole is leaving Rowington and moving to Southampton to be near her son and grandchildren. I'm sure we all wish her the very best for her new adventure. She will however be sorely missed by all her friends

in Rowington where she has lived for all of her life. On a practical note we will now need to find someone to take over her plot (and to do the teas on clear up days.) I doubt this will be a problem as there are several local people interested in having an allotment.

As ever our members did a fine job putting the allotments to bed in the autumn.

All the usual jobs such as hedge cutting and ditch clearing were done to a great standard and as already mentioned we hired a skip to further tidy up the grounds. In addition to this regular maintenance work Richard and Harold have dug a drainage trench across the allotment ground to run excess water into the roadside ditch. Richard has at his own expense put in the drainage pipes to complete this extremely important project. Certain areas of the allotment ground have always retained water from the higher ground and so this work was greatly needed. I am glad to report that the new drainage is making a considerable difference to these plots. Without the cooperation and help of our willing plot holders none of this could be achieved so a very big thank you to them from me particularly as in recent months my contribution has been only to manage to paint the shed! We continue to cut all the communal allotment grass each week and have a rota posted in the shed. We have also now, thanks to Mike Wades generosity, been gifted another petrol mower. It does not have a drive mechanism but does have a roller so may be useful on the narrow paths between allotments.

We only have a 12 month lease agreement with the Parish Council, and so can be given, via the Charity, a year's notice at any time. This is something that we have asked to be re-negotiated as 12 months is far too short a period for an allotment agreement. I will again be taking this up with the P.C. and if necessary, with the Almshouse Charity.

We believe that the allotment grounds are an extremely important part of our village life and are grateful for the continuing support of the community and the Parish Council in ensuring their growth and continuation

Many thanks to all our members who have gone out of their way to carry out necessary jobs throughout the year, special thanks to Richard and Harold for their drainage work, to Gary for his help with David's plot to Freda who continues to maintain our wild flower garden and to Sue for her general assistance and particularly for her constant delivery of horse manure. Thanks also to Freda and Sue for the tea and sausage rolls that they supplied on the clear up days.

We have mainly because of Covid been unable to hold our usual meetings but I propose to have at least one later this year where we will discuss matters of concern and elect a new treasurer.

As already stated, we are very keen to ensure that the allotments, that we have all worked so hard to improve over the last 13 years, continue to be well maintained and that they remain an important asset for Rowington and the surrounding area.

For any further information or to be added to the waiting list please contact either John or Sue on 01564 784352.

The Churches of St. Luke & St. Laurence

2021 was a year of many changes for St. Laurence and St. Luke's, including the retirement of Rev Keith Mobberley as the Rector for the Ferncumbe Benefice after 22 years service – the longest serving vicar in the Diocese.

A personalized farewell service for Keith and Susan was held at the start of September at St. Laurence and a Benefice service was held at Hatton at the end of September at St. Susan continues to be a key part of the Icon Centre based at St. Laurence. Kemble Everitt has continued to be a force of nature leading much of the worship over the past few months.

May 2021 also saw the retirement of long-standing Churchwarden Di Dillon and also David Dillon (though David has remained as safeguarding officer for St Laurence). Di also remains a key part of the team as Coordinator for Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals at St. Laurence. Pat Staffer also retired as PCC Secretary after many years service. We owe much to them all for their support and energy over the years, and in particular their focus and commitment during the last 2 challenging years of Covid. Jenny Fish also stood down as our Flower Arranger lead, and Yvonne Harrington has taken up the mantle. Changes also this month for our bellringing team as Helen Greenly takes over from Graham Hames as Tower Captain. A huge thanks to everyone for their love, support and service.

Whilst the church was closed, Di working alongside our Treasurer, Roger Shepherd, ensured work was undertaken to re-wire and re-light the whole building so once we were allowed to open the doors for worship we could take advantage of a safer, more up to date and flexible church building and worship space. A huge thank you to them both.

As of May 2021, Jude Palmer took on the role of Church Warden for St. Laurence, and Nicola Overall was installed as the new PCC Secretary. From September, Jude has been working with Kemble and the Coventry Diocese to ensure we have visiting clergy to support Eucharist Services, and Jude and Kemble are leading the other Sunday and Thursday services. Last summer, as the parish and church emerged from Covid lockdowns to living with Covid, and knew we were heading into interregnum, we cautiously returned to a 2 Sunday services a month, plus Thursday Complines on 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Thursdays pattern as it was felt this was workable for the foreseeable until a new vicar is installed. At present St. Luke's remains closed until we feel we have sufficient resources available.

Roger Shepherd and Jude Palmer were nominated as Parish Reps from the PCC and worked with colleagues from the Benefice and Coventry Diocese to write the Parish profile during the autumn, advertise and recruit for a new vicar in early 2022 and we are delighted to know that Rev Ann Peachey will be joining us and the Ferncumbe Benefice on autumn this year. We would like to say a huge thanks in particular to Rev Richard Moore from St. Nicholas in Kenilworth and Rev Robert Langton (retired) who have/are helping with many of our services.

Sadly we chose to cancel our Carol Service due to local Covid infection rates, but were heartened by the number of people who joined us for an outside short prayer and Carol Service on the 19 December and came to church to drop of donations for Baby Basics in Warwick. Our Remembrance Service was also outside once more in 2021, and indeed several commented on how poignant the outdoor service has been these last 2 years – we may keep this going forwards. Spring to the much anticipated return and new look of Ferncumbe News across the benefice. A massive thank you to Yvonne and Graham Harrington for taking on the magazine from Jude Palmer (after an 18 year stint as Editor!) and their flair, colour (literally) and relaunch they have created on its pages. More subscriptions and adverts are coming in all the time. Easter was a busy weekend of services at St. Laurence and also our first Primrose Café on the afternoon of Easter Monday which through the power of a cuppa, cake and our community helped raise £300 towards the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

Looking forward, St. Laurence has a busy year ahead with several Baptisms and weddings booked in which is wonderful to see once again. We also see a return of our Parish Summer Festival after a 2 year break, running Sunday 5 to Sunday 12 June 2022. We will open the festival week with a 6.00pm service on Sunday 5 June to celebrate the life and service of Her Majesty the Queen on her Platinum anniversary – we trust this service will complement and close out the Parish celebrations during the day. We shall be sharing a glass of fizz after the service in order to toast Her Majesty. Other activities in the Parish Festival week will include the return of the Parish Quiz (hopefully back at the Rowington Club), a Prayer Walk, Icon Centre Open day, local history talk on Greswolde with cheese and wine, a concert by the Circle Singers of Leamington Spa and a close out service on 11.00am Trinity Sunday (12th) followed by strawberries and cream. It was also great to reinstate our Bring & Buy Book Sales kindly hosted at The Tom O The Wood by Charlie and Chris in March – next one is scheduled for the 2 July, with another in October too. Our 300 Club continues to be supported, though we will be looking to grow membership of this in the year. And as we reach September, we hope to be welcoming our New Rector, Rev Ann Peachey.

WI – Heather Cole

We reverted to normal meetings in October 2021 after meeting via Zoom. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month. At our AGM The decision was taken to elect two joint Presidents – Helen Thompson and Heather Cole. Membership is at 41. A varied programme starting with Christmas lunch at The Punch Bowl with speakers from Dogs for Good, war memories, antiques and valuations and to follow, a garden meeting visit to Kiftsgate Garden with a walk and lunch. Lynne Stubbings, Chair of WI National Federation, Bletchley Park, Warwick Walls.

We always welcome new members. We will be helping at the Jubilee Celebration at Rowington and hope to have stall at the Village Show.

Rowington Almshouse Charity

This year we said a sad farewell to our residents who had lived as a couple in Beech Close for over 35 years.

We also lost the person who was our latest appointment to one of the Almshouses.

During the next couple of months, two properties will be available to suitable applicants, if you wish to apply, please contact the secretary for an application form.

The refurbishment of the properties will continue. One of the Almshouses in The Avenue, which has been upgraded, took twelve weeks to complete.

The flat felt roofs in Beech Close and The Avenue have been replaced using G.R.P. Fibre glass by doing so we have extended their life span .

The decision taken by the Trustees two years ago to replace the storage heaters in all the properties with a Ground Source Heat Pump system, is proving to be a great benefit to our residents, with the price of electricity on an ever rising upward curve.

The Trustees realised that outsourcing the maintenance of the properties was not a good option. With the appointment of a secretary and using local building contractor, they as a team are investing their local resources to much greater effect, for which the Trustees pass on their thanks.

Lowsonford Village Hall

Objectives and activities

Lowsonford Village Hall (“the Charity”) holds a premises within the village of Lowsonford (“the Village Hall”) on trust under a conveyance dated 21 December 1936 for physical and mental recreation and social moral and intellectual development for the benefit of the inhabitants of Lowsonford and its immediate vicinity.

To that end, the main activity of the Charity is making available the Village Hall for hire to inhabitants of Lowsonford and its immediate vicinity on preferential terms. It is also made available for hire more generally to generate funds to maintain and operate the facilities.

Structure, governance and management

The Charity is governed by a conveyance dated 21 December 1936, which sets out the purpose of the Charity, as summarised above.

Although the governing document sets out arrangements for the election of trustees, those arrangements are no longer reflective of the social and recreational structures of the village of Lowsonford and its immediate vicinity. Accordingly, the Trustees intend to bring forward proposals for new arrangements for the election of Trustees for consideration at the Charity's Annual General Meeting in 2022.

The Trustees elect a Chair who convenes and manages Trustee meetings. A Treasurer is also appointed, and individual Trustees may be given designated areas of focus, based on their experience and interest.

Achievements and performance

Following a closure enforced by Covid-19, the Village Hall reopened in May 2021. By this time the major refurbishment of the Village Hall, which commenced in 2018, was substantially complete.

Maurice Daw and Robyn Jackson stood down as Chair and Treasurer respectively during 2021. Four new Trustees were appointed in the year to help market and operate the Village Hall. The Trustee body is very grateful to both Maurice and Robyn for their immense contributions, in particular in managing the refurbishment project and navigating the Charity through the extensive period of closure due to Covid-19.

The level of bookings was understandable slow to build following the re-opening, in particular as some organisations which historically were regular hirers ceased activities during the period of the Village Hall's closure. However, a total of around thirty individual hirers enjoyed use of the Village Hall between reopening and the end of 2021. As awareness of the refurbished facilities grows so do levels of interest in future hires.

Although the main focus of the Charity is presenting the Village Hall for others to hire, it will from time to time arrange its own events. The first of these post reopening was a Christmas Fair. This took place, with appropriate Covid-19 precautions, amid the Omicron wave. Despite that, the event generated a surplus and allowed a good number of local residents to experience the refurbished Village Hall for the first time. Samantha Kent and her team of co-organisers deserve significant credit for arranging this event in such challenging circumstances.

Since reopening, the Trustees have focused on completing snagging works relating to the refurbishment and delivering other enhancements to equipment, furniture, external areas and amenities. This process will continue into 2022, as will improvements to marketing collateral, including delivery of a new website.

Tennis Club – Joan Shepherd

The club is going fairly well with membership numbers quite consistent. At present there are not many juniors, possibly because there are not many children in the village. The courts are still in good condition, apart from the ever-present moss problem. We will always welcome new members and hope to se

7. Public Forum

No matters were raised.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed.....Designation Date.....