

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 11 May 2026**  
**At 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr R Sheehan, Chair, Parish Council  
Four members of the Parish Council and the Parish Clerk  
Four members of the public

The Chairman welcomed everyone. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12 May 2025 were approved and signed.

**Parish Council – Chairman’s Report**

There has been a change of guard in the Parish Council during 2025. Tim Suter resigned as Chairman, with Richie Sheehan being elected as Chairman in his place, with Hamish Blythe being elected to the post of Vice-Chair.

David Lindsey resigned from the council in December 2025. Notice of a casual vacancy was posted and Louise Bird was duly co-opted as a member of the council in March 2026. Both Tim Suter and Jake Brown resigned from the council in May 2026, with a Notice of casual vacancy yet to be posted.

The Council, along with a dedicated steering group, began the process of producing a full Neighbourhood Plan, converting the work already undertaken for the Priority Statement, with the aim to consult on a first draft summer 2026.

Other issues that have been discussed and actioned by the Council include:

- Responding to consultations on the Unitary Proposals for Oxford and the wider county and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Working with Thame Town Council to produce a mutually acceptable proposal on parish boundaries to be considered during the Community Governance Review.
- Maintaining and enhancing facilities and environment on parish council (e.g. hedge-laying in the Millennium Wood and ensuring the play and exercise equipment on both Miss Cross Field and the Recreation Ground are safe and fit for future use).
- Reviewing planning applications across the parish, including coordinating responses with neighbouring parishes for the new Council Waste Vehicle depot at the former Ariens factory on Rectory Road (since approved).
- Progressing with the project for deciding how to spend the Public Art funding to which we are entitled.

I pay tribute to the energy and commitment of the parish councillors – all volunteers determined to do their best to enhance and support the local community; to the members of the community who attend our meetings and raise issues for us to address; to our District and County Councillors who have kept us fully informed of developments at District and County level, and argued our cause when appropriate; and above all to the Clerk, Andrea Oughton, who cheerfully and efficiently keeps us on the right track.

**Responsible Financial Officer’s Report**

**2024-25 Accounts**

**Internal Audit**

From a financial point of view the internal audit of the 2024-25 financial accounts was undertaken by Mr Dick Heinrich between 21<sup>st</sup> May and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 following the Scope of Work agreed by the Parish Council.

The internal audit concluded that the control objectives had been achieved throughout the financial year and the Income & Expenditure account and the Balance Sheet were a fair reflection of the financial position of the Council for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

The audit this year took even less time than in previous years. The Scribe accounting software on the one hand and efficient record keeping and filing by the Finance Officer ensured all required documentation was available at the start, was clearly laid out and easy to be interpreted by a third party not completely familiar with the details.

### **External Audit**

Due to Income receipts being under the £25k set by the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 the Parish Council approved to Exempt itself from an External Audit and completed Form 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). This however does not reduce the amount of work required in completing the accounts and information and all financial information required to be published on the website was done.

### **2025-26 Accounts (unaudited) to 31 March 2026**

#### **Expenditure**

Total expenditure was £16,972.00 vs budget of £17010.00, typical annual expenditure items include council administration, grass cutting, dog waste bin emptying, accounting software, annual play inspections, subscriptions and insurance. One off payment over £1k for planning consultant to provide a report and support objection to convert Great Haseley Trading Estate to a District Waste Vehicle facility. The Parish Council continues to support charitable organisations including Citizen's Advice along with annual grants to the Village Hall and a contribution to St Peter's Church towards the cost of grass cutting.

#### **Income**

Total income was £18,445.22 made up primarily of the Precept (£16,400), the amount of income the Parish Council requests from the District Council to include in the Council Tax that home owners pay each year, bank interest £465.00 and a donation of £570 towards the maintenance of the wall at the Plough from The Haseley Pub Co.

2025-26 accounts have yet to be audited and the internal audit is expected to take place in the next few weeks. As the income and expenditure is below the £25k threshold the Council can Certify itself from a Government External Audit, however all the documentation and publication of accounts and related information is the same regardless.

Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Councillors for their support during the year and my thanks on behalf of the Parish Council as well as personally to Dick Heinrich for his continued support as Internal Auditor.

### **County Councillor's Report**

County Cllr Edwards sent her apologies and circulated her annual report. A summary is provided below.

#### **Introduction**

This has been my first year as County Councillor for the Chalgrove & Thame West Division. It has been a challenging but rewarding year, focused on understanding County Council processes, representing parish priorities, and ensuring rural and market-town communities are properly reflected in county-wide decision-making.

As you will be aware, I was diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer in December 2025 and have had to step back from council duties to focus on treatment. This report therefore reflects work undertaken prior to that point. I am pleased to say I am nearing the end of my treatment and

hope to return to work in early May. I am very grateful for the support and kindness shown by parish councils across the division.

#### Representation and Council Work

I attended Full Council, scrutiny committees, locality meetings and extensive member training during the year. I serve on the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee, focusing on NHS services, public health, adult social care and safeguarding.

In September, I made my maiden speech at Full Council, speaking in support of Family Centres and highlighting the work of the Chalgrove & Watlington First Steps Family Hub. I also volunteered as Chair of the Henley & Thame Locality Committee, reflecting my interest in neighbourhood governance and strengthening links with parishes.

#### Working with Parishes and Communities

I attended parish and town council meetings across the division, including Berrick and Roke, Brightwell Baldwin, Chalgrove, the Haseleys, Great Milton, Little Milton, Newington, Stadhampton, Tetsworth, Tiddington and Thame Town Council. Where attendance was not possible, I encouraged direct contact and follow-up.

I also represented the County Council at a range of community and civic events, the flag raising ceremony for Armed Forces Week, including Thame Pride, village family events and the Chalgrove Horticultural Show (60th anniversary), which highlighted the vital role of volunteers and community groups.

#### Highways, Flooding and Infrastructure

Highways and flooding were among the most significant issues raised by parish councils.

I worked closely with parishes and officers on repeated flooding issues in Tiddington, Little Milton, Great Haseley and Newington, pushing for both immediate mitigation and longer-term solutions. The move to annual gully clearance, supported by additional county funding, has already made a difference in some areas, although legacy issues remain. I also followed up on potholes, drainage failures, road safety concerns and structural issues such as the weight-restricted bridges over the River Thame near Tiddington.

#### Planning and Strategic Issues

The proposed development at Chalgrove Airfield has been a major issue. Homes England's exhibition indicated a forthcoming planning application, and from a county perspective, traffic and highway capacity remain key concerns. I met with county officers, district councillors, our MP and Martin-Baker Ltd., who have stated the proposals are incompatible with their operations. This remains an ongoing concern, and I remain concerned about the whether we are being listened to. The recent case where a refusal of planning permission for further housing development on the edge of Chalgrove was overturned at appeal is a concerning precedent.

In response to the planning permission for Great Haseley Industrial Estate, where there was a proposal to use the site for a depot for waste disposal trucks, I focused on highways impacts linked to HGV traffic through surrounding villages. I was pleased that planning permission ultimately included conditions to reduce local traffic impacts.

#### Local Government Reorganisation, Health and Other County Matters

Local government reorganisation has been a major theme, with three unitary options submitted to government. I raised concerns about the "Greater Oxford" proposal and favour an option that keeps Oxfordshire coherent, is simpler and least disruptive to services. We expect to hear from the Secretary of State about the decision for Oxfordshire in June 2026. Elections for a shadow authority are likely to take place in May 2027.

Through my scrutiny roles, I focused on NHS provision, adult social care, safeguarding and preventative approaches such as the “Age Well” programme. It was encouraging later in the year to see Ofsted and the CQC report effective progress on SEND services in Oxfordshire.

Other county-wide issues included the introduction of the Oxford Temporary Congestion Charge and the Fire and Rescue Service Review, where I encouraged parish input to ensure rural needs were recognised. In the latter case, I’m pleased to report that that revised proposals are now being discussed that avoid fire station closures or the reduction of fire engines in Thame from 2 to 1.

### Supporting Communities and Looking Ahead

I promoted support available to residents, including the Resident Support Scheme and Home Upgrade Grants. My Councillor Priority Fund was allocated to Cosy Homes Thame, Thame Pride and the Chalgrove & Watlington First Steps Family Hub. These three causes tie in very closely to my driving principles of community inclusion, tackling climate change and supporting families.

I look forward to resuming work and continuing to support all parish and town councils across the division from early May.

### District Councillor’s Report – Cllr Heritage

*It continues to be a privilege to represent the Haseley Brook ward and I’m pleased to offer my annual summary of council activity over the past twelve months:*

Since the government produced their local government reform white paper in December 2024, all council work has been against the backdrop of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and Devolution. The first part of Government’s programme is LGR, which affects counties like ours which operate under a two-tier system of District and County councils. All such councils are set to be abolished and, in their place, new unitary authorities. Government will decide on the size and shape of the new unitary council for our county, but affected councils throughout the UK were recently invited to submit a proposal.

There are three proposals on the table for Oxfordshire. We’re still waiting for more information from Government on the direction for Oxfordshire and we expect news from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government before this summer’s parliamentary recess.

For councils’ “business as usual” activities, very few commitments can be made which take us beyond the next two years. This will inevitably present challenges. We want to be a council that gets things done and leaves strong legacies. However, whichever direction Government chooses for our county, it’s important that residents experience a smooth transition, and we are committed to working constructively on the process in order to achieve that.

What this means to residents in terms of the next local elections in 2027 is that we expect to be voting for a Shadow Authority – ie the councillors who will ultimately replace District and County councillors in 2028.

At SODC, our first full council meeting of the new council year in May 2025 saw us break our administrative partnership with the Green party. With new members joining the Lib Dem administration following district byelections, it was an appropriate time for the Liberal Democrat group to make a friendly and respectful break from our partnership with the Green party. We enjoyed working with the group and continue to do so, albeit from an opposition perspective.

In July 2025 the council was delighted to approve up to £10M towards approximately thirty homes for use as social housing, through an addition to the council’s approved capital

programme. This funding was made available through money that had originally been earmarked for the proposed new building at the Gateway site in Didcot. Council approved the financial transfer and decision to cease to further work on this project in light of impending Local Government Reorganisation.

On 1<sup>st</sup> October the council received hugely disappointing news that South & Vale's forward-looking Joint Local Plan was recommended for withdrawal over a single issue - "duty to co-operate", specifically with Oxford City Council. It's no secret that there's disagreement within Oxfordshire on how many homes the rural districts should provide on Oxford's behalf. Nevertheless, all councils in Oxfordshire are working towards what they believe to be in the best interests of their residents and their area.

The government later changed direction on this point and on 3rd December 2025 we were in a position to confirm to the Inspectors that we wanted to resume the local plan hearings. Government removed the "Duty to Cooperate" pass/fail test early in the new year, though cooperation would still need to be shown as part of the soundness test. The JLP Procedural Meeting took place on 12<sup>th</sup> February, and we are now set for the standard hearings which will be in the week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026. As an aside, unfortunately we're already required to start working on a new Local Plan, due to the government's new housing targets and NPPF, so that will no doubt be a topic for next year's annual report!

February 2026 was Budget month for councils, and at SODC full council we approved a balanced "people first" budget for 2026/27, setting out plans to protect local services, invest in community facilities, provide affordable homes and manage public money carefully. I'm particularly proud of our community grant schemes which many councils are not in a position to offer. The latest budget includes:

- Funding for our leisure centres, including decarbonisation projects to reduce emissions and save energy.
- Significant commitment to investment in housing, which now totals £25 million, both for homelessness emergency accommodation and for those most in need on the housing register, in addition to financial support for community-led housing projects.
- New ongoing funding to support community cohesion, backing local projects that bring people together, reduce isolation and help strengthen community ties, particularly for vulnerable and marginalised residents. This is in addition to the council's Community Hub, which will continue to help residents with housing issues, cost-of-living pressures and access to advice and support when they need it most.
- A record amount of grant funding at over £2 million, including £590,000 for community grants and £750,000 for infrastructure grants. This funding will help to deliver community-led projects such as village hall upgrades, improved facilities, energy efficiency projects and improvements to public spaces.
- Continuing to invest in climate action in a way that delivers real local benefits. A new £100,000 Climate Action Fund will accept bids for nature recovery and climate adaptation including flood alleviation and access to nature for local residents, while the council will continue to make its own buildings and facilities more efficient, helping to lower long-term running costs while also tackling climate change.
- Funding for the Wheatley flood alleviation scheme to help to protect at-risk homes and businesses.
- Funding to continue the council's economic development work, helping businesses to start up, expand and adapt, supporting high streets, rural employers and the local economy more widely.

Residents pay an average £156.24 per year for services provided by SODC in 2026/27 - £3 per week - with its share of the council tax increasing by £5 a year for a typical Band D household.

This small increase helps to protect frontline services and fund investment in local facilities, while ensuring the district's council tax remains one of the lowest in the country.

Locally, I've been particularly active in planning matters over the past twelve months and have called several applications to planning committee hearings, where I've spoken on behalf of residents. The ward has experienced a difficult year with some large applications as well as enforcement matters to deal with. Like most residents, I understand our villages can't stand still in time and we need housing for our younger generations.

I've been supportive of many developments within the ward. However, quality of life is important and I don't agree with housing estates without infrastructure. The new higher national housing targets may have changed the scene but I'll continue to speak up for appropriate housing, not just any old housing, and to protect our village pubs and shops.

We still have some contentious applications and issues in the system, not all of which are housing developments, including the proposed Postcombe & Lewknor solar farm and the ongoing unauthorised traveller site enforcement case in Tetsworth, both of which I continue to liaise closely with parish councils and officers on.

One of the planning applications I've worked hardest on over the past 12 months involved the purchase of Haseley Industrial Estate by South & Vale councils, to be used as a depot for the districts' waste vehicles. As it was the council's own application it was not decided by an SODC planning officer but instead went to a cross-party planning committee in October 2025. I registered to speak as ward member and spoke on as many concerns as possible that residents had raised with me in correspondence, while focusing on the unsuitability of the A329 through Little Milton as a vehicle route.

I had worked closely with County Councillor Judith Edwards and Freddie van Mierlo MP on this, including meetings with both OCC Highways and SODC officers prior to the committee date as well as research into local freight policy. We were relieved that our collaborative work - alongside the parish councils - resulted in traffic route conditions being imposed by committee members. Residents' three main areas of concern - drainage, lighting and vehicle route management - were all addressed via amended conditions. The traffic route plan will be developed soon.

Works to the new depot have been slightly delayed due to nesting birds and bats, however I had the opportunity to visit the site recently and look at the works carried out so far. I learned more about the installed Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the areas that attenuation has been introduced, and also that changes to the landscaping plan will result in deeper planting around the perimeter of the site ie increased screening. In terms of the site work, I was pleased to learn that efficiencies on site are resulting in a 97% recycling rate.

In summary to this report, working as a local councillor is my full-time commitment and I always aim to be approachable and responsive, and to yield results and answers for residents. It is my job to represent you and I take this responsibility very seriously. If there's anything about SODC that you'd like information about, or if I can be of assistance to you in any way, you are always very welcome to get in touch with me.

### **Reports from Organisations in the Parish**

#### **The Haseleys Magazine** (Chris Cassell)

Firstly, thank you to everyone who has contributed to the magazine over the past few months. Whether through articles, photographs, notices, advertising, delivery help or simple encouragement. The magazine relies heavily on community support and contributions, and it is greatly appreciated.

I became editor of The Haseleys in January 2026, building on the strong foundations established by previous editors, at which point the magazine underwent a significant redesign and broader editorial refresh. Since then, the publication has moved towards a more premium full-colour format, with a stronger focus on high-quality photography, thoughtful design and more varied editorial content. Feedback from residents and advertisers has been very positive, particularly regarding the improved visual quality and the broader mix of features.

The aim of the magazine is not simply to provide notices and announcements, but to create something people genuinely enjoy reading and keeping. Editorially, the focus is intentionally centred around village life, local character, the environment, gardens, food, history, creativity and community interests, while generally avoiding divisive political commentary. Parish Council and local political updates are still included where relevant, but these are published directly from the organisations or representatives themselves rather than being editorialised.

Financially, the magazine is self-funded through local advertising support. Advertising invoices for 2026 total £3,114, of which £2,898 has already been received. One of the major pieces of work since January has been experimenting with different printers and production methods. Although the move to full colour printing naturally increased costs, changing print suppliers has still resulted in an overall reduction in production costs of approximately 20%, despite the substantial improvement in print quality and colour reproduction.

Advertising rates for 2026 were intentionally kept at the same level as the previous year, with many existing advertisers effectively receiving a complimentary upgrade from black-and-white to colour placement. Now that a reliable long-term print partner has been established and production costs are more predictable, the advertising pricing structure will be reviewed for next year, although the intention is to keep pricing accessible and reasonable for local businesses. As almost all advertisers pay annually, any revised pricing structure would primarily affect the 2027 advertising cycle.

Printing costs are currently approximately £270 per issue across 10 issues per year, although this varies depending on issue length. There are also some smaller ongoing costs such as image licensing, software and production expenses. Overall, the publication is operating sustainably, although further advertising growth would provide a more comfortable financial position and allow for continued improvements over time.

One of the ongoing challenges is community engagement and content gathering. While many residents are supportive and contribute articles, photographs and notices, it can sometimes be difficult to secure regular submissions consistently, particularly around work and family schedules. As a result, the magazine has increasingly developed a flexible editorial structure, with a mixture of community contributions and standing features that allow the publication to remain reliable and consistent each month.

Another ongoing challenge is maintaining accuracy and minimising errors across the publication. Producing the magazine in Adobe InDesign allows for a much more professional and flexible layout, but it also creates a more complex editorial and proofing process, particularly when working across multiple contributors, layouts and last-minute amendments.

Distribution also remains quite time-consuming. Copies are currently delivered to volunteers who distribute in their area. Additional volunteer help here would make a significant difference, particularly someone able to reliably coordinate or distribute bundles to the various local deliverers each month.

Overall, the response since the redesign suggests there is a real appetite for a high-quality village publication that reflects and records the character of the local community, and I hope to continue building on that over the coming year.

## Great Haseley Cricket Club (Chris Groves)

### **Season 2025**

Haseley Millers continued playing T20 matches on Thursday nights at Great Haseley Rec for season 2025. Resplendent in their T20 kit, sponsored by Morgan and Associates, The Millers completed 5 matches, with a 100% record, extending player roster to 21 including their first overseas player

**Results:** 0 Wins, 5 Losses, 18 Players involved

The Millers were competitive in all matches. Much as it is nice to win, participation and socialising are at the heart of the Millers ethos.

### **Significant Performances**

| <b>Player</b> | <b>Millers#</b> | <b>Opposition</b> | <b>Score</b>   |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| W Peers       | 10              | Great Milton      | 30 (no - rtd)  |
| L Suter       | 11              | HQCC              | 33 (no - rtd)  |
| M Lowden      | 6               | HQCC              | 31 (no - rtd)  |
| F East        | 21              | Chalgrove         | 39 (no)        |
|               |                 |                   |                |
| <b>Player</b> | <b>Millers#</b> | <b>Opposition</b> | <b>O-M-W-R</b> |
| CML Groves    | 17              | Chalgrove         | 4-0-3-28       |
| D Bennett     | 2               | Great Milton      | 3-0-3-19       |

### **2025 Season Fixtures**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Opposition</b> |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 04-Jun      | Bodleian (H)      |
| 18-Jun      | Chalgrove (A)     |
| 21-Jun      | Great Milton (H)  |
| 25-Jun      | Medicine (H)      |
| 02-Jul      | HQCC (H)          |
| 16-Jul      | Chalgrove (H)     |
| 23-Jul      | Tiddington XI     |

## Great Haseley History Group (Jane Simcox)

Little has taken place with the History Group during 2025. Unfortunately, the small amount of money that the History Group has is now being eaten away as the bank is taking charges every month of £4.25. As a result, we have been endeavouring to get the group registered as a charity to avoid paying these charges. The first application failed and we are about to submit a second application in the hope that this one will meet the exacting standards of the Charity Commission.

Recently a box full of papers has been donated to the History Group from Margaret Townsend which among other things has the family tree of the Cooper family back to the 1600s. The Cooper family were stonemasons and many of the gravestones in the churchyard are attributed to the family. We will be going through this treasure trove of material to see what else can be found out about a very important family for Great Haseley.

We are still looking for a permanent home where we can display the vast amount of local information that we have accumulated over the years but as yet have been unsuccessful.

Anyone wishing to join the group is more than welcome and should contact me on 01844 279631 ([jane@janeanddavid.co.uk](mailto:jane@janeanddavid.co.uk)) and I will keep you informed of meetings etc.

### Great Haseley Sports Club

Committee Our committee members are currently: Victoria Nixey (treasurer), Emily Gresty (secretary), Lucy Foster (membership), Sarah Lowden (coaching), Sarah Walden-Jones (marketing).

The courts are in a good condition following a professional treatment in early April. The courts had not been treated for a couple of years and after the wet winter the committee decided we needed professional help to remove the moss. We will be monitoring the weeds through the summer and periodically remove them.

Membership remains steady. With costs slightly increasing we have increased the annual membership fees for the 2026/27 season to £50 for a family, £30 for adults and £20 for juniors/seniors.

Tennis coaching commenced on Sunday 12th April 2026 with Neil James, our longstanding coach - delivering 18 weeks of lessons on Sunday mornings. There are 39 children and 7 adults registered for lessons each week – our most popular year to date!

AGM is being held on Wednesday 24th June 2026 at 7.30pm at the Bull in Great Milton. All welcome. We are also looking for any new committee members should anyone be interested please do come along.

### Great Haseley & District Horticultural Society (Louise Bird)

There were a lot of positives the society had a busy year of events:

- Garden visits to Adwell and Le Manoir
- Garden Party and Visit to Old Belchers farm and Albion Fields
- Pimms and Paint Event
- Flower Arranging Demonstration
- Pottery workshop
- Snowdrop walk and meet the alpacas

The show was well supported with a total of 57 exhibitors, it was encouraging that overall, we had 23 new exhibitors and 20 Children participated.

However, there are still problems: Some events were poorly attended despite advertising the show, not enough people helping organise, it nearly didn't happen because the organiser was ill for all of June into July, not enough people helping on the day- particularly with the outdoor set up and take down and very few new volunteers. The show will be happening this year, but its long-term future is uncertain without fresh volunteers. Efforts are being made to involve more children.

Last year we discussed the chapel. Over the year we have started to look in earnest at the chapel. It was decided that the priorities are to update the land registry, carry out a survey of its condition and decide what should happen to the chapel if the society folds. The society remains in a stable financial situation but does not have the resource if the chapel at any point needs major works to it.

### Playing Fields (Chris Groves)

#### **Activity 2024-25**

35 Cricket Matches

Tiddington 4<sup>th</sup> Team folded mid-season due to continued lack of player availability. Agreement to improve surface of access road fulfilled (Thanks to Shrimptons). New Treasurer navigating transition to online banking.

Swings were "condemned" Parish Council looking at options to replace/Improve.

## Activity for 2025-26

### 42 Cricket Matches Scheduled

| Team                  | Match Type    | # Fixtures |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------|
| Haseley Millers/GHCC  | Friendly T20  | 6          |
| Tiddington III        | CCL Div 7A    | 9          |
| Tiddington Vixens     | Home Counties | 1          |
| Tiddington Boys U17s  | OCB Comps     | 1          |
| Tiddington Boys U15s  | OCB Comps     | 6          |
| Tiddington Girls U13s | OCB Comps     | 6          |
| Holton                | Friendly      | 8          |
| Bodleian              | Friendly      | 3          |
| IAS Friends           | Sunday League | 2          |

### St Peter's Church (Toby Garfitt)

The two big events of this past year have been the installation of a splendid pipe organ, rescued from a church in Sussex, and the retirement of Simon Cronk after ten years as Rector, marked by a lunch party at The Neighbours' Hall in Great Milton.

The organ case and a few pipes were erected in time for the concert in October which also featured a string quartet of doctors from Morland House Surgery, a local flautist, and Emily Booth singing songs from the shows, as well as a large choir. Work continued on the organ up to Christmas, and indeed afterwards. There is one extra stop (a trumpet) still to be fitted. Several generous donations have been received towards the costs.

The departure of the Rector has left us in an interregnum which will only come to an end in July, when we look forward to the installation of the Revd Lucie Spiers as our first woman priest. Communion services have been covered by a range of helpful clergy, while other services have largely been taken by volunteers from within our congregation. There have been several big funerals and memorial services, which I have been glad to take myself.

Other highlights of the year include the laying of a new path from the churchyard gates to the south porch; the annual visit to St George's Chapel, Windsor, in June, at which our church silver was on display; a wonderful Evensong sung by the choir of Merton College, Oxford, in September; the annual carol service in December; and more recently a very moving and well-attended service of Passiontide Music and meditation on Good Friday.

There are plans to provide a permanent low level of heating by using air-source heat pumps to blow warm air through the Victorian underfloor ducts. This will require significant fundraising.

### Village Hall (Paul Woodrow)

Another very busy year in the village hall.

Firstly, the pop-up pub has been a great success and the addition of food vans really add interest and now we have Le Secret Garden on board it's even better. We have a good cross section of the community attending which is most important as we are here for everyone. There will be more on the recreation ground this year too.

The pop up is a massive boost to our funds as without extra money we could not cover the day-to-day bills of the hall.

We had a local decorator paint the windows for us this year at a very economical price which is much appreciated and has made the hall look so much smarter, though there are still walls to be done Once we have some more funds.

We have a good variety of new users of the hall for Pilates, dance glasses and band practise. The coffee mornings Once a month are well supported too.

Other events including the Apple day have been well supported and very popular though more hard work to carry out and Christmas Carols have been a wonderful addition. We are very nearly ready to launch our new digital booking system which will make life easier. We have also Edited the Nineteen Seventies Constitution to bring it into line with how we can operate today with less people having time to volunteer but with the basic structure staying the same.

We are at last very near to getting quotes on the building works after time consuming decisions then at last we can apply for grants.

For the first time in many years, we had our accounts audited for which we are very grateful to Dick Heinrich. He was very happy with where we are and commented that the hall was in safe hands. On a personal level we are so lucky to have an amazing committee happy to put their backs into all these projects and day to day running of our beautiful village hall.

#### **Open Forum – Questions from Electors / Public Discussion**

No questions were raised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.55pm

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Chairman  
12 May 2027