

## REPORTS TO THE WEST ILSLEY ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2014

The West Ilsley Parish Council would like to say a big thank you to Sean Ryan who has stepped down as Chairman of the Parish Council after 8 years of fantastic leadership. His position will be taken by Dries Hagen an existing Councillor.

### **West Ilsley Tennis 2103/4**

We decided to hold our annual membership fee this year at £45/family and £25/single membership. We currently have 26 family memberships of which 6 families are from neighbouring villages. Income from memberships and pay and play continues to bring in approx. £1,000 per annum and our aim is to fundraise an additional £500 a year to cover maintenance and to invest in our sinking fund for future court refurbishment. Our main fundraising event this year was a "Santa safari supper" in December and we will once again be running the fete teas. We are mindful of keeping our outings to a minimum and to this end we would like to thank Alan Beaumont who has very kindly taken on our weed killing and strimming at the moment. It is super to see so many children playing and this has been helped by junior coaching which 18 children took part in over Easter organised by Louise Beaumont. An additional 2 days of coaching have been organised for the May half term. One final plea - the court remains unlocked but this leaves it open to very occasional misuse. We would be most grateful if everyone could help us look after the court and fencing in order to preserve it in its present good condition for as long as possible so please let us know if you spot anything untoward!

### **Options appraisal for the Trees around the tennis court.**

We think all villagers would agree that the dead trees around the tennis court are an eyesore. For the tennis court's management committee they also represent a considerable threat to the long term stability of the court's surface. There are few substances that will degrade the playing surface of a court more quickly than a liberal scattering of bird poo and the trees provide a roost for the birds to wait in before taking aim! On the plus side, the trees do provide at least some element of shelter from the prevailing wind. The court is surely one of the most exposed in the area and needs some form of screening to make it at all playable. We understand that was why the trees were planted in the first place. The tennis court's management committee recently carried out a full options appraisal to consider all the possible

solutions to this problem. The outcome of this process (unanimously supported by all members of the committee) was that the trees should be felled and a windbreak attached to the interior of three sides of the fencing which surrounds the court. Similar windbreaks exist at other Downland courts and photographs of those installed at Chieveley are available to view on the village notice board. The works will cost @ £1,720 and will be paid for out of the management committee's sinking fund. This was created when the new tennis committee was formed in 2009 and is funded by membership subscriptions and the proceeds of fundraising events. We anticipate that the work will be carried out in September/October 2014 and we will liaise with the landowners (The Lockinge Estate) and users (the Carlisle family) before work commences.

### **The West Ilsley Evergreens**

We held our AGM in March and we now have 57 members who come from East and West Ilsley and Compton. The committee was elected and the outings programme was approved.

Over the past couple of years the outings have been running at a loss so we have reduced the number from 9 to 6 in an effort to save money.

In the coming year we will continue to fund raise with stalls at East Ilsley Midsummer madness, an Autumn Fair, raffles on the outings and possibly 2 bingos.

I would like to say a big thank you for the generous donation from the fete committee and to say that our members will be pleased to run the bottle stall at West Ilsley fete in July.

### **Poors Wood Charity**

There is £638 in the Coif Charity Fund and £394 in the Current Bank Account. At Christmas, 18 residents were each given £10. Norman Carlisle and myself continue to be the Trustees. I hope the charity will continue in its present form for many years to come. Anne Butterworth.

The Coif Charity is a banking fund for charities giving a good return. The money came from investing the original donation to set up the gifts many years ago. We only give to West Ilsley residents and it is supposed to be to the needy but ,of course, there are not so many of those nowadays. Prior to this year we have had a donation from the village fete.

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### All Saints Church

Over the last year, Revd. John Toogood continued as rector of the East Downland Benefice, supported by Revd. Lady (Denise) Brown, and Revd Douglas Dales. Occasionally, services are held by other clergy and on very rare occasions, by members of the pcc.

At our recent annual parochial church meeting, Alexandra Axtell was re-elected churchwarden with Ian Fewtrell-Smith.

We are one of 9 churches in the benefice, with united services held in Chieveley every third Sunday in the month. All Saints continues to hold three Sunday services each month, two of which being specifically aimed at families and children.

The church and churchyard are looked after by volunteers, whether keeping the grass cut, cleaning the church or providing flowers and our thanks are extended to all those who help.

By the end of 2013, our accounts were showing in the black, but only by virtue of several cheques not being presented until 2014. We were extremely grateful for grants of £300 from the West Ilsley Fete and £300 from the Parish Council, as well as a donation of over £600 from Christmas greetings printed in the West Ilsley News. As always we rely heavily on fund raising events to augment our income and again in 2013, we held three social events, these being a community lunch, 5 Voices concert and harvest lunch. Over the last few months, we have received donations from quiz nights at The Harrow as well as other individual donations.

The planned winter warmer in February of this year was cancelled due to the flooding and we were unable to rearrange it. We will be holding a mid-summer lunch on 22<sup>nd</sup> June after the pet service and there will be other events later in the year.

All Saints donated the whole collection of its Remembrance Day service of £202 to the Royal British Legion and the collection of £65 from our Christingle service in January of this year was sent to the Children's Society.

The church building remains in a reasonable condition, now with steel mesh fixed to the underside of the rafters protecting people from falling plaster. This enabled the church to be opened as quickly as possible, with just a few services being held in the village hall whilst the work was carried out. However, this has

significantly reduced our reserves, having cost a total of £9,405.60. Over the next couple of years, we need a significant input of money in addition to income from regular donations and fund-raising events to secure the church in West Ilsley.

### West Ilsley Web Site Report 2014

#### **Overview**

The website continues to tick over nicely with 18,000 page views last year which included 3800 visits from 39 different countries. The most popular pages in terms of total page views being the Photo Gallery (53%), the Home page (15%) and the West Ilsley News section (12%).

Despite reasonable traffic to the site, it's likely the web site could be more useful, particularly if contribution was opened up to a more distributed model (see below).

#### **Future of the Web site**

I've had a few requests to expand the site and make it more open to content contribution (for example by different committees and organisations around the village).

I think this is a good idea in the long term as it will hopefully:

- Allow others to contribute more easily
- Potentially increase in amount of content and how often it's updated
- Make better use of the web site/technology in general
- Make it more useful to visitors

I would like to propose that over the coming 12 months the site is re-designed and re-hosted to allow this. I would carry out the initial work voluntarily (although contributors welcome) and once the site was migrated would look to contributions from any committees/other volunteers if required. Ultimately I would like to pass on the ownership of the site although this is not required in the short term/before the site is migrated.

I currently host and maintain the site and purchase the domain name on an annual basis (and am more than to be happy to do so in its current form) but for the above proposal I recommend hosting separately at minimal cost and would apply to the Parish Council for funding to cover this as follows:

#### **Estimated running cost of the site:**

Hosting £2.99 monthly (or £35.88 annually)

Domain name £19.20 annually (for westilsley.org and westilsley.org.uk)

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### West Ilsley play area

£400 was raised to fund additional equipment and play bark, through a silent auction at a pub quiz in September. An enthusiastic work party laid a large amount of play bark last autumn. Bird spike deterrents have helped keep the swings clean. I hope we will have a small wooden playhouse installed by the end of the summer. We successfully passed the ROSPA inspection in April. Thank you to all the families on the rota who continue to maintain our play area. Jessica and Marc-Andre Walsby will be taking over the organisation of the play area in July.

### Ilsley Under Fives

We survived the flooding although it did mean we had to cancel some sessions or find an alternative venue. We continue to have a small but enthusiastic committee. Ilsley Under Fives are currently trialling a range of different activities to encourage new parent/carers to come along. Increase in hall rent means that we need a higher attendance to cover all our costs.

For the summer term alongside our normal sessions in West Ilsley Village hall, we will be hosting messy play, music and gym activity mornings. We will also be hosting the West Ilsley Wild West Fete dance on Friday 11th July. This will be a fun evening and a good chance for us to fundraise. Due to our changing programme of events - keep an eye out in the WIN for more details.

**West Ilsley Table Tennis Club 2014** We only had one team this year, as our "A" team was unable to commit this season: So that left West Ilsley "B" team playing in Division 3 of the Newbury Table Tennis League finishing two places higher than last season at 4th. We have 5 players in our team, with 3 playing in each match, we played 18 matches won 11, drew 1 and lost 6. We also took part in a knock-out handicap competition, and won the Emanuel Cup. We are regular bookers of the Village hall during the season September - March, with approximately 9ish Monday evening bookings. Points (to also be raised to Village Hall Committee)

- We agreed to a 33% raise in our fees paid to the Village hall, but would not be able to suffer any further increases.
- We still had some problem with water seeping through the floors, but conditions weren't as extreme as in previous years.

- Having the heating on during the day, also further improved playing conditions, and probably helped reduce condensation.
- We're concerned about when the proposed works on the Village Hall will start.
- We sometimes had problems getting access to cleaning materials, so often brought our own towels to help dry floor
- We now have a second table in the hall, it isn't quite the competition quality we'd hoped for, on loan to us from the Newbury league.
- The cost of individual hire of the village hall is still far too expensive, if just a few us (villagers) want to come round for a knock. I could consider running occasional open sessions. Alternatively perhaps, we should get a list of residents who play and or have tables in their houses, so that we can get some more social sessions within the village going?

### West Ilsley News

#### **Liz Dray and Andrea Cook**

**Editors:** We are both happy to continue for the next year, but will also be happy to relinquish the task if a new team volunteers!

**Residents only emails:** usage continues to increase and was an amazing help to those affected by the floods. We are mindful of keeping those without email in the information loop so we went to special efforts to ensure that those homes knew what was going on during that time, and wherever possible we ensure notes go in the monthly WIN.

If there was any good to come out of the flooding, it was that several villagers realised that being on the email list could be of benefit to them and they joined up - which has relieved some of the kind people who printed the WIN for them of this task.

**"Non-players":** Despite extra efforts to communicate during the flooding we still have a couple of households who clearly don't want to know about the village so we won't try any further with them.

**Advertising:** we now have 13 monthly advertisers and various ad hoc ones. We have now accumulated £898 in advertising revenue.

**Printing of copies for neighbours who do not have computer access:** Please can we take this opportunity to thank those in the village who kindly print out a copy of the West Ilsley news for

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neighbours who don't have access to a computer and who also ensure that they are aware of notes which are sent round on email.

### **West Ilsley Fete**

The current fete committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Alan Bloor and other departing members of the committee for all their hard work, enthusiasm and input over the years, particular thanks to Alan Bloor for his involvement over the past seven years.

The 2013 fete was held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2013 and was preceded by the usual Friday night dance organised by Ros and Rollo Duckworth, which was a huge success with the money raised used to support the village hall. Fete day itself was blessed with fine weather, large crowds and Andy Murray winning Wimbledon.

Highlights of last year's show included the produce show, including the ever competitive male and female baking categories, village 5 aside football, raffle, dog show, clothing and 'bric a brac' stall as well as the other usual stalls.

The cumulative effect was that the money raised last year was the largest for a number of years with donations made to many village organisations, including All Saints Church, Evergreens, Tennis Club, The Ilsleys School, Ilsley Under 5's, Village Hall, Air Ambulance, totalling almost £2,000.

This year the fete is to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2014 with the pre-fete dance on the Friday night. This year the event is being organised by Ilsley's Under 5's and to include a live band, hog roast, silent auction and much more.

The planning for the fete this year is well advanced with a number of new members joining the committee. Highlights this year include a dog display team, West Ilsley dog show, owl display and flying, produce show and the usual range of stalls and entertainment.

The committee is always keen to receive any comments or suggestions for this year's event and would like to thank all the village organisations, local businesses, sponsors and individuals for their continued support every year to make the fete weekend a successful and enjoyable event. Daniel Hudson – May 2014

### **Downland Volunteer Group**

The Downland Volunteer Group exists as a last resort service to help people travel to hospital, doctors and other appointments when no other option is available to them. It is run by volunteers and unfortunately recruiting volunteers continues to be very difficult, so if

anyone has any time to spare and would be interested to help in any small way, please let us know.

Overall, the DVG made a total of 1320 client trips for the year 2013/14 compared with 1398 for 2012/13 so a very slight decrease on last year.

Within that, West Ilsley continues to pull its weight – we still have 4 volunteer drivers who between them gave 82 lifts in the last year (2013) compared with 94 in 2011/12 – again, the vast majority of the work being done by one volunteer.

West Ilsley has 11 people registered to use the DVG, only 7 of whom needed to call on us in the last year, making a total of 15 trips between them. Yet again the support from friends, family and neighbours has meant that our village doesn't have to rely too much on this over-stretched resource.

### **West Ilsley Cricket Club**

As only 25% of the membership are resident in West Ilsley the club thrives thanks to a catchment radius of roughly 11 miles with the furthest source being Hungerford. The membership is dominated by the youth section led by Tony Scriven with his coaches & managers made up of parents and so the youth section continues to shine brightly, notably the girls. This is all the more evident by the high number of club players who have been selected to play at county level - most recently 16 at the end of 2013 inc. 8 girls - congratulations are due to both players and management alike and it is a delight to watch such a high standard of play, even if it is a little embarrassing for some of us who theoretically have many more years experience! Total membership number has varied each year (421 in 2011, 536 in 2012, 390 in 2013) but the breakdown has remained consistent:

Social:	60%
Players:	40%

Seniors	11%
Juniors	71% (70/30 boys/girls)
Minis	18%

(Note: a player's family get automatic social membership)

The seniors play in the Oxfordshire Cricket Association League (Divs 4 & 8) and the juniors in the Berkshire Youth Cricket League although nowadays the senior teams are often made up

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of increasing numbers of juniors especially the Sunday XI which battles neighbouring villages. Visiting teams have often been heard to say how nice it is to play here and the club owes its thanks to a small core of dedicated volunteers who keep things going - the club consistently scores highly in the OCA match reports for ground appearance & condition and deservedly so.

Financially, the subs. and bar prices have been kept at the same level for the last few years and the club more or less breaks even each year - the largest expenditures continue to be pitch & equipment maintenance, followed by insurance, rates and development courses.

All we need now is a little more sunshine...

### **Village Hall Committee**

The committee has made good progress since it was reformed last year. Plans are progressing re refurbishing the external repairs to the Village Hall and to the interior decor. This will not be wholesale change, but is intended to make the Hall a more appealing venue for both villagers and visitors to the village for social gatherings.

The Hall has been granted a £5000 grant from the local council through the efforts of Councillor George Chandler, if this can be matched by funding from the Village Hall funds, towards the costs of the refurbishments.

A decision was taken not to continue with the refurbishment plans whilst the village was focused on sorting out the problems caused by the flooding, however, the committee will meet shortly to continue with its efforts.