

## **HAILEY ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

**Minutes** of the **Annual Parish Meeting** held on Monday 8th April 2019 in the Village Hall

**Present: Cllrs:** G. Knaggs (in the chair), A. Smith, D. Musson, C. McGibbon, G. Hyatt, **County Cllr:** L. Walker, **District Cllrs:** G. Hill, K. Mullins, **Parish Clerk:** L. Wilkinson, **Presenters:** Ann Gibson (Gardening Club), Martyn Clark (Project Hailey), Neil Clennell (Wychwood Project), Michael Drew (Hailey Herald), John Gibson (Hailey Relief in Need), Karl Franklin (Hailey Village Hall), Kate Drewett (Kestrel Cubs), Alan Bailey (Hailey Play reading group), Sean Townsend (Radio Control Car Club), Elpie Lewis (St John's Church), Bob Fisk (Witney Rugby Club), 25 members of public

**1) To receive Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Doland and McConville

**2) Introduction from Chairman**

Cllr Graham Knaggs welcomed everyone to the new look APM. He also welcomed the new councillors, Ann Gibson and Michael Drew who will take up their role on 7<sup>th</sup> May following an uncontested election. Karl McConville and David Musson are standing down from the Council after many years' service, David being Cllr Knaggs' predecessor as chairman.

**3) Parish Council Reports**

**a) Latest on the Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Graham Knaggs reported that for most of the year the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been undergoing consultations and additional studies. This culminated in an independent examination of the NP in February. WODC is amending the Plan to take account of the examiner's report and a referendum will be held in a few months' time. The Inspector has taken the housing proposals out of the report. Various sites around the parish have been designated as Local Green Spaces which gives them more protection from development. The importance of the gaps between Witney and the villages has also been recognised. The Night Skies policy is embedded into the NP which means that street lighting is severely restricted. This will also apply to the new 1400 houses.

**b) Speedwatch and a new VAS for Delly Hill**

Cllr Andy Smith reported:

**Community Speedwatch**

- Over 10 years ago the Parish Council set up a Community Speedwatch group who undertook many speed check and enforcement exercises in conjunction with the Police
- The group also erected Community Speedwatch signage, installed a mobile VAS device (these are the flashing "30" signs), organised speed data recorders around the parish, and even succeeded in having speed limits changed on roads within the parish
- Since then things have improved. However, in mid-2018 a request came in to reinvigorate the scheme – and a willing band of volunteers has now formed to take things forward
- On 12<sup>th</sup> October last year we organised a training session with the Neighbourhood Policing Team who took about a dozen of us through the programme, showed us how to use the roadside SID kit (which displays a vehicle's approach speed), and explained how to administer details of speeding vehicles
- Through October and November, we held eight Community Speedwatch events in the parish focusing on vehicles (i) coming into the village from Whiteoak Green direction, (ii) coming into the village from Witney direction, and (iii) travelling through Poffley End – all exercises were held in 30mph areas
- These events were typically at rush hour with volunteers donning hi-vis to record details of speeding motorists

- The success of the events varied – with between 3 per hour and 34 per hour speeding vehicle details recorded – and with speeds of up to 47mph (bearing in mind this was all in 30mph areas)
- Details of speeding vehicles were forwarded to the Neighbourhood Policing Team who wrote letters to the vehicle owners – if speeders are caught more than once, those identified vehicles could be targeted by Police
- At the end of October, the Oxford Mail ran an article on our successful campaigning <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/17190560.west-oxfordshire-speedwatch-groups-deter-dangerous-drivers/>
- We then took a well-earned rest over the winter months – but now that spring is here, I have sent out emails to the team to restart our efforts after the Easter holiday period – and the Neighbourhood Policing Team have confirmed kit availability
- So far, I've pencilled in more events for the bottom of Delly Hill, but would welcome more volunteers
- If anyone is interested in joining us – or has any ideas or questions – please do let me know

## **VAS**

Following up on priorities identified in the Hailey Parish Action Consultation Team (Hailey PACT) questionnaire in 2009-2010, we installed 3 posts about 10 years ago to house a mobile battery-powered VAS that was shared across three locations – two at either end of the village and another in New Yatt

- This mobile VAS needed to be moved every 10 days or so (when the battery ran out) which was relatively cumbersome and time-consuming
- Over time we have been able to move to a position where we have two permanent solar-powered VAS – one on the existing post in New Yatt and one on the existing post at the Witney end of the village
- It is worth noting that the worst (and most numerous) offenders from our Community Speedwatch events appear to be those coming into the village from Whiteoak Green direction which currently has no VAS coverage
- We will soon add a third device, to be installed on the existing post at the bottom of Delly Hill – this will be battery-powered as we have been advised that solar-powered would not be effective with the tree growth above
- Liam Walker has kindly covered the cost of the new VAS through his Priority Funding – for which we thank him
- The new permanent VAS has now arrived, but it was damaged in transit unfortunately – we are looking to have it replaced and hope to have it set up as soon as we can

## **(c) Plans for a new Village Hall**

Cllr Graham Knaggs reported that the Infrastructure Development (IDP) working party of the Parish Council (PC) considered what should happen to the existing Village Hall when the current lease expires in 2021. Outline plans and costings were obtained and the IDP recommended to the Parish Council that the current village hall and sports pavilion be rebuilt. The PC accepted these recommendations. Following this decision, the PC set aside £5,000 in the 2018/19 year and has budgeted £7,500 in 2019/20 as part of its contribution to the eventual cost.

The IDP working party has created an 'architect's brief' setting out a wish list of facilities it would like to see in the new facility. These were consulted on during November / December 2018 – responses are on the web site. Subsequent to this consultation most of the residents of Church Lane objected to the suggestion of an additional entrance to the Village Hall from Church Lane.

Project Hailey (see separate report / presentation) is leading the fundraising activity.

## **4) County and District Councillors**

County Cllr Liam Walker reported:

- We are investing more in roads to reduce potholes: this year we plan to invest a further £13 million on roads on top of our existing £18.5 million. OCC has changed its policy on repairs doing more square cuts rather than sweep and fill. Please use Fixmystreet to report defects.
- Community Speedwatch has previously been successful and is due to start up again this month. I'm pleased to support this group.
- New Yatt bus service: we are currently working with a community bus provider looking into whether New Yatt could be included as part of a new bus route they are looking to set up.
- SGN gasworks: still no update. Not due to take this lace. This has now been delayed for two years....
- New VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) for Delly End junction has been funded by OCC. County Councillors have a fund available for community projects. I am delighted to fund this new device to help with reducing speed in the village
- A40: OCC has submitted plans for £180 million funded through the Housing Infrastructure Fund, for improving the A40. The plan includes extending the dual carriageway from Witney to the planned Eynsham Park and Ride; an eastbound bus lane and sections of a westbound bus lane.

District Cllr Gill Hill reported:

- Local Plan has taken a long time to be implemented. Hailey C should start thinking about S106 money that will be available from the development of 1400 houses.
- A successful Water day was held last year at WODC with Thames Water and the Environment Agency. Issues discussed were flooding and pollution of rivers.
- A safe house has been built in Chipping Norton for homeless people.
- This is my last year representing you as a District Cllr and I have thoroughly enjoyed it.

District Cllr Mullins reported:

- He shares the responsibility of the District Council with Gill Hill. Between them they have five parishes.
- The Gigaclear project is the major work at resent and is causing disruption at present although in the main they are doing a good job.
- The move towards Publica – group of councils which together deliver services - is settling down and teething problems are being resolved.
- It has been a frustrating year with regard to the Local Plan. This was passed although he voted it against it. It is meant to see the end of speculative developments although they are still coming up.
- We need truly affordable housing and more social housing so people can continue to live in the village they grew up in.

## **5) Witney Rugby Club**

Bob Fisk reported:

The Rugby Club was formed over 50 years ago and moved to Hailey in early 1980s.

Witney Rugby club is an RFU seal of approval club with excellent facilities and a strong committee dedicated to enabling rugby for the local area. We have 3 men's teams, a Vets team, a ladies' team, youth teams from under 5 to under 18 and a SEN team. 400 children are currently signed up.

The Club likes to be good neighbours and sees themselves as part of the community.

We are a not for profit organisation who are supported by many local businesses.

If your son or daughter or you are looking to play rugby, please contact me

[robertfisk@btinternet.com](mailto:robertfisk@btinternet.com)

### **Recent and Forthcoming Events**

27th March Witney schools tag festival  
10th April Quilter kids refereeing 7-10pm  
14th April county under 10/11 festival at Witney RFC  
The Senior Men's End of Season Dinner will be held on Friday 26th April!  
6th May Witney Colour Run  
Cotswold 7s @WRFC Saturday 8th June starts midday  
Guinness World Record attempt 22nd/23rd June 10s rugby  
Nat West / club and grounds clean-up day 29th June  
Summer Ball 13th July

Throughout the summer we stage:  
Dog shows, caravan weekends, and social events like BBQs

They have recently been granted planning permission for an extension to accommodate players after matches for meals. It has the potential to hold weddings/ wakes/ parties weight watchers classes/ Zumba etc

## **6) Wychwood Project**

Neil Clennell reported:

He is the new Chief Executive of the Wychwood Project and has spent 3 months finding out what is happening in the area.

- Foxburrow Wood has been planted for 10 years. The habitats are slowly starting to evolve.
- Parents and toddlers' group is held on Friday mornings.
- Plans are to use a reserved area for education. There is the possibility that this area will exclude dogs in order to increase wildlife and create nature reserves of the future.
- They are also looking to build an education shelter and expand their bird project to attract more birdlife.
- The Wychwood Project has recently taken on ownership of Singe Wood

## **7) Hailey Village Hall**

Karl Franklin reported:

A new committee has been appointed in the last year.

In January they started cleaning the floor. It will be sanded and re-varnished in the summer. They are fund-raising for this upkeep.

Whilst the hall is receiving more outside bookings, they also need local support.

There is a new online booking system although email and phone booking can still be used.

## **Coffee morning**

Dawn Franklin reported:

It has been running for 15 years. It is held on the first Friday of every month. It initially raised funds for school but now raises them for different charities such as New Yatt Riding for Disabled.

## **8) St John's Church**

Elpie Lewis reported:

St John's Church is now not only a part of the Parish of Witney, but also a part of the new Benefice of Witney which now includes Minster Lovell.

### **Church events 2018-19**

Quick Whizz through the year:

**Work on the church** was completed in the summer thanks to amazing dedication of many local people not least Michael Drew who masterminded the whole thing. So, we now have:

- New block and beam floor in 2/3 of the church
- New Kitchen with beautifully crafted bi-fold doors created by Pete Heritage
- Re-designed disabled loo
- Re-designed vestry

We had a **Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration** in July - followed by pig roast – it was a big occasion on what seems to be the only wet day of the summer! But enjoyed by all.

**Regular events –**

9.15 service on Sunday each week, 10am service every Thursday alternating between Middletown Grange and the church. We have a good relationship with Middletown Grange.

6pm Evensong 1st Sunday of the month.

**Link with school:** the clergy go in to school regularly to take assemblies, and several of us helped with a wonderful Prayer Space Day which was held in school. The school comes into church for special services – like the leavers service, school carol service. They also came and participated in the Parish Advent Carol Service, held in Hailey this year. Individual classes have also come up for lessons in the church.

**Special services elsewhere–** Woodland Service, Peace Service, Remembrance Day,

**Other Special Services -** Lights of Remembrance when the churchyard is lit up by night lights, Harvest Festival, Village Carol Service, Village Festival Service – Father’s Day/limbo dancing!!

**Concerts: - Woodgreen Jazz group** came during the Hailey Festival – their first public performance and very well received.

- **“A Village Reflects”** for Armistice Day was a big village occasion – when we raised £1117 for Combat Stress. That weekend we also planted the Hailey Armistice Tree near the War Memorial, when Robin Carr, a veteran himself, spoke movingly of Peace, Hope and Remembrance. We are currently talking with Alec Peever about the engraving of a stone to go beside the tree – you may hear more about that in the Hailey Herald.

**Village Lunch** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of month in Village Hall, now welcoming between 40 and 50 people

**Soup Lunches** – through November and during Lent at homes around the village and raising funds for Christian Aid. This Lent will be well in excess of £600.

**Future plans** include: **Board Games Afternoon** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of Month, starting on 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2-4pm

**“A Peaceful Place”** – Thursday afternoons/early evening starting after Easter. Peace, tranquillity, cuppa.

Always open to new ideas.....

**The Churchyard** receives attention on our special Churchyard Clean Up days, when an army of volunteers tackle pathways, ivy, weeds, and overgrown shrubs, and are fed with cake and coffee.

The churchyard is regularly beautifully mown and strimmed by Roger Cantwell, and we would like to thank Hailey Parish council for their generous grant towards the maintenance of the churchyard as a very special place for residents and visitors to visit.

## 9) Radio Control Car group

Sean Townsend reported:

West Oxfordshire Remote Control Arena (WORCA) has been running for 4 years in Hailey, on a Saturday night. It started off with a plastic track. This started to wear out, so they built a new one out of steel which folds away. They were the first club to introduce to floodlights indoors.

They have held big meetings including a charitable meet for Children with Cancer UK and raised £500.

They have built the group to become a leading group in the area and they are immensely proud of it.

## 10) Project Hailey

Martyn Clark reported:

**History:**

- Formed 2005 as “Project Hailey Kids are Us”

- Purpose is to generate funds for Village infrastructure, initial support WODC/WREN
- First project Children's playground equipment: hard Surfaces, Basketball Net, Skate equipment and a bench
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase in 2010/11 was "Playtown", Spring Riders, Fort Yuma and Picnic tables.
- Latest Phase: Outside Adults Multi Gym

**Present Project:**

- Proposed new Village Hall and combined Changing Rooms
- Existing predictions are circa £1 million required for new build, fittings and demolition of existing facilities.
- Requirement agreed by IDP and Parish Council

**Fund-raising:**

- Currently Seeking Charity status
- Grants and Donations are the prime source, Housing, Corporations Clubs and Individuals
- Xmas Raffle/Annual Raffle
- A Hailey 500 Club has been proposed
- Welcome all new ideas to assist in generating funds

## **11) Hailey Herald**

Michael Drew reported:

The PAST is written down in 272 copies of the Hailey Herald, (which were displayed). They are a fascinating record of the last 27 years of the social history of the village. From how we celebrated national events: Jubilees and the Millennium etc. and local events too such as the demise of the Tree Club, the Diamond Years and the Wine Circle, to the starting of the Play Reading Group, the Hailey Singers, the Village Lunch and the Second Tuesday Ladies.

The first issue was produced in 1992 and 10 issues a year have been produced since then with not one issue being missed.

The Hailey Herald is a joint effort and thanks go to:

- the school, staff and Governors for use of the photocopier at minimum cost
- the deliverers who have delivered a total of 136,000 copies
- the editors, the first of whom was Geoff Crompton and for the last 20 years David Burton
- Doris Burton for the packaging and distributing to the deliverers
- the financial supporters such as the Parish Council, Hailey Gardening club and other donors plus a few advertisers. For this reason, the Hailey Herald has a healthy bank balance.

Looking to the future, younger people are needed to take over the reins if the Hailey Herald is still needed in the age of the website and many forms of instant communication.

## **12) Breach Wood**

David Musson reported:

Michael Drew had the idea for the development of Breach Wood; it was planted in 2002 as a 6-acre woodland. The design of the woodland is such that there is access from all the different parts of the village.

It is widely used on daily basis, increasingly for educational events such as Forest School. They have also collaborated with Inclusive Community Education based in Witney to offer people with learning difficulties a range of outdoor activities.

Breach Wood is affiliated to the Wychwood Project.

David Musson recorded the thanks of the Trustees to Sean Morris, the founding chairman of the Trustees of Breach Wood. He has spent a lot of time there over the last 17 years. However, sadly he is leaving Hailey which will leave a gap in the care of Breach Wood.

The twelve Trustees meet three or four times of year.

If you are interested in finding out about activities held in Breach Wood, you can be added to the mailing list.

### **13) Hailey Relief in Need**

John Gibson, Chair of Trustees, reported:

It has been a registered charity since 1997. It was an amalgamation of four local charities who originated between 1652 and 1786 initially for 'Poor widows and needy orphans of the parish'.

The charity exists to assist individuals who live within the secular parishes of Hailey and Crawley.

It is a very small charity: total funds are around £33,000 which yield an annual return of around £1,00 to £1,200; that is the amount used to fund assistance rather than the capital.

The charity cannot be used for assistance with Council Tax bills, tax to HMRC or outstanding utility bills. Grants are one-off and cannot be regular payments or follow-up payments to an original grant without fresh consideration. Grants are as diverse as helping the purchase of defibrillators; to helping an elderly person to make their bathroom easier to negotiate; to assisting the church with the provision of a new toilet. They also have a small stock of wheelchairs that can be borrowed.

Additionally, the fund pays for small gift hampers for 15 to 18 older members of the community every Christmas and also makes contributions to the Witney food Bank to assist families over the Christmas period.

HRIN is managed by a Board of Trustees which include the vicar, Rev Ness Wiffen, Janet Lines, Lauren Basson and Jeremy Lewis. Our secretary/Treasurer, Pam Simpkins, gives us great support and is our main problem-solver. If you become aware of someone who might need some help, please contact Pam or myself in the first instance. We can make emergency payments of up to £100 without convening the Trustees but for greater amounts, need a meeting. Pam's phone number is 01993 868626 and mine is 01993 700162.

### **14) Hailey Festival 2019**

Andy Smith reported:

- A willing group of enthusiastic volunteers meet regularly to coordinate several events into a programme during June of each year
- Although the festival committee does "run" and "own" one or two of these, most of them are independently-run and representatives work with us to ensure there are no clashes and to promote each other's events
- We started back in 2012 for the Jubilee, and we are now about to do our 8<sup>th</sup> annual Hailey Festival!
- From a financial perspective, we try to ensure our revenue each year matches our outgoings
- We do currently have healthy finances, with c£2,500 in the bank, and we aim to keep this level of reserve specifically to fund a "national event" at some point in the future, e.g. a coronation, etc.
- This year has seen us become independent of the Parish Council and I would like to thank the Parish Council for its help to date – both financial and operationally
- This year's programme (so far) is:
  - Fri 7 June from 6pm = **Rounders Match** (Fri 14 June backup date) at the Recreation Ground

- Sat 8 June from 12pm = **Scarecrows start** (until Sat 22 June) with theme of “Film Titles” and **Hailey Rocks starts** – you can still sign up for a scarecrow (talk to Ann Gibson, Judith Knaggs – or message us on Facebook)
- Sat 8 June = **Common Leys Country Fair**
- Sat 8 June from 12pm-5pm = **Rugby 7s Competition** at the Rugby Club
- Sat 8 June from 7pm-midnight = **Hailey Festival Summer Party – GrooveTown featuring The Mighty Disco Biscuits (playing live) at the Lamb & Flag**
- Sun 9 June from 12pm-3pm = **World War II Variety Show** (bring a picnic) at the Church
- Sat 22 June at 12pm = **Scarecrows ends**
- Sat 22 June from 12pm-5pm = **Summer Fete** (including Scarecrows winners’ announcement) at the Recreation Ground
- Sun 23 June = **Afternoon Tea** in the Village Hall
- These details are all available on the Parish website – and more details will soon be published on the Hailey Festival Facebook page
- If anyone is interested in joining our committee, interested in helping with a particular event such as the Summer Fete, or would like to donate raffle prizes, etc. please do let me know!

### 15) Hailey Primary School

Debbie Davies reported:

The school is trying to keep to local traditions as well as being innovative. Below is list of things they achieved last year.

#### A Celebration of 2017-18

As well as our fantastic end of year results we have lots of celebrate this year. Here are some of the wonderful things we have done which help to make this school so special and broaden your child’s learning, experiences and development.

**Science Week** **Outdoor Learning Day** **99 Club**  
**Pirate Dan** **Stargazing** **Talent Show**  
**One World Week** **Swimming Lessons**  
**PAT Day** **sports coach** **Music Lessons**  
**Parent Open Mornings** **Class Assemblies**  
**Carol Concert** **Productions** **Panto Visit**  
**Rookesbury Residential** **Rainbow Day**  
**Mosaic** **Christmas Tree Walk**  
**Summer Extravaganza** **Book Fair**  
**Click Theatre** **Easter Service**  
**Harvest Festival**  
**Library Visit** **Sports Morning** **Sports Events**  
**Blue Cross** **Chance to shine** **Class Trips**



## 16) Lamb and Flag pub

Matthew Cantwell reported:

He has worked for the pub for the last 4 years. Last June, due to circumstances, he had to take over. Currently the pub has two 2 bar billiards teams, five darts teams (one women's) and three Aunt Sally's teams.

They serve food from Thursday to Sunday; with pie night on Thursdays and a Sunday roast. They intend to re-start Friday lunches.

They are an asset to the community, and it can only be a viable business by the local community supporting it.

## 17) Kestrel Cubs

Kate Drewett reported:

Kestrel Cubs is part of the 1<sup>st</sup> North Leigh Scout Group

- We have started meeting in Hailey during the winter and then in the summer we use a woodland in North Leigh
- The group also has a beaver colony that meets on Wednesday evenings, two cub packs that meet on Mondays and a Scout troop that meets on Thursdays

This year is our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to celebrate we are all camping on Brownsea Island where Baden Powell started the scouting movement.

Our Pack activity

- We like to be outside as much as possible and we do the scouting activities you'd expect like learning lighting fires – and of course fire safety!
- Our activities are wide but we particularly like crafting and we encourage recycling and upcycling
- We do a lot of activities around understanding nature and the environment
- Recently we visited Ardley Energy Recovery centre to see what happens to our rubbish
- We do at least a couple of camps for a couple of nights away every year
- This year we are at WOD camp in June with other West Oxfordshire Scout Groups for a big camp at Horley near Banbury
- We also like to take our cubs Narrow boating

Tea Party

- We recently had the Guide Dogs for the blind visit our pack – which the cubs really enjoyed and asked some great questions!
- We are hosting a fund-raising Tea party here on May 19<sup>th</sup> – 2 - 4pm. We would like to invite you all to join us

We want to use the event to both raise funds for Guide Dogs and raise awareness of Scouting here in the village

New cubs are welcome now

- Our pack currently has 18 cubs, but we can take up to 24 cubs
- We are looking for new recruits as quite a few of our cubs are due to move onto Scouts in September.
- Children under 8 can join the waiting list for our Beaver Colony and children over 10.5 for our Scout troop

Scouting leaders are all volunteers

Scouting is a very rewarding pastime – seeing children try activities they might not otherwise have the opportunity to try at home

It's great to watch them develop and grow in confidence

- Unfortunately for us, one of our leaders is moving to Cornwall over the summer, so we are on the hunt for another assistant leader

- We also need occasional helpers for the odd sessions where more adult support is helpful, as well as hikes, events and camps

Join us!

For more information in joining our pack or Scouting activities contact Kate Drewett – North Leigh Kestrel Cubs Akela:

[kate\\_drewett@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:kate_drewett@hotmail.co.uk)

[addphone number](#)

## **18) Gardening Club**

Ann Gibson reported:

The club was set up just over 70 years ago and is still going strong with 170 members, 15 of whom joined during 2018.

We have a committee of 6 – Dawn Franklin, Graham Franklin, Martyn Clark, Graham Knaggs, our Treasurer, and Judith Knaggs, our Secretary. As well as our Annual General Meeting in March, we meet about six times a year and between us we organise a wide variety of events.

We are steadily improving our communication by collecting email addresses – taking care to comply with the GDPR Regulations that came in last year. We also have a Facebook page. Details of our events, our AGM and our accounts are all available on the Parish website.

The annual subscription to the club is probably one of the lowest in the area at £4 a year for an individual and £7 for a couple, which entitles members to free admission to our talks and discounts at certain garden centres and nurseries.

With some of its surplus cash, the club makes donations to village-related items – for example, providing a bench, or to local charities and organisations. Donations this year have gone to support the horticultural students at Wood Green School; Riding for the Disabled at New Yatt; the Hailey Herald; the cubs who now meet here in the village hall; and Project Hailey.

### **A report of our events**

In 2018 we had a special 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary garden party on one of the hottest days in the year. And, many of you will know that we all hosted the BBC Radio 4 programme “Gardener’s Question Time” at Wood Green School. This was a sell-out event and was very successful. We were delighted that one of the questions selected was put forward by one of the horticultural students.

And now, our regular events ...

To encourage everyone after the winter our talks provide tips and ideas for both the gardening enthusiast and the beginner. We also invite speakers to talk on general interest topics. So far, this year, we’ve had a talk about Cogges Manor Farm Museum and one about Labour saving gardening. Our next one on Monday, 29 April is entitled “Peppers, Potatoes, Petunias and poisons” – all about the deadly nightshade family.

Other events that some of you will be familiar with are the Spring Plant Sale in May and then the Scarecrow trail in June as part of the Annual Hailey Festival. Last year’s sports themed event generated 37 different sports around the village. This year the theme is film titles and we have 31 people signed up so far. The other contribution the gardening club makes to the Festival every other year, as we did in 2018, is Open Gardens. This is a lovely way to spend a warm sunny afternoon in June – visiting gardens and eating cake – two of my own favourite occupations. As well as the 11 gardens in different parts of the village that were open last year one family in Poffley End also kindly invited visitors to see their allotment.

Some of the events we run are rather weather-dependent, of course. An example is the Village Show in September – the highlight of the gardener's year. Although the Show itself is held indoors in the village hall it can sometimes be a bit of battle to produce the best exhibits of flowers, fruit and vegetables for the show when the weather has a mind of its own like last year with a long winter, a very wet start to the year and then a hot and dry summer. However, gardeners are not daunted by the weather and we were able to put on a very good show of exhibits from the garden as well as stunning examples of crafts, cookery, photography from both adult and child exhibitors.

Once the Village Show is over, we turn our attention to Apple Pressing Day in October, when people from all around the area arrive with crates of apples to be turned into delicious apple juice. We also have all sorts of games and quizzes – and, of course, lots of apple-based cakes to eat. As we move into winter our Deck the Halls event has become a regular feature in the calendar. People from the village and elsewhere come along and work together to create the most wonderful wreaths. It is always a jolly evening helped along by the Christmas carols, mince pies and mulled wine.

So, the club is thriving, but it does depend on its members and other interested people to come along and support our events. We'd love to have more people – particularly children – entering the Village Show – there are trophies and cash prizes to be won.

If you are not a member and would like to be, there are membership forms by our display. There is also a flyer for our next talk on 29 April. We hope to see you there.

### **19) Play reading group**

Alan Bailey reported:

The Play Reading Group meet every second Wednesday in the month at various local venues. Everyone is welcome.

They occasionally do readings in the village hall. This costs £1 to cover costs of borrowing the books from the library.

### **20) Questions and items for general discussion**

None

Meeting closed: 9.20pm