

# Tetsworth Parish Council

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for Tetsworth Residents held at 7.30pm on Monday 27 April 2015 at Tetsworth Memorial Hall

### Present

Councillors: Karen Harris – Chairman  
Hazel Bottone  
Alan Martin  
David Nixey  
Marjorie Sanders

Minutes Clerk: John Gilbert

Members of the public: 30

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Sarah Pullen – Parish Clerk  
Michelle Jacques – PCSO  
Jacqui Madden – PCSO  
Tanith Ridgway – TPSA  
Paul Carr – Parish Councillor-designate

### 2. Welcome & Annual Report by Parish Council Chairman – Karen Harris.

Good evening and welcome to the Annual Village meeting of the Parish Council. It provides an opportunity to hear about what has been going on in the background from the various organisations in the village and others, and learn something about issues that affect the quality of life here in Tetsworth.

I would first like to pay tribute to Frank Eley who sadly died in October. Frank worked tirelessly for over 25 years tending to the village green and most passionately to the cricket pitch and square. It was never fully appreciated how much time and dedication he put in until he was no longer doing it. The TSSC has had an uphill struggle to fill his shoes. We have had many discussions with the committee to offer support and financial assistance.

We have looked at 17 planning applications and 1 outline plan for the Mount Hill Farm development over the year and have dealt with, and are still dealing with, various planning disputes surrounding the Golf Course lights, one unlawful development in the High Street and various boundary disputes and breaches in planning conditions. We are still awaiting response to our communications regarding the trees along the boundary of the village green and the new development behind the Swan Antiques Centre, Victoria Gardens. We have managed to get agreement from Rectory Homes, the developer, to pay £1,700 for works to trees we believe are in their ownership although they continue to state that they belong to the village. These works will be carried out early May. We have also ensured that the newts in this area continue to be protected. Many years ago when the Swan Gardens development went up, the village was promised by Bryant homes, now Taylor Wimpey, a substantial amount of money to maintain the trees at the rear of the Antique Centre, now Victoria Gardens, and the back of the Swan Gardens houses - money the village has never received. The TPC is adamant that history does not repeat itself, leaving the village with substantial costs towards

maintaining trees that do not belong to us in the years to come. We will continue to pursue the ownership issues in this area.

We have also attended various appeal hearings. The proposed bund development on Manor Farm was rejected on a few counts, one being that it would ruin the view of Tetsworth for those on the motorway! The bund development would be of benefit to many in the village in addressing the motorway noise. We will continue to support this should it come up again.

The CLP group worked very hard to survey the residents and produce the final document that was distributed around the village in December. Many thanks goes to them. It has given rise to a few areas the Parish Council will be aiming to facilitate over this next year including the Business Directory on our website, further bulb planting along the verges, and a comprehensive mapping of the footpaths that surround and go through the village. Mr Andy Mayes has already come forward to organize this, so it is already underway. Sorting out the various archived documents for the village and placing interesting and pertinent documents on the website is another task. We will assist the play area and skate ramp refurbishment group with help and financial assistance, and guide creation of a new residents' pack. 60 people offered their support to various projects including those I have mentioned and others for the various voluntary groups in the village.

The play area is looking a little sad and requires a complete overhaul along with the newly refurbished skate ramp which, although repaired, is not going to last that long. It is so very popular. Our thanks to Mr Glen Marriott for repairing it. Also thanks to Charlie and Lawrence, two schoolboys, who volunteered to help me treat the new surface last week. A small group in the village has come forward to drive a play area project. It is important that we continue to address health and safety issues in these areas and prepare the areas for formal inspection in July. Grants will need to be applied for, so maintenance of these areas is important, as grants will not be forthcoming if the areas are closed. We welcome anyone to come forward to assist with raking the weeds out and levelling off the bark. We inspect these areas weekly.

At last, the TPC has been able to make use of the small area of land behind the green that was donated to the village some years ago. A covenant was placed on future use of the land, but we have been able to get permission to bridge the ditch and gain access. David Wilmshurst, our county councillor, managed to secure a grant of £1,000 towards the cost of the bridge along with a donation of £500 from someone in the village. As a result, the Forest School opened this month run by a very enthusiastic group who want to provide outdoor education for children. We fully realize that it will be an impossible task to keep teenagers out of this area, but we do ask that people remain vigilant and report to us should they have any concerns relating to Health and Safety and nuisance.

The big clean-up project run by OCC will be back in January to clear verges and paths in the area. We have tried to change the timing and are assured that they work progressively round the area and that we will get our paths addressed at a different time each year taking our turn for more favourable ridding our pavements of the explosion of spring and summer growth.

We are currently mapping all the grassed areas that we are responsible for, so that we can put the maintenance/cutting contract out to tender. We are also mapping all the trees in village ownership, many of which have tree preservation orders on them, and addressing any that require works. We are also gathering information for our village assets register with the aim to complete formal registration of all Parish land. We hope to have all this information on our website.

We have appointed a new solicitor for the Parish Council. She is currently looking at various land and boundary issues. We have very limited funds and are often unable to risk running up huge costs addressing some of the disputes we encounter, unless we can pass the costs on.

We have had several complaints from residents about parking in the village. Most are not in our power to sort out and we are therefore limited in what we can do except inform our local PCSO and encourage responsible parking. With the ever-increasing popularity of the school from children out of the village, many parking issues surround the dropping off and collection of children from the school in the morning and afternoon. Perhaps the school representatives could assist with a solution when they have their opportunity to talk later. Parking will continue to present problems in the more densely populated areas of the Mount, Back Street, Parkers Hill, Chiltern View and the Laurels. We can only ask people to utilize space on their property and consider emergency vehicle access when parking.

We have a precept at £14056.00 which includes the SODC grant and have recently received a way-leave of £780 from BT for the new telecoms junction box on the green. We are no longer required to have conduct Financial Audits with both external and internal auditors. This has now been replaced with a Transparency Code which requires small parishes to provide a list of relevant documents for general inspection. We are still required to have an Internal Audit carried out by an independent person. Roger Symes from Brightwell-Cum-Sotwell has been appointed as our Auditor for last year's accounts. Our Financial Audit for 2014/15 will be available for inspection in June/July.

Please take a few minute to look at our new website and offer for inclusion any information that you feel would benefit the village. We also have a Facebook page providing regular information.

Finally, it is with great regret that we had to accept the resignation of our Clerk, Sarah Pullen, due to her continued success and high pressure of work for her own company. Sarah has worked tremendously hard for our village as the Clerk for over five years, sorting out many areas that had got into quite a mess having had no clerk for many years. She has gone way beyond her remit and spent hours dealing with many contentious issues, and designing and maintaining our website bringing us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century! She has a wealth of knowledge and contacts within District and County Council offices and has been a very valuable asset to us all in Tetsworth. The Parish Council faces a somewhat turbulent future without a clerk and especially without Sarah. I will certainly miss her energy and efficiency; she has been my mainstay as Chairperson over the past 4 years. We wish her all the best for the future and thank her for being part of our village, even though she herself lives in Watlington.

Also thank you to all the councillors who have given up a considerable amount of their time to work on village matters; we have been a councillor down for some time and this has required the remaining volunteers to take on further work. We are a voluntary group of people who aim to do our best to make Tetsworth a pleasant place to live. We do not get paid and are so often criticized and hardly ever praised. Please offer your support and, if you feel you could take on the role Parish Clerk, we will be very pleased to hear from you.

We will have time at the end of the meeting should you have anything you wish to put to the Parish Council following our other speakers this evening.

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 28<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 to be signed as a correct record.**

Resolved: To accept the minutes as a true record and sign - UNANIMOUS.

**4. Report from District Councillor – Dorothy Brown.**

Our District Councillor, Dorothy Brown, will be retiring from SODC at the next elections on 7 May 2015. She was unable to be present and had not submitted a report.

**5. Report from County Councillor – David Wilmshurst**

David Wilmshurst was unable to be present at the meeting, but had submitted a written report which was summarised by a parish councillor.

Annual Budget. The County Council will have achieved savings of £204M between 2010 and 2015 and these are set to reach £292M in future plans. Further reductions in Central Government funding could give rise to additional savings requirements.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). A Serious Case Review which followed high profile CSE publicity in the county was conducted by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Its findings are resulting in greater awareness training for 1,500 relevant professional staff and the building of 4 more children's homes for the most vulnerable in the county.

School Nurse Programme. The Council has promoted the role of the School Nurse as a key appointment within schools' management teams since taking on responsibility from the NHS.

Connecting Oxfordshire. The Council has conducted a consultation exercise on its ambitions for transport improvements across the county as Oxfordshire's population and businesses grow in the period to 2031.

Chief Executive Appointment. The Council's earlier decision to declare the post of Chief Executive redundant is now under review.

Foster Care Support Scheme. Oxfordshire is benefitting from a Central Government grant to establish support 'hubs' offering respite care, peer support and social activities for foster carers. The 'hubs' will be delivered by the Fostering Network charity.

Better Broadband for Oxfordshire. Additional funding of £5.1M to this programme will result in an additional 6,500 Oxfordshire homes being able to access high-speed broadband.

London Welsh Rugby Club Partnership. The London Welsh community team will help to deliver the 'Live Smart, Tackle Heart' school-based health initiative.

## 6. Tetsworth Community Led Plan – John Gilbert

All of our households will have received a copy of the Tetsworth Community-Led Plan (CLP) for 2015 to 2025 at the end of last year. The project took approximately a year to move from an initial decision to develop a new plan to publication and distribution of the glossy booklet which set out almost 50 actions which could help to make Tetsworth an even more attractive and vibrant community over the next decade. With financial assistance from SODC and our own Parish Council, and enthusiastic support from a small group of local volunteers, the project managed to stay on track and was delivered on time and within budget.

The aim of the CLP is to tease out those things that villagers would like to see in terms of new and additional facilities and services, how better to overcome some of the less attractive features of living in Tetsworth, and capturing general views on the direction and extent of future development of our village. The principal means of harvesting these opinions was the Village Questionnaire which sought responses during June last year. To those of you who participated, a big 'thank you'. Almost 50% of households and a similar proportion of adult Tetsworth residents took part and provided the evidence on which the actual CLP document and its actions are based. The survey also captured details of almost 60 villagers willing to support a range of potential improvement initiatives.

The CLP does not claim to be the inspiration of many of the initiatives set out in the document, and progression of many potential projects will be led by existing village organisations such as the school, church, Sports & Social Club and Memorial Hall. Some actions are little more than signposts for our Parish Council and residents to take note of, while others will not get off the ground without sustained commitment of volunteers willing to lead and support specific projects and initiatives..

This meeting is the first formal opportunity to review the CLP Actions List. I do not intend to go through all 46 actions this evening, but will just highlight a few where I can report significant progress during the past few months:

Plans have now been drawn up for refurbishment of the kitchen area of the Memorial Hall.

A team of volunteers has come forward to launch plans for the replacement or refurbishment of the PATCH play area. Interested residents also expressed support for adult exercise equipment on the Village Green, perhaps organised as a Trim Trail.

Memorial Hall bookings are buoyant with a number of exercise-related sessions now established in the programme of events.

The Better Broadband initiative should go live soon. The new junction box is in place on the edge of the Green and contractors are busy installing fibre-optic cables in the local area.

A Tetsworth resident has come forward to take on the role of Village Footpaths Warden.

The lobby for M40 noise mitigation is alive and well.

A start has been made on inviting contributions to the Tetsworth Business Directory via the Parish Council website.

The website itself has recently benefitted from a comprehensive make-over and now has the potential to be a valuable focal point for local information. However, the driving force behind the site refresh, our Parish Clerk, Sarah Pullen, will shortly be relinquishing her appointment. If the website is to flourish, as it could, we will need a volunteer to take on the role of webmaster. Any volunteers?

The CLP document, the analysis of the Village Questionnaire data and the Action List are all posted on the Tetsworth Parish Council website, and I would be grateful to receive any updates on progress on any of the CLP actions. I plan to post revised information on an occasional basis.

Finally, another 'thank you' to those who contributed to the preparation of our CLP, and an open invitation to the villagers of Tetsworth to involve themselves in getting the good ideas and initiatives off the ground and through to completion.

## **7. Report from Community Policing Team**

Tetsworth was included in 2 community policing initiatives:

Operation Maginot: Detecting and deterring travelling criminals through the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) with a high-visibility Police presence.

Operation Magpie: Providing advisory letters to owners of vehicles in which valuable or attractive items have been left on display.

Only 2 minor incidents had been noted, although the Swan Antiques Centre had suffered a well-publicised break-in during Dec 2014.

## **8. Reports from Local Organisations:**

### **M40 Environmental Group – Ken Edwards**

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the M40CEG working on behalf of communities between Loudwater and Milton Common, and the continuing support of the Tetsworth PC and its M40CEG representative, Dave Harris, are particularly welcome. We can report significant progress with trial barriers expected to be erected in 6 locations next year.

A funded 3 phase Barrier Evaluation and Development programme is underway. 17 possible barrier solutions have been submitted by suppliers in UK, Germany and Italy. Up to 6 of these will be subject to technical assessment and detailed design with trial installation of chosen designs at selected locations planned for 2016.

In addition to its own monthly Planning Meetings, the M40CEG is represented on monthly Working Groups with Highways England and district councils, and on Quarterly Review Meetings additionally drawing in relevant county councils and local MPs.

Noise mapping is being used to assess the benefits of mitigation achievable through barriers and quieter road surfaces. The results of a pilot study at Milton Common showed that 5m barriers and quieter carriageway surfaces for all lanes were needed to reduce noise exposure to WHO-recommended maxima for over 80% of properties. Less radical solutions left more than 75% of homes exposed to greater noise nuisance than the WHO threshold. With the help of the Parish Council grant, it is expected that Tetsworth will be included in future noise mapping programme to cover all small communities along the local M40 corridor.

### **PATCH Play Area & Forest School – Pippa Ashton**

The PATCH refurbishment initiative has got off to a most encouraging start. We have had several meetings with local people about the project and many have come forward with contacts and ideas for fundraising or suggestions for how the PATCH should be renovated. We have also had a quote from a Playground company and are awaiting responses from others. Wholesale modernisation of the play area could cost almost

£100,000. We have had a look at a couple of initial design plans and once we have more quotes we will put together a formal plan and fundraising proposal to move the project forward.

The Forest School project has enjoyed huge community support and generosity in its initial stages. The village-owned site behind the Green is rapidly being transformed into an exciting and valuable asset for the youngsters of Tetsworth. The bridge to the site, bought with financial support from the Parish and County Councils and a local donor, is now in place. We have had donations of wood chip for the pathways from 4 Season's tree surgery, and TSSC has generously allowed us to use their water and tools. We have had locals come and cut pathways, build a fire pit, plant trees, shovel wood chip, collect resources and do so much more. We have had donations of a small pond, water butts, mud-pie kitchen and pots and pans to go with it, logs and fire wood, large cable reels from a building site and the offers keep coming in!

Forest School sessions have already started on Tuesday mornings with leaders from Heart of the Wild Wood. These have been well attended and people are travelling to the village to take advantage of these sessions. Tetsworth Primary School is keen to start coming to sessions and the Pre-school has already attended. A charity has now been set up so that we can formally apply for grants. We have called it the Tetsworth Outdoor Learning Centre as this encapsulates the vision for the site much better than Forest School. The site is being used in the evenings by locals who gather for a camp fire, marshmallow toasting, cooking bacon over the fire and enjoying time together.

We have had several events to raise money for the site and make people aware of what we are doing here. They have been very well attended and raised initial funds for a first aid kit, Forest School equipment and bug hunting jars.

Feedback from our Forest School users, both parents and children, has been full of universal praise for this community project. It is clearly meeting the need for additional local facilities in which our youngsters can enjoy themselves, acquire new skills and learn the value of teamwork in an exciting outdoor environment.

### **Tetsworth Memorial Hall – Caroline Cann**

The hall has been busy again this year and bookings have increased. We have seen a significant increase in business bookings, including the NHS.

We have a new tenant in the office; the tenant is, again, a small village business.

Engraved bricks will be put up in the near future; this is being done by a volunteer and so can only be done when both the hall and volunteer are free.

The village notice board has been returned to us, it has been repaired and adapted to enable it to be free standing in the front garden. This again is being done by a volunteer so will be erected as soon as both the volunteer and the hall is free.

We are fundraising for a new kitchen and heating by holding fundraising events each month. The plans have been drawn up and we are in the process of going out to tender. As soon as we have raised approximately 30% of the total needed, we can start the grant application process to raise some of the remaining sum.

We do have a problem with current limitations of Temporary Event Notices. Their effect is to restrict us to just 12 Bar Licences per year. We have already allocated them for this year and received 3 further requests. As a result, we are having to consider very seriously applying for a premises licence.

We are always in need of help from volunteers and we will soon be advertising volunteering opportunities at the hall.

It just leaves me to say thank you to everyone for their continued support.

### **Tetsworth Primary School – Alison Charlton**

Tetsworth School has continued to thrive and currently has 52 pupils on roll. 2014/15 has seen us introduce hot meals into our lunchtime provision; develop our curriculum coverage and delivery in line with the new national curriculum; lose a valued member of staff, Mrs Hinton, to what appears to be a very active retirement.

Our Sports Funding has been used to employ a sports coach who works with our sports co-ordinator. We believe that exercise is essential for all and that competition is character building. K.S. 2 have taken part in a number of sports tournaments winning some, coming second in others and being good sports in the remainder. The whole school were involved in commemorating the World War One Christmas truce, playing a very muddy football match prior to breaking up for Christmas. Pupils from Years 5 and 6 have also undertaken cycling proficiency training.

Staff are always keen to develop their practice and have attended a number of courses including ones on story-telling techniques, effective marking, assessment for learning and barriers to learning in mathematics.

As a school we are lucky to be part of a village community. This year we have had our Harvest Festival, our Christmas celebration and our Easter Service in Saint Giles's Church. Thank you to Peter Waterson for his continued support. Our Harvest Festival collection was used to purchase unwrapped gifts for Oxfam with monies remaining being presented to Peter for the church funds.

The Memorial Hall has provided us with a venue for our TPSA quiz, a school dinner (which freed up our school hall for a storytelling day) and a block of P.E. sessions. At Christmas time some of our pupils entertained the senior citizens following their Christmas dinner. Later in the year we have it booked for a Music Evening.

We are also grateful to the Sports and Social Club for providing us with goal posts and for keeping the grass on the football pitch cut; the Swan Hotel for allowing parents to use their car park during the times when they are open; the Red Lion for providing sandwiches and snacks (I am not sure Mr Surman could survive without you).

We have also visited St Mary's Church in Thame for a Federated Christmas Service in December and an Easter Experience in March.

Foundation Stage and Year 2 pupils had their end of year assessments moderated and verified by outside moderators and our end of Key Stage 2 results gave us value added figures of 98.5% in Mathematics, 98.7% in Reading and 99.4% in Writing.

We have provided a full time teaching placement for Mrs Cook to complete her teacher training and continue to welcome students from Brookes University in Oxford and Lord Williams's School in Thame.

The Tetsworth Primary School Association continues to fundraise and help to provide extras such as reward trips as well as curriculum enhancing materials.

Friday's 'tea & cake' sessions remain popular with parents. As well as a time to socialise we do also use them to boost fundraising efforts.

Our pet tortoises, Munch and Crunch, spend weekends away with the families of pupils and staff from the school and there has been some amusing tales told on their return.

As in previous years we have taken part in local events such as the Thame Partnership of Schools Dance Festival and Thame's Carnival. Also national events such as World Book Day, Children in Need, Young Voices at the O2 and Red Nose Day.

Now, with less than two terms before the end of another academic year, we are once again looking forward to our school sleepover, the TPSA Plant Sale, Sports Day, our Music Evening, our end of year graduation service and of course SATs!

Tetsworth Primary School welcomes visitors who may want to see our school in action. Appointments to view the school can be made via the school office on 01844 281328.

Alison Charlton also addressed the school drop-off and pick-up parking issue. She explained that fewer pupils were coming in from outside the village, and that the Swan Antiques Centre car park was available to parents whenever the centre was open.

## **Tetsworth Primary School Association (TPSA) – Tanith Ridgway**

Tanith Ridgway had taken on the role of TPSA Chair from Petra Eden-Parish who had served 7 years. She hoped to do as good a job as her predecessor.

We have continued to raise money for the village school via various methods which include a cake stall at the Village Christmas Fete, Christmas cards designed by the children and sold to parents, Easyfundraising, a second-hand school uniform shop and the Phil a Bag Scheme which recycles many items including clothes, fabrics, shoes and bags. The next collection will be at our annual plant sale which will be held on Sat 25 May this year. So, please drop in any unwanted items and come along to buy some plants.

We also held a very successful Quiz Night at the end of February which raised an amazing £950!

Last October, Kate Thompson who heads up fundraising for Tetsworth Little Kites, and I hosted a Halloween Disco for the grown-ups. This turned out to be a successful evening that everyone seemed to enjoy! This raised a lot of money which was split between the TPSA and Pre-School. We used our portion to top up the Bookhouse account so that the staff can continue to purchase books for the school. A few of the parents also sold hot-dogs, cakes and sweets after school to keep the children involved and raise additional funds.

Some of the children attended the Young Voices Choir at the O2 in January, and the TPSA was very pleased to help pay for the transport up to London for this.

I would like to say thank you to everyone for their continued support of the TPSA. We are very lucky to have such a great team of parents and villagers who attend and support our events.

## **Tetsworth Little Kites – Seb Mossop**

The Pre-School continues to build on its 'Good' assessment awarded by Ofsted last year. Little Kites is currently running at full capacity of 15 children and even, for a short time, had a waiting list. This is a fantastic testament to the staff and setting, and we aim to improve further through investment in staff development and training. We also aim to make continuous improvement in facilities and environment with more off-site trips and additional equipment. The children are already thoroughly enjoying the Forest School which is becoming a great asset for the village.

We enjoy positive interaction with Tetsworth Primary School and plan to run more events with the TPSA for mutual benefit; we will be participating in planned village fetes.

We are promoting Little Kites through our website, [www.tetsworthlittlites.co.uk](http://www.tetsworthlittlites.co.uk), and are recruiting new children and achieving greater parental involvement through running parents' evenings, social events and helper-days at the school.

## **Tetworth Trust – Paul Silver**

The Tetsworth Trust continues to be funded by donations from the Bingo, and our main outlay is the hampers to the senior citizens at Christmas.

It has been a difficult year, sadly Mr Frost passed away earlier this year after a long battle with illness. His contribution to the Bingo, the Trust and the village over many years has been tremendous; our thoughts are with his family.

Mr Spiers is recovering well from an operation, and the volunteers at the Bingo were able to keep the Bingo running during his recovery, and continue to provide support, which is very much appreciated. Mrs Hall had an accident in December, and is recovering well.

The Bingo is held at the Neighbours Hall in Great Milton on Saturday evenings. The Trust is very grateful to receive donations from the Bingo which was our only source of income in the last financial year.

The Trust continued to provide Christmas Hampers to the senior citizens in December. In previous years, the Bingo carried out most of the work of putting the hampers together, in addition to preparing the Christmas

Bingo & hampers for the Bingo goers. This last December, the Trustees assisted by making the arrangements for the village hampers in Tetsworth. The recipients were given the option of having their hamper delivered as before or collecting from a coffee morning at the Village Hall. Feedback from this was positive, as some enjoyed meeting up for a cuppa, and others preferred the delivery as before.

We would like to thank everyone that helps and supports the Bingo. We would also like to thank the village for your support, especially those who help with the Christmas hampers and deliveries, including parish councillors – your help and support is much appreciated.

### **Cozens Bequest – Alan Martin**

The Cozen's Bequest was founded in 1923 to provide pensions to poor widows and spinsters of good character professing the Protestant religion (this restriction was removed in 1991) and living in Tetsworth or adjacent parishes.

These parishes are: Tetsworth, Thame, Great Haseley, Stoke Talmage, South Weston, Adwell, Wheatfield, Lewknor and Aston Rowant.

The Charity Commission Scheme, which lays out the conditions of the Charity, requires just five Trustees:

Peter Waterson  
Martin Paul  
Carolyn Carr  
Simon Thorpe  
Alan Martin

Regrettably, Simon Thorpe is resigning as a Trustee and a replacement Trustee will be required. This person's appointment would need to be ratified by the Parish Council. If anyone would wish to assist in managing this Charity and become a Trustee, please contact Alan Martin direct.

The Trustees have made just one payment this year to support the activity of a local young children's group.

We are also still continuing to provide, having done so for many years, a small quarterly payment to six pensioners who all live within the 'Area of Benefit'

### **Tetsworth Sports and Social Club (TSSC) – Roger Benke**

I echo the words of others who have already paid tribute to Frank Eley who sadly passed away in October. His passing leaves an enormous hole in the committee – recognising that he did most of the work!

I remain Chairman of our current committee with Tony Bottone and Glen Marriott continuing as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Our numbers have grown with Lee Wanstall, Cary Hearn, Mike Bradley and Clare Allen joining the team. The Football section is represented on the committee by Janet and Andy Loveridge, with John McTaggart our 1<sup>st</sup> Team Manager. The Cricket section is represented by Pam Eley and Reggie Isaacs.

Our membership of almost 200 is a mix of cricket, football, social and biker members. The renewal cycle for 2015/16 is now underway.

On the sporting front, we support:

Football. 2 teams, both doing well. The 1<sup>st</sup> team came third in their division and the 2<sup>nd</sup> team came second in their league and got promoted.

Cricket. 2 teams playing in local leagues. We are looking for more players.

Golf. 30 members organised by Tony Bottone play at a number of courses in Oxon and Bucks to varying standards. The principal aim is to have some fun and gentle exercise.

Darts. 2 Ladies' and Men's teams play in local pub leagues. The men's team won both the singles and pairs cups, and the Ladies' team won the singles.

Pool. Competitive pool has stopped owing to the Local league folding. However, pool continues to be played in the clubhouse.

Aunt Sally. This has lapsed in the past couple of years, but we are planning to get it up and running again soon – starting with some friendly games.

TSSC has become the regular meeting point for a group of motorcycle enthusiasts from Chilton who meet each Tuesday. We continue to host live bands and singers every other Saturday with these social events free to members. The bar, on these and other occasions, continues to be our main source of income.

Last year saw us complete a major face-lift of the lounge and bar areas to attract more members and encourage greater regular use. We need to have an attractive offer to compete with the Memorial Hall, Old red Lion and Swan for our share of custom.

On the publicity front, we are distributing our own TSSC Newsletter and contributing articles to the Tetsworth Newsletter. We have also improved our website and are making greater use of Facebook and Twitter to promote membership and usage of our facilities.

We continue to look after maintenance of the Green. The Cricket section looks after the cricket square which is starting to look really good again. The rest of the Green is cut on a volunteer basis by members from across the club. Our old tractor is in urgent need of replacement and we currently have one on trial. However, it will cost £1,500 that we cannot currently afford. To square this circle, we are seeking grants and financial support from various sources, as well as technical expertise to give us confidence that we are getting a good deal.

TSSC will be organising an August bank Holiday Sports Festival in memory of Frank Eley. It will feature darts, 5-a-side football, cricket and Aunt Sally over the weekend – and a Beer Festival.

The TSSC committee is very disappointed that this year's Village Fete will not be held on the Green, and would love to see it return in future years.

Finally, thanks to all who have supported TSSC, and an open invitation for new members – come down and see what we have to offer.

### **St. Giles Church and Friends of St. Giles - Carolyn Carr**

The congregation at St Giles Church remains small but is flourishing under the care of Peter Waterson, We have a regular pattern of services throughout the year, with the exception of a few weeks in August. Rev Waterson officiates at communion services on the first and fourth Sundays of each month and at the special services at Christmas and Easter. We have a Morning Worship service on the second Sunday of the month, led by Jeneva Paul, and a more informal café service on the third Sunday led by Heather Moore or, occasionally, by Carolyn Carr. The latter service is held in the side aisle of the Church and involves a lightly guided discussion on topics from stories in the Old Testament to the origins of familiar hymns, accompanied by activities for the children (or young at heart), a few hymns or songs and quite a lot of chat and cake!

The average attendance at our services is still low (9 to 10 adults and 2 or 3 children) but the sense of community is strong and we are very gradually growing in number. Attendance at the special services at Christmas and Easter has grown more substantially and the Church is gratifyingly full on such occasions.

We continue to be very grateful to those who contribute to the upkeep of the fabric of the Church through contributions to Friends of St Giles or by helping to maintain the Churchyard. We held a Churchyard maintenance day last weekend and can now actually see some of the larger tombs that had been surrounded by elder! Thanks to a substantial donation 2 years ago, we are able to pay to have the grass cut throughout the summer, although this is not a bottomless pot and so we would obviously welcome any donations from people who are keen to help us maintain the grass at a sensible level.

We are required to have a structural assessment of the Church every 5 years, and this has raised a number of areas where we need to repair damage or do protective maintenance. Martin Kermack and his team have

already tackled some of this work, including repairing cracks inside the Church building and rehangng the gates. There is quite a lot more to be done so do not be surprised if you see scaffolding around the Church over the next few months.

### **Senior Citizens' Christmas Party – Paul Silver**

The Christmas Party was held in the Memorial Hall in December. We had to move to a Friday for the 2014 event, so chose to provide Fish & Chips as the main meal. A mobile Fish & Chip business which had been used successfully at a Memorial Hall event in the summer provided the fare, with sausages and a vegetarian dish as additional options. The move away from a buffet as provided in previous years appeared to be popular with diners. A big 'Thank You' to everyone who made the day possible, including Tetsworth School, and Angie Young, the Community Life Champion from Asda.

Our main fundraising events in 2014 were Jumble Sales and Quiz Nights, and we would like to thank the Fete committee for their donation.

In February this year, we held an open meeting to look at plans for 2015; 6 people attended and 1 apology was received. Our next meeting is scheduled for 19 May. Our Jumble Sale and Quiz Night held in April raised £370. We will be participating in the Village Fete in the summer, and will hold another Jumble Sale and Quiz Night later in the year. We will decide on the format for this year's party once we have established a final budget.

I would like to thank everyone for your continued support.

## **9. Open Forum and Questions**

Alan Martin welcomed the increased attendance at the War Memorial ceremony on Remembrance Day, and encouraged even greater participation in the coming years.

There were no questions.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm**