



LEONARD STANLEY

P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 12th May 2009 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

Those Present:- Councillors Wendy Bevan, Chris Connett, Mair Forder, Ruairidh Gaunt, Phil Herbert and Jess Wiseman, District Cllr Nigel Studdert-Kennedy and County Cllr Leslie Williams.

Bob Hall (Cricket Club), Rachel Spyvee (FOLS), Jill Hutching (Womens Institute), Dorothy Clark (Newsletter), Audrey Blythe (Monday Club) Maureen Kerry (Village Hall Management Committee), Gary Walker and Susan Hilder (Social Club) and PCSO Debbie Flay.

Apologies have been received Dist Cllr Ray Apperley, Mr J Hale (Parochial Church Council), Mr D Newton (Enterprise Group), Rev'd Sue Phillipson-Masters (Music at the Priory), Tim Smith (Twinning Association and Wine Circle), Kaz Elliott (Neighbourhood Warden), Emma Gardiner (Toddlers Group), Mrs M Cunningham (Art Group) and Sue Wheeler (Time for Tots/Jam).

1. Previous Minutes: It was proposed by Cllr Connett that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Bevan and carried unanimously.

2. Report on the activities of the Parish Council :-

a) Cllr M Forder Chairperson -

The Council

We currently have 6 councillors, with 3 vacancies. Maggi Mukasa left in October for family reasons after four and a half years of much appreciated hard work in her role as secretary of the village hall committee. Maggi also took on the task of organising the annual litter pick, and has kindly agreed to continue to do so. Jess Wiseman joined us last year, and Craig Jones was with us for a few months before leaving for work reasons. The work of the council is spread thinly at the moment and we look forward to welcoming new recruits to help us represent the parish. Despite being few in number, the council members remain committed to their work in the parish and I thank them for their support over the last year. I would also like to thank Irena, our Clerk, for her continued efficiency and support. Our District Councillors, Nigel Studdert-Kennedy and Ray Apperley, and our County Councillor Lesley Williams, have continued to advise us on matters relating to their areas of responsibility and I thank them for their support.

Other people

Our first Neighbourhood Warden, Simon Moulding, recently left us to continue working elsewhere and we thank him for his efforts in the parish. We are pleased to welcome Kaz Elliott in his place and hope that she will enjoy working in Leonard Stanley.

We receive occasional reports and visits from the PCSOs who work in our parish and they are quick to respond to requests for help or advice. Our thanks go to them also.

Our work this year

- I attended Chairman's training on financial issues, organised by GAPTC, and, with Cllr Bevan, also attended training on recent changes in planning legislation, organised by SDC.
- After continued pressure from the council and residents, Woodlands was finally resurfaced for the first time since it was built.
- The new street lighting by the school was finally fitted with bulbs recently, much to everyone's relief. Following consultation with the lighting department, part-night lighting has recently been introduced in some parts of the village to save energy.
- Several stiles have been replaced by kissing gates, to help make the village more accessible and further work is likely.
- The interpretation board outside the church, which was paid for by a grant from Awards For All given to the VEG group, has been adopted by the parish council for insurance purposes.
- Major financial donations have been given to the village hall for the replacement floor in the social club, and to the FOLS towards the cost of the new pool liner.
- Recent improvements to the pavilion should help our sports clubs to continue to progress, although we are currently experiencing a few plumbing problems.
- We continue to improve our working methods. To this end an employment policy has been prepared and adopted and the Contingency Plan has been updated. Hiring agreements have been drawn up for use of the playing field and pavilion by our sports clubs. These documents are in line with those prepared by other parish councils and offer some insight into the way the council operates on behalf of the community.
- The closure of the Youth Club due to lack of adult help saddened us and, in conjunction with KSPC, we will support any future ventures in this area.
- Staying with youth, Ian Smith, the head teacher of the primary school, came to one of our meetings to explain his concerns about the future of the school and to ask for our support.
- A second Community Information Day was very successful and attracted many interested parishioners.
- Another ongoing project is the Lift Scheme, now into its 6th year, and, like so many other schemes, managing with a very small band of volunteers.
- The safety of Gypsy Lane has caused much controversy over recent months, with a child being hospitalised as a result of a dog bite on a public path. The parish council has supported the family concerned and has liaised with the authorities at all times. The clerk and I met with the Stonehouse police sergeant and expressed our concerns about the poor communication and perceived lack of action by the police. Again, King's Stanley Parish Council has been supportive to us. Liaison with the police is ongoing, and will continue for as long as necessary.
- Finally, the ending of the food waste scheme has been a hot topic recently and looks set to go on for a while. Representatives from SDC spoke at one of our recent meetings and we have liaised with KSPC to try to ensure that every possible step is being taken to keep our waste down. Questions have been asked, but not always satisfactorily answered, and I believe it is now the responsibility of this council and the residents of our parish to look at ways of reducing waste nearer to home, by considering composting schemes and other methods of greening our community. To this end, the council will be discussing the putting together an 'environmental' policy outlining possible ways forward.

b) Reports from the following Councillors (see appendix 1):

- Cllr R Gaunt (Youth)
- Cllr Herbert – Playing Fields and Pavilion

- Cllr Bevan – Neighbourhood Watch
- Dist Cllr N Studdert-Kennedy
- Dist Cllr R Apperley

3.Reports from Village Organisations – Reports were received from the following organisations, (see Appendix 2).

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| 1. Mrs M Cunningham | Art Group |
| 2. PCSO D Flay | Community Police |
| 3. Mr A Cave | Cricket Club |
| 4. Mr S Craddock | Football Club |
| 5. Mrs R Spyvee | Friends of Leonard Stanley School |
| 6. Mrs D Clark | Leonard Stanley News |
| 7. Mrs A Blythe | Monday Club |
| 8. Rev'd S Phillipson – Masters | Music at the Priory |
| 9. Mr G Walker | Social Club |
| 10. Mr J Hale | St Swithun's Church |
| 11. Mrs S Wheeler | Time for Tots/Time for Jam |
| 12. Mr T Smith | Twinning Association |
| 13. Mrs M Kerry | Village Hall Management Committee |
| 14. Mr D Camm | Welfare Trust |
| 15. Mr T Smith | Wine Circle |
| 16. Mrs J Hutchings | Womens Institute |

4.Issues Raised by attendees –

The Chair opened the floor to questions:

1. **Q** – When is any money going to be spent on the roads?
A – The Highway Department have confirmed that the resurfacing of Bath Road, Marsh Road and Church Road are on their list of priorities, but the earliest this will be done is 2010/2011. In addition to that it is hoped that the area around the school be made a 20mph zone.
2. **Q** – If the area is made a 20mph zone, are the police going to enforce it?
A - PCSO Debbie Flay confirmed that the police would carry out speed checks if requested.
3. **Q** – Why has a ramp been built at Stonehouse Police Station, if the reception area is to be closed?
A – To comply with the Disabilities Discrimination Act.
4. **Q** – Who is responsible for parking?
A- Causing an obstruction would be dealt with by the Police, parking against regulations i.e. on yellow lines or inconsiderate parking etc is counted as Civil Enforcement and would be dealt with by the District Council.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

SIGNED

CHAIRMAN

DATE

Appendix 1

Ruairidh Gaunt – Youth:

Stanleys Youth

The youth club folded in the last financial year due to lack of adult help because of the lack of respect from the members of the club. Attempts are trying to be made to resurrect the group. A meeting with relevant people is due to be scheduled soon.

Stanleys Scout Group

This group consists of beavers, cubs and scouts. There are currently 13 beavers, 14 cubs and 8 scouts. Each group is thriving under the guidance of Nicky Gaunt as the GSL and the leaders Lewis Dangerfield (Scouts) and Juliet Jefferies (cubs & beavers). Each group has a varied programme on a term to term basis and parents are actively encouraged to get involved. The parents are involved each week on a rota basis but there are other opportunities for involvement for example the forthcoming camp out weekend in July. The group as a whole is thriving and the financial situation is buoyant. They have just held their one fund raising event of the year – a car boot sale at Victory Park on Bank holiday Monday which managed to raise over £1000.

Phil Herbert – Playing Fields and Pavilion:

There have been no major changes and we are still using the same contractors. However, improvements have been made including tiling the floor of the pavilion. We have made some alterations to enable the Football Club, who have been promoted, to comply with the new regulations of the league they are joining. It is felt that we need to continue to maintain and improve the Pavilion as it is the only building owned by the Parish Council.

Wendy Bevan – Neighbourhood Watch:

There are over 300 watches in the Stroud and outlying areas a total around 2400 homes this varies when some watches close and new ones open up

In June there will be a pack offered to NWH coordinators asking if they want their watch area to be a no cold callers area coordinators will have the chance to offer all who are in their watch if they want this and as long as there is a majority signs will go up and everyone who wants it will have a sticker to put in a window or door

There has been a lot done by the NWH going around sheltered accommodation getting cameras installed making it safer they go into schools explaining how NWH works and how they can help by keeping their eyes and ears open

Last month the NWH and Stroud Disability and Access Group arranged with the Fire Service to explain how the new building at Quedgley the old Council Depot Goodrich Avenue, the Fire Service intend to build will be used for it will be a Life Skills Centre for schools and groups to go around showing dangers and how to deal with them they are also hoping that groups will be also able to have use of it out of hours

The areas can be rearranged showing different scenarios like: a fire in the home, dark alleyways, train crossings, how to stay safe on the streets and how to deal with these dangers

There is one built in Birmingham and it is well used by schools, taking groups of children around showing them different scenarios and dangers

Hopefully there will be more Fire service depots in Gloucester and Cheltenham as they estimate to be at a scene within 8 minutes

In June the NHW week will be launched and items for your safety will be sold like personal alarms advice given more coordinators to start a watch is needed there will be leaflets on how one goes about it

From July 1st there will be no reception at Stonehouse and Nailsworth police stations will close any queries will then have to be phoned in to the police number 08450901234

NHW is an organisation that works with all like the Police, Council's, Schools, Fire, Ambulance and others it does a grand job

Hopefully in the future I would love to see a watch in every street it makes the places we live a safer place for everyone

Thank you

District Cllr Nigel Studdert-Kennedy

Transport

In my report to you last year I suggested that there was strong support for the re-doubling of the railway line between Kemble and Swindon. I am pleased to note that due to lot of pressures, not least from the Gloucestershire Campaign, a feasibility study is to be implemented.

Canal

Last December the District Council decided to proceed with Phase I A, from Stonehouse to Brimscombe, of the project to restore the Cotswolds Canals. Things have moved on and a Project Manager has been in post since March. It will not be long before things will begin to happen again on the ground.

Tourism

The effort to attract more tourists to Gloucestershire and thus to our District continues. The new Cotswolds Visitors Guide for 2009 has an entry for King's and Leonard Stanley together with many other local settlements. The local production of a guide to local walks in the village is to be very much welcomed.

Supermarket

I attended the opening of the new Fire Station at Dursley built as a result of attracting Sainsbury's to build a new supermarket on the Castle Street site. Sainsbury's are currently improving their design for the new store in ecological terms before building starts.

The above are all positive steps in an uncertain financial climate. I believe that we need to be positive in approach to our present financial difficulties.

Waste Trial

It is particularly difficult for all of us to accept that the Waste Trial has been ended even if only for the present time. However I should point out that it was a TRIAL and regardless of its success remained a TRIAL. As such the area in which it took place enjoyed a very good subsidised service not available to everyone. The very good work put in by householders was much appreciated and they are to be congratulated. Strenuous efforts have been and will continue to be made to try to achieve the same standard or better than the Trial for everyone across the District. Until this can be achieved we are reverting to the standard service currently available to all householders not involved in the Trial. A reply to the letter from King's Stanley Parish Council to Stroud District Council is attached to this report. Upon a more positive note I have today spoken to the Strategic Director responsible for Waste collection. I

informed her of the interest in my suggestion for a possible voluntary collection scheme of food waste to be run by the Villages. In short this could involve the villages providing the labour for the collection and SDC disposing of the collection. It is my understanding that a meeting is to be called to discuss the possibility.

The Future

The Council continues to look for efficiencies whilst trying to maintain services. It is only right that the services offered should be reviewed to confirm whether they should be continued in their present form, adjusted for changes in conditions or removed having completed their purpose. Having made this point may I remind you that I am of the view that we need to be positive in facing our future.

District Councillor Ray Apperley :

2008-2009 has again been a busy year and I have tried to represent the Parish Council's views on planning matters whenever possible. I have studied the new plans for the Grange field development and discussed these with Planning Officers.

I also attended various village meetings when I was able.

I took up a complaint made by Leonard Stanley parishioners regarding the savage dogs owned by Mr. Wheeler and their attack on a child. I can fully understand the views expressed by a number of parishioners at the Parish Council meeting.

In addition no-one living nearby should have to suffer sleepless night because of the noise these dogs made at night. If this nuisance persists then a complaint could be made to the Council's Environmental Health Department and I will if asked, present this complaint.

I was advised that the dogs were allowed to remain on site on the recommendation of the Police provided the owner Mr. Wheeler took additional security measures. As you are probably aware this went for trial on 1st April 2009 and was adjourned until later.

I have also drawn to the attention of Council Officers that the extra security arrangements made are not always followed by Mr. Wheeler.

The Rotary Club of Stonehouse at my request, replaced a dividing fence for an old soldier living in Brimley at no cost to the gentleman concerned.

Pavement fouling by dogs near the Garages in Brimley has also been reported by me to the dog wardens.

Although I am a member of the Council's Strategic Scrutiny Committee, my main job with the Council is as before being the District's representative on the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and I was elected as Vice Chair in May 2008.

This Committee held a major review of the performance of the Great Western Ambulance Trust in conjunction with other Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees served by the Ambulance Trust.

I also chaired the sub-group who reviewed its performance in the Stroud District. In order to assist GWAT we decided at Stroud to try to help find a number of Community First Responders and I am pleased to say that we have identified around 25 members of the community that expressed an interest in volunteering. This is well over double the numbers identified in all other areas of the County added together.

I am pleased to announce that Great Western Ambulance Trust met all their targets last month for the first time. Of all the rural areas in the County, Stroud District is the best served by the Trust.

I was also part of the Committee that visited Gloucester Prison in order to review their medical facilities which was followed by a discussion with the Warden and his medical team.

Currently I am working as part of another sub-group that is looking at the provision of NHS Dentistry in Gloucestershire, and the next meeting with NHS Gloucestershire is planned for the 20th May 2009.

As part of my following up on the Closure of Weavers Croft I have attended several meetings with the Architects who have just finalized the design for the new facilities to be built at Charlton Lane Cheltenham. I am please to report that many of the suggestions made by myself and others have been incorporated in the final design.

I am also a Council representative on the League of Friends of the Stroud Hospitals and Health Centre and I actively work with them by supporting their work.

I have to say that I am very disappointed that the Stanley's waste trail was discontinued and it is my view that the closure was not handled very well by Stroud District Council. I have made a strong protest over the way the decision was made and communicated.

Finally I would like to thank all the people in the Stanley's who voted for my re-election in May 2008. I will try to represent all who live in the Ward to the best of my abilities.

Appendix 2

Marjorie Cunningham – Art Group:

Thank you for your letter inviting me to your Annual Parish meeting, unfortunately it only arrived this morning as there was a surcharge to be paid on the postage and could not be delivered until it was paid. This delayed its arrival as I was not at home when the postman came.

I regret that I could not have attended as I was chairing a meeting in Stroud on Tuesday evening.

Here is my report as you have suggested.

Art workshop 2009

All our members continue to paint with enthusiasm, we still have a full class.

We were delighted when we had a lady of 93 from Highborder Lodge join us, her eyesight is not good but she enjoys visiting us when she can, we always escort her home.

We are always looking for inspiration to vary our sessions and hope this summer term to be able to paint outdoors and have various venues to visit weather permitting.

We enjoyed a Day's Workshop with Joan Marlow, a very talented and well known Artist from Minchinhampton.

Last year we were invited to show our work in Kings Stanley Church during their weekend open days in September, as we have not a planned Exhibition this year we hope we may be invited again. We found every one so helpful in setting it all up, it was quite hard work as we have to persuade our members to prepare and present framed work for display.

The hall is always kept immaculate thanks to Gary, and we have the added advantage of off road parking.

We always invite newcomers and any who would like to visit us during our sessions.

Community Police - PCSO Debbie Flay:

- Crime is down on last year.
- Sergeant Kirk Harrison has taken over as the Community Officer from Sgt S Irvin
- We continue to run Kidi cop with the local schools, where the children make and present posters to those stopped for speeding past their school, to remind them of the importance of killing their speed.
- We fitted a Statistical Finder (M500) in Brockley Road, to monitor and assess the speed of traffic over the humps in Brockley Road and confirm that nothing untoward was found.
- We are setting up a meeting with the representatives of the Parish Council to meet with Inspector Stack, reference the dog attack in Gypsy Lane, the court case is scheduled for the 17th June 2009.
- We are working with the new Neighbourhood Warden Kaz Elliott.

Mr Alan Cave – Cricket Club:

The 2008 season saw Leonard Stanley Cricket Club winning Div 1 of the Stroud League under the guidance of captain, Adrian Holder, returning to the Premier Division for the 2009 season after relegation in 2007.

The club tried without much success to run two junior teams during the 2008 campaign, despite the efforts of both team organisers, the younger element of the village showed very little interest, however, on a more positive note, some Sunday fixtures were played in an effort to play more cricket and more are planned for the 2009 season as well as a return to the midweek evening league after an absence of several years.

The club continues to thrive off the field, with a regular bar rota in the Social Club as well as the ever popular 200 Club and Xmas Turkey Draw helping to keep the club afloat.

During the summer of 2008, Fixture Secretary Paul Walker launched the club website and everything you wish to know about Leonard Stanley Cricket Club can be found at

www.leonardstanleycc.co.uk.

BREAKING NEWS - The cricket club skittles team, Leonard Stanley Cricketers won the Stroud News and Journal K.O. Cup at Matchplay last Friday May 8th defeating the Newboys in a closely contested final.

Stuart Craddock – Football Club:

The playing season of 2008/09 has been the most successful season for Leonard Stanley first XI ever. The team have won the Stroud League and District football Division One, Section B Stroud Charity Cup Competition and came runners-up in the Gloucestershire Football Association County Cup competition.

Having won Division one of the Stroud League for the first time in its 73 year history the first XI will be playing football in the next league of the football pyramid structure, in Division 2 of the Gloucestershire Northern Senior Football League. The club was verbally accepted into the league on Friday the 8th May following a successful ground and changing room inspection and is awaiting official confirmation of acceptance following the Northern Senior League Constitution Meeting in May.

Acceptance to the league is in no small part due to the wonderful support of the Parish Council in helping upgrade the changing and showering facilities in the Pavilion in line with Gloucestershire Northern Senior League regulations. The management committee and players of Leonard Stanley football club are very appreciative of the Parish Council commitment, without which progression to the next level would have been a difficult next step. The football club would like to place on record thanks in particular to Councillor Herbert whose support and commitment to getting the extra work completed and on-time have been instrumental in gaining NSL acceptance.

Leonard Stanley also runs two other football sides, the Saturday second XI playing in Stroud and District League Division five and a Sunday team playing in the premier division of the Gloucester and District Sunday League. The Saturday team just about held their own in Division five and the Sunday team fared slightly worse, the success of the first team having an impact upon the Sunday season.

It is the clubs intention to run all three teams again next season with renewed focus on improving the Second team and Sunday team, whilst the first team come to terms with playing football outside of the Stroud League on a weekly basis for the first time.

For further information and details please head to the Leonard Stanley Football Club website at:

<http://www.leonardstanleyfc.co.uk/>

Rachel Spyvee – Friends of Leonard Stanley School:

FOLS are a team of parents who do what we can to support the school by raising money. The current committee consists of:

Chair	Rachel Spyvee
Vice-Chair	Tess Wheeler
Treasurer	Sue Greening
Vice Treasure	Jo Cooke
Secretary	Lisa Crossley

We meet about 6-8 weeks at the school to organise a variety of fund raising events.

This year we have already hosted 5 main events: the annual Firework Display, the Christmas Fair, a Quiz Night, a sponsored swim at Stratford Park and the May Fair at the school. In addition to these events, we have also raised money through an Easter Egg raffle for the children, a table top sale, a non uniform day and commission from Chocoholics and Body Shop sales. It soon all adds up.

Events still to happen this year include a Fashion Show on May 14th, a Treasure Hunt and Bar-b-que on June 19th, a football tournament in June/July at the school and a stall at the Village Fair. We also hope to have a social evening sometime in July at the new Indian restaurant at the Kings Head, Kings Stanley.

But what is the money spent on ?

Each Year we always pay for:

Children's Christmas presents and party - £250
Coaches to the pantomime - £850
PGL coaches - £500
Year 6 Leaver's Buffet & Church refreshments - £300
Year 6 Dictionaries - £120.00
Donations to classes - £300.00

Then each year we try to raise money for what is needed or requested by the school. This year we have contributed towards the following:

Software for ICT - £1200.00
Year 3 canopy - £600.00
Skirts and T-shirts for country dancing - £80.00
Car park and school frontage - £4000

However, another important role of FOLS is to maintain and run the school's swimming pool. The children use the pool daily after the May half term (weather permitting) and we offer family membership to people who wish to sue the pool after school or during the summer holidays. It is a wonderful facility to have but this year has been an expensive year for the pool. As you know FOLS have installed a new pool liner costing £3,500 which is a large maintenance cost. In addition running costs have also increased due to the introduction of new microbiology testing that checks the bacterial content of the water. Each test will cost approximately £100 and needs to be done monthly whilst the pool is open. However all of this means we will have the safe use of the school pool for future years.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parish Council for their donation of £1000 towards the new pool liner for which we were very grateful.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the committee for their support and hard work during the year, but must mention Tess Wheeler for all her hard work and Wendy Stanley for organizing the Sponsored Swim.

Dorothy Clark – Leonard Stanley News:

The very first issue of the Leonard Stanley News was produced by Rev. White on 20th June 1965.

When we heard that the News was to be discontinued in January 2001, the Women's Institute put their heads together and, after taking a poll among people in the village, decided to take over the editing, organisation of the photocopying and distribution of the Village Newsletter.

Realising the amount of work entailed, non W.I. members came forward and help to deliver the News around the village. The routine is that the master copy is delivered to Tom Williams at Office Stop on the Monday morning as dated at the top of the issue. He then photocopies for us, and two W.I. members count out the required quantities and then deliver to the deliverers, who then put them through the letter boxes. Nowadays the issue is sent to Office Stop by e-mail, and the copy for the Village Web site is sent to Steve Watson the same way.

Our finances are handled by Tim Vale and he is satisfied that we are paying our way, but none of us will be taking a holiday in Florida at any time in the future. Should there be any funds left at the end of the year, this is forwarded to Tom Williams since he has always given us a preferential quote for the production.

We are still delivering some 450 copies of each issue and these are looked forward to by many people in the village. The issues are produced fortnightly but recently, due to the bank holidays, these have been more like three weekly as Office Stop would not be open to run them off and the distributors need a break.

Any circulars needing to be sent to villages are also handled by the Leonard Stanley News (for example the snow warden letter and cold weather advice) and are added to the News for circulation.

Audrey Blythe – Monday Club:

The Monday Club seems to fill the needs of approximately 45 "oldies" from the village, plus a few from Kings Stanley. It runs from 2 pm to 4 pm on most Mondays throughout the year. Just before Christmas this year we shall have a centenarian member in our midst. Ruby Wells will be celebrating her 100th birthday. She is still present at most meetings, accompanied by her daughter.

The age range of the group make it difficult to run suitable outings for all. We do however, manage three to four outings each year. These were a ride on the Avon Steam Railway with a boat trip; Christmas dinner at the George (Frocester), and most recently a visit to Webb's Garden Centre near Worcester. A very pleasant venue.

We have speakers every other week, and play Bingo or Hoy in between. The majority enjoy the talks, although when we have slides in a darkened room, some members take their afternoon nap. We just hope the speaker is not too aware. The topics are varied – to mention a few:- there was 'Barefoot to Buckingham Palace', 'Vintage Wonders', 'Flatholm Island in the Bristol Channel', 'Life around Stroud since 1910' in old photographs. On the musical front we enjoyed our singing/guitar playing duo in their Western mood. We also learned about the

autoharp, something quite new to us. Then as usual we had our carol-singing mince pie afternoon.

We enjoy keeping contact with the younger members of the village by sharing lunch with them once each term then, in November, we bring Punch and Judy to the youngest in the school. If volume of noise is anything to go by, they certainly enjoy it.

At our recent A.G.M. Audrey Blythe stepped down after about 22 years as chairperson.

Beatrice Lusty has taken over, and we wish her well – in no way will she reach 22 years in the jobs!

Sue Phillipson-Masters - Music at the Priory Committee

You will know that last year Music at the Priory was not able to organise the usual series of concerts because of the work that needed to be done in the church. So there is nothing at that level to report. However, in recent months Robert and Jill Hutchings have relinquished their roles, and the present committee would like to take this opportunity publicly to thank them for all that they have done. Carrying the series on after Gordon White, they have done a magnificent job in many ways. Their organisational abilities, hospitality and their constant enthusiasm for this concert series has left us a lasting legacy, which we will endeavour to carry on to the highest standards.

Gary Walker – Social Club:

The club has a total refurbishment and gives a warm and welcoming atmosphere. This is due to a new chairman, secretary and new committee members.

The social club has increased its number of members this year and we are finding that away teams who visit the club are keen to join.

The club has two skittle teams, two men's dart team, one ladies dart team, cricket team and football team. Enquiries are being made from other teams about joining to use the skittle alley.

We have received several comments on how the club has gone forward and we are all looking forward to the future and keeping the social club thriving as it is now.

The social club has applied for a variation licence on opening times this has been advertised it allows the club to stay open longer in the evening for any entertainment arranged as 9am but obviously we will not be opening at that time of the morning this will just cover any functions that the village hall or social club may be approached for. The plans were produced to the village hall committee prior to being put into Stroud district council.

The new committee is working with the village hall and welcomes their points of views and recommendations. Between the club and the village hall working together we all have a good future if we continue to work hard and promote the club and the hall.

John Hale – St Swithun's Church:

The Church held its AGM at the end of April when it received reports from the Churchwardens concerning the maintenance of the building, Pastoral and Social Groups, the School, Worship Committee, Sunday Club, Time for Tots and Time for JAM groups and the Bell Ringers.

Thanks were expressed to all those involved for the huge amount of work undertaken in the name of the Church.

Villagers will notice that at last scaffolding has gone up around the Church and work to replace all the guttering and down-pipes, together with repairs to stonework on the east side of the tower is getting under way. Further work inside will follow later.

The day-to-day cost of running the Church continues to spiral and this is a concern for the congregation. The first Gas and Electricity bills in 2009 are not far short of the total for the whole of 2008. One of the economies we have implemented is to revert to a team of volunteers for grass cutting in the churchyard and cemetery. This is just beginning and we shall have to see how things work out. Meanwhile we gratefully acknowledge the £250 donation from the Parish Council towards the cost of last year's maintenance work.

Sue Wheeler – Time for Tots:

It's been a good year, with a few changes. We now meet at St. George's Church at 10.00 am most Thursdays during term time. We've had lots more new children and their Mums/Grans/childminders.

We still follow the same format as previously - singing, story, and prayers, all in the Lady Chapel - and artwork/cooking on the small tables near the kitchen end of the church. We start and finish in the children's corner at the back of the church, though occasionally use other parts of the church – as in when we play parachute games or have treasure hunts!

Lorna looks after us very well with refreshments at the end! We've also had lots of help this year from Pat Savage and Liz Griffin.

We are following the Old Testament stories again this year; we did the New last year.

Sue Wheeler - Time 4 JAM:

We've had another very good year at our JAM group. It is still really enjoyed by the children. We usually have about 20 or more children each week. Our numbers have grown since we changed to meet in the school hall.

The children are very keen and enjoy telling their friends and parents! Jenny and I are very grateful to Fiona and Rosemarie for their help this year.

I usually use the same basic story each week for JAM as for Tots, but rarely do artwork now. We play more games as the age range of the children has grown, with lots of them staying on even though they are juniors! We start with refreshments and a simple activity to keep them busy and "tuning in" to the story – often word searches or spot the difference pictures. Then we have a game before the singing/story and prayer time. Occasionally we have simple memory verses to learn – at which they excel.

Due to the pressure of trying to care for my Mother-in-law (who's 90 and has vascular dementia) I'm handing the "baton" on, hopefully temporarily, as from half term. The group will continue to run though.

Tim Smith – Twinning Association:

2008 was a quiet year as the anticipated visit from Dozule was cancelled by them.

We are trying very hard to encourage new people to join us, particularly families but finding it very difficult to find suitable homes in and around Dozule. We hope that with a new President there our aims might be achieved.

The only time that we got together was for the Village Fair in July, which proved to be very successful financially for us.

We hope that the informal link between our Village School and St. Josephs in Dozule, set up the previous year is still ongoing.

However, from now on we shall be very busy as on 23rd May a party of 36 will be visiting Dozule by coach and by car and we shall start to prepare for the 40th anniversary of the Twining in 2010, no mean achievement for a village of our size.

We have not made any decisions yet as to how to celebrate this. but we hope, that with some assistance from the Parish Council we shall be able to make it something to remember for everyone who has taken part in the Twining from the start.

My thanks go to all members of the Committee and in particular to Mike & Dolores Merrett and Louise Wilson.

Maureen Kerry – Village Hall Management Committee:

Since 2008 A.G.M we have lost several representatives to sit on the Committee of Trustees. We have also lost, unfortunately, our Chairman and Secretary, with the hope that this can be rectified at our A.G.M. in June.

Relationships with the Social club are still continuing well. Gary Walker is now their Chairman, he has also taken over as Caretaker with Maureen Kerry, Bookings Secretary. This arrangement is working very well.

We have solved the issue of the Temporary Events Licence, with the Social Club taking over the cost, the forms still being filled in by the Hirer.

Bookings continue to be steady, although we have just lost the Line Dancers on a Monday evening, they still continue Tuesday Lunchtimes.

We have installed a new Cooker in the Kitchen as part of the compensation from the Council for using our Car Park. There is also going to be a Microwave, which will be of use mainly to the Luncheon Club. Other maintenance issues have been resolved or are in the pipeline.

As in 2008 our finances still remain limited, with fuel prices still increasing.

We still have organisations who do not send a Representative to our meetings and I appeal to these to support us.

Many thanks to our Trustee Members for their continued support, especially David Turner who has taken over as Acting Chairman as well as being our Treasurer.

Tim Smith – Wine Circle:

2008 once again proved to be a very successful year under the Chairmanship of Noel Baker until November when Tim Smith succeeded him. We had some very interesting speakers at our monthly meetings which were generally well attended. In the summer we had a very enjoyable evening visit to the Broadfield Estate and Winery where we sampled their very good white wines and sat down to a very tasty supper.

It has become a tradition that we have a skittles evening at the Grange, by kind permission of David & Fiona Turner. This year was no exception despite the weather generally during the summer.

Thanks must go to those who contribute in any way to making our evenings so enjoyable by providing the food, table decorations etc etc. A very big thank you to Sarah Pearson (

Secretary) for doing all the arranging of speakers and so on, and to Tim Vale (Treasurer) for keeping the books in order.

Dave Camm – Welfare Trust:

The Welfare Trust has had an eventful year and a very rewarding one as well. Its subsidiary the Rishton Education Foundation was able this year to make grants to five youngsters to assist in their further education at university. Whilst the grants were not large they were very much appreciated as indicated by the letters of thanks that were received. These grants are available on an annual basis, upon application to the trustees, for all Leonard Stanley residents embarking on their first year at university. The trustees ask for a brief synopsis of the applicant's studies and from that they are then able to determine the value of the grant they are able to make.

The welfare trust was also able to assist in a case of a dire financial situation for one family in Leonard Stanley, and in addition to this grants were given to two organisations within the Parish who do sterling work in providing practical social care primarily to the elderly.

The main source of income is from land in Gypsy Lane in the form of a grass keep, a tenancy, and the allotments. The allotments provide the largest income and are over subscribed at present (we have a waiting list of 11) and as a result of a policy change two years ago when it was decided that only half plots were allocated instead of full ones the total number of plots has increased to 93. The vast majority are well maintained and are very productive and tidy perhaps it's the influence of an ever increasing number of female allotment holders we have at the moment. Should anyone wish to put their name forward for an allotment the only condition the trustees require is that the applicant is resident in Leonard Stanley and over the age of 18. (an insurance requirement). You are never too old we have a lady of 85 on the waiting list and asks me frequently how far she has moved up the list.

Jill Hutchings – Women's Institute:

Looking back over a year it always surprising to see just how much we have done. Our membership is slightly down on last year, thanks partly to the ravages of age and illness, but also to constantly rising subscription rate.

We have been privileged to enjoy some very interesting speakers this year, ranging from experiences of a bus driver and a town crier, through a childhood spent partly in a Japanese internment camp. We enjoyed the visit from Howard Powell and his huge guide doe, and were thrilled by the superb photos taken in the Forest of Dean by Philip Mugridge. On a lighter note, as always Susan Marshfield kept us in stitches with an account of life with her husband, which proved both varied and highly amusing.

At our monthly meetings we tend to find that displays are more popular than competitions, especially when members bring along items and talk about them. So far this year we have done this with brooches, old photos and wooden objects.

Outside of the monthly meetings we meet for a regular monthly pub lunch, a weekly craft session, monthly whist drive and the occasional skittles session. We have also enjoyed some very good outings, to the Houses of Parliament and to Waddeson Manor, and more recently to Elgar's birthplace and Worcester.

Perhaps our participation in county events is not as vigorous as it might be, but 3 people went to the recent Annual council meeting, and the new speakers' mornings and the new members' mornings also attracted a following. There is always a good response to the Christmas

concerts and we live to fight another day in the county quiz. The Gloucestershire Federation of W.Is is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, and so far the activities have been almost entirely based on the theme of horses – a special Ladies Day at Cheltenham races, visits to the equine centre at Hartpury and to various racing stables plus a polo match. These doubtless proved popular with some W.Is but not our's, and they were all very expensive. So we will do our own thing and have a garden party in June to which all our members can come at no extra charge.

Our W.I. is always marvellous at responding to requests for practical help, and we have provided refreshments for the village information morning and the crime prevention morning as well as the village fete. We ran a well received Lent Lunch and ran several stalls at the annual Plant sale which raised £221 for the Air Ambulance. In November we were able to sent off 22 attractive shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Our commitment to editing and distributing the fortnightly village news sheet remains strong.