

THE CHRONICLE

Aston Abbotts Parish Magazine



Speeders watch out! Liz, Sally and David are out to get you!

Issue 363—June 2016

EDITORIAL

THE CHRONICLE

Issue 363

June 2016

Here for your enjoyment the June Chronicle.

The busy summer season approaches with events to mark the Queen's birthday, 11&12th June - the Summer Ball 9th July - Village Fete 23rd July, none of which happen without the enthusiasm and drive and hard work of those who organise them so well done all and if you attend any - Enjoy.

Thanks to Mike Coker who has provided me with some old photos of the village from the Bucks Herald archive, one of I have used on page 14 shows the Whaddon Chase hunt in 1949, more to follow in future editions.

Great news for the Village Hall with the grant of over £44,000, more details inside, again well done those involved.

Deadlines for the July Chronicle, if you can get anything to me around 22nd or 23rd of June that would be great and bear in mind it's the last Chronicle before the summer break the next one being the September issue.

I have now been putting the Chronicle for three years, if anybody else in the Village would like to have a go and take it on, give me a call 688191.

Phil

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Peter Knight

May 24th and I haven't heard the Cuckoo yet this year, my goodness I do miss his call, when I think back to my first years on a farm the cuckoo nearly drove us cuckoo with incessant calling. Bird life is at its most active at present, some have already reared a brood of young for example Rooks and Blackbirds. Others are busy feeding young in their nests like the Blue tits. A friend of mine has a nest box with a camera in it - hoping I'll get a look one day!! Pheasants and partridge are incubating eggs now ready to hatch out in Ascot week. Yet other birds are still busy building nests but whatever they do in May they do with gusto - food is plentiful for most species.

This year I will have had the pleasure of living in our village for 48 years. I've seen plenty of changes over those years. Dutch Elm disease killing all the magnificent Elm trees that bordered the fields was without doubt the biggest disaster. 1000 trees went off Mrs Morton's land alone - imagine that. It all happened in two years.

Most changes are at a slower pace - the vast increase in Badgers, Kites, Buzzards, Magpies and Carrion Crows and grey Squirrels all preying on other unfortunate wildlife; the near disappearance of Frogs, Toads, Hedgehogs, Turtle Doves, Skylarks, Linnets and Yellowhammers to name but a few. There is however, one great change that few people are aware of, the invasion in certain fields by pasture ants. Pasture ants live, surprise surprise, in old pasture. They start off with a small colony and gradually over a few years build an ant hill which may be 2 ½ feet high. There are parts of the old Bricstock Village field that I can no longer drive a Landrover - the Ant banks being so big and so close together. I saw Chris Packham on Cuddly Bunny T.V. rejoice at finding pasture Ants which would then bring Green Woodpeckers to feed thereon. Just wait till you are overrun with them!

Amazing how we don't allow ourselves to be overrun with rats, mice, wasps, cockroaches, etc. We remove them by any means. A few slugs and eco friendly gardeners put down poison in blue lines round their plants, which easily kills dogs - I've seen one die from eating them.

We need a balance in nature but most of all we need a balanced view of how to manage our wonderful countryside.

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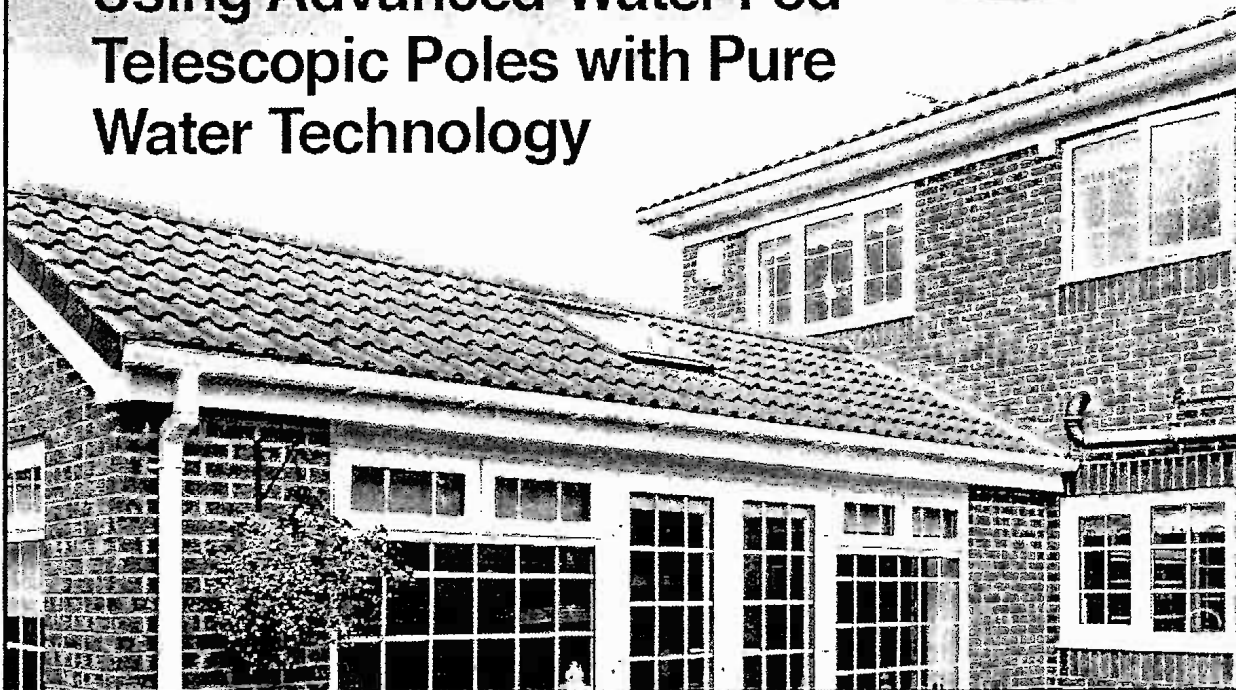
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Village Stuff

Speedwatch May 2016

The Aston Abbots Speedwatch team were active in the week 25-29th April. Each morning between 8 and 10 and between 4 and 6pm in the evening, we monitored the traffic on one of the three approach roads to the village. It was inevitable that our presence changed the behaviour of motorists. Observing their speed on our monitor we could detect the point at which they noticed us and took their foot off the accelerator. Generally that was their only acknowledgement. Most stared straight ahead as they passed our position. A few made a cheery wave, some gave us the thumbs up and one indicated his feelings with two fingers. Two drivers stopped. One asked what speed we had measured him at because he wanted to check his speedo (I don't think this was the real reason). A second came to a halt alongside the camera and fixed me a very annoyed stare. The conversation went something like this:

Driver: Do you have permission from the Police to use that equipment?

Me: Yes, this is Police approved kit.

Driver: Are you just monitoring traffic volumes?

Me: No, we are measuring vehicle speed and recording the particulars of those that exceed the limit.

Driver: What are you going to do with this information?

Me: We will send it to the Police.

At this point I got a little irritated with this interrogation so I asked "and who may I ask are you?"

The driver answered "A law abiding citizen", wound up their window and drove away!!

As well as manning the Speedwatch kit (which automatically detects speeding vehicles and records 10 seconds of video as evidence) we conducted a census of incoming and outgoing vehicles. We noted the type of vehicle (in 10 categories) and the direction of travel (incoming or outgoing). Over the 16 hours of peak time roadside monitoring we recorded 1105 incoming and 1020 outgoing vehicles. Of the 1105 incoming vehicles we recorded details of just 21 offenders. We did not use the equipment to monitor the speed of outgoing vehicles during this our first week of operation but will do so in the future. I assume that the very significant difference, between the 15% of offenders recorded by the MVAS speed sign (as noted in Phil Spooner's article in last month's Chronicle) and the 2% of offenders that we have reported to the Police, indicates the different attitudes of drivers to the two traffic calming measures.

Peak time traffic volumes measured ranged from 250 per hour on Wingrave Road, to 125 on Cublington Road and that on Moat Lane was between these at 160 per hour, with no significant differences in the flow in each direction. Although it is unwise to draw conclusions on one week's work, of the 19 offenders recorded there was a larger proportion on Moat Lane (10) compared to 7 on Wingrave Road and 2 on Cublington Road.

We will be doing further speed checks in the coming weeks so please observe the 30mph limit in the village at all times. Next time we may not be so visible!

David Gray. Speedwatch Co-ordinator.

A DAY AT THE RACES
TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY
SUNDAY 12TH JUNE FROM 1PM
IN THE ORCHARD



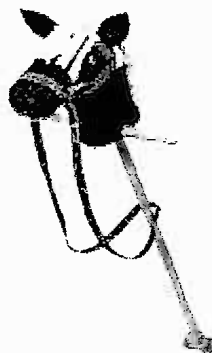
Dig out your hats, hampers and rugs for a communal picnic.

Activities to include treasure hunt, snail racing, garden games, table skittles, tractor rides, hobby horse races (horses provided), human steeplechase and a mystery auction

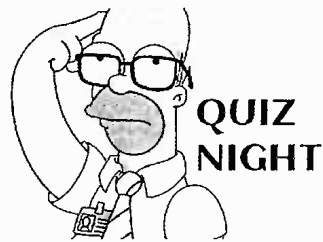
Bring your own "feed" and water

Tea and cake stall

THIS IS A FREE EVENT but small donations to cover expenses appreciated



**Royal Oak Aston
Abbotts
Quiz Night
Sunday 19th June
7.30pm**



**Come and enjoy the fun and
frolics. Food available
Just £1 to join**

What's on in June

Thurs 2nd	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 -12
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Sun 5 th	Rambling Club Ivinghoe Beacon		2 pm
	Evensong St James		6pm
Tues 7 th	Mobile Library	The Green	10.30m
Thurs 9 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10- 12
	Bingo	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Sat 11 th	Exhibition AA the last 90 years & flower festival		
		Village Hall	10 -5pm
		St James	12 - 5pm
Thurs 16 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 - 12pm
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Sat 18 th	Cublington Fete	Orchard Ground	1 pm
Sun 19 th	Fathers Day Breakfast Village Hall		9.30 am
	Followed by short Church service		
Tues 21 st	OAP bus trip, 9.08- LB - MK - Northampton		
	Return 17.10 bus		
Wed 22 nd	Parish Council	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Sat 25 th	Rambling Club meet at Royal Oak		11 am
	Short walk followed by buffet lunch		
Thurs 30 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 - 12 pm
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30 p



Aston Abbots Village Hall news – June 2016



£44,100 offered to us from WREN

This was our major grant application. We are all very pleased!

The money, awarded by WREN's FCC Community Action Fund, will be used to underpin and replace floors, install a new kitchen, fit out the new disabled toilet and rewire the hall.

Over the next few weeks we must give WREN updated costs and confirmation of how we will fund the complete project including the "new build" parts and the access ramp. So we are continuing to work on costs and schedules. We are not there yet – but it's looking good.

WREN is a not-for-profit business that awards grants for community, biodiversity and heritage projects from funds donated by FCC Environment through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Furniture fund. If you are able to help with a monthly or one-off donation (for furniture or the building funds), please see the form delivered with last month's Chronicle, contact any one of us, or email astonabbottsvillagehall@yahoo.com

Vale Lottery. We have our first prizewinner from Aston Abbots! And... it's me! Not money this time, just three free tickets for next week – but it's growing: this week four people won £25. If this is your thing, please buy your tickets from our page and we get 50%:

www.valelottery.co.uk/support/aston-abbotts-village-hall-trust

Queen's birthday weekend 11-12 June

Village Hall, Saturday 11 June 10am-4pm and Sunday 10am-12 noon, exhibition covering 90 years in Aston Abbots. Photos, newspaper articles, maps. Buy a reprint of local history book *Aston Abbots 1000-2000: A village history*. We'll also have a few copies of Neil Rees' *The Czech Connection* to sell, hard to find these days! Refreshments. Admission free, donations to the village hall improvement fund.

Caroline Lane – Aston Abbots Village Hall trustees

Aston Abbots Village Hall Trustees group: Caroline Lane (Chair), Liz Hall (Secretary), Nigel Palmer (Treasurer), Peter Shorrock, John Whyte, Kevin Copping. Email: astonabbottsvillagehall@yahoo.com

June 2016



Above happy villagers celebrating the grant.

Below:

This shows the Whaddon Chase hunt apparently at the junction of The Green & Wingrave Rd going towards Bricstock 1949.



Minutes of meeting number 1/16

Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 27th January 2016

Present: - Cllrs. Mrs K Curry (Chair), C Higgs, R Clarke, P Shorrocks, County Cllr N Glover, District Cllr P Cooper, Mrs Z Ayres (Clerk) and four member of the public.

1/1/16 To accept apologies for absence:

- **Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs J Hardcastle, P Spooner, B Carvey**

2/1/16 Declarations of interest:

- **None declared**

3/1/16 To approve minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2015

- **Minutes of the last meetings were signed as approved.**

4/1/16 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

- **The cleaning of the dog bins was discussed and the Clerk reported that she had spoken to AVDC and would continue to monitor the situation.**

Action: ZA and RC

5/1/16 Clerk's report

- **The Clerk discussed the upcoming BALC training events that she was attending. The Clerk informed the Council that the training was also open to Councillors, should they be interested.**
- **A letter regarding the changes to bin collection day being postponed was shared.**
- **The Clerk requested that the Council discuss the option of Online banking and it was AGREED to put this on the next agenda.**

Action: ZA

6/1/16 County council, District and Police matters

- **County Cllr N Glover shared her report regarding: the 1st delivery of waste that had been delivered to the Calvert incinerator; collective switching to obtain cheaper electricity on this website: www.buckscc.gov.uk/switchedon; the Tri-county alliance and its drive to improve local infrastructure including transport and the internet; the LAF requiring volunteers. She warned the Councillors to watch out for horse theft and an increase in burglaries. N Glover also related the news regarding: a push for more local Foster families; Support for dementia patients; Active Bucks needing volunteers and offering time credits.**

- **District Cllr P Cooper informed the Council that there was a new AVDC website. He also informed them that Council Tax would be rising as the Council would be getting less money from Central Government.**

7/1/16

Highways

- **Devolution of Grass Cutting. – was discussed and it was RESOLVED for the Council to take up the Tranche 2 offer. The implication for the Precept was discussed and it was RESOLVED to budget for maintaining 6 cuts this year.**
- **MVAS – The Clerk reported that the MVAS would be delivered to Aston Abbotts on Sunday. It was RESOLVED for Cllrs Mrs K Curry, R Clarke and P Spooner to meet with the Cllr from Cheddington and install the MVAS.**
- **Salt Bin – at the corner of Bricstock/ The Green was discussed and it was AGREED to purchase one ready to grit the affected area.**

Action: ZA and KC

Action: ZA

8/1/16

To Set the Precept for 2016-17

- **The Precept was discussed and it was RESOLVED to increase it to £13,499 which was an increase of 6.7% from last year.**

9/1/16

Village Matters

- **Play around the Parishes – was discussed and it was RESOLVED for the Council to contribute to one session.**
- **Queen's Birthday Celebration – was discussed and it was AGREED not to have a beacon. An invitation to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party had been received and it was AGREED for Cllr R Clarke to apply as the longest serving Councillor who had never attended an event there before.**
- **Clean for the Queen – was discussed and it was AGREED to have a litter pick on Saturday 5th March.**

Action: ZA

Action: CH

10/1/16 **Planning**

- **Community Right to build – Steering Committee – The Steering Committee reported back that they nearing the end of Stage 1. They were about to advertise to all interested land owners to come forward with any suitable site. They would then consider how to best engage with and inform the village of the progress so far.**

11/1/16 **Recreation Ground**

- **Safety Check – happening on a weekly basis. Cllr R Clarke reported back that the climbing net and handles needed**

Action: ZA

replacing. It was **AGREED** for the Clerk to get a quote and report back at the next meeting.

12/1/16 Accounts

- **Appointment of External Auditors** – was discussed and it was **RESOLVED** to remain opted-in.
- **Capital Expenditure Ideas** – were discussed and it was **AGREED** to discuss them in depth at a later date.

Action: ZA

- **The following were approved for payment:**

	Date	Purpose	Expenditure	Amount Pd
EON	11/12/15	Street Lights	£87.98	£92.38
SLCC	20/12/15	Subscription	£77	£77
Mrs AK Ayres	3/1/16	Clerk's Salary	£193.33	£193.33
EON	11/1/16	Street Lights	£90.91	£95.46
P Knight	27/1/16	Bell Repair Contribution	£100	£100
A Shorrocks	27/1/16	Bus Shelter Repairs	£160	£160
Andy Muskett	27/1/16	Lighting Maintenance	£91.15	£109.38
AVDC	27/1/16	Dog Bin's	£102.96	£118.02
Buckland Landscapes	27/1/16	Grass Cutting	£107.63	£129.16
Mrs AK Ayres	27/1/16	Clerk's Salary and Training	£272.96	£272.96

13/1/16 Date of next meetings

- **It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 16th March 2016 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.**

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

Minutes of Extraordinary meeting number 2/16

Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 2nd March 2016

Present: - Cllrs. Mrs K Curry (Chair), C Higgs, Mrs J Hardcastle, P Shorrocks, P Spooner, B Carvey, Mrs Z Ayres (Clerk) and three members of the public.

1/2/16 To accept apologies for absence:

- Apologies had been received from Cllr R Clarke

2/2/16 Declarations of interest:

- Cllrs K Curry and C Higgs declared an interest in the planning application for Windmill Hill Barns.

3/2/16 Planning

- **16/00086/APP - ASTON ABBOTTS**
Land Adj To Windmill Hill Barns, Moat Lane, Aston Abbots, Buckinghamshire.

Erection of one detached dwelling house; change of use of existing storage building to garage.

Cllr K Curry withdrew from the room and Cllr C Higgs to the Chair but had no involvement in the discussion.

This planning application was discussed. It was **RESOLVED**, by a majority vote, to object to the application for the following reasons:

The proposed dwelling will detract from the surrounding Area of Attractive Landscape.

The land surrounding the barn is still registered as agricultural land.

The barn was only granted planning permission after appeal, and after previous planning permission for 2 dwellings was refused.

This land is not within the village envelope and should not be considered as an 'infill' site.

- **16/00461/APP - ASTON ABBOTTS**
Abbots View Farm, Moat Lane, Aston Abbots, Buckinghamshire, HP22 4NF.

Change of use of one paddock from agricultural use to a Sui Generis use as a Cattery including the erection of building.

This planning application was discussed and it was RESOLVED not to object. However, the Parish Council did wish to highlight their concern about the increase in traffic on the bridleway. They wished to request that traffic calming measures be taken into consideration to ensure the safety of any pedestrians and horses using this right of way.

**CM/50/15 - BIERTON
CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATION**

Aylesbury Golf Course, Hulcott Lane, Bierton

Proposal: Restoration of part of the old golf course to agriculture using imported soil, including recycling of hardcore, for a period of 5 years

This planning application was discussed and it was RESOLVED not to object. However, the Parish Council wished to comment that they believe the landowner responsible for the dumping of inappropriate material should be made liable for any costs incurred to correct the damage.

4/2/16 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

- **Devolution of Grass Cutting Tranche 2**
The Council discussed the possible options and RESOLVED to award the contract to S&D environmental. They decided that this firm offered a good package and the best value for money.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chairman

March 2016

Aston Abbotts Parish Council

Minutes of meeting number 3/16

Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 16th March 2016

**Present: - Cllrs. Mrs K Curry (Chair), C Higgs, R Clarke, P Shorrocks, Mrs J Hardcastle, P Spooner,
B Carvey, Mrs Z Ayres (Clerk) and three members of the public.**

1/3/16 To accept apologies for absence:

- **Apologies had been received from County Cllr N Glover and District Cllr P Cooper**

2/3/16 Declarations of interest:

- **None declared**

3/3/16 To approve minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2016 and the Extraordinary meeting held on 3rd March 2016

- **Minutes of the last meetings were signed as approved.**

4/3/16 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda

- **The cleaning of the dog bins was discussed again and it was AGREED that the Clerk would go back to AVDC to establish what was happening.**
- **The Salt bin at the corner of The Green and Bricstock was discussed and it was RESOLVED not to join the TFB scheme at this point.**
- **Online banking was discussed and the Clerk reported back that as it was not an urgent matter she felt it could be discussed during a quieter meeting at a later date.**

**Action:
ZA**

**Action:
ZA**

5/3/16 Clerk's report

- **A letter regarding the Cherry trees and Stump outside Numbers 30 and 32 The Green was shared. It was RESOLVED that Cllr R Clarke would respond to the enquiry suggesting that the matter be taken to BCC, as the trees are their responsibility.**
- **The Wingrave and Rowsham Plan was discussed and it was RESOLVED for the Clerk to resend the link and for the Councillors to respond in a personal capacity if they wished to comment.**
- **The subscription for Bucks Playing Fields Association was discussed and it was RESOLVED to pay it this year.**

**Action:
RC**

- **The Land Registry Variable Direct Debit scheme was discussed and it was RESOLVED to give the Clerk the power to download deeds and plans for Parish Council business. It was AGREED that each time she downloaded something it would be signed off and checked during the next PC meeting.**
- **A Parish Council Laptop and Website were discussed. It was AGREED to apply for funding from the Transparency fund for Small Councils for a laptop. It was also AGREED for the Clerk and Cllr P Spooner to research the best Laptop for PC work and report back at the next meeting. It was RESOLVED not to start a PC website at this time.**
- **The Clerk's hours were discussed and it was RESOLVED to increase them to 6 hours per week for the next 3 months.**

**Action:
All Cllrs
(optional)**

**Action:
KC and
one other
Cllr**

**Action:
ZA and
PSp**

6/3/16 County council, District and Police matters

- **None in attendance**

7/3/16 Village Matters

- **The Best Kept Village Competition was discussed and it was RESOLVED not to enter this year.**

8/3/16 *Highways*

- **Feedback from SWARCO. The training was discussed and Cllr P Sp informed the council that he would be downloading the first set of data when they moved the MVAS. The Clerk reported that there was not going to be as much funding from the LAF as initially anticipated which would create a shortfall of approximately £350. It was AGREED that the Clerk would go back to them to question this as there had not been any official communication regarding the change in the amount available.**
- **Mowing of the Green was discussed and it was AGREED to officially thank P Knight in the Chronicle for his hard work over many years for cutting the grass.**

**Action: P
Sp**

**Action:
ZA**

- **Mowing of the Rec. was discussed and it was AGREED to put the contract out for tender towards the end of the year, prior to setting next year's precept.** **Action: ZA**

9/3/16 **Planning**

- **Community Right to build – Steering Committee – The Steering Committee reported back from their meeting on 3rd March.**

10/3/16 **Recreation Ground**

- **A possible addition to children's play area was discussed and it was AGREED that the next steps would be to send out a questionnaire to the children with 5 possible options on and report back at the next meeting.**
- **The quote for the climbing net was discussed and it was AGREED to establish whether this included fitting, also that it would be a good idea for them to advise on a new piece of equipment for the area.**
- **Safety Check – not yet happening on a weekly basis, but it was RESOLVED that this would be the case in the future as it is a requirement from the insurance company**

Action: ZA

Action: ZA

Action: RC

11/3/16 **Accounts**

- **Financial Regulations: Were discussed briefly and it was AGREED to locate the title deeds for the Rec. and The Green.**
- **Financial Risk Assessment and Report: The Clerk gave a brief financial report and it was AGREED to obtain an up to date financial risk assessment to be on the next agenda.**
- **The following were approved for payment:**

Action: ZA

Action: ZA

	Date	Purpose	Expenditure	Amount Pd
EON	11/2/16	Street Lights	£90.91	£95.46
Mrs AK Ayres	29/2/16	Clerk's Salary/ Training and Expenses	£275.77	£275.77
EON	11/3/16	Street Lights	£85.05	£89.30

BPFA	16/3/16	Subscription	£20	£20
Buckland Landscapes	16/3/16	Grass Cutting	£107.63	£129.16
Glasdon	16/3/16	Salt Bin	120	144
Andy Muskett	16/3/16	Lighting Maintenance	£91.15	£109.38
Buckland Landscapes	16/3/16	Grass Cutting	£107.63	£129.16
SWARCO Traffic Ltd	16/3/16	MVAS Training	278.16	333.79

13/3/16 Date of next meetings

- **It was confirmed that the next Annual Parish meeting will be held on Wednesday 13th April 2016 at 8pm in the Village Hall.**
- **It was confirmed that the next Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th May 2016 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Chairman

May 2016



LATEST OFSTED REPORT FOR WINGRAVE SCHOOL

A message from Mrs V Britnell, Headteacher and Mrs K Smethurst, Chair of Governors

We are thrilled to announce that Ofsted have judged Wingrave Church of England Combined School to be a GOOD SCHOOL. This is the first time the school has achieved this category since Ofsted and the inspection framework were introduced.



As you may have been aware, the school was inspected by a team of two inspectors on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th April 2016. We had a superb two days showcasing all the hard work that has gone on since the 2013 inspection. Our school has undergone so many changes since then and there is a great deal to celebrate.

We are delighted with the outcome of the inspection. The report rated the school as GOOD in every one of the judgment areas, Effectiveness of leadership and management, Quality of teaching, learning and assessment, Personal development, behaviour and welfare, Outcomes for pupils and Early years provision. The school gained this grading from Ofsted, under the new tougher inspection regime brought in by the Government in September 2015.

We thank all of the children and the dedicated team who have strived together to improve our school and move forward on our journey to outstanding. It has been a lot of hard work and some challenging times, however this is the outcome we aimed for. Thank you for keeping faith in the vision. Key actions made the vision become a reality for our children. The relentless focus on teaching and learning and on improving ethos and learning attitudes has given us this outcome.

We are pleased that all stakeholders and Ofsted recognise the rich learning experiences which support good progress here at Wingrave Church of England Combined School.

The actions identified to help the school improve further were already in motion and will accentuate our Good provision as we strive to become Outstanding. All the measures we have put in place have been introduced to ensure that the improvements we have made are sustainable and that we can continue to improve and ensure that all children achieve the best outcomes and receive an outstanding education.

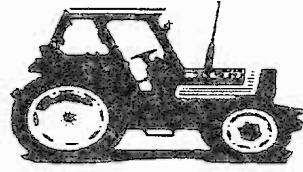
This is obviously a testimony to the hard work of the children, parents/carers, staff, governors, Bucks Learning Trust and the Oxford Diocese Education Board.

WINGRAVE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
COMBINED SCHOOL
Twelve Leys, Wingrave, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 4QG
Tel: 01296 681436 Fax: 01296 681764 office@wingrave.bucks.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs V E Britnell BSc (Hons)

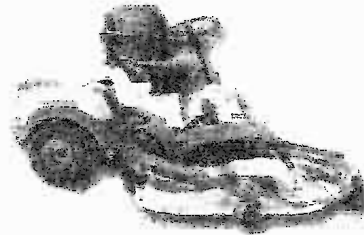
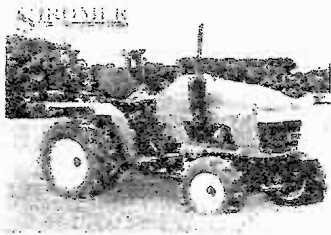


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The Arty BitsBooks.....Music....Theatre...Travel & Food.... and the bits I'm not sure where to put!

May Bookclub

Last month's book was *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini, whose first 2 books, *The Kite Runner* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, were both acclaimed bestsellers set mainly in Afghanistan. His latest book is a departure in terms of the style as it was written as a series of apparently interconnected short stories. Starting in Afghanistan, the stories take in a variety of locations from a small village in Afghanistan, to Kabul, the U.S.A, Paris and the Greek island of Tinos.

The story opens with a young boy following his father and beloved sister across the desert. His father relents and allows the boy to join them on the journey and that night tells them what seems a fairy story but in fact foretells the event that is about to happen and change all their lives forever. This terrific opening is followed by a series of stories concentrating on different people who are touched in some way by the first event.

There were mixed views about the book. Some people found it hard to see how all the stories were connected. Many of us felt that the author had failed to concentrate on the main characters and rather gone off track with some minor characters. Some of the stories worked better than others, particularly that of Uncle Nabi who had, in his efforts to help his brother in law, come up with and assisted in the implementation of a life changing idea.

Nonetheless this was a good read just not quite up to the standard of his previous 2 novels. If you like short stories there is much to enjoy.

Our next book is *The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund de Waal

Sally Palmer

Letter (s)

Sir,

I feel that Aston Pete's letter in the Chronicle needs a reply.

1. I am amazed that there is evidence showing that more people read the Chronicle because it now contains smutty teenage jokes.
2. I doubt anybody reads through the Chronicle in order to find the Astonians.
3. I can't believe that anyone has attempted to drum up opposition to and complaints about the Astonians.
4. Wow! What a surprise to hear that the Astonians is purely fictional.

I am well aware that whatever is written in our Parish Magazine appeals to only a small section of our diverse community. However, if it were suggested that more people would read my paltry efforts of I used bad language and suggestive innuendo I would not believe that to be so.

Surely there is a basic standard necessary for a Parish Magazine that must be acceptable to all Parishioners, young and old alike.

It is no good saying "if you don't like it you don't have to read it".

Peter Knight

The Illegal Eagles

Aylesbury Waterside Theatre

We were over the moon to have the opportunity see the Illegal Eagles thanks to original recipient being unable to take up the offer of the two free tickets.

We have been avid admirers of the original Eagles ever since they arrived on the music scene in the seventies and have seen several of their live appearances including one of the shows on the legendary "Hell Freezes Over" tour (still got the 'T' shirt). As Don Henley insists there will be no more Eagle performances after the untimely death of Glen Frey, we were eager to experience once again that magic sound of a live Eagles concert. Not being the original Eagles we were half expecting to be a somewhat disappointed, but no, they were absolutely brilliant! They went through just about all the well known, and not quite so well known Eagles songs plus some of Don Henley's own hits with some Eagles history in between melodies, who wrote what, when and where etc. A really entertaining evening, and the sound was as near to the original Eagles as just about possible.

There was a very welcomed lack of mobile phone activity (filming etc.) to the point of where the audience was encouraged to film, photograph and do anything else legal during the last twenty or so minutes of the performance. The groups leader actually took pictures of the audience and said they would be on their Facebook page by the morning, firstly giving anyone the opportunity to leave first - some did!

The group were very good musicians and singers in their own right, and could have carried off lots of other styles of music just as well, especially heavy rock and roll.

As an aside, the temporary but excellent drummer (usual one was being "mended"?) was waiting to hear that he was the grandfather of twins, and the poor old bass guitar player's partner was actually about to drop that evening. Every time someone came on the stage to change the guitars or adjust the set etc. he nearly died thinking "this is it"!

Pete & Jean Newens

petenewens@btinternet.com

June 2016

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Sadly for Kate Curry she wasn't able to take up the press tickets for the performance of The Sound of Music at Aylesbury Waterside on Thursday, 10th May, so it was John and I who were the lucky couple who benefited and went to watch the evening performance.

We arrived early for the show and we were surprised how packed the foyer was with theatre goers. We were given tickets for excellent seats in the centre of the stalls and a programme, and were advised that there would be a free drink waiting for us in the interval. The theatre was buzzing with crowds of folks of all ages and there were very few empty seats.

From the start, we were all thrilled by the beautiful voices and harmonies of the 'nuns' and this was enhanced when Lucy O'Byrne as Maria took the stage singing the iconic title song. All the actors played their parts well and Andrew Lancel (who I remembered for winning Villain of the Year for his portrayal of Frank Foster in Coronation Street) was great as a pompous Captain Von Trap.

As children are very limited on how often they are allowed to work, they had three different sets of the six Von Trap children to cover all the different performances, and both John and I were impressed how well the six children who played the parts that evening acted out their roles, and how clearly they spoke and sang.

It was beautifully staged and the scenery changes were very clever. In the finale you could have heard a pin drop when a very talented Jan Hartley, as the Mother Abbess, sang 'Climb Every Mountain', until the final note and then the applause that followed was deafening and the audience were on their feet giving them a standing ovation. Thank you for a brilliant evening's entertainment.

Pam and John Dixon

The Astonians

Car Keys

astonpete

I was going to tell you this snippet of news about what happened to me the other day but instead I've insisted my wife tells you in her own words. Fellow Astonians please, when you see her next, don't snigger.

The Wife.

I was looking for my keys. I thought they were not in my pocket. A quick search in the meeting room revealed nothing. Suddenly I realised I must have left them in the car. Frantically I headed for the car park.

My husband has scolded me many times for leaving the keys in the ignition. My theory is the ignition is the best place not to lose them. His theory is that the car will be stolen. As I scanned the car park I came to a terrifying conclusion. His theory was right. The car park was empty.

I immediately called the police. I gave them my location, confessed that I had left my keys in the car and that it had been stolen. Then I made the most difficult call of all.

"Hello My Love", I stammered; I always call him "My Love" in times like these. "I left my keys in the car and it has been stolen."

There was a period of silence. I thought the call had disconnected but then I heard his voice. He barked, "I dropped you off!"

Now it was my time to be silent. Embarrassed, I said, "Well, come and get me."

He replied, "I will, as soon as I convince this policeman I have not stolen your bloody car."

Seriously underdressed in Napier

On our recent extended trip to New Zealand we planned to be in the North Island city of Napier for the annual Art Deco weekend. Napier was almost totally destroyed in 1931 by an earthquake but the city was rebuilt in the midst of the great Depression because it was one of the few natural harbours on North Island and because the earthquake had raised the land by 2-3 meters and created a great deal more usable land in the area. It was not planned in any overall sense but the fact that so many new buildings were constructed at the same time meant they reflected the prevailing architectural ideas of the day. The resulting art deco city remained largely unaltered for many years until a few buildings started to be replaced and a movement developed to protect the city's uniqueness that has been largely successful. Today it is a lovely city that attracts tourists year round but for one weekend a year when the festival takes place it travels back to the 1930s.

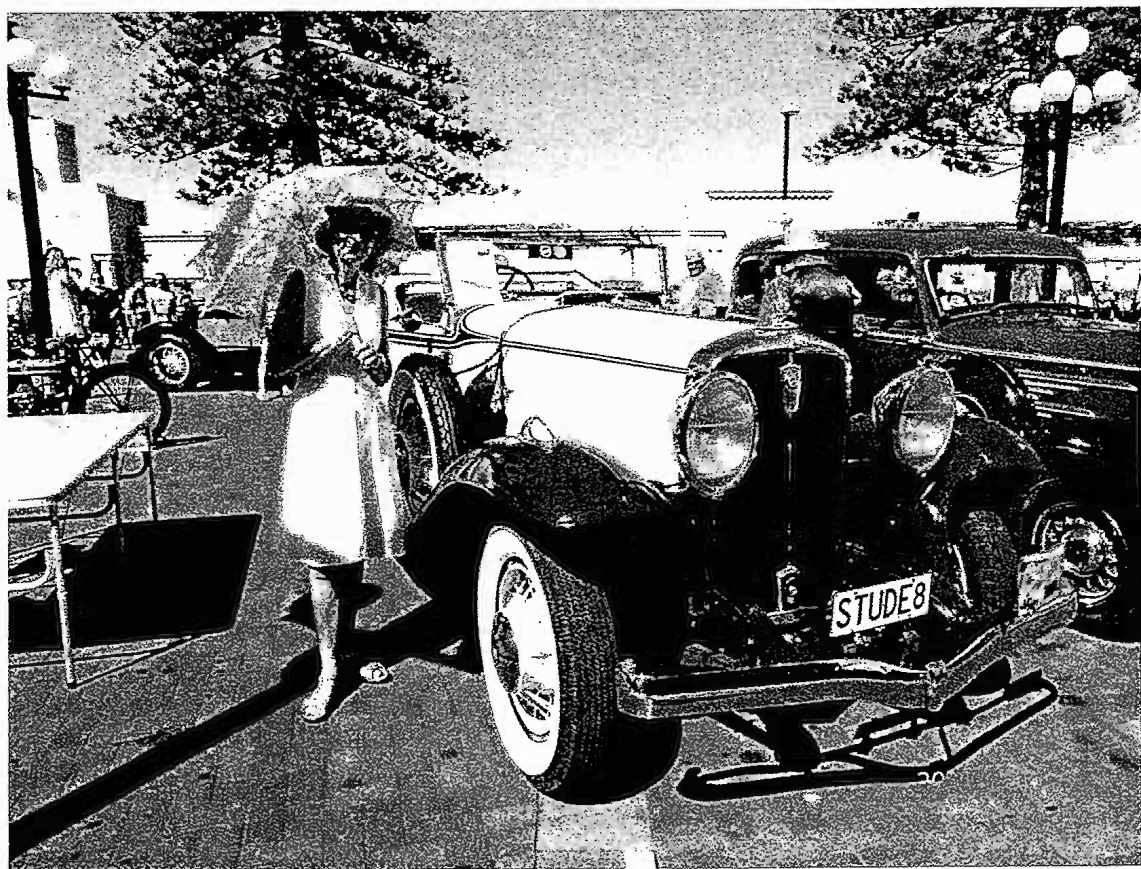
Arriving at our hotel at about 6pm people were already leaving for evening events dressed to the nines in elegant period dresses, high-waisted trousers, two tone shoes, striped blazers and boaters. Venturing out I was amazed to discover that the whole city appeared to have travelled back in time. We were seriously underdressed and I was somewhat irritated to think that we could have kitted ourselves out quite well from items left behind in Aston Abbots.

The seafront roads were jammed with many fabulous classic cars including a number of Rolls Royce's and huge American made Packard cars their owners supping wine and champagne in the best hotels in town overlooking the beach. Mixed among these symbols of wealth were people dressed down to attend (at 55 dollars a ticket) the Depression Dinner rattling their tin cups for a dime. Having failed to pack the required clothing we settled on a take away which seemed appropriate, all the restaurants were booked out anyway, and then enjoyed the free entertainment. Saturday was the day of the Classic Car parade consisting of about 250 immaculate vintage cars and their equally immaculately dressed occupants. By this time we had purchased a straw boater for him and an elegant parasol for me. In the morning we watched an energetic show of 1930s dancing on the main stage and a best dressed competition with several categories of which the most interesting was the vintage category where every visible item worn was genuine vintage clothing. One lady had a fabulous gold dress with its original Paris label. The partying went on long into the night with free bands playing swing and more modern tunes.

Sunday events included a soap box derby with a significant number of entries racing down the sloping centre street the fastest design seemed to be a kind of space rocket attached horizontally to 4 wheels in which the driver laid down. At lunchtime came the last major event the Gatsby Picnic and it was pretty amazing. From 6 am people had been setting up picnics, mainly under gazebos. on the lawn behind the beach and on the edge of the beach itself. Mixed among the gazebos were more modest blanket and sandwich affairs. A fabulous array of tea items were on display including crystal glasses, vintage tea sets, hampers, candlesticks, samovars and tablecloths. Many picnics were themed and included large props such as the Dads Army picnic complete with real upright piano. There was also a village school picnic complete with old fashioned desks and benches and blackboard. All in all it was a great weekend with many people promenading around just looking at what was going on.

Shortly after our visit I received an email about a picnic for the Queen's 90th Birthday planned for the Orchard and this got me thinking about the Gatsby Picnic. I think that Aston Abbots can be just as creative as the good folk of Napier so look out for the information about our own picnic.

Sally Palmer
June 2016



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**Services at
Saint James Church - Aston Abbotts
June 2016**

5th June	6.00pm	Evensong	Revd. Philip Derbyshire
12th June	10.30am	Queen's Birthday Communion	Revd. Peter Binns
19th June	9.30am	Big Breakfast in the Village Hall on Father's Day followed by a short service	
26th June	10.30am	Parish Communion	Revd. Roger Hale

We look forward to seeing you

100 Club Draw May 2016

1st Prize, £50: Juan Gutierrez

2nd prize, £10: Pam Dixon

Church Matters



The diary of St. James's

Sunday 15th May saw the first birthday of our Breakfast Service. This initiative has been highly successful in bringing young families into the Church to join in the short informal services.

The balloons, popcorn and percussion instruments made the latest service particularly noisy enjoyable and everyone joined in the game of hide & seek! This is a fitting memorial to the late Reverend Peter Knight and our thanks must go to his wife Rosemary, Caroline Abel Smith and the hard work of the PCC in planning and conducting this new form of service. Always on the lookout for new buzz words the Church hierarchy has coined the illustrative term 'messy church' for such initiatives! There are many exciting events coming up this summer:

The Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations will be marked by a Flower Festival and Organ recitals in the Church on the Saturday and Sunday 11/12th June. The Village Hall will also have an exhibition of Village History and serve teas in aid of the Village Hall Restoration fund. See elsewhere in this Chronicle for details. If you would like to get some exercise by participating in the Ride & Stride event this year on Saturday 10th September or sponsoring a participant such as our own Caroline Lane then please see the advert elsewhere in this month's Chronicle. The Harvest celebrations this year involves a Breakfast Service on the 18th September starting in the Village Hall and concluding with a short service in the Church. Then on Monday 19th we will have our usual Harvest Supper and Auction.

Finally please keep an eye out for the 100 Club forms that will be coming through your door early this month. It would be great if you could support your Church by renewing or starting a new membership by the end of June.

The Novice

June 2016

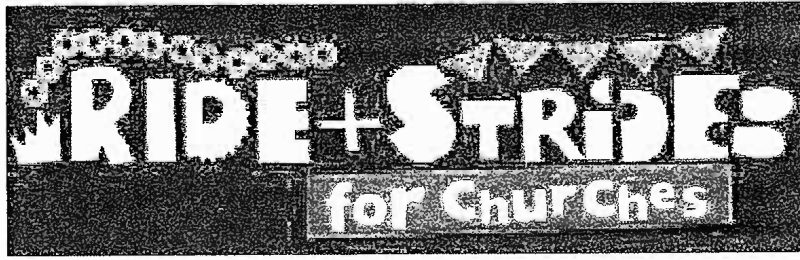
Dear friends,

I for one think it's really great that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have called all Churches to pray for people to engage with faith in Jesus Christ. They have done this because they rightly assessed the damage which has been done to our society by cynical undermining of wholesome and traditional values in almost every area of life. This is nothing to do with pc attitudes, which although often laboured, are generally a civilized move forward in our attitudes and behaviour

In the middle of May we celebrated the great gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost when the promise that Jesus made to His disciples about not leaving them comfortless was fulfilled. This gift is for the world, bringing life and hope to all willing to listen and collaborate with the will of God. With all the matters we seem determined to fight over a message of reconciliation and collaboration can only be good.

Have a lovely June and have some time to just sit and give thanks for all the good stuff and not just worry about the dreadful things we see and hear about.

God Bless, Philip.



The annual Ride & Stride event will take place on Saturday 10th September
 A national fundraising day during which people of all ages conduct sponsored
 walks and cycle rides between local churches. Half the proceeds go to the local
 Church and half to the County Organising Trust that uses the money to meet
 Church repair and restoration bills.

For more information go on www.rideandstrideuk.org

Church Duties June

	Cleaning	Flowers	Mowing
4th	Colin & Caroline L	Caroline A/S	Peter
11 th	Gordon & Ann	Festival	Caroline
18 th	Alex & Anita	Festival	Nigel
25 th	Colin & Gay	TBA	Gordon
2 nd July	Colin & Caroline L	TBA	Andy



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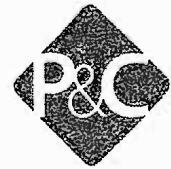
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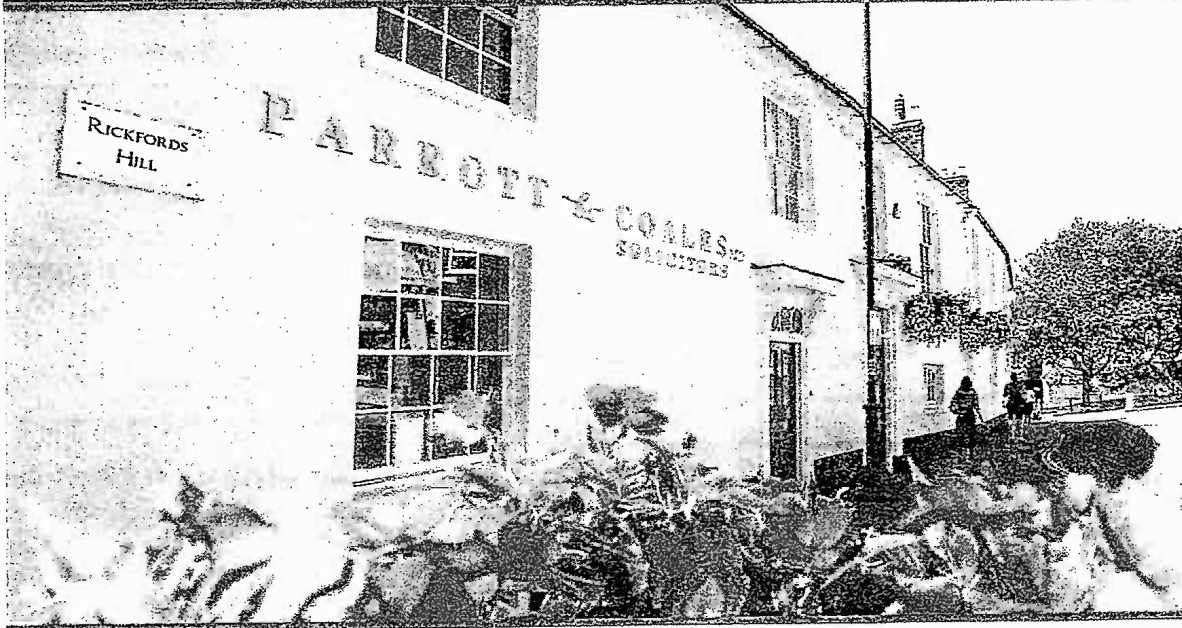
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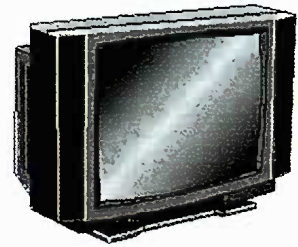
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