



Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting

5th April 2006 at 7:30 p.m.
St John's Hall Mortimer

The Annual Meeting of the Parish was held on Wednesday 5th April 2006 in St John's Hall, Mortimer with Cllr K Davies in the chair.

Before the commencement of the Meeting, the Chairman of the Parish Council presented the 2006 Stratfield Mortimer Community Award. This year two awards were presented, one to Peggy Hood for long service to the local community in the Dramatic Society, St John's Church choir and the Volunteer Bureau etc., and one to Mary Edwards for setting up and running the yearly art show plus the permanent display at the surgery.

Present: There were 47 people present (including Councillors).

- 1 **Apologies for Absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr G Puddephatt.
- 2 **Minutes of 2005 Annual Parish Meeting:** The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 7th April 2005, which had been previously circulated, were proposed as read by Mr L Picking and unanimously accepted.
Matters Arising: There were no matters arising.
- 3 **Presentation on the new pavilion project, The Fairground:** Cllr Adrian Smith reported that the working party has continued its hard work throughout the last year and at to date the money raised stands at £200,000 out of the target of £420,000 required. There are a number of grant applications awaiting decision and some others still in preparation, so that if all of these were to be successful, then the target would be exceeded! He thanked all those in the village for their support of the runner in the London marathon last year. This single event brought in over £1,000 in sponsorship money from the local community and he said they hope to repeat it again. On top of the £150,000 pledged by Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity the working party have been successful in 2006 in gaining £40,000 funding from South East England Development Agency, which will be split and spent across the next 2 tax years. This means that we **will** begin construction in the next 12 months! The project is eligible for this grant as a result of the Parish Plan that was carried out by the Parish Council and we are the very first recipients of such a grant in the West Berkshire region, so the whole community can be very proud that we have achieved that. The working party also secured Full Planning permission for the new facility during 2005, with no objections. Additionally, this was achieved without having to pay architects fees for the process, so saving several thousand pounds. Cllr Smith thanked Tom McLoughlin for his hard work in achieving this. The construction phase is still a little way off and the working party still has a lot of work to do in the meantime. However, between this meeting and the next Annual Parish Meeting phase one may already have started and finished! Mortimer Cricket Club have agreed to play all their 2007 matches away from home in 2007 and, in principle, have agreed that, should funding sufficient to allow construction during 2007 be in place, the existing pavilion might be demolished once the playing season in 2006 has finished. That would be a real sign of progress. Once again Cllr Smith thanked all the members of the community for their help and support over the last year and asked if anyone thought that they may be able to help to contact him or the Parish Clerk.

4 **Parish Council's Annual Report:** Cllr Keith Davies (Chairman of the Parish Council) started by introducing all the current members of the Parish Council present, he advised that he had been elected as new Chairman in May 2005 after Graham Puddephatt's term of the Chairmanship ended at the Parish Council's Annual General Meeting on May 12th 2005. He said that Graham's work as Chairman was a hard act to follow. He himself had been invited to be co-opted onto the Parish Council in 2001, and became Vice-Chairman in 2003. The Parish Council have had another very busy year and the parish Office is well used and many residents and councillors call in or 'phone on the open mornings. In addition over the last 12 months the office has been used for 61 additional committee and other meetings and 12 District Councillor Saturday surgeries. The Clerk's role continues to be a very busy one. The Clerk is the linch pin of the Parish Council and he then outlined The Parish Council have had another very busy year and the Parish Office is well used many residents and councillors call in or 'phone on the open mornings. In addition over the last 12 months the office has been used for 61 additional committee and other meetings and 12 District Councillor Saturday Surgeries. The Clerk's role continues to be a very busy one and some of her responsibilities are:

- the operation of the busy parish office and all correspondence,
- she is legal adviser,
- finance officer (dealing with the accounts, budgets, VAT returns, insurance etc),
- responsible for agendas and minutes of all meetings,
- Cemetery Manager,
- Fairground Manager dealing with bookings, maintenance, safety inspections etc.
- Commons Manager/Administrator dealing with maintenance and legal issues
- Web site manager
- New projects such as funding for mini bus etc
- Community Award
- Remembrance Day Parade

And many other things that come along to name but a few.

Finances: The Parish Council total budget for expenditure has actually gone down by £2,947 on the previous year. The amount of the precept figure has only increased by £553 the increase has been caused mainly by the loss of the transport grant for the Mortimer Link.

Planning: West Berkshire Council are the Authority which determines planning applications. However, the Parish Council as a statutory consultee is invited to comment on all applications within the Parish. To this end the Planning Committee have met 24 times during the past 12 months and considered 108 applications. The majority of applications are non controversial but a small number are contentious for example 7 houses to the rear of 33-37 West End Road, development of Mortimer Mens Club, and additional mobile 'phone antenna at the fire station. In order to press our views the Parish Council representative has spoken on 8 occasions at the West Berkshire Council Eastern Area Planning Committee Meetings. All Parish Council Planning Committee Meetings are advertised on the two Parish Council Notice Boards outside The Post Office and outside The Library 3 days in advance and parishioners welcome to come along to meetings and observe (These are usually held in the Parish Council Office at the back of the Library). Many people take advantage of viewing current planning applications which are available to view in the Parish Office on Tues/Thursday mornings although all planning applications can now be viewed on the West Berkshire website.

Village Design Statement: A working party made up of members of the public and councillors was set up to prepare the Village Design Statement is now at the first draft stage and members of the public have had the opportunity to comment on this and it was

posted on the web site for this purpose. During the year two public consultation open mornings have been held in St John's hall and a questionnaire was sent to every house in the parish regarding the content of the design statement.

Rural Housing Trust: The results of the Rural Housing Trust Survey sent out to every household in September 2004 showed that there was a need for more low cost housing within the parish. A meeting was held with the Rural Housing Trust in May 2005 to progress this and the Parish Council is still waiting to hear from the RHT despite chasing them several times.

Cemetery: The Cemetery is looking very neat and tidy. During the year a new bench has been put in and a new deer fence has been erected. In the light of good practice (and after researching other local cemeteries) we have revised the cemetery regulations and forms as from 1st April this year.

Roads & Footpaths:

Speed limit reduction: After years of campaigning by the Parish Council West Berkshire Council have agreed to recommend a reduction in the speed limit between The Avenue and Pitfield Lane from 40 mph to 30mph.

Footpath and crossing: Mr Mark Edwards, head of Highways from West Berkshire Council advised at the public meeting on 25th February that improvements will be made to existing footpaths and as it has become impossible for practical and financial reasons to provide a continuous footpath along The Street. It is intended that a pedestrian crossing will now be installed in a location east of Kiln Lane.

Police enforcement lay-bys: Two police speed enforcement laybys have been agreed by West Berkshire and will be situated in front of the Fairground and close to Mortimer Lane.

Commons:

Brewery Common:

Ownership: The legal title held by SMPC will be officially registered at the Land Registry, but only after current boundaries are settled.

Gas Main: In May, after long legal battle gas pipe moved into its rightful place in highway and a modest amount of compensation (including all costs) has been obtained from Transco.

Dragons Teeth: WBC has applied to DEFRA (Secretary of State) on behalf of the Parish Council for permission to install dragons' teeth (wooden stakes) around the grassed areas of the common to deter trespass. This is a long process and West Berkshire Council when pressed recently have agreed as a temporary measure to place large logs at the edge of the grassed areas until such time as permission is obtained from DEFRA.

Fairground:

Fairground Trust: As reported at the last Annual Parish Meeting a new board of trustees was set up on the 10th June 2005. Negotiations are still taking place for the grant of a lease by the Fairground Trust to SMPC.

Fairground General: Vandalism continues, especially to tennis court fence. The vandalised clatter bridge on the multi play unit in the children's play area on the Fairground has now been replaced with a new chain link bridge.

Working Party: The working party continues to meet on a monthly basis on the first Saturday of each month to carry out maintenance to the Fairground. New volunteers always very welcome.

New Pavilion: See above

Mortimer Link Mini Bus Service: The grant of 64% from SEEDA ran out at the end of February. The Parish Council are keen to continue the Mortimer Link Mini Bus Service from the village to station and have been seeking alternative funding. West Berkshire Council has now agreed to part fund the service. The Parish Council have also approached

other funders including RIN and will also continue to make a contribution. Demand for the service is increasing (passenger journeys are up from an average of 102 per week in 2004 to 126 for the first three months of 2006. It is anticipated that the demand for the service is likely to increase as the housing numbers in the village grow and the parking at the station gets worse. Timetables and routes are advertised in the Parish Council Newsletter and are available on the web site.

Web Site: All minutes, agendas and other parish council information can be viewed on the Parish Council website www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk and also on the two parish council notice boards outside the Post Office and the Library.

Communications:

Newsletter: The Parish Council continue to produce a quarterly Parish Council Newsletter which is distributed to every house in the parish by a band of volunteers. The Newsletter is well received by residents who have said that they find the information very informative.

Mortimer, Burghfield and District Neighbourhood Action Group: In addition to the by-monthly Action Group Meetings at which Mortimer has two parish councillor representatives two well-attended public meetings have been held (on 23rd May and 25th February) jointly by this Parish Council and Thames Valley Police. Inspector Rodger Cartwright, who has just taken over from Inspector Andy Talbot, announced that he had obtained funding for re-opening the Mortimer Police Station (part time) and invited volunteers to offer their services in helping to man it: three volunteers came forward immediately and some others have added to the number. Also a traffic warden has been appointed to deal with double yellow line infringements (and I understand that he has been in Mortimer this week). Further Action Group meetings will be arranged in due course and probably another public meeting later in the year.

A copy of this report and the budget figures will be published in the next edition of the Parish Council Newsletter which is scheduled to go out at the beginning of May.

5 District Councillor's observations:

Cllr Keith Lock reported that 2005-6 had been a year of considerable change at West Berkshire, firstly there was a change of control on 5th May 2005 when the Conservatives gained a seat at Thatcham in a by-election. They established an Executive of nine members under the leadership of Cllr Graham Jones from Lambourn. There has been a number of staff changes in recent months, the Chief Executive Jim Graham left to take over at Warwickshire and was replaced by Nick Carter (previously one of the Council Directors). A number of planning staff have also left to take up more senior posts elsewhere. A staff re-organisation has just been announced which will result in job cuts at Head of Service level, meanwhile staff vacancies are running at 15%. During the year West Berkshire were again subject to a Government inspection and the Council was downgraded from 'good' to 'fair' this despite the Planning Department having improved rapidly and being judged among the best 25% in the Country and Housing becoming a 3* service for the first time. The schools have continued to perform well above the national average but Education was judged a 3* service (4* the previous year). Locally The Willink School again had over 60% of pupils achieving 5 A to C grade passes at GCSE. Pressure for development has continued and will continue in this area but the Council's new draft plan intends to concentrate new building around Newbury and Thatcham. The Prudential plan to build 7,000 dwellings north of the M4 and west of the Mortimer to Reading railway, this will be resisted. In recent weeks a provisional agreement has been reached with the Englefield Estate to hand Ufton Court back to the Estate. The Court has been leased for educational purposes for many years by Berkshire County Council and then jointly by the six Berkshire unitary Councils. Some of the other councils are anxious to terminate the lease early and this is being done. It is the intention to set up the Ufton Court Educational

Trust to be run from the Court and that it is hoped that local schools will continue to enjoy the facilities there.

Cllr Sandra Harding reported:

There continues to be considerable pressure to develop land within the village. Several large applications have been received such as Garth House, St John's Road (unsuccessful), land behind 33 to 37 West End Road (unsuccessful), land behind the Victoria Arms (successful) and Mortimer Club (successful). In particular the successful application to demolish the Club is to be regretted but faced with English Heritage's reluctance to support its protection we had to concede its loss. More applications for back land development (in rear gardens of properties) are being received. This could have a great impact on the character of the village. Sovereign Housing has also sold a number of sites in the village for private housing, the money to be reinvested in public housing, but unfortunately not necessarily in Mortimer, which is a pity given the demand for social housing here. There has been an unwanted application to raise the height of the mobile phone mast at the Fire Station. Unfortunately there are no grounds under planning law to stop it. Cllr Harding then gave a report on the status of the footpath for the south side of The Street. A full investigation and costing of the footpath has taken place. A number of issues were raised such as the holly hedge to the rear of the houses in Orchard Road and with a number of large mature trees on the bend before the junction with Kiln Lane. The cost of moving the road over was investigated but the cost was £125,000. It is intended to install a controlled (traffic light) crossing just before the entrance to Mortimer Hall. This will achieve a safe crossing point for children and others at much less cost. At a recent speed limit review meeting it was agreed to reduce the limit along that stretch of The Street to 30mph. Work continues on the conversion of the residential wing of Windmill Court into 6 extra care units and 1 ordinary flat scheduled to be complete in early June. West Berkshire Council will have nomination rights (not Sovereign) and are looking for tenants. The Warden's House is to be tenanted out by Sovereign Housing. Cllr Harding then reminded people of the monthly councillor surgeries held on the first Saturday of each month in the Parish Council Office at the Library. She also thanked the Parish Council for their support and interest over the last year.

6 Report from local Charities:

Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity:

The Chairman of the Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity, Hector Clark, gave a report. The Charity continues its efforts to provide funding to those in need, such as a fuel allowance at Christmas and assisting with funding for Clarke's Educational Trust. The main source of income in the past, has been from revenue received from royalties from the mineral extraction from Burnt Common. This work is now virtually complete and future income will be from investment. The Charity continues to support the Fairground building project subject to it serving the community as a whole and not just a cricket pavilion. We are also at present considering application for funds from St Mary's School/St Mary's /Church Car Park, the refurbishment of the Methodist Church facilities, the alterations and extension to the Football Club building and the refurbishment of St John's Hall. An application has also been received from the Parish Council in respect of the Mortimer Link Bus Service. It is hoped that in the Charity's next report that a number, if not all of these schemes will have progressed to either completion or ongoing projects.

Clarke's Educational Foundation:

Mr John Mazillius, Hon Treasurer for the Clarke's Charity reported that the Charity owns part of St Mary's School and the income from this, together with interest on invested funds, is distributed in grants to support the educational needs of young persons who live in the parishes of Stratfield Mortimer, Mortimer West End and Wokefield. There are eight

trustees in total, four appointed by the local parish councils and the unitary authority, one appointed by the local churches, together with three co-opted members. The administration is in the capable hands of Mrs Isobel de la Mothe who ensures that the administration costs are kept to a minimum, currently 2.5% of income. The Charity has this year given grants totalling £8,589 to various organisations and individuals with another £3,500 allocated but not yet paid. The main recipients are St Mary's, St John's and Silchester School. This year the trustees continued the scheme of awarding bursaries to young people who were starting at university or further education to assist them with the purchase of essential text books. Currently 7 people are receiving bursaries totalling £3,500. A copy of the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts were tabled.

Stratfield Mortimer Fairground Charity:

Mr John Bull reported that at the last Annual Parish Meeting he was elected to be the Meeting's representative on the newly formed Stratfield Mortimer Fairground Charity. At the first meeting he was elected as Chairman and during the first months they consolidated their individual views within the terms of the trust deed. Two members of the original committee resigned but have been able to attract one replacement. Have nearly finished the negotiations with the Parish Council on the value of the lease. This will give the stability for the Parish Council to continue in their role of maintaining the Fairground. As laid out in the trust deed the charity will gradually gather funds to distribute to the needy of the village. Completion of the lease will also allow the Parish Council Working Party for the proposed pavilion to secure their promised funds. He thanked his fellow trustees and the Parish Council for their guidance and especially Chris Lewis for all the time and experience he has put into the negotiations of the lease.

7 Statements by School Governors:

Mortimer St John's Church of England Infant School: Mr John Hannawin, Chair of Governors, reported that the number on roll this year is 174 out of a possible 180, which is a rise of 4 over last year. The rise in the number of children has not had significant effect on the school after the large rise last year but it has led to a large Year 2 group. There are six classes with two in each year group. Each class has a full-time teacher and the equivalent of a full-time teaching assistant. Where a class includes children with recognised special-needs learning support assistants are assigned to those children. In addition, each class has a dedicated lunchtime carer. To accommodate the large Year 2 group, the school has been able to provide an additional temporary teacher who takes a small group for teaching each morning. This means that each Year 2 has been taught in a group with a child to adult ratio less than 14:1. As these children leave the school at the end of this academic year it is unlikely that we will be able to continue with this going forward.

Staffing: The school has had a small number of changes this year with one teacher moving from St John's to St Mary's. The school has implemented the planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time requirements. Each teacher must be given 10% PPA time within the school week. The 10% of teacher lead activities has been replaced with a range of creative activities using external experts. The teaching staff are using this time to spend on group and individual planning and preparation as well as in implementing a programme of more rigorous assessment. The changes have been well received by the staff and appear to be having a positive impact on the quality of learning for the children. The school has been reassessed for the Investors in People standard. I am happy to report that we were once again awarded this nationally recognised standard for employers.

Governing Body: In July our long standing Chair of Governors, Diana Thackray, retired. The Governing Body would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Diana for the huge amount of time, effort and care that she extended to the school. In September Mr John

Hannawin was elected as the new Chair of Governors. The governors continue to attend relevant training, which is monitored by a nominated governor. In addition, close links have been forged with St Mary's, with the respective Head's being non-voting members of the other Governing Body

Curriculum and Standards: The school has continued to develop in delivering the National Curriculum. The SATs results for the year were extremely good with an across the board improvement. Once again, the Governing Body would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all of the School staff for this achievement. The School's computer facilities have been improved with a new server, 2 new workstations in every classroom and a wireless network to allow the workstations to be used anywhere in the school. The main network to the school has also been upgraded as a part of the LEAs Wide Area Network strategy. Staff continue to deliver and develop extra curricular activities and clubs. At present the school runs a French club, recorder club, gardening club and a choir.

Mortimer St Mary's Church of England VA Junior School: Mrs Jane Carpenter, Chair of Governors reported:

School Organisation: There are currently 219 pupils on roll, 96 girls and 123 boys. They are organised into seven class groups across 4 years. The approximate number of pupils for the academic year 2006/07 is also 219 although this does not include any casual admissions from the new housing development at Mortimer Hill. With completion of the current building work and the subsequent availability of our new classrooms, from September, our students will be organized into two classes per year group. We will be taking approximately 60 students into Year 3 in September.

The current Budget has been more generous than the previous one due to our student numbers being over 200. This has meant that we have been able to employ additional staff so that we could give all our staff release from classroom duties for 10% of their time in line with Government guidelines. Refurbishment of 'the cottage' has meant that staff now have a comfortable and practical working space in which to do marking, planning, preparation and administration.

Curriculum: The school has recently been recognised by the Basic Skills Agency and has been awarded the Quality Mark. Most of the leavers this year will be going to the Willink Staff have all attended a number of varied training courses and in-house sessions

Premises: Work has begun on the construction of our two new classrooms which will be used or one existing class and a new class. This means that an existing room can and will be converted into a computer suite.

Governors: Mrs Margaret Mayes, the previous Chair of Governors and a great friend and supporter of the school resigned from the chair at the end of the last academic year. The school is most grateful for her manifold contributions and we are all delighted that she has stayed on the Governing body and is a very active member of several committees. As the new Chair of Governors I am ably supported by two Vice Chairmen; Dr Steve Colley and Mrs. Jane Bell. The Governing body is almost at full strength as we are waiting for completed administration concerning a foundation Governor and we have one further vacancy. Governors have been very busy with the redevelopment of the school site which is now underway. We have recently refurbished several classrooms and the Head teacher's office. We are all disappointed that we have not yet been granted planning permission for the proposed car park and are continuing to investigate ways of solving the parking challenges at the start and end of the school day. Governors are also engaged in a review of all school policies and have recently received the school budget for the coming year which looks most promising.

School Performance: 2005 Key Stage 2 SATs Results showed pupils achieved above the

national average in English and well above the national average in Science. Mathematics, although broadly in line with the national average continues to be a focus for further development and the school's resources are being channelled to further improve our performance in this key area.

Other Activities: Students continue to participate in a wide variety of after school clubs many of them with a sporting or musical theme as well as handicrafts and other activities. The school received the Bronze award in the Healthy Schools initiative. The work of the staff and Governors is supported by an enthusiastic and committed Parent Teacher Association and many charities and organizations in the area. We are all most grateful for their support and look forward to continue working with them over the coming years.

- 8 **Report from Alfred Palmer Committee & Election of Officers:** Mr John Dell, Secretary thanked the Parish Council for their continued financial assistance towards the up keep of the ground. Regretfully there have had some problems with two of the residents from the adjacent caravan site using the field as an extension of their garden, erecting washing lines, small portable swimming pools and children's general play things. Our thanks to the Parish Council who wrote to the residents concerned requesting the removal of the various items. The majority were eventually removed, it remains to be seen what happens when the better weather returns. Another recent problem, which we hope is not repeated, is the dumping of domestic waste in the gate way, this was cleared up by the Football Club and amounted to seven large refuse sacks. The weather has been good this past year and very few games have been postponed this season. Our thanks to the main users of the ground for their co-operation in not using the ground on those occasions. Our thanks also to the Football Club in helping to maintain the ground. The field is used on a regular basis from August to May with the Football Club running four adult teams who play on Saturday afternoons and Sunday morning. The cubs use the ground for training and a few organised games. The teams using the field have quite a good season, the two Saturday teams look as though they will finish mid table, the Sunday first team look like being promoted and the reserves whilst finishing in the bottom half of the league are well clear of relegation. In addition to organised games of football it is pleasing to see the field used for many other activities during the year.

The current committee of Major G Leworthy, Mr D Grimwade, Mr S Dell and Mr J Dell are all prepared to stand for re-election. This was proposed by J Morden and seconded by K Lock. The committee were re-elected unanimously.

- 9 **Report from Parish Council's Representative on St John's Hall:** Cllr Shorrocks reported that 2005/2006 has been another productive and positive year for St. John's Hall. Lettings income has been healthy and despite the increases in energy costs. The Hall has managed to maintain a satisfactory financial situation, as is outlined in the attached financial report. The poor heating has been a problem for many years and with the installation of gas to the village last year, it was agreed that a completely new heating system should be installed. The Hall committee were able to achieve this with help and contributions from E S Pipelines, who installed the gas connections free of charge, and Relief In Need charity who have contributed £5,300. The committee also gratefully acknowledges the grant of £1,000 from the Parish Council towards the project. The balance of the capital for the project was met out of the halls own resources. There are still improvements to be made to the heating, as regular hall users will know, and this is being addressed. An additional sodium light has been installed in the main hall and new lights have been installed in the loft, with financial assistance from Mortimer Dramatic Society. The electricity supply, outlets and appliances, has all been recently checked and is in good working order. Following the changes in Government legislation the new licensing laws were negotiated and the hall now meets all legal requirements in this respect. The Hall

committee would like to extend its thanks to Mr. Lawrence Picking for all his efforts in this regard. Future plans for improvements to the hall include:-

1. Finalising the heating (including boxing in the pipes)
2. Doing the appropriate work to comply with recent legislation regarding facilities for the disabled.
3. Maintaining the recurring items of general maintenance.
4. The committee is also looking to extend the building, subject of course to planning constraints and available finance.

Ann Waller who has kept the hall clean for some years, as well as being a member of the committee, has given up her cleaning duties. The Hall committee would like to express, on behalf of all the hall users, their grateful thanks for her efforts. We are pleased to report that she will be remaining as a valued member of the hall committee. The committee are now looking for a new cleaner to take up Ann's duties.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all those whose time and effort, freely given, has helped to ensure that our village hall remains a viable part of our community.

10 Report from Representative of Tennis Club: After 4 years of slowly declining membership, the 2005/2006 season saw a small but welcome revival. The Club has never been large because of the limited court availability, the rules set a maximum of 50 adult members but last season's rise in adult membership from 21 to 29 and in junior from 8 to 13, was very welcome. This level is the highest since 2000. While we have not conducted a scientific survey, we feel that the renewed interest is partly attributable to more vigorous marketing, and partly to the decision by the Parish Council to have the courts painted, which greatly enhances the appeal of tennis and of the Fairground as a whole.

Another potential change to the village facilities is the Pavilion Project which will have been discussed earlier on in tonight's agenda. At the moment, our website is the Club's 'virtual clubhouse', but we anticipate that a physical location which members can use as their shared home will make a great difference. The new members are all keen players, so the Club's Tuesday and Thursday evening social tennis sessions were much better attended than they have been in recent years. In addition, the Club was supported by local LTA coach Rachel Hill, whose Thursday evening drills attracted a regular following of players keen to experience the dubious satisfaction of gasping lungs and burning legs. An area in which the Club has had difficulty recruiting is junior tennis, and the figure of 13 junior members mentioned above is in fact deceptive, as many of these join as part of the Club's family membership package. However, the coach's preferred clientèle is the younger players, with whom she has particular expertise and experience, and we have, as it were, 'outsourced' our services to junior members to Rachel, who has built up a thriving junior section. The one category of player that remains hard to reach is the teenagers, but we may simply have to accept that the world offers them other distractions, and that those with a real interest in tennis will seek the resources of larger, better resourced clubs. We held a number of special social events over the season, starting with the Open Day and picnic in May, which was attended by some 50 people, aged three to seventy, who enjoyed the tennis, the weather and the food and wine in equal measure. On the competitive side, the club fielded 4 teams in the Basingstoke League summer season (one men's, one women's, two mixed). The results were not an unmitigated success: the men's team finished bottom of Division 3 (out of five), with 1 win, 1 draw and 5 losses. The women did somewhat better, finishing 6th out of 9 in Division 3 (out of three), with 2 wins, 1 draw and 3 losses. Mixed team 1 was ranked 4th of 8 in the penultimate Division, and mixed team 2 sixth out of 8 in the bottom division. However, it should be recognised that we are a very small club, and that though we have no actual objection to winning, the primary motivation for team players really is the old amateur ideal. It's the taking part that matters. Over the winter

season, the club fields 3 teams, one of each sex and one mixed. Not all the matches have been played yet, but as things stand at present all but the men's team are showing similar results to the summer. The men at present stand in dire risk of promotion to a higher Division, being ranked 2nd in Division 4. Like the Royals, it remains to be seen whether they will be able to stand the heat of the big time if they go up.

- 11 Report from Representative of Cricket Club:** Mr Adrian Keep reported that the Cricket Club had a fairly good season. Finished 3rd in the Millennium Sunday League. We used about 20 players in all, very few home based players, we still have 2/3 that travel from Southampton and Bournemouth to play for us. On the building side, that's going along slowly but surely, there are a few dedicated people putting in a lot of hard work to get this project off the ground. The club has spent a considerable amount of money on the wicket preparation for this season as the last time we had any thing professionally done was about 10/12 years ago. Still having problems with a bit of vandalism e.g. the ropes around the wicket keep disappearing. We haven't much left to steel now so hopefully we will have a trouble free season this year.

12 Open Forum:

Mrs Mayes spoke about the pending planning application made by St Mary's School and Church for a car park. She advised that only one site is available and if the application is not successful another one will not be forthcoming.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:40 p.m. The date of the next Annual Parish Meeting is Wednesday 18th April 2007 at 7:30 p.m.