



**Kennington Parish Council  
Oxfordshire**

**Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held in the Kennington Village Hall  
on Wednesday 24 April 2019 at 7.30pm**

Cllr. Colin Charlett, Chairman of the Parish Council, took the Chair.

He welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**In attendance:** There were 25 residents, Gary Carey (Emergency Planning Officer, VOWH DC), Claudine Cassar (Emergency Planning Officer, OCC) and Mrs Rachel Brown (Parish Clerk)

**Apologies:** Rosemary Aldgate, Eileen Rodgers, Jean Holt, Christine Ravenscroft, Rev Dr Stephen Maunders, Jo Lees

**1. Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting**

The Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 25 April 2018 in the Kennington Village Hall at 7.30pm, were circulated by the Clerk. The meeting approved the minutes and they were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**2. Chairman's Report**

This is my sixth report and looking back at the previous five there is a sense of repeating myself in some items. However some things improve.

**ROADS** - The best news is that the long awaited resurfacing of the North end of Kennington Road finally happened. The work was carried out to cause minimum disturbance to nearby residents for which I am sure they are very grateful. It is a shame that the final bits of finishing and tweaks here and there seemed very protracted, mainly due to bad weather. Done at last and a vast improvement. The sad news is that the Avenue which was resurfaced not long ago is now showing a few cracks and potholes. Now the perennial problem of parking. The main road through the village is virtually impassable at times. Virtually every road in the village is affected by parked cars. Parking outside the Co-op is one of the main sources of complaints. As there is the Village Hall and Tandem car parks within an easy walk the only people who should need to park on the yellow lines are blue badge holders. Unfortunately the Police do not have the manpower to stand there all day. There are moves for the District Council to take over parking control and if this happens we will probably find zealous officials dishing out tickets which should help. Parking outside the school is also a major problem and has been for many years. I believe the PCSO is hoping to arrange a meeting with the school to see if something can be done to alleviate the problem. The corner of Playfield Road and Poplar Grove are also two hotspots for inconsiderate parking.

**GRASS CUTTING AND MAINTENANCE** - This was the second year with our new contractor and things seem to be going well. They have cut back the rough areas to the North side of the playing field and Forest Side which makes the areas more pleasant. Any residents who are infirm or disabled and unable to cut their own verges can contact the Clerk and she will arrange for them to be put on the cutting list. As reported last year, we were trying to get the County Council to replace the cherry tree that was cut down at Grundy Crescent. They offered trees to commemorate the end of the first war but when we applied and told them we wished to use it to replace the cherry tree we were informed they could not be planted on county land. Our MP also offered us a tree but again when we said yes we were told she had none left. As you have probably noticed the other cherry tree also went recently.

**LITTER AND DOG FOULING** - At the risk of tempting fate, fly tipping seems to have reduced. Unfortunately, dog fouling seems to be on the increase. Equally on the increase is the people who use the poo bags and then throw them on the ground or chuck them in the hedge. They can be placed in any bin. A litter pick took place at the North end of the Village in July. Hopefully with a few more volunteers we can cover a larger area this year. Although not strictly litter, we also had a plague of abandoned bicycles last year. This seems to have eased somewhat. The ones in use now do not stand out like the yellow ones did. Despite our best efforts we were still plagued with abandoned roadworks signs. I think these have now been collected.

**PLANNING** - We get a steady trickle of planning applications to comment on. Unfortunately, all the infilling and conversion to multi occupation adds to the parking problem. While on planning, as you are probably

aware the Council is in the process of submitting an application to replace the pavilion. Our application should be in in the next few months, hopefully.

**MISCELLANEOUS** - The damaged bollards around the War Memorial should be replaced in the coming months. We are waiting for them to be produced. Our thanks are due to Alex Wenham who carried out some repairs to the Memorial before Remembrance Day. The bus shelter at the church was damaged again last year and after an age it was finally repaired and moved back from the kerb at no expense to us. As some of you may have noticed, the post box in Bagley Wood Rd. disappeared. Apparently it was stolen. It has now been replaced, but we have been informed that it will not be in use. Now some good news items. St John's College have now opened Bagley Wood to residents. No permit is necessary but users are requested to only use the official entrances and to keep to the paths. The Remembrance Day service was very well attended also the Carols around the tree, although this was the first time that it was Carols in the Church due to a sudden downpour during the first Carol. Our thanks are due to Kennington Band for providing the music at both events. We have run some defibrillator training courses so that people will know what is inside the yellow boxes and what to do in an emergency. The training has been provided by Dick Tracey who is a retired paramedic. He does all this in his own time and at no charge to us. The Parish Council purchased an infant manikin to assist him with training as a mark of our appreciation. We will be arranging more courses so please let our Clerk know if you are interested in attending one. It may help you to save someone's life. Finally, it is election year for District and Parish Councillors, although there won't be elections on the parish council as not enough people put their names forward. On your behalf I would like to thank all the Councillors and everyone else who gives their time to help keep things going in Kennington. I would also like to express thanks to Rachel, our clerk who helps to keep things running smoothly and is trying to bring us up to speed with all the modern technology and new rules and regulations, of which there seem to be many.

### **3. Financial Statement for 2018-19**

The Clerk presented the financial statement for 2018-2019. She reported that the total expenditure in 2018-2019 was £71,766. This was an increase of £3,922 on the previous year, which was partly due to the cost of overseeding and fertilising the playing fields, as well as the feasibility study into rebuilding Playfield Rd pavilion. Income was £101,936 of which £92,832 came from the precept. Other income was from the County Council's grant for the highway verge cutting of £2335; £1,890 in grants towards the cost of the pavilion feasibility study and the overseeding of the playing fields. Income of £3,384 came from hirers of the pavilions, including the Cricket and Football Clubs. For the first time, the parish council has received a Community Infrastructure Levy contribution of £541. This money is paid by developers towards the provision of infrastructure and addressing the demands that development places on an area. A new internal auditor has been appointed, due to the retirement of Mr Symes, and he is in the process of carrying out the internal audit. The Parish Precept for 2019-2020 is set at £94,689 which costs a Band 'D' property £55.90 per year. This is an increase of 91pence on a Band D property.

### **4. Matters arising from the reports**

None

### **5. Reports from the District Councillors**

**5.1 Cllr. Blagrove reported that** he has been a district councillor since 2015, but the current administration is coming to an end with the elections this year. Successes in this time include increasing the number of affordable housing units; the Local Plan part one has been passed and money for infrastructure has been coming in, including, section 106, CIL and successful infrastructure bids with central government. Challenges which will continue, regardless of the outcome of the election, includes housing – ensuring that the right number and type of houses are being built, including 1 and 2 bedroom homes; and ensuring that the right amount of infrastructure is in place – the District Council will be a consultee for the government's plans on national infrastructure, like the expressway, but not ultimately decide. The New Homes Bonus has been received from the government for building in the Vale. In the past, the amount of money was known in advance to enable long-term planning. However, the Vale has not been told what it will be after the next financial year. The Vale currently has £39.6 million in useable reserves, up from around £11m since 2011. Plans are underway for civil parking enforcement, however all district

councils must be in agreement. Two hours free parking has been provided in market towns in order to boost the local economy. There was recently a motion at council, declaring a climate emergency. In the Halifax survey of great places to live, Vale of White Horse is the 11th greatest place, up 50 places in the last 3 years. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve the community over the last four years.

**5.2 Cllr. Johnston reported as follows:**

1. Much progress has been made on the roll out of the Vale Local Plan Part 2, and currently we await a final letter from the Inspector which might, or might not require further consultation. The process has not been without controversy. For example the Inspector removed "safeguarded" land for a putative bus and cycle lane in Sunningwell (not justified for 2 buses an hour!) and required further work on the Abingdon Airfield site. It is hoped that the process can be concluded within the next few months, which will safeguard the Vale from unwanted speculative housing proposals.
2. Mention must be made of the failed five Councils outsourcing which tried to outsource much back office work and more to the private sector. It has been a complete fiasco. It will not save four million pounds a year, but will in fact cost money. Much has already been taken back in house e.g. property and more will follow. It begs the question of what is a council for? I personally believe in pro bono publico ethos and in house where ever possible.
3. The accounts for 2017/18 have been qualified by the Auditors, because there are too many unanswered question, a very rare occurrence. More accountants have now been employed and the situation retrieved. Not good for the reputation of the Council.
4. There is a huge hole in the Council's finances potentially leading to a 1.5 million pound hole in the budget in the near future. This in my view is because the Council used a funding stream called the New Home Bonus to keep the Council Tax down instead of putting it aside to fund capital projects. As a consequence all capital projects such as the Grove Wessex Leisure Centre are on hold. In that time they could have put the Council Tax up by a cumulative 30 pounds a year, which would have reduced the hole to 300,000 pounds a year which would be much more manageable. All in all a poor record of stewardship

**6. Report of County Councillor - Cllr. Bob Johnston reported as follows:**

1. The biggest issue is the proposal for an Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, a six lane highway between the two Cities. My Group opposes the proposal, we think it would be hugely destructive, have a massive carbon footprint (climate change friendly?) and, if it were to be built with all the associated housing, Oxfordshire would no longer be rural.
2. The County has received some funding from the government in the form of a growth deal and a HIF grant of 215 million for the Didcot Garden Town, the science bridge in Didcot and a new bridge at Culham. This is all to unlock housing. This is still short of the 8 billion pounds of infrastructure required for the 100,000 houses agreed in the structure plans.
3. There is a new spatial plan (Oxfordshire 2050) which aims to co-ordinate planning between the Districts between now and 2050 is now being rolled out. In my view the jury is out on whether this will be a good thing or otherwise.
4. The Oxfordshire ruling group has scrapped plans to go back to a more Committee led system of governance which would involve more back benchers. This apparently after an informal away day by the ruling Cabinet who decided they did not want to share power more widely.
5. We have had a Peer Review by the Local Government Association (LGA), in my view a complete waste of time, all they told us was that the Cabinet members did not talk to one another, we could have told them that anyway!

**7. Reports from Local Committees and Organisations**

**7.1 Neighbourhood Policing – PCSO Rich Osborn reported that** parking around the school is a sore subject within the village, which he is looking at from a problem solving point of view. With the support of Helen Atkinson, Head Teacher of St Swithun's School, and the school council, a survey has been undertaken, which looked at the current parking restrictions, signage etc. A survey was then completed, speaking to residents of Grundy Crescent and The Avenue and to parents, asking how far they had driven; did they have multiple drops etc. They are now looking to see if there is anything we can do to decrease the number of cars parking around the school. This may include initiatives to see which school groups can

walk the furthest; or which year can walk as far as the top of Everest, and there will be prizes for the winners. Even reducing ten cars along The Avenue in the morning would make a difference. The aim is that this will be a sustainable change, and it is hoped that by telling people what the school is doing will make them feel better about the situation.

**Crime** – there has been an increase in shed break-ins, however, more recently this has been in Radley rather than Kennington. Thieves are targeting sheds at the bottom of long gardens, as these are lower risk with high reward. The team is currently stretched, as manpower is being taken by the climate change protests, but the police will try to remain visible within the village.

**7.2 Kennington Parish Path Warden Officer – Jim Parke reported as follows:**

Little damage was caused to the path network this winter as there were only a few days of snow and ice on the ground. Generally the path infrastructure of gates and stiles on Kennington's Public Rights of Way (PROWs) is in good condition. At my request the new owner of the site of the house beside the FP 6 (between the Avenue and Poplar Grove) has cut away the privet hedge that was overgrowing the footpath. There has been a major improvement of the surface of the Thames National Trail (FP 10) between the South-Eastern ring road overbridge to the Kennington railway bridge. This section of the Trail is heavily used by cyclists as it forms a section of Sustrans Route 5 as well as the many walkers who use the Thames trail. Previously the path was narrow and becoming rutted with puddles. See the photos. However contractors have put down a 3 metre width of asphalt with wooden kerbing. This width means that cyclists and pedestrians have enough room to avoid accidents. This improvement was funded by Oxfordshire County Council. Most of this came from European Union funds. The footbridge over the stream on Footpath 3 has a missing deckboard on its northern side. This has been reported to the County Council.

**7.3 3<sup>rd</sup> Kennington Brownies – Linda Andrews reported as follows:**

Another busy year has passed for the 3rd Kennington Brownie Pack. Our numbers are down at the moment to 15 girls due to some reaching the age of 10 yrs and moving onto Guides or Scouts and some girls from Rainbows joining other Packs. The fluctuation in numbers is a fairly normal pattern due to the fact that the village may have a natural gap in population of girls 7-10 yrs at any given time. So, the highlights of the year have been: World Book Day in which the girls came in the costume of their favourite character in a book and told the Pack about the character's adventures. We had a 'Mad Hair Day' in which we discussed the problem and awareness of people with alopecia. We coincidentally had a Brownie that suffered from this problem and she was quite happy to talk to her Brownie friends about living with alopecia and the importance of people being understanding about the condition. Fortunately, she did not experience any bullying as a result of the condition. One night we had a visitor who taught the rudimentary skills of Irish dancing. This was a hugely popular night and even the Leaders had a go although not as accomplished as the Brownies. Another meeting we had a Maths 'games master' show the girls how to use their maths knowledge in playing board games. The girls really become quite involved in solving maths problems as a game and it was wonderful to see them so absorbed and working as teams. Brownies love going outside and we had a twilight woodland walk. The Leaders placed objects in various places and the girls went on a treasure hunt. They found all the objects plus some that weren't even on the list! Remembrance Day was well attended by our Brownies. It is a matter of honour that the girls carry the flag on behalf of the 3rd Kennington Brownies in memory of the fallen and that we should never forget their sacrifice. Christmas was the main highlight as we took all the girls ice skating at Millett's Farm including hot chocolate and biscuits. This was such a huge success that it will definitely be repeated this Christmas! The year was rounded off with a visit from Santa. Santa quizzed the Brownies to see if they could name all of his reindeer. There was such a heated discussion about this that they forgot that Santa had presents for them! Did you know that Santa had a reindeer called 'Olive'?! The girls were desperate to see Santa's reindeer, so he had to make a fast getaway!

**7.4 Kennington Chronicle –Amena Sutton reported as follows:**

This past year has brought changes to the Kennington Chronicle. In July last year, Amena Sutton became editor following 15 years of editorship by Paddy Landau. Not only did Paddy edit the magazine articles, but he also did the layout of the Chronicle before sending it to be printed. However, we decided to add a producer into the team to do the layout. We have had some recent interest to our advertisement for a

producer and we are hopeful that this will remove that role from Paddy who has continued to do this, thus sharing the job with Amena. Mark Horseman has continued as treasurer and advertising co-ordinator and John Maine as distribution co-ordinator. We are very grateful to the team of distributors who give time each month to ensure that each home, organisation and business place receives a copy of the Chronicle. We are also much indebted to our advertisers and of course to the numerous contributors who provide interesting and well-written material for our readers. We hope that readers will continue to provide feedback and make suggestions so that the Chronicle continues to be the magazine of, by and for the people of Kennington.

**7.5 Kennington Cricket Club – Norm Robins reported as follows:**

The club is not doing great. 15 years ago, there were three men's teams and around 80-100 kids. This year, we have only one men's team. This is not exclusive to Kennington – the whole cricket world is suffering. Kids who are interested tend to go to bigger clubs, with a semi-professional coach. 15 years ago there were 111 teams in the men's league, but now there are only 80. We need an influx of new players. The ground is fantastic, and it is a great place to play. Visiting teams comment on what a nice place it is to play, and how the atmosphere is great. If you are interested in playing, please get in touch or just turn up!

**7.6 Kennington History Society – Linda Andrews reported as follows**

Our membership to date is 52 members. We have sadly lost a few of our long standing members during the year. The Committee have decided to keep the membership fees at their current level for 2019 & 2020. Speaker charges have increased but more members have been giving really first class presentations and are happy to be rewarded with a bottle of wine - keeping our costs down. There are some gems of Speakers in our midst!

The Speakers last year continued to be of high quality. Some of the more notable ones were: With our Backs to the Wall - on to Armistice Day; Pirates, Press Gangs and Smugglers; The Lost Abbey of Eynsham; The Morris Motor Works and Transformation of Oxford and Steam & Steel in the Vale of White Horse to name a few. The Society had planned its annual outing for 2018 to take place in Coventry. However, due to lack of support and despite being heavily advertised, it had to be cancelled as we could not have withstood the substantial loss. In the past, we have had to rely on the support of non-members joining us. However, it was decided to have an alternative option this year which will be a walking tour of Radley College in September conducted by their Archivist. The College is right on our doorstep and has a fascinating history. I am certain that we will have no problems in getting a group together for this excursion. We look forward to our evening meetings held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:45 pm at the Methodist Church. We are very welcoming to guests and happy to ply them with a cup of tea and a biscuit.

**7.7 Kennington Horticultural Society – Brian Peedell reported as follows:**

Kennington Horticultural Society (KHS) was founded 1939 and aims to promote horticulture in the village through a number of activities. Our annual programme commenced on 1 April and this year includes a number of presentational talks/social events, coach outings, and a plant sale; this year on 4 May. In June we are running a five day holiday to Suffolk visiting various gardens of interest. On 7 September we hold our annual show. Last year's membership reached just under 300, and it is over that this year. We understand we have the highest membership of any organisation in the village. A small committee, assisted from time to time by volunteers serves the KHS. We also have a number of vice presidents and honorary vice presidents, many of whom donate to the Society's funds. Apart from VP donations, KHS is fully self-funding and from time to time donates to projects in the village. Over the years' this has been quite significant. For the third year running, you will not have failed to see the display of purple crocus throughout the village, a joint project with Oxford Isis Rotary and funded by the Society towards eradicating Polio. Members continue to maintain the War Memorial flower beds and receive a significant number of favourable comments. We aim to continue the project this year. Full programme details and other KHS information is published in the Kennington Chronicle... We now have our own website at: [www.kenningtonhortsoc.org.uk](http://www.kenningtonhortsoc.org.uk)

**7.8 Kennington Methodist Church – Doreen Biggadike reported as follows:**

In September, we welcomed our new minister – Reverend Doctor Stephen Maunder. He looks after our church, Lime Walk and Rose Hill churches and will be with us for three years. Worship follows the usual pattern but we do have an alternative service once a month, which has included a café style church, a Bible based discussion, a meditative service and a prayerful service. Our Bible Study and Discussion group continue to the first Monday evening of the month with lively exchanges between members. A monthly Tuesday afternoon fellowship concentrates on prayer, praying for our members, local people and global and local problems. These groups, although small, benefit from sharing each other's concerns and learning from each other. They are invaluable for those who attend in strengthening them in the faith. Anyone is welcome to these meetings and not necessarily belong to any church denomination. Our Minister takes an informal worship at Edith Court, for their residents on a Wednesday morning monthly.

Maintenance of the church building continues. Regular checks are made, e.g. electrical, gas, fire, safety. The church roof and guttering's have been checked. The cooker was deemed unsafe and it was decided to install a microwave and fridge. After talking to our users, it was established that the cooker was mainly only used once a year to heat up mince pies and therefore was uneconomical to replace.

The Memory Club now meet in our church twice a week working with elderly people with dementia. This is an invaluable service for both clients and their carers. A collection of non-perishable goods is still made for the Oxford Food Bank. This is a vital service for those less fortunate than ourselves. We continue to have Ecumenical Services with members from St Swithun's – Advent, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Good Friday Walk of Witness and Service. As there are so few of us for Women's World Day of Prayer, we hope to attend the service at a church in Abingdon. We are an ageing church and this year we have lost a few of our members. There are also a number who are ill. The Pastoral work and general running of the church have therefore been challenging at times.

**7.9 40<sup>th</sup> Oxford Sea Scout Group – Colin Charlett (on behalf of Kit Smith) reported as follows:**

For many of us, one of the best things about Scouting is that it has moved with the times. While making and keeping our promise is still at the core of everything, (in essence "I promise to do my best"), you may be surprised by the variety of challenges we offer young people. You probably know about the emphasis on outdoors and camping – indeed our Nights Away badges run from 1 night, to 200 nights away. But we also offer 4 levels of Digital Citizen, Paddle Sports and Musician among others.

There are Global Issues badges at all ages, as well as fun and active challenges. Beaver Scouts can do "Health & Fitness" and "Experiment". At the other end, Scouts can participate in Street Sports, Meteorologist, Parascending and Librarian. In fact, the only thing they all have in common is that kids can't be passive. They can't let information or entertainment wash over them while sitting comfortably; they must participate, imagine, "do", in order to achieve.

Scouting in Kennington has had another good year - in our recent census we returned a youth membership of 77, up from 68 last year. We were also delighted to welcome Andrew, a new Scout leader with loads of enthusiasm and skills with water sports. We are particularly proud of a group of our Scouts who won the District cooking competition – they didn't know the ingredients until they arrived and had to improvise – something I'd find terrifying! In fact, many of our young people are now award-winning – 5 Cubs earned their Silver Chief Scout Award and 7 Scouts had their names added to our Chief Scout Gold Award honour board.

We still have kids on our waiting list, and can only 'activate' them, with yet more adult help. As well as what you might be able to give, please do think seriously about what you might have to gain - and if it's time for you to take on the climbing wall at Brookes, pass on your story-telling skills, learn to use a drill or try snowboarding, please talk to any of us, or email [kenningtonscouts@gmail.com](mailto:kenningtonscouts@gmail.com). You can do as little or as much as you want. If you're like most of us, you'll start off with a small project to accomplish, and then get enthused about everything else you might achieve.

**7.10 Kennington Strollers – Rachel Brown (on behalf of Rosemary Aldgate) reported as follows:**

This walking group was established in 2013 especially for people with mobility problems or health conditions that might benefit from taking short gentle walks for exercise. Last year from May until the end of September, we walked around the Playing field at Playfield Road. Numbers of walkers were small for each of our ten walks (two a month). Our volunteer leaders and helpers consistently turned up to walk with

anyone who needed support and/or companionship but quite often there were insufficient numbers of walkers to helpers. In view of the poor attendances last year, we have decided not to run the short walks this coming May to September 2019.

We would like to thank the Parish Council again for enabling us to use the Pavilion to serve refreshments which provided a sociable end to each walk. As a group, we very much look forward to the development of the new Pavilion in due course which would provide a better environment for groups of walkers to meet. I would personally like to thank the helpers without whom the short walks would not have happened over the years since their inception. These were Pamela Allen, Pauline Cross, Marilyn Wilcox and Michael Thacker. Their consistency in turning up to the walks demonstrates their kindness and dedication to serving their community in a small but significant way - enabling others to enjoy a short walk in the open air. Thanks also go to the few regular walkers who did turn up to enjoy the walks last summer – they know who they are!

**7.11 Kennington Village Hall – Colin Charlett reported as follows:**

2018 has again seen the bookings remain steady. There are many different clubs and organisations who use our facilities. We are in the process of having a dedicated website and also now have a dedicated phone number for bookings etc. With the hall now being 30 years old, a planned refurbishment is being undertaken as and when the funds are available. So far, the flooring in the upstairs committee rooms has been replaced and the main hall and entrance lobby have been redecorated. The flooring in the entrance hall has also been replaced.

The boilers also needed replacing due to their age. This was a major expense, and we are grateful to the District and Parish Council for a grant towards the cost. We have also received a grant from our County Councillor's Stewardship fund towards the cost of renovating the seats in the playground and to the cost of the boiler replacement, for which we thank him. We also had a fault with some of the heating pipes which entailed some work under the stage. Again, a sign of the age of the building.

KADS have installed some stairs to give them access to the loft area which they use for storage. This will hopefully give more room in the downstairs storage area. Outside, the car park was remarked to show the spaces more clearly.

**7.12 Kennington WI – Colin Smith (on behalf of Jean Holt) reported as follows:**

We had another successful year in 2018, with speakers covering a wide range of subjects. Our fundraising coffee morning was quite successful. During September we were advised by the President of the Kennington Link (afternoon) WI that, due to a decline in numbers and funds, they would be closing after their December meeting. This prompted our Committee to discuss our future as, although not to the same degree as the Link, our membership number was gradually getting smaller. Discussions took place with our members and the result of this was a vote to change our evening meeting to the afternoon. With the help of a WI County Adviser it was finally agreed to 'enlarge' with the Link group and in January 2019 we continued as the Kennington Women's Institute. We now hold our meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.15pm in the Kennington Methodist Church Hall. This meant that sadly we had to leave the Village Centre venue. We have been active in the various Village Halls since our inauguration in 1925 and felt very sorry to have to give notice. We will always be grateful for the Village Hall Management Committee for looking after us so well over so many years. We are now moving on with a combined larger membership and are looking forward to continuing a Women's Institute here in Kennington for many years to come.

**7.13 Kennington Youth Club – Mark Horseman reported as follows:**

The Kennington youth club has had a successful year, and was very pleased when 90% of last year's children returned this year. Some have subsequently left, but the club is running at almost full capacity, as others have joined. The club wanted to do something for the slightly older children of Kennington, so have started a trial for the school years 8 – 10 running on the first Wednesday of the month 3.30 – 5.00pm. This has been well received, and the committee will shortly start talking with the young people attending to decide whether this format and time will continue in September, or to try something else.

We had a problem with the roof leaking, and were very grateful to the parish council who gave us about half the money to make the repairs. Last year, the club ran at a significant deficit, but thanks to some

fundraising and service contract changes, we will break even this year. We have also received a number of donations of both money and things useful to the club, one such being an electric piano, which some of our members absolutely love. The club is now a registered charity, allowing us to apply for further grants etc. The sessions this year have included healthy eating, raising money for charity and being good neighbours, whilst we have been on trips to the race hut in Cowley, bowling and a Christmas party at a pizza restaurant. We, like so many other such organisations, are always looking for more helpers, so if you fancy giving it a go, then please either contact me, or come along on a Wednesday evening and see what happens.

**7.14 Patient Participation Group (PPG) – Sylvia Buckingham** gave a tribute to Gerry Bowen-Thomas and reported that

**7.15 Kennington Thames Rainbows – Rachel Brown (on behalf of Pauline Robinson) reported as follows:**

The Rainbows unit continues to thrive with weekly meetings at Kennington Methodist Church Hall. Last summer we completed the Trefoil Guild 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Challenge by inviting their members to afternoon tea. With a new programme for all sections about to be launched we spent the summer travelling the World with Global Adventures. We joined the Brownies for an end of term party in glorious sunshine. Autumn saw the launch of the new programme with Handbooks and Badge books for the girls and a vast quantity of essential programme material for the leaders to purchase. Earlier in the year the girls had asked for a flag to carry at the Parish Act of Remembrance as the only village unit without one. With finances strained by the new programme, we approached the Parish Council who granted us the full cost of the flag. We were very proud on Remembrance Sunday when we could take a full part in the ceremony and service. We embarked on the new programme with enthusiasm but at the same time realised it would need some careful planning to achieve all the goals as envisaged. New for Rainbows are badges they can achieve outside the meetings and these are proving popular. December saw us preparing for Christmas, making cards and decorations with a party to end the year attended by Father Christmas himself. The New Year saw us trying yet more of the new programme topics but realising that older girls coming to the end of their time in Rainbows could achieve the new highest award with a combination of old and new activities we quickly fitted in some old programme roundabouts so that Ellie, Emilie and Isabel gained their Gold Awards as they left at the end of last term.

**7.16 Friends of Kennington Library – Pamela Allen reported as follows:**

Once again, The Friends of Kennington Library have had a successful year supporting the Community Library through making financial contributions to Oxfordshire County Council and by the enthusiastic team of volunteers who work alongside staff during opening hours. We have pioneered a scheme whereby we fund outreach work by our library manager which takes place outside normal library opening hours and allows for class visits to the library and visits to schools and other organisations. The Youth Club had an event recently, which was very successful. The main fund-raising events were the Festival of Arts run over a weekend last April in which authors, artists, dancers and musicians took part, and a Quiz Night in November, once again kindly sponsored and run on our behalf by Tonks Brothers. We continue to work to grow our membership and have this year adopted a new constitution, become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and registered with the Charity Commission. We also have a new logo, chosen following a competition which Small World Nursery sponsored the prizes for. Throughout the year we put on free monthly events for children: Story Time and Rhyme Time and a free author talk for adults. During the school summer holiday we run Story and Craft sessions allied to the national initiative, the Summer Reading Challenge, again free. We have more children taking part in activities than any other library in the county (excluding the County Library in Oxford), and credit must be given to Dominique. This year we have also focussed on providing weekly online help via our Digital Helper and once a month an expert in online Family History research is available in the library. These sessions are extremely popular. We have also supported the running of an occasional Board Games Café which has appealed to many of all ages. By working hard to support our library we ensure that access to OCC's many library services is available to all residents, right in the heart of the village.

**7.17 Kennington United and Church Choirs – Colin Charlett (on behalf of Christine Ravenscroft) reported as follows:**



Kennington & District United Church Choirs came into being 46 years ago in December 1973. From small beginnings we have grown into a large choir with more than 560 people singing with us over the years (not all at the same time, thankfully!). Today there are usually 35-45 people singing at our performances. We are all amateurs who enjoy making music and raising funds for charitable causes and come from all areas of Oxfordshire. Trevor Cowlett, MBE, is the founder, leader and conductor of the Choirs.

During each year, we present concerts in March, June, October and December and are fortunate to have principals from both the Oxford and Abingdon Operatic Societies to share the Gilbert & Sullivan concerts; and for our spring and autumn oratorio concerts we are privileged to have some of the best solo singers in the county. The Choirs are noted for their high standards of music.

In April 2008 we sang Brahms Requiem and Vivaldi: Gloria in Exeter College Chapel raising £1,030.97 for the Lotus Trust; in June and July we sang G&S: The Sorcerer at Abingdon, Witney, and Kennington raising £645.91 for Christian Aid, £405.73 for The Abingdon Bridge and £12,449.81 for KOA (the last time we will be singing for them); in October we sang Handel's Messiah in the Holywell Music Room raising £813.75 for Support for Sick Newborn and their Parents (SSNAP); in December we performed G&S: Princess Ida at Abingdon, Witney, and Kennington, raising a total of £6,458.85 for The Abingdon Bridge, Christian Aid and Action for Children. Ten days ago (14th April) we sang Haydn: The Creation in Exeter College Chapel and raised approx. £1100.00 for Alexandra House of Joy, a fairly new local charity raising funds for a building in Bicester for adults with learning and severe disabilities.

Entrance is always free at our performances and collections are taken for various charities with no expenses deducted. We are proud that since 1973 we have raised £545,000 for charitable organisations locally, nationally and internationally.

The Choir is one big happy family blessed with a remarkable musician and indomitable figure at the head. Trevor expects the best and he gets the best! If you are in the vicinity of the Methodist Church in Upper Road on a Friday evening you will hear not only some serious singing but also gales of laughter as we struggle to get to grips with difficult pieces of music and languages!

We appreciate the support of so many people in Kennington as the Choirs make music for everyone to enjoy and, in doing so, raise money for various charitable organisations. We look to you for your continued support and encouragement. We are always happy to welcome new members so if you would like to join us please get in touch – see our website [www.kenningtonchoir.org.uk](http://www.kenningtonchoir.org.uk) for details.

#### **8. Suggestions/Comments from Parishioners**

It was reported that it is difficult to find space on some of the noticeboards in the village, particularly those outside the village hall; on the corner of Manor Grove and outside St Swithun's School. There are lots of ongoing posters from businesses. It was suggested that businesses could be dissuaded from advertising on the noticeboards and that the parish council could consider purchasing bigger or additional boards at these locations.

The road signs around the village have mostly been removed by Oxfordshire County Council; however there is still a 6 foot tall diversion sign on the corner of St Swithun's Road, which was missed.

It is perceived that some vehicles are speeding down Sandford Lane – perhaps as fast as 40 or 50 miles per hour. There is also an issue with vehicles failing to stop at the roundabout at the top of Kennington Road / Upper Road. It was reported that the roundabout sign is partially obscured.

A bicycle has been locked to the lamppost at the beginning of Edward Road, which seems to have been there for several weeks.

#### **9. Presentation from Gary Carey, Emergency Planning Officer, Vale of White Horse District Council**

Gary Carey gave advice on how households can make their home more resilient. Suggestions included creating a household emergency plan; using a "message in a bottle" from Lions; preparing a 'grab bag' in case you need to leave the house quickly; a survival bag for the car; having an escape plan in case of a fire; signing up to the priority service with your utility companies, if eligible; checking fire alarms and getting a free fire safety check from the Fire Service.

#### **10. Additional reports received after the meeting**

##### **10.1 Kennington Festival Group reported as follows:**

The objects of the Group shall be to promote the social welfare of the over 60's. The Group shall hold regular fortnightly meetings of members in suitable premises in the Village for the purpose of providing activities for entertainment and recreation. The Committee may admit as members of the Group any person who is over 60, residing within the village of Kennington. The Committee shall have power to admit any other person at their discretion. There are now 38 members who enjoy fortnightly meetings for a friendly chat over afternoon tea and joining in a light-hearted game of Bingo. We only had 3 lunches last year instead of the usual 4. This was due to holiday dates of committee e.g. mine to long lost relatives in America in August. The lunch at the Tandem last October proved successful and was paid for by our anonymous donor and our first one this year was a take away supplied by the Tandem which proved delicious. We thank Ryan, Lucy and all their staff for their support.

16 went to Studley Grange, Butterfly world, Farm Park and Craft Village and Wyevale Home and Garden Centre in June in the mini bus. Thanks go to Colin who was our minibus driver over the last years but had to give up due to Council Regulations. We have had offers from 2 people in the Village who are willing to drive the 'Bus 4 Us' so hopefully will be having some outings this year. The Strawberry tea in July to which friends were invited raised £100 for Breast Cancer Care. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mary and Bob Bakewell for having the garden party at their house once again. It was a lovely afternoon, the sun was shining and light music played in the back ground. The committee and Mary supplied a tasty selection of sandwiches and cakes, and cups of tea. We played 3 rounds of scattergories and had a raffle.

On December 12th 16 of us went to 'No Mincepies', an afternoon of entertainment by members of Brookes University whilst enjoying afternoon tea, which was better than the previous year, with other community groups. Another very pleasant afternoon and a couple of us won a prize at the free mini Bingo and Raffle. At Christmas we all enjoyed our Christmas tea with 'Harveys Bristol Cream'. Ian Giles entertained us on his Harmonica and Melodeon and singing a few traditional songs. Finally a big thank you to our volunteer drivers and Margaret our Tea Lady and to the Parish Council for their support over the years.

#### **10.2 Kennington Good Neighbours**

On 22nd of September 2018 we had a tea party for volunteers past and present to thank them for their services to our community over the last 50 years. Also invited were those involved with producing the Chronicle and the people who deliver it. 55 people came and spent a most enjoyable afternoon catching up with old friends and meeting new over a cup of tea and cakes: a time for reminiscing, and passing on village stories to those who did not know the tales and history that abound in Kennington. There is still a small group of Volunteer drivers who use their own cars to take those residents without cars to local Hospitals, Health Centres, hair dressers, and local amenities eg one gentleman is able to visit his wife once a week at a residential home outside the village. We belong to the Oxfordshire Community Network Volunteer Link up and our Drivers can apply online for an OCTA Badge to allow free parking at Local Hospitals. We also have 5 volunteers who are willing to visit those who would like a bit of social company now and again. So if you, or anyone you know who would be interested, please let me know. New volunteers now have to complete a DBS. All volunteers are covered by public liability Insurance and now have a DBS check (criminal) which is free through our contact with Age UK. Good Neighbours no longer produce the bi-yearly Village List for a number of reasons but much of the information is now available in the chronicle and online. I don't know how much longer Good Neighbours will continue but we definitely need some younger blood on the Committee to take us into the coming years. Thank you for your support.

**Signed .....**      **Date .....**