

Minutes for The Annual Assembly for Crowcombe Parish held at Church House on Sunday 15th April 2018 at 11.00am.

(in the format to be presented to the next meeting for approval)

Present:

Parish Councillors:

Messrs M Smith, B Druitt, J Laver and Miss R Druitt

C Morrison-Jones (clerk)

Parishioners x 26

1. Apologies

SCC Cllr C Lawrence, WSDC Cllr A Trollope-Bellew, CPC Cllr T Brooks

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting –7th May 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th May 2017 were approved by those present and signed by chairman

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Report by the Chairman covering the activities of the Parish Council

See attached report (A)

5. Reports from County and District Councillors

See attached reports

The report from SCC Cllrs C Lawrence (B) was delivered by Cllr B Druitt

The report from WSDC Cllr A Trollope-Bellew (C) was delivered by Cllr J Laver

6. Short Reports from the Local Groups within Crowcombe Parish

- (D) Village Shop, delivered by Melville Trimble
- (E) Cricket Club, delivered by Stuart Smith
- (F) Cinema Club, delivered by Philip Comer
- (G) Neighbourhood Watch, delivered by Tony Allan
- (H) Tennis Club, delivered by Mariele Smith
- (I) Church House, delivered by Roger Goodwin
WI, delivered by Pat Chittenden
- (J) Crowcombe Cars, delivered by Jan Lock
- (K) The Village Show, delivered by Chris Birch
- (L) Crowcombe Players, delivered by Kim Hughes
- (M) PCC, delivered by Melville Trimble
- (N) Crowcombe Chest, delivered by Jonathan Denton
- (O) The Crowcombe Hall, apologies of absence from Chris Staniland
- (P) CAW, apologies of absence from Maggie Inglis

7. Questions and Comments from Parishioners

i. The finger on the signpost at bottom of the Combe isn't facing the right way. MS volunteered to attempt to rectify – it is thought that an allen key of the correct size is

ii. Question to the Village Shop: when shop was originally started a

survey was circulated asking what people wanted. If proposing to change stock (eg selling alcohol) will the shop be reconsulting parishioners? Melville Trimble responded that the sale of alcohol prohibited for next 2 years. J Laver reminded people that you could make use of the list outside the shop to request stock that it not currently carried

iii. Parishioners reported being bothered by nuisance telephone calls (calls ringing off when answering which were then followed up by a company offering the service of stopping nuisance calls and requesting credit card details). B Druitt reminded those present that BT offer a service called 'call minder'. Neighbourhood Watch stated that they will circulate a flyer to the village regarding nuisance calls

iv. A parishioner noted that the names on the war memorial are very faint. Can the PC consider again re-carving work? B Druitt said that when this was considered before by the PC it proved incredibly expensive and the current stone is so soft which would cause many. Any plates added instead of stone would be valuable and prone to theft

v. There is a perceived increase of amount and speed of traffic in the village...is it Hinkley workers? Is it on PC radar?

M Smith replied not yet but acknowledged that a lot more traffic everywhere being caused by Hinkley. The mitigation fund has expanded so could be a possible future route for funding for community

vi. The 20mph signs are in poor condition and obscured by trees. The PC do report to Highways any faulty signs....parishioners need to report any issues they observe to the PC who will forward the concerns to Highways

vii. Future purchases of playground equipment were questioned by a parishioner and the chairman indicated that future purchases of equipment would need the funds raising by outside sources to the PC

The Chairman thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 12.27

REPORTS

(A) Chairman of Crowcombe Parish Council

I will begin with a summary of the Parish Council's activities since the last Assembly. Earlier this year, Dennis Lock and Kate Kenyon retired as Councillors and I would like to thank them for their contributions to Parish Council affairs. In Dennis' case, this was his second lengthy stint as a Councillor stretching back a number of years. New Councillor Rachel Druitt was co-opted on to the Council at our March 2018 meeting, and we are now looking to fill the second vacancy at our Council meeting next month. If anyone is interested in putting his or her name forward, do please let me or Claire know and we will send out some information. It really is a worthwhile thing to do on behalf of the local community, and although there is a degree of commitment as with all things, the role is not unduly time-consuming.

I would also like to record my thanks to my vice-Chairman, Tony Brooks, the other Councillors and of course to our Clerk, Claire, without whose excellent planning and organization the Council would struggle to operate.

Meetings held

Since the last Assembly in early May 2017 the Council has held 5 x regular bi-monthly meetings and 5 x Extra-ordinary meetings to consider specific planning applications. In their capacity as Trustees of the Kesteven Recreation Ground, the Councillors have also held 2 x formal meetings and 1 x informal meeting. In February 2018 some of the Councillors attended a site visit at Hinkley C, where the scale of the works is enormous, as you will hear in Anthony's report.

Planning Applications

We have been consulted by the District planners on 11 x planning applications over the past year, of which 8 were supported by the Parish Council, and 3 were subject to objection on the grounds of over-development or inappropriate use of the land. One of our strong objections was to a fresh application to demolish old Leigh Mill and replace it with a substantial, new-build dwelling. Our objection reflected the views of many of our parishioners, indeed such was the strength of local feeling that an application to have the property Grade II listed so as to avoid destruction was successful around the turn of the year, following which the planning application was withdrawn. However, a further application has since been submitted for a two-storey extension to the existing cottage via a glazed link. A Council meeting will follow on from this Assembly so that the Councillors present can discuss the application and determine their response. You are of course most welcome to stay on for this. Another contentious application was for the change of use of the agricultural land next to Higil Lea, initially for a seasonal, pop-up cream tea business. This followed on from our successful defeat of the owner's campsite proposal just over a year ago. The Council voiced its strong objection to any change of user. A decision from WSC is still awaited. It has been an unusually long time coming, and the fact that the most recent documents loaded on to the planning portal seem to be focusing on the detail of site access and surface dressing appears rather worrying.

Precept for 2018/19

After due consideration, the Parish Precept for 2018/19 was set at £9,750. This represented an increase of 5.5% over the previous year, which is never welcome but was considered necessary to meet the budgeted expenditure for the year and, perhaps more importantly, to maintain sufficient reserves to provide for a number of financial contingencies including the future upkeep of the village Play Area, the proposed new recreational footpath across Broad Meadow, and the continued devolution of financial responsibilities from district to town and parish councils – for instance, we might be required to pay for the future resurfacing of the Memorial car park., which is subject to heavy use.

The Councillors are very conscious that the Play Area and its equipment are in danger of becoming a very serious drain on limited parish resources. We have therefore made a decision in principle to spend only the minimum amounts necessary on the maintenance and repair of equipment that still has a useful future life, but to take out of action any equipment whose condition has become high risk in the view of our annual inspection company. A recent example of this being one of the two sets of swings, whose supports had rotted at ground level.

Given the changing demographics of the parish, and the fact that fewer Crowcombe children than before make regular use of the facilities, the Councillors feel that if there is a desire amongst local parents to replace equipment that has been lost, a largely external fund-raising effort will be needed. This would then allow the release of some financial reserves in other directions.

Particular Developments in 2017/18

Otherwise, the year has been a relatively quiet one, but I will mention a few points of interest:

- The new, fibre broadband cabinet at the entrance to Hagleys Green was eventually commissioned after a series of technical glitches and delays. It has brought significantly faster broadband to a number of properties along the road through the village. Unfortunately, it does not solve the problem of slow broadband speeds in the outlying parts of the parish, and unfortunately there is no solution in sight here unless householders are prepared to pay the money for an individual 4G service.
- During the year two parish volunteers embarked upon an assessment of the condition of our various historic fingerpost signs and have begun a rolling program of repainting and renovation with materials funded by the PC. Other parishioners have quite separately questioned whether we should be releasing more of our financial reserves in maintaining our local signage, and this is something that can be put on the Council's agenda for consideration.
- Finally, we are progressing plans to create a short footpath across Broad Meadow, from the pub to Pound Orchard, so that pedestrians, including school children, may avoid the rather dangerous short stretch of road opposite Home Farm Drive. We are hoping to draw on grant funding for at least part of the cost, which will probably be in the region of £5k - £6k when all's said and done.

Conclusion

That concludes my report as Chairman.

There will be an opportunity for questions and comments at the end, but now I would like to move on to the Reports from your County and District Councillors.

Unfortunately, neither Christine Lawrence, our Somerset County Council representative, nor Anthony Trollope-Bellew can be with us today, but their written reports will be read out by Parish Councillors.

(B) SCC Cllr C Lawrence

ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS 2018

It is always a pleasure to use the Annual Parish Meeting as an opportunity to say a big "Thank You" to you all.

Dunster, Carhampton, Withycombe and Rodhuish, Stogumber, Crowcombe, Roadwater and Old Cleeve, and all the little hamlets in between, you have clearly been hard working and effectively in your respective communities.

It was amazing how resilient you all were during the recent harsh weather we had a few weeks ago. The way you all worked together helping others, checking on the elderly, clearing pathways of snow, driving your 4x4s to support Doctors, Care Workers and all those in need of transport. I was proud to tell officers at County Hall how wonderful you all were.

There is, of course, more to do. The cold weather has played havoc with our roads and pot holes seem to appear by the day. I know that Highways are doing their best to catch up with repairs and I regularly inform them of new problems that you have to deal with as you travel about.

The knowledge gained and the work that has been accomplished regarding flooding has proved invaluable, so my thanks go to the West Somerset Flood Group under the leadership of Theresa Bridgeman.

I am aware that many of you are working on complex and important projects for your communities, such as:

- A new “Mugga” in Dunster Marsh
- A Heritage Centre in Carhampton
- A new Car Park in Stogumber
- A Children’s Play area in Withycombe

To name just a few of them.

I am truly proud and supportive of all that you do and will always help and support wherever I can.

You can always contact me on: cmlawrence@somerset.gov.uk

My sincere thanks to you all

Christine

(C) WSDC Cllr A Trollope-Bellew

My apologies for not being able to be present in person. I am in Cardiff as part of my wife's birthday celebrations, a date that was fixed months ago.

The main event at West Somerset District Council over the last year has been the Secretary of State agreeing to the forming of a new council from West Somerset District Council and Taunton Deane Borough Council. The Structural Change Order was laid before Parliament just before Easter. This will now go through the due Parliamentary process and should come into force in June. Then the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCE) will set to work defining the new ward boundaries. The LGBCE is not allowed to be involved until the order has passed through Parliament. However, in the meantime the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government will start to gather evidence through the two district councils.

The probable number of councillors for the New Council will be 58. This is slightly on the high side compared to other councils but has been negotiated bearing in mind the sparsely populated areas of Exmoor.

The district council has already started the process of gathering information. The parish council has been sent one plan that works for comment, but this is unlikely to be the final solution as the plan that is going to the district council Full Council on 25 April is different. I have not involved myself with the parish council response. If you should wish to comment at this stage you can do so by emailing bdlang@westsomerset.gov.uk. The boundary commission plan is to publish the draft recommendations for consultation on 4 July and the consultation to close on 27 August. This is not the best time of year, but timescales are tight and there is no room for slippage if the new ward boundaries are going to be in place for the election on the first Thursday in May 2019. The final decision will be published by November. During the consultation anybody can comment but comments need to be evidence-based. All comments, whether from a council, a group or an individual, will be given the same consideration and the importance attached to them will depend on the evidence provided. Doubtless everybody will not be happy as the boundary commission has to stick to plus or minus 10% of the average number of electors per councillor of 2013. If published names and addresses of individuals will be redacted for privacy reasons. Though the timeline is tight the same rigour as normal will be applied to this process. If the LGBTE cannot complete their work in time the fallback position will be to use the county council divisions for the election in May 2019 and

new ward boundaries would be drawn for the election in 2023. This is very much a fallback position and I hope it is not needed,

The budget was passed by Full Council in February. Unfortunately, it includes an increase in council tax. I regret this but there is no alternative with the continuing reduction in central government funding. This year as we have stopped funding the public conveniences thereby saving £170,000 the budget setting has been fairly painless. For five years we have been trying to get a straight answer about what will happen to the business rates from HPC. I fear that HPC will be put on a central list so all the business rates will go to central government for redistribution. In February I was promised an answer personally by the Secretary of State, but I have not received such at the moment.

The construction of Hinkley Point "C" is progressing rapidly and there are now 3000 people working on site. The site is massive as those of you who have been there can testify. When you consider that at the moment everything that can be seen will not be there at the end and it is only there to enable the construction of the reactors it is even more impressive. EDF hope to start generating at the end of 2025. The new CEO, Simone Rossi, is confident of this date as the problems that have delayed construction in France and Finland can be avoided at Hinkley Point. EDF run tours of the site which can be accessed through their website. Also, there is more funding available for impact mitigation through the Somerset Community Foundation. As this is now countywide hopefully it should be easier to access financial support.

If you have any questions preferably please email me on atrollope-bellew@westsomerset.gov.uk or failing that ring 07977 591940.

(D) Village Shop

The Shop

The Village shop continues to thrive. Although turnover was down a bit on last year, the shop made a profit in 2017 of over £4,000 before the payment of grants.

The Shop Committee is well aware that the business must continue to grow, rather than stagnate, and look to continue to provide services to the community. To this end, the committee has, over the first months of this year, been looking at what other services the Shop might provide. A matter of watching this space!

As to updating the shop: Two new chiller cabinets, together with a larger fridge for the store room, have been installed. We have instigated a new range of bakery produce. And clearly we remain interested in any new ideas not just from the Committee.

Last year we provided grants to the tune of £3,199: £1,500 to the Church Organ restoration fund. There will be an organ concert in September with an internationally renowned Organist playing. £1,500 was provided to help to renew equipment for the play area. £169 to providing sides to the two moveable shelters that were purchased the year before which are available to anyone in the village free of charge and £30 in vouchers for the Flower Show raffle.

We have approved, but not yet paid out, a grant of £2,000 to the Crowcombe Cricket Club as a contribution towards a new scoreboard. The financial resources of the shop remain strong and it continues to solicit applications for grants that will benefit the village.

We would not be able to operate at all, were it not for the legion of Volunteers who come in rain or shine and snow (this year). Recognition of which was celebrated by a

party for all the volunteers in February this year. I would add that we are always on the look-out for new volunteers.

I would like to mention one name in particular: John Robertson who stood down this year from the role of Secretary, having held the position for over ten years. Everyone on the committee is truly grateful for the work he has done.

Post Office

The Post Office has had another solid year. If anything, our traditional mails and parcels business bounced back a little with the increase in online shopping and local Ebay business, and our banking services remained up at last year's record levels. Foreign holidays were back on the agenda for some, with a 60% year-on-year increase in our sales of Euros. Pre-orders of other currencies were also up.

We managed to survive the demise of the old £1 coin, and the birth of the new, plastic £10 note to join its £5 sibling. Very few have had anything positive to say about the introduction of notes that may last longer but simply don't fold properly!

(E) Cricket Club

As the 2018 season is now upon us we look forward to another positive year of development for the Club.

2017 was not the best of years for the First and Second X1 with both struggling to field resilient teams on a weekly basis which ended in relegation into the Second and Fourth divisions respectively, but all players are back with renewed enthusiasm and looking forward to the 2018 season. The Third Eleven however had another enjoyable season and with Richard Harris & Geoff Metcalfe at the helm they continued to field a strong team.

Mike Watson again captained the 'All Stars' playing several weekday games throughout the year with numerous matches already booked for 2018.

Chris Lewis should again be thanked for all his hard work, giving up his Sunday mornings coaching the juniors who are so important for the future of the club. This year we are also supporting the 'All stars Juniors Cricket' an initiative promoted by the England and Wales Cricket Board for boys and girls ages 5-8 with the emphasis on having fun and being active.

Sadly in 2017 we lost not only a well-respected and committed member and supporter but also a dear friend, Steve Parry. His funeral was well attended by the club and a very successful friends and family match was organised in Steve's memory. We were also honoured to receive a magnificent bench made by Steve that he had donated to the club.

We also honoured Richard Boddington by the unveiling of a plaque that stands proud below his weather vane on the gable end of the hall.

I should also mention Richard Cooper a past Chairman and Life member, who left the club £1000 from his estate. With the help of this donation we managed to replace the aging Mower to maintain the wicket. We are also indebted to the Village Shop fund who have offered us £2,000 towards a new electronic scoreboard. The old score hut which is a vital part of the club's history, will remain in place and be refurbished.

In order to raise the remaining funds for the scoreboard we will be holding a Race Night on 4 May in the Village hall.

This year saw the revival of the Presidents X1. Crowcombe played gallantly against Anthony's X1 but his team were just a little too strong for us, however this year could be a different story.

I wish all teams a successful and enjoyable year

(F) Cinema Club

Crowcombe Cinema is run by Philip Comer under the supervision of the Crowcombe Village Hall Management Committee. We show a diverse range of films including both popular titles, such as Bridget Jones's Baby and Lion in 2017, and more "Arthouse / Independent" films such as I Daniel Blake, Lady Macbeth and The Levelling. An important aspect of Crowcombe Cinema is that our screenings are very much social occasions, with people meeting in the bar beforehand and chatting over ice creams in the interval. Many of the films we show are not available in the local Multiplex.

We continue to have two shows a month, with the more mainstream films being shown on Sunday evenings and the arthouse/independent films on Fridays. We showed 20 films in 2017, the same as in 2016. We do not show films in August and only have a single show in July and December. Our total audience over the year was 1222, with an average audience size of 61 (63 on Sundays and 59 on Fridays) slightly up on last year. Our largest audience of 104 in 2017 was for an unusual film "The Eagle Huntress". This was a documentary about a young nomadic Mongolian girl who yearns to follow her father and grandfather in the ancient art of hunting with Golden Eagles, but she has to fight tradition to become the first female Eagle Huntress. Other notable films this year have included Ken Loach's Palme d'Or winning "I, Daniel Blake", the enjoyable "A Street Cat Named Bob", a Spanish film "The Olive Tree" and "The Levelling", set and filmed on the Somerset levels.

Crowcombe Cinema continues to be a significant contributor to the Hall funds, with a net surplus in 2017 of £4,671, a 24% increase on 2016.

Our main communication with our audience is through email, and we now have 341 email addresses on the list. We also put up posters in Crowcombe, Bicknoller and surrounding villages, and include a listing in the West Somerset free Press.

(G) Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch are the local eyes and ears of the Police. Information is two way - to the police through 1) the 911 telephone call (not urgent - after the event) . 2) the 999 telephone call (urgent- crime/incident in progress). 3) Through information gathered by Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators.

Having gathered information concerning crime in the locality, the Police communicate 'Alerts' to local Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, who in turn, either through email or personal contact, pass that information on to their designated households.

Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators oversee the flow of information to approximately 30 households each. Crowcombe has four co-ordinators;

Village Hall end of the village:	Maureen Glenister
Middle:	Tony and Jan Allen
School end :	Mariele Smith
Heathfield :	Tony Motture

Their telephone numbers are listed in CAW. You are urged to keep your co-ordinator informed of any incident/suspicion you may have, and NEVER assume, upon hearing a house alarm, that it has been triggered accidentally.

I take this opportunity to thank the co-ordinator deputies who ensure unbroken coverage of the scheme.

2017 was, thankfully, a relatively crime free period for Crowcombe, the major concerns being outhouse/shed break ins, where thieves are looking for tools and equipment. Boldly marking such items with indelible inks can be a deterrent.

Of growing concern is the telephone/ doorstep fraudsters. If in any doubt, we urge you to talk to your coordinator or ring 911, and under no circumstances, get talked into doing anything before thoroughly cross checking.

Finally, there are a number of people living alone in the village. It is a reflection of the community spirit that ensures there is a watchful eye being kept on them. Well done. Long may it continue.

(H) Tennis Club

Membership numbers remain steady with 66 adult members and 25 juniors with is excellent.

We have once again made a small increase to membership fees. The court will be repainted next year 2019 and we need to ensure we have enough for the major resurface which will be due 5 years after that. We are also now contracting out the de-mossing to Ray King. He has a machine which is much more satisfactory than spraying and also means that the moss becomes his responsibility. This cost also has to be factored in.

This is the 7th year that Michele Hewitt has coached the juniors. She still runs three groups on a Monday and has started a new course – Tennis 4 Kids an LTA sponsored initiative and I think her course is already full. Apart from subsidising the lessons, we will continue with the free sweatshirts and also pay for the hire of courts for matches. We only have one court which is not feasible for match play. Once again it cannot be stressed enough how lucky as a small village club we are to have Michele to coach and encourage the juniors – she is a real asset to our club, the village and the surrounding area.

Michele adult improvers class is a great success with the same ladies attending and if there is demand she hopes to do an adult beginners class.

Chris Highton has been an invaluable over the past year killing the moss and we have been indebted to him as he also kills the weeds and keeps on top of the vegetation around the court.

(I) Church House

With the renovation and redecoration of Church House complete, 2017 was a more normal year. Some ongoing commitments meant that we had a small loss for the year but bookings recovered, as expected, and reserves rose from £8748 to £11805 a far more comfortable figure.

As ever we were in debt to the 100+ Club and to several donors whose help augmented the increased revenue from bookings.

Weddings are a major source of operating income and last year we hosted 4 of them. So far this year we have had a number of enquiries but, as yet, no firm commitments. We can accommodate 80 guests in this wonderful room and have catering facilities. This can be booked from noon on the day before the wedding until 2pm on the day after for only £280 in summer or £320 in winter. I would urge everyone who hears of a wedding in the planning stage to mention this terrific facility. A number of powerpoint presentations are being made to local history and archaeological groups who wish to learn of the history of this building. Thanks, as ever, to the hard working members of the committee and to Martin Smith who draws up our annual accounts and Melville Trimble who has examined them.

(J) Crowcombe Cars

For those who are not aware of us, Crowcombe Cars is a scheme that provides transport within the Parish of Crowcombe for clients who for one reason or another are unable to use public transport.

We have a small committee that meet regularly & are part of the The West Somerset Partnership Scheme, who are the link between other schemes and Somerset County Council.

We have a total of 16 Voluntary drivers.

We have 39 registered passengers, 16 of them have used the scheme from 31st March 2017 up to 1st April 2018.

In this time frame the drivers have totalled 221 trips and 3,326 miles.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their commitment to the scheme.

If anyone would like any further information about becoming a volunteer driver or would like to use the scheme there are leaflets in Crowcombe village shop and a telephone number on the back of CAW.

(K) The Village Show

The 2017 Flower Show was a massive success, building on the popularity of the previous year. After a month of grey skies, wind and rain, we were blessed with one of the best days of the Summer. It was hardly surprising that entries were slightly down on last year. In fact it's a credit to those that took part that they found anything in their gardens. The Dog Show was just as popular as last year and is now a permanent fixture. The Village School contributed to the Children's Classes and it was wonderful to see so many entries from them. We created a new division – the Scarecrow Competition – which added to the spectacle around the village and this is set to be repeated this year.

At the start of 2018 we took the decision to re-name it the Village Show. Over the past couple of years, the Flower Show has become much more than a produce show. There is the dog show, children's races and scarecrow competition, we have expanded the number of artisan stalls and included a bar. We feel that "Village Show" covers all that we now offer and gives us scope to keep growing over the coming years.

But don't worry, we are not throwing the proverbial baby out with the bath water. The produce show will remain at the heart of what we do. We have already started work on this year's schedule. The Handicraft and Photography classes have already been released. The full schedule will be available in the village shop by mid-May and the full programme will be distributed at the beginning of July.

(L) Crowcombe Players

The panto is produced once a year. The matinee was supported by Stogumber & Crowcombe schools and resulted in giving £315 to the school. Additionally, an increased offering to Crowcombe Hall of £700 was raised. Thanks must be given to Crowcombe Hall for the use of the Hall for the performances and rehearsals

(M) PCC

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission and has the responsibility to co-operate with the incumbent, the Revd. Angela Berners-Wilson and her Benefice Ministry Team in promoting the whole mission of the Church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical - within the ecclesiastical parish. In particular it: maintains and where possible enhances the buildings and land for services and for posterity; facilitates the worship organised; and facilitates any other Christian activity proposed by the Benefice within the parish.

The full PCC met 4 times during the year with an average attendance of over 90%. We have lost 2 members and a 3rd shortly due to house-moves and also welcomed 2 new members.

From within the Parish we are very well served by many unsung heroes: bell ringers, flower arrangers, sacristan, organists, church cleaners, maintainers of the churchyard, the carol service choir, opening and locking the church, clock winders and the many other volunteers.

The two C of E schools in Crowcombe and Stogumber continue to play an important part in the role of the Church and Rector. We have 41 local residents on the electoral roll – this enables them to be informed about and vote on important issues relating to our village church. It would be good to have more members, to represent the community more fully.

Apart from regular services, there have been a number of special services which have been well attended by the community, including a full church for the School's harvest service, Carol Service 130, Christmas Day 100, Crib Service 27, Easter 54, Harvest Festival 40 and Remembrance Day 75. We have had 2 Baptisms, 8 Weddings with several more booked, 2 Funerals, 2 Interment of Ashes, and 40 for the farewell to the Butterworths.

We supported the Deanery Mission Project for 2017, which was the Kathryn's Mercy Mission Home Trust (Tamil Nadu South India), raising funds for a minibus to transport young dalit people safely from their own homes to the Mercy Home. The project has been exceptionally well supported and the £9,461 realised by the whole Deanery has enabled the Trust to purchase a minibus outright. The mission project for 2018 is Home Start: South West, a local Minehead initiative supporting families with young children. We collect and deliver donations of food for the food cupboard in Minehead. We also operate a planned giving scheme, where people commit to regularly giving the Church funds and where appropriate, this can also attract gift aid.

Following the restoration of the organ which was so wonderfully supported by the community, we are currently focusing on fund-raising to improve the churchyard and

the lighting in the church. We have a barn-dance planned for April 7th in the village hall and an organ concert with a concert organist of international repute, on September 1st. These and any other events are always advertised in CAW.

Finally, the PCC has a forward plan, which is available to anyone on request.

(N) Crowcombe Chest

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Jonathan Denton and I am Chairman of the Crowcombe Chest. I am not here to give you a report of our accounts, because we do not produce any yet, but I do want to tell you who we are and why we are here.

The Crowcombe Chest - a Legacy for the Village

It is generally agreed that more mature of us have lived in 'The Golden Years', enjoying financial security which future generations are unlikely to repeat and it was agreed in a series of village meetings we should find a way of providing support to the village in the future.

The Crowcombe Chest was established in 2015 to provide a scheme whereby the current residents of Crowcombe can, by gifts and legacies, provide help for those who will live in the village after us.

The Chest, a charitable fund, is managed for us by Somerset Community Foundation which has been inspiring community philanthropy since 2002. Any funds in it will be professionally managed and over the years grow in value.

As the bulk of the funds for The Chest will come from legacies, and we are all living longer, we are not sure how quickly the Chest will grow- it is intended that once The Chest reaches £25 thousand pounds we will be able to start considering requests for help.

Although managed by The Somerset Community Foundation decisions on requests for funding will be made here in the village by our Custodians who are currently myself, Bob Druitt, Chris Lewis, Dan Davis and Ben Fawden.

If you have already made a legacy to The Chest we thank you. If you have not got round to it yet or have questions do get in touch with one of The Custodians (or David Freemantle) or your financial advisor.

Remember it does not have to be a legacy- in life donations qualify for generous Gift Aid support, whilst legacies do help to lessen The Inheritance Tax burden.

If we can establish a fund of reasonable size, future generations of the village will I am sure be grateful.

Halse has such a Fund in existence from which people are already benefitting, as do some other villages around the country.

As a way of helping the committee if you know of anyone who might like to make a donation to the village via The Crowcombe Chest that would be really useful, any of us would be more than happy to discuss this with them. I am convinced that once we reach our target that we will be able to help future generations have the opportunities that we have all been able to enjoy.

(O) The Crowcombe Hall

In 2017, our 15th year, bookings started to improve compared to 2016.

Although we are looking at overall income similar to 2011 there is great comfort that the finances are in good order, thanks to Jamie our treasurer for keeping our accounts under a tight reign. This year has started well with weddings as icing on the cake. We are sad that the short mat bowls has run its course, but the hall still attracts new groups and with the forthcoming Freshers evening on September 21st who knows what will happen.

The bonfire night was a great occasion with more attention paid to elf and safety as stipulated by the insurance company. The firework display was deemed to be the best yet by all and sundry.

Our film showings have become a main feature of this hall and, as always, a team effort helps it all come together.

We had a delightful day for the unveiling of Richard Boddington's plaque, and it was good to see so many of his family present. We now have Old Father Time watching over us for years to come.

Maintenance is always ongoing and with the help of Tony, Rob and Dennis, it continues to be the high standard that is expected of it. Our grateful thanks to the trio.

As in previous years I cannot thank the hall committee enough for all their time and hard work in maintaining the smooth running of the hall.

Finally, it is with great sadness that David and Rosemary are leaving us. They have been much valued members since the inception of the Hall. Not only David's invaluable work in getting the hall off the ground we must also thank Rosemary for standing in with her diary as a marvellous minute taker. David's stint at the helm, his guidance and input over the years with Rosemary at his side has been a very important part of the past 15 years, not forgetting the preceding 2 years in getting the hall up and running. I am sure you will all join me in giving them both our utmost thanks for everything that they have done.

I hope to carry on as Chairman in 2018.

(P) CAW

Since leaving Crowcombe and moving down to Woolston, instead of thinking that my connection to Crowcombe would diminish it seems to have continued and increased.

I am still producing CAW, the bi-monthly magazine for the village people, I hope this is still meeting with your approval and any donations towards funds are always gratefully received, and you can contact me by email maggie.inglis@btinternet.com. Interesting articles can be submitted along with photos (jpg) please and I will see if there is any room for them.

I have also returned to being the booking secretary for Church House which can be accessed through churchhousebookings@gmail.com, should you wish to enquire about making a booking. I am also the editor who produces the benefice magazine – pathways, and you can contact me by accessing qtbpathways90@gmail.com for any inserts or articles etc.