

Minutes Pembridge Annual Meeting 2018

Held Wednesday 2nd May 2018 at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Evans Chairman, Cllrs. Pace, Owens, Rogers Thomas, Phillips, PC Wall & Mrs Albright.
25 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Hancock, Cllr Mifflin, Cllr Bennetto, Cllr Jones and Mr Pierce.

Minutes of the meeting 12th April 2017

The minutes were approved. No matters arising.

Parish Council Chairman's report 2017/18 – Cllr Garfield Evans

This year the Council has again held eleven ordinary meetings. The Parish Council meets every month (other than August) and a notice and agenda are always posted on the Parish Council notice board (on the wall of the Red Lion) at least three days before each meeting. Members of the Parish are more than welcome to attend, and they may contribute to a debate, if invited to by the chairman. There is always an open session for Parishioners to comment or ask questions.

This year the Parish Council has very sadly lost the services of Alan Stokes, who passed away in early November following a long and debilitating illness. Alan was a loyal member of the Council who continued to attend meetings for as long as the effects his illness would allow. Alan was a great servant of the Council and of the whole community and he is greatly missed by us all.

A Parish Council cannot function without a clerk and at Pembridge we are very fortunate to have Becky Bissell as our clerk. We are an active Parish Council, who place a heavy workload on our Parish clerk and Becky deals admirably with all that is asked of her. Becky is also our lengthsman co-ordinator and the person to contact if anyone has concerns about ditches and verges on the minor roads in the Parish.

In the year which ended on 31 March 2018 the Council set the precept at £24,000 and details of the income and expenditure figures will appear on the Council website (www.pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk) after the external audit has been completed. For the year to 31 March 2019, the Council has budgeted for income of £30,874 and expenditure of £30,170 which would result in a small surplus being added to reserves. Of the budgeted income, £24,000 will be raised via the precept. The increase in precept for the second year in a row is a further reflection of the changes that are taking place in local government. Reductions in central government funding mean that more and more services have to be funded at parish level including match funding lengthsman and footpaths expenditure.

In the year to March 2018, there is a change to the grant funding for the lengthsman scheme with the Parish Council required to make mandatory contributions of 66% to receive 33% of grant. In monetary terms, the funding has dropped from £120/km to £30/km. For the year to March 2018 the P3 (public rights of way) grant scheme funding is unchanged at £15/km but looking forward, this will also reduce. The current understanding is that the funding for lengthsman and footpaths will reduce to zero by 2020.

Each year, before being submitted for external audit, the Parish Council accounts undergo an internal audit. Mrs Carrie Pierce has once again fulfilled the roll and on behalf of the Council I thank her for her support.

The Parish Council has had another busy year, dealing with a number of planning applications and other routine matters. We continue to make progress towards producing a neighbourhood plan and

Councillor Andrew Pace will be giving an update. We maintain links with the local police, who regularly attend meetings and report to the Parish Council.

A few other points of note.

The impact of traffic is a perennial problem and the Parish Council have followed up on the findings of a public meeting, held in June 2016, which requested that a 20mph speed limit should be implemented. We consulted with representatives of Herefordshire Council and were advised that the only way of implementing a lower speed limit would be by seeking a Traffic Regulation Order. However, there would be a number of difficulties to be overcome in obtaining a TRO and we were advised that it would be better to try to implement other traffic calming measures, such as a gated entrance to the village. As well as speed, there have been further problems caused by parking near the entrance to the school. The Parish Council have met with the headmaster and with Herefordshire Council and it has been agreed that zig-zag white lines will be used on the carriageway to prohibit parking where it is dangerous for children and inconvenient for other road users.

During the year the Parish Council have made progress in taking ownership of the public car park and toilets. The contract to transfer ownership has been reviewed by our appointed solicitor and we are awaiting the final approval by Herefordshire Council for the transfer to take place. The Parish Council has continued its review of facilities on the Millennium Meadow (although the site itself is occupied under licence from the Pembridge Amenity Trust) and plans are in place to install new equipment, some of which will be suitable for use by children and adults. The Parish Council hopes to be able to fund a large proportion of these costs from grant money, but it is almost inevitable that a contribution from Parish Council funds will be required.

The Parish Council has a duty to protect the ownership rights of the community relating to common land and the village green. We have contacted everyone who has a direct access onto the village green and having received the necessary evidence from each property owner, we have agreed to the access points that currently exist. This does not mean that any further rights of access can be granted. It is a criminal offence to encroach on a village green and the Parish Council has a duty to remove any encroachment. An encroachment will be any structure built or otherwise constructed on the village green. Unlike a right of access, there is no mechanism in law to grant permission for any encroachment.

Details relating to all of these items and more can be found in the minutes of Parish Council meetings, which are posted on the parish council website (at www.pembridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk). The website has been well maintained on behalf of the Parish Council by Bob Pierce and it contains a wealth of information, which is sadly underused.

It would be wrong of me to make my report without a mention of the work done by the Pride in Pembridge volunteers. They continue to work tirelessly to make the village attractive to locals and tourists alike and on behalf of the Parish Council I thank them for all that they do.

As always, I will conclude with some further thanks. Thank you to the volunteers who help to keep the Parish running smoothly; to the teams of parishioners who involve themselves in the erection of Christmas trees and lights; to the Good Neighbour Scheme for providing such a valuable service and to the volunteers that look after the speed indicator device. Thank you to Tony Norman who continues as tree warden and importantly, as our flood warden. Thank you to Judy Rogers, who along with Bob Pierce has taken over the volunteer editorship of Pembridge Parish News and further thanks to Bob Pierce for looking after the Parish Council website. Thanks to Michael Hancock, who is not only our footpath officer but also our local correspondent for the Hereford Times.

Last but not least, my personal thanks go to the vice-chairman, Andrew Pace, and to all my fellow Councillors for the many hours that they dedicate each year to Parish matters.

Parishioners matters raised

None.

Police report – PC Dean Wall

PC Dean Wall and CSP Steph Annette introduced themselves. PC Allford had retired after 42 years of service. There will be two new Community Support Officers joining Kington shortly. CSO Annette is helping them to settle before moving on. PC wall continued by advising he hoped to regularly attend meetings and the PACT surgeries would continue. CSO Annette urged parishioners to contact them for minor concerns on 101 and emergencies dial 999 and an officer would attend as soon as they could.

Headteacher School report – Rob Hollis

The school continues to maintain some excellent achievements with results in end of Key Stage Tests (aged 7 and 11) at or above national averages. These demand considerable knowledge and skills from the children and I'm sure you would be surprised at what exactly the Government insist our children should be learning. Nevertheless, when our children leave Pembridge, they continue to do extraordinarily well in their High Schools whether at Weobley, Kington or at Hereford Cathedral School. We are very proud of them.

Despite the rigours of grammar and spelling, tables and fractions, we still regard the benefits of the wider curriculum as having a huge influence on our success. Our outdoor classroom is used regularly, and we value getting our children outside and learning in different ways. Termly topics form the backbone of what we teach, and the children respond creatively both in school and at home to a variety of tasks. Our website www.pembridgeprimary.org.uk provides a wealth of information about what we do – and what we believe is most important about educating children. Our weekly newsletter is an important link between home and school; anyone can see our news, 'Ad Lucem', on the website too.

We are a growing school. There are currently 95 children on roll and we are looking to be almost 'full' (104 children) by September this year. This is fantastic news and quite different to a rather bleak picture when I first arrived in 2015. Ultimately, more children mean more money and this enables us to be more flexible with how we teach and the additional support we can give to those children who need it. We are in a very positive position. Should we have an influx of families, we will have to think very creatively!

The Diocese and Local Authority have contributed significant amount of money for a building project at the school so that we now have a physio room and a bathroom for those with disabilities. Since these took the place of our staffroom, we now have a new staff room built on an odd patch of ground behind East School House – we are all very pleased with the results and only serves to increase the wow-factor when touring the school!

We continue to work closely with the Pre-School and are determined that a purpose-built building should be constructed in our grounds. Whilst we were not successful in a National Lottery grant, we still regard having a building for wider 'educational' gains would be an asset to the village. This build should not be seen as just a space for Pre-School but as a space to provide out-of-hours educational enrichment too. The school is utilising the pre-school staff to provide wrap-around care so that families can leave for work earlier and pick up children by 5pm. We envisage this as an important asset for the village as a whole, but particularly for new families coming to live in our community. The ground at the front of the school around the war memorial is not looking good and does not, in my view, match the picturesque image that Pembridge has coveted or even as a fitting tribute to the Fallen. Please could I ask the Council to discuss how they wish to see this land being used and managed so that we may all come up with a plan? I have had quotes to remove trees (as requested by some neighbours) and tidy up but want to do this with you and the village community, sharing the cost wherever possible.

Thank you, once again, for your support.

Village Hall report – Mrs Albright

2017 was another steady but busy year for the Village Hall – all the usual activities and bookings took place successfully and there were no major disasters - as far as we are aware. We are booked almost

every day and evening, and most weekends – we often find we are turning bookings away or frantically juggling bookings, changeovers and cleaning rotas to fit everyone in.

As always we remain committed to running this valued community facility at no financial or time cost to the Parish Council precept or to parishioners. From what I know of other parishes this is a very rare - most Village Halls rely heavily upon PC funding, fund raising and administration. We are not sure how long we can continue to be fully independent given that every year we are using reserves to pay for improvements and ever increasing general running costs and annual maintenance. We have some larger projects pending, such as the refit of the Ladies toilets, that will need to be done sooner rather than later, and we are trying hard to raise and ring fence money to undertake these necessary improvements paid for from income.

Another cost that seems to absorb our remaining income is heating (not only are we still on expensive oil with an antiquated and awkward heating system, but we also have very little insulation and huge rooms) which costs us thousands each year and gets more expensive annually. And the maintenance of the building is also a huge expenditure – as much as we would love to replace the kitchen and curtains we simply don't have enough money.

We remain financially dependent upon the Auction for much of our income, for which we are grateful as it is relatively lucrative and a secure stream of revenue. But we also recognize that this generates a lot of wear and tear on the building and also prevents us offering other hirers the opportunity to book the hall on Sundays and Mondays. It is not an ideal situation but is fundamental to our viability to have a 'commercial' hirer – for now.

There have been a few minor issues over the past year, especially since we have noticed that Mondays seem to now be the allocated day for Pembridge funerals (possibly because we don't have a Vicar?) Our constitution dictates that parishioner funerals and wakes take priority over all other commitments – as you can imagine neither the Auction team or Pre School are happy about cancellations (often at short notice) This has caused a few problems and has potential to remain an issue going forward.

Pre School/After School would very much like to have the option to book the hall on Mondays and to have a permanent base (rather than packing away each night) in order to offer full 'wrap around' childcare to support families and help feed our outstanding Primary School. We are keen to support the Pre School/After School provision wherever we can – and are mindful that they are looking for a dedicated building.

We are aware that these two hirers alone mean that our offering to others can appear to be more restricted – however we have taken the decision that two long term, yearlong hirers are better than the building being empty, and hope the inconvenience caused is minor.

It may be that the committee need to look at how we can meet the changing needs of all our parishioners and potential hirers - taking a good look at how the hall could function better and with more flexibility. This will be a more pressing issue once new houses are built, and we would ask the Parish Council to always consider the impact of any development upon the hall when looking at planning applications that may come forward. It may be that we need to consider an extension, remodelling, refurbishment – or even something simple such as being connected to mains gas – but we all hope that the VH will remain an important part of the community facilities of Pembridge going forward and that we can adapt to any major changes successfully.

Staffing news:

Joyce is still treasurer (which is a sterling, commendable effort for which we are very grateful). Sarah did resign as Caretaker/booking secretary but has somehow found herself reinstated as caretaker. She acknowledges that she is now a lot stricter with how much she can do and how long she can be at the hall.

Several new people have joined our enthusiastic committee, and this has meant we have more people to share the tasks and more ideas to bounce around. We may even be looking at a website in the near future.

Chris remains our able and committed chair – and he manages us all very well and helps us secure

our goals.

I hope the Parish Council will agree that Sarah, Chris and Joyce have shown incredible dedication and passion to the village hall and parish and that they manage an exceptional facility for our community. I would like to thank them most sincerely, along with all the committee members, for all they do. As a group we are an enthusiastic bunch of volunteers - always keen to find solutions and support the parish. However, without the main three lynch pins willingly giving, time, experience and energy I am not convinced that there would be a Village Hall for us all to enjoy.

Pride in Pembridge report – Cllr Rogers

A quick resume of the work undertaken by PIPs in the year

Litter picking takes place regularly as does the maintenance of the Moat, the Conservation area and the Village Green where appropriate and needed

During the year from May 2017 we have...

- Planted flower boxes at the eastern entrance to the village
- Erected summer flower baskets on the Steppes railings and at the Café on Bridge St
- Continued strimming and weeding on Bridge Street
- Weeded Bridge St pavement and sprayed the gutters
- Erected an oak finger post at the entrance to the conservation area – funded by our lottery grant
- Erected National Lottery Logos on the boardwalk
- Cleared the pavement between the village hall and Manley Crescent
- Began the fight on Himalayan balsam along the river banks at the village green and the conservation area
- Cut back hedges around playground and washed playground equipment
- Strimmed vegetation in the moat
- Held a fundraising Race Night in the village hall
- Planted 500 daffodil and fritillary bulbs in pots ready for transplanting in the spring
- Removed summer planting from the east of the village and replaced with winter pansies
- Scrubbed the boardwalk to remove algae and make safer walking
- Removed a decade of rubbish from the Bell Tower
- Erected 'Caution' signs on the boardwalk
- Planted cowslips in Bridge St and the Churchyard
- Cleared the carpark toilet building gutters
- Obtained litter picking signs for road working
- Carried out the early spring litter pick from Milton Cross to the village
- Installed new oak litter bins on the village green – funded by lottery grant
- Erected posts to protect the grassed area of the village green carpark from turning cars and lorries
- Discussed the village mowing schedule with the contractor – this to be monitored through the year
- Removed concrete slabs from the millennium meadow to facilitate mowing to the edges
- Mowing of paths in the village green begins following chain harrowing to remove mole hills

On average 60 man hours of labour are carried out by the PiPs team per month

Pembridge Amenity Trust – Cllr Garfield Evans

Pembridge Footpaths report – Cllr Hancock

There are 42km of public footpaths and Bridleways in the parish of Pembridge. Since taking over responsibility for the paths in May 2015 I have walked all the paths and will continue to walk the paths again before the summer season is fully upon us. The parish is a member of the P3 scheme and has an allocated budget of £2450. Our current lengthsman Richard Mills is also our P3 contractor.

I have continued to meet with many of the larger landowners in the parish and talked about the paths that cross their land. We have discussed how I can best support them in ensuring ease of access to these public rights of way without encouraging, or rather to discourage, trespassing. I have also been able to bring several dangerous situations to their attention (rotten foot bridges, trenches and drains blocking access to stiles and gates, rotten stiles, inappropriate fencing hindering the proper use of stiles, insufficient or incorrect way markers, bulls in fields with paths). In this way it is hoped that avoid any potential injury to members of the public – and the resulting financial penalties to landowners. Despite this there are still several bridges over ditches that remain in a parlous state. We await action.

Last year I reported that we were awaiting action from Balfour Beatty to make the old bridge on PM 29 safe for general use. Unfortunately, during the last year the situation with this bridge has become worse. The current landowners allowed one of their contractors to drive over the bridge with a large tractor towing a slurry tanker which subsequently collapsed one side of the bridge depositing the tanker in the Curl Brook. The slurry was apparently recovered safely and eventually the tanker was removed from the Brook. The closure of the bridge and path was re-confirmed by Balfour Beatty and we await developments almost one year later. Apparently, the delay is the lack of apparent insurance settlement between the landowners and their insurers, and an insistence on the part of BB they will only repair the path for foot traffic only. This bridge, and the green lane on which it's situated, is an important piece of agricultural architectural history and I would be loath to see it disappear because of lack of action on the part of BB or the landowners and I can only urge them to come to an agreement that will put this path and bridge back at the disposal of residents and visitors alike.

During the course of the last 6 months, several complaints and comments have been received and action was taken bringing the situation to the attention of the landowners concerned. Where necessary return visits to the paths were undertaken to check the problems were addressed.

Maintenance carried out during the last year:

- Set post in yard of Leen Farm at junction of PM 1 and PM3. The landowner was also approached and asked to reinstate PM3 in its entirety and to ensure it is open and unobstructed through to the lane
- An audit of paths immediately adjacent to the village of Pembridge was produced and work required by the landowners to bring the furniture on the paths crossing their land indicated. This was carried out at the beginning of the year. Much of this work has yet to be carried out.
- Set post to the Grove on PM6
- Reset post on PM11 (Cabal). There is a blockage of PM11 by an electric fence at the stile one field after the commencement of PM11 off Cabal Lane. Waiting for the landowner to clear this.
- PM48 reset post by Marston, also clearance of the stile at the origin of PM48 as it leaves the A44 and a new post at this position too.
- PM45 clear and reset steps out of lane into field
- PM 36 Set post and sign out of lane
- PM 56 add signage to post
- PM62 (by Milton) repair steps and stile (this actually comes off a metalled road and payment should come from Balfour Beatty NOT our P3 budget
- Reset finger post on PM1 as it originates off Bridge Street. Replacement of broken styles behind lambing sheds with self-closing gates on PM1. Repair of stile as PM1 enters the Leen's cattle lane.

- Commission of risk survey of the willows overhanging PM1 as it leaves the Village green and the felling of same in response to the findings of the survey
- Addition of stone and handrail to improve safety on PM as it leaves the Millenium Meadow
- Provision of stakes for the samplings making up the Verdun Oak Walk to be planted along the straight mile. Also, the provision of a pamphlet to support this project connecting the sapling walk to existing paths in and out of the village of Pembridge
- Collaboration with the Eardisland memorial walk project
- PM16. Ditch bridges in need of repair have been reported to BB and we have been awaiting their response

As a continuing point of interest, there is a deadline looming to ensure current footpaths, green lanes, and other historic ways currently unregistered on the definitive map should be so registered with Herefordshire Council as a change to the definitive map. If not registered they will be lost FOREVER. I would be very grateful for any information about paths in the parish and am available on via my cell phone at: 07956 815943

In conclusion: our paths are an important resource providing both local amenity and attractions for visitors visiting the area who contribute to our local economy. Additionally, when paths are ill-maintained, there is an increase in the incidence of trespass and a higher possibility of injury to path users which could result in significant litigation and subsequent costs to landowners.

We, in the PC are doing our best to ensure our paths are well maintained and hope that landowners will enter into partnership with us, so we might maximise this great community resource for our community's greater benefit.

Pembridge NDP Report – Cllr Pace

Cllr Pace thanked the Steering Group, Data Orchard and the Clerk for their hard work during the year.

The NDP went to public consultation during the last year and as result of feedback has been amended.

The amended Plan was agreed by the Parish Council at a special meeting on the 4th April.

The NDP will now go to Herefordshire Council and after about 6 weeks we will be given the names of three inspectors and will select one to examine our NDP.

Again, after about six weeks and following the examination we would hope that a referendum could be held to approve the Plan (hopefully).

Parish Website report – Mr B Pierce

The site continues to be primarily a source of information about Council activities although there are also pages devoted to local services and groups. It provides access to Council minutes, agendas and other reports. Minutes are available going back to January 2007 and are much quicker to access on the website than on paper.

The website doesn't use tracking cookies so we don't have reliable figures on how many humans, as opposed to robots, are visiting the site or through which pages they navigate. The server logs suggest up to 20 visitors per day but some of them may have arrived by accident while searching for something else. A higher proportion than in previous years come directly to the site, rather than via search engine, either by typing in the web address or by clicking a saved bookmark which probably indicates a regular visitor.

Additional pages this year have given a fuller coverage of the Neighbourhood Development Plan activities. The website has for some years invited visitors to submit their contact details so that they can be informed of Parish Council news and activities. As it stands, this process will probably not

comply with the new General Data Protection Regulation and some changes will be required. The Clerk will be able to explain in more detail!

Good Neighbour Scheme – Mrs P Stokes

Since reporting to the Annual Meeting last year, the Good Neighbour Scheme has actioned 44 different requests. Making the total hours that our volunteers have contributed to 162.5 hours

We are continuing to have a diverse number of requests that we can respond to although we have lost a few volunteers due to them moving out of the village.

Our monthly Coffee mornings are still being successful with a total of 56 volunteer hours contributed to this and most months we do see new faces which is very encouraging. I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank everyone who is involved in the running of these events, those who bake the cakes and the other community members such as Pips, WI, Pembridge Parish Council and the Church for taking one month a year to help run the coffee morning.

I would also like to take this opportunity once again to thank all the PGNS volunteers who have given us their time and commitment and also to the Parish Council for their ongoing support.

Church Report – Ms M Fothergill

PCC members:

Mrs Jacqui Thomas (Churchwarden & chair)

Mrs Gill Smith (Churchwarden),

Miss Catherine Fothergill (Treasurer), Miss Marguerite Fothergill (Secretary)

Mrs Meryl Griffith, Mrs. Emma Hardy, Mrs Jenny Locke, Miss Rosemary Mayall,

Mr Eric Price, Mr Roland Scott, Mrs. Carol Taylor

There have been four formal PCC meetings during 2017, and the standing committee have met twice. There have been many other meetings in between; SMCP (community project), fund raising, churchyard clearing, and church cleaning.

We have been in interregnum for the whole of 2017 but have continued all our usual services, being grateful and enjoying the help of several visiting clergy from around the diocese, with particular thanks to Revd. Preb. Steve Hollinghurst as well as Revd. Robin Rogers and Ian Smith (reader). We have had services in our church every Sunday at 11 am; Family Communion week 1, informal meditation and chat with coffee and croissants week 2, sung communion week 3 and family service week 4. Week 5 a group service in one of the churches of the benefice.

The usual services have had an average attendance of 20 but at Easter, Armistice, Harvest and Christmas the congregation filled the church. We were once again pleased with the success of the Christingle and crib service on Christmas Eve. Mrs. Sarah Norman kindly organised our travelling crib to be passed round among the young families in the parish, finishing up in church at the crib service, for which we thank her.

There have also been early morning communion services (using the prayer book) held at Moorcourt on the second Sunday in every month.

The Bible Study group has continued to meet at Rose Cottage twice a month during the day, and every week during Lent.

Some people have attended monthly evening meetings in people's homes in Shobdon. There have also been prayer meetings in Shobdon Methodist Chapel twice a month, and a quiet reflective prayer time at Moorcourt has been started.

We welcomed into church the children from Pembridge School for a service at the beginning of the school year and end of term services. At Easter we were especially pleased to take part in their "Experiencing Easter" activities which took place in church during the last week of the Spring Term.

The choir continues to sing at some services - choral communion in Pembridge once a month and choral evensong in Shobdon occasionally, anthems at Easter and Harvest services, and Christmas carol services.

We very much appreciate the leadership of Tim Hollinghurst for the choir and for playing the organ so well at our services throughout the year.

Fund raising has once again been very much on the agenda, the high light of which was The Wedding Fayre which took place on the Sunday and Monday of the Spring Bank Holiday. Many people from the village took part in this and we were most grateful to them for their help and support.

We were privileged to have Cantabile (award winning choir from Hereford Cathedral School) perform for us in June.

There was the annual quiz in March, a couple of coffee mornings at Rose Cottage, Gill's and Jen's Annual Strawberry cream tea at The Curl and then Sunday afternoon cream teas during the Summer, the fete in August, Harvest Supper in October and the Woodcock Fayre in November. We finished the year with a Christmas concert by The Village Quire in December. Thank you to everybody who helped in any way with the running of the events and thank you to all the people who attended them and so made them successful.

We were particularly grateful to Richard and Sally Pimm who very kindly donated to us the gate money to their Water Garden from one Summer Sunday afternoon.

In October we held a Gift Day which followed an appeal letter sent out with the October/November Arrowvale Messenger. We would like to thank greatly all the people who generously responded to this appeal.

In August we were again pleased for The Presteigne Festival to hold a concert here.

We hosted a 'Pembridge Good Neighbours ' coffee morning in the village hall and had a tombola at the "Turning on of lights" evening for the start of Christmas in the village.

We have been working with the other parishes in the Arrowvale Group.

The Tapestry Group continues to meet in Staunton-on-Arrow Village Hall.

The Arrowvale Messenger has been produced bi-monthly in conjunction with Lyonshall, Shobdon, Staunton-on-Arrow, and Byton, and as far as possible it has been distributed to every household in all the parishes.

During the Autumn the historic archives of the parish were deposited with the County Archive Office as we were concerned that these precious documents were not in the ideal conditions for preserving them properly for the future.

The church has been kept clean and tidy throughout the year by volunteers and there have been many occasions upon which the church has been beautifully decorated with flowers etc.

Thank you to all the cleaners and flower arrangers, and particularly to Joyce Williams, Barbara Petrie and Pat Teale. Also, to Roland and Liz Scott for the hard work they put in to the churchyard. We do employ two people to carry out the mowing and major hedge trimming and we are very grateful for the £500 that we receive from the Parish Council, but there is a lot of other general tidying up required as well.

Many thanks to all the people who have read lessons at services during the year, the bell ringers, and to all the people who see to the delivery of the Arrowvale Messenger.

Very many thanks to Clare and Eric Price who look after Moorcourt for us.

Our Church is always opened and closed every day of the year (by Catherine or Marguerite Fothergill, occasionally Jean Heaven) and we hope that many visitors are able to enjoy it.

Finally, a big thank you to our two churchwardens for the relentless attention given by them throughout the year, especially during this continuing time of interregnum.

We hope we have continued to connect with all members of our community, and our fundraising events have been varied in order to appeal to most people in the village.

St Mary's Community Project – Report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on April 23rd 2018.

At the beginning of the year it was decided that we would go ahead with a second application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). As part of the reapplication process we organised a meeting of interested parties from our local community to get ideas for a draft activity plan to submit with the HLF application. This took place in March, was led by Suzanne Wenczek, and attended by over 25 members of the community and their ideas and suggestions were recorded to be used as a basis for this activity plan.

In April, Suzanne, Gill and Meryl attended an HLF Workshop in Birmingham regarding applying to HLF. They also received useful advice for a second application. There is work to be done to meet with this advice. Things that have been discussed regarding this have been fundraising, match funding, letters of support, statements of need and significance, architect's costs and the possibility of going through the architect procurement process again as over the years our needs have changed eg the welsh dresser shop, the tapestries and the effigy costumes. Meryl and Jacqui completed the Statements of Need and Significance which would need to be included with the application.

It has been a year of meetings which have been noted for our HLF application.

In May Gill and Meryl attended The Prince's Generation Trust - BRICK Workshop at The Grange in Leominster where they discussed developing creative options for the reuse of historic buildings, project management and utilising social media. Here they also did some networking - Quantity Surveyor, David Crump, from Greenwoods offered to look at our architect's costs free of charge. They also won the group activity – the prize- a day's visit from a Purcell architect. Niall Phillips, from Purcell, visited us for a half day in June and also in November to discuss our project and give us his advice.

In June Gill and Jen (PCC) attended the Visit Herefordshire & The Wye Valley – Tourism & Leisure Group Meeting.

In July, Grenville Jones, conductor of the Bath Male Voice Choir (BMVC) came to visit us and told us of his work with the Goldies Charity – a singing club franchise for the elderly and those with dementia. He also offered to bring the choir to the church to perform in a concert which would kick start our fundraising for the project.

Also, in July Meryl and Rosemary (PCC) attended a day's workshop in Cardiff, run by The National Churches Trust. This was about securing major funding for capital projects at a place of worship.

In September Suzanne told us of a new lottery fund called The Resilient Heritage Fund and thought that we could apply for a grant to fund such things as new plans from an architect, feasibility study and Quantity Surveyor. If we were successful we would then already have a relationship with the HLF before going ahead with the HLF application for the main project. It was decided that we would put the big application on hold while we applied to Resilient Heritage. It isn't a big application and it is assessed within eight weeks.

In October, Suzanne, Gill, Jacqui and Meryl met with Stephen Challenger the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) Secretary and the Archdeacon in The Archdeacon's office in Hereford to keep

them up to date with our progress. Simon Whaley, from the Ludlow Diocesan Office, was also in attendance.

In November Meryl and Marguerite attended a Digital Communications Training Workshop, in Kingsland, run by The Church of England where they learned about how to use social media – Facebook, twitter and Instagram, in connection with the church.

Also, in November, Suzanne and Meryl attended a meeting, with Wendy Coombey, Simon Whaley and Hannah Vernon (who is helping Eardisland church and Kingsland church with their applications to the HLF), at the Diocesan Office at Ludlow. Under discussion was the possibility of a joint application between the three churches to Resilient Heritage. It was decided to look into this.

In December we met with Fred Hamer, who is an Associate and Chartered Architect with RRA Architects, Hereford, to discuss our proposals for Pembridge Church.

It has been a busy year and the applications will be our focus in 2018.

Ward Councillor Report – Cllr Phillips

The austerity period in public services continues to impact on the delivery of council services together with the rising pressures of adult and children's care. Since 2010 Herefordshire Council has had to make £67 million worth of savings with huge impact on all services particularly non-statutory. The Government uplifted council tax increases for councils with care responsibilities in the autumn and Herefordshire increased their level to 4.9% (5.9% was maximum permitted).

The Council set a balanced budget of £144 million for 2018/19 This will be funded by

Council tax	£ 99 million	(£93 million in 2017/18	£89m in 2016/17).
Business rates	£33 million	(£32.5 million in 2017/18	£30m in 16/17).
Government grants	£12 million	(£19 million in 2017/18	£27m in 16/17).

In 2017/18 £75 million was spent on 3,500 people. These people have high care and complex needs and the council has a statutory obligation to meet their needs. I am representing the Council on working parties submitting evidence to Government on the new formula for funding local authorities including the sparsely populated councils which help gains us an extra one million in grant for this year.

Herefordshire has over 2,000 miles of roads and their maintenance and condition is a concern particularly after the long wet and cold winter we have had. Balfour have had difficulty in dealing with the potholes since the new year and on behalf of residents I have raised many issues with them and our commissioning team. The budget for next year sees 27 million identified for Balfour contract with 4.7 million for the A44 highway corridor. I have secured some resurfacing for my ward including Shobdon and Titley, and will continue to lobby for more resurfacing, better practice and outcomes. Other ongoing highway issues include Titley 30 mph, Lawton crossroads redesign, Royal George corner, drainage issues at Bircher and Rhyse lane, Pembridge 20mph, Golden cross junction, speed limit on A44 Monkland to Hardwick, Pembridge entrances, and Shobdon pedestrian crossing.

In August I invited my parish Councillors to a visit to the quarry to question Tarmac and learn more of their operation. I maintain contact with major HGV companies and contributed to the Local Enterprise Partnership HGV consultation and an upcoming review of traffic in North Herefordshire. I enclose the Traffic figures via the grey boxes which have been monitored since I had them installed in 2005. I report the October traffic numbers, types and speeds to Parish Councils.

The 2017 October traffic figures over a month period was

Shobdon	4,602 vehicles per day with	20.5% (944) being larger vehicles
Eardisley	4,222 vehicles per day with	24% (1011)
Pembridge	2,851 vehicles per day with	26% (740)
*Lyonshall	2,457 vehicles per day with	9% (223) *

The 2006 October traffic levels taken on average over four months

Shobdon 4,425 vehicles per day with 19% (841) being larger vehicles

Eardisley 4,271 vehicles per day with 19% (811)
Pembridge. 2,332 vehicles per day with 19% (443)
Lyonshall. 2,056 vehicles per day with 17% (350)

This year saw the consultation on the option routes for the Hereford Bypass from A465 to A49. The preferred route will be identified this summer and I will work strongly to support its building. We cannot afford to make the mistake of thirty years ago again. When you see the Newbridge on wye and Newtown Bypasses it beggar's belief that Hereford, Leominster and Pembridge still suffer like we do.

All the Parishes have or are involved with Neighbourhood planning. Eardisland NP has been adopted, Pembridge and Shobdon are reaching regulation 14, with Lyonshall and Titley following. These plans once adopted in conjunction with National Planning Policy Framework and Herefordshire Core strategy form the basis of all planning decisions. Herefordshire has the highest proportion of NP in any English county. I recognise the huge amount of work undertaken by all those involved in the preparation of these plans.

I have regularly attended Parish council meetings and many other events in my ward throughout the year. I arranged two meetings for the Parish Clerks, our Balfour steward and planning officers. I send out monthly updates to my email contacts in the eight parishes and have to react to the new data regulations with the support of the Council's monitoring officers.

This year saw the Council consult on the expansion of the travellers site of which the parish councils were very supportive. We secured the sealing of entrances from the site onto the Kingspan access road on safety grounds.

Shobdon and Luston Primary schools now have a joint arrangement sharing a headmistress and they and Pembridge are enjoying high standards of education and increased attendance and deserve the community's support.

This year saw our CSO team move away or in Dick Alford's case retire. I am pleased to report that two new CSOs are being trained to take over the patch and starting from mid-May.

Can I thank all those of you who have supported me during the past 12 months, including Chairs and Clerks. I continue to do my best to work on your behalf for the residents and business of the Arrow ward and Herefordshire in these very challenging times.

Pembridge Charities report – Cllr D Owens

Alms house Occupancy:

There are currently 10 properties available to let of which 7 have tenants at present. The homes at Duppa have need further refurbishment and sourcing grant funding has started. 2 properties are currently unoccupied at Duppa and 1 void at Trafford.

Alms house Charges:

Single Bedroom £27.50 per week

Double room £41.25 per week for tenants to be reviewed 8th May 2017, there has been no increase since May 2015. Tenants need to qualify to rent a property, living or working in the parish/surrounding parish of pensionable age with a need.

Trustees: -

Mr Gwillam has resigned, and new trustee Hugh Higginson replaces.

Clerk: Mr. Michael Coleburn has retired after 14 years and Jean Simmonds now takes post as clerk to the trustees. Email: pembridgecharities@live.co.uk

Charity Registration: Registered Number: 216294.

Pembridge Royal British Legion Report – B Rose

Pembridge are a small branch raising £3- £5K over the last 30 years for poppies. Thanks for generous support.

2019 see the centenary year for the end of WWI. There are several events planned to mark this occasion.

- Knitted poppies – over 2000 will be placed around the village by the knitting group.
- Celebrations booked in the Parish Hall on 3rd November with a surf band. Offer of help welcome.
- To celebrate the end of the War 11/11/18 a larger commemoration on the A44 it is hoped the school and parishioners will attend the parade which will include vintage vehicles
- Bell tolling at 11.00am will ring to commemorate the day of death for fallen Parish soldiers.

The British legion is open to all and you can join for £16 to be a member.

Pembridge Film Nights & Allotments

My name is Richard Goddard and I live with my wife Elaine at Little Byletts House, between Ken Wheeler and Sue Adams on one side and Geoff and Emma Hardy on the other. We moved in about 18 months ago, but I know the village well, as Ken Wheeler and I used to be business partners and I worked in the village for many years back in the 90s (as well as having more than the occasional drink in the Red Lion and the New Inn).

This brief report is to update you on the two organisations in the village which I'm involved with.

The first is called Pembridge Film Nights. With the support of Flicks in the Sticks and Arts Alive, Geoff Hardy and I have started a community film screening on the last Sunday of each month. This happens in the downstairs restaurant area in the New Inn, which Jane and Rosie kindly lend us. We should have had six films by now, but November and December were snowed off so in fact we started in January. We aim at feel-good movies which are generally not on current release (because it's easy to see those elsewhere) - the exception was Paddington 2 last month, as there were so many requests for it. The other films we've shown are Sunshine on Leith, O Brother Where Art Thou and Even When I Fall.

We can only seat about 30 people, and all the films have been sold out, and, certainly for the first three, almost everyone was from the village or within a couple of miles, which is what we wanted. Out of interest, it costs us from £93 to £120 for the licence to show each film, so at a fiver a head that means we have just enough surplus to pay for spare bulbs and a new screen for next season - everything is ploughed back into the group. I use my own projection equipment, as otherwise we just couldn't manage with a 30-person limit! Jane and Rosie kindly provide a free ice-cream for each person during the interval, and it's a pleasant social evening as well as a chance to see some films you might otherwise have missed. We've now stopped for the so-called summer, but we'll be back with the 2018/2019 season on Sunday 30th September at 7.30.

Any questions about the Film Nights - Richard on 01544 387571

My second role is that I've taken over from Mal Jones as Chairman of the Pembridge Allotment

Association, as Mal has now moved to Presteigne and no longer needs an allotment. In fact, Elaine and I took over his allotment a year or so back, and now I seem to have finished up with his role as well. Rosie Melvin is still the secretary, and it's thanks to her persistence in pushing the allotments that we're now beginning to look flourishing again after a period a couple of years ago when plot holder numbers were getting low.

In the last year, we've gained three new plot holders, as well as Elaine and myself, and I think there's the possibility of more people in the pipeline. But, at the moment, eight of the twelve available plots are taken, and we'd love a few more people to join us - we have pleasant social meetings as well as the chance to provide as much of our own produce as possible. Nearly all of us met a week or so back to have a tidy up, and as well as a very neat set of allotments we've also now got a communal area where we can share unwanted tools and other resources. We had a bit of a problem with access following the very wet weather, but Chris Thomas - who rents the land to us - is sorting out some nasty ruts and we've just about got enough in the kitty to put some crush and mix down through the gateway to make access easier. In case anyone is interested, or you can spread the word, full plots (which are about 60 foot by 40 foot) are only £60 a year, and half plots or less are also available.

Any questions about the Allotments - Richard on 01544 387571