

***ANNUAL REPORT
OF
MARESFIELD PARISH***

YEAR 2009-10

PREPARED FOR THE

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

FRIDAY 21ST MAY 2010

AT

FAIRWARP VILLAGE HALL

<u>INDEX</u>	PAGE
<u>Parish Council Reports:-</u>	
Council Highlights	3
Councillors	7
Accounts y/e 31 March 2007 (unaudited)	8
Finance & Administration Committee	9
Environment Committee	9
Planning Committee	10
Strategy Committee	11
<u>Reports from Parish Groups:</u>	
Ashdown Forest Riding Association	13
Fairwarp Sports Field	14
Fairwarp Football Club	15
Nutley C.E. School	16
St James The Less Church	17
Ashdown Evergreens	20
Nutley Tennis and Squash Club	21
Nutley Nutkins	22
Nutley Pre School	22
Maresfield Bonners CE School	23
Maresfield Conservation Group	24
Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee	25
New Parklands Residents Association	25
St. Bartholomew's Maresfield Youth Work	26
Fairwarp Community Society	27
Fairwarp Village Hall	28

2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT

Parish Council Highlights

In the year to end March 2010, there has been an unusually large amount going on in our parish or affecting us.

What was seen as a potential ogre, the **Maresfield Waste Site**, has turned out not to be all we feared. Perhaps as summer progresses, there will be more traffic at weekends, but so far the only issue has been an unfortunate taking in of a waste lorry just as the snow began; the waste remained on site and rotted, with a very unpleasant smell badly affecting some people.

The hopes for a **branch surgery** to be set up in the parish, probably but not necessarily in Nutley, were badly set back by a report from the Primary Care Trust that it had rejected the proposal. It was obvious from the report that this was not satisfactory, as well as it dashing very wide local demand and hopes to have a surgery back in the parish. We have continued to work with Ashdown Forest Health centre to seek to reverse this. However, AFHC has other things on its plate, and the management consultant working with it on this has been side-lined for a while. Regrettably, no progress can be identified so far, but though this exercise seems interminable, it does continue and we are reasonable in thinking that we should be able to get the PCT to consider the proposals more carefully.

The loss of **Nutley's Post Office** now seems to be irreversible. Advice from Post Office Ltd is that the rules applying to opening of small Post Offices are quite restrictive and we see no way in which anyone could make a sensible economic case for running one in Nutley on the current terms of service.

The **County Council** proposed a new system to work with parishes to identify and deal with small local highways and related issues – the types of thing which small work gangs can fix. This has been a success and has led to remedial work taking place quite quickly in several instances.

The County Council, as with all other local authorities, were unable to deal satisfactorily with the long period of snow. It is remarkable that the plans to deal with snow allow for whole villages and hamlets to be cut off, as applied to Fairwarp. The last of the snow and the following melt must have been only just in time to avoid real hardship for people who needed medicine, visits to hospital or doctors or just to go shopping.

Many parishes are struggling to know if it's sensible to upgrade local facilities to put down grit to keep footpaths open when it snows. The cost is quite high; the grit doesn't last; and at many sites, the grit is stolen for personal use - in some places, apparently whole bins get carted away by thieves! We could do more for ourselves if there was support for raising our local Council Tax to react to such inconveniences; a request in parish magazines for feedback about this led to no response, so we draw an obvious conclusion from that.

We have a good **Civil Emergency** plan in our parish. Of course the Parish Council is not meant to be at the front line if anything awful happens; but some emergencies stretch the main, uniformed services beyond their capacity and we ought to be able to put local people and equipment into action if called on.

The response to our questionnaire in the autumn (as part of the update for the parish emergency plan) was very good indeed, so we do have records of people and equipment which may be available to help if needed. The plan itself is first rate. We are fortunate to have a good team of radio operators who are able to co-ordinate efforts if called upon.

What people are willing to offer for an emergency makes it reasonable to ask if we should try to set up something to support people where there is no parish emergency but **individual need** is very high – the car service to go to the doctor or hospital is an obvious example.

We had hopes to review the grass cutting regime in time for the summer 2010 season; but have not been able to do this yet. It is odd that ESCC cut grass (or pay contractors to cut) in some places and Wealden District Council in others; and both of them do not manage full coverage. It's a problem that some people identify an area of uncut grass as a mini-nature reserve and others see it as an eyesore!

In summer 2009, we consulted in each village about the Core Strategy for WDC's **Local Development Framework**, ie the plan for locating housing and employment and other spatial planning issues up to 2026. The turnout in Nutley was one person; but in Fairwarp and Maresfield was very strong both in numbers and in views expressed. What we put in to WDC as our response to their consultation has been reviewed and at late spring 2010 WDC's work on the Core Strategy is at an advanced stage. As previously indicated in parish magazines, the implication of this for our villages is enormous; in Nutley that extends to what happens in Mid-Sussex and in eg Hailsham and Polegate, as the potential for A22 to become considerably busier is obvious, and in Maresfield includes the potential for a large development of new housing.

At the more everyday level of development control/planning, WDC are trialling a new electronic means of consulting parishes, and it was good to see that our parish was identified as one of the trial partners. Not least this is a feather in the cap of Tony Allen, whose experience and ability make him ideal to see how the electronic scheme works and might need improvement.

During the year, WDC reviewed the results of its **Housing Needs Survey**; the great delay in its publication indicated some difficulty with the report received by WDC by the consultants engaged to make the Survey. That became more obvious once the result was announced, as WDC seem unclear what are its implications, especially in that they have had to be asked what will be the unmet need for housing for families with local connections in our parish, and seem so far unable to say what action is to be taken in the light of the report. We understand that a study by Shelter concerning provision of Affordable Housing shows WDC as the worst performing council. This deeply affects real people who live or wish to live in our villages and cannot do so; people who many of us think ought to be able to do so if our communities are to remain healthy. It is as big an issue as any we face.

A **speed camera** was installed in Nutley and has had an obvious effect in slowing traffic. Elsewhere, we look to **Speedwatch** and to ESCC to work with us to agree schemes of road engineering etc to reduce speeds, or, as in Maresfield, to reduce volume of traffic: a scheme is being developed for B2026 between Fairwarp and Duddleswell and another is being developed for Maresfield.

So far as Speedwatch is concerned, we have a good team and Jessica Bradford has worked hard to co-ordinate it; in other places, Speedwatch teams have had a considerable effect in slowing traffic and the hope is that we can strengthen our Speedwatch efforts.

At our Parish Annual Assembly in 2009, community groups were critical of the Parish Council for not being closer to them and involving them more. In autumn 2009, Roger Street brought forward proposals to improve the level of **engagement** of the Parish Council with the community groups and with individual parishioners. This has not been entirely successful so far as the community groups are concerned but the effort continues. However, **communication** has been greatly improved by the approx fortnightly publication of Your Parish Brief: this is a short news sheet with a growing circulation and is at <http://www.maresfieldparish.org.uk/news.htm> To receive this automatically by electronic distribution, please e-mail with "YPB" in the heading or text to Clerk@MaresfieldParish.org.uk Our website is regularly updated and well presented and used; it is right to acknowledge the work of Charlie Stevenson is keeping this in such good shape and in sorting out problems from time to time with the Parish Office IT system; this is an opportunity to thank him for all that. Other intentions to involve non-councillors to a greater extent and to arrange for a discussion of local issues before a Council Meeting are proving hard to achieve but, again, the effort continues.

Some years ago, the owners of the track alongside Maresfield Recreation Ground followed up a request to control parking by users of the Recreation Ground with a threat to bar the **access to the Recreation Ground** altogether. This was extremely serious and has been extremely hard to deal with, and we should all be grateful to Val Taylor for her efforts to resolve the problem. Though it is not yet completely resolved, we hope that it soon will be.

Some years ago, the routing of the **29 bus service** was altered so that it no longer called at Fairwarp. There were local calls for re-instatement of a bus service, and during the year the 249 service did call at Fairwarp; however, contrary to firm statements by local people that they would use a bus service if it was provided, the take up was very low, and the service has been withdrawn.

Jessica Bradford joined us as Assistant Clerk in March 2009 and has been successful in getting to grips with how a Parish Council works and with particular programmes which she has been running herself – the Speedwatch team is one, the development of an allotment at Maresfield (this is in progress) is another. She is now away on maternity leave until April 2011, and to cover her while she is away we have engaged Katrina Larkin; Katrina is the Clerk at Arlington Parish so knows the way a Parish Council works and the who's who etc at the County and District Councils, and she has recently obtained the Certificate in Local Council Administration qualification.

Tony Allen deserves our thanks for his considerable efficiency. During the year he took part with our Finance & Administration Committee in reviewing his work and establishing Targets & Objectives for the current year and this should enable him to make the Parish Council more effective. However, it is councillors who have to decide what policy should be and take the lead in making decisions, and who press our case to the County and District Councils and to others who serve us and we should be grateful to those who have worked hard for us all in this way.

It is not widely enough known that the **Parish Council is helped by non-councillors** in the Environment Committee in relation to Civil Emergency Planning by Peter Easton, David Endacott and Graham Allt, and in relation to their role as Tree Wardens by Emma Newman and Ian Johnstone; and we are grateful to them. In the last year, Fred Thorogood has continued to be closely involved with the work towards a return of a surgery to the parish, and Michael Wheeler and Fred Taylor in particular with the potential large housing development at Maresfield and we are grateful to them too.

Lastly, we should recognise the work done on our behalf by our **County and District Councillors**, Tony Reid and Francis Whetstone, Norman Buck, Roy Galley, Mike Hoy, Sylvia Martin and Ken Ogden, and we are grateful to them too.

Cllr William King
Chairman

COUNCILLORS

FAIRWARP

Roger Street	713227
<i>John Handley</i>	714555
<i>Vacany</i>	

MARESFIELD

John Gutteridge	764781
Ken Ogden	761433
<i>Grace Brady</i>	768911
<i>Pat Palmer</i>	764804
<i>Vacancy</i>	

NUTLEY

Derek Barlow	713151
David Finch	712142
Roy Galley	713018
Peter Harris	713141
William King	713798
Charlie Stevenson	712823

COUNTY COUNCIL

Tony Reid	712242
Francis Whetstone	01892 770304

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Norman Buck	732208 M
Ken Ogden	761433 M
Roy Galley	713018 N
Sylvia Martin	740556 N
Michael Hoy	01892 770166 F

F Fairwarp
M Maresfield
N Nutley

Finance & Administration Committee

MARESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010

<u>2009</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>2010</u>
77,533	Precept	77,666
1,159	Interest	28
6,690	Other	60 <small>Note 1</small>
85,382	TOTAL	85,382
<u>2009</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2010</u>
14,696	Administration	16,676
30,416	Staff Costs	39,081
14,342	Services	10,688
1,052	Subscriptions	1,132
260	Grants – Section 137	660
7,345	Grants - Specific Powers	9,080
2,541	Projects	2,300
180	Parish Office Alterations	65
6,570	Other	0 <small>Note 1/3</small>
77,402	TOTAL	79,682
<u>2009</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>2010</u>
47,609	Balance as at 1 April	55,589
85,382	Plus Income	77,754
132,991		133,343
77,402	Less Expenditure	79,682
55,589	CLOSING BALANCE	53,661 <small>Note 4</small>

Note 1: In 2009, these were funds held on behalf of The Easylink Project. These have now been distributed at Easylink has its own banking arrangements.

Note 2: Includes accruals in respect of legal fees, play area maintenance, bus shelter and fingerpost repairs.

Note 3: Payments on behalf of Easylink

Note 4: Reserves of £35000 now held in accordance with auditors recommendation.

Finance & Administration Committee

The last year has been comparatively uneventful in terms of the work of The Finance and Administration Committee. There was a small surplus of £238 compared to the budgeted expenditure this year but as I explained last year, the intention was to use some of the accumulated reserves to meet the budget for the year. This proved unnecessary in practice.

As in previous years, not all the budgets have been spent on projects. Notably there was £2,200 budgeted for roads, traffic and transport and also a budget of £1,000 for the Parish Health Surgery. Unfortunately, these were not spent during the year as the budget on roads proved unnecessary as East Sussex met all the expenditure involved and alas, the Health Surgery still remains in doubt.

The Clerk and his Assistant have worked hard during the year. Jessica is due to leave us on maternity leave and we all wish her well. Arrangements are being put in place to cover her work while she is away.

The Budget has been agreed for 2010/11 and shows projected expenditure of £92,980 which is an increase of 5.1% over the previous year. However, as we have accumulated reserves from previous year above our required reserves, the Precept (what we require through the Council Tax) has only been increased by 1.4%.

Cllr John Handley
Chairman
Finance & Administration Committee

Environment Committee

As usual, the Committee's activities over the last year have been many and varied. Here are the highlights:-

- **Dog Fouling** – We have been working closely with the District Council's Dog Warden and notices asking dog owners to clear up their dogs mess are now in place in several areas in the Parish.
- **Red Telephone Kiosks** – Two of these kiosks in the Parish are set for adoption as BT is withdrawing service from them; the one by the Nutley Shop and the one outside the Foresters Arms in Fairwarp.
- **Trees, Hedges and Tree Wardens** – Numerous tree works have been carried out, most notably the crown reduction of the lime tress at Maresfield Recreation Ground and around the play area there.
We welcomed two new Tree Wardens, Ian Johnstone and Emma Newman, as our long-standing Wardens, Guy Hardy and Chris Stephens stepped down and we thank them for their many years working in this capacity. We have developed a Tree Wardens Action Plan so that our Wardens are fully supported and effective, and this Plan will include a tree planting scheme for the Parish.
We continue to liaise closely with ESCC on the matter of overgrowth affecting footpaths and roads and must thank its Officers for their co-operation.

- **Civil Emergency Matters** – We are well into the development of the current Civil Emergency Plan into a Risk Assessed Community Action Plan. We welcomed Major and Mrs Allt as the new Radio Operators for Maresfield Village; thanks to them for volunteering and to Peter Easton and David Endacott who are our Operators in Nutley and Fairwarp respectively.
- **Play Areas** – A lot of routine maintenance and repairs continue to be needed at most of the play areas, which are inspected on a regular basis. The two wooden springer horses at Fords Green were replaced with identical hand crafted items. A special mention must be made of the fantastic work being carried out by the New Parklands Resident Association, and all others involved in the upgrading of the play area there. We aim to start similar projects for some of our other play areas.
- **Grass verge cutting in the Parish** – We have set up a Working Party to look at the possibility of the Parish Council taking over this function from WDC and ESCC as we feel that this work needs to be carried out more regularly and at more targeted intervals.
- **Footpaths** – Following on from the admirable success of a small group in Maresfield Village, we are setting up a new Parish wide Rights-of-Way Volunteer Group to ensure that our footpaths are properly maintained and kept open
- **ESCC Ward inspections** – We have been successful in working with ESCC Officers to address matters affecting our roads and pavements and we will now be joining the ESCC Strengthening Local Relationships initiative where we can raise all ESCC related matters affecting our Parish with Officers and Councillors..
- **Street lighting** – We are currently reviewing our contract with EDF Energy as a potential for cost savings has been identified.
- **Allotments Scheme** – We are in the early stages of trying to establish allotments in the Parish; not an easy task when you bear in mind that we have the AONB and Forest to consider. But we are making some promising progress and this is due to the hard work of our Assistant Clerk, Jessica Bradford, and the team she has put together.

Tony Allen
Parish Clerk

Planning Committee

One of the actions I inherited as the new chairman of the planning committee was to find a way of streamlining our consultation process. Meeting every two weeks would have meant the committee coming together some 28 times throughout the year. On some occasions there may only be one application to review.

For the last six months we have been piloting a reduced frequency of meetings. Since November the committee has been meeting every three weeks. This has proved very successful as when we meet there has been anything from 5 to 9 applications to review. The frequency has had no adverse impact on our deadline to return comments to Wealden and still allows us to conduct site visits if necessary.

In addition we have been working on a delegation process for the non contentious applications in a bid to further reduce the number of meeting we hold each year. Our main issue with this new process is that we must maintain accessibility for our parishioners should anyone want to comment on any planning application. This process is still being finalised and will hopefully be in use within the next few weeks.

Maresfield Parish Council is one of several parish councils taking part in a pilot of Wealden District Council new electronic planning application process.

The last year has seen the completion of the Maresfield Waste Transfer site. We are reviewing the planning conditions attached to this site to ensure that items such as the height of the bunds and tree planting have been undertaken with the local community in mind. By this I mean that 18 inch saplings would qualify as tree planting however they will take many years to grow to a sufficient height to obscure the site.

Councillors conducted a site visit in March which proved informative and worthwhile, allowing us to see the operation first hand. The whole site, whilst understandably new, is still kept very clean and tidy. The management at the site certainly seemed conscious of the need to work with the local community. The site manager mentioned that he is still working on reducing light pollution at the site although this has greatly improved since they took over from the builders there is still room for improvement. Noise levels were very low; indeed more noise was coming from the A272.

As Veolia have a 25 year contract the site is licensed to handle 91000 tonnes per year to allow for growth during this period. Currently they are operating at around 55000 tonnes per year with no expectation that this will increase in the near future.

My thanks go to all the councillors who have attended so many meetings over the last year and also to those parishioners who have come along to express their views.

Cllr Peter Harris
Chairman
Planning Committee

Strategy Committee

The year has been one of mixed results for the committee.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment was the refusal, by the Primary Care Trust to go forward with the proposed satellite surgery for Nutley.

The lead doctor at the Ashdown Forest Health Centre has confirmed that they wish to work with the Parish Council to continue to pursue the matter with the PCT.

On road safety our Assistant Clerk has been pursuing the Speedwatch programme within the area.

The village gateways are now erected and hopefully will draw motorists' attention to the fact that they are entering the village areas.

Discussions are advanced on traffic calming on the B2026 and we hope to finalise matters very shortly.

Community Transport is continuing to expand and North Wealden Community Transport hopes to have at least one locally based minibus by the end of the year.

Affordable housing investigations are continuing but we are seeking clarification on the EU Habitats Regulations.

Our efforts to re-start a Post Office service in Nutley are still being frustrated, and recent attempts to tie up with other local communities, who are in the same situation, have so far failed.

Efforts are continuing to see how we can offer practical help to the elderly and to carers.

Two Councillors are working to try to develop better play areas in the Wards, but particularly in Nutley where existing facilities are becoming life expired.

Cllr Derek Barlow
Chairman
Strategy Committee

ASHDOWN FOREST RIDING ASSOCIATION (AFRA)

www.afranews.org.uk

Membership Secretary – Helen Bardsley

01825 713152 helen@afra.org.uk

AFRA has 175 members and covers an area wider than Maresfield Parish. It covers all Parishes containing parts of the Ashdown Forest. The Objects of the Association are:-

1. To assist in conserving the Forest in its natural state for the benefit of walkers and riders alike.
2. To work in liaison with the Conservators to improve riding conditions.
3. To ensure that Ashdown Forest is kept available for use by horse riders with the minimum of restrictions.

In the past 12 months AFRA have helped achieve improvements to gates and bridges on the Ashdown Forest, by liaising with the Conservators and donating funds towards works carried out.

Traffic calming is also of great concern to AFRA. We have been campaigning for safer road crossings, in particular following a fatal accident on the A22 between Pippingford and Chelwood Vachery. A 16-year old boy was crossing the road on his horse when he was struck by a car. The horse had to be put down shortly after the accident due to massive internal bleeding. The driver of the car (an 80-year old man who was in poor health) has since died as a result of the accident. The boy who was riding escaped with concussion and minor injuries.

Following this accident a meeting was arranged in February at the Ashdown Forest Centre with local councillors, AFRA committee members, the owner of Pippingford Estate and one of the Ashdown Forest Rangers to discuss safety measures that could be put in place for road crossings.

It was emphasised by AFRA that this is not the only place where safe crossings are needed. Indeed there are 5 locations altogether, besides Millbrook Hill there are 3 sites that have been identified on the A22 south of Nutley village and one on the B2026 at Duddleswell Tea Rooms. Four of these locations have been scenes of fatal accidents in recent times and AFRA has discussed the possibility of safe crossings with Maresfield Parish Council. The Parish Council and AFRA looked at 2 sites in particular, one being at Fords Green and the other at Cackle Street, and it was agreed that the PC would support safe crossings at locations where they would serve the largest number of people in the community and could be used by walkers and cyclists as well as riders.

At the A22 Millbrook horse crossing the Conservators have cleared back scrub to improve visibility and also are checking the self closing gate there is in good working order and easy to use. Colin Clarke from East Sussex County Council Highways agreed that larger signs at this point warning drivers of horse riders could be put in, and also red marking on the road to show where riders (or indeed pedestrians) cross. These improvements were seen as short term measures, with the long term aim being a Pegasus Crossing (for use by horse riders and pedestrians) or an underpass. The New Forest use underpasses as safe crossings for pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and wildlife and Colin Clarke is contacting Hampshire County Council to find out how these were funded.

This year AFRA are launching the Archive Project, inviting members (and non members) to write in with stories of past routes they used to ride on and around the Ashdown Forest. The aim is to establish where routes have been used historically by horse riders, to map them, re-establish routes which have been lost and to get horse riders off the roads wherever possible. Anyone with useful archive information is invited to contact AFRA; details of the scheme are on our website.

Fairwarp Sports Field - New Pavilion & Drainage Project

Objective: to replace the current pavilion with one providing facilities for sports in this century and which meets the traditionally aesthetical needs of the area. To provide a complete drainage system to the field providing year round access for sports and recreation for all ages.

The Trustees held a public meeting and village picnic in August last year. It was attended by over 80 people who brought their own picnics. The football team played a game of cricket and children played games and enjoyed crafts, as well as paddling in the stream at the bottom of the field. When one considers that only 50 people attended the meeting in 1978 to agree to purchase the field this was an excellent turnout. Information on future hopes and aspirations for the pavilion with the intention for the attendees to take away a voting form to vote for or against a new pavilion. On the day itself over 70 people voted 'Yes' to the Trustees proposal. By 31 October 2009 85 Yes votes had been received.

With the village's support the Trustees have gone forward in researching initial costings which have put the cost of works in the region of £150,000-£200,000.

On Saturday 24 April the Trustees held their first big fundraising event. An Auction of Promises at Fairwarp Village Hall which was well attended by the community and raised in excess of £4,000. Although the aim of the evening had been to raise money towards the Pavilion Project, the Trustees wanted to ensure that everyone who gave their support on the night had a really good time and from the feedback received they certainly achieved this.

There will be ongoing fundraising but since receiving the village's backing for the project, the Trustees have taken part in various small fundraising initiatives involving other groups in the village. These have included providing children's activities and toy stall as part of a Cancer MacMillan Coffee Morning organised by Anita Long in the village hall and joining forces with the Church choir for a Sing-along Carol Night hosted by the Foresters Arms whose landlord, John Lyon, donated a percentage of his takings on the night to the joint causes. A number of joint ventures are programmed for the coming year and will be fun events as well as essential fundraisers. A local initiative inviting people to 'Purchase a Plank' will hopefully be up and running before the end of the year.

The Trustees will be holding a Cricket and Croquet Day at the Sports Field on 14 August this year with a similar format to the village picnic of last year with a small admission charge and pay-per-play for the cricket and croquet. The Trustees hope to encourage the cohesion of the community with the event as well as provide a venue for a great village day out.

Unfortunately, due to the appalling weather over the winter months, the Sports Field suffered from being waterlogged for almost three months and junior football training on Sundays had to be cancelled during this time. It is now up and running again, despite the junior's pitch still not having dried out, but the children are glad to be back there on Sunday mornings.

Sadly, the pavilion has suffered from vandalism with increasing monotony and our PCSO, Julie Perrin has been a regular visitor. It is hoped with support from the local police and interaction with village residents this situation will change for the better.

The Field continues to be used by occasional groups and is available for residents to use on an ad hoc basis for personal activities whenever it is not officially hired out. The long term aspirations of the Trustees is to provide an 'exercise trail' which will encourage all residents, whatever age, to utilise the Field to its full potential as one of the most beautiful hidden places in the forest.

Anyone with any enquiries about the Sports Field should direct them to Russell Davison, Chairman of the Trustees on 01825 713531.

Fairwarp Football Club

Fairwarp's two teams have been going from strength to strength this season. Despite getting knocked out of the race for cups the First Team looks to be pushing for promotion in League Division 5 of the Mid-Sussex league and the second team could clinch top spot in Division 10.

Despite a race against time for the home ground to be playable after the snow and rain of winter, John Lazenby ensured that not only was the pitch excellently prepared but the whole of the Sports Field made the Club proud.

The Football Club is actively involved in helping to raise money for the Pavilion Project to replace the old pavilion at the ground with an incredible trawl of promises submitted by the teams towards the Sports Field Trustees' Auction of Promises held on 24 April 2010. The highlight of the First Team's promises being two lots of 'Topless Lawn Mowing', which caused much amusement on the night. A former player of the Club donated a bike worth £299 from his business, The Tri-Store, which was the top earner on the night.

The Senior squad members have been actively involved in the Junior Football team training on Sunday mornings with the trainers donating their 'petrol' money to the Pavilion cause.

Committee members are working closely with the Sports Field Trustees in an endeavour to maximise funding potential and all those involved in the club have pledged their support in whatever way they can.

Fairwarp has a long tradition of football and are still proud to have over 50% of the teams living in or having a close link to the village.

Anyone wishing to find out more about Fairwarp Football Club, seniors or juniors, should contact Paul Rowland 01825 712292.



**Nutley Church of England Primary School
Parents & Friends Association
High Street Nutley East Sussex
TN22 3NW
Registered Charity No 278814**

7th April 2010

Annual Report for 2010

The Nutley Primary School PFA hopes this letter finds you all fit and well and enjoying some much needed sunshine. We have had an exciting few months with much planned for the coming months.

We purchased a new computer programme '2 Simple' that the children can access from school and home, to aid with their education. We have also purchased some Foundation Stage reading books.

Although the plans for a new extension have been placed on hold the relocation of the ICT suite enabled a fifth classroom to open up after refurbishment.

The next six months include plans to build a new all weather play area for Foundation Stage children. This will of course be an ongoing project as it will allow us to improve the existing play area for the other children ensuring all children get the most from their outdoor activities.

The government are introducing a new Primary Curriculum; we will be looking to help the school with new resources and space to introduce this.

I would like to thank the village and the council for their continued commitment in supporting the school and the PFA in our efforts to fulfil these projects, ensuring the education of the children is of the highest possible standard. Thank you

Yours sincerely

Sandy Paupiah
Chair

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST JAMES THE LESS NUTLEY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009

1 Objectives and Activities

The primary objective of St James the Less is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and to help and encourage people to become disciples of Jesus Christ in a manner consistent with the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Vicar in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church pastoral, evangelistic social and ecumenical.

2 Achievements and performance

- 1 Work with **young people** continued, with The Xtreme club becoming well established, and an increase in attendance of children and parents at All Age Worship. Small children have been better provided for by clearing space for them at the back of the church. Brendan Martin regularly preaches and or leads All Age Worship.
- 2 **Brendan Martin** has joined us officially as Youth Minister working for both Maresfield and Nutley. This is a three year programme, and part of the funding is a generous grant for each of the three years. The remaining funds will be raised each year from each congregation.
- 3 **All Age Worship** on the first Sunday of each month has continued to grow, such that there were twelve families at the last service.
- 4 William King continued as a **Reader**.
- 5 Anne Finch continued as **Verger**.
- 6 **Rules for the interment of ashes** have now been established, and details can be obtained from the vicar.
- 7 Various **courses** were run during the year – Lent Course; Christianity Explored; Mining God’s Riches; Discovering Christianity and Discovering Discipleship. Likewise, the Home Groups have continued to meet and conduct successful study programmes. One evening home group stopped meeting; one new evening home group were formed.
- 8 **Prayer meetings** continued.
- 9 More work has been done to **access for people with mobility difficulties**. A new oil tank was purchased and has now been resited away from the church. The churchyard water tank has also been replaced.
- 10 **Outreach** continued with Perspectives meetings, provision of tea at the Village Day, and Teas on the Green (but only three due to Pavilion refurbishment). The monthly Village Lunches have continued and have proved to be a great success with many people who do not know the church coming to the Church Hall and meeting members of the church and enjoying time with others who live in Nutley. A variety of good causes have benefited.
- 11 **Churchyard maintenance** has taken a major step forward with Jock and Helen Compson leading a team of volunteers to cut back years of growth. They have done a brilliant job, and consult with John Hacker with a view to beautifying the area further.
- 12 The new outreach activity **Sunrise Café** aimed at parents, grandparents, carers with toddlers and babies was launched during February 2010. The cafe is held in the church hall Friday mornings during term time. During the first five weeks 18 different adults came to the cafe, 12 of them do not attend church services apart from Nutley school services.
- 13 There are **104 parishioners** on the church electoral roll.

3 Review of the year

Matters considered by the PCC included:

- St James the Less **finance**, including a visit from the Diocesan Stewardship Adviser and the formation of a Stewardship Committee made up of Brian Porter, Bruce Morley and Rod Thonger. We narrowly achieved an excess of income over expenditure in 2009, but there is an expected loss in 2010. With the current financial climate, there is a reluctance to approach hard-pressed families for additional funds, but we need to be aware of the situation.
- **Diocesan finance**. Discussion has been dominated by the gap between requirements for such as pensions and general running expenses and the contributions by the various parishes. In Nutley we have been able to pay our share but many others cannot and there is pressure to try to make up the shortfall.
- **Visitors**, with a paper submitted by John Taylor – this has led to re-assessment of the role of sidesmen. This was followed up with plans for additional furniture to tidy up the back of the church. Designs and costings have been received
- The **Garden of Remembrance** and new arrangements for marking of places of interment.
- An extension to the hall, based around a design by David Juniper, to whom many thanks. **Extending the hall** is difficult but we may be able to solve part of the problem by increasing the storage available.
- Many of the matters listed under Achievements and Performance above.

An **on line church calendar** was set up by Rod Thonger and Robin Thomas. Very useful especially for wardens but also used by other members of the congregation.

New church textiles commissioned by the PCC, with DAC faculty approval, were designed and made by Eva Thomas and started to be used during Advent 2009

An All Age Worship service was directly followed by **a trip** on John Hacker's Routemaster to a bluebell wood with walks, adventure playground and picnic. Over 50 people attended on a beautiful May Sunday; it was much enjoyed by all.

Songs of Praise evening in May led by Bruce Morley, a joint service with Maresfield congregation at Nutley Church followed by refreshments, much liked by those attending.

Choral Evensong in August, led by William King with extended choir, Michael Haig, organist, followed by refreshments, much liked by those attending.

Harvest Festival service in October followed by Harvest Brunch with food for grown-ups and young children, a number of young families attending.

Youth Minister **Brendan Martin's commissioning** service in November, Bishop Wallace attending with many family and friends attending from Lindfield, where Brendan grew up.

In September Nutley church congregation member **Jack Griffiths** started full time Youth minister work at Kings Church, Lewes. Received approval to start training to become ordained pastor.

During the year there were no weddings but three **baptisms** were held. One teenager and three adults were **confirmed** at Danehill church by Bishop Wallace in July.

4 Financial Review

Total receipts of ordinary unrestricted funds were £41,300 and are detailed in the financial statements. Planned giving rose by £212 compared with 2008.

£40,340 was spent to provide the Christian ministry from Nutley Church. This included £26,571 diocesan parish contribution.

On restricted funds expenditure exceeded income by £2,965. £4,391 was spent on upkeep of the church buildings. All these costs were met from the fabric fund.

A total of £5,293 was raised for the support of our youth worker. This figure includes tax reclaimed on gift aid donations.

Balances carried forward on 31st December 2009 were £27,062 unrestricted funds, £500 designated funds for the upkeep of the vicarage and £23,373 restricted funds.

5 Members of the PCC

Members of the PCC in 2009 were as follows:

The Vicar

The Wardens:

Eva Thomas

Rod Thonger

Deanery Synod Representatives:

Brian Porter

Rod Thonger

Treasurer:

Susan Edwarde*◇

Secretary:

William King

Anne Finch (2008)

Bruce Morley (2008)

John Hacker (2007)

John Taylor (2007)(retired at APCM 2009)

Shirley Coxen (retired at APCM 2009)

Christine Griffiths [2009]

Muriel Parker [2009]

◇ Susan Edwarde continued as Treasurer notwithstanding her retirement from PCC

William King

Secretary, Nutley PCC

ASHDOWN EVERGREENS

YEARLY REPORT

We have had another successful year commencing with our AGM in February.

March we heard about Life in an Edwardian Country House, followed in April with a talk by one of our locals, Bert Keeyes on his work and life as a Queens Body Guard.

Joan Brookbank came along in May to talk about her lifetime of memories when she was a photographic model and ballet dancer.

Jenny Clarke fascinated us with her talk about her hospital for injured bats and came along with some of her little friends she has nursed back to health.

July was the month we enjoyed a day out to Amberley Museum and where, on the way home, we stopped for a cream tea at a local Garden Centre.

As the Memorial Hall closes for August to enable the caretakers to take a break, we had our annual 'Tea on the Green' at Fords Green. Although the weather was not favourable and refurbishment work was still in progress, the event was enjoyed by all.

Our birthday celebration was well attended and Glynis once again entertained us with her accordian. An excellent tea was provided by our own WI group.

"A Wrinkly Goes Back-Packing in New Zealand" was the title for our October meeting and John Proctor gave an amusing and very interesting talk about his adventure, accompanied by slides.

Unfortunately we were let down in November but were able to call upon Christopher Rudd who came up trumps at the last minute with his talk on Pooh Bear and A A Milne.

The year closed with the Christmas Lunch held again at Wealden Bowls Club and everyone was very happy and pleased with their meal together with the excellent raffle prizes, which were donated as usual by members.

The year 2010 began as usual with our AGM in February followed by a Quiz and once again tea was excellently provided by Nutley WI.

In March we welcomed Morgan Williams from Raysted Centre for Animal Welfare who told us how the Centre was built up from a small concern by Miss Raymonde-Hawkins in 1952 to prevent and relieve cruelty to animals and to protect them from unnecessary suffering to what it is now.



Nutley Tennis & Squash Club

A report of our activities over the last year

The last 12 months have proved a struggle for our club.

Having raised our membership numbers to a record high of 120 in the previous year, achieved by raising the profile of the club within the area, April 2009 saw a drop in subscription renewals by some 30%, equivalent to over £1000 or over 10% of our income. This was despite not raising our subscription rates, a difficult decision but one we took in light of the recession.

Our major expenses have been the rent to our landlords, the Nutley War Memorial Trust, eating up 45% of our income, and electricity. The former we hope to re-negotiate, the latter to reduce by looking at even more energy saving options.

We have held two successful fundraising Quiz Nights, last June and this March, together raising over £3000. The money should have gone on improvements to our facilities, but with the drop in income from subscriptions we had to spend it on more mundane things like rent. It has meant however that we have remained solvent.

As a club within a small village we see ourselves as one part of the jigsaw that makes up community life in Nutley. Hence we make welcome a wide spread of ages and abilities, 4yr olds discovering sport, “rusty-racquet” adults nervously re-discovering their talents, to having successful Men’s, Ladies and Mixed teams who compete against much bigger clubs. Our two professional coaches continue to expand their services at the club, with junior coaching being particularly popular.

The Parish Council’s £250 donation last year was spent on temporarily improving the security netting around the tennis courts. This included the purchase of 2 all-weather combination padlocks, enough netting to patch the 4 large holes where non-members were pushing through to gain access, and wire to secure the netting. All labour was carried out voluntarily by members. This seems to have reduced the number of non-members gaining access to the courts, but it is still a problem for us.

Looking ahead to the coming year:

We are holding an Open Morning on Bank Holiday Monday May 3rd in an effort to gain new members. Free coaching will be available, a chance to speak to existing members and have a look around our facilities. A discounted membership rate is available for those who join up on the day.

Should the Parish Council see fit to make a donation this year, any grant we received would go towards improving the facilities within the clubhouse, particularly for our squash players, with the purchase of a scissor- action sweeper for the courts and if funds allow, re-sealing the playing surfaces. We look forward the Council’s response to our grant application.

To secure our tennis courts we are applying for a £5000 grant to completely re-fence the courts, and at the same time build an integral practice re-bound wall, something we see as an attraction for members.

Due to the fall in income we have just decided to raise our rates for the 2010 – 11 year, making sure they are still competitive with similar clubs in the area. It remains to be seen if we have made the right decision

Hopefully the “green shoots of recovery” will be evident this year, with membership numbers on the increase and more people being able to enjoy what we see as a positive contribution to life in the village.

Sarah Wilson (Treasurer)

April 2010

Nutley Nutkins Mother and Toddler Group

Nutley Nutkins Mother and Toddler group meets regularly every Wednesday afternoon between 1.30pm and 3pm in term time. Our links with Pre School are very strong and we now regularly share equipment, including the fantastic outside space. The children have a range of activities to enjoy, our energetic area with climbing frame, bikes, scooters and ride in cars is always popular, our pop up house and dressing up provide great role play opportunities, jigsaws, train set and art activities are ideal for quieter moments and the baby area has books, toys and comfy cushions for the parents. Our attendance numbers are currently good and this year we have welcomed lots of new parents that have moved into the village. Our group has a very relaxed, friendly and supportive atmosphere; the parents can catch up with a cup of tea whilst their children have a lot of fun.

Nutley Pre-school Parish Assembly Report 2009/10

Nutley Pre-school has had another very busy year. The Government's drive to professionalise early years education means that our dedicated team of staff now have a graduate leader in Abbie Tester. Never one to rest on her laurels, Abbie continues her studies, now working towards 'Early Years Professional' status which she hopes to achieve later in the year. She is ably assisted by Niki, Jo and Cecile who are all trained to NVQ level 3 in Childcare whilst Amanda, our newest recruit, is already qualified to NVQ level 2. The team are often assisted by volunteers including a retired local lady, Jenny, and of course parent-helpers. Together the team are undoubtedly pre-school's biggest asset and they ensure that our little folk have the very best introduction to early years learning possible.

Of course as well as educating the children, the pre-school staff provide play experiences for them which cover every area of learning both within the Memorial Hall and outside in our garden. The children have been on several trips this year including those to Minor Mania soft-play centre, a Chinese New Year lunch in the Wok Inn, several walks in/around the forest and most recently, to local favourite Blackberry Farm. They were also enthralled by a recent visit from a travelling theatre group who presented, 'The Musicians of Bremen'-this was an example of an 'enrichment activity' opportunity afforded to us by a grant that pre-school receive courtesy of Abbie's graduate status.

The children have also enjoyed visits from The Rev. Jon Hobbs and PCSO Pilston, the ESCC road safety team and the travelling library service.

The Committee have been very productive this year with fundraisers including our annual Jumble Sale, the Easter Bunny Hunt at the Ashdown Forest Garden Centre, a bingo night at the Social Club and our forthcoming Quiz. We will of course be supporting Village Day with a stall and our ever-popular raffle for the 'barrel of booze'! The Committee also ensures that all of our parents have the opportunity to meet up, regularly organising social events such as our termly 'bacon bap mornings'. Though these events do not generate much in the way of profit, they do help especially new parents to integrate and strengthen the community feel of our pre-school.

Pupil numbers remain healthy for now and with a recent change in the funding formula in respect of grants received by 3 and 4 year old children SHOULD only improve.

(However, the flexibility that we are expected to offer parents may test our resilience!)

Our strong relationship with Nutley Primary school continues to thrive, with our 'Rising 5's' visiting the school for assemblies and to meet the reception class teacher, thus smoothing their transition across the road to 'big school'.

We very much feel that pre-school is an integral part of the Nutley community and are delighted to assist our 'Little Deers' in taking their first steps into not only early education and the forming of friendships, but also developing an appreciation of the beautiful area in which they live.

BONNERS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY 2010

The most significant event for Bonners School this year has been our Ofsted Inspection in November 2009. This was accompanied by inspection of our church school status conducted by the local diocese.

Ofsted judged the school to be 'Good' with some elements being 'Outstanding'; these areas included the extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community, the effectiveness of the school's care, guidance and support for pupils and the effectiveness of the school's engagement with careers. Other strengths that Ofsted found were the pride that children had in their school, their behaviour and good manners, the pride parents felt in having children at the school, the strong links that exist between the school and the church and the quality of the exciting curriculum that children follow. Leadership and management, at all levels, was found to be clear and strong and the inspectors endorsed the words of our prospectus that 'behind the Victorian walls lies the creative and stimulating environment of a modern and active school'.

Areas that the inspectors felt that the school needed to develop further were embedding more cross curricular writing tasks, developing pupils' thinking skills to solve problems in mathematics and improving the way that marking gives pupils guidance on how work can be further improved.

The inspection carried out by the diocese judged the school to be 'Outstanding'. The inspector found that 'the school through its distinctive Christian character is outstanding at meeting the needs of all its learners'; that 'the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding' and that 'the impact of Collective Worship on the school community is good'. Strengths of the school were judged as:

- the positive ethos and the strength of the relationships built on Christian care and concern
- positive yet rigorous Christian leadership at all levels
- strong links with the church and local community.

Areas for development were to increase the use of pupil voice in evaluating the school as a church school and developing the pupils' understanding of Britain as a multi-cultural society, recognising and valuing religious and cultural diversity.

We are all proud to have been judged in these ways and feel that it is a just recognition of the efforts of all staff and stakeholders at the school.

A further item of encouragement is the successful outcome to our bid for integration of Stepping Stones Playgroup onto the school site.

We have now completed the planning stage of the project and tendering is underway. We hope the build will commence in the summer holidays, ready for occupation by January 2011. This will be a great opportunity and result for both the playgroup and the village. Playgroup will have custom made premises and provision and meeting the needs of those parents who do not drive and sometimes fall to the margins of local society will be greatly enhanced. Opportunities for extended school day provision and use by other agencies eg health will improve local access to support currently only available away from the village.

Report of the Maresfield Conservation Group

The Group this year, which has a membership of over 400, has continued to try to make a difference in carrying out its role of maintaining and improving the village especially in the Conservation Area.

We have had the usual Village Clean Up days in March and November which uncovers the most extraordinary things that people seem acceptable to dump around the village. Pity is that we have to do it at all; we would promote the services of a maintenance person to serve all the villages, on a regular basis, to keep the villages clean and tidy with some grass cutting in the most important areas on a rotation with the County or District Councils.

Over the past year the Conservation Group has, through Dick Thompson's (Deputy Chairman) team, continued the opening up of various public footpaths including the Maresfield to Uckfield and latterly the installation of new "kissing gates" on the footpath at Queen's Drive. We also commissioned the new bollards that surround our recreation ground at a cost of £4300 of which some £2200 was recovered from other organisations contributions. Most people have welcomed the improved appearance this gives. There is always much to do in this respect and we will continue to select projects that will benefit the most people. Very shortly, and with the help of other donations, we will be relaying the church car park and placing a seat at the bus stop at this location. The MCG also makes a £250 contribution every year towards the churchyard maintenance. We will also be prepared to look at any project within our remit of Conservation put forward by anyone.

The Executive Committee has been working for a number of years on the severe through traffic problems that we suffer in Maresfield, which can only get worse as new developments take place anywhere south of Maresfield. Over the past year a small team has produced a Traffic Plan for Maresfield which has been consulted upon at a well attended Public Meeting and various meetings with the County and District Council and vitally, on April the 20th this year, the Parish Council agreed that a Traffic Plan for Maresfield would be included in the Parish/Village Plan so that a scheme could attract funding from developments which hitherto have been taken for other places.

Fundraising events this year have included our Annual Art Show on the Friday and Saturday of the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, Quiz Night in May, our stall at the village Fete, Summer and Winter Suppers, all of which are very successful but new support is welcome.

MARESFIELD RECREATION GROUND COMMITTEE

This committee has been in existence over a long period of time. They organise on behalf of the Parish Council the letting of the ground to the various Sports clubs wanting to use the ground for their activities. Currently there are five clubs involved:- Cricket, Stoolball, Senior Football, Junior Football and Bowls. These clubs pay an annual ground rent plus fees for training sessions and matches. The committee itself is comprised of a representative from each of the clubs, two representatives from the Parish Council, three village members and the committee officers.

The Pavilion was restored about six years ago. Much of the money was provided by the Football Foundation. Inside the Pavilion are four changing rooms with toilets and showers. In addition to this there are rooms for the referees. A kitchen and a bar are in the reception area. The maintenance of the Pavilion is the responsibility of the committee.

New Parklands Residents Association Annual Report May 2009 – May 2010.

Since the Parish Assembly in May last year, the Parklands Residents Association has achieved:

May – Stall at Village Fete.

May – Wealden District Council allocate £5100 towards Play Area project.

June – Teddy Bears picnic.

July – Sponsored Fun Run around the estate.

July – Wealden District Council agree to fund all play area project management and design (£7000) costs.

July – Award winning landscape architects Davies White Design Ltd engaged to design and project manage the play area developments.

July – Carried out detailed written consultation with all neighboring properties of the play area.

Aug – held Summer Party and BBQ (raising over £600 towards the play area)

Oct – Held public consultation event on the Play Area.

Oct – Halloween Party on play area.

Nov – Maresfield Parish Council give permission for development of the play area.

Dec – Christmas party held in village hall.

Jan - WDC gave full planning permission for the play area project.

March – Changing Spaces Stage 2 application submitted (Decision due May)

April – Maresfield Parish Council agree to fund £3,000 towards the project.

April – Veolia Environmental Trust application submitted (Decision due July)

Future dates:

May – Village fete

Aug – Summer Party and turf cutting ceremony

Sept / Oct – Start of work on play area. (Subject to all successful funding bids)

Nov / Dec Work Completed on play area.

Dec – Community Tree Planting Ceremony at completion of works.

We look forward to working in partnership with Maresfield Parish Council over the next year, and seeing the Parklands Play Area Project completed.

St Bartholomew's Youth Work Report for the 2010 Annual Parish Assembly

Pulse (Mondays 7-8.30)

Pulse has motored on despite some difficulties this past year. Losing 3 core leaders in September for various reasons was a challenge. I am thankful to those who stepped in to help when we were very low on leaders, especially to the teenagers who very consistently helped. Without their help Pulse would have been unable to run, their work has been crucial. More recently Ruth Harris has agreed to help Anne and I each week which has really lightened any burden we had, though we still hope that another male leader might join us to complete the team.

Every week we teach the children a little about what the Bible teaches.

POD (Wednesdays 7-8.30)

Every week teenagers from Maresfield and Nutley get together to study the Bible in POD. Recently we have studied an overview of the Bible, Jesus' parables, Angels and Demons, the importance of church, and how to personally read our Bibles and pray. What I am now focusing on more, is that loving Jesus has consequences "If you love me you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Once again we took some of the youth to venture last year and plan to take a few of them this year. Venture is a fantastic week away with good fun and good friends, and where we can think a bit more about Jesus. I hope to do a weekend away this coming October for them too.

Kids' Club (Sundays 11.15-12.15)

I am thankful to the volunteers who very faithfully help each week teach the children. Each week we have some games and crafts looking at different stories in the Bible. It can be a real challenge to be ready to teach 3 year olds and 11 year olds at the same time, but it is one I personally take much enjoyment from. Recently doing a Holiday Club at Bonners school, I hope that some of the links we have with families might mean we see more children from the village joining us each week.

Maresfield Mother and Baby/Toddler Group (Mondays 9-11am)

We have had a very healthy start to the academic year once again and have attracted many new mums and babies/toddlers, and a set of twins! Weekly attendance is on average 22 mums. We again have said goodbye to some of our older members who have started Pre-school. We are thankful to the continuing support of St. Bartholomew's Church. We now have our own website, and continue to advertise through "Kites" and via the Health Visitor link.

We are continuing to forge links with Stepping Stones Pre-school and combining joint activities so that it is not so difficult for the children when they move up to Pre-school and also makes easy parent contact with the staff at the Pre-school to ease the transition. We also hold joint end-of-term services at St. Bartholomew's Church, the Easter service was a special time for all.

We have been incredibly fortunate to secure a volunteer from the "Uckfield Volunteer Bureau" to help us each week when she can. We also hold Tempest Photography sessions and have had a trip to Monkey Business indoor play centre, and are planning an outdoor trip in the next term.

The "*Health Visitor Check-ups*" each month for the babies and toddlers are used by all the mums we could stay for 3 hours with the queue!

Report of the Fairwarp Community Society

Membership of the Society has reached 190, a very satisfactory increase from the first year total of 100.

The fee for membership has remained at £3 a year per person, and offers extremely good value by entitling the member to a large number of concessions with local businesses.

Fund raising events have included a Race Night. A Quiz Night will take place in November. Unfortunately the planned Bluebell Walk had to be cancelled due to the cold weather delaying the flowers coming into bloom. The Xmas Social was well attended and everyone enjoyed listening to carols sung by the Christ Church Choir. Other events organised by the Society include a guided tour of the Chelwood Vachery and a visit to the Nuclear Bunker at Kings Standing.

Plans are in hand to have a large Christmas tree decorated with lights on the village green at Christmas. Another event being organised is a May party for children next year, with a Maypole on the village green. It is planned to invite children from Maresfield and Nutley to join the children from Fairwarp.

The notice board in Old Forge Lane has proved to be popular so we will install another in the north of the ward at the Ashdown Forest Garden Centre.

A folder containing relevant local information is planned to be delivered to all households in the ward during June.

The Society has continued to lend its support to the campaign to reduce traffic speed on the B2026 and in the village.

Christ Church, clubs and organisations in the village have received support and publicity through the Society newsletter and notices in the Courier newspaper.

An open meeting was organised to enable residents to receive information and make comment on the proposed Banner Homes development of houses in the village. The meeting was well attended and the minutes were passed to the Parish Council and sent to the Society members.

Contact with similar organisations in the surrounding villages has begun. The Chair of Forest Row Village Hall has welcomed the opportunity to foster a closer relationship.

The present Committee members are: Michael Card (Chair), Russell Davison, Mel Fordham, Penny Handley (Treasurer), Jan Holford, Jan Kemsley (Secretary), Louise Kentish, John Lyon, Lolita Reeves, David Ridley.

Michael Card

FAIRWARP VILLAGE HALL

Management Committee's Annual Report for 2009

The committee reported at the AGM last year that they urgently required new members for the Management Committee. We have been successful in recruiting two new members, John Manthorpe joined the committee in November and Lucy Newman (from Stepping Stones pre-school) has recently been co-opted. A joint letter from the Fairwarp Community Society and the Village Hall Management Committee has also been circulated to residents in the hope that further members may come forward to join the committee.

Although two new members have been added to the committee Philippa Rosevear will be leaving the committee following the AGM after being the Treasurer for the last three years. Two further Committee Members have agreed to stay on for one more year in order to ensure that the committee remains viable, but it is hoped that new members will come forward during the next twelve months so that they can stand down.

We would like to thank Philippa for the excellent work she has done as Treasurer, including computerising our accounts which has made the job much less of a burden than in the past.

Since the last AGM we have not had a permanent Chairperson, one of our members has been appointed at each meeting, a situation which we will need to resolve after this AGM. However during the course of the past year the Hon Secretary, Caroline Sowter, has had to cope with these difficulties and take on more work and greater responsibility as a result of this situation. We are aware of the additional burden this has put on her, she has responded to the challenge brilliantly and we would like to take this opportunity to thank her.

We have had to undertake some significant repairs to the premises over the last twelve months. The first of these arose when we noticed that our water bills seemed to be excessive, investigation revealed a water leak under the car park that cost approximately £500 to repair, however, we should see much lower bills in future, so this cost should be recovered quite quickly.

We mentioned last year that we thought we had a subsidence problem at the hall. We had hoped that the insurers might meet part of the cost of this, but unfortunately that was not the case as it turned out not to be a subsidence problem. The hall was closed for several weeks over the summer and when John Lazenby managed to gain access he discovered a major infestation of woodworm and a significant number of very rotten timber supports! Thankfully he was able to carry out the repairs, but it cost around £6,000 to do so. He also carried out repairs to the Village Hall sign where the post had rotted away and to the disabled access ramp as well as being on hand for routine repairs throughout the year.

The old blue crockery has been replaced by very smart white and gold crockery that Angela Tilly managed to source for us and we have complemented this with new cutlery and tumblers, so our tableware is now much more presentable for hirers.

The play area passed its annual inspection with only minimal work to meet health and safety requirements. However £1,024 has been spent on two deliveries of bark to bring the flooring back to the required standard and we have purchased two new benches for the play area. We are grateful to Emmett Jaques for obtaining these at a substantial discount. We would like to thank the villagers who helped Di and Pete Bowley with the task of moving the bark and putting it in the required places.

As usual we would like to thank Bryan and Alison Hoath for undertaking weekly bin manoeuvres at the hall and for ensuring oil is delivered on a timely basis. Bryan has informed us that they can no longer undertake the grounds maintenance work that they has done around the hall and car park over many years and we are in the process of obtaining a quotation for a contractor to carry this out in future. We would like to record our gratitude for everything they have done in the past.

The village market has continued to be very well attended and has brought income into the hall of £1,183. This is slightly up on last year, which is an admirable achievement during a recession! Thank you to Ruth Fisher and Eve Sowter for all their hard work.

In spite of promoting the Sovereign Club, membership has fallen slightly again and with the increase in gold prices, the higher cost of the gold sovereign meant that the club secretary (David Endacott) returned £500 for the hall which is down on previous years.

Anita Long took over the role of Bookings Manager following last year's AGM and has done a sterling job in keeping the hall well booked throughout the year as evidenced by receipts for hire of £6,612 which represents an increase of 6.5%. Although bookings during 2009 were higher than in the previous year, we saw the sad loss of the Maresfield Observers in the autumn after many years. 2010 has started with encouraging signs for the year – several charity events, children's parties and local activities. The committee expended a considerable amount of time upgrading the Conditions of Hire where were circulated to all regular users in January and are required to be agreed by all hall users. As and when local authorities introduce new legislation, these will be incorporated into this document.

We have recently reviewed the hire charges for the hall in an effort to simplify them for hirers. Local hire charges have been reduced with most other charges held at the same level as for the previous two years, which makes Fairwarp Village Hall a good choice compared to other village halls in the vicinity, so we hope to continue to be well booked. The charges will be reviewed again later in the year.

In spite of dreadful weather, all appeared to enjoy themselves at the annual Village Fete in July. The fete sub-committee (comprising Roger Street, Anita Long, Louise Kentish, Jan Kemsley, John Lazenby, Craig Williams and Sue Bergan-Gander) put in a lot of hard work once more to make it an enjoyable and profitable event. We must also thank all the unsung heroes over the weekend who either provided prizes and sponsorship (significant contributors were Emmett Jacques, Tim Neale and John Lyons), transport (Russell Davison and Jeff Holford) and ran stalls (too numerous to mention individually, but whose contributions were nonetheless much appreciated). The gross income was £4,452, which was less than in the previous year as a result of the appalling weather and the recession.

We had anticipated that receipts might be lower and had contained the costs as much as possible, so were able to clear just over £3,000 on the day.

In the forthcoming year we intend carry out some repairs to the car park at the hall, in the vicinity of the recycling bins, where water collects. We have also decided to invest in some new waterproof tents and chairs for the fete as we are going to have to dispose of some older gazebos and the few remaining canvas chairs which are now unsafe.

Fairwarp Village Hall Management Committee

March 2010