

Thank you to all those who took the time to either attend or send reports for this meeting, which as clerk, is a statutory obligation. Tea was served, together with and a delicious lemon cake, kindly baked by Ursula.

Reports:

Bellringing - Tower report 2023 - 2024

We have a very active group and are now practicing most weekends. Over the last year, in addition to regular practices, we have rung 2 quarter peals, and hosted various 'open towers' with people 'having a go at ringing', or simply having a look at the historic bells.

New members are always welcome, whether complete novice, or a returning ringer.

All are welcome, although ideally have to be at least 10 years old (and children should be accompanied by, or have permission from a parent). You don't have to be religious or musical!

Happy to be contacted with any queries.

Dan (Haresfield tower captain) 07855 058 130

Chatters

Chatters offers a pop up café environment where villagers can meet for a chat, fresh coffee or tea, cake and a chance at a small raffle prize all for £1. Attendance has been steadily growing after the last year and of late we have seen numbers of over 20 enjoying the company of friends and family. We have been putting our new cooker to good use and have started serving soup as an option which has proved very popular. Sarah Gibbons has most kindly stepped into the shoes of Caroline Segelov who so sadly passed away last year and both Sarah and Sue are always there to welcome anyone who walks through the door. Café opens at 2pm Friday afternoon and closes for the last drink or slice of cake at 4pm. Dates vary but will always be advertised in the Herald.

Community Craft

A small group continue to meet on an ad hoc basis in the Village Hall and are currently nearing completion of a large three panelled mosaic to hang on the back of one of our bus stops. The final position of the mosaic has not yet been decided – to be considered when it is nearer completion. Anyone is welcome to join us and our meets are during the day or evening as suits the group. Please contact haresfieldvillagehall1@gmail.com if you would like to know when we are next meeting up.

Cricket Club

Residents are always warmly welcomed on match days. Contact: Astie Bolton

Footpaths

Martin took on role of Footpaths Warden 9 months ago, and 6 months ago joined the working party group for the Cotswold Way, a part of which falls within the parish boundary. His work covers gates, stiles, bridges, tree and bush cutting, waymarking and tree planting.

Recent work has included: 2 new bridges and one repaired, 2 stile repairs and one new one. 4 dog gates installed, 7 stiles cleared, 2 way posts and 10 way markers, 1 handrail and a set of steps.

Martin Hartley

Haresfield Herald

Since the Covid Lockdown, we have continued to disseminate the Herald electronically, instead of printing it. There are now 163 names on the Herald mailing list, which is also used to send out village notices. 14 residents have the Herald printed and delivered by hand as they do not have computer access.

Send any notices, advertisements, letters, or news for inclusion in the Herald to Ursula Jeakins.

jeakinshome@gmail.com

History society

A number of residents are in touch to share an interest in village history, if you are interested, contact Dan on

danielnelmes@btinternet.com

Horticulture group

This is active via an informal WhatsApp group, which is used to exchange plants and keep an eye on the village verges and green spaces, including the area around the Millennium Stone. Contact Sue Thorpe if you are interested in joining.

LitWits

The LitWits book group meets in the village hall on the first or second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm and we have just started using Quedgeley Library Services to obtain free reading sets which is proving a considerable saving. Our reading material covers all genres and although we don't take discussion too seriously we still manage to give 45 minutes of time to that element of the meeting with the rest devoted to chat, laughter, wine and cake. We are currently 12 strong but new comers are always welcome.

Merryfield Trustees

Trustees – Paul Barton, Jenny Knight, Ben Pillinger

This year was marked by the sad loss of trustee Caroline Segelov who was always a willing and valued member of the team. Ben Pillinger has now taken up the role of trustee representing the PCC.

Last year a grant was received from UBB for protective rubber matting and this was put down in August. Attempts to reseed the areas with matting have been thwarted by heavy rainfall, but more seed will again be put down over the coming weeks. Already proved its worth. Grass seed sewn straight away, but rained away!

The Trustees expressed their gratitude to Martin for the invaluable work on the gate and stiles – this has been much appreciated by all users of this important village space.

The trustees also thank John Hunt for his excellent repair of the bench by the gate, going to a lot of trouble to ensure that it is properly secure and strong again.

Brambles remain an issue - Paul has attempted to dig some up and this is an ongoing battle!

The Cricket Club have expressed a willingness to strim down the bottom of the Merryfield where the grass has become very long.

The new Platinum Jubilee bench has been awaiting installation, and Martin and Paul are agreed to take this in hand.

Paul Barton

School

Autumn Term

The school council voted to support the Tussell Trust for the Harvest festival this year and we collected an excellent amount of food for the food bank. Following our service down at St Peter's Church Mr Jeakins very kindly took our donations for us. During this term we also had a coffee morning in aid of MacMillan which was supported well both by parents and friends of Haresfield.

The children in class 4 had whole class music tuition and made excellent progress learning the ukelele. They gave an end of term performance to the whole school and showed off their talents. We also organised several 'wow' days including programming Lego robots, introduction to coding, a French day and a day learning about their bodies and keeping safe. Many trips took place, going to the Cheltenham Literacy festival, a cinema trip for the whole school, All things wild in Bristol and an Evacuee experience at the steam railway.

The school also took part in many sporting events such as a KS1 football festival, girls football festival, sports hall athletics and KS1 end ball. The children had amazing fun and represented the school impeccably.

Antibullying week in November was on the theme of 'make some noise about bullying' and encouraged children to speak out about bullying wherever they see it and tell an adult if they are being bullied themselves. During the term we had several visits from the Schools Beat Officer PC Hannah Coll who talked to class 4 about peer pressure and online bullying.

We were very fortunate to have the support of our friends from St Peter's to allow us to carry out a workshop for each class in the church called Experience Christmas, where the children had hands on interactive stations telling the real story of Christmas. We also invited all of our school family to Christingle at St Peter's on 19th December. The church was full for the event and many ex-pupils, and their families came along to enjoy the evening.

Spring Term

The children in Class 4 had indoor rowing lesson and attending a rowing festival at Stratford Park. There were several successful rowers at the event including a first for the year 5 girls' team.

The children in years 1 and 2 had whole class recorder lessons, Mrs Bacon was pleasantly surprised how harmonious they sounded and the progress they made was outstanding. They are due to perform for the whole school next term.

The end of term saw worship group run an Easter service for our whole school family, there were readings, artwork and hymns around the theme of justice. During the service we said goodbye to Mrs Alcock Gore who is leaving the school after 16 years of service.

As a school we have been working with a network of other schools, sharing good practice, and attending staff meetings together to share costs of external support. Our small hub of six schools is very successful supporting each other and ensuring the children of our whole community are getting a good education.

The children have been visiting the woodland classroom every Friday this year, until the rain made the area too muddy, and we were conscious that the environment needed time to recover. Each class has a timetabled slot with Mr Meadows, a primary school teacher specialising in Forest School learning. There have been so many different examples of excellent teaching and learning such as den building, wildlife identification, food webs, printing, weaving, clay sculptures, learning about forces and poetry writing to name but a few. I am deeply grateful to the local community for enabling us to use this amazing resource. Teaching children about looking after our environment, taking risks in a safe space and learning about their own limitations allows our school to teach the whole child, allows different children to shine and grow and develops a deep love and respect of nature in our children. Something which I believe is invaluable.

Rachel Bacon, head

St Peter's Church

The most significant event was, of course, the death of my fellow churchwarden Caroline Segelov. It goes without saying that this was a great blow to the life of the church. It's worth noting that she was 10 years younger than me. We need all to start thinking about how our church a community asset, like the school, village hall and the pub, is going to keep functioning. Haresfield is far from unique, very many rural parishes are facing this problem. One of Carolines' many activities in the village was the Children's Society Box Co-ordinator. It's wonderful that Pauline & Ivor have agreed to take on this role, so that the village's long involvement with this charity will continue. More positive news, we had our first wedding since 2019 last summer, bell ringing has been revived, three people have got involved in cutting the churchyard grass, and despite one of our three clergy leaving and not been replaced, we continue to hold a service every Sunday. We are very grateful to all who financially support the church through the Parish Giving Scheme or with other donations.

Alec Jeakins - churchwarden

Village Hall Management Group & Bookings

Committee - Sue Thorpe, Borange, Neil Thorpe, Dee Gibson-Wain, Geoff Gibbons

The hall has always been a significant central meeting place within the village and the Village hall committee are determined to maintain the building and continue with improvements through fundraising and grants to ensure it continues to be a viable concern for many years to come.

Bookings of the hall have increased over the last 2 years and this may partly be due to the range of improvements we have made to the building itself. Gloucester Geology has made a permanent weekly booking and along with band rehearsals, parties, village events and general meetings the hall is in constant use. Over the last year new inner doors have been installed which has made a significant difference to both the appearance and the comfort of the space when occupied. We are currently trying to obtain a grant for new lighting.

Village Events Committee

Committee - Sue Thorpe, Maddy King, Nicky Ford, Neil Thorpe, Dee Gibson-Wain

The Village Hall Committee actively seeks ways of bringing our community together through events held at the hall. Last year we successfully arranged an Autumn Best in Show alongside a Harvest Lunch and a village Walk followed by a cream tea. We supported two road races with tea and cakes for spectators, the annual autumn Children's Society

Box opening and a fantastic Coronation event on the Merryfields. We hope to continue this year and are planning a free village walk at the end of April, followed by a traditional afternoon tea available to all villagers whether they have walked or not.