

# The Wappenham Newsletter

## Autumn 2011



### What's on this autumn

Sept	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Village Fete, 2-4.30pm (Old Rectory Gardens)
Sept	6 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council meeting 8pm (Village Hall)
Sept	7 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee morning, 10-12 (The Outbuildings, Old Rectory)
Sept	18 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Club 5.30-6.45pm (Village Hall)
Oct	5 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee morning as Sept
Oct	9 <sup>th</sup>	Harvest Festival & lunch 11am (St Mary's) Harvest Thanksgiving 10.45am & 6pm (Chapel)
Oct	16 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Club 5.30-6.45pm (VH)
Nov	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Coffee morning as Sept
Nov	5 <sup>th</sup>	Quiz Night with fish & chips (VH)
Nov	13 <sup>th</sup>	Act of Remembrance 10.40am (St Mary's)
Nov	20 <sup>th</sup>	Youth Club 5.30-6.45pm (VH)
Dec	9 <sup>th</sup>	'How Steeple Sinderby Wanderers Won the F.A. Cup', New Perspectives (VH)

### Regular Events

*Church service & Sunday School* Sundays 11am (St Mary's)  
except for 1<sup>st</sup> Sun in month when there is Holy Communion at  
9.30am in Lois Weedon and no Sunday School

*Chapel service* Sundays 10.45am

*Sunday School* Sundays 3pm (Chapel Schoolroom)

*Bible Study* Tuesdays 7.30pm (Chapel)

*Ladies' meetings* Wednesdays 2pm (Chapel)

*Bell ringing practice* Thursdays 8pm (St Mary's)

*Table tennis practice*, times vary (VH)

Short mat bowls Thursdays 2-4pm

Upholstery classes email [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk) (VH)



## FROM THE EDITOR



Thank you very much to our current newsletter sponsors, who are: Smiths Newsagents, David Taylor (Rockschoools and Guitar School), the Running Bean village market at Lois Weedon Village Hall, Astwell Turkeys, Geoff Carverhill, Piano Tuner, and Coleman's stationers.

This is a bumper edition as there have been quite a few events recently. Through the support of our advertisers, I am also able to include the entire report from the Shop Steering Group, which is towards the back of the newsletter.

As newsletter editor I have been able to get to know quite a few people in the village. Nowadays some of the people I know well here do not know each other, which I think is a shame. I hope that the village events and organisations will be a chance for people across the village to get to know one another better – for example, at the Fete on Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>, or one of the monthly coffee mornings.

For anyone wishing to contribute to the autumn newsletter, the copy deadline is **November 10<sup>th</sup>**. Please drop off contributions to me, or email them to me via [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk).

*Jane H*

## NOTICES

**Welcome** to: David N, who has moved into The Green. David comes from Yorkshire and more recently, Whitfield. Peter and Jennifer A have moved to the High Street – they have lived in Sulgrave and spent some years in Beirut. Christine and Clive W have moved into the High Street; they come from Greens Norton. And Linda and Alan U are also moving into the High Street, coming from a village in Cheshire. We hope you all enjoy living here.

**Congratulations** to Jo C, who achieved a first class honours degree at Bristol University. Well done!

**Congratulations** also to John B, who has been awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list, for services to forensic science and the Northampton police. Dr B is acknowledged across the globe as a pioneering forensic scientist, with his latest development in fingerprint technology, which allows police to retrieve prints from bullet cases.

### WIZ

WIZ is the Wappenham email contact group.

To join, send an email to [wiznews@btinternet.com](mailto:wiznews@btinternet.com).

### WAPPENHAM VILLAGE WEBSITE

If you would like to add something to the website, such as photos, events, articles, news items, your business details, stories, and so forth, please send the information to [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk); I will be more than happy to post your contributions.

The website address is:

<http://www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham/>



Dianne W, Webmaster

# WAPPENHAM VILLAGE FETE

**Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**  
at 2pm

in

**THE GARDEN OF THE  
OLD RECTORY**

(By kind permission of Brigadier Koe)

**FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY**

MANY STALLS INCLUDING: Children's games,  
Tombola, Bottle and Darts, Bric-a-Brac, Home  
Produce and Plants, Teas, Raffle and Music  
Local Farm Shop



## WAPPENHAM OPEN GARDENS

We needed the rain, but not on Sunday or with that bitter wind; it was extremely unlucky, especially as Saturday and Monday were fine! So rather than the previous year, when over 300 came to visit the village gardens, we had 51 stalwarts who braved the weather.



**The unique and brilliant Roof Garden**

Thank goodness for Jane M and her team who decamped from her house to the Village Hall at short notice and provided warmth and resuscitation with delicious teas and added to the coffers of the Church and the Village Hall.

After weeks of backbreaking work in the gardens to bring them to their best, it was heartbreaking to see them horizontal on the day. Our gazebo, put up for shelter, had to be anchored to a drainpipe in the yard to prevent it from taking off! It was a relief that no one blew off Di W's roof garden!

However, it was good to hear very positive feedback from those who could see through the wind and rain and appreciate everyone's efforts.

Even so, we were able to send a cheque of £363 to the National Garden Scheme. I have just heard from the County Treasurer that Northamptonshire Gardens raised in excess of £60,000 this year, which is an amazing contribution to the various cancer charities and hospices, and others, it supports..

Best wishes Joanna

PS: £125 were also made from the teas, which looked and tasted fantastic; they 'would have graced a Viennese patisserie' as the Friends put it. (Ed.)

## **A TRIBUTE TO DORIS YOUNG**

### **An Old Wive's Tale**

Doris Young was typical of an old Wappenham that has nearly gone. She was proud to have been born in the village, christened, confirmed and married in the church. Her father was Harry Haynes, whose ancestor came as a gardener to Wappenham House and who had two brothers Charles and Frank, a sister, Mrs. Golby, and seven of their children, all living in the village! Harry's wife Rose also had a married sister living in Wappenham, Mrs. George Brown; I think her Christian name was Amy. She had at least five children, so in my childhood there were seven adults living in 16 Helmdon Road. Doris had lots of cousins in the village. Both Rose and Amy were originally from Helmdon, members of the Watson family who farm and live in the same two villages today.

Doris left school in Wappenham and went to train at the Domestic Service College in Northampton. Entry to this

'course' was on the recommendation of the local parson's wife or lady of the manor, and was considered an achievement. In country villages many girls were alumni: Maude Peart, Lucy Keen and Phyllis Causebrook were some people might remember in Wappenham.

The 'college' assured your future, rather like a University place today, and gave a good training in the domestic arts when water had to be carried from a well or pump, the majority of lavatories were outside in the garden, few cottages had sinks and electricity was unknown in many villages until after the end of the Second World War in 1945.

As a very little girl I can just remember Doris's first wedding, which I watched from the wall by the Church gate. It was thought so romantic!..... The Bride wore white, of course, and I think it was in February, bitter cold. The dress was velvet, with a bouquet of red carnations. The groom was in uniform, from Helmdon. As they left the church he picked her up and carried her in his arms across the snow-covered Green to the cottage where her parents lived – the second and third of four between No. 9 And "The Shoe", No. 17 today.



So Doris Haynes became Doris Humphreys, defying two 'old wive's tales': "Change the name but not the letter, you change for worse and not for better....."; "Don't mix pure white and bright red [clothes] it's asking for bad luck....."

Doris's first husband was later badly injured in the war – I believe, losing part of a foot. In Doris's own words, "He wasn't the same person; in hospital when he came home, you couldn't talk to him, there was no living with him. He just didn't want to know me anymore.....". Before the end of the

war the marriage had failed, and Doris met Harry Young, a very Welsh Welshman. He may have been stationed in the village, at the HQ (the third Rectory, built in 1830's or what was known then as the Squash Court, called by the late Miss Hobson "The Shielling", in the Helmdon Road). The two buildings housed more than forty soldiers, "billeted" permanently in the village manning local searchlights. These were the official HQ of the village Home Guard, commanded by Sacheverell Sitwell of Weston by Weedon Lois. The Home Guard used to meet on a Sunday morning in Kings' builders' yard, and we small children used to sometimes peep in the gate at the very red-faced Sachie. I was told later by Rosemary Cox of Syresham who worked for him at the time, that "he couldn't even do his own buttons up", so she didn't know what use he would be.....!

Doris's second husband stayed in Wappenham when the war ended and for several years lodged and worked for the same Bill Maule who frightened Norah Tarry in her darkened cow shed, mentioned in the Summer 2011 issue! He lived in Home Farm, built for one of the Helmdon Fairbrothers on his late marriage in about the 1870's. The Fairbrother family owned three of the Wappenham farms: The Laurels, Elm Lodge, and Home Farm, and the modern Watson family own the Fairbrother family home in Helmdon in which John Watson lives. If you want to see what a historic pigeon coop looks like circa. 1640's, ask one of the Watsons if you can see the one in their Helmdon yard. It's very impressive, and wonderfully kept.

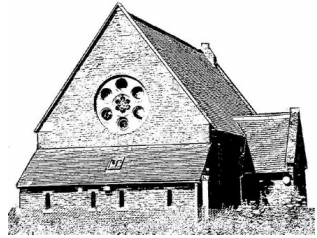
Divorce was expensive, so both Doris and Harry had to save up, and didn't live together, like a modern couple might. They waited nearly twenty years..... But they did finally marry, very quietly but not as spectacularly as the first time, and really did live happily ever after.

PS Harry was a very keen gardener, as Doris's ancestors had been!

Eileen R

## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Village Hall committee would like to thank everyone who contributed photographs to the Wappenham calendar competition.



The number of pictures received far exceeded our expectations – around 180 in all and the standard was extremely high. We didn't realise there were so many talented photographers in the village. Congratulations to the winners and commiserations to those whose pictures were not selected.

The next calendar will have the theme of "Doors, Gates, Knobs and Knockers in Wappenham".

The images will need to be in landscape format. Portraits will be accepted, but if they are chosen as winners, they may have to be cropped and will lose some detail. The images need to be of high resolution, and if scanned from prints will need to be a minimum of 300dpi. A group page on Flickr will be set up very soon for you to submit your images.

So if you're out and about and see something that fits the bill, send it either to Michael or myself or alternatively put it on the Flickr site. A big thank you must also go to Colin B, whose generous donation towards the printing costs has helped boost our revenue, and to members of The Towcester Camera Club who had the unenviable task of selecting the winning snaps. Already we have sold over 100 copies – if

you're interested in purchasing one please contact a committee member or alternatively buy one at the Fete. We hope you like the calendar as much as we do.

Planned social activities for the remainder of the year are as follows: on **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November** – hope that's not going to clash with too many bonfire parties – we are having another **Quiz** with fish and chip supper. Tickets will be available from committee members in October.



We are also very fortunate in seeing a return of The New Perspectives Touring Theatre Co. on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December**. They will be showing 'How Steeple Sinderby Wanderers Won the F.A. Cup'. It's a one-man show about how a village football team win the F.A. Cup against all odds – a sort of footballing version of David and Goliath. Tickets will cost £7 with no concessions; they will be available for purchase in November. If you haven't seen any of the New Perspectives' work, do come along: they are probably the best touring professional company in this area and we are extremely lucky to have them visiting us again.

Finally, it's that time of year again. The last draw of the Tote is in September and payment for the next year is due in October. Committee members will be knocking on doors next month to receive contributions. This is a vital source of income and really does make a difference to our ability to maintain the Hall. Of late we have spent a lot of time and money improving the facilities, with a newly-gravelled outside area, freshly-painted walls, re-painted kitchen and fire escape doors, a new front door and new folding tables.

We have plans to restore the flooring and complete the interior painting. We just need to get to grips with all those weeds around the front of the Hall.

Best wishes

Jenny S – Secretary  
Village Hall Management Committee

## **WAPPENHAM RECREATION ASSOCIATION (WRA)**

### **Camp-out**

Here is the tug of war from this year's camp-out, which was well-attended.



### **Summer Fete**

As usual the WRA has spear-headed the organisation of the Fete, with the Friends and Village Hall Committee heading

up raffle and teas. Come and support your village and enjoy all the games, stalls and home-made produce!

Dene A plus Ed.  
Chairman WRA Committee

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

### Parish Councillors

You may be aware that there have been a few changes to the Parish Council.



Firstly, in April, Harvey L gave notice that due to work and family commitments, he would not continue on the Parish Council. Harvey joined the PC in June 2007 and has been an important member. His knowledge of planning coupled with his discerning approach was much valued. It was with regret that we accepted his resignation.

Following the May election we had a second resignation, Phil K. With the increase in councillors' work load and the numerous rules and regulations to which we have to adhere, it is becoming increasingly bureaucratic. Phil felt it was time to leave and decided to concentrate on his other community activities. Phil was a councillor for over 7 years and contributed much. He never shied away from difficult decisions and made sure the PC retained an open mind. Again it was with regret that we accepted his resignation.

Then Paul F – no he has not resigned – but has stepped down as chair. He is now vice-chair and I, reluctantly agreed to be chair. Not that I did not want to be chair, but since Paul was already doing an incredible job as chair, I was happy

remaining vice-chair. But with Paul's growing responsibilities as director of his company and his 6-year commitment as chair of the Parish Council, he decided that it was time for someone else to take on this role.

We now have one new member on the PC, Howard M, who was co-opted at the last AGM in May. Howard is also a district councillor for Buckingham South; he is on the Economy Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee. We are very pleased to have him on board.



At the moment the PC consists of 6 members: Paul F (vice-chair), Howard M, Michael P, Dianne W (chair), Hilary W and David W. Last but not least our clerk, Liz H, who now holds a CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

Therefore, although I take on the role of chair with some trepidation, I am relieved that I have a fantastic group of individuals to support me.

As we are still short of one councillor, we are hoping to co-opt a new member in the coming months in order to have a full PC.

## **Village Action Group**

By now you will have all read the Wappenham Community Shop Steering Group report, regarding the survey's findings. The findings were disappointing and as a result "the conclusion of the group is that it is not viable to open a community shop in the village" (*Wappenham Community Shop Steering Group Report*, July 2011, Rupert F, chairman). If you

would like to read more about the findings please visit to the following webpage  
<http://www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham/WappenhamActionGroup.htm>

As a researcher, I know how hard the steering group has worked on researching the options, carrying out the survey, collating the findings and so forth and would like to thank all involved for their hard work and commitment.

### **Village Design Statement**

Following a South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) consultation of Wappenham's Village Design Statement (VDS), a list of recommendations were issued. Wappenham PC resolved to accept all of SNC's recommendations and amend the VDS accordingly. A new version of the VDS was submitted on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July and it is expected to be adopted at SNC's next development control meeting in September. This will now form part of the Local Development Framework for South Northamptonshire Council and will be a consideration in determining planning applications. The VDS should not be viewed as a static document – at some point it will need to be reviewed and updated in order to reflect changes in our community and in local and national policy.

It has been a very, very long haul, and thanks are due to the VDS committee responsible for producing the document, namely: Colin B (chair), Nick L (vernacular architecture specialist), Eileen R (historian), the late David F (treasurer), Brian W, Kerstin K, Phil K and Clive W (photography).

My input with regards to the VDS was mainly editing, formatting, document revisions, and liaising with SNC.

To find out more, please visit the following webpage  
<http://www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham/SNCConsultation.htm>

## **Scheme of Delegation**

I am sure that you have all read Paul's last newsletter contribution and his note on the Scheme of Delegation. Just a quick reminder: from now on, decisions on the majority of smaller planning applications are made by officers, under what is called "delegated powers". Other (bigger) applications, however, are generally decided by the Development Control Committee. How big, you ask?

- Applications for 10 or more dwellings
- Applications for new buildings where the floor space to be created is over 1,000 square metres
- Any development on a site over 1 hectare in size.

What does this mean in practice? It means that when the Parish Council raise objections to a specific planning application, it no longer goes in front of SNC's Development Control Committee (where decisions are made by elected members, namely councillors); instead, the planning officer has the last word. We can 'call in' a planning application, but this needs to be supported by our district councillor and can still be ignored by the planning officer. So in essence, it means that as a community we have little say in what happens, in terms of planning, in Wappenham. Needless to say, this makes the VDS even more crucial. The PC is evaluating what impact this may have on our community, what other means are at our disposal, and what we can do about it. I shall keep you posted.

## **Planning**

*Beeches House, Greenside, single storey rear extension, conversion of barn to living accommodation, re-roof existing garage, pedestrian gateway.* The application was withdrawn to include a bat report and make amendments; the new plans no longer include a rear extension. Again, the PC had no objection to this second submission and made minor comments. We are awaiting SNC's decision.

*2 Brookside, conversion of garage to self-contained annexe.* Again the PC made no objection but made some comments. We are awaiting SNC's decision.

If you would like to view applications online visit SNC's planning register on <http://snc.planning-register.co.uk/> (do not use www. after the http).

## **New District Councillor**

On the 12 July we had a visit from our new District Councillor Peter Davies - Washington Ward. The meeting took place in my house. The village hall had been double-booked and there was a band practice in full swing; they kindly offered to share the hall, but I thought better of it. Our clerk suggested that we use my house. So I ran back home, and with the help of Paul Featherstone, re-arranged seating in my dining room to accommodate the PC, the new district councillor and a member of the public. It was a bit surreal but it all went well.

Cllr Davies introduced himself to the PC and talked of the decline in services and amenities and how he is hoping to be able to make a difference in his new role. He mentioned the budgetary cutbacks, the HS2, the possible relocation of SNC to Moat Lane and whether or not this was a wise move. He also discussed the fact that grants to the community are sometimes made available and gave examples of some causes

which had benefited in the past. We are looking forward to his support and guidance in the future.

### **Wappenham Website**

I have now been webmaster for over 7 years (or is it 8) and would love to pass it on to someone else. The website could do with a revamp. But if you would just like to update it for the moment and think about a re-design later, that is equally fine. The website comes under the umbrella of the PC, therefore anyone who takes it on will have to liaise with one of the PC councillors. If you are interested please contact me at [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk) or give me a ring on 860516.

Minutes of the Parish Council, from 2004 onwards, can be found on the following webpage

<http://www.northantsvillages.org.uk/wappenham/parishcouncil.htm>

Prior to 2004, they can be viewed at Northamptonshire Record Office, Mereway, Northampton.

### **Dates of future meetings**

Tuesday 06 Sep 2011 – 8pm

Tuesday 18 Oct 2011 – 8pm

Tuesday 29 Nov 2011 – 8pm

Tuesday 10 Jan 2012 – 8pm (provisional)

I am sure I am missing something but since this is already a lengthy article, I will keep it for next time. Hope you had a great summer.

Dianne W  
PC Chair



## **The Astwell Benefice**

*Helmdon with Stuchbury and Radstone, and  
Syresham with Whitfield,  
Lois Weedon with Weston and Plumpton  
and Wappenham*



## **CHURCH NEWS**

### **Jumping to conclusions**

Jack, a friend of mine and I were once chatting about occasions when we had jumped to the wrong conclusions. For him, it was a lack of fondness for a chap called Andrew Murphy who attended his church. He thought Andrew had a patronising attitude and seemed absurdly devout for a relatively young man, given to frequent genuflections and pronounced gestures of piety. Then one day Jack unexpectedly came across a mate of his in the local pub that he hadn't seen for a while. Their conversations naturally turned to catching up on each other's families. Jack's mate shared his distress at the sad state of his son, Ross. "Ross is a drug addict. His behaviour is appalling." He said. "He steals from us and gets violent. I feel dreadful about it but we've had to forbid him to come home. I thank God for Andy. He gives Ross a bed whenever he needs it, no matter what state he's in. Andy's a saint if ever there was one." "Who is Andy?" Jack asked, intrigued. "Andrew Murphy," said his mate. "You probably know him. I believe he goes to your church." Jack then realised that he didn't really know him at all.

### **Special Church Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

I would like to thank you very much for coming along to the special meeting we held in the church on 29<sup>th</sup> June. Dorothy

and I found it very helpful and encouraging, not just the comments made during the meeting but also the positive remarks and offers of help subsequently.

If you recall there were two areas we discussed:

- Church attendance and the nature of worship
- Church Youth Club.

### *Church attendance & Nature of worship*

Dorothy and I are planning to hold a number of 'Come & Praise' services in months where there are no other 'specials' on. We shall have held our first (Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August) by the time this edition hits the streets. During October, November and December we shall be celebrating Harvest, the Armistice, and Christmas and so we shall be looking to another 'Come & Praise' early in 2012. We plan that these will be simple services comprising well-known hymns and appropriate readings around a particular theme, with coffee and tea available from 10.30am before the service and the service beginning at 11am as usual.

Do look out for these services and join us if you can.

### *Church Youth Club*

My feeling about this proposal is that there are enough people now who would be willing to help to pursue the idea further, and that therefore we should have a go!

The suggestion was that the club would run on a monthly basis and take place in the village hall on a Sunday evening from 5.30 – 6.45 pm. Given the demands of Evensongs across the Astwell Benefice, the only Sunday which I am able to offer with any regularity, is the third Sunday in the month. I have therefore booked the village hall for the following Sundays: 18th September, 16<sup>th</sup> October, 20th November, 18th December, 15th January and 19th February. If this proved to be viable I would then set the dates for the following six months.

I plan to send out a reminder to folk nearer the time but would be grateful if you would note the dates and times in your diary if you are interested.

**Confirmation - Sunday 30th October at 3pm – Syresham – led by the Right Reverend John Flack, Honorary Assistant Bishop of Peterborough**

During the past term in two of the benefice's primary schools, a number of youngsters in year 6 have been following the standard confirmation classes that we offer. Presently, a total of nine pupils from St James School in Syresham and St Loys School in Lois Weedon are being prepared.

There may well be others from Wappenham and across the benefice who would also wish to consider confirmation. We shall be offering classes in September and October and so if you or someone you know would like to consider confirmation, please do get in touch with me or any member of the Ministry Team. We would be delighted to hear from them.

Bishop John Flack has kindly offered to lead our worship on the 30<sup>th</sup> October.

**Special Autumn Services**



***Harvest Festival – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 11am - followed by a Harvest Lunch***

For a number of years now, we have been celebrating Harvest in traditional worship fashion and enjoying a splendid lunch in church together after the service. Do come and join us again this year. Any offers of apple pies or crumbles would be most welcome!

*Act of Remembrance – Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November at 10.40 am*

I take the view that this is an important annual service. For most of us now, the two world wars of the twentieth century do not lie within our lifetimes. I was a part of the 'baby boom' of the mid to late 1940s. Nonetheless, throughout my life there have been many conflicts across the world and at home where young men and women have lost their lives. We have witnessed all too often the tributes which the loyal people of Royal Wootton Bassett have made as each hearse has driven through their streets. **Help for Heroes**, the charity set up to support the wounded from recent conflicts has also caught the public imagination following very much the sympathies of **The Royal British Legion**. Our representation may well be small but I, for one, believe we should not forget.

Best wishes,

Will

The Rector

*Tel +44(0)1280 850683 Email:rector@astwellbenefice.co.uk*



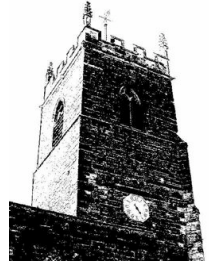
**PIANO TUNING  
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**Geoff Carverhill** C.M.I.T.  
Piano Tuner / Technician

Tel: 01604 891512  
Mobile: 07962 180790  
e-mail: [gcpiano@intamail.com](mailto:gcpiano@intamail.com)

## FRIENDS OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN

The church is looking beautiful in the summer and I was delighted to see it featuring in the village hall calendar. Well done to Michael Payne and his committee - what a good fundraising idea. Some shameless cross-selling coming up – if you are looking for a simple present, something light to post and practical to own, we have Wappenham tea towels showing the village of yesteryear, in two different versions, available from Di at £5 each. [*Email [wappenham@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:wappenham@tiscali.co.uk) if interested.*]



Moving on to the works agenda, we are still chasing a small but persistent leak in the church roof. Anthony T has been up there twice with the experts to check out any holes, but these are difficult to find and to trace where exactly the drip that hits the tray in the church comes from. We will continue to keep an eye on this so that a small problem does not develop into something more damaging and costly.

For many people in the village, the church is a landmark rather than somewhere to come and worship. It was heartening therefore to see the good turnout for Will Adams' meeting in June to talk about how to encourage more of us to attend. The Friends too want to make the church more accessible and welcoming. We cannot justify a major outlay on kitchen and WC, but we are going to install a small, environmentally friendly, 'loo' discretely in the south porch. This would be the first one in the diocese and the diocesan authorities are, er, giving it a fair wind.

Thank you to everyone who supported our spring plant sale and the summer Open Gardens Teas, the latter jointly with

the Village Hall. Both were lovely occasions and modest but useful fund-raisers, despite the weather.

See you at the Village Fete on Saturday 3 September, in aid of all 3 village charities! I shall be brandishing my apron again and leading on the teas. All offers of help on the day and of cakes will be welcome – just let me know. Only those not scared of wasps need apply!

Jane M  
Chair of the Friends of St Mary the Virgin Wappenham

**THE CHAPEL**  
**News from Slapton and Wappenham**  
**Independent Evangelical Church**



Dear Friends,  
We just wanted to give you a short update from the chapel.

We continue to have various preachers and pastors from all over the country visiting us each Sunday for our services in the morning, at Wappenham at 10.45am and then at Slapton Chapel in the evening at 6pm. We continue to be very privileged to have the quality of people who come and share ministry with us. They are some of the most gifted gospel preachers in the country. You are very welcome to join us.

The regular congregation and members are a very warm and welcoming group of Christian people. Between 20 and 30 people regularly attend both our morning and evening services; some travel up to 15 miles to come right here to Wappenham and more people are coming along.

The Sunday school meets each week in the schoolroom at the back of Wappenham chapel from 3pm to 4pm each Sunday afternoon. We welcome children who are ideally from 5 to 11 years old. Please do encourage your children to come; again, they will be most welcome and will have a great time. If anyone has any questions please do ask postie Claire.

We have a midweek meeting on a Tuesday night at 7:30pm, held in the schoolroom each week. This is normally either a Bible study or a visiting missionary group from around the world. It is a great opportunity to hear passages read from the Bible and have then explained in a clear way. All our sermons are recorded, so if anyone would like to borrow a free copy, please do not hesitate to ask me. One of the studies we have started on a Tuesday is called "What We Believe", and these studies are led by Mr Roger M of Wolverton. These are the first Tuesday of each month, through to December. The next one in this series will be on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Once a month we have a Ladies' meeting, which is again held in the schoolroom at the back of the Chapel, on a Wednesday afternoon at 2pm. This is held once a month and the details are displayed on the noticeboard outside the chapel giving details of the visiting speaker. The meeting is always held by a lady and is for the ladies only. The next one is on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September and will be led by Mrs Irene M.

If you have not been to one of our services before, we would warmly invite you to come to our Harvest Thanksgiving Service on October 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:45 in the morning and 6 in the evening. Both services will be here in Wappenham and the chapel will be decorated in locally-grown produce.

There are many people in these times that are experiencing difficulty in their lives, and the many things going on around us which lead people to be down and depressed, but there is real truth to be found in the teaching from the Bible and the

reassurance that this book is the absolute truth. There is a very special feeling in your heart when you come to know the Jesus Christ as your true saviour. How many times have you thought about where will you go once your time in this life is over? You have the wonderful opportunity in this village to learn about this truth.

The apostle Paul in his letter in the New Testament said this: "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners - of whom I am the worst" - 1 Timothy 1 v. 15. So, whatever you may think about your life and whatever thoughts you have, you are welcome to come and hear the Bible truths. You have nothing to lose, but everything to gain by coming along.

If anyone has any questions please do not hesitate to ask us. Really everyone is welcome to come and join us for any of our weekly meetings.

With God's Blessing to you all,  
Richard K – On behalf of Slapton and Wappenham  
Independent Evangelical Church

## **OIL BUYING GROUP PROPOSAL FOR CHEAPER OIL**

Northamptonshire ACRE is concerned about the level of fuel poverty across the county and is looking at practical ways of being able to help our local, rural communities. Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) has recently set up a new social enterprise that will reduce the cost of domestic heating oil with each order, simply by joining a community-based countywide oil buying syndicate. By bringing communities together throughout the county and making the most of joint buying power, huge savings can be made and passed on

directly to people whose fuel costs are high simply because they have oil-fired central heating.

By operating county-wide, the scheme makes it possible for new or existing local community oil-buying groups to make the most of their collective purchasing power. Members pay a small annual fee to join (which is generally recouped in the savings from the first order!) before negotiations take place with every oil company that supplies premises in the county to ensure the best price is achieved.

Thus far, the Oxfordshire scheme is proving a great success, so we are conducting some research to find out what level of interest there is to run a similar scheme in Northamptonshire. We would be extremely grateful if you would complete the very short survey on our website by clicking on this link: [www.northantsacre.org.uk/2011/07/21/](http://www.northantsacre.org.uk/2011/07/21/). Alternatively, you can contact me at Northamptonshire ACRE on 01604 825889. Thank you.

Beth Milne, Rural Officer  
Northamptonshire ACRE, Tel 01604 825889

## **COUNTY CONNECT BUSES WILL LINK RURAL COMMUNITIES**

*From the NCC website, 02/08/2011*



An innovative new bus service that will connect rural communities will shortly be introduced by Northamptonshire County Council.

The demand response system – known as County Connect – will focus on five separate areas in the county and centre round hub towns, where passengers can then connect with regular inter-urban buses.

It differs from conventional bus services in that customers book a seat on specially designed low-floor mini-buses either by telephone, text message or via the internet and arrange to be picked up at a specific time at their nearest village bus stop.

People can book to travel to any other stop in the area served, not just the local town centre and rather than just providing occasional 'shopper' journeys, the service is designed to make all kinds of journeys possible, including medical appointments, and regular journeys to college or work.

..The new CountyConnect service will be launched in September across South Northants, focused on Towcester and Brackley, including off-peak links to Banbury.

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# WAPPENHAM COMMUNITY SHOP STEERING GROUP REPORT – JULY 2011



## Introduction

The WCSSG was formed in March 2011, following a public meeting held in the Village Hall on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The group consisted of Rupert F, Laura K, Michael K, Val S and Charlotte S.

The group defined its objective as coming to a view on whether a community shop in Wappenham was viable. The group met formally on four occasions, and spent a considerable amount of time researching the various issues involved in setting up a community shop, examining the experience of shops set up successfully in similar communities, and preparing and distributing a detailed questionnaire in Wappenham and the surrounding villages.

Unfortunately, the conclusion of the group is that it is not viable to open a community shop in the village, principally for the following reasons:

- Lack of suitable premises
- Lack of evidence that the shop would generate enough revenue to be viable

It is also not clear that there is significant financial support, although the group felt that enough money probably could have been raised to get the project off the ground.

However, the group found that there is an encouraging level of interest in volunteering time, and there is no doubt that there remains a huge desire for a community facility of some sort within the village.

Our conclusions on the specific issues are as follows:

## **1. Location**

From the start, we all felt that a shop almost certainly had to be situated on the main road through the village. The key reason for this is that Wappenham itself is not big enough to support a shop and therefore the shop would have to attract, and be accessible to, passing trade if it was to be viable. The old shop site is not available, so we gave serious consideration to a small number of other possible sites, including the construction of a new building, and the purchase of an existing property. These were ruled out for reasons related to planning permission/parking issues, and cost respectively.

We gave serious consideration to the use of either the church or the village hall, but ruled both out on grounds of practicality (what would happen to the stock etc when the buildings were in normal use), accessibility, security and parking.

The one location which was available which we felt was viable was one or more of the barns belonging to Rectory Farm. These are attractive buildings of a good size with parking available. However, the group felt that the costs of conversion would be too high, and this together with the site not being on the main road, meant that we had to reject it.

## **2. Funding**

The experience of other village shop projects of a comparative size is that start-up costs (including modest structural alterations/fitout costs to structures like barns) are likely to be in the region of £20,000 - £30,000. It is certainly possible to get

grants and help from various government bodies and charitable institutions such as the Plunkett Foundation to cover much of this, but it would be necessary to raise a significant proportion of this money locally. The results from the questionnaire were not encouraging in this respect, with actual pledges being approx £1,300. The group felt that raising this money, both through locating and applying for grants, and organising local fundraising, would be more or less a full-time task, and were conscious of the fact that the project lacked the skills and time of an experienced fundraiser. However the group were confident that if presented with the reality of a village shop, the community could well rally round and enough money be raised locally to get the project off the ground. It was encouraging that 15 people volunteered to help with fundraising

Thereafter the shop should be more or less self-financing, with deficits (if there are any) either covered through reserves or through annual fund-raising events. The experience of similar shops (eg Sulgrave) is that deficits of this kind should never be more than a few thousand pounds and that this kind of sum should be sustainable within Wappenham.

The idea of raising finance for a more ambitious project involving construction or the purchase of a property was considered to be a non-starter, without a 'white knight' or full-time experienced and committed fundraiser, neither of whom were on offer.

### **3. Levels of interest**

It is very clear that there is very strong support for the project from Wappenham, evidenced by the attendance at the initial meeting, the number of survey responses from the village (37, or 45% of the total) and the informal feedback that members of the group have received. However, there is less evidence of

strong enthusiasm from the surrounding villages (where we delivered approx 500 questionnaires for 45 replies). The response on volunteering to help in the shop was encouraging, with 27 people offering 2-4 hours a month, and 7 people offering 2-4 hours a week – assuming they all did 4 hours rather than 2, this represents about 220 hours a (4 week) month, against the 200-250 hours for which the shop would be open. Five people offered to serve on the management committee, which was also encouraging.

#### **4. Other approaches**

We looked at various alternative ideas, notably approaching larger supermarket chains (eg Waitrose) to see if they would in some way support us or cooperate with us. This was not productive. We also considered the use of temporary structures such as Portacabins, but felt there was no suitable site.

#### **5. Survey Highlights**

The full survey results form an appendix to this report. The following results seemed to the group to be of particular interest:

- Scores of 4.05 / 5 and 3.85 / 5 for the importance of a village shop and a post office in the village respectively
- Most popular products in order: fresh fruit and veg, newspapers, dairy products, greetings cards, bakery, local produce (all scored over 50%)
- Other services receiving significant support (in order): tickets for local events, advertisement board, dry cleaning, tearoom / coffee shop, shoe repairs
- Sunday opening – 55% yes, 45% no
- Use of village hall almost exactly 50/50 for and against, use of church opposed approx 60/40

- 57% of people surveyed volunteered time
- Total amount of money volunteered upfront was approximately £1,300, with a further £850 - £1,000 annually

## **6. Conclusion**

Within Wappenham, there is clearly a strong desire for a shop and a post office, and in an ideal world, the shop would include a tearoom/coffee shop and provide a range of additional services. While achieving all this at the outset is not realistic, we do believe that there are enough volunteers, and (probably) just about enough money to get an initial shop going. However, Wappenham is a small village of around 350 people. Almost all villages that support community shops are at least twice the size, and many have populations of 1,000 or more. We believe that the village is unable to support a community shop on its own, and so would have to attract passing trade from neighbouring villages. Its ability to do this will depend on its commercial viability; there was limited evidence from the survey of substantial support from surrounding villages, and so to succeed the shop would need to be in a prime location. Unfortunately, the only available site, attractive though it is, is not on the main street, and as stated, we believe this to be critical to the project's success.

We were very aware of the desire within the village to create a community facility of some kind, and we all shared a sense of frustration at the fact that we were unable to recommend the establishment of a community shop. There was a shared view that it would be a shame if the matter was allowed to rest, and we discussed other ways in which community facilities might be created. The most promising of these seemed to us to be a broadening of the existing monthly coffee mornings organised by the church and held at The Old Rectory. One idea was that some sort of shopping delivery

service might be organised for the benefit of attendees. While this and other similar ideas are outside the scope of this particular group, individual members would be delighted to pursue them with the village if requested.

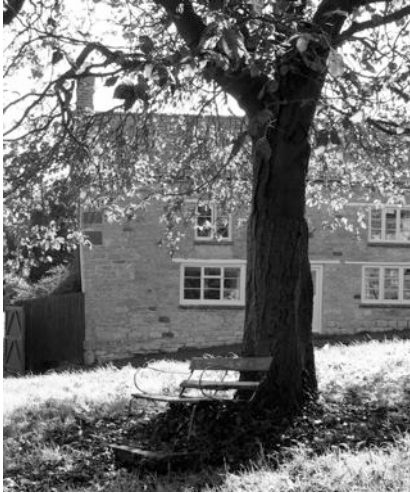
This document is a brief summary of our conclusions and what we felt were the key points that led to them. In the course of our work we have accumulated a wealth of information on the subject of community shops and we would be delighted to share this in more detail with any members of the community if requested.

I would like to thank my fellow group members for their help with this project. They have all devoted an enormous amount of time and effort to researching funding opportunities, devising potential legal structures, looking at other village shops and how they have been set up, meeting with people in a similar position to ourselves, designing and distributing the questionnaire both in Wappenham and in the surrounding villages, inputting the results, and attending and contributing to all our meetings with professionalism, wisdom and humour. The village could not have had a better team to conduct this task.

Rupert F, Chairman  
July 2011

## **WAPPENHAM THEN AND NOW: THE KNOB**

I have used this topic to commemorate the chestnut on the Knob, which unfortunately had to be taken down because it was diseased and had split. Thanks to Dorothy O for the photos of its demolition.



A healthy tree a few years back. The Parish Council says: "It was planted in 1932 to commemorate King George V Silver Jubilee. However, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee is in 2012. Perhaps once the ground is clear we can start to plan a suitable replacement."

Having split during a storm the tree is taken down.





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