

Newsletter report to Parish meeting 9th May 2016

There have now been over 80 editions of the parish newsletter since it started in 2002. We now have a fully constituted committee of 9 people. They are supported by another group of 9 volunteers who distribute the bi-monthly publication through every letterbox in the parish. We also have an increasing number of recipients, currently 24, who have also requested digital copies. This along with its capability to download from the villages' website, means that the newsletter can reach all corners of the parish and beyond.

2 newsletter committee members also organise the distribution of the "Ramsey & Warboys Informer" in Upwood village. There are another 12 volunteers who deliver this publication on a monthly basis and donate their delivery fee to newsletter funds.

Particular mention should go to the editorial committee of Paul Charman, Judith Harvey and Pauline McLeod, along with Fran Charman as proof reader, who manage to maintain such a high quality of publication from issue to issue.

This year we have managed to raise the profile of the newsletter even higher by introducing 4 colour pages on a regular basis. This is thanks to the successful bid for funding from the Ramsey Windfarm Community Benefit Fund. This project, involved members of the newsletter committee, village hall committee and the Communications sub-group of the Community Led Plan committee. It proposed a co-ordinated approach to addressing communication needs within the parish. As a result there is enough extra funding for continued colour publications over the next 18 months as well as a designated laptop and software for the editorial committee to use.

The newsletter relies on financial donations for its continuing existence. This year I would like to thank the Parish Council, the Open Gardens Event, the Fete Committee, the Cross Keys Fun

Day, the Newsletter Treasure Hunt, "Informer" Deliverers and the Ramsey Windfarm Community Benefit Fund for their generous donations. These allow the newsletter to go from strength to strength. Future funding is an issue that the current newsletter committee is aware needs addressing. We are a voluntary non-profit making organisation and, as such, our sources of income are limited to receiving donations from the parish council and local events

Parish Clerk

From: NORMAN JONES <normanmag@btinternet.com>
Sent: 07 May 2016 16:22
To: parishclerk@upwood.org
Subject: Report for the quilt group.

Dear Carol,
Please find the report for the Quilt Group.

We meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the village hall.
We have a membership of 23. Most of the members bring their own projects to the meetings and there is always help and advice from the other members should you need it.
At present we are in the process of making a group quilt, which will be raffled at a later date.

Thank you Margaret.

From: Williams David hollyhouse.upwood@tiscali.co.uk
Subject: upwood tt club-report for your agm
Date: Today at 10:20
To: Clerk Parish parishclerk@upwood.org

Hi Carol

The TT club continues to grow in popularity with a current membership of 50 which includes Tuesday night and Wednesday afternoon players.

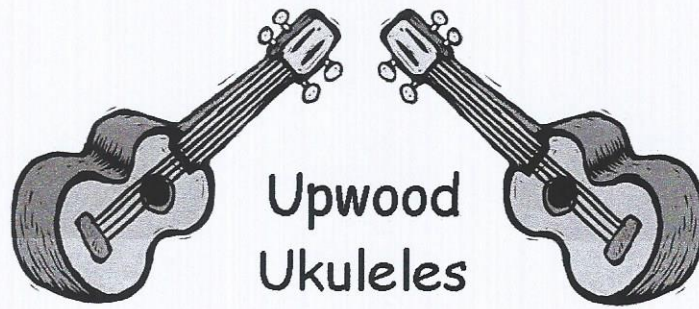
The Wednesday group has proved particularly successful and now has a waiting list for new members.

The club ran several tournaments over the past 12 months and provided subsidised social outings to Hunstanton in summer and Pidley bowling in winter.

The year concluded with a meal at the Cross Keys Pub attended by 44 members and guests.

Regards

David Williams



Formed in February 2014 with the accent on having fun and making music together, our popularity has taken us somewhat by surprise. Upwood Ukuleles has gone from strength to strength, playing at an ever increasing variety of events ranging from WIs, residential homes and day centres to private parties and social evenings, entertaining adults and children alike. We also performed on Radio Cambridgeshire just before Christmas in 2014 and again in 2015.

Upwood Ukuleles include a wide assortment of musical styles and instruments. As well as the whole range of ukuleles from piccolo to bass, we play kazoos, harmonicas, recorders and various percussion instruments including the cajon. Audience participation is encouraged and we play songs ranging from George Formby classics, through 1960s novelty numbers, to current chart hits.

We do not usually charge a performance fee as such but do request a suitable donation to our designated charity, Magpas Helimedix. The most recent update from Magpas on 09 May 2016 acknowledges the group's total donation of £3603.58.

Upwood Ukuleles has evolved to the point where it had become necessary to formalise its administration. Election of officers and the adoption of a constitution has provided the group with terms of reference for its smooth operation and a formal status demonstrating accountability and allowing the group to apply for grants. We now have a constitution, a bank account and public liability insurance cover.

The twelve members of the group take financial responsibility for their own instruments and personal equipment but we have evolved to the point where we need to purchase a sound system to assist and enhance sound projection. Some venues with complex acoustics or larger audiences have challenged the group and impacted on the enjoyment of listeners. Playing in the outdoors has also proved problematic for this reason. Many of our groups of listeners have particular needs. For example, many of our elderly listeners need amplified sound, not just for volume but also for clarity. Some of our most rewarding performances have been with those suffering from Alzheimer's where music and song lyrics have brought back long lost memories. Carers have thanked us for helping their loved ones to sing for the first time in years. Experiences such as these are very powerful and have made us realise what a difference we are making.

We have taken advice and conducted extensive research regarding the best equipment to purchase and hope that this may be achieved via grant applications enabling us to provide higher quality performances with greater clarity; the flexibility to play in bigger or more acoustically challenging venues; and the ability to reach out to a wider audience whilst continuing our financial support of Magpas Helimedix. Making music for our own enjoyment; the enjoyment and tangible benefit of others in our community; and the opportunity to support a vital charity has evolved into a powerful synergy and inspiration for continued improvement and success.

"Everyone enjoyed the occasion and have requested that you come back again soon, please!"
Wendy Ibbett – Coffee Pot Memory Club, St Neots

"I would like to thank Upwood Ukuleles for a very enjoyable afternoon. Though we have had some excellent speakers/performers you are the first where I have been asked to re-book while you were still in the hall!"
Whittlesey U3A

"Such a splendid evening's entertainment."
Judy Bainbridge, Warboys WI

"Thanks for coming in yesterday, you were fabulous."
Katharine Park, Producer, Radio Cambridgeshire

"We would like to thank everyone at Upwood Ukuleles. Your support really is fantastic and very much appreciated."
Debbie Florence, Head of Fundraising, Magpas

For more information and booking contact Doug McLeod: pndmcleod@btinternet.com / 01487 814114 / 07709 930398



UPWOOD VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

April 2016

Regular bookings of the hall have generally remained steady in 2015 however it is a matter of concern that in the past few years that there have been few new regular hirers and some long standing groups have folded due to lack of support. A recent concern has been the Brownies, a long-time hirer that has recently had to suspend their meetings due to a lack of helpers.

To try and counter this, the Village Hall Management committee have undertaken a programme of work over the past few years to improve facilities in an effort to make the hall more appealing and comfortable. This has included the installation of new heating, improved insulation, redecoration inside and out and more recently the purchase of new chairs. With the aid of a community grant we have also recently upgraded the video projector and installed free Wifi for our users.

The fabric of the hall (the original part of which is almost 150 years old) continues to require maintenance, Last year the outside woodwork was repainted and rot was discovered in some of the beams, similarly we have had to keep a watchful eye for dampness and one such area was recently repaired near the front fire exit.

As a village we are extremely lucky to have a village hall and I would encourage everyone to let people know what a great resource it is in an effort to boost its use and provide us with a valuable income that can help us keep it open and in a good state of repair.

As well as regular bookings we have been fortunate to host a number of performing arts events, not only are these extremely well attended, they draw people from outside the village and are a great advertisement for the hall. Many thanks go to Doug McLeod for organising them.

Once again we would like to thank all of our fundraisers who enable us to invest in major refurbishment projects and to the Parish Council who's grant has helps to cover our insurance costs.

Last but not least, my sincere thanks go to the Village Hall committee and its trustees whose tireless efforts continue to ensure that the hall remains a valuable community resource.

Stephen Howes
Chairman,
Upwood Village Hall Management Committee

Upwood and The Raveleys Village Hall
Bank Balances as at 29 February 2016

Current Account (No 609369280)		
Balance	£788.51	
Less unpresented cheques	£92.00	£696.51
Plus outstanding payments		£561.60
 Business Premium Account (No 8090 5143)		£10,694.34
 Fund Raising Account		£12,972.65
 Petty Cash		£0.86
		<hr/>
		£24,925.96

I hereby certify that the income and expenses accounts and balance sheets for Upwood and The Raveleys Village Hall for the year ending 29 February 2016 are a true record according to the information provided.

Signed

R. W. Peckover

R.W. Peckover

Date *14.3.16*

Upwood and The Raveleys Village Hall

29th February 2016

Deposits	£	600.00	Refunds	£	309.63
One-off users	£	357.70	Rates	£	246.50
Art Group	£	697.36	Water Rates	£	286.17
History Group	£	106.35	Cleaner	£	1,146.02
Home to Home	£	230.23	Repairs & Maintenance	£	3,027.59
Parish Council	£	908.76	Electricity	£	672.64
St Peters Church	£	305.94	Insurance	£	869.24
Quilting Group	£	190.18	Consumables	£	159.98
Brownies	£	240.00	Sundry expenses	£	423.37
Table Tennis	£	2,593.58			
WEA	£	478.92			
Book Club	£	94.95			
Performing Arts	£	364.70			
Village Gdns Donation	£	228.82	Income over Expenditure	£	473.65
Upwood Ukuleles	£	212.15			
Interest	£	5.15			
		£ 7,614.79			£ 7,614.79

R.W. Pedwar.
14.3.16

INCOME

Knighthley and Mischa ticket sales	£1,359.00
Donation from RSC	£50.00
Mischa raffle proceeds	£156.00
Autumn shows ticket sales	£3,661.50
Coppin/Silver raffle proceeds	£107.00
Melrose Quartet raffle proceeds	£134.00
Christmas & Spring 2016 tkt sales	£3,127.00
Nelson raffle proceeds	£71.00
Celtic Strings raffle proceeds	£126.00
Interest	£30.47

EXPENDITURE

Refunds for Steve Knightley tickets	£120.50
Steve Knightley performance fee	£1,152.00
Steve Knightley - UVH elec & hire	£46.20
New Ropes - UVH elec & hire	£68.30
Mischa Macpherson performance fee	£800.00
S Woodward & V Crivelli performance fee	£50.00
Mischa Macpherson-UVH elec & hire	£48.70
Mischa -refreshments, B&B, sound eng	£75.00
Coppin/Silver performance fee	£800.00
Cup O'Joe performance fee	£100.00
Coppin/Silver-UVH elec & hire	£51.20
Coppin/Silver-refreshments, B&B, sound eng	£125.00
Melrose Quartet performance fee	£850.00
Melrose Quartet -UVH elec & hire	£55.80
Melrose Qu-refreshments, B&B, sound eng	£90.00
Nelson performance fee	£500.00
Nelson - UVH elec & hire	£47.60
Celtic Christmas Strings performance fee	£600.00
Celtic Christmas Strings - UVH elec & hire	£53.90
Celtic Christmas Strings B&B exp	£30.00
OVC performance fee	£350.00
UpUs performance fee	£350.00
OVC & UpUs -UVH elec & hire	£61.30
Various concert expenses	£138.70
30 banqueting chairs	£1,612.80
Microphones,stands & leads (Thomann)	£324.02
	<u>£8,501.02</u>
Income over Expenditure	£320.95
TOTAL	<u>£8,821.97</u>

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Income over Expenditure

£320.95

£8,821.97

R.W. Peckover
14.3.16



UPWOOD & THE RAVELEYS WEBSITE

Report to the Annual Parish Meeting – 12th May 2016

The website which serves the villages began as a website to serve the needs of the village hall, but has expanded over the years to cover many of the parish's activities including a large local history archive.

This year the website was transferred to a more fluid format using Joomla!, an award-winning content management system (CMS), which enables website construction. Many aspects, including its ease-of-use and extensibility, have made Joomla! the most popular website software available. Best of all, Joomla is an open source solution that is freely available to everyone.

The process of moving all the content over from the old website format to the new CMS took a substantial amount of time but this is now complete and the new format is much more mobile- and tablet-friendly than the old one.

Parish organisations can now have much more control over the content of their own webpages, should they so wish, rather than waiting for the webmaster to update articles.

The website is administered on a voluntary basis by Steve Howes (technician) and Doug McLeod (day to day admin / webmaster). It also relies on parishioners to send in up-to-date information on activities and events in order to keep the website current. Updates are completed on a regular basis according to need and free time available to the webmaster.

In the past the website organisers have been grateful to the Fete Committee for providing funding for the annual cost of web hosting. As this funding stream no longer exists would it be possible for the parish council to take over this small annual financial commitment, please?

Doug McLeod & Steve Howes
Upwood & The Raveleys Website

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT 2016

This report is designed to give the Parish Council an overview of District activities in the previous year which has a bearing on the Parish.

I have divided the report into four sections, the first being Finance, the second Planning, third Devolution and Shared Services and finally general Council services.

Finance.

Like all councils across the country, HDC has, since 2011, been subject to severe financial restrictions imposed by the government which can best be expressed in the net revenue budget for HDC. In 2011, this was c. £23million per annum, in 2016/17 the budget is £17.9m and by 2021 it is required to be £13.8million; an overall reduction of 40%.

The government is removing more than £7million of grants traditionally provided to councils in order to exert pressure upon the cost base and this has created a revolution in the way HDC finances and manages its services.

A system known as zero based budgeting has been adopted to ensure that all departments operate at the minimum cost level possible given the service levels to be delivered and this will yield savings of £4million per annum by 2020.

The council have succeeded in bringing down the operating cost without impairing service levels and have managed to do this without the help of council tax rises which have remained unchanged for three years at £133 for a band D property, amongst the lowest levels in England.

The council must ensure that the level of reserves does not fall below 15% of the annual budget and whilst this current budget year is in balance, there is a projected deficit of £4 million at the end of the plan period in 2020. Therefore, the austerity measures will continue for several years and there will be a constant fight to protect frontline services.

Commercialization as part of the attempts to reduce the gap between revenue and costs, efforts have been made to improve the business performance of some of the costlier activities run by the Council. One such example is One Leisure which has in recent years been losing more than £2million per annum. A more commercial approach has been adopted and new management installed with the result that OL has moved from negative figures to surplus in the last 12 months.

The OL Group achieved annual sales of £6.85m (Budget £6.97m) with an operating surplus of £425K (Budget £343k), representing a turn-round of over £500k in comparison to 2014/15.

Devolution

As you no doubt aware HDC signed up to the agreement presented by the Treasury prior to the recent Budget statement which involves the devolution of powers to Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire and described in the attached document The East Devolution Agreement. When our position was discussed in Council on the 23rd March, the Leader explained that it was important to stay at the negotiating table to ensure we could fight for the best deal for Huntingdonshire.

Since this date, members of the Cabinet have been involved with our Executive Officers in numerous meetings with members of all 23 Councils and LEPs in the Anglian region and have explained that the Greater Anglia Deal is unappealing to our Council because of the huge geography it covers with the corresponding difficulties which will be faced by a single Mayor.

We have support in this view from adjacent councils notably South Cambs, Peterborough, Cambridge City, The Local Enterprise Partnership and although their support is politically ambiguous, from Cambridgeshire County Council as well. The leaders of these councils have agreed to present to the Treasury and Greg Clark, a new version of the Peterborough/Cambridgeshire deal document which was produced earlier this year. This document, now in draft form, reflects most of the aspirations the government has defined for devolution but on a smaller geographic scale. Most importantly it explains why the Greater Anglia deal is less attractive economically than a twin track deal to both devolved areas.

Once complete it will be discussed with government with a view to obtaining an early decision on its viability.

The timetable imposed by Government is such that a decision in either direction must be taken to allow an announcement on the appointment of the Mayor(s) to be made by 4 July.

As soon as the proposed revised document is completed it will be shared with Members who will be asked to vote on a Devolution motion at the special council meeting on the 29th June.

Shared Services

The Share Services project is a voluntary initiative through which HDC, South Cambs and Cambridge City have agreed to centralize certain activities to provide both lower costs and more efficient use of resources. The first project has successfully merged the CCTV networks of HDC and CC into a single control room in Huntingdon controlling 270 cameras in six town and city locations across the district. This is saving around £100k per annum.

Work is now underway to merge IT Services, Building Control and Legal Services for the three councils and this is expected to yield c£2million per annum for HDC by 2020, which will go some way to reducing the deficit mentioned earlier.

Planning

The Local Plan, which calls for 21000 new homes by 2036, (of which 8000 are 'affordable') has been delayed due to questions about traffic management around Wyton on the Hill. The District Council believe there must be major infrastructure investments to relieve congestion and this would necessitate a new river crossing being built across the Ouse to link the A141 direct to the A14. Uncertainty about funding has caused the Council to plan for different scenarios in order that the full housing quota can be met, but the 'Final' Plan must be completed by the end of 2016 and submitted to the Inspector by the Spring of next year. A long queue of Local Plans means that approval is unlikely to be given until mid-2018.

To address the potential shortfall in housing arising from the Wyton delay, Alconbury Weald developments may be intensified and Upwood Airfield may be brought forward. c450 homes are being considered for Upwood, of which 125 could be built in the next 5 years.

Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment

An updated version of the 2010 Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment (GTANA) is being coordinated by Huntingdonshire District Council in partnership with South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire and Forest Heath District Councils, St Edmundsbury and Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Councils and Cambridge and Peterborough City Councils. The main purposes of the GTANA are to:

- Inform the development of future housing and planning policy for each respective authority
- Provide information on gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople's accommodation needs both temporary and permanent, including 'bricks and mortar' accommodation
- Gain a better understanding of the pattern of movements and encampments in and between the Councils' administrative areas
- Translate these accommodation needs into five year increments covering the period 2016 to 2036

It is not intended to 'designate' potential sites as occurred in 2011, but instead to take a more holistic, regional view of requirements, which should hopefully avoid the controversy of the last policy initiative.

Neighbourhood and Community Planning

With the exception of Wyton on the Hill which has a potentially large scale development within the parish, the other parishes in the Ward cannot justify a Neighbourhood Plan at this stage and all have instead completed a Community Led Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans only reward parishes in which medium to large scale housing projects are being planned and so unless there is an opportunity for several smaller parishes to 'club together' thereby gaining scale and access to higher CIL contributions, the Community Plan will have to serve its purpose.

However, if the situation should change, parishes may consider the work to upgrade their Community Plans to Neighbourhood status to be worth the effort.

Robin Howe
District Councillor
Upwood and the Raveleys

Cambridgeshire County Council is facing financial challenges on a scale never seen before and have had a very tough year to reach a balanced budget however by liaising with officers and scrutinising strategies the council managed to achieve an under spend of around 5 million pounds. By the year 2020 there will be a gap of £102 million between the funding we have to spend and the funding we need to continue to provide our services, this years budget is even more challenging with savings of 51 million to find.

To achieve, this it will inevitably lead to reduced services. Some services have been cut significantly such as youth work and children's centres and school transport routes have been reviewed and made more streamline, We have merged teams that used to be separate and are now sharing some services with other organisations such as Care Network, the Fire Authority, carers trust, Generally, the county council has moved away from providing services that are classed as being for everyone to access (universal), to services targeted at those that are most vulnerable and in real need, however, the number of people in this group is growing and we are struggling to meet this demand.

One of the main changes the county council has made is the strategy of a programme called transforming lives which is being rolled out from middle of April having proved effective in a pilot scheme where savings were achieved, this strategy is based on outcomes for the most vulnerable and elderly in our communities, part of this strategy is a new point of contact called the early help contact centre this came on line in early April which signposts to community organisations and our more complex services, which should improve the speed of which enquiries are dealt with We have increased the use of technology to meet people's needs, such as assistive technology for older people so they require less face to face visits. However we are still delivering broadly the same services but at a lower cost which has been achieved through reviewing departments and services and making some significant restructures which have resulted in reductions of staff, particularly management. Office space for Council staff has been reduced and, where it remains, the vast majority of staff do not have an assigned desk but have to share space and use a hot desk solution.

In February it was agreed at full council to increase council tax by 2% which is ring fenced for Adult social care which will help alleviate the stress put on to the social care budget in the coming year. the main council tax was not increased.

Discussions have been ongoing on devolution, the county council voted 64 with one abstention to carry on with discussion however the deal that was put forward by government was not accepted and that a new deal should be negotiated and bought back to the Councils, this is an ongoing discussion and will further brief this council when anything is known.

In Upwood Potholes, have been filled and patches put in where necessary, The footpath between Bury and Upwood has had some substantial work completed, new initiatives have been put in place to help mitigate reductions in services to the elderly and most vulnerable, a monthly walk about is now taking place so that any seen problems can be reported ASAP to the appropriate services. A new reporting system is being trailed and if successful will be rolled out in the next couple of months which should speed up the reporting process.