

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY, 28th APRIL 2008 AT 7.45 p.m.

PRESENT

Dr Oakley, Dr Grindley, Mr Allars, Mr Barnes, Mr Bentinck, Mrs Macintyre
District Councillor Deborah Roberts

IN ATTENDANCE

11 members of the public

APOLOGIES

County Councillor David McCraith and Councillor David McKeown

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and briefly described the way it would be run with short speeches of about five minutes duration, each followed by questions.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Dr Oakley proposed that the Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting, held on Monday, 30th April 2007, be taken as read. Dr Grindley seconded the proposal and all were agreed.

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Dr Oakley said the council was much changed since the 2007 Annual Parish Meeting due to several councillors having left before the May 2007 elections and the appointment of new councillors. He thanked the former Chairman, Dudley Pusey, for his continuing contribution to the Dovecote/Meadow project and for his help and advice. He also thanked previous councillors: Brian Hockley had promoted the undertaking of a Parish Plan for Foxton and was now taking a leading role in the project with David Allars representing the Parish Council, and Rob Brooksbank continued helping the village by chairing the Recreation Ground Extension Committee (REGEC).

The council had been sorry to lose the valuable services of Vic Mead in the summer of 2007. David Salmons had now undertaken Vic's work together with a wider range of repairs, tree work etc in a role now dubbed "The Village Warden".

The council had also been sorry to lose Mark Kennedy, who had joined the council in May 2007 and had chaired the Finance Working Party, but had left due to the pressures of work and family commitments. The council had been very pleased to welcome Rachael Macintyre when she joined the council in February 2008.

Dr Oakley mentioned three items of interest:

- Planning Permission had been granted for the development of the Recreation Ground extension and work there was nearly complete.
- The Dovecote restoration had achieved an SCDC Built Heritage Award
- A project was being undertaken to improve the youth facilities in Foxton

All these matters would be covered in ensuing reports later in the meeting.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Mr McCraith had sent in a report, which Dr Oakley read on his behalf as follows:

“This year the County Council has once more received a funding settlement from Central Government that does not reflect the rate of inflation or the amount of extra people that are being encouraged to live and work here to share in the huge amount of economic growth being generated.

The average rise in the amount Government gives Shire counties such as ours is 5.6%. We are the fastest growing county in the country. The Government has given us a rise of just 2.1%, which, in effect, forces the County Council to do more with less money, and to increase Council Tax by the legal maximum of 5%.

The Police have reorganised the way they are fighting crime this year. Neighbourhood Panels have been established, and Foxton is part of the Melbourn panel, which meets monthly to decide what the priorities are for their area. Parish Councillors are invited to these meetings, and I would urge you to go, as they provide an opportunity to monitor how the police are doing and to bring any local problems to their attention so that you can make sure they take the effective action needed to deal with them. Currently the three top priorities here are: 1) anti-social behaviour, 2) house burglaries, and 3) speeding.

The County Council has appointed a new chief executive, Mark Lloyd, who started at the beginning of this month. He has come from Durham City Council and will, I am sure, be a great help to the County in the future.

The area around Cambridge is going to have nearly 50,000 new homes built in the next few years, and the County Council has teamed up with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council, to form two joint planning committees - one for Northstowe (SCDC and County only) and the other, to which I have been elected as joint chairman, is for the Cambridge “fringes”.

With Transport, the County Council has been consulting parish councils regarding what sort of improvements people prefer. The County Council has bid for over £500m worth of improvements from the Government's Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), including better rural bus services and more imaginative use of services such as bus services to railway stations. The Government has not replied yet, but has indicated that it requires some form of congestion charging.

However, the County Council recognise that the improvements need to be substantial, and carried out before any Congestion Charge takes effect, and, of course, if the Government do not make a good enough offer, the County Council is ready to turn the money and congestion charging down completely.

The A10 at Foxton needs to flow smoothly through the crossing. An application for the carwash was made this year to the district council who, on advice from CCC Highways department, turned it down. The carwash was allowed on appeal, which, I believe, puts added pressure on safety and traffic at the crossing.

The Guided Bus scheme is making progress and is on target to open in spring next year. There will be a station at Trumpington Park and Ride and a branch going to

Addenbrookes Hospital, which, with the Addenbrookes access road currently being built, should make it quicker to get to Cambridge.

The County Council is responsible for many different areas, and I am determined to make sure that Foxton gets a good service. I look forward to another year working with your parish council so that together we can give Foxton the best service possible.”

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

Mrs Roberts began by saying that she was grateful and pleased to have been re-elected last May. However, she said that she found her work in Fowlmere and Foxton was more satisfying than that at the SCDC offices at Cambourne, where she had some concerns about the way things were organised. Instances she mentioned included the loss of Advisory Committees, which, although some pruning of some committees was needed, to remove all of them meant that much expertise had been lost to the council. Mrs Roberts said she was also part of a campaign against the transfer of council houses to Housing Associations.

One consequence of the lack of funds was that the council was no longer able to maintain Milton Country Park under present arrangements. Other bad news was that the South Cambridgeshire housing stock would run out of money for repairs in a few years’ time. The council was also carrying out a very expensive (£0.75 million) exercise in consulting with its tenants.

Mrs Roberts also expressed her disappointment about the degree of party political point scoring that was going on.

In conclusion, Mrs Roberts thanked both councillors and parishioners, who she said were a pleasure to work with, and that she would continue to do her best for the village.

REPORTS FROM THE WORKING PARTIES

RECREATION AND AMENITIES

Mr Bentinck reported as follows:

He said the Recreation & Amenities Working Party consisted of himself as chairman, together with Mrs Macintyre, Dr McKeown, Mr Allars, Mr Barnes and Dr Grindley. All the inherent tasks were shared between members, with Mr Barnes having a particular responsibility for matters relating to trees.

Mr Bentinck said that the working party was kept busy and tried to meet monthly to discuss progress. Responsibilities ranged from grass cutting, weed treatment and ground maintenance, through issues concerning trees to ensuring that RoSPA safety checks are carried-out in play areas and recommendations acted on.

One of its best achievements this year had been the employment of David Salmons in the post of “Village Warden”. In this newly expanded role, as well as the routine work of bin emptying, weed treatment etc, Mr Salmons had carried out a range of jobs in the past year including:

- Fitting new swings and chains, and carrying-out groundwork in the play area.

- Concreting the entrance to the Recreation Ground near Edis Way
- Laying plastic tiles, 3 tons of topsoil and grass seeding the path onto the Recreation Ground from Illingworth Way.
- Removing some smaller trees.

Mr Salmons also provided the working party with a monthly report from which members often learned about the more anti-social aspects that had to be dealt with. The council had needed to spend a lot of time and money removing graffiti from the Village Hall, bins, bus stops etc as well as repairs to benches and fences around the Recreation Ground, including the play area, due to vandalism. Beer cans and bottles had to be regularly cleared as well.

Trees

The working party had overseen the removal of two trees from the Recreation Ground - a diseased Horse Chestnut and a Norway Maple with a split trunk. Mr Bentinck said that it was council policy to see that any trees removed were replaced. Two Hornbeam trees donated by the Foxton Gardens Association were being planted in the new Picnic Area in memory of Barbara Orchard and Angela Lloyd. Further plantings were planned for other locations.

On a separate note, Mr Bentinck said that Chris Hindley had offered free tree surgery work to the council for which it was very grateful, as the saving would be most useful.

Other ongoing tree projects included:

- The large Oak Tree in Hall Close where an assessment plan from the Assistant SCDC Tree Officer was awaited
- The removal of a damaged mature Horse Chestnut from the gravel car park by the Recreation Ground. This had been agreed and Mr Barnes was putting this out to tender.
- Work on the Horse Chestnut in front of the Press that was damaged in the gales.
- The removal of a Prunus at the entrance to West Hill Road
- Some tidying of the Limes on Shepreth Rd

Partly owing to RoSPA advice, all the signs around the play area had been replaced. Signs had been erected asking for consideration of residents' privacy for those residents whose houses adjoin the play area. The missing sign marking the Oak tree planted in memory of the Rev Rowlands had been replaced.

Mr Bentinck said that, looking forward, it was the council's aim better to manage the area of land at the borders of the Recreation Ground, in order to provide a more attractive aspect, denser coverage and sympathetic planting. Three members of the working party had met with both the SCDC Landscape Officer and the SCDC Biodiversity Officer and, grants forthcoming, it was hoped to start work this Autumn on Phase 1, which would be the Illingworth Way side, and to commence Phase 2, the St Laurence's Way side, in 2009.

With this in mind, the council issued its usual annual letter to the residents with property adjoining the Recreation Ground, offering them access to it from their rear gardens. However, this time a reminder was included that residents may not carry out any work themselves on this land nor leave any of their grass cuttings or fencing on this council land. Any deviation could jeopardise the project, to the detriment of the village.

Mr Bentinck said that, having heard that many residents had reported unlit street lamps to no avail, the clerk made direct contact with the appropriate CCC officer and they were promptly rectified.

Weed spraying on the Recreation Ground is due imminently. This would primarily be carried out to keep 'plantain' at bay, and, apart from looking nice, would make for a better surface for sports, especially cricket - the contractor would shortly be given the "go-ahead".

The council's largest annual expenditure was the grass cutting of the Recreation Ground and of the verges as far as the end of Barrington Road and beyond Peter Meade's, this being the last year of the four-year contract with the present contractor. Tenders would shortly need to be prepared for the grass cutting in 2009 and beyond. The verges were cut last Friday and an area was missed leading up to the National Speed Limit sign on Fowlmere Rd; and this was being followed up.

Dr Oakley thanked Mr Bentinck for his report and invited questions.

Mr Pusey pointed out that where tree work is required on trees growing in the verges, this is often the responsibility of either the County Council or, occasionally, the District Council.

FINANCE

Dr Oakley said that he had taken over the chairmanship of the Finance Working Party as a temporary measure following Mr Kennedy's resignation from the council. He expressed his gratitude to Peter Sutton, for all his help with both the council's and the Recreation Ground Trust's accounts. Dr Oakley then distributed a table of figures prepared from the income/expenditure accounts showing expenditure in 2007/08 compared with amounts budgeted for in that financial year, together with proposed figures for the 2008/09 budget.

Some contingency reserves had been carried forward to 2008/09. Following the expanded role of the Village Warden, the costs of this service had risen appreciably. Dr Oakley invited questions on his report and the figures he had distributed.

Mr Challis wryly commented that it would be nice if the Parish Council could pass on costs in the same way as the District Council had passed on the cost of street lighting. *Mr Barnes apropos of this and previous remarks said that, where possible he always tried to get the cost of tree works passed to the County or District Councils.*

Mrs Roberts said that SCDC, having economised on lighting, was now trying to establish a plastic bottle collection service.

PLANNING

Mr Barnes reported as follows:

It had been a quieter year than usual. Two public meetings had been held about the proposed development for 3 houses in Mortimers Lane and about the application for a house at the rear of No.65 High Street. In both cases the District Council had paid heed to the Parish Council's concerns.

In addition there had been applications for 1 conservatory, 10 extensions, 4 new houses on two sites and a change of use application from dog-kennels/garden to plumber's yard at 4 Barrington Road.

There had also been a conclusion of sorts to the Parish Council's application for the development of the Recreation Ground extension.

As yet there was no ruling from the Inspector regarding the two "objection sites" adjoining West Hill Road and bordering the A10. Additional details had been requested regarding the housing needs in South Cambridgeshire before a ruling could be made. Mr Barnes added that the proposal for an "eco-town" near Hinxton was an additional factor. Also no final decisions had yet been made about the locations for new gypsy/traveller sites.

The retrospective application for a car-wash facility by the level crossing had been granted on appeal despite the advice from the County Council that it represented a road hazard. The former Q8 garage had still not submitted a planning application as requested by the District Council despite the passage of many months.

In conclusion, Mr Barnes thanked the other members of the working party, especially the vice chairman, Dr Grindley, and District Councillor, Deborah Roberts, for their support throughout the year.

POLICE LIAISON REPORT

Mr Bentinck reported that he and Geoff Barnes formed the Police Liaison group. They tried to keep up with any untoward incidents in the village, partly through the school, of which Geoff was a Governor, but also through word of mouth and direct contact with the Police.

Along with the villages of Melbourn, Meldreth, Fowlmere and Bassingbourn, Foxton was included in the 'Melbourn Neighbourhood Panel' area of the Cambridge Constabulary: its primary contacts were PCSO's Emma Garwood and Lee Nutbeam. Mr Bentinck suggested that if anyone would like a contact phone number or e-mail address for these officers they should see him after the meeting when he would provide this information.

Mr Bentinck said that the Neighbourhood Panel holds quarterly meetings, hosted by the Cambridge Constabulary, with usually about 70 members of the public in attendance. He was pleased to say that Deborah Roberts and David McCraith always attended these meetings, as did he and Mr Barnes - the January meeting had been held here in the main hall.

The Panel, as well as being a platform for all to have a say, allows for discussion of statistics: a copy of the panel's latest report was available at this meeting if anyone would like to have a look. Mr Bentinck read out the latest crime statistics for Foxton

and Fowlmere and said that it was hoped that results for these two villages would, in future, be recorded separately.

The Police also used the opportunity of these meetings to give warning of the types of crime to look out for – most recently a series of ‘distraction burglaries’ in the area aimed at older residents. These warnings could then be mentioned at parish council meetings and, in Foxton’s case, included in Don Challis’s articles in “The Laurentian”.

The Police say they apportion their resources to the three areas that the meetings agree require them most - currently anti-social behaviour in Melbourn and Bassingbourn, burglary from dwellings and speeding. He and Mr Barnes have advised the Police when and where the council would like speed checks carried out.

The next meeting would be on 22nd July, probably at Bassingbourn Village College, although this had yet to be confirmed.

More directly, the council had had to deal with Anti-social behaviour, some vandalism and a fair amount of graffiti. The vandalism was mostly damage to fences, benches and the Village Hall, where paving stones were pulled-up and thrown onto the Pavilion roof, but unfortunately not captured on the CCTV due to being out of its range. Vandalism and graffiti had greatly reduced since the council became more pro-active in its dealings with the younger members of the community. This was in reaction to the problem of youths in hoodies kicking footballs and generally ‘hanging around’ in the doorway of the Village Hall most evenings - something that many older residents found intimidating. Things came to a head and e-mails and letters started to circulate from angry residents. This was the classic ‘kids with nothing to do’ scenario, and the council therefore invited all parties - the residents, the youths and the Police - to the council’s monthly meeting. The outcome was very positive and all parties left in a happier frame of mind. Mr Bentinck said that further steps in this process would be outlined in the ‘Provision of Youth Facilities’ presentation.

Mr Bentinck then summarised crime-related happenings in the village over the last 12 months as follows:

- 3 break-ins in West Hill Rd between July and Sept 2007 - this was a trend in the region at the time
- 2 cars also stolen around the same time
- Police called to attend a noisy party with underage drinkers at the Village Hall in September
- Police called to an incident involving fights at a party in October

Mr Bentinck said that the meeting might be interested to know that Cambridge Constabulary had the 3rd lowest number of Police Officers per 1,000 people in the UK. Despite this shortage, and according to the statistics, Foxton appeared to have the least crime out of all the villages in its Panel area and this must make Foxton a pretty safe place to live in.

Dr Oakley thanked Mr Bentinck for his report and invited questions.

Mrs Howell said that she would like to make it clear that the incident to which the police were called at the Village Hall occurred outside the hall and not in it.

PROVISION OF YOUTH FACILITIES

Mr Bentinck reported as follows:

Following the demise of the superb Youth Club and the Drama Club, always staffed by the same over-stretched stalwarts of the village, there was very little for youngsters (particularly those of a certain age) to do. Those over 11 years were not officially allowed in the Play Area: the hard court was all right but pretty minimalist, and balls disappeared into the undergrowth, and the large football goals would soon be replaced by mobile ones that would only come out for matches.

It was clear that there was a lack of provision for youths between 12 and 16 years of age, and this was partly why there had been problems with anti-social behaviour around the Village Hall.

Subsequently to the parish council meeting mentioned before, when 4 youths came along and spoke very well about their need for some suitable facilities, the council advertised an open meeting to discuss the way forward.

About 20 youths came along and there was a discussion about what facilities they would like to see in the village. These were agreed to be a shelter from bad weather (possibly with solar lighting) located close to somewhere they could kick a ball around without annoying people. The type of shelter needed was discussed and brochures were passed around. The youths offered to carry out fundraising activities and were reminded of the need to stop graffiti and anti-social behaviour if they wanted the council's continued commitment. It was also agreed to meet periodically to discuss progress.

Mr Bentinck said that he and Deborah Roberts were investigating the types of shelter available.

The second, rather ambitious proposal being considered, was to convert the existing hard court area into a proper 5-a-side court surrounded by steel fencing so that footballs/netballs stayed in the court. This could be a great facility for the village.

Meanwhile, the Dirt Bike Track was now open although it remained to lay some grip tiles and perhaps tidy the area with some grass seed and pallsading - this was a great facility for the village and it's location next to the allotments had some benefits for family allotments holders and the avoidance of potential bullying. The council had been advised by RoSPA to put up signs about the wearing of safety helmets etc. Mr Bentinck said that much of the credit for the Bike Track should go to David McKeown and the youngsters who had originally raised funds for this years ago.

Mr Bentinck concluded by saying that, all in all, he thought the council was doing a good job for the youths of the village and that any further ideas were always welcome!

Dr Oakley thanked Mr Bentinck for his report and invited questions.

A spirited discussion ensued with members of the public living on the hard-court side of the Recreation Ground very concerned about the impact that the proposals for a shelter and a fenced-in hard-court might have on them. They feared these facilities would give rise to noise and anti-social behaviour and that the problems experienced outside the Village Hall were simply being transferred to their side of the Recreation Ground. They were also concerned that they had not been consulted.

As the atmosphere was getting somewhat heated, Dr Grindley, through the chair, said a few words about the issues involved. He said that the process needed to be clarified. The council had encountered a problem and had tried to deal with it by talking, in the first instance, to the youths involved. Their needs had been identified and the council was presently looking at the possibilities for filling them. Once the council had the necessary information to put forward a proposal, all those with an interest in the matter would be invited to see what was proposed and give their views.

REPORT ON THE PARISH PLAN PROJECT

Mr Allars said that Brian Hockley had been the driving force in getting this project “off the ground”. A steering group, with members from all age groups, had been set up and had held three meetings so far. The Plan would be made for the village once the questionnaire being devised had been completed and the responses analysed. When complete, the plan would be in the form of a properly bound document.

The questionnaire should be going out to parishioners in the summer and responses (anonymous) would then be collected at a later date. South Cambridgeshire District Council had given a grant of £1,500 towards the project. An advantage of having a Parish Plan in place was that it could be considered by other bodies when considering developments and projects affecting the parish.

Dr Oakley thanked Mr Allars for his report and invited questions. Mrs Roberts said that SCDC would use a Parish Plan as supplementary planning guidance.

RECREATION GROUND TRUST REPORT

In Dr McKeown’s absence, Dr Oakley read his report:

The Trustees, newly formed following a new Parish Council in May 2007, met six times during the year. At the first Meeting the Officers were elected, these being:

Chairman	Nigel Oakley
Vice-Chair	Geoff Barnes
Treasurer	Mark Kennedy
Correspondent	David McKeown

Initially, the long outstanding defects to the structure of the Pavilion and Village Hall occupied much time, but these were slowly resolved and were now being handled as ongoing maintenance. A Joint Meeting of the Village Hall Trustees and the Recreation Ground Trust (RGT) was arranged in February 2008 to ensure clear communication on such issues. It was resolved to continue these joint meetings.

The Constitution (Trust Deed) of the RGT was also a topic of concern as the new group took over. A meeting was held with our solicitor, giving the opportunity for all Trustees to gain an understanding of the position and the reason for the change requested by the outgoing Trustees. After careful consideration, the Trustees decided not to progress with a new Trust Deed and to continue to operate under the terms of the 2000 Constitution.

Finance control had remained secure, though the resignation of the Treasurer led to some delay in appointing signatories from the other Trustees. This had now been resolved for the bank accounts and was being addressed for the investment accounts. Nigel Oakley had been acting Treasurer for the remainder of the year. One decision

that Trustees made on finance was that to continue to seek contributions from the County Council to the maintenance fund for the years prior to 2005 was futile. The matter was therefore closed.

Following Mark Kennedy's resignation, the Trustees numbered only six, but Rachael Macintyre was co-opted to the Parish Council in February, thus bringing the Trustee numbers to seven.

Registration of the various small parcels of land owned by the Parish Council and the RGT had progressed slowly during the year. The solicitor had all documents bar the land valuation, which was in hand - John Callin having volunteered to carry it out for the Trustees, for which they were most grateful. The Trustees expected imminently the finalisation of title to these parcels of land, primarily around the Recreation Ground.

A long-running saga had been the obtaining of planning permission for the Recreation Ground Extension. Eventually a meeting was held with Gareth Jones, Corporate Manager, Planning and Sustainable Communities, at SCDC, during which Colin Grindley and Geoff Barnes were able to extract permission qualified only by the Trust's need to submit a landscaping plan within a year. This allowed contracts to be placed in February and March for the necessary earthwork and fencing and, as could be seen, the work was now complete.

The implementation of the sub-projects on the Extension Site had been handled by the Recreation Ground Extension Committee and the Trustees were grateful for their efforts.

REPORT ON DOVECOTE/MEADOW PROJECT

Mrs Macintyre reported as follows:

Mrs Macintyre said the highlight of the past year had been in March when the council was awarded an SCDC "Built Heritage Award" for the restoration of the dovecote. Dudley Pusey and Deborah Roberts attended the awards ceremony on March 11th and received a certificate. *Mrs Macintyre held up the framed certificate so that those present could see it.* Mrs Macintyre said the certificate would be displayed in the Village Hall in due course.

During the year a damp problem had appeared inside the dovecote, which was believed to be caused by moisture penetration of the brickwork that was evident after a spell of heavy rain. Following its restoration, the building was now better sealed, and consequently less well ventilated than it had been before. Friends of the Dovecote had been advised by the project's architect, Simon Ward, that the lower brickwork, which was weathering and hence disintegrating, should be sealed with a damp-proofing product. Mrs Macintyre said that this would be carried out at some future date during a spell of dry weather. In order to improve the ventilation in the building, a series of holes had been drilled in the door to improve airflow and the damp problem had dramatically improved. The planned artefact display, which was mentioned in last year's report, had been delayed until the group was sure that the damp problem had been cured.

In addition to the swift and bat boxes, a Barn Owl box was now being built using the internal beams as supports. Mrs Macintyre said she was not sure whether the swift and bat boxes had yet been occupied.

The Friends Group continued with a twice-yearly management of the meadow in May and September when a group of volunteers from the Wildlife Trust and volunteers from the village, cut the grass and rake it into heaps. The wild flower plugs planted about 2 years ago had been disappointing and the group had recently sown some more seed to try and improve the wild flower mixture in the meadow.

Ecological monitoring was done annually in early June when all species were recorded in quadrants of 1 metre square at 10 metre intervals across the meadow. By doing this it was possible to tell whether certain species were becoming more prevalent or not.

Finally, Mrs Macintyre said that it was good to see the footpath across the meadow being well-used by people going over to the school and to the village hall.

Dr Oakley thanked Mrs Macintyre for her report. There were no questions.

FOXTON TOWN LANDS TRUSTEES' REPORT

Mr Challis reported as follows:

He said that the Charity continued to be administered under the Charity Commission by the three Trustees, himself, David Boreham and Nigel Oakley. The only income the charity had remained the rent of £350 per annum from a plot of land in Fowlmere Road.

The accounts for the year ended 31st December 2007 were:

Cash at Bank	£3,636.07
Rent	£350.00
Interest from Bank	£83.44

Mr Challis said that during the year the charity had made grants to the Sports Clubs of £500 towards the provision of tables in the Sports Pavilion, and to the Help Group of £300 to assist the group in its various activities. There was therefore a balance of £2,269.51 in the Bank Account at the beginning of the year.

Dr Oakley thanked Mr Challis for his report. There were no questions.

FOXTON HELP GROUP

Mrs Sanderson, the Help Group secretary reported as follows:

The Help Group committee had continued in the past year to help with social and care needs for the senior citizens in the village. Mrs Sanderson said that, as far as she knew, there was currently no need for the services of a Village Community Warden.

The car scheme, providing lifts by car to necessary local appointments, had been used as follows:

9 drivers (from a total of 20 volunteers available with the necessary CRB checks) had been used in the last year: they had made a total of 85 journeys adding up to 886 miles, to doctors' and dentists' surgeries, and to Addenbrookes hospital. These totals were approximately 70% of those in the previous twelve months.

Both the Harston and Melbourn surgeries provided a local session for 'flu jabs in the Sports pavilion and the Committee provided some administration and refreshments to make these events as efficient and pleasant as possible.

On the social front, the Help Group had continued with the apparently popular pattern of events including afternoon teas, a Christmas lunch and coach trips. After the very popular trip to Bletchley Park National Codes Centre last year, trips to Norwich and to London (to see "The Sound of Music") had also been arranged. A full coach trip was anticipated for the trip to Burghley House and Barnsdale gardens in three weeks' time.

Dr Oakley wound up the meeting by saying that members of the public were always welcome to attend the council's meetings, usually held on the first Monday of the month, and keep abreast of what was happening in the village. He concluded by thanking David McCraith, Deborah Roberts, his fellow councillors and the clerk for their continuing help and support.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10pm.