



Aynho Annual Village Report, 2025

Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting, 2025

By Dawn Willis, Chairman, Aynho Parish Council

Introduction and Welcome

Welcome everyone to the Aynho Annual Parish Meeting.

2024-2025 has seen Aynho Parish Council running at full capacity of nine Councillors, for most of the year. Since our last Annual Village Meeting, we have welcomed three new Councillors: Poppy Hoole, Richard Rees and Jerry Stephenson. All Councillors give their time on a voluntary basis and we are grateful for the input each of the Councillors have made in ensuring the smooth governance of the village. All Councillors are re-elected after four years and will require this in the forthcoming elections to be held on 1 May 2025. Two Councillors have decided not to stand for re-election in May. Simon Wormald has decided to retire and his knowledge of parish governance will be greatly missed. Alan Beaumont is stepping down after a hectic year, during which time he has helped with financial administration, representing the Council on the Village Hall Committee and practical work on the Pavilion. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for their hard work on the Parish Council. They will be greatly missed.

If anyone is considering standing and joining us, we are a richly diverse team with a variety of interests and perspectives. As Chairman, I enjoy ensuring everyone is heard and that all matters are discussed in a proper and orderly manner. However, there are times when I call time on discussion and move to vote, as I am keen that all meetings conclude within the two hours allocated for meetings.

This year has seen the retirement of a much-appreciated member of the Council: our Responsible Finance Officer (RFO), Stephen Brooke. Stephen stepped into the breach 4 years ago, following a short break from previous Councillor and Chairman duties. He has

administered Aynho Parish Council's finances in accordance with the relevant regulations and has advised us on a range of financial matters, such as the annual budget forecast and reporting on ongoing incomes and expenditures. His many years' experience of Parish Council procedures and the ready advice he has provided on protocols and governance will be greatly missed. Following Stephen's retirement, our Clerk, Alan Youel, has added the role of RFO to his position of Clerk, a practice which has become commonplace with many local parish councils.

Current APC Members and Staff at the time of writing: Alan Youel, Clerk and RFO; and councillors Dawn Willis Chairman, Alan Beaumont Vice-Chairman, Poppy Hoole, Leslie Horley, Helen Mackenzie, Richard Rees, Jerry Stephenson, Ray Willis and Simon Wormald.

Planning

APC made comment on a range of planning applications throughout the year 2024-2025. Many applications moved forward to a successful conclusion, with, at the time of writing the only outstanding application for resolution being the development of the Cartwright Hotel. This application is of keen interest to the vast majority of residents and we will keep everyone informed of future developments, as they come to our attention. The current temporary car park on Station Road, for RH staff and visitors has been extended until end of October 2025.

Maintenance of Village and Facilities

Cllrs Ray Willis, Alan Beaumont, Richard Rees, Jerry Stephenson and Dawn Willis worked hard to ensure facilities were maintained around the village throughout the year.



This included fitting a new kitchen in the Pavilion: repairing and repainting the floor, revamping the changing rooms, including decorating and fitting storage cupboards. The amenity now looks fresh and modern and is a delightful facility to use for sports and recreational events. Much needed work has been carried out to the exterior of the Pavilion, including replacing the weather-worn timber of the west-side of the building. Further maintenance will continue through the coming year.



The Council have fulfilled its commitment to fully resurface the tennis court, which should provide a wonderful asset for many years to come. Whilst residents can continue to use the court on an ad-hoc basis free of charge, there is a small fee to pre-book the court for exclusive use. There is a reasonable charge for users who do not live in the village. Please refer to our website for full details of these charges.



Work has also been conducted at the Play Park, such as replacing the seating bench situated around the silver birch tree. This had become rotten, and its replacement had become an urgent priority. A new picnic bench has been added to the Play Park, and we will be continuing the upkeep of this facility throughout the coming year.

We have replaced four dog-waste-bins around the village, as the previous bins had fallen in to a state of disrepair.

The salt bin was replaced on Portway, as, like the dog-waste-bins, it had become irreparable.

RJ Ground Care have been awarded the grass-cutting contract for the next two years. We have been very pleased with their work around the village and have received a number of compliments on their behalf, from residents.

Village Clean-up Days



We arranged a village clean-up/maintenance day and were grateful for all those who volunteered to help improve the appearance of the village and Sports Field. As ever, many hands make light work and we would appeal to all those who are able to, please endeavour to help us on our next clean-up day, this Autumn.

Traffic Management

Aynho Parish Council, once again, conducted a Speed Watch Survey and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those residents and councillors who gave their valuable time for this. As a result of our efforts, we recorded 279 speeding offenders within the four week period, and 192 letters were sent to offending motorists by Northamptonshire Police. As a

consequence of the survey, we decided to increase our efforts to more effectively manage the speed of traffic through the village.



The instillation of 20mph Advisory Speed Signs are a welcome addition to the further Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) for the village. Whilst there will always be those who ignore the signs, it is pleasing that there are those who do adhere to the request and some traffic has slowed down as a result of the signs. These, alongside the road safety initiatives currently being undertaken by West Northants Council, will hopefully make a big difference in the years to come.

A zebra crossing, a long-standing West Northants Council initiative, will soon be completed, and is a much-needed development for all those using the Village Hall. Aynho Parish Council liaised with Kier, Highways to minimise any negative impacts.

As you would expect, traffic safety is a priority for the Council, and we will be exploring future traffic management initiatives in the coming year.



Station Road Pedestrian Track

At the end of the winter period, a team of councillors and residents ensured that a walkable track on Station Road was cleared, allowing pedestrian access between the village and The Wharf.

Keeping this track clear will be an ongoing challenge, but the more it is used, the more defined the path will become.

We would like to stress that this is not a pathway, so sturdy footwear is highly advised. Please refer to the highway code regarding pedestrian use of verges on the highway.

The track will be included in our future litter-pick campaigns and any help in keeping the track clear will be greatly appreciated.

Going Forward

2025 will offer opportunities for residents to work with Aynho Parish Council to ensure that Aynho continues to be a desirable, safe and welcoming place to live. We will help launch a Neighbourhood Watch scheme, including a Street Watch initiative. Indeed, this will be

discussed tonight, so there will be every opportunity for anyone who wishes to be involved, will be able to do so and join those who have shown an interest. We will continue to endeavour to make our streets safe by managing traffic speeds throughout the village.



We will also be repairing damaged areas to the running track in the coming year. Whilst much of the track is wearing well, there is some tree-root damage to some sections of the track.

We will further encourage residents to become involved in improving our community in a variety of ways, whether helping with speed-watch campaigns, village clean-up and maintenance days, or more formally, by joining initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Finance

Aynho Parish Council Annual Return
Accounts for Year from 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025

All accounts are available for inspection under usual rules for public funds. (rfo@aynho-pc.gov.uk). This is prepared based on the information in "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: a Practitioners' Guide" Important note: These figures have been prepared on a RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS basis.

Box No.	Description	Year ending	
		31/03/2024 £	31/03/2025 £
1	Balances brought fwd	28,851	41,431
2	Annual precept	28,875	30,318
3	Total other receipts	7,340	15,987
4	Staff Costs	2,135	8,366
5	Loan interest/capital repayment	2,080	2,080
6	Total other payments	19,420	30,302
7	Balances carried forward	41,431	46,987
8	Total Cash and Short Term Inve	41,431	46,987
9	Total Fixed Assets and Long Ter	146,123	147,203
10	Total Borrowings	2,080	2,080

* Note :- An asterisk to the right of the box indicates it is an item that has changed by more than 15% and £200 from the previous year and probably warrants a comment in your notes. This is only an indication and should not be considered exclusive. You will only see asterisks if this is the second year you have used the report .

All comments regarding the Report can be made to: The Clerk, email: clerk@aynho-pc.gov.uk, Tel: 01869 934164 or by using the online form on the Contact Us page, www.aynho-pc.gov.uk.

The Parish Council is responsible for the financial governance of the parish of Aynho. Our funds come from: the precept (a supplement which is added to the council tax of every council tax paying household); income from renting parish council owned assets; fundraising events held by the parish council or donations made to the council from fund raising events organised by residents. Over the years, this has included: Pavilion and Sports Field rentals, car boot sales, village lottery, fete and quiz and curry nights. The council greatly appreciates the efforts of all those residents who have been proactive in raising finances in this way.

The precept is spent on the ongoing, day-to-day, year-on-year, running costs and general upkeep and maintenance of parish council assets, notably the Play Park and Sports Field. It is also spent on cutting grass verges, street-lighting and emptying dog waste bins.

Rental income and donations from fund raising events have been spent this year on additional projects which further improve community well-being, such as fully resurfacing the tennis court, fitting a new kitchen in the pavilion and installing a new defibrillator at the Pavilion. These improvements to the Sports Field could not have taken place without support from residents helping to boost parish council finances and workers giving their time freely.

Aynho Gardening Club

The Aynho Gardening Club follows a programme of events for the year which is published at the November AGM of the previous year. These events take place on the second Wednesday of the month from January to November. The meetings are held in the Village Hall and involve a talk about a garden/plant related topic. This is followed by refreshments and time for a chat. Once a year a day trip to a chosen garden is arranged. A visit to a local garden is also arranged in the summer. The AGM takes place in November, followed by entertainment and 'bring and share' Buffet. We are a friendly Club with around 40 + members. The yearly subscription for Membership to the AGC remains at £12. Guests are welcome to come on the evening for £3.

The 2024 programme was carried out in full. We had several good talks, along with a day visit to Kelmarsh Hall. The cost of booking a large coach for a small club is now prohibitive so the local Ability bus was used and was a great success. The garden was well worth a visit, and some had time to see around the house too.

In July we visited two gardens in The Butts. Firstly, we visited the McClellan's garden – a very lovely well-established garden, then onto the Stephenson's beautifully designed and recently planted garden. The Stephenson's generously hosted the evening with wine and canapes. A thoroughly enjoyable, if breezy, evening was had by the large number of people who came. In August we held the 40th Flower and Vegetable Show which went well with a good number of entries considering the inclement weather during the run-up to the Show. This is a village event – anyone can enter the classes, we enjoy seeing the children



and their parents to take part. The Aynho Gardening Club Committee work very hard to put on this event and we greatly appreciate and encourage the participation of those living in the village.

The AGC Committee appreciate the Village Hall as a facility where we can hold our evenings and the annual show in a well organised and clean space. We thank the Village Hall Committee for all they do to enable this.

New members to the AGC are always very welcome – members do not require any particular knowledge of gardening techniques or plant names, just an interest in gardening matters. Information about the Gardening Club can be found in the Newsletter or on the village website or ring Annabel Bellamy (810847) or members on the Committee.

Report written by Chair Aynho Gardening Club, Annabel Bellamy

Aynho Ladies Group

The Aynho Ladies Group meet on the third Wednesday in the month at the Village Hall. Our membership this year has remained stable so although some ladies have left having moved away others who have moved into the village have joined. We have talks on a wide variety of topics, which this year have included Innovations in Medical Technology, Otmoor Nature

Reserve, Energy Pathways, the 17th Century Grand Tour, Medical Assistance Alert Dogs as well as The Secrets and Scandals of Canons Ashby which was a joint meeting with the History Society.

Once a year we have a Garden Meeting which in 2024 was held at the Pavilion. This proved to be a good choice as it was a very hot afternoon and we were able to sit in the Pavilion out of the heat and enjoy the delicious food our members had provided. As well as the Garden Meeting we also usually have a Christmas lunch but decided this year to have an anniversary lunch in April instead to celebrate the launch of the Aynho Ladies Group.

We hold coffee mornings at the Village Hall on the first two Wednesdays in the month. As well as these we have three special ones; one in December when we have mulled wine and mince pies, then ones at Easter and in August when we serve a selection of homemade cakes. All these coffee mornings are open to everyone and are very popular and well attended.

New members to Aynho Ladies Group are always welcome or, if you are not sure, come as a guest to start with. For more details go to the village website www.aynho.org (Clubs & Societies) or

Contact Jill 01869 811206
Email: jayrw10@gmail.com.

Winter Lunch Club

November 2024-March 2025

Winter Lunch Club was held on most Thursdays from November 2024 until the end of March 2025 in the Dame Mary Cartwright Room in the Village Hall, 12.15pm-1.30pm. It is an opportunity for villagers to come together and enjoy a

homecooked meal at very reasonable cost once a week. This year many 'regulars' returned and we welcomed some new faces. There is no membership required, all I ask is that you sign up by midday on the Monday of the relevant week (maximum number of places available is 22) so that I have time to buy ingredients and then prepare them! I run WLC for the community and after costs (hall hire and ingredients) this year all profit was donated to the village hall. An average of 14 villagers attended each week which adds up to a lot of lunches eaten. The total amount of profit made was £1,760 which will help with various small village hall improvement projects.

My wonderful team of volunteers who help front of house, Sheila, Glenwys, Shirie and Ailsa all returned to help over this past winter so a huge thank you to them. Without their time and cheerfulness WLC would not happen.

Thank you to all who supported WLC this past winter.

Amanda Limb

Aynho Writers

Aynho Writers meet in the Mary Cartwright Room in the Village Hall at 10.00 am on the second Saturday of the month. The meetings last between two and two and a half hours. We have three facilitators who take it in turns for four months each to set the subjects and chair the meetings. Three new members have joined in the last year to replace the three who have left. We currently have 18 members. At each meeting, we read our contributions for the group to comment on. We have a limit of 700 words. In addition, we produce an annual publication. We are now in our

29th year, and our publication this year was, Notes from a Village Hall. This year we have invited writers to speak to us about the source of their writing and their publications. Several members have had work published. Particular thanks to Helen MacKenzie who manages our finances and Jayne Ryman who has produced our last four publications. New members may come to a meeting free of charge to see if it suits them. To join costs £5 membership fee and £3.00 a meeting.

Contact: Keith McClellan

Email: keithcarolmac@gmail.com

Tel: 07512437291

The Village Allotments



There are 18 village allotments on the Charlton Road between 1st and 2nd crossing. There was 100% occupancy in 2024. Allotmenters are from Aynho or have connections with Aynho and live in nearby villages (Charlton (3) and Bloxham (2)). The plots are a very good size – about 5mx12m – each with their own access path and mostly fenced in to protect from rabbits. It is a little haven as a nature reserve! 2024 was a good year to grow. Each year one or two allotments become available for new allotmenters; watch out for the November newsletter for the contact details. Do drop in and speak

to any of the existing allotmenters if you want to find out more information.

The allotments are contained within a hedge, have a central path dividing the whole into two halves; there is an access gate off the Charlton Road and parking for about 8 cars on the verge. Rents remain £5 for a full plot and £2.50 for an half or quarter plot; costs for services were £17.50 in 2024 reflecting the need for changes to the water supply, the water used, and the hedge/ grass cutting . Good value – good exercise – good fun – great veg and flowers. Do join the community and give it a try there will be part plots available in 2026!



History and Charitable Status. The allotments are part of Aynho’s history. An historic charity runs the allotments on what was described as Poor’s Land “an allotment, of about one acre.....which appear, by a conveyance to trustees in the reign of Charles 1, to have been purchased with some ancient benefactions to the poor of Aynhoe” . Nowadays the rents, as arranged by the Trustees, for each plot (currently £5) are distributed

annually to the poor of Aynho up to a total of about £90. There is no other income. The Charity is called Poor's Piece Charity and "excepted from the requirement to register" with the Charity Commission (since 2008) in view of the very low annual income.

A N Bellamy, Tel: 07795087874

Aynho Bridge Club

The Aynho Bridge Club (ABC) was established during December 2022 and the first bridge games commenced during January 2023. During the second half of 2022, initial soundings were taken and there were expressions of interest from 3 or 4 villagers who had played bridge before and surprisingly there was also interest from some younger players who had never played before but wanted to learn. A bridge coaching evening was arranged in late 2022 using an outside tutor and it was very well attended and this led to the first bridge games being played during January 2023 at the Cartwright Arms Hotel.



We play on the second and fourth Mondays of every month at 7 for 7.15pm at the Pickled Ploughman in Adderbury, and we try to accommodate 8, 12 or 16 players on the night. We play Contract Bridge only and not the Duplicate method. Bridge play requires four players per table. The 2024 bridge year was an outstanding

success. We have persuaded both experienced and new players to join the club and enjoy themselves – it is a very social game.

Bridge playing in 2025 has started strongly at Aynho. We now have a small contingent of bridge players who join us regularly from neighbouring villages, and we recently introduced a second bridge night within the month.

Almost 30 bridge members and their partners attended the annual dinner hosted by the Pickled Ploughman who provided a splendid 3 course meal together with some excellent wine. In addition to the usual toasts, fellow villager Faraz Shibli read out another bridge-related poem – The Bridge Forecast (a humorous take on the BBC's nightly Shipping Forecast), which was much enjoyed by all.

Contacts: The ABC is managed jointly by Faraz Shibli and Kevin D'Silva
Email: kevinds@salusinvest.com

Aynho Apricots Running Club



We are a social running club that caters for runners of all ages and abilities. We usually meet on Sunday mornings at 9am on Portway for local runs, although we occasionally drive to a run beginning in a nearby village. Organisation takes place

via WhatsApp. Routes and distances vary, but we tend to run around 5-10km on roads and sometimes trails at a pace that is comfortable for all. We often begin by running a few laps of the track at the sports field together, before splitting off into those who wish to remain on the track and those who wish to run on the road or a trail.



We currently have 23 members. Outside of our Sunday runs, some members have run together in official races, such as the Oxford Half Marathon and the Deddington Four Farms Challenge. We also organise the annual Great Aynho Half Pub Run, which involves running a half marathon (13.1 miles), with stops at several local pubs, starting and finishing in Aynho.

Contact: Faraz Shibli
Email: faraz.shibli@oxon.org,
Tel: 07742 906 780

Aynho Apricots Cycling Club

We are a social cycling club that caters for cyclists of all ages and abilities. We usually meet at 9am outside the Cartwright Hotel on the first Sunday and third Saturday of every month for group rides, with a stop for a hot drink and cake or breakfast.



We ride on roads, but riders use a range of bikes, including road bikes, mountain bikes, hybrids and electric bikes, with the recent addition of a tandem!



We currently have 29 members. Organisation takes place via WhatsApp. Routes and distances vary, but we tend to ride around 25-30km at a pace that is comfortable for all. A smaller number of members also ride longer distances together and some also ride together virtually using a stationary bike and an online platform called Zwift. These rides are also organised via WhatsApp.



Some members drove to the Vosges mountains of eastern France and rode together for three days in 2024. We are aiming to organise a foreign tour in 2026.

Contact: Faraz Shibli,
Email: faraz.shibli@oxon.org
Tel: 07742 906 780

Social Dog Walking



The dog walking club meets on weekdays around lunchtime, but occasionally at other times and on weekends. Organisation takes place via WhatsApp, and we usually arrange a time and place to meet on the morning of the walk itself. Walks tend to take place either in the village or a short drive away, in places such as Clifton, Deddington, Kings Sutton and Stoke Woods, and generally take around 45-60 minutes. We currently have 13 members.

Contact: Faraz Shibli,
Email: faraz.shibli@oxon.org
Tel: 07742 906 780

Aynho History Society

Our programme began in March with a detailed and in-depth talk from Pippa Gwilliam on “The Wonder of Woodstock”. Pippa had volunteered at Blenheim Palace for many years and brought with her a fascinating insight to the evolution of Woodstock.

April saw the return of Wendy Raybould who covered the “West Haddon Enclosure Riot” detailing the troubles within the changing face of the countryside in the C16th.

We were treated to an insightful talk in May from Maureen Paterson on the National Trust’s property at Waddesdon with a “History of Waddesdon Gardens”.

The first part of the year ended in June when the author and singer Kevin O’Regan delivered a talk on his latest book about the work of the ‘Air Transport Auxiliaries’ highlighting the 2nd World War efforts of this little-known group of air personnel; many of whom were women.

Following our summer break, we met again in September alongside the Aynho Ladies group when Laura Malpass described some of the “Secrets and Scandals” of Canons Ashby. Another nearby National Trust House containing unique secrets of its past inhabitants.

Our taste buds were tempted in October when John Paul Carr talked about Palmers Ilchester pie factory in “Pork Pie Heaven” accompanied by appropriate ‘samples’ of a current comparable pie.

The year ended in November at our AGM with mulled wine; mince pies and a talk from Helen Mackenzie based on a letter from Arnold (Bill) Pyatt who was an evacuee in Aynho during World War 2 entitled “The Kindness of Aynho Village”. A Quiz on Aynho was also held with a photographic ‘walk’ around the village based on a tour written by Keith McClellan.

Finally – are you interested in your village History? Do have a look at the excellent resources contained on the Village website <https://aynho.org/category/history-society/> Here Jill Wightman has produced a comprehensive and brilliantly catalogued Aynho Archive. Well worth a visit!

Programme for 2025

23rd April

Tales and Legends of Northamptonshire
by Steve Dimmer

28th May

Olive Gibbs by Liz Woolley

25th June

William Morris by Christine Rose

July/August - holiday

24th September

The Truth Behind the Crown by Matthew
Dennison

15th October

Discovering the Invisible by Keith Wescott
(with Aynho Ladies)

26th November

AGM/Wine & Mince Pies/Remembering
your Memories Questionnaire

All are welcome –

7.30pm Village Hall - £4.00 on the door

Contact Helen Mackenzie (07866 044985)

Well-Being Walks

There are currently two levels of walks led by several qualified walk leaders so the walks are different each week.

One is a more leisurely pace for approximately 2 or 3 miles and lasts a little over the hour or longer if needed. We walk at the pace which is comfortable for all. The second walk is more challenging and walked at a brisk pace for an average of 6 miles. These walks usually take around 2 hours.

If you are new to the village or just want to get out and about a bit more and meet some new faces this is the group for you. The walks cover Souldern, Kings Sutton, The Canal, Croughton and everywhere in between. The views are spectacular.



There is no need to pre book, just come along. All new walkers are very welcome. However, the walks are not suitable for pushchairs as we often go across country and over stiles and gates. Sturdy footwear is recommended.



We meet at the Sports Field Pavilion every Thursday and set off at 10.00am come rain or shine. On returning to the Pavilion, there are some light refreshments for sale. A nice cup of tea, a slice of cake and an opportunity to relax is always a welcome sight after the walks.

There is no fee for the walks but we ask for a voluntary 50p towards the running costs of the Pavilion.

This year, the Parish Council has endeavoured to make Aynho Wharf more accessible by foot, and we are pleased to say that we have taken full advantage of this and have enjoyed adding new options to our range of local walking routes.



Dawn Willis

The Village Almshouses – John Baker Charity



Throughout 2024 our Almshouses remained at full occupancy once again, with the residents looking out for each other and enjoying life in the community. Our regular maintenance continued and the gardening help made a great difference for some of the less able residents. There were no major projects to be done as all the houses are in good order.

The Almshouses are run by the John Baker Charity, itself made up of Trustees living within the village and being the representatives of the Parochial Church

Council and the Parish Council. Between them the trustees cover the roles of welfare, administration, property management and financial management. The installation of our new Rector, George, in July meant that we had a full complement of Trustees. However, we will be looking to recruit some new people to join us this year as one has now left the village and another is finding it a bit more difficult to cope due to age and health. If anyone is interested in taking on such a role, please contact myself or Andrew Bellamy. It is not onerous, I promise you.

Villagers who might be interested in a future vacancy for themselves or for a member of their family, or who would like more information about living in an Almshouse, are requested to contact the trustees via the village website where there is background information and the financial reports for 2024 and previous years:

https://aynho.org/village_life/alms-houses/.

Application forms can be obtained from me, Kathy White at:

kathywhiteaynho@gmail.com

St Michael's Church

2024 was a year of two halves – the first in which we continued without a rector, the second saw the arrival and installation in late July of Reverend George Frost – and how much better the second half as been! How delighted we are to have a Rector back in the village and working across the Benefice after 2 years of vacancy. We look forward to a long and happy stay for George in the community. Most will know that George came from his Curate's job up near Towcester where he completed his training – but he is a Northamptonshire man through and through, from a farming background.

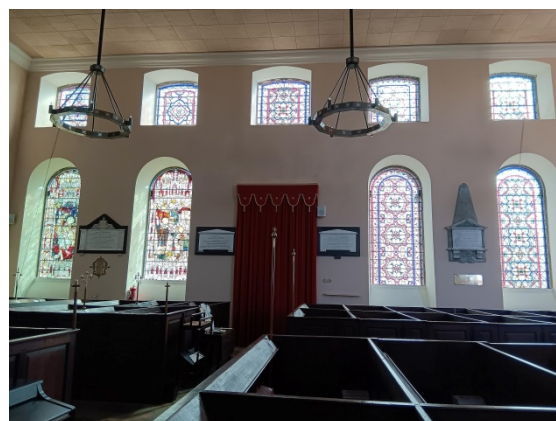


We are thankful for the support of retired clergy and lay readers who have helped us through the first part of the year. We managed 2 services a month in the first half and have now returned to the normal 3 for St Michael's, with the third Sunday being shared between the other churches in the Benefice. The details of all services are in the village Newsletter and on the website as are all the contact details for Reverend George and the Churchwardens, presently Kathy White and Andrew Bellamy.

Although not bursting at the seams for Sunday services there are a large group of parishioners who attend services, worship and share refreshments afterwards. The percentage attendance is up on the national average so something must be a bit better than normal! A time for reflection about the week gone and the week to come with familiar words, bible stories and prompting guidance from the pulpit, all makes for a different day in the week and a chance to catch one breath. Everyone is welcome and the Church community would love it if more villagers came from time to time – St Michael's Church is a beautiful place in itself – a credit to the village stonemasons who rebuilt and opened it after just 18 months work, in April 1725.

The fabric of the building remains in good condition – a 100-year-old roof keeps the rain out; the heating system was successfully replaced in the first quarter of

the year and we now have infra-red warmth emanating from the six splendid chandeliers; the old boiler, pipes and radiators have gone. We have gone "green". The clock tower and bells are in good condition and are rung regularly. On the latter the policy is for a long ring, known as a Peal, to happen only 3 times a year – once on a weekday, once on a Saturday, and once on one of the bank Holiday Mondays.



The Church is of course available for weddings, blessings, baptisms and funerals or burials as it has been for 700 years. Contact Reverend George whenever a need arises or you need to make preparations.

Aynho Cricket Club

The Aynho Cricket Club (ACC) was re-established in January 2023 and has now completed two successful playing seasons as an established club under the charter of the English Cricket Board (ECB) and operates under guidance from the Northamptonshire County Cricket Club. The club has an established constitution and an annually elected board with the mission to play non-league, friendly cricket matches at Aynho (and now with reciprocal matches away) with local and visiting clubs and to actively facilitate the introduction of cricket to village and local children, from the age of 5.

The ACC has active playing members who are all from the village. During the 2023 and 2024 seasons the home cricket matches were well supported by Aynho villagers who came to watch and enjoy a cup of tea at the Denis Compton Pavilion, and many stayed on after the match to enjoy a drink and the barbeque that was hosted by the Club. Matches start at 2pm and normally end after 5pm.

In the 2024 season, the club had 7 fixtures and the current 2025 fixture list (from end May to mid-September) shows an increase in matches to 9, with some 5 home matches and 4 away matches, reflecting the growing interest in both the village and local villages in developing cricket as a community activity for all. The dates for these will be published in the Aynho Parish newsletter or are available from any board member (contact details below). There are also regular net sessions - winter and summer – open to all, to hone your bowling arm or perfect that cover drive.



Aynho v Souldern, 16 June 2024

The club is a member of the ECB All Stars programme and coaching commences each year in May and ends in early July each year. Parents of children (aged between 5-8 yrs old) attending the All Stars programme participate actively in managing coaching sessions and receive formal training and guidance from ECB programmes. The All Stars sessions

during 2025 are being held on a Saturday morning and start at 10.00 am for an hour. Last year most sessions had over 20 children being coached and this year 22 children have entered the programme to date, many returning from the previous year.

And now, after two successful years of running All Stars, there are a number of children moving up into the next age bracket. To support and encourage their continued involvement in cricket, ACC has set up an Under 9s programme this year which will focus on further development of core skills and an introduction to 8 a-side pairs cricket. These sessions will be led by ACC members who have completed the necessary ECB coaching courses and have been made possible by the efforts of ACC to improve the outfield and purchase roll out wickets which will allow the children to play pairs cricket. We hope that a successful season will establish the U9s programme as the next step from All Stars and keep local children involved as they move through the age groups.

The re-establishment of the ACC in 2023 would not have been possible without the support of the Parish Council, and the club continues to work closely with the PC to develop the sport for the benefit of the community.

Essential to developing and growing our cricket club is the establishment of an ever-improving wicket and outfield. These usually take many seasons to create from start, but the work and dedication of our volunteers has been invaluable.

In particular, the wickets (the Square) we have to thank Andrew Bellamy and Tom Haselgrove, amongst others for an incredible achievement to date. In terms of the outfield, Barry Grant has been instrumental and generous in securing the all-important gang-mower and Pete Collins

for the rolling of the outfield, and former club Chairman Kevin D'Silva has continued to give invaluable help and advice. But many members of the club have helped and dedicated time and resource to getting what we believe will be a ground to be proud of for 2025!

Over the last six months, the club has received various generous gifts of financial support from members and sponsors, including The Cherwell Agent (Chris Wilmer), Barclays (Nick Montgomery), Barry Grant and of course the incredibly successful quiz night (raising over £1,000) and Darts night....all to be repeated and more to be developed – watch out for news of these!

Finally, we are very keen to develop cricket within our community and encourage anyone interested to join us – we have all ages and all experience levels. Cricket is growing strongly as a community activity throughout the local area, and we see more and more villages and clubs being created and developed and wanting to engage with us here in Aynho.

Your contacts at ACC for 2025 are:

Oshy Ryan-Pont (Secretary),
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Chris Coopman (Treasurer),
Paul Duncanson (Club Chairman).
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Aynho Community Facebook Page Cover Photos 2024-2025

