

KEMPSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

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DRAFT

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held Tuesday 30th April 2024

Present:

Parish Councillors -	Mark Strange (Chairman), Christine Nugent, John O’Connell, Karen Saunders, Neil Green, Stephen Andrews and Debbie Watson
Teresa Griffin	Parish Council Clerk
Mr J Greenhalgh	Resident & 4x4 Response Team
Daniel Tiffney	GCC Highways
Paul Sayer	RAFCTE
Matthew Davies	RAFCTE
Nick Cook	RAFCTE
Col. Landon Phillips	RAF Fairford
Andy Gray	Kempsford Village Hall
Jolan Flach	Kempsford Village Hall
Ann O’Hara	St. Mary’s Church PCC
Rosemary Andrews	Church
Jacqui Howlett	Kempsford Community Garden
Roy & Anne Caddick	Residents
Lorna & Allan Morriss	Resident
Kathy Woodward	Resident
Tony Williams	Resident
Bob Slade	Resident
Carol Schaming	Resident
Trisha James	Resident
Alison Ward	Resident
Stephen Funnell	Resident
Charles Horton	Hannington Resident
John Bagshaw	Resident
Mark Collins	Resident
Jenny Bennett	Resident

- 1. Apologies –**
Helene Mansilla
Dom Morris
- 2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 4th April 2023 –** approved and signed by Chair.
- 3. Kempsford Parish Council Chairman’s Annual Report –** Chairman Mark Strange gave his report through a presentation outlining the following –
 - Members of the Parish Council, number of councillors in relation to neighbouring parish/town councils and the frequency of meetings.
 - A summary of how the Parish Council has supported groups and organisations within the Parish.
 - A summary of the key planning applications and on-going work.
 - What future planning may arise and why. The need for a Neighbourhood Development Plan and how this fits within the CDC Local Plan.
 - The Hannington Wick Road Closure and what work the Parish Council has been doing to push for it to be reopened, including expressing the views of the community, particularly in relation to the temporary reopening for RIAT.
 - Thanking everyone who volunteers in any shape of form within the community.

4. Gloucestershire Highways – Daniel Tiffney provided an update on the Hannington Road Closure –

- I have been involved since we first heard the culverts were failing and after inspection of one, it resulted in the road being closed.
- It was then passed to our Structures and Drainage Team who subsequently found that there are 5 culverts under the road, probably Victorian, and all 5 of them are in various states of disrepair. The road needed to remain closed on safety grounds which is always the priority. I can appreciate what that means for the local community.
- The repair is a very complex scheme, requiring structural and drainage engineers and we do not have a big team. It was not within our 'program of works' which plans for 5 or more years ahead.
- The biggest complication in any repair is the gas main, which belongs to Wales & West Utilities. We are not allowed to touch, move or repair around it. It is not in their interest for the gas main to be relocated, as to them it is working well.
- In order to replace the culverts with new pre-cast concrete ones, we cannot do the work until the gas main is moved. We had to get Wales & West on board to design the relocation and various options were considered. The gas main needs to be moved in to the adjacent field and required discussions with the landowner and legal agreements to secure easement rights in perpetuity.
- One of the biggest delays is that we haven't been able to do detailed investigations and measurements because the field has been so wet.
- We will be allowing RIAT to access along the road as we did last year with the bridge access. I know one of the questions has always been – if you can allow access for RIAT, why can the community not have access? The conditions under which traffic moves over that road during the RIAT event is very, very different to how it would be when they are not there. So, essentially that road is shut for RIAT and they have one-way access, it's all controlled by traffic management operatives, it is all within daylight hours and access is strictly controlled and that is why it is safe to do that. We cannot replicate those conditions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is no street-lighting, there would be 2-way traffic, no restriction on vehicle size and no safe way we can do this. Whilst RIAT have access, all the risk, management and liability sits with them. They have a very robust traffic management plan so access is controlled and safe.
- The good news is that we have done vegetation clearance work, stage 2 designs for the culverts, in discussion with Wales & West and the adjacent landowner, who in principle is happy with the scheme subject to the legal agreements. We are now confident that we can get in there in August and start work on the replacement culverts. The build duration will be at least 3 months. It could be more as we do not know how long the Wales & West element will take, but the GCC Highways bit will take around 3 months. Resurfacing works will then follow.

Questions –

1. *Surely by starting in August with the works duration planned we will be back to the bad weather? Whereas if it was started before RIAT it would be drier.*
That is a risk; however we, and Wales & West, are not at a point where we could start the works earlier than August.
2. *Can you confirm that Gloucestershire County Council has been given full allocated budget for the works?*
Yes, and I am happy to share the budget with you once the detailed designs are complete which will include the cost of relocating the gas main. Councillor Dom Morris, who is also the Cabinet member for Highways, is absolutely adamant we will deliver this scheme.
3. *Does allowing RIAT temporary access with construction of bridges not cause further deterioration to the road?*
No, the bridge span is wider than the culverts and above the level of the road. None of the construction sits on the damaged road.
4. *Why were the local community not allowed to use the temporary bridges constructed by RIAT?*
Paul Sayer from the RAFCTE advised – Their insurance covers use for their customers on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday only.
5. *I find it very difficult that in March 2023 GCC said that the road cannot be reopened, whether it's temporary or not, until it is completely repaired. So you can understand why people find it difficult that RIAT are allowed to reopen it. It seems double standards.*
When GCC say they cannot reopen it, this means as a public highway with unlimited access in the condition that it is in presently. The conditions which RIAT open it, as I have explained, are very different.

6. *I farm either side of the Hannington Bridge as an integrated farm requiring travel back and forth. I realise that we have 3 different authorities in the area but at one point we had all 3 bridges shut, why can you not communicate with one another? It would also be helpful if Cllr Morris and his colleagues replied to emails.*
I can assure you that I have been in contact with authorities, particularly when Half Penny Bridge was shut. None of the bridge closures were planned works. The Half Penny Bridge was very complicated to sort and the Castle Eaton Bridge was fortunately very easy to repair.
7. *There is a considerable amount of damage done to the road and tarmac as a result of the temporary measures put in for RIAT and their removal. Nothing has been done to make good. The way the road has been closed makes it incredibly difficult to even cycle through. Do the large vehicles that install the temporary bridge not have to use the road to do it?*
The works that were done to tarmac around the temporary bridges and its removal was carried out by GCC Highways in conjunction with RIAT so that falls to us. I agree that the road surface is less than satisfactory and it was included in our scheme for resurfacing. As soon as the culvert work is done the aim is get in and get the resurfacing done, but we would not invest that money until the culverts works are complete. I am pretty sure that the way the legal closure was done that the road is shut to cyclists and pedestrians, and whilst I appreciate it is a massive inconvenience, it is about safety.
The temporary bridges are constructed by craning from the adjacent fields and do not pass over the damaged culvert section.
8. *I am surprised that GCC are having to fund the moving of the gas main as it is old and Wales & West will receive an improved asset. So why are they not contributing towards the cost?*
They are not contributing to it as there would be no need to move it if we didn't need to replace the culverts.

5. **County Councillor's Annual Report** – Not Present

6. **District Councillors Annual Report** - Not Present

Concern was raised from residents that neither the County Councillor or a District Councillor was present at an Annual Parish Meeting in an area that they represent.
The Chair advised that the Parish Council has also been concerned at the lack of attendance at regular Parish Council Meetings.

7. **Reports from Representatives of Local Organisations**

a) **RAF Fairford** – Colonel Landon Phillips –

- I am Col. Landon Phillips, the Commander of the 501st Combat Support Wing and took command in July 2023. We have 8 bases across the UK with US visiting forces, plus one in Norway.
- RAF Fairford is the Wing Headquarters, which has moved from Alconbury due to increased importance of operations at Fairford.
- Over the last 2 years we have had bomber task forces come through once a year for around 6-8 weeks at a time. It is now more frequent at around every 4 months.
- The U2's continue to fly out of Fairford and this will continue for probably another couple of years.
- There has been a lot of work completed at Fairford over the last year including the renovation of our Headquarters and the renovation of the Bowling Alley. On the North-West side of the base most people will have noticed the start of construction of a new 4-bay multi-purpose hanger. This is for increased operations and agile combat employment.
Going forward there will be more projects including warehouses and storage facilities. Hopefully over the next year or two you will notice more of a NATO presence and some of the other UK Wings on a temporary basis.
- Over the next 3 months in the build up to RIAT there will be more aircraft activity.
- The base housing has been reestablished and our 22nd family put in. Roughly 10-15% live on base with the remainder living within a 30-40 mile radius.
- By the end of the summer, our numbers will be around 200. There is no plan to change the airfield hours.
- I would like to thank the local communities for welcoming our Airmen, and in many cases young families on their first assignment overseas.

- Throughout the year we typically host 'open houses' and civic events. This year because there are a lot of 80th Anniversaries in September, including the 80th Anniversary of RAF Fairford, we have big ambitions to open the base up (like it used to) and invite people to the hangers to see the aircraft and also have our Airforce Ball here at Fairford.
- If anyone has a volunteer organisation that is looking for volunteers, we always have airmen that are looking for things to do.

Questions:

1. *It's great to hear the plans for September and you mentioned the bowling alley, are you saying that local people will not be able to access it unless it is a special event?*
Yes, unfortunately the post 9-11 rules change our ability to do that and going forward it will be more partnered events. School events, with enough co-ordination, are definitely something we can do.
2. Andy Gray asked on behalf of the Village Hall if there would be anyone interested in being a caller for line-dancing?
There is probably someone interested so please get in touch.
3. Jacqui Howlett advised the Community Garden is also looking for volunteers.

b) **RAFCTE** - Report by Nick Cook -

I am the Emergency Services Manager for the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust Enterprises.

As we look back, RIAT 2022 was really hot and sunny, RIAT 2023 was windy, rainy and generally horrible weather! Combined with all the other issues concerning bridges and culverts that have been discussed, we are keen to look forward to RIAT 2024.

Our work on the airfield starts with the opening of Gate G at Kempsford on Monday 17th June, and that will stay open 7 days a week until Wednesday 7th August. It will start off 10-12 hours and from Thursday 18 Jul until Mon 22 Jul it is 24/7.

We take over control of the airfield from our American colleagues on Wednesday 17th July, which is when our first aircraft arrives. Aircraft continue to arrive on the 17th and 18th.

There are 3 public days to the event – 19th, 20th and 21st. The 19th has a big focus, as it has traditionally for the last few years, of having school children.

The structured flying display on the Friday is 4 hours long. In advance of that and afterwards there will be some arrivals. On the Saturday and Sunday the flying display will be 7.5 hours long. We say goodbye to all our international visitors on the Monday and start dismantling the site.

If we think about the things that will impact you – one-way systems, road closures and the like, there is no change to what we did last year. We have applied to the Streetworks Department at GCC Highways to extend speed restrictions temporarily, if you are travelling from Whelford to Kempsford the 30mph limit as you leave the village by about 600-700 metres given the density of pedestrians moving around in that area. We have also introduced, temporarily for a 6 day period, a 30mph limit on the last 200 metres before approaching the T junction by the Shell Garage if heading from Whelford. Similarly, when turning left towards Fairford it will be 30mph for the first 200 metres, same 200 metres to the right heading towards Lechlade. There will be 100 metre stretch of 30mph if taking the back road to Lechlade, by crossing the railway bridge. All these measures are for road safety.

We will go in to further details with the Parish Council when we host our Community Briefing event next month.

We have 4 themes at the show this year

- The 50th Anniversary of the F16
- The 75th Anniversary of NATO
- The 100th Anniversary of the Royal Canadian Air Force
- An Operational Theme called 'Pushing the Boundaries in Air & Space'

Questions:

1. *Last year I understand Vodafone installed a mast, will this be done again?*

Paul Sayer advised that Vodafone, O2 and EE will be bringing in additional masts. There are 4 masts they piggyback on and this will be to deal with 'domestic' users. What we are doing for the outlets is to put in Cat5 cabling that each burger van and outlet can plug in to.

2. *The Chair asked Matt Davies to report on the charity and work they have assisted with in the local communities –*

Matt advised that at the start of the year they set out to engage more with the local communities. As part of this we donated some money to Kempford Primary School in order for them to maintain their 'ELSA' programme and contributed to the Long Table Meals organised by the Church.

3. *During the Show days, visitors who do not pay to go in to the show are parking their vehicles on verges and pavements in the village. Is it possible for whoever is responsible to move them on?*

Nick advised that they apply for approximately 12 additional 'No Waiting' areas to supplement the existing No Waiting Zones. The Police will not enforce those No Waiting areas unless there is a clear case of obstruction. We pay Gloucestershire County Council to bring 2 Traffic Officers in on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 07:00 to 18:00hrs to cover the area around the airfield. They are very reluctant to issue a ticket, and would rather just move the motorist on because they have to wait a certain amount of time before they can issue a ticket.

4. *Last year the flow of traffic through Kempford was very difficult and is there any way that the Resident's Sticker can be used to aid movement for local people?*

We are aware that the Friday last year was particularly challenging around Kempford and we have been told fair and square by a great many Sponsors, Senior Officers, Politicians and the such like, that we need to improve that. One example of measures we are taking is not to bring the 9,000 school children that will visit on the Friday through Kempford, but to approach from the Shell Garage direction.

We know this was far less than satisfactory Traffic Officers at Gate G and we will be having additional officers there to improve this.

If anyone does have challenges, please phone the Helpline in advance and we can advise you of the best way to go. For journeys over the weekend that you are concerned about - phone us on the day, half an hour before and we can talk you through.

5. *Will the issue with the traffic lights on the C124 be better this year?*

Yes, there were issues with the control box which resulted in us bring in our own traffic lights. We are extending our use of those traffic lights to the Thursday this year to aid movement.

The Helpline will be operable from Thursday 16th May.

6. *What arrangements do you have for local people requiring Emergency Services?*

On the 3 public days, inside our Emergency Control Centre alongside our medical staff are a Dispatcher and Officer from South West Ambulance Service, who will speak to the 999 service if Fairford related. Very occasionally they will ask one of our ambulances to attend. So we field Saturday and Sunday 7 crewed paramedic ambulances within the confines of the airfield, plus 2 response vehicles. So somehow, we will support the local communities. Also on site is a Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service Liaison Officer.

c) **Churches** – Report from Rev Kim Brown –

Worship and Services - Worship continued in a normal pattern with steady numbers attending. We held a full programme of services, celebrating Easter, Harvest festival, All Saints and All Souls, Remembrance Day at the war memorial and Christmas services and held Lent and Advent groups.

Our monthly outdoor Family Service continued to be well attended with several baptisms during the year including an outdoor one. These activities will all still continue during the vacancy. Rev John Swanton and Rev Caroline Symcox will be providing support and any queries should be first directed to them.

We thank our Reader Robert Mitchell, and Reader-in-training Elizabeth Emberson for leading services and preaching. Rob is now supporting Castle Eaton. We also thank Rev Geoff Price and his wife Hope for taking regular services at Whelford.

School Engagement - The active engagement of St Mary's with Kempford primary school continued, with Open the Book, Prayer Spaces and school attending church for Easter, a leavers' service, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day and Christmas service. The school also came to church this January on World Religions Day

Occasional Offices - There were two weddings at St Mary's and one at St. Anne's; 5 children were christened at St Mary's & 1 at St Anne's; 1 funeral was performed and two interments of ashes took place.

Mission in the Community - The Youth Club in the Village Hall was split in Sept 2023 as it had grown in numbers. Around 12 children come to the younger group and 18-20 children in the second. We give thanks for our Youth Worker Chris Saunders and his work in our schools. Thanks also to the Parish Council for their support to this activity. Thank you also to Margaret Wolfenden and Cassie Vickery; Cummings, without whom these clubs would not continue.

The Long Table – the monthly community meal continued in the school hall with 50-60 meals served each session. We thank many church members and volunteers from the villages who set up and wash up and all the ladies who prepared desserts and cooked main meals.

We provided financial support to families in need in the village this year, identified through the school, offering supermarket gift vouchers and Christmas meals, from the William Battersby and John Hampson-Jones Charitable Trusts. In overseas mission this year, shoeboxes were sent to those in need via Teams4You and financial support given to Scripture Union to support mission in Tajikistan, and food is donated each week to Cirencester Food bank.

Building Project – Consultation was undertaken regarding choice of chairs and we met a surveyor to consider drainage options, receiving feedback on our plans from the DAC. Detailed drawings are now being prepared for the re ordering of the west end of the church to provide a much needed disabled loo and also a small kitchenette.. Once these drawings are accepted by Diocese, quotations can be sought for the works and funding from grants accessed. Myra Sheppard and Ann O'Hara have continued to identify activities to help raise funds. This is important since we may need to match funding from other sources. They will talk more about their initiatives.

PCC and Deanery Synod - Thanks to all PCC members who serve. James Arkell has continued to serve as our rep for Deanery Synod and report back on initiatives in the wider church. Bob Nicholls has taken on the role of church Warden and Neil Watson assists in their duties.

Pastoral Care - Visits take place to those who are unwell at home, in nursing homes and in hospital, and to those who have been bereaved, with home communion where requested.

Curate – In July of last year we welcomed our Curate Rev'd Catie Watson and her husband Neil and her work as curate to the 5 parishes continues.

With thanks to all who support our churches,

Questions –

1. *The Chair asked if there was any idea how long it will take to find a replacement for Rev Kim?*

Rosemary Andrews advised that it should be fairly soon. The next stage is meeting of the Diocese to decide what they are looking for and we need to get together with the other churches to agree a profile.

d) **Church Fundraising** – Ann O-Hara reported on fundraising events held and future events –

Kempsford & Whelford P.C.C.

Events & Fundraising Report April 2023- 24

We are very grateful to an increasing number of local people and organisations who have helped with our events this year. Thank you for giving your time and talents, hands on help during the events, raffle prizes and for encouraging others to come along! Thank you for the publicity support we have received through Kempsford & Whelford Newsletter and local area Facebook postings. A final thanks to Chris Roberts MBE, local journalist, who supports our efforts by sharing news about events in nearby areas and further afield. Throughout 2023 we continued to raise funds to support the work of the church in the community and the development of facilities for all those who use our churches. At St Mary's, the main goal is to achieve

sufficient funding for the installation of a toilet and a more environmentally friendly and improved heating system. At Whelford, we have supported improvements to the porch.

The acoustics of St Mary's make it a great venue for musical events. Our first event was 'Rave in the Nave', Friday 12th May 2023. Popular bands Presto and Night Jar returned for a second time to treat a packed church to a great evening of country and rock music. The evening ended with a very special, one time only, uniting of the bands for a final song. Rev'd Kim's uplighters once again lit up the church and she thoughtfully provided a porta-loo! Members of the PCC, helped by Cassie Vickery-Cummings, ran a bar. The bands generously gave their time free of charge helping us to raise almost £646.84.

In May, we were kindly given a donation of 10 Designer bags to auction to raise funds for improvements at St Mary's. Ann O'Hara organized and hosted a Handbags and Fizz Evening where bids were received in a Silent Auction. The Auction raised £200.

In September, once again with thanks to the kindness and talents of local people, we hosted a Musical Celebration in St Mary's. This event was open to all ages. Dan Strange, whose idea inspired the concert, played St Mary's organ in his first public performance at our church. Pete Wolfenden, played a range of jazz and contemporary music on the grand piano, and Sharon Elliot accompanied Elizabeth Emberson for her solo performances. Once again, Rev'd Kim thoughtfully provided a porta-loo and helped to run the bar, aided by Cassie Vickery-Cummings and our Curate Catie, with her husband. After costs, this event raised £500.

Our now established Gifts & More Craft Fair was held on 4th November. We were pleased to welcome 8 stall holders, both regular and new, the majority of whom come from Kempford, Whelford and nearby towns. All our stall holders make the goods they sell using natural and/or recycled materials products. New stall holders included Melanie's skilful clay creations, Nikki's recycled fabric creations and plants from Kempford Community Garden group. The PCC ran the café and the Big Raffle. We offer huge thanks to local individuals and businesses who kindly donated a wide variety of prizes for the Big Raffle: including The George Kempford, Blackthorn Coffee & Cakes Kempford, The Lakes Bar & Kitchen, The Bull Hotel, RAFCTE RIAT 2022, Pets Corner Lechlade, Cricklade Leisure Centre and The Barn Theatre. Our cash prize of £100 was also kindly donated by local individuals. We raised £619

In December, we were able to team up with The George, Kempford, who ran a 100 Board Raffle. The prize was a packed Christmas Hamper with goods for all ages. Once again our thanks go to individuals who helped us with the collection of 24 hamper treats including food, wine, seasonal treats and games. We raised £233.50.

INITIAL DATES FOR YOUR 2024 DIARY:

17th May 2024 – Pub Quiz at The George

23rd November 2024 - Gifts & More Craft Fair with the Big Raffle

Look out for other activities including PCC stall at the Village Fete and the Christmas 100+ Board

Please see Appendix A for Prayer Spaces at Kempford C.E. Primary

e) **Kempford Village Hall** – Andy Gray gave a presentation of the following -

- Details of the committee members
- What's happened in the previous year – this included the reduction in regular hirers, new activities/events and continuing events/bookings.
- An update on the basic facilities –
 - Addition of Wi-Fi
 - Card Payment Facilities
 - Alcohol Licence
 - TV licence
 - The trial of a new bookings process
- Details of major unforeseen expenses and expected future costs
- The current financial position
- Future plans – update of the Constitution
- What to do about the future of an ageing building
- Where do will go from here and our vision
 - Develop a building for the future by taking advice
 - Make it more of a community hub

- Continue with another year of updates and developments that hopefully will improve the lives of all parishioners.

f) **Community First Responders** – Stephen Andrews reported -

When on duty, volunteer Community First Responders (CFR) are called by the Ambulance Control to incidents within their rural area. Originally, the focus was upon immediate life critical events, such as Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Now CFRs are trained to deal with just about anything that an Ambulance may be called to – except Road Traffic Collisions and pub fights!

This time last year, I was reporting the move to more “normal” times with the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions. Those restrictions may have gone, but pressure on the Ambulance Service continues, and that means more calls for us.

Members of the Group also helped the community in other ways over the last year, including running community events and working with Farmors School to introduce their students to CPR/Defibs. Ambulances were redeployed, Community Defibrillators regularly checked as “rescue ready” and with the help of the Lechlade and District Lions added more across the Fairford and Lechlade area with 16 now in place and a further 2 planned. The support that we receive from the Friends of Fairford and Lechlade Communities is essential to that.

Having just brought another kit into service, the Fairford and Lechlade Responder group currently has 11 Responders and 8 sets of equipment, 4 of which have a special chair which allow us to lift patients off of the floor. Whilst apparently in a healthy position, it is likely that one or two Responders may leave over the next year and we are still looking for volunteers to join us – full training given.

A recruiting drive will start formally in the Summer. If you are interested in joining us, get in touch. We would love to see you.

g) **GW 4x4 Response Team** – Report from Jerry Greenhalgh (Chair) –

GW4x4R is made up of volunteers using their own 4x4 vehicles. We are DBS checked and undertake BORDA standard off-road driving training.

“The object of the CIO is to preserve and protect life and property, but not exclusively, by providing equipment, vehicles, and other resources to offer support in adverse conditions.”

GW4x4R is affiliated to 4x4R UK which has 34 Teams covering the UK. Each regional group has volunteer Responders who own and maintain their own 4x4 vehicles. Vehicles range from unmodified ‘off the shelf’ to those modified to cope with more challenging conditions. About 75% are capable of driving on unmetalled roads and tracks and about 25% have some capability in flooding. Each Responder is required to carry a specified list of equipment such as first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency blanket, and recovery equipment etc.

We currently have 24 Responders 5 Controllers and 9 Support members. We need additional Responders and are presently recruiting. Any 4x4 vehicle is suitable for our tasks but a 4x4 is not necessary to undertake Control or Support tasks.

We generally assist NHS Trusts, Care Homes, and Local Authorities transporting staff to and from their place of employment in adverse weather when their own, or other forms of transport, are not available. We also assist Blue Light Services and Highway Authorities if required.

Recent weather patterns have changed our climate from limited snow events to more flood related incidents, but this can still give rise to challenging road conditions. We have our own internet-based radio system (Zello) to communicate with our members and run a computer-based control and deployment package, Advanced Response Management (ARM,) which includes a database of all members and team assets.

We are self-funded and raise money by marshaling at triathlon and running events, car parking at Cotswold Show, general duties at Gloucestershire Vintage & Country Extravaganza at South Cerney and various other shows and events.

If you are interested in joining or require more information please contact:- membership@gw4x4r.co.uk or chair@gw4x4r.co.uk

Meeting closed at 10.25pm.

Prayer Spaces at Kempford C.E. Primary

In January 2023, we met with Mr Richard Mendum, headteacher of Kempford C.E. Primary, to discuss plans for Prayer Spaces in March. We did not know at the time the actual journey we would be on with Prayerspaces this year. Unexpectedly and tragically, Mr Mendum died on 29th January. As Prayer Spaces has become a valued opportunity for personal reflection and development (within the school's spiritual moral social and cultural provision), school leaders and governors asked us to provide a Prayer Spaces which would support staff and children to reflect, grieve and share happy memories. In response, members of St Mary's church, supported by our village Youth Worker Chris Saunders, a governor and members of staff at Kempford C.E. Primary, ran a Prayer Spaces day under the theme of 'Share and Shine'. The aim of the day was to give children and adults the opportunity to think about themselves and their feelings; to accept all the emotions we go through without judgement; and to help them to notice what brings a smile to hold on to as we move on. There was time for 'Stilling, noticing, dwelling(feelings) across the 4 Prayer Spaces.



Seeds of Joy (Margaret Wolfenden)

Sunflowers always turn towards the sun, taking in light & warmth to grow. The seeds from a sunflower provide food for birds to help them through the hard times of winter. Our shared memories of things Mr Mendum did or said are like sunflowers and their seeds bringing us a smile and helping us through hard times.



es (Mrs McKenna)

Adults thought about their own connection with Mr Mendum – activity; cake, playing sport etc. Our connections, shown by our memories in the Together Tree showed his time with us had given us all something to remember.



Fun Times (Mr Saunders and Alex Ballard, governor)

Chatting helped to recall and share how Mr Mendum loved sport and ways he encouraged the children in their sports and hobbies. The children talked about the skills/values they had learnt and will use in the days and years to come.



Sparkle and Shine (Ann O'Hara)

This Prayer space gave children the time to talk about how we can tell when someone is feeling unhappy, sad, lonely, hurt. Whilst making 'Calm Jars' the children talked about their own feelings and how we can help each other to get our 'sparkle' back, sharing ideas for what we can say and do things to help others to feel better.

Reflections from Prayer Space leaders, children, school staff and governors showed the day had been successful and helpful.