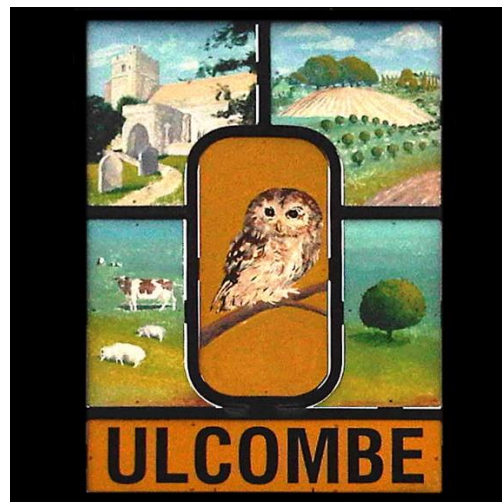


ULCOMBE

Annual Parish Report

2023/24

www.ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk



Produced by Ulcombe Parish Council
July 2024

Report of the Parish Council given by the Chairman at the Annual Parish Meeting - 23 May 2024

Following this year's elections, it has been one of change for Ulcombe Parish Council. Cllr Rachel Robinson, Cllr Matt Lingwood and Cllr Moir decided not to stand again and we also lost our Parish Clerk, Irene Bowie. Liz Easton also stood down in January 2024. We would like to thank them all for their time and service to this parish.

We have welcomed Mr Chris Barlow and Mr Trevor Sharp as Councillors and Helen Anderson has stepped in as our temporary clerk. I have been appointed to the role of Chairman at our recent May meeting.

Planning Applications - For the period April 2023 to March 2024, we have as a council dealt with approximately 33 applications, mainly relating to household changes or gypsy and traveller sites.

The Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan Review (2021-2038) has recently been adopted. The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Development Plan is still ongoing.

Police – Local Policing changed from June 2023 with the implementation of a new 3 point module of operation under the umbrella of Community Safety Unit, Beat Officers – warranted officers to be allocated to Wards, Child Centred Policing and Neighbourhood Task Force.

Monthly crime figures for Ulcombe can also be found online via the Kent Police website at www.e-watch.co

Recreation Ground – Repairs to some of the equipment, painting of frames, some new soft pour surfaces and a replacement bench will be carried out in the near future. S106 funding available from the Grafty Green development will be directed towards these improvements.

A tidying up of the exterior of the cricket pavilion is also being explored for costings at the moment. It is still being used as a storage facility for the football team and its appearance across the ground needs to be looked after otherwise it will be subject to vandalism if left to nature.

We also would like the opportunity to thank our contractor Landscape Services who continues to keep our recreation ground maintained.

Football Pitches – The Headcorn football club continues to use the recreation ground for their junior matches throughout the year.

Finance - It was agreed to generate a precept for 2024/25 of £26,041 which equates to £63.50 per band D property.

The Accounting Statement for the year ending 31 March 2024 has been internally audited and will also be externally audited by Mazars LLP in June 2024. In summary:-

Balance as at 31/3/2023	£48,047
Receipts in	£29,126
Payments out	£24,528
Balance as at 31/3/2024	£52,645

Communications – Our website can be found at www.ulcombeparishcouncil.co.uk. This website is fully compliant with the WCAG (website content accessibility guidelines) and is kept up to date with both Council business and other items of village interest. We continue to use our village noticeboards situated outside the village hall and in The Street (near the bus stop). The use of Ulcombe Parish Council Facebook page has remained lightly used for the past few years as other more effective village mediums of communications have been found. We will consider its future once we have regained access to it.

We are keen to engage with residents as much as possible and value any ideas for new projects or village celebrations, as well as listening and address any complaints (hopefully not too many) that you may have. Please do get in contact with our clerk in the first instance or come along to a Parish Council meeting

which will be held monthly on the first Thursday of the month from 7.15pm at the Village Hall (from 4 July).

Litter - We like many other parishes have to deal with the blight of litter. We would like to thank everyone who throughout the year has taken the trouble to pick this up on their daily walks and also to our local contractor, Ken Parrish who services the core of the village weekly.

The Parish Council does have litter collecting equipment available (pickers, gloves and bags), please do contact the clerk. Heavily blighted roads can also be reported online to Maidstone Borough Council on:-

<https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/do-it-online/report-it/top-6/report-a-street-cleansing/report-litter>

Recreation Ground No Dog Policy – The Parish Council has continued to uphold this policy of not allowing dogs to be exercised on the recreation ground. As you will understand it is very well used by the football club children/youth teams throughout the year and we must keep a high level of cleanliness so as not to endanger their health from both bacteria and viral diseases as a result of contaminated dog faeces being left behind. Secondly, our children's play area is not in a self-contained enclosure and so children and parents can play freely without the need to worry about loose pets. We hope that you continue to understand our views on this. Ulcombe is in a very fortunate position to be surrounded by lots of footpaths and fields for you and your dog to explore.

Number 59 Bus – We are led to believe that funding has been secured for the coming financial year. It is important that residents support this service if they can otherwise it will be lost and much harder to bring back in the future. It currently runs on a Wednesday only leaving Ulcombe bus stop (near Chestnut Close) at 9.44am and leaves Maidstone King Street Bus Stop L2 at 1pm.

Thank you to our two Borough Councillor's Martin Round and Ziggy Trzebinski and Kent County Councillor, Shellina Prendergast who have given their support to our Parish Council throughout the year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my Councillors for their input, support and willingness to look after our village and we look forward to the coming year ahead.

A Report by County Councillor Shellina Prendergast

As I enter the final year of my second term serving residents of Maidstone Rural East, I cannot help but look back over the years and the many challenges that you and our local businesses have faced over that time. Whilst we are fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful areas of rural Kent, we are also a resilient community who continue to support each other throughout the most difficult times – something that fills me with great pride and for which I thank all of you.

That previously well-run council across the UK are now facing serious financial difficulties has been well documented and Kent County Council is no exception – having started this year facing a budget gap of some £50m ahead of setting the 2024/25 budget.

The budget was approved by councillors in February, the books only being balanced by a range of measures which include a major review of frontline services, dipping into reserves and a council tax increase of nearly 5% - a decision that was very tough for all those present given the financial pressures residents are facing.

However, it remains an inescapable fact that the cost of and demand for key council services for adult social care, children in care and home-to-school transport will continue to increase at a much higher rate than the funding available from government and local taxes and some very careful consideration will need to be given to how KCC delivers services into the future – and we are all working hard to ensure that we continue to deliver the best services we can and at the best value to council tax payers here in Maidstone Rural East and across Kent.

Turning to more local matters, community protection continues to be a major contributor to my postbag – whether it be domestic abuse, substance abuse, scams, antisocial behaviour and supporting those who are most vulnerable and their families. It would be fair to say that there is a lot of joint work at KCC with partners – the police, the health service, parish and district councils – to ensure a safer environment for

all of us to live and work in.

However, the single biggest issue for me when it comes to community safety in our rural communities is that of highways safety – whether it be speeding, inconsiderate driving, accident hotspots, the impacts of works on our major road networks such as the A249 and A20, the chaos we face every time Operation Brock is implemented or some of the problems we are faced with what appears to be never ending roadworks. Working jointly with several parish councils, we have been successful in getting these issues right at the forefront in discussions with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, senior Officers from Kent Highways and Kent Police. I am delighted to say that all parties recognised the issues raised and are all committed to taking measures to improve safety for all road users. There is too much to detail in this annual report, but it is also true that there is much work to be done and I will endeavour to keep you all updated as matters progress on local issues.

In the meantime, please do let me know if there is anything at all that I can assist you with. As ever, it is an honour to be representing residents of Maidstone Rural East at Kent County Council.

A Report by Borough Councillor Martin Round

I am pleased to confirm that I will be around for another four years as a Headcorn and also now Sutton Valance Ward Councillor as will Ziggy Trzebinski, and we would like to thank all of our supporters who felt that we should be re-elected, but stress that we are here for all residents and will be ready to represent you, listen to you and assist you whenever required.

With regards to the recent Borough Council elections, there is no overall majority for any party. At the Maidstone Borough Council AGM held on Saturday 18th May, the Green Party councillor Stuart Jeffery was voted in as Leader of the council. The Greens and the Lib Dems formed a coalition with a number of Independents to give a majority. This coalition will chair all of the meetings apart from Overview and Scrutiny which is Conservative being the largest opposition party.

Sadly, a number of very good councillors were not re-elected, many with well over ten years experience, which in the short term may cause a challenge for those committees such as licensing and planning, where formal training is required. Additionally, the deputy mayor, Martin Cox was not elected so John Perry from Staplehurst, who would have been Deputy Mayor this year, will be the next mayor. I have taken on the role of Deputy Mayor and am very much looking forward to this role.

There has also been some movement in the Parish Councils of Boughton Malherbe and Ulcombe, who have a number of new members. Headcorn, Sutton Valance and East Sutton stayed mainly the same. I thought that I would just recap on the achievements of the council over the last two years and update you on progress. First, we managed to implement 4 year elections, the first of which has just occurred. This not only saves the council over £ 40,000 a year but means that for a four year term there should be continuity of direction for the council officers.

We finally adopted the local plan after years of preparation. This was a cross-party plan and all parties were involved and consulted in its preparation. It is not popular with everyone, but it allows the council to control what is built where. Without a local plan the Borough would be open to developers to put their own sites forward, and if refused would go to appeal and probably win. Work should start on a new plan almost immediately.

We pledged to buy 1,000 affordable houses for Maidstone residents and their children, plus 186 private rented sector homes, totalling 1186. Currently 603 are credibly in place and of that figure 465 are contractually secured, which is very good progress.

I am afraid the bin saga continues but things do seem to be improving slowly. The contractor has been taken to task and has promised an improvement. The situation is under constant review. Should anyone not have their bins emptied for 3 weeks or more please contact either myself or Martin Round and we can chase them up individually.

A Report from Kent Police

Kent Police have recently invested in several local 'Beat Officers' to serve the surrounding parishes of Maidstone. Ulcombe is one of a cluster of Wards that PC Bingham and PC Maskell have assumed responsibility for. Although PCSO John Boyd remains part of the Community Safety Unit, he now forms part of the team for our Task Force. Generally call demand is very low for Ulcombe but we have visited through general police patrol. Recently we acted on some intelligence that was received from the local residents and have also attended your local school regarding some enquiries with anti-social behaviour.

We do need to hear from our residents so if you have some information, please contact us and we will act on it accordingly.

We want to be available to you and more importantly contactable and visible.

Most of our activity is posted on My Community Voice so please download the app and feel to contact us on there.

Please visit our website for further updates in your community.

In an emergency always call 999 or 101 for any other enquiries or report your concern online at

www.kent.police.uk

Reports from Village Organisations and Representatives.

Ulcombe History Society

Programme

There has been a full programme of 9 speakers, including an extra one in July to replace that cancelled in 2022. Topics included Memsahibs in India; Three Ladies of Boughton Malherbe; The City of London before and after the Blitz; The History of Morris Dancing; Henry III and the Battle of Lewes; A History of Headcorn; Behind the scenes of the BBC's Golden Years and a Medieval Christmas. We had planned for a speaker on The Bloomsbury Group for November following our trip to Firle Place and Berwick church but this had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. Instead, we welcomed Ed Adams who spoke about the World War II bombing of Ashford.

Outings

In June we took a coach with members and friends to Firle Place and Berwick church. Both interesting places and glorious sunshine. In September we enjoyed a tour of Provender House, and meeting the owner, Princess Olga Romanoff. Thank you to John Moore, and also Derrick Parkes, for all the work and time involved in making these such successful trips.

Links with other History Societies.

Ulcombe now regularly exchanges information with other local History Societies about talks and events which members can attend as guests. We have welcomed several guests this year from other societies and some of our members have attended their meetings.

The British Association of Local History (BALH) has introduced a new option of digital membership which the committee decided to take up. This means that the quarterly journal will be sent out online for all members to access.

Membership

Membership remained steady at 38, but I am pleased to report that guest attendance has increased from 28 to 40, probably as a result of networking with other societies.

Acknowledgements

In my second year as Chair, I have been greatly supported by the Secretary, Bridget Samuelson, so knowledgeable, capable and efficient. Thank you so much. I would also like to thank our Treasurer Derrick Parkes for his capable financial skills, constructive suggestions and good humour; John Moore for the many hours spent organising such successful trips and Bev Martin for arranging our speakers and on occasion finding new ones at the last minute. Also our other committee members, who help to keep this committee running smoothly. Thanks to Simon Odam for setting up the sound system and our new

projector screen. Also to Richard Pilborough for inspecting our accounts. Lastly, thank you to you, the members, for your enthusiasm and interest, without whom there would be no Ulcombe History Society.

Leila Ware (Chair)

Ulcombe Church of England Primary School

Another busy and successful year is coming to an end for the school. We currently have 62 pupils on roll in three mixed ages classes and will be welcoming a number of new pupils into year R in September.

This year's achievements include the following:

Achievement of The National Nurture accreditation - this was achieved at the end of an 18 month training course following an assessment. It is about nurturing children, developing the whole child, rather than focussing on pure academics.

Certificate of trauma informed practice- this ensures that children within the school who have experienced any type of trauma i.e. bereavement, separation of families or a sudden house move are supported well in school.

Establishment of a community church within our school which meets once a month.

Various building improvement projects, notably the new fence, gates and car park. Improvements have also been made to the security of the school, ensuring staff and pupils are kept safe.

The children have attended various experiences this year in addition to their national curriculum which we have to follow i.e.

Various local sporting events

A three day residential trip

Trips to places of worship

Weekly swimming in partnership with Sutton Valance school

Young voices - a gathering of lots of school choirs at the O2.

A space dome took up residence in the school

A virtual meeting was held with a member of the House of Lords

We also have several events to look forward to including:-

The Aspire Festival of Arts

A sports festival

Ulcombe sports day

Ulcombe are due their SIAMs (Church) inspection and OFSTED inspection from September onwards. We, Kent and the diocese are expecting good judgments in both inspections and look forward to sharing the outcomes with you

Emma Hickling
Executive Headteacher

The Committee of The Friends of All Saints, Ulcombe.

The Friends of Ulcombe Church continue to be active. It has a hardworking committee though its members are getting a bit elderly, and we need some new and enthusiastic Committee Members who are keen to preserve Ulcombe's ancient and beautiful church.

The wider FASU group membership also includes members who do not necessarily live in Ulcombe but support FASU fundraising by their annual membership fee and also generous personal donations. Each year FASU has helped the church finances by paying the insurance costs of the building – over £2,000 a year.

The Friends of All Saints Church Ulcombe started the fundraising year in April with a repeat of the very successful 2023 Bingo Evening. It was much enjoyed last year so we decided to risk a repeat. This time we enlisted the help of the Village Hall Committee and the profits from the jointly run event were shared between us - £329.86 each.

Currently we are preparing for the Holst Concert on the 6th of July. It is being held at the church at 7 o'clock and given by The Invicta Wind Orchestra to celebrate the life of Gustav Holst who was born 150 years ago.

As well as the Holst pieces it will also be playing folk songs and dances such as Greensleeves, the Londonderry Air and the Song of the Blacksmith.

The Invicta Wind Orchestra was founded in 1989 by Jeremy Cooper. It meets several times each year for a day of rehearsal followed by an evening concert. Members of the orchestra come from as far afield as North London, Oxford, West Sussex and Surrey as well as from all over Kent, and include former military musicians and teachers.

Tickets are available from Molly Poulter (Mollycpoulter@gmail.com) or at the door. Wine and coffee will be available.

Our third fundraising event will be an Auction of Promises on Saturday the 21st of September. It will be held in Ulcombe Village Hall at 7 pm. To date, we have more than thirty very varied and interesting items but there is still room for more –items, activities, help, transport etc. Offers to Molly please'

The auctioneer, auctioneer's clerk and cashier have all been appointed so all that remains is for you to come and bid for the numerous promises on offer.

Molly Poulter (Chairman)

Headcorn Football Club.

Headcorn Football Club would like to extend their gratitude to Ulcombe Parish Council for the continued support in the rental of the pitches for our Junior teams. Without this support we would not be able to fulfil the demand we face given our own site is not large enough to accommodate all of our teams. We look forward to continuing this partnership over the years to come. We will be exploring grants to help with the recreation field drainage as the pitch has become very waterlogged this year.

Matthew Botley Chairman

Community Breakfast Report.

Since we started the community breakfast, we have run over 32 events. It is held on the 3rd Saturday of the month in the Village Hall. We are open from 9am to 11.15am. All funds raised go towards community projects. We must take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers who help from our table setters, our cooks and the ultimate help of washing up and clearing away at the end.

Ulcombe Village Hall Report

Several outstanding administrative matters have been addressed this year.

We have obtained licences from the Performing Rights Society and Public Performance Ltd to ensure our use of music at the Hall is legal and we have updated our premises licence from MBC, which was in the name of a long-departed chairman. (It is now in the name of the Hall Management Committee, so it will not need to be changed again when personnel change.)

We would like to do a similar thing with our land lease from the Parish Council, by 'vesting' the lease in the Official Custodian for Charities. There are two difficulties, however. Firstly the lease is, at present, still in the name of the two individuals who took it on in 1978, and they will seemingly need to be traced,

but we also need to agree with the PC just how much of this land we wish to continue to lease. The VH is presently responsible for more land than either the Hall Committee or the PC had previously thought, and it is likely that much of it will be taken back by the PC, but we need to decide whether it may be beneficial to us to retain some.

Other administrative matters addressed this year concerned the updating of our Hire terms and of our Constitution.

At the start of 2023, we had more people wishing to serve on our Committee than our Constitution allowed, but we used the power of co-option to accommodate two of those people and used a power to grant representation from new user groups to appoint a third.

During the year, the position was regularised by the Charities Commission who granted us permission to vary our 'Governing Document' so as to have more elected members on our committee (up to 12).

Ironically two members of the Management Committee subsequently resigned and we have not yet been able to replace them. This has thrown an extra burden on the seven that remain and has meant that we were able to run, independently, only one fund-raising event in the year (our autumn quiz) although we collaborated with a group of local people, going under the name of 'Ulcombe Independent Productions', to organise another Christmas Bazaar.

We benefitted significantly during 2023 from various donations, which Debby will mention in her report, and we saved over £300 by agreeing with The History Society that we would audit *their* accounts in return for them auditing *ours*.

Looking ahead to 2024, we have agreed to cooperate more closely with Ulcombe Independent Productions (and also with the 'Friends of All Saints Ulcombe'), formally sharing the workload of some events, and similarly sharing any profit or loss. Hopefully, this will work to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

Also in 2024, one important aim will be to ensure that our fire safety precautions are 'fit for purpose' (which will certainly include improving 'Emergency Exit' signage and emergency lighting and may also require other improvements).

Additionally, we will look to improve the Hall itself, insofar as we can afford to. In this connection we will be investigating possible grant funding and also hoping there may be opportunities to benefit from any planning consents granted to Esquire Developments or Jarvis Homes, as they seem keen to demonstrate that their local house-building plans could include a 'community benefit'.

Small scale improvements might be made by updating the Hall lighting, for example. A more expensive improvement might be to install solar panels with battery storage or to create a friendly outdoor eating area, with permanent tables and attractive planting. But if big money were on offer, we might propose an extension to the rear of the Hall (to include, perhaps a stage and /or storage space)

One thing is sure. We will be busy! And so I finish by offering my sincere thanks to the Hall Committee (Christina Cox, Debby Boland, Janine Monk, Sara Jackson, Simon Odam and Tracy Watton) for their hard work and for their continuing support.

Richard Pilborough,
Management Committee Chairman

Ulcombe Community Drop In – A Time to Play

This group takes place on the second and fourth Thursday of each month during term time in Ulcombe Village Hall between 9.30 and 11.30.

The group is facilitated by Wendy, Nikki and helpers Janet and Trev who are amazing. The rationale of this group is to offer friendship, a safe place for people to come along and meet and be part of the community. It is open to ALL residents of Ulcombe Parish; young, old and in between. We do have a play area for our younger visitors so mums can meet each other and know that their children are engaged and safe.

We do have regular attendees but unfortunately very few of our visitors actually come from Ulcombe, we have mums travelling from Rochester, Coxheath, Grafty Green, Headcorn, Sutton Valance and Lenham. It is fabulous that so many decide to travel to join us and we thank them very much; it would be lovely however to welcome more visitors from the village itself. So please come along and give it a go you may be very pleased you did.

The session is donation only and we feel that this is important we will never turn anyone away. We serve refreshments during the morning, in fact our toast is legendary and has been a godsend for busy mums who have missed breakfast.

Father Christmas came and visited the children which was lots of fun. We also made decorations that we put on our trees in the village hall.

We are planning a vintage sale on Saturday 25th May to raise funds for a wooden climbing frame to add to our fabulous selection of toys. We are hoping that the village will come out and support this event. We are also planning an end term tea party, Halloween themed morning and a Christmas party this year. (fingers crossed)

We are also looking to widen what we offer and we are looking to invite crafters and others to come and set up stalls, we are enquiring as to whether we can have a pop-up Post Office as well. We also have a new Parish Councilor joining us on a Thursday morning.

We feel passionate about creating a village 'Hub' where people can get local news, support and socialize with others.

So, watch this space!

Wendy Saunders

Ulcombe Newsletter

The Ulcombe newsletter in its present 30 page, glossy, full-colour form has now been going for more than two years. It has been well received in the village and over 200 households are receiving it.

The cost for a year is £3 - incredibly cheap when compared to other villages. Most of the costs are met by advertising. We would be happy to receive two more advertisers for future copies.

The Newsletter is put together each month by Liz Foster to whom we are very grateful for all her hard work and designer skills.

The Newsletter is delivered each month by a volunteer team organised by Frances Crawford. They also collect the subscriptions and we are very grateful to them.

Do continue to keep sending in your news, items about forthcoming events and any articles you think might be of interest to the village.

If you wish to receive a copy and you don't already, please contact Frances Crawford on 01622 843862.

Molly Poulter

Ulcombe Badminton Group

The Ulcombe Badminton Club plays in the Village Hall on most Friday evenings from 8pm-11pm from October to May. We don't play during the summer months because it gets too warm in the hall and members tend to be busy doing more exciting things, like going on holiday.

The club has been thriving over the past couple of years with a welcome injection of new and younger talent from the village, many of which have recently moved here. We now have a great mix of ages and skills and ended the

season with 13 regular players and an average weekly attendance of 8 or 9. This is just about perfect because there is, of course, only one badminton court in the hall and therefore only 4 people can play at a time. For information, most of the members live in the village and the others have many years of association with the village. We don't play in any league, we are a group of people playing what I call 'social' badminton for the exercise, the conversation, a bit of fun and the odd glass of wine or two – which doesn't really help to improve the playing however!

Because of the number of members and the single court, we don't really have the time or space to teach people how to play or provide formal coaching but we can always do with more keen energetic players so if you are interested in coming along then please message or call me.

Alan Burch
07780 661409

Churchwarden Report for All Saints Church Ulcombe 2024.

The year began with the supply and fitting of a new sound system. The old system fitted following a legacy from the will of the late Jenny Balston in 1998 had become unreliable and spares virtually unobtainable due to its age and the advancement of technology. The new system was purchased using a grant from a "Benefice Pot" of money gifted to Len Valley Benefice by Canterbury Diocese following the sale of surplus land at Lenham Vicarage.

I was aware that our Nominated Church Architect, Clague of Canterbury, had not been in contact following communications regarding the North Chapel windows in late 2019. During the Covid Lockdown there was no communication and no further communication following the return to "normal" life.

2023 is a year when All Saints is legally required to have a Quinquennial Inspection. The last being in 2018. A problem presented itself in that we have had no communication with our Architect.

In consultation and guidance with Rev John Huggins on behalf of the PCC, I approached Katharine Rutherford, Church Architect and Ancient Building Consultant based in Wye, to be our Authorised Architect. On visiting, Katharine, with pleasure accepted the invitation.

The Quinquennial Review, the five yearly inspection of the building took place on the 17th and 18th of October. Katharine, our nominated architect, due to the number of quinquennials she was required to make across the diocese, has only recently finished and published the report. I received the report on the 5th of March 2024.

The PCC Members remain the same. We thank them for all the time and work that they give to the church. All have been accepting further tasks to assist me as Churchwarden. For this I am eternally grateful.

Vickie Ford has stepped into the role of Treasurer, taking over from Rosemary Davis. Vickie comes with a wealth of experience as a Treasurer. Since October, Vickie has been taking up the task, which has been difficult due to updating signatories. Still a way to go, but it is happening. Many thanks to Vickie. Services have continued with a slight alteration. The First Sunday service had become Morning Worship. The service being planned and led by one of our two Authorised Lay Ministers. The numbers attending had declined to about six people. This was becoming untenable. The amount of work to prepare the service was overwhelmed by the small 3 to 4 attendees and it was decided to end the service.

With the placement of Curate Revd Charlotte Coles to the Benefice of Ashford in July, the benefice service rota has had changes. With only one priest in the benefice there is a change of demand for their mission. There are two retired priests within the benefice, and they have willingly joined the Clergy Team. They fill the services where it is impossible to have Revd John attending. The ALM's also cover non-Eucharist services regularly, which is a great help in management.

Whilst our regular congregation is small, we have been pleased to welcome members of Pathways Church Lenham occasionally to All Saints. It is a great pleasure to have them join us.

Easter Day, Remembrance Service, Carol Service and Christmas Day services were well attended, with many Villagers joining us.

John Goode (Churchwarden)

Ulcombe Independent Productions

Ulcombe Independent Productions is a small group of Ulcombe residents who organise various types of events for the village of Ulcombe.

The group's first event was the variety show on 25 February 2023.

Past events in the last 12 months included:-

Summer village wall on Saturday, 22 July with a picnic lunch.

Harvest Home dance on Saturday, 30 September 2023.

Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, 25 November 2023, held jointly with the village hall committee.

Christmas Tree light up on Sunday, 3 December 2023.

Village Easter Ramble on Saturday, 30 March 2024.

Forthcoming events include:-

Vintage sale on Saturday, 25 May 2024 from 1pm.

Village Ramble and picnic lunch on Saturday, 27 July 2024.

70's disco night on Saturday, 28 September 2024*

Ghost Walk amongst the trees of the playing field on Saturday, 26 October 2024*

Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, 23 November 2024*

Christmas Tree lights switch on – date to be confirmed.

New Years Eve Dance on 31 December 2024*

* Denotes an event that may be run jointly with the village hall committee.

The UIP team will also be helping out at the Ulcombe Fest on Saturday, 22 June.

Simon Odam

Baby Sensory Drop In

This takes place every other Thursday at Ulcombe Village Hall. Founded by two Ulcombe mums (Jess and Kelly) in May 2023, these sessions were created to provide an opportunity for parents and carers to help stimulate their babies' senses in a relaxed environment.

The drop-in currently caters for babies aged 0-18 months and features a varied array of sensory stations designed to foster cognitive and developmental growth. With hope that the age range will grow as our babies do too!

The sessions are also a great opportunity to meet other mums and enjoy hot drinks, sweet treats, and good company and we've also enjoyed welcoming some grandparents and nannies too.

Booking in advance is not required and those attending are asked simply to bring at least a £2 donation and a blanket. Please contact Jess on 07845 930120 for more information.

Games Afternoon

The games afternoon is held on the first Thursday of each month in All Saints Parish Church, Ulcombe. We currently have between 8 and 12 regular attendees, some coming from surrounding villages. Rhian, Nicky and myself provide refreshments in the form of an afternoon tea. We also very much enjoy taking part in the games. This is a very pleasant way to spend the afternoon in our beautiful village church.

We would like to welcome new people to join us within Ulcombe Parish. We advertise our group on the Ulcombe Support Group and via social media.