

## Leafield Parish Financial Report

Anglican parish churches in the UK do not receive any central or local government funding, nor are they subsidised by the Church of England authorities.

On the contrary, congregations must give money to the Church of England (the 'parish share') to pay for clergy and central administration. (In Leafield £10,000 remains to be paid in 2010.) This can be a heavy burden for a small village which is faced with the upkeep of a large old building. Churchgoers also feel a moral obligation to support charities at home and abroad. This makes the income from weddings, funerals and fundraising events such as Open Gardens, the Christmas Fayre and the Fete all the more important.

With lower interest rates on savings and increased running costs, this could be a gloomy outlook. However, it follows that the preservation of the fabric of St Michael's which is the first part of the Project will help future maintenance costs. The improvement in access and facilities offered by the re-ordering will make use of the space more attractive to worshippers, the wider community and visitors. This should encourage gifts, active participation and future events which will help funding.

That the village as a whole cares about St Michael's has been recently shown by the response to the Bell Repair Appeal. This not part of Project St Michael and is separately funded from donations, but the two work together. As a result, bells that have been silent for decades are now rung again by an enthusiastic team, possibly a unique event. The same enthusiasm can be generated for the whole of a well-loved building.