

# VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

JULY 2010

ISSUE 88

## VILLAGE DIARY

- Fri 2 Tree Wardens walk. 7pm, Village Hall car park  
Sat 3 **Farmers Market. 9.30 – 12.30**  
**Linton Village College**  
Sun 4 Holy Communion. 9.30, St Mary's Church  
Tue 6 **Green wheeled bin, recycling & plastic bottle collection**  
Wed 7 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall  
Fri 9 **Pre-School Bingo Night. 7.30pm, Village Hall**  
Sun 11 Holy Communion. 9.30, St Mary's Church  
Tue 13 **Black wheeled bin collection**  
Fri 16 Tree Wardens walk. 7pm. Contact Trevor Hall (T: 290559) for meeting place  
Sun 18 Holy Communion. 9.30, St Mary's Church  
Tue 20 **Green wheeled bin, recycling & plastic bottle collection**  
Wed 21 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall  
Sun 25 Family Service. 9.30, St Mary's Church  
Tue 27 **Black wheeled bin collection**  
**Parish Council meeting.**  
**7.30pm, Village Hall**  
Wed 28 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall  
**The Pre-School meets Monday to Friday**  
**9.30 – 12 in the Village Hall**  
**School Summer Holiday 22 July - 2 September**

## DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES

**Saturday 14 August**

### **Gardening Club Annual Show**

Show schedules will be delivered with next months Village Voice but a preview is available from Andrew Morris. 21 High Street, West Wickham. T: 290863

## **The Village Hall**

is available to hire at the rates below, it also offers the following equipment: **Badminton, Short Tennis and 3 Table Tennis tables.**

### **Village Hall rates (for Village use):**

Sport Hire	day or evening £4.00 per hour.
Meeting Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £4.00 per hour. evening £6.00 per hour.
Main Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £6.00 per hour evening £9.00 per hour.
Complete Hall	day (9.00 – 19.00) £10.00 per hour evening £15.00 per hour
Children's party	£25.00 daytime £36.00 evening
Adult's party/disco	£50.00
Wedding reception	£120.00

**To book the Village Hall contact Kathy Pelling**  
**T: 01223 290505**

## CAN YOU SPARE 15 MINUTES....

...to count butterflies in your garden or in the wider countryside? The charity Butterfly Conservation is asking people to simply count butterflies for 15 minutes during bright (preferably sunny) weather anytime from 24 July to 1 August (an ideal project for the school summer holidays). The survey is being launched this year to mark the International Year of Biodiversity. Butterflies react quickly to change in their environment which makes them excellent biodiversity indicators and the count will also identify trends in species that will help plan how to protect butterflies from extinction as well as understand the effect of climate change on wildlife.

If you are counting from a fixed position like your garden then all you have to do is to count the maximum number of each species you can see at a single time. If you are on a walk you just need to total up the number of butterfly species that you see during the 15 minutes. You can submit separate records for different dates and different places – your count is still important even if you see nothing at all. You can only submit results online - the website will be open to receive results throughout July and August – [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org). The website has all the details of the survey and you can also download a Butterfly ID Chart if you want.

And don't forget to let Pete know what you see in the village for 'Nature Notes'.

Janet Morris

## PLAYGROUND NEWS

Following the item in last month's Village Voice, 2 eyewitnesses came forward and identified the grass cutters as being responsible for the damage to the playground fence, not a motorised go-kart as had originally been suggested. The contractors have agreed to pay for the repairs. Please report any damage you see done to the playground or Village Hall, either to me or to Marcus Cornish the Chairman of the Parish Council (T: 290203) or Jenny Richards, Clerk to the Parish Council (T: 894076). At its last meeting the Parish Council felt that the driving of a motorised go-kart on the Village Hall car parks was dangerous, especially as the rear car park is intended as a multi use area for children to play on. They have therefore banned the driving of a motorised go-kart on the car parks, playground and playing field. A notice will shortly go up, also noting that the riding of horses and motorbikes on the playing field is not allowed either.

A few more people have volunteered to help move the new ecobark to the playground pits but more volunteers would be very welcome. The bark has now been ordered and should be delivered mid July. When I know more I will contact all who volunteered and also put up a blackboard with a date when your help is needed.

Andrew Morris. T: 290863

**The Village Voice is sponsored by West Wickham Parish Council and delivered free to all households in West Wickham and Streetly End. The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.**

## TREE WARDEN SCHEME

You may have read in the Parish Council Minutes that South Cambridgeshire has revived the Tree Warden Scheme and that there has been an interest in the village for us to participate. There are five people who wish to be a part of the scheme, Di Licence, Sue Kiddy, Carol Hall, Andrew Morris and myself. At the last Parish Council meeting I agreed to be the designated Tree Warden and the point of contact between West Wickham Parish Council and the South Cambridgeshire District Council Tree Officer.

The scheme aims to raise local interest in trees and to gain a better knowledge of the tree population throughout the district by highlighting the importance of trees both as an environmental asset and as a local amenity.

South Cambridgeshire runs regular training sessions for Tree Wardens and others interested in the scheme and whilst there is an element of the legal aspects of tree preservation and risks associated with trees, the main and most interesting part of the scheme is the identification of the significant trees within the district including such things as the diversity of trees particularly along hedgerows. The other significant aim is to identify trees suffering from disease, particularly chestnuts and oaks which are under threat in a number of ways.

The District Council have provided a useful book, the "Tree Warden Handbook" which provides useful information and advice on a wide range of topics about trees. This can be lent to anyone wishing to know more about the scheme. The Tree Warden Group have already had a meeting to look at what we wish to achieve for the parish and have decided to undertake a tree census to see what trees we have in the area. This census will be undertaken by members of the group having walks of about an hours duration through small sections of the parish identifying what trees are visible from the road and footpaths. The first walk was on 18<sup>th</sup> June around Burton End. Further walks will be taken on Friday evenings at 7pm and anyone wishing to attend will be very welcome. Times and meeting points will be advised in the Village Voice.

We would also like to know which trees in the parish you value. These can be in hedgerows, our local woods or in

gardens and can be ones you particularly like looking at or are valuable as wildlife habitats. There are various ways of obtaining trees for planting in the villages and we have already seen that there are places where trees could be planted. Knowing your favourite trees will help us and we can try and plant trees that people would like to see.

As a later project for the group, we would like to identify the extent of the walnut population as this tree has an historical association within the parish. To enable us to count and record these trees and other significant ones in gardens we would be grateful if you could let us visit and record them.

When I heard of the scheme I was a little concerned that there was going to be an element of "Big Brother" attached to it, with the Council wishing to put Tree Preservation Orders on trees wherever possible. This would have affected me directly, but my perception of the scheme, and its sponsors, is that it is aimed at getting people more involved in tree issues, by raising awareness and interest by making information on trees more accessible.

We have already started receiving information notes on trees, the first one advised on trees being affected by road salt and how they can be treated, this raised my awareness to dead trees in the hedgerows even though there is not much chance of them being affected by salt in West Wickham. Another activity being encouraged under the scheme is that of Community Orchards. There is already one in Harston and the District Council is looking if it will be possible to establish one for South Cambridgeshire. The possibilities of one for West Wickham would be dependent on the availability of a suitable bit of land at some time in the future.

A copy of the South Cambridgeshire document on Community Orchards is available on their website or from myself.

Please feel free to contact me on 290559 or on e mail: [trevorhall@atobviac.com](mailto:trevorhall@atobviac.com)

Trevor Hall

**BINGO**  
**night with cash prizes  
 plus much more**  
**West Wickham Village Hall**  
**Friday 9th July**  
**7.30pm**  
**Tombola & Bar**  
**Tickets £7.50 - includes one free game,  
 plus baked potato supper  
 & dessert.**

*Daisy Chains*  
 Pre-School West Wickham

All proceeds go to  
 Daisy Chains Pre-School  
 West Wickham

Tickets available from the Post Offices in Balsham &  
 Weston Colville, and The Chestnut Tree Pub, West Wrating,  
 or please contact Caroline Newey on (01223) 290490  
 and Jane Jackson on (01223) 290854

### HAVERHILL ARTS CENTRE

#### Films for July

Mon	5	The Ghost. 15	1.30
Mon	5	Nighwatching. 18	7.45
Wed	7	The Ghost. 15	7.45
Mon	12	Dear John. 12A	1.30
Mon	12	Father of my Children. 12A	7.45
Wed	14	Dear John. 12A	7.45
Thur	15	Four Lions. 15	7.45
Thur	22	Sex & the City 2. 15	7.45
Mon	26	Sex & the City 2. 15	1.30
Mon	26	Dogtooth. 18	7.45
Wed	28	Sex & the City 2. 15	7.45
Fri	30	Robin Hood. 12A	7.45

**Box Office: 01440 714140**

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING REPORTS

The Annual Parish Meeting on 25 May was very poorly attended, with only members of the Parish Council, our District & County Councillors and one resident of the parish attending. As those below had kindly taken the trouble to provide a report it was agreed that they should be published in the Village Voice.

### PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Your Parish Council has met six times during the year. Councillor Phil Webb has resigned during the year and has been replaced by co-option with Malcolm Cameron from Streetly End.

It has been a frustrating year. Several things appear on our agenda too often. Our attempts to install a speed limit reduction in Streetly End have so far been thwarted by ridiculous excuses from the local highways department. This scheme was first mooted three years ago. We are on the case and we will succeed. The playground has had an overhaul and all that remains to be done is new bark, Andrew Morris is looking for volunteers to help do this final job.

This year we have no vicars' report because Canon Francis Woolley retired in July and Keith Johnson retired in September. I am very happy to report that last night I attended the licensing service in Balsham of The Reverend Doctor Julie Norris, she will now be looking after our Parish needs. Hopefully there will shortly be another appointment to assist her.

Thank you to my Parish Council team for your work during the year. Also particular thanks to the Parish Clerk, Jenny Richards, who has somehow kept us abreast of the continuous stream of information, which lands on her desk. I hope you feel that we spend the Parish Precept wisely.

Marcus Cornish

### COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Over the course of the last year there have been three major issues that the County Council have faced:

**Guided bus.** The northern section of the guided bus way should have been opened in February 2009, it is still not open and there seems little prospect of it opening in the near future. The problem is that the cost of the project has dramatically over run its budget. The additional obligation is around £50 million. The terms of the contract cap the liability of the council at £1.5 million the rest falls on the contractor. Needless to say the contractor is disputing their liability. The most likely outcome is that the whole matter will go to the High Court for decision. This will mean more time lost and more expense for all concerned. This is an on-going saga.

**Transport Innovation Fund.** This was the government fund that the county bid into for £520 million to dramatically improve public transport in the City and in South Cambs. This would have included investments in road priority for buses, an expansion of existing park and ride facilities, the creation of "transport hubs" on main routes in the larger villages and an increase in subsidised bus services in the rural areas. For us locally this was our only realistic prospect of getting a good bus service for the villages. Sadly a condition the government set down was that "Congestion charging" had to be part of the package, the County felt unable to sign-up for this and the bid was

rejected by the government. The Fund has now been dropped and we must wait and see if the next government has any new ideas.

**Road maintenance.** A big issue throughout the County this year has been the condition of the roads and the amount of money that has had to be diverted into emergency pothole repairs. In the first three months of this year in South Cambs alone more than 6,000 potholes were treated. As we know many of them more than once. The bad weather was clearly a factor, but the real reason the roads got to such a bad state is that over the years the road maintenance budget has been steadily reducing. This has meant that the planned maintenance programme has not been able to keep our roads up to scratch. Lets hope that the lesson has been learnt.

These are all issues that still need to be resolved in this coming year.

John Batchelor. County Councillor

### ANNUAL REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR RICHARD BARRETT

#### Finance

This has been a very difficult year with the down turn affecting all areas of the council. Large cost savings were being made in the year 2009/2010 and much larger cuts in the current financial year, upward of two million pounds. Vacant posts were not filled and some redundancies made. Areas most affected were planning, which has seen a much lower stream of applications and the new communities section because of the delay on the Northstowe development

#### Housing

Due to the down turn in market housing development, social housing has been affected as it relies on, in most cases, the section 106 agreement to provide 40% of this. Consequently our waiting lists for both rented and equity share housing has increased.

#### Planning

With the decision of Marshalls Airport not to release their land for housing, it means land for several thousand houses will have to be found elsewhere in the District

#### Communication

Four sessions per year are now arranged for Parish Councillors to meet with the Cabinet (twice) and planning officers (twice). Members of the cabinet are quite happy to attend parish council meetings (by invitation).

#### Mobile warden Scheme

Funding for this has been agreed for another year 2011/2012. This is good news and gives Parish councils, the District Councils commitment when setting their own precepts.

### VILLAGE HALL REPORT FOR 2009/10

The hall has been very well used again this year by the local clubs and playgroup. Unfortunately the Short Tennis club decided to move back to Haverhill sports centre due to location and ease of their members travelling arrangements.

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The Iaido club have continued their sessions, twice a week, and the club now has international recognition and representation.

The Preschool Playgroup is still very popular and to aid the group, the committee has again agreed to give a reduction for the September term as this is when the numbers of children are at their lowest.

The Bowls club continues and the History and Gardening clubs continue solidly.

There was no summer fair for the hall last year as it was decided to support the church via a fair in the grounds of Manor Farm. At this point in time there are no plans to hold a Village Fair this year either, but we are meeting in the next 3 weeks to decide.

Various items of maintenance have been conducted this year, including a further time clock replacement. These are now over 10 years old and no longer manufactured and they will be replaced by new units in the next month. The car park resurface has been delayed whilst plans are being drawn up for submission to the council. Unfortunately some companies have declined to submit estimates for the work. In the meantime a temporary repair with Tarmac has been applied.

**The AGM for the village hall will be on 17<sup>th</sup> September at 8pm.**

John Pelling

## **DAISY CHAINS PRESCHOOL REPORT**

Our biggest news this year has been that in September 2009, West Wickham Pre-School changed its name to Daisy Chains Preschool, West Wickham. We felt that this reflected the fact that we are open not only to children from West Wickham, but also to children from the surrounding villages. At present we have 27 children on the register and are open from 9.30-12, Monday to Friday. From September however, we will be extending our opening hours to 9.30-12.30 in line with government directives.

Our two major fundraising events so far this year have been the Christmas Fair and Jumble Sale raising £600 and £500 respectively. We are also hoping to plan a Bingo Night later in the year.

Since September 2009, the children have been doing a number of topics including All about Me, Shapes and Colours, Under the Ground and Water. We recently had to close on the day of the general election and took the opportunity to have a day out at Haverhill Nature Reserve where the children had an enjoyable morning learning about local wildlife and then had a picnic in the sunshine.

We are also currently working on an application to develop the outdoor area at Preschool, so that the children have the opportunity to learn and play outside every day and in all weathers. We hope that this will be in place for next summer.

## **THE MEADOW SCHOOL BALSHAM GOVERNOR'S REPORT 2010**

The Meadow continues to be as popular as ever with 290 pupils in school. These children require 50 or so adult

teachers, classroom assistants, supervisors etc. etc which makes the school a very busy place and costly to run. The Senior Management Team and Governors will be challenged to meet what is expected to be reduced budgets in real terms over next few years because the clear indication is that Government's public finances are destined to be curtailed.

For most of the year our Head, Alison Rowe, has been on maternity leave and Steph Wilcox has done an outstanding job running the school. We will be 'back to normal' when Alison returns in June.

Throughout the year, in addition to first rate teaching and learning our pupils have made many trips out of school to :

Audley End,  
Institute of Astronomy,  
Banham Zoo,  
Fitzwilliam museum

They have also welcomed several Theatre Groups into school.

Sport and music have figured highly in activities out of the classroom where we have had considerable success in competitions.

It was good too that the pupils considered others and, in February, had a fundraising day for the relief of people in Haiti.

The PTA has been as active as ever raising £8000 from the popular Balsam Ball and the well attended annual Jumble Sale and the regular Craft weekend.

The next event will be the June Revels. It is always an enjoyable event – See you there!

Richard Silk. Governor

## **WEST WICKHAM CARPET BOWLS CLUB REPORT**

The Club is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year having come into being with the opening of the new Village Hall in 2000. There are 22 members from West Wickham and the surrounding area and about half are founder members. Throughout the last 10 years the Club has maintained the ethos of friendly competition and a welcoming atmosphere firmly established by the much-missed Brian Hayward and John Harrison. We do not play in any league because this can be overly competitive and selective but prefer to play friendly matches against other clubs in which all members can take part. We played 17 of these during the last year, home and away and with varied success (losing more than we won!). However, we pride ourselves that it is our friendliness, not the fact that we are good losers, that has clubs queuing up to play with us and indeed this is often commented upon.

As well as our weekly meetings we run 2 tournaments in the year. The singles tournament was won by John Short and the doubles, for the Founders Cup, by Win Watts & Mary Ellam. Several members have taken part in tournaments organised by neighbouring clubs, usually in aid of charity and to make up for our losses in friendly matches, a team from West Wickham won the Withersfield Club quiz for the second year in succession.

Carpet bowls is a fun game suited to all ages and abilities –

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why not come along and give it a go (it's a great social evening too).

Officers for the year:

Chairman	Richard Barrett
Secretary	Janet Morris
Treasurer	Mary Ellam
Captain	Eric Ellam

Further details from the Secretary, Janet Morris, 21 High Street

Tel: 290863 Email: [jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com](mailto:jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com)

## **WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB**

The Club was formed 28 years ago, at a meeting attended by 18 members of the parish, and with Messrs. Pearson and Morris on its first committee. During the ensuing years it has expanded both in its geographical scope and in its size, and it now has a membership of 47, which is drawn not only from our own village but also from the surrounding villages – to the extent that the club is arguably the premier gardening club in our corner of Cambridgeshire. However, Andrew Morris is still on the committee (as Treasurer), and the club remains firmly rooted in West Wickham, from where the bulk of its membership comes and where all its regular meetings and special events take place in the Village Hall.

Chronologically the first of these special events in the Village Hall is the Annual Plant Sale in May. This has developed a considerable reputation for its good range of modestly priced plants (supplied by Club members), and both the 2009 and 2010 Plant Sales were most successful and help subsidise the Club's speaker programme. The highest profile of the special events in the Village Hall is the Annual Show in the late summer. This is open to all residents of West Wickham and the surrounding villages, and was a resounding success in 2009, with 43 exhibitors, 269 exhibits and a considerable number of entries from children. As the Club is affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society, it is able to award the Banksian Medal, and it also awards the Bill Pearson Cup, named after its foundation Treasurer.

The core of the Club's activities is provided by its regular monthly meetings and its more occasional outings. The regular monthly meetings take place in the Village Hall, on Mondays from October to April, and have included an instructive explanation of the criteria used by show judges, well informed presentations on alpinists and wild orchids, and interesting talks by the Club's own members, mainly on practical topics. At these meetings, informal plant exchanges also occur, as does the sale of Mr. Fothergill's seeds at a large discount. Two local outings were organised during the summer months, to the largely unknown but beautiful gardens of Newnham College, and to the remarkable private garden created in five years by Rosemary Yallop at Castle Camps. The main annual outing in June was a rewarding visit by coach to Marks Hall garden and arboretum, and to Beth Chatto's garden, both in Essex.

The affairs of the Club are administered by a committee (consisting of four officers and a number of general members) which meets in the autumn and spring (usually October and March). It deputes the running of the Annual

Show to a sub-committee, and it itself is answerable to the Annual General Meeting of members. The last A.G.M. in September 2009 was attended by 25 members, and received from the Treasurer a financial statement which showed that the Club was continuing to operate in the black and to be maintaining an appropriate small financial reserve. The meeting also elected Hilary Thomas to its chair.

The Club welcomes new members, and aims to serve as wide a range of gardening and horticultural interests and expertise as it possibly can.

Arthur Mawby (Hon. Secretary)

## **WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB**

The Club remains small in numbers (about 16) but has managed to have a full programme of talks during the year on a range of subjects including the history of the Land Settlement in Abington, the development of seaside towns, education in 19<sup>th</sup> century West Wickham and All Saints church, Jesus Lane. We also had an evening looking at old films of the area. There were evening visits during the summer to the Hildersham furze hills and Burwell Museum, where the main museum building is a barn that originally came from Streetly Hall. The small membership does make it difficult when it comes to paying for speakers and we are lucky in being able to call on some 'home-grown' ones and friends but we could desperately do with some more support. We will be organising a programme for the coming year and all are welcome to come along to any or all meetings.

Research into the history of the village continues and there are still many enquiries from people investigating their own family links to the village. Contacts and visitors have come from as far away as Australia and New Zealand as well as from nearer home. Two publications have come our way during the year. One is a memoir by a member of the Webb family of Streetly Hall and the other is a biography of Mary Amelia Wollaston, wife of John Ramsden Wollaston, perpetual curate in West Wickham from 1825 until 1841 when he and his family emigrated to the newly-established colony of Western Australia. The latter was written by Helen Mann, a Wollaston descendent, who spoke to the Club when she was here doing research some years ago. Please ask me if you would like details of these two books.

In September, the Club had a display at the Cambridgeshire History Fair (part of the Cherry Hinton Festival) where probably the most asked question during the day was 'Where is West Wickham?!' However, the Club is part of the wider local history world in Cambridgeshire. It is affiliated to both the Cambridge Antiquarian Society and the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and our members are able to attend their meetings and conferences. Personally, I am a member of the Council of CAS and represent them on both the Committee of CALH and the County Advisory Group on Archives & Local Studies. This provides lots of useful contacts and sources of information and there cannot be many in the local history community at least who aren't aware of the existence of our village.

Janet Morris, Secretary

21 High Street

Tel: 290863 Email: [jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com](mailto:jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com)

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

At the AGM of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May the following matters were discussed:

### Elections

Chairman: Cllr. Cornish.

Prior to his election he stressed the need for extra people on the Council. It was agreed that expanding the council to 7 councillors should be considered before the election next year.

Vice Chairman: Cllr. Morris

Village Hall Committee: Cllr. Cornish & Cllr. Cameron.

**Road Maintenance:** The proposed work could no longer be carried out because of lack of funding due to the enormous job of filling in pot holes. Cllr. Morris will email Keith Faunch and ask that when funds are available could the necessary work in Streetly End be a priority rather than work in the High Street.

**Streetly End Speed Limit:** A copy of a letter from Cambs. Constabulary supporting the need to lower the speed limit has been sent to Richard Preston of Highways Dept. at Shire Hall requesting a response.

**Salt bin:** It was agreed this would be placed next to the Bottle and Clothes banks.

**Play area:** A post and some fencing have had to be replaced round the Childrens Play Area. It was at first thought to have been caused by a motorised go-kart but transpires that a grass cutter had knocked into it. However it was agreed that motorised go-karts should be banned from use in the car park and on the playing field. The Ecobark has not been ordered and it is hoped that there will be further volunteers to help lay this bark before putting in the order (Ed. See page 1).

### Finance:

The End of Year accounts for 2009/10 and Statement of Accounts were agreed and signed by Chairman and Parish Clerk.

The allocated reserves up to 31/3/11 were agreed as: Clerks Gratuity £778.99; Playground £1600.42; Speed reduction for Streetly End £3000.00. Leaving un-allocated reserves of £2053.75.

### Planning:

A query had been raised regarding Planners, when granting planning permission, stipulating what sort of materials you use but also from whom to buy them. The Parish Clerk will query this with the Planning Dept.

There was concern by a parishioner in Streetly End about the smell caused by horse waste which should be dumped at least 40m distance from her property. This will be looked into.

**Tree Warden Scheme:** Trevor Hall was appointed as the Parish Tree Warden and the group now consists of Di Licence, Sue Kiddy, Carol Hall, Andrew Morris and Trevor Hall.

**The Speed Watch Scheme** now has 5 people trained to use the equipment and a monitoring system will be now be organised.

**Broadband.** The speed of broadband in this area is cause for concern. Trevor Hall volunteered to investigate community schemes.

**The next meeting is at 7.30pm on Tuesday 27 July. ALL RESIDENTS OF WEST WICKHAM ARE WELCOME**

Jennifer Richards, Clerk to the Parish Council.  
T: 01223 894076

## NEWS FROM LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE

The change of government has already had an impact on our local schools and that is no surprise. Education was always a political football, used by successive governments when they are flexing their muscles and wanting to demonstrate visible change. In only a matter of weeks since the election, the new primary curriculum has been dismantled, three developing diplomas have gone (science, humanities and languages), the international GCSE favoured by some independent schools has been sanctioned for the state sector and the work that was being done on key stage 3 assessment has been put on hold. Blink and you miss an email that heralds a major change of direction.

The day after the general election, the new government signalled its intention to shake things up. The DCSF became the Department for Education, the old rainbow coloured website disappeared and a new, more starkly designed one replaced it carrying unsettling warnings about existing content not necessarily representing current policy.

A week or so later I received a special letter from Michael Gove, the Education Secretary, inviting Linton Village College as an outstanding school, to consider Academy Status. We could make the transition by September and there was no compulsion to consult our parents. This is speedy change indeed.

I imagine you are wondering if the College is going to take up this opportunity. Well, frankly so are we. We would be unwise not to consider both the implications of becoming an Academy and also of not becoming one. There are important principles at stake, but there are also practical realities to face. As a Governing Body we have agreed to find out as much as we can about the implications of Academy Status and to keep a very close eye on what other schools in our Authority are doing. Whatever happens, this decision is not something we would wish to make at any speed, so I can guarantee that if LVC does become an Academy it won't rush into it by September. I can also guarantee that such a major change of status for us will be preceded by a full consultation with our governors, staff, parents and students. As a Village College, we sit at the heart of our community and serving the needs of that community is a central priority.

Caroline Derbyshire, Principal

## CAKES...ONCE AGAIN

It is already time to be thinking about the Village Fete and, in particular, the cake stall. When we put out our annual appeal you all respond magnificently, so we are hoping that you will do so again this year.

The date is Saturday 4th September, which seems a long way ahead but it comes around very quickly. Could anybody who thinks that they may be able to make a cake for us please put it into their diary. We will be publishing a reminder in the Village Voice next month but for now could you keep it in mind because we will be scrounging cakes from as many people as possible very soon.

Vivienne Henderson & Shirley Hulyer.

## MEADOW MATTERS

### NEWS FROM THE MEADOW SCHOOL

Well, at long last, the sun is shining and it's actually feeling a little bit warmer – not that I'm feeling it very much, stuck in the office.

May has been a very busy month, with lots of trips and events taking place. Y6 went on their residential – a different trip this year. They went to Finborough Hall in Ipswich and had a great week taking part in a whole range of activities: rifle shooting, quad biking, kayaking, climbing and abseiling to name but a few. The children came back exhausted but full of their week away.

Foundation and Key Stage 1 held a Night at The Meadow Museum. The Meadow School became a museum for the night, with children bringing their own collections from home. They then watched the film Year 2 children were invited to sleepover at school. A successful night was had by all even though the hum of the fish tank kept the adults awake.

A group of Y5 children were invited to attend the Y5 Maths Challenge: Niall, Finlay, Ailsa and Josh and competed against 11 other schools; although the children did not succeed to the next round, they were highly commended for their team work. An example question: find the multiples of 3 and add them together: 99, 144, 81, 139, 243. (in 30 seconds) – I really don't think my Maths skill are that good!

We run a very popular chess club at school with almost 40 children attending: Torin, Tom, James and Aaron represented the school at a nationally organised area tournament in Ely and did very well. A special congratulation to Aaron who has won the school award for outstanding achievements.

We are losing two members of staff this summer: Claire Coulson, who has taught in Y5/6 for almost 3 years. She has proved to be a most valuable part of the school team and will be greatly missed. The other member of staff is Margaret Mascie-Taylor. Margaret has decided that after 19 years at The Meadow it is time to retire and enjoy some time for herself. Those of you that have had children in Margaret's class will know how well loved she is by the children and this feeling is echoed by the staff. Margaret has been a dedicated member of the PTA and the drive behind our international school status. Her rather wacky dress sense on 'dress up' days as well as her constant source of enthusiasm and energy means that she will be sorely missed. If you have had children taught by Mrs M-T (or in fact you have been taught by her) and would like to contribute towards a retirement present, a collection envelope will be in the school office. We are trying to organise a tea-party style event and if you would like further details of this, please contact the office. She deserves a good send-off!

**Forthcoming events:**  
**Craft Fair: 16/17<sup>th</sup> October**

Thank you for your support.

Linda Wain

## NATURE NOTES

### Creatures of the Night

Most of my interesting news concerns those mysterious animals who normally operate under cover of darkness.

First and foremost was our **bat watch** kindly hosted by Sylvia Norton and attended by bat expert Chris Vine. About 14 of us waited in eager anticipation until at 9.21 precisely the first of the bats emerged from the garage barge boards and the count began. 20 minutes later 49 had emerged – all apparently female and probably pregnant. By now they should all have given birth so the numbers will have increased. The fifth bat to come out was caught by Chris and we all had a chance to stroke the little Pipistrelle before she flew off into the evening sky to forage in the surrounding area. Thanks Sylvia.

Four of us were out for a walk with the dog one Saturday evening at about half past six when there was a rustling in the ditch and out came a **badger**, crossed the path in front of us (but behind the dog) and busily moved on through the line of trees into the next field. This was only the second time that I have seen a badger alive in daylight. It was on the tree-lined section of what we know as "the gallop" (Footpath 10). Does anybody know where the badger's sett may be?

The **Barn Owl** has featured before in this column, but there have been numerous recent early evening sightings of a Barn Owl quartering fields around the airfield crossroads. Might it be feeding young?

### In the light of day

I asked everyone to let me know if they heard a **cuckoo**. The only one reported has been on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> June. (I heard it also). Numbers of Cuckoos are well down in recent years but nobody is sure why. There has been a lot of cuckoo spit, though! I still haven't heard or seen a turtle dove this year.

It doesn't seem to be a great year for **butterflies** so far. I have seen very few small tortoiseshells and speckled woods, which are normally common. However yesterday I did see a painted lady – a nice surprise.

I can't leave without giving a mention to the wildflowers – particularly the **oxeye daisies** whose blooms look bigger and blousier than ever. There are some very impressive groups of them on the footpath leading to Skippers Hall Farm.

Keep the information coming in.

Peter Grieve. T: 290503

## GARDENING CLUB

I would like to say a big thank you to Janet Morris for all the effort and organisation that she put into the Gardening Club outing on the 19<sup>th</sup> June. It was an excellent excursion, visiting both the Swiss Garden & Coton Manor and was appreciated by everyone who went. Thank you for a great day out.

Cynthia Swadling

## HEARING DOGS FOR DEAF PEOPLE CAMBRIDGE & DISTRICT BRANCH NEWS

The local branch of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People has now been in existence for just over a year. Due to job relocation the inaugural Branch Organiser, Sandra Mace, is unable to continue in post and I have recently agreed to take up the challenge of moving the branch forward. As a branch our objectives are to raise money for the charity (which receives no government funding whatsoever) and to raise awareness of the work of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

There are many ways in which we can come into local communities and raise awareness; equally there are many ways that you, either as individuals, community groups or local businesses can help us. For example, we can supply speakers for schools, cub, scout, brownie and guide groups, which can help with young peoples perception of disability and ways of overcoming problems that are faced on a regular basis. We can also supply speakers for local groups such as WIs, Rotary Clubs etc and also for corporate events.

You can help us in many ways, for example you could join our small committee of volunteers who meet on a monthly basis. If committee work is not your cup of tea, would you be able to spare a couple of hours on an ad hoc basis to help us? I am really keen to build up a database of people who are willing to help on an occasional basis – this could be by holding your own fundraising event such as Paws for Coffee (we can provide support materials), manning a stall for a couple of hours, donating items for tombolas/raffles to help raise money locally, or by selling raffle tickets for one of our National campaigns – all offers of help will be warmly welcomed. Also, if you are planning a local event where we could attend with our information leaflets and merchandise please let us know.

Currently we are in the early stages of planning a sponsored dog walk, which will be held in Milton Country Park in October. If you would like to help us make this event a huge success please let us know as we will need helpers on the day. Further details of the dog walk will be sent out later in the summer.

If you have questions about the work of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People or would like to offer to help please do not hesitate to contact me.

Jenny Parker – Branch Organiser  
01223 833562 (evenings only please)  
jennifer.parker5@btopenworld.com

## STREETLY END OPEN GARDENS

We would like to thank all those who came to their gardens to look, or chat and have tea, or buy plants or help in many ways.

We were able to send £371.00 to the National Garden Scheme, which is an encouraging sum. We would also like to thank all the residents of Streetly End for not making a fuss about all the cars in the village and hope they were not too much nuisance.

Sylvia Norton & Shirley Shadford

## AND THIS HAPPENED IN WEST WICKHAM!

I live in the house by the 30 mph sign, on the way to the crossroads and have lived there for over 30 years.

Recently something happened to me, which will stay with me for a long time.

It was about 3 o'clock at night when I was woken up by a strange sound. It sounded like something, perhaps a branch of a tree, was blowing against the side of the house. I didn't think too much of it, but felt a little uneasy. Notwithstanding, I fell asleep, but not for very long. There was another sound, which was slightly more scaring. Something or somebody was fiddling with the double glass door downstairs.

I was scared, very scared. But I said to myself that whatever was going to happen, the most important thing was to look after myself. I didn't move and stayed in my bed. And listened. After what seemed to be a long time I heard somebody walking away past the front of the house and I felt slightly better. I jumped out of my bed, ran downstairs and switched all the lights on. I looked in all the rooms to see if there was a burglar inside. Nobody to be seen.

At that point I thought about ringing the police. But was that necessary? Everything seemed to be all right now, except my heart was still racing along. I decided to ring the police – 999 - somebody listened to me and they would be there right away. That was a relief. It took some time because the nearest station is in Sawston. I heard them coming and raced downstairs in my pyjamas. What a relief. They looked inside the house and outside in the garden and assured me that all was safe. I could ring them any time and they would come.

The next day they came back anyway and looked at the glass door. One of the policemen noticed almost immediately that somebody had tried to prise the door off the hinges. Thank goodness they didn't succeed. And if all this was not enough, a day later a very nice young policeman came here, especially for me, to help me forget this adventure.

I made a donation to the police force's charity and I won't forget their help and friendliness and knowledge of people like me in this situation.

At their suggestion I have now had a security light installed and other security measures and my house now feels like Fort Knox.

Judy Jolly

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