

VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

SEPTEMBER 2015

ISSUE 149

VILLAGE DIARY

- Wed 2 **Blue & green wheeled bin (day late) Collection**
Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sat 5 Farmers Market. 9.00 - 12.00
Linton Village College
- Sun 6 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Tue 8 Black wheeled bin collection
- Sun 13 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Tue 15 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
- Wed 16 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Deadline for items for the October issue of the Village Voice**
- Sun 20 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 21 **Gardening Club AGM. 7.30pm, Village Hall**
- Tue 22 Black wheeled bin collection
- Wed 23 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sun 27 Family Service. 11.00, St Mary's Church
- Mon 28 **Parish Council meeting. 7.30pm, Village Hall. All are welcome to attend.**
- Tue 29 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
- Wed 30 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall

Daisy Chains Pre-School meets Monday to Friday 9.30 – 12.30 in the Village Hall

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	November - March £10.00/hour. April - September £5.00/hour.
Meeting Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £5.00/hour. evening £7.00/hour.
Main Room	day (9.00 – 19.00) £7.00/hour evening £10.00/hour.
Complete Hall	day (9.00 – 19.00) £12.00/hour evening £18.00/hour
Children's party	£30.00 daytime £43.00 evening
Adult's party/disco	£60.00
Wedding reception	£150.00

To book the Village Hall contact Louise Salter
T: 01223 291226

Email: bookings@westwickham.org
or visit www.westwickham.org

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.

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB ANNUAL SHOW

Once again a wonderful display of vegetables, flowers, jam, chutney, liqueurs and cakes etc. were on display at West Wickham & District Gardening Club's Annual Show on 15 August. Everyone who entered should be proud of their effort and it was great that the show attracted a number of new exhibitors and that there were new winners of several of the trophies.

The cup and trophy winners were:

The Children's Trophy: Isabella Bearton.

The West Wrattling Cup for vegetables & fruit: Simon Blackwell.

The White Horse Trophy for cut flowers & plants: Jean Martin.

The Stan & Hilda Cox cup for domestic classes: Sue Kiddy.

The West Wickham Star Baker: Amy Sargent.

The Bill Pearson Cup for the most points won in show was won by Simon Blackwell, with Jean Martin & Sue Kiddy runners up.

The RHS Banksian Medal was won by Simon Blackwell.

I enjoyed it, I know those who came to see the show were impressed by what they saw. Those who were not able to come missed a very good display, so don't miss next years show.

The Club's next meeting is the Annual General Meeting, 7.30pm on Monday 21 September at the Village Hall

Andrew Morris, Show Organiser.

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB

A big thank you to the Cowell family who kindly answered my appeal for anyone visiting First World War cemeteries to photograph the gravestones of West Wickham men. They were able to find those for three of our men – Dennis Lucas, Frank Simkin and James Maddever – and very thoughtfully left a poppy cross on behalf of the village at all of them. If anyone else is planning a visit to France or Flanders I would be happy to provide details of these or other cemeteries.

Find of the year

Lucy Cameron in Streetly End was extremely lucky to find a silver groat (a coin worth four pence) from the reign of Henry V while planting a rose in her garden. The coin was minted at the Tower of London between 1413 and 1422 and is in very good condition – most coins that are found in the village are very worn from weathering – and it is fun to speculate how it may have got there. As Lucy points out, we are marking the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt this year (on 25



October) and a groat (or a groat and a half according to some sources) was a day's pay for an archer in Henry's army. For whoever lost it, the coin was quite a lot of money. A groat would have bought 4 gallons of best quality ale or a pair of work shoes while 10 groats would have paid the rent of a cottage for a year.

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Find of the year continued

If any more of you are finding items (not just coins), either in your garden or the surrounding fields, please get in touch. It's good to know about them as they help build up a picture of village life in the past. If you need them identified and there are enough of you, I could see about organising an 'identification' session with someone expert.

The first talk of our autumn programme will be on Monday 12 October when Andrew Westwood-Bate will be telling us about First World War VAD hospitals in the area including those at Linton and Balsham. Do come along and join us.

Janet Morris, 21 High Street
Tel: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

LINTON HEALTH CENTRE FLU CLINICS

Flu jabs are recommended for everyone aged 65 and over and those in clinical at-risk groups. Once again we will be running our Saturday mornings clinics starting on 3 October. We are taking bookings now. We have over 2,600 patients requiring immunisation, so we ask for your help in booking a Saturday appointment if you possibly can. This will help to minimise the impact on our nurses' weekday appointments.

Children aged 2, 3 and 4 on 1 September, and those in at-risk groups aged 2-17, are eligible to receive the nasal spray flu vaccine. We have been informed that this vaccine will not be available at the start of the flu campaign, so we will book children in to the clinics on 17 and 24 October only.

The shingles vaccine is also available to people who are aged 70 and 78 on 1 September 2015. This is a one-off vaccine that can be given at the same time as the flu jab. In addition, anyone who was eligible for immunisation in the first two years of the shingles programme but who has not yet been vaccinated remains eligible until their 80th birthday. This includes people aged 71 and 72 and people aged 79 on 1 September 2015.

Please phone 01223 892555 to book your appointment.

Dr Wheeler & Partners



AUTUMN CONCERT

at Holy Trinity Church,
Balsham

Saturday, 10th October 2015,
7:30 PM

IN AID OF

ST. ANDREWS PARISH CHURCH

AN EXCITING PROGRAMME

OF
CHORAL & INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

TICKETS £10, CHILDREN FREE

INCLUDING INTERVAL REFRESHMENTS

Will be available from Balsham and Weston Colville Post Offices from 1
September

or Michael Gorman 01223-290653

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE ORGANISERS:

Michael and Linda Gorman 01223-290653 Jeanette Job 01223-290706

FROM THE VICARAGE

This month we will be advertising and interviewing for a part-time Parish Nurse. Although the Parish Nurse will not be working in West Wickham there may be someone who lives in the village who is looking for this kind of job and who is willing to work in the neighbouring communities. The Parish Nurse needs to be State Registered and willing to work with the churches and local village communities, and in partnership with the local GPs. The post is for three days per week. If anyone is interested, please contact me for more details (Rev Julie Norris 01223 891350 or email 7churches.seven@gmail.com)

The Family Service this month is at 11am on 27 September and will include a Baptism. Please also put in your diary that the Harvest Festival Service this year is to be held on 4 October at 3.30pm and will include a Songs of Praise with the Salvation Army Band.

This month also sees the launch of the New Diocesan Strategy with a service in Ely Cathedral at 3pm on 27th September. Tickets to this service can be obtained from the Office at Bishop Woodford House, Ely (T: 01353 652700). There is a document which sets out the Strategy, called 'People Fully Alive: Ely 2025' which can be downloaded from the Diocese Website or found at the back of the Church. The Strategy aims to encourage small churches like ours by helping us to develop tools to engage with our local communities, by offering training and developing lay and ordained leaders. In some ways West Wickham Parish Church is ahead of this. The PCC has already looked at the building and taken a step to make the Church more accessible to the village by installing water and a toilet. Now, the Strategy encourages us to think of new ways to make this ancient and holy space used by the whole community. We will be welcoming wider conversations and ideas as we explore how the Strategy will impact on us here.

Rev Julie Norris

CHERISHING OUR CHURCHYARDS

In June we celebrated national 'Cherishing our Churchyards' week. Who knew? But we should cherish them because, I quote,

"They often contain a rich diversity of plant and animal life"

"They often have distinctive and veteran trees"

"They provide a home for moss, lichen and ferns on the old stonework and boundary walls"

"They provide a tranquil place for quiet reflection"

St Mary's does all of these. You don't need to be a churchgoer to enjoy the tranquillity and wildlife in our churchyard. In the late afternoon there are often stock doves and even a little owl roosting in the porch, swallows skimming across the grass collecting insects. People have seen foxes and badgers. At dusk bats can be seen flying around. Although our grass is kept short, there are nettles around the edges. Look carefully and you may find ladybird larvae and caterpillars of the peacock and small tortoiseshell butterflies. More often than not there is a song thrush singing in the trees and a cheeky robin hopping around the tap area. When the lime trees are in flower they give off a heady scent as you walk up the path. There is much to enjoy, so visit and stay awhile and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.

Di Licence

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The following items were some of the issues discussed at the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 27 July. The draft Minutes can be seen on the Notice Board in the High Street.

Highways issues: The Parish Clerk had had no response with regard to overhanging branches obstructing sight of the A1307 at Dean Road despite sending photographs of the problem; also no response regarding the need for repair or replacement of signage in the parish. The Parish Clerk had also enquired about the replacement of cats eyes on the road from Balsham to Fulbourn but received no reply. Further emails have been sent.

Parish Council website requirement: It is expected that www.westwickham.org will be updated by the end of October. Parish Council information e.g. Minutes, Agenda etc. will be shown on it. It was agreed that in order to conform to rulings from SCDC the Parish Council would pay the annual registration fee and subscription fee of £100.

Church Clock Repairs: The PCC had obtained a quote from to replace the clock face for £5580 plus £850 for the scaffolding. Marcus Cornish hoped this could be reduced as measurements had been taken and the clock hands and drive already removed. The Parish Council agreed that some help should be given and the PCC was asked to write a letter of request with copy of the estimate. Also some fund raising events could be organised as the clock is very much part of the village and it would be sad to lose it.

Finance: The updated accounts had been distributed to all councillors and cheques signed following authorisation by the Parish Council. The internal audit had been distributed to all councillors and as there were no issues to be discussed the audit was accepted as satisfactory.

Planning:

S/0060/15/OL – 95 High St. Demolition of garage and outbuildings and construction of 2 single dwellings and garages. The application was discussed at a Planning meeting held on 1 June and the application was recommended for refusal because a) it was outside the village envelope; b) it is “backfill” development which was deemed to be inappropriate in West Wickham, which has been designated “infill”; c) it would have a materially adverse effect on 95 High St and the houses opposite.

S/1726/15/LB – 21 High St. Replace roofing felt and repair. This was recommended for approval.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Parish Council agreed to submit an ‘Application to Designate a Neighbourhood Area’, along with supporting documentation, to SCDC, who will consult businesses, landowners and local stakeholders. If SCDC approves the designation, a plan will be prepared based on the views gathered in the survey. Having a Neighbourhood Plan ratified by the District Council would give the Village greater influence over future developments. Cllr. Hall and his team were thanked for all their work.

Broadband: Following further enquiries by Cllrs. Charlton and Schuilenburg it seemed unlikely that West Wickham and surrounding villages would receive superfast broadband before the summer of 2016. There were also concerns regarding the costs for a solution and whether sufficient funds would still be available in 2016. They are both looking into alternative methods and will report back.

(Ed. See also an article on broadband by Alex Schuilenburg below)

Maintenance: Cllr. Licence had spoken to the man who is

organising the electrical recycling project and he would like to come to talk about it at one of our meetings. It was suggested other parish councils be invited to come to hear about it.

Childrens Play Area: Wicksteeds report showed that there were some issues which needed attention, mainly to do with Health & Safety. Cllr. Plumb will look into this.

Report on meetings attended by Cllrs:

Cllrs. Cornish and Hall had attended a “myth busting tour” on “exemption” affordable housing/shared ownership housing built outside the village envelope. It was interesting that the houses were noticeably larger than those built on the open market and only 10 houses to the acre were allowed.

Cllrs. Schuilenburg and Hall attended the SCDC Planning Forum. Many complaints had been received from Parish Councils about the way things were being handled.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 28 September at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Jenny Richards, Parish Clerk

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO BROADBAND IN WEST WICKHAM?

If you, like me, have been watching the Connecting Cambridgeshire website and waiting patiently for our fibre broadband "upgrade" this September, I am afraid you will be disappointed... again. Connecting Cambridgeshire have recently informed me that a solution to bring *Superfast Broadband* to West Wickham and surrounds will only be provided sometime between Summer 2016 and Summer 2017.

The reason for this delay is that the Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC) solution, namely bringing fibre optic cable from the telephone exchange in West Wrating to the new telephone street cabinet on Common Road by the new crossroads at the top of the village, has now been cancelled. Even though many of us in West Wickham and surrounds would have seen an improvement in broadband speeds through this "upgrade", BT OpenReach determined that only 3 properties in West Wickham would actually receive *Superfast Broadband*.

Connecting Cambridge have asked BT OpenReach through an official change request to stop work on the FTTC upgrade for West Wickham and investigate and suggest alternative solutions that would provide *Superfast Broadband* to the majority of properties in West Wickham. A decision on the solution is expected to be made by Connecting Cambridgeshire at the end of this year, with BT OpenReach expected to commence work early in 2016. The favoured solution is to provide a single new telephone cabinet, either just outside or in the middle of West Wickham, which is connected by fibre-optic cable to the telephone exchange in West Wrating. This work is expected to also take at least 6 months to complete. Unfortunately there are another 9 villages in Cambridgeshire in a similar situation and we are all competing to get this work scheduled first.

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What's happening to broadband? continued

The primary reason for this change is because the funding for this work is through the Government's Superfast Extension Programme (SEP), and insufficient properties would have received Superfast broadband, so making the allocation of SEP funding for the original Common Road cabinet upgrade to West Wickham inappropriate. In addition, due to technical reasons, an upgrade could have made broadband even worse for those on really low speeds (which is most of us). While these issues could have been foreseen, no official reason was given why they were not. We are also one of 10 other villages in similar situations.

I must emphasise, as requested by Connecting Cambridgeshire, that all dates are provisional based on best (namely shortest) estimates.

Naturally I am bitterly disappointed about the further delays, like I am sure many of you now all are. Unfortunately I was not surprised as I had been tipped off over a year ago. As a result of the tip-off, I, along with other like-minded residents, have been questioning and pressuring Connecting Cambridgeshire for the truth since the beginning of this year. This pressure, I am told, has pushed the West Wickham agenda near the top of Connecting Cambridgeshire's list of other villages in Cambridgeshire with similar "upgrade" issues.

Please help keep up the pressure on Connecting Cambridgeshire by emailing them your opinion at <contact@connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk> and ask for regular updates on what is happening and when we can expect to see decent broadband speeds in our area. The information on their website, <http://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/parish/west-wickham/>, is sadly almost always out of date, and OpenReach's website just lists our Superfast status as "Under Review". If you find out anything more, please email me at <alex@westwickham.org>, and likewise I promise to keep applying pressure and keep you all regularly updated through the village voice.

What are the alternatives?

If you are not prepared to wait on a forever-changing and as-yet unspecified date (Summer 2016 to Summer 2017 is what Connecting Cambridgeshire currently are telling us), there are reasonable alternatives.

1. Community Wifi: This is the most cost-effective solution but does require support from the community and, in particular, local businesses. There is a start-up cost per household of around £80-£100 for the equipment (although this could be waived), with a monthly charge of around £26-£28 for speeds up to 40Mbps. There is also the requirement of an aerial to connect the wifi community to an access point that connected to the internet with very high bandwidth (1Gbps+). Fortunately the cost of this aerial can be met through the government's Superfast Broadband Voucher Scheme which is available to local businesses wishing to improve their internet connectivity. This scheme can provide a grant of up to £3000 per business, and if enough local businesses step forward we can create a group scheme to cover the cost of the aerial. However, we first need to establish if the scheme is feasible. A site survey has already been commissioned to establish viability and the cost of the scheme. More importantly though, if you are a local business that is willing to join the

scheme, please email me at <alex@westwickham.org> to register your interest. Without local businesses willing to join, this scheme will not work. It does not matter how small your business is either (in fact it is better if you are small), and there is only a minimum commitment period of 6 months. It would help if you are located high (elevation) in the village and have a small bit of land that on which you would be willing to allow an aerial to be located. If you are VAT registered, that would also help. Don't worry about the paperwork, there is not much involved and the company who will provide the service will do most of the work. If the scheme is viable, we propose to follow up with a presentation in the village hall for all residents to let you know the details.

2. Satellite Broadband: This is available now, but has a high startup/initial investment of £280-£400 plus installation costs. For an average 4 person family with typical gadgets (iPod, Android) and usage (iPlayer, music streaming), expect to pay around £50-£60 per month for 22Mbps download speeds. You can get faster speeds and higher data allowance, but expect to pay more. While there is also a minimum contract period, most decent providers will allow early termination if Superfast Broadband is brought to your region before your minimum period expires with no penalties. There are plenty of companies around offering this service. However, reliability is affected by poor weather and this solution is not suitable for online gaming nor voice/video calling over the internet (unless you are prepared to put up with 1-2 seconds delay).

3. 3G/4G Mobile Broadband: While most of us have poor phone coverage, the recent Neighbourhood Plan Survey has suggested that a large majority of residents are not averse to having a phone mast in the village. While there is no guarantee, the parish council could register an interest in having a mobile phone mast in or near the village. If a mobile phone operator takes up this offer, it could see 4G connectivity brought to the village. However, most mobile companies have already established their masts in this region so it is unlikely the village's registration of interest will be taken up. In addition, mobile data fees tend to be high.

Alex Schuilenburg

A PLEA FROM CAMBRIDGESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

HARVEST is upon us and we're calling on local residents to help our fight against straw stack arson. Stack fires can quickly spread and not only endanger people and livestock, but also life-long work on farms. Stacks burn very slowly meaning crews are committed for long periods of time, making them unavailable for other emergencies. Don't forget, many firefighters attending incidents like these in rural parts of our county are on-call personnel and their retention at a stack fire impacts directly upon business and services in their community.

What can you do? We're urging residents and those passing through rural areas to keep a careful watch. Do you see someone acting suspiciously around stores of hay or straw? Is there an unusual vehicle near farm buildings? Become a community member of Arson Watch and keep an eye on stacks in your area. Report suspicious activity to police on 101 and dial 999 if you see a stack fire.

NATURE NOTES

Returning from carpet bowls the other evening, Andrew and Janet report being met by a ghostly pale hedgehog in their garden. Setting aside any suggestion that they may have been hallucinating on a moonless night, or that this was a reincarnation of some past resident of West Wickham, a hedgehog sighting is a cause for celebration, and I would welcome news from anyone else who has seen hedgehogs in their garden this year. I would repeat the advice that many of you will have heard before, to check bonfires before setting them alight to ensure that no hedgehog is hibernating.

Hedgehogs are, of course, the gardener's friend but some other creatures do not have that reputation. Some of us garden with nature in mind, and sometimes pay the penalty but also try to see matters from the point of view of the so-called pests. Di reports after the recent rain, the emergence of slugs and snails and with some relish, describes the sight of *"two brown slugs, mating, lying in a circle with the eggs/sperm in the centre, looking for all the world like a tiny doughnut on the grass"*. Sounds very tempting! We are all being visited by wasps no doubt. Di says they have discovered her ripening figs, while in our garden they took the precaution of nesting in a hole at the base of the apple tree. I picked an apple the other day and while holding it I counted 13 wasps emerging from the fruit. Not one of them thanked me.

After a quiet time for birds, there are traces of song to be heard, including, for Di a mournful moulting robin, the still twittering swallows and screeching swifts, noisy young green woodpeckers and raucous magpies. Bullfinches have also been feasting on her honeysuckle berries. There have been one or two notable bird of prey sightings, including a marsh harrier passing over the field behind us, seen by my neighbour Ruth, some noisy young kestrels on the wire up Blacklands Lane, and Di reports a sparrowhawk on the grass beside White Gables. *"Seemingly unaware of our presence, she casually flew in front of us, landed and stayed for about ten seconds before flying off. Magic!"* Di has also had a pair of collared doves nesting in her pergola, where the two youngsters, about to emerge will need to keep a wary eye open for the sparrowhawk.

Butterfly watch has ended but overall it seems to have been a good year. Second broods of red admiral, comma, peacock and brimstone have recently been emerging. Whites have been prolific – the caterpillars have destroyed our nasturtiums and chrysalises are already appearing. With luck the nasturtiums have self-seeded, so the cycle will continue. Out on walks there have been plenty of meadow browns and gatekeepers, which are still around as I write. I've noticed many different dragonflies in various locations in ponds, streams and wooded walks, but despite having books and charts am not entirely confident on identification so would welcome some authoritative information about what we can see locally. Also, Di has commented on the absence of hornets so far this year and would like to know if anyone has seen them.

There is plenty of knapweed in flower at the moment, which provides nectar for bees and many species of butterfly and I would also like to give an honourable mention to the chicory currently in flower alongside the path on the way to Leys Wood. The blue flowers open in the sun, but you need to catch them before they close up again because they seem to go to bed early.

Peter Grieve. T: 290503, Email: mail@petergrieve.co.uk

MEADOW SCHOOL'S ANNUAL CRAFT AND GIFT FAIR

10.30 to 4pm Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 October
Entrance £1 for adults, 50p for Concessions & children

Following the magnificent success of our 25th Annual Craft and Gift fair last year, where we nearly had 1,000 people come through our doors, please do come along again to our 26th fair on 10 and 11 October. There are over 50 stalls of locally handmade crafts and gifts with a handful of new stall holders including your old favourites in a slightly new layout. Again, there will be plenty of stalls to peruse including the return of the food hall selling Greek foods, chilli sauces, flavoured vinegars. cakes, chocolates, brownies as well as infused glass, ceramics, greeting cards, knitted and fabric crafts, wooden toys, games and puzzles, jewellery, novelty soaps, scented candles, art, gemstones and fossils, natural soaps, creams and lotions, scarves, bags and accessories, Phoenix Cards, Usborne Books along with Meadow School stalls: face painting; sweet stall; adult and child tombola; lucky dip; children's crafts together with our café selling lovely homemade cakes and biscuits, filled rolls, bacon butties and hot dogs.

Come along, have a browse, stay for lunch or just indulge in something delicious from the café. It will be great to see you. Don't forget your cheque book, you will need it again this year! You never know what you may find - perhaps a perfect gift for a loved one or maybe all of your Christmas shopping all wrapped up.

All proceeds raised from the Craft & Gift Fair will benefit the children of the Meadow School. For more information about our exhibitors please visit

www.facebook.com/balshamcraftfair



OPEN DAY & DOG SHOW

Wadgells Farm, Sowley Green, Great Thurlow, CB9 7JR

Sunday 20th September 2015
2.00pm onwards

FREE ENTRY

Activities during the afternoon include:

Tour of the kennels

Terrier, lurcher and family dog show

Pony rides

Fariery demonstration

Sheep dog and duck demonstration

Tractor and trailer tour of part of the Thurlow Estate Farm

Bouncy Castle and other children's entertainments

Teas and cakes, BBQ, ice creams and homemade produce for sale

MEADOW SCHOOL NEWS

Another academic year has come to an end and once more we have a fantastic set of results throughout the whole school. The summer holidays are being used for school improvement - this year we are having all of the windows and doors replaced around the whole school and builders are making all of the infant's access points wheelchair accessible. As an academy, we are now able to tap into grants that were not previously available to us to make these critical improvements to the school.

We also have a very active "Helping Hands" group of parents who have been transforming the infant area into a fabulous outdoor area for the children to use throughout the year. Helping Hands started out as a group of parents who every couple of months would clean pathways, assemble equipment and repaint fences, and very quickly it became much more with parents transforming areas of the school by building mud kitchens, sand pits and creating staging and creative play areas.

The PTA has been incredible this year raising thousands to help provide school equipment through to funding the majority of a whole school trip to Hunstanton. They do this through various events such as the Craft Fair, June Revels, the sponsored walk, the jumble sale, school discos and much more.

The school is also supported by Parent Voice which is an open forum in which parents can constructively discuss ways in which they can support the school and collaborate on issues such as road safety and well being. This is an opportunity for parents to discuss topics such as homework, the website, school photographs, mindfulness and class friendship groups.

Then we have the Governing Body who validate school improvements and work closely with the school to ensure the progress of the pupils, the teaching and learning and monitor finances.

I think it goes without saying how much the school benefits from all of the support that it gets from the community and the parents, many of whom don't join a group but give their time willingly through helping in the classroom, listening to children read, transforming the foyer of the school and creating amazing displays, running lunchtime clubs such as Code Club, Chess Club and Running Club and sitting pool side to ensure the safety protocols are followed during swimming season, etc.

And it's not just the parents ... Linton Village College's Science Department came to the school and ran "Science Week" and also ran a science stall at June Revels and invited the Year 6 children into LVC for science demonstrations. We also benefited from teaching support from LVC for small targeted groups of pupils in Year 6 throughout the academic year, and of course they have been there to help out when we have needed them with letting us use their mini buses and much more.

The school is going from strength to strength and we will be welcoming Ofsted over the next two terms to give us the opportunity to demonstrate how far we have come since the last inspection. A huge thank you goes to all members of the community and to the parents who have supported the school over the last two years.

Clare Gorman (Chair of Governors)

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

I haven't gone anywhere quite yet. Some very kind people have dropped in to see me to say goodbye, having heard half of a message. Yes, I have got a new job, but sorry, actually you've got to put up with me until January 2016 because that is when I take up the post at Saffron Walden County High School. We have, however, begun the task of showing prospective applicants around the school and I must say everyone has really been impressed so far ... in spite of the potholes in the drive and the last vestiges of restoration work being done to the Listed Building. The interviews for Executive Principal are in the middle of September. As for the potholes, they will disappear over the summer because we have been successful in securing a large sum of money for drive resurfacing and some new signage. It is a matter of pleasure for me to hand over the building and site in a repaired and enhanced state: the hinges of all doors and windows in the 1937 building now work for the first time in over a decade and the metalwork really looks rather beautiful.

As I write this, we are getting ready to pack up for the summer. We have very few teacher leavers this year, but two I ought to mention: we say goodbye to Dan Carter, Lead Tutor of Redgrave House and the man responsible for the improvement in our PE results in recent years. He is going to lead PE across a group of schools in Harlow. I would also wish a warm farewell to Angela Cassidy, our lovely Assistant Principal who is taking time out from her career to raise her young family. Angela was responsible for teaching, learning and training prior to our last Ofsted inspection and she leaves a great legacy. We will miss Dan and Angela both very much.

Caroline Derbyshire, Principal

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

AUTUMN PROGRAMME

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Monday 21 September. | Annual General Meeting. |
| Monday 19 October. | Apples (diseases and identification). Talk by Joanna Crosby from Trumpington Orchard Project. |
| Monday 16 November. | The care of cacti & succulents. Talk by Richard & Sheena Drane from Green Lawns Nursery, Sudbury. |
| Monday 21 December. | Christmas meeting - short talks by club members. |

All meetings are held in West Wickham Village Hall starting at 7.30pm. Further details from Rosemary Yallop. T: 01799 584262

PRESS DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 16 September

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