

VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

APRIL 2016

ISSUE 156

VILLAGE DIARY

- Sat 2 Farmers Market. 9.00 - 12.00, Linton Village College
- Sun 3 Family service. 9.30, St Mary's Church
- Tue 5 Black wheeled bin collection
- Wed 6 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sun 10 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 11 **Local History Club. *Family History in the Archives*. Talk by Gill Shapland. 7.30pm, Village Hall**
- Tue 12 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
- Wed 13 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sat 16 **Deadline for items to go in the May Village Voice**
- Sun 17 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 18 **Gardening Club. *Darwin the gardener*. Talk by Shelley Innes from the Cambridge Darwin Project. 7.30pm, Village Hall**
- Tue 19 Black wheeled bin collection
- Wed 20 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sun 24 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Tue 26 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
- Wed 27 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall

Daisy Chains Pre-School meets

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.30 – 12.30
Tuesday & Thursday 9.30—2.30 (includes lunch club) 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	day or evening £8.00/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.

NEWSPAPER DELIVERY

Missing your daily newspaper delivery now that Pepperpot News has ceased trading? We understand Sweet Talk News from Linton are making a daily bulk delivery to the village, leaving the papers in the Church porch for people to collect. If you are interested in joining this scheme give them a ring on 01223 893480 or pop in a see them at 77 High Street, Linton. They are open 5.30am - 8.30pm.

A THANK YOU FROM DAISY CHAINS

A big thank you to everybody who turned out to support our preschool at the Quiz Night in February. We hope that you all enjoyed yourselves and that you found the level of questions to your liking.

Daisy Chain Pre-School relies heavily on fund-raising and I am pleased to say that you all helped us to raise approximately £500. It was lovely to see so many villagers there at a community event having a fun time.

Thanks must also go to Jake Bevan who donated the use of the PA system free of charge. (Please note that Jake hires this equipment out to the public at a very reasonable rate for parties, social events, etc.)

Also thanks to all Daisy Chain Committee members who helped in any way on the night and without whom the preschool would not function.

Again, many thanks from

Sue Harrow, Preschool Leader

SHOOTING SONGBIRDS IS ILLEGAL WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Songbirds such as thrushes and starlings have been found shot in West Wickham and this practice has got to stop!

Some landowners permit people onto their land, ostensibly to shoot woodpigeons. We know pigeons do a lot of damage to crops, particularly rape. These people however do not limit themselves to shooting pigeons. They are quite partial to having a shot at anything that flies, and after they have been in the area, corpses of other birds have been found. As well as song and mistle thrushes, starlings and pheasants out of season, they were seen to kill a little owl.

In some Mediterranean countries this practice is seen as normal. In Britain it is not only considered despicable, but illegal under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which prohibits the shooting of all wild birds with the exception of gamebirds (when in season) and those in special categories, including those that damage crops like woodpigeons. These "marksmen" have been coming to West Wickham for a number of years with their shotguns and in the past have been seen on public footpaths. There has been no noticeable decline in the number of woodpigeons during this time, whilst at a national level, species such as song thrushes and starlings have declined alarmingly.

So, a plea to those landowners who permit this activity – take away the permission you gave to these people to come onto your land with their guns, and don't let them come back. Their actions are illegal, cruel and distressing.

Peter Grieve, Jane Scheuer & Andrew Morris

FROM THE VICARAGE

Canon John Fellows, who has served this group of churches in recent years, is about to retire. John has taken services in all the churches in the group. His sermons have brought laughter and also serious reflection, and have been greatly appreciated. He has also been part of the work that we have undertaken to try to forge greater links between the church and the communities, through his contribution to Bible Studies, Lent courses and discussions. He has made a significant contribution to the life of these parishes, particularly at West Wrating and Weston Colville. His last Sunday is 17 April at 10am at St Andrew's, West Wrating. This is going to take place whilst I am away and I am grateful that the Archdeacon of Cambridge will be there to preside. After the service there will be refreshments. If you would like to contribute to a gift for John, Roger Whitehead at Weston Colville is organising this.

John's retirement leaves a gap in the ministry team which we hope to fill in the near future. This has made us look again at where the best place to house the ministry in the group is. There are three vicarages, at Balsham, Little Abington and West Wrating. Looking at where the balance of work arises over past years, it has been clear that the two places where there is most call on the time for an appointed priest are Balsham and Abington/Hildersham.

For a number of reasons, it has been decided that I should move to Balsham and we should seek a house-for-duty priest to live in Little Abington. This places the full-time post in a more central location in the group and it keeps a priest in the Abingtons. I will continue to be the priest in charge, and will have someone in place to help. This will release me to focus more on West Wickham, Weston Colville and West Wrating than I have been able to in the past.

The reality of the reduced numbers of priests, alongside the financial burden of covering ministry costs, has been evident to observe in the development of my own role as priest in charge of first three and then seven churches. It would be easy to view this with dismay. However, we have worked hard, in the team and in the churches, to make the best of working together. From the Six Parish Annual Report (which can be found at the back of the church and on the website), you can see that with the current arrangement of working together there have been many opportunities for mutual support. There are some things that we have been enabled to do because we are working as a group of churches rather than just focusing on a single parish. A case in point is the 7 church choir. Working together gives a sustainable model for church life and growth across all the parishes. We are aided in this by the time given by Rev Kathy Bishop and Very Rev Keith Johnson and by the licenced lay minister, Mr Steven Wheeler, and the two authorised lay ministers, Mrs Rosemary Mead and Mr Keith Day.

You are welcome to share your hopes, dreams and any concerns, with me, the churchwardens and PCC members, who will be part of a consultation process to appoint the new house for duty priest.

The Church Annual meeting this year will take place on Thursday 14 April at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church, West Wickham.

Rev Julie Norris

COME AND SEE THE BLUEBELLS

We are walking to Lower Wood in Weston Colville (about 3 miles) on Monday 18 April. Start at Maypole Croft at 10.30. Do come and join us.

Di Licence. T: 290434.

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY CLUB

Researching your family history?

Come along to our next meeting on Monday 11 April (7.30pm in the Village Hall) when Gill Shapland will be talking on *Family History in the Archives*. Although the talk will be mainly about Cambridgeshire Archives, where Gill worked for a number of years as an archive assistant, the sort of information covered will almost certainly apply elsewhere. Gill is also Chairman of Cambridgeshire Family History Society so can give you any family history advice and help. If you have any particular questions, let me know beforehand and Gill will come prepared. For those of you who have taken part in Dig2, Gill will be a familiar face as she is also a member of Rheesearch, who have done geophysical surveys for us. All are welcome to the talk – there is a small charge for non-members.

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

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MONDAY 18 APRIL

Darwin the gardener. Talk by Shelley Innes from the Cambridge Darwin Project. 7.30pm, Village Hall. Non members are very welcome.

SATURDAY 21 MAY

PLANT SALE

something for everyone
FLOWERS, SHRUBS, VEGETABLES & HERBS
friendly people and expert advice
10.30 - 12.00

at

West Wickham Village Hall

SATURDAY 20 AUGUST. ANNUAL SHOW

We will be distributing the schedule to all households nearer the date but a preview is available from me for anyone keen to plan ahead. This year we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Beatrix Potter and there will be classes inspired by her wonderful books. In the children's section there will be a class for "Mr McGregor's garden in a seed tray". In the vegetable section many of the classes will be for things grown in Mr McGregor's garden. In the domestic section the "Star Baker" Technical Challenge will be a "loaf of sage & onion bread", the Show Stopper a decorated carrot cake and the Signature Dish will be a cheese cake.

Andrew Morris, 21 High Street, West Wickham. T: 290863.
Email: morrisandrew203@gmail.com

NATURE NOTES

Unquestionably the highlight of the month comes from Trevor and Carol, who have been sitting watching a group of redpolls feeding on sunflower kernels in their garden, for several days in succession. As far as we are aware this is a first appearance in West Wickham of this small finch with its red crown, streaked back, small black chin patch and, in some cases, a yellowish beak. These birds are more common further north, especially in the summer months, so I expect they will be leaving the village soon, without having had the good grace to visit our garden, only 200 yards away. I have to admit to feeling slightly envious.

Di, however, is more positive. *“It’s that time of year when we wait for the first sights and sounds of the summer visitors, warblers and swallows returning to our village from Africa. Last year we saw the first chiffchaff on 23 March and the first swallow on 4 April, not so far away. Already people have seen reed buntings around and the wintering thrushes, redwings and fieldfares, are gathering in large flocks on the fields to depart for Scandinavia and Russia. After last month’s mention of house sparrows, several people have told me that they have some in their gardens, which is good news. Mrs Dockerel tells me she saw a barn owl sitting on a post at the crossroads recently, and had a grey squirrel on her windowsill which made her jump. Steve saw a pair of red kites, and we have seen common snipe on the very wet field opposite Pete. The rooks are back on their nests on the A1307 and making a lot of noise about it. They are often to be seen in the fields displaying to each other by throwing their heads back and cawing loudly. They can be seen flying with large sticks in their beaks, to add to the already untidy heap of sticks that make up their nests.”*

Hérons continue to be sighted at both ends of the village and in fact my neighbour, Brian spotted two standing in the field behind us the other day. This is quite unusual as they are generally solitary, except in the breeding season of course, when they build nests very much like the rooks described by Di.

On the wildflower front, we were walking around Thriplow recently, where the daffodils are all in flower, but for me the highlights were a couple of clumps of coltsfoot in flower, with their leaves wrapped round the stem like someone hugging themselves to keep warm in the cold wind. I noticed another patch of coltsfoot on the roadside between Haverhill and Withersfield as I was driving home the other day. Di wrote *“Despite the wet ground, the arums, lords and ladies, jack in the pulpit, whatever you call them are coming up everywhere. Tiny weeny blossom buds are on the dark branches of the blackthorn waiting to burst, the sticky buds of the horse chestnut are swelling and the cheerful yellow celandines are now showing in a ditch near you. In Norfolk last weekend we even found some greater stitchwort in flower”*.

Len Ling told me that there have been signs of badger activity near the allotments again. Quantities of ivy and other vegetation have been dragged into the culvert there, presumably as bedding material. Unfortunately we had an awful lot of rain on Wednesday last week, which must have cast some doubt on the wisdom of building a residence in a drainage channel. There are probably a few human builders who can take a lesson from this badger’s experience.

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

LINTON AND SAWSTON GP PRACTICES

AN UPDATE ON THE MERGER.

The two partnerships merge on 1 April to form Granta Medical Practices. Our computer systems will then merge on 20/21 April. This is a huge piece of work for which we have been preparing for quite some time.

Both Sawston and Linton sites will be closed from 1 pm on the 20 April (Wednesday) until mid-day on the 21 April. All calls will be diverted to the out-of-hours service that will provide emergency medical cover during this period.

Both practices will close their computer systems down by mid-afternoon on the 20 April with all electronic lab results and hospital letters having to be checked and filed – quite a task for the GPs. The merge will then run overnight. Any forward bookings for appointments at Linton site will not transfer and Linton will aim to minimise forward bookings as much as possible in the run up to the merge. On the morning of 21 April we will need some time to check that everything is working as it should and our reception staff will manually input all the pre-booked appointments for Linton. By mid-day we hope to have this work completed and we will be ready to resume normal service.

As always, we appreciate the support of all our staff and also the support and understanding of our patients as we prepare for the future. The next update will come from Granta Medical Practices – the culmination of several years of hard work and collaboration between the GPs and practice staff.

Sheila Griffiths

Practice Manager and Partner

Linton Health Centre

Gerard Newnham

Business Practice Manager

Sawston Medical Practice

D’ABO TENNIS CLUB – WEST WRATTING

Our new tennis season will start 1 May. If you are interested in receiving a new members pack please contact the Treasurer, Mark Holme on 07768 443223 or email treasurer@westwrattingtontennis.co.uk

1ST HORSEHEATH BROWNIES

We all enjoyed a great afternoon of games and activities at our annual District Thinking Day celebrations held on Sunday 28 February at Linton Village College. It was made extra special as we were joined by some US Girl Scouts from RAF Mildenhall. We hope to link up with them again during the summer.

We have just returned from our weekend away at the Jarman Centre. Our theme this year was Rabbits, as we completed the Bunny Challenge. The activities were all rabbit inspired and included eating carrots or celery like a rabbit e.g. no hands; bunny cluedo which is like ordinary cluedo but you had to hop between the clues; a rabbit masked party; bunny lollypops and the girls all got to experience archery too, which was a first for the unit.

Sainsbury’s Active Kids Vouchers are trickling in so if you don’t have anywhere to donate your vouchers then please place them in the box in Horseheath Post Office for the Brownies.

If you think your daughter may be interested in joining us please register her at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested. If you would like more information on what we do or would like to help us with a special skill you may have then please drop us an email.

Pauline, Katie and Hera. E: brownies@horseheath.info

VILLAGE CLEAN-UP

A very big thank-you to everyone who turned out for the Village Clean-up. At least 18 people (I lost count) filled 27 bags of rubbish from the roadsides round West Wickham, plus various car parts including 6 tyres and other items. The usual suspects featured heavily (Fosters, Stella and Red Bull, with a strong showing from Walkers Crisps and various makes of cider). I hope nobody suffered any after effects, including those people, who carried on working until after lunchtime. At one stage I was stopped by someone looking for High Point prison, so whether he thought the clean-up was some sort of offenders work party I don't know.

Thanks also to Heidi and her team from South Cambs who provided the gear, and hopefully, to the people who collect the rubbish from the Village Hall car park.

Peter Grieve

BALSHAM SINGERS SPRING CONCERT

Saturday 14 May, Holy Trinity Church, Balsham at 7.30pm

The programme includes works by Poulenc, Elgar, Haydn and Rutter, and will also feature familiar hits from Frank Sinatra, The Beach Boys, Eva Cassidy and others.

Tickets may be obtained from Balsham Post Office or from a choir member. Prices: £8 in advance, £10 on the door, 18s and under are free but will still need a ticket.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 15 – 21 MAY

Last year £1416.88 was raised in Balsham, West Wickham, West Wrattling & Weston Colville which showed the amazing generosity of people in our villages. We shall hope to raise a similar amount this year but many collectors will be needed. Look out for those red envelopes! Any offers of help please contact:

Joanna Sanders, Local Organiser. T:01223 893063
Email: sanderschimneys@uwclub.net

CRIMEWATCH

There have been a number of shed break-ins reported in this area recently, with lawnmowers, hedge trimmers and other garden equipment stolen. In light of this Cambridgeshire Police ask you to please consider this security advice:

- Install security lighting positioned out of arms reach.
- Deny easy access to your rear garden with lockable gating and fences.
- Lock your shed and consider a shed alarm – these can be purchased at Sawston police station for £8.
- Mark your property to make it less desirable to sell on and easily identifiable as being stolen property, for example use bright coloured paint displaying your post code.

For further security advice please visit Cambs Police website www.cambs.police.uk/

And remember if you see anything suspicious in the neighbourhood then please call the Police immediately on 101 (or 999 if it is happening there and then) so that we have the opportunity to investigate.

BROADBAND UPDATE

Burton End Cabinet Installation:

Connecting Cambridgeshire state there is no change to the December 2016 date and are still unable to advise when work on the physical installation will commence.

BT OpenReach:

Followers of BT OpenReach's online service may have noted that the status to bring Superfast Broadband to West Wickham has been downgraded from an "In Scope" status to "We are exploring solutions". In plain speak BT OpenReach describes these statuses respectively as "We have a plan" and "We have no plans, there is no BDUK funding, we will help you develop your own solution".

Connecting Cambridgeshire have assured me this is an unfortunate error, that there is BDUK funding and a solution is in progress but are unable to get BT OpenReach to correct its contradictory public position.

Air Broadband:

By now all those who signed up will be aware that as of 15th March Air Broadband's plans had to be put on hold as BT OpenReach want an extra £4,800 in Excess Construction Charges to bring fibre broadband to the property in Horseheath which would be our link to the outside world. This additional cost has come as some surprise and means that the scheme may no longer be viable at the installation and monthly charges and minimum subscriber level initially set. Air Broadband have contacted Lucy Fraser and Connecting Cambridgeshire to ask for help in waiving these charges – the least BT can do after the repeated delays and broken promises made to West Wickham residents. I will do the same as these charges are unreasonable given that Horseheath's cabinet was recently upgraded with a fibre connection with BDUK funding less than a year ago. BT OpenReach have stated in their report to Air Broadband that for technical reasons, the fibre will have to come from a location towards Haverhill approx 1.3km away instead of the approx 400yards from the cabinet in Horseheath.

Alex Schuilenburg

EVENTS IN WESTON COLVILLE

Wednesday 6 April: the brilliant film noir *The Third Man* will be shown. Celebrated for its acting, score and atmospheric cinematography, based on the screenplay written by Graham Green. Weston Colville Reading Room at 7.30pm, entry by donation, refreshments served.

Wednesday 27 April, Pub Quiz. Weston Colville Reading Room 8pm. Max 4 per team, £2 entry per person. Wine, cider, lager and draft ale.

Enquiries for all Weston Colville events: Jacqueline Douglas, T: 291475, E: jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com.

PRESS DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 16 April

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