

VILLAGE VOICE

NEWS FROM WEST WICKHAM & STREETLY END

FEBRUARY 2018

ISSUE 178

VILLAGE DIARY

- Sun 4 All ages praise/Candlemas. 9.30, St Mary's Church
- Mon 5 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
- Wed 7 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sun 11 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 12 Black wheeled bin collection
Local History Club. Great & Little Abingdon 1900 - 1930. A time of change.
Talk by Jennifer Hirsh. 7.30pm, Village Hall
- Wed 14 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Fri 16 **Deadline for items for inclusion in the March edition of the Village Voice**
- Sun 18 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 19 Blue & green wheeled bin collection
Gardening Club. Who dares prune?
Talk by Simon White of Beales Roses. 7.30pm, Village Hall
- Tue 20 Carpet Bowls Club. 7pm, Village Hall
- Sat 24 **Daisy Chains Pre-School QUIZ NIGHT 7.30pm, Village Hall**
- Sun 25 Holy Communion. 9.15, St Mary's Church
- Mon 26 Black wheeled bin collection
- Wed 28 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.

DUAL CARRIAGEWAY MEETING

On 2 January an "all village" meeting, was held to discuss the proposed new dual carriageway between Haverhill and the A11. One hundred residents and representatives of other villages attended. At the meeting it was made clear that the proposal for the new road is being led by the A1307 Strategy Board and is completely separate from the Greater Cambridge Partnership's plans to improve the existing A1307. The A1307 Strategy Board's favoured northern route proposal would bisect the village between West Wickham and Streetly End.

Attendees of the meeting were overwhelmingly against the new road proposal, with many residents claiming that accidents on the current A1307 are caused by dangerous driving rather than the road itself being dangerous. Lucy Frazer, the local MP, is aware that the new road is not well supported in her constituency; however residents are encouraged to write to her and our County Councillor, Henry Batchelor, to express their views (contact details below).

The meeting concluded with Georgina Magin being nominated as acting chair of an Action Group to investigate the road proposal further, coordinate actions and feed information back to the Parish Council.

For more information on the proposals see the village website (<http://westwickham.org/a1307/>) and sign up to residents@westwickham.org or newroad@westwickham.org using the form on the website.

Contact details:

Lucy Frazer, Alexander House, 38 Forehill, Ely, CB7 4AF or House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
E: lucy.frazer.mp@parliament.uk

Henry Batchelor, 1 Maltings Cottages, Long Lane, Linton, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4NS. E: henry.batchelor@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Kevin Newey

ROAD CLOSURE

Streetly End will be closed between Streetly Cottage and The Meadow in February. Access will be maintained to properties affected by this order. This is to facilitate sewer connection works which are being carried out. It is anticipated that these works will be carried out between 19 - 23 February.

The alternative route for vehicles is via Streetly End - Horseheath Road, West Wickham - High Street Southern Spur - Balsham Road - Balsham Road Southern Spur to Mill Road Horseheath - Webbs Road - Streetly End and vice versa.

Graham Hughes, Cambridgeshire County Council

COMMUNITY GRITTER VOLUNTEER NEEDED FROM STREETLY END

Winter is not yet over and we need volunteers from Streetly End to help dispense grit from the newly installed bin there onto the pavements periodically in the early evening. Safety and dispensing equipment will be provided by the County Council. Please email me at alex@westwickham.org or call on 07811 364531 if you are willing and able to help.

SPEED INDICATOR SIGNS

You may have seen some Speed Indicator Signs appearing at different locations in West Wickham and Streetly End recently.

Two signs have been purchased by the eight villages in the Balsham Local District Ward – Balsham, Horseheath, Carlton, Castle Camps, Shudy Camps, West Wickham, West Wrattling and Weston Colville. Each of the villages will have use of a sign for periods of two weeks during which time they can be moved between four or five locations where permanent brackets have been mounted on convenient posts.

The use of the signs has been approved by Cambridgeshire County Council and meets all standards set for Motor Vehicle Activated Signs. The intention is to use these signs to remind drivers to observe the speed limit as it is realised that it is easy to exceed the limit unintentionally.

The signs have a data recorder built into them which records how many vehicles pass the sign in a certain period of time which can be set between 15 minutes to 1 hour. Individual vehicle speeds are not recorded but the maximum speed of a vehicle in a time period is saved. Whilst the sign will record maximum speeds the display stops showing a vehicle's speed above a pre-set limit to prevent "speed testing"

The information will help us to identify the traffic patterns within the Parish and help to persuade drivers to keep within the speed limit. It is not there to be used as a revenue generator.

Trevor Hall

NON-EMERGENCY CRIME, ANTI-SOCIAL ACTIVITY, AND DRIVING INCIDENTS REPORTING ONLINE

As an alternative to phoning 101 did you know you can now report online non-emergency crime, as well as suspicious, criminal or anti-social activity, fraud, vehicle/driving incidents (accidents, dangerous driving, speeding) and other activity (e.g. fly-tipping, potholes)?

Go to www.cambs.police.uk/report/Report.

Alex Schuilenburg

MOBILE PHONE UPDATE

We appear to be seeing a large variance of mobile phone signal quality across mobile phone providers, making it difficult to build up a bigger picture of the issues. For example, problems reported in Streetly End seem to get fixed and then return a month later. Some residents in the lower end of West Wickham, myself included, have even seen a 4G signal temporarily, so there does appear to be some ongoing activity. However, recently we appear to have reverted to the status quo so I would appreciate if any residents could email or call me with their provider, experiences and current situation, even if it is now working for you. Mobile phone providers won't fix what they don't know is broken.

Alex Schuilenburg, alex@westwickham.org, 07811 364531.

DAISY CHAINS PRE-SCHOOL

Daisy Chains Pre-School has availability for immediate starters or for those wishing to enrol later in 2018. Funded places are available for eligible two and three year olds. Set in West Wickham Village Hall, Daisy Chains is a small preschool which accepts children from two to five years. It is very well established (we will be celebrating its 40th birthday this year - look out for some special events) with exceptional, experienced staff and a very low child to staff ratio. It has fantastic facilities, a large playground, and access to a nature reserve.

If you feel your child would benefit from being with smaller groups of children, then Daisy Chains will give their education a great start, and prepare them for attending primary school. We are open Monday-Friday 9.30-12.30 with additional lunch clubs on Tuesday and Thursday until 2.30.

Our annual quiz night is taking place on Sat 24 February 7.30 for 8pm start. This is always a popular fun night with a bar, snacks, prizes, raffle and an important fundraising event for our lovely preschool.

01223 290512, 07943866294 (9.30-12.30),
daisychains.westwickham@gmail.com

FROM THE VICARAGE

The New Year has begun in great excitement with a visit from Bishop Stephen to Balsham for a service which included the Blessing of the Plough. It was a wonderful occasion with a full church, including a number of the ploughmen in their costumes, which were much admired by the Bishop. Later this month on 14 February it is Ash Wednesday, marking the start of Lent, with services at Balsham and Hildersham. People usually consider giving up something for Lent but I like to commit to doing a little something extra; maybe a quiet time of a few more minutes than normal, or being aware of a person who is lonely and needs a visit. Lent is a time to reflect and say sorry, and being aware of our effect on those around us is no bad thing. So maybe instead of a New Year's resolution it might be an idea to focus on searching inwards to ourselves and outwards to those around us.

Kathy Bishop

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE REV IAIN MCCOLL AS PRIEST IN CHARGE OF THE GRANTA VALE GROUP

We are very pleased to announce that the Bishop of Ely, the Rt. Revd. Stephen Conway, has appointed the Rev Iain McColl to be our new Priest in Charge (Rector Designate). Rev McColl comes to us from St. Peter's Henleaze, Bristol. He is married to Anna, and they have two children, Owen and Bethan. He worked as a lawyer for some years before he was ordained in the Church of England. He and his family will be moving into the Rectory in Balsham. Please remember them in your prayers as they make the move from Bristol to Cambridgeshire.

The Bishop will conduct the Licensing Service for Rev McColl at 7pm on Thursday 12 April at Holy Trinity Church, Balsham (Further details will be announced in due time).

FROM THE NEW VICAR

My family and I are looking forward with excitement to our move to the Granta Vale benefice and our involvement in both church and community life. We have enjoyed a wonderful time in Bristol being part of St Peter's in Henleaze and there is always a poignancy about moving on, but we can now look ahead with great anticipation to life and ministry in Cambridgeshire.



My wife, Anna, grew up on a farm in Essex and I grew up in the countryside as well, so we will be looking forward to the change from living in the city. We have two children, Owen aged 7 and Bethan aged 6, who both like sports, cycling and playing outside, so we think they will enjoy it too!

Prior to ordination I was a solicitor for ten years in London and Bristol and my church ministry experience began as a leader of a 'fresh expression of church' in the centre of Bristol. I then trained for ministry at Westcott House in Cambridge, so as a family we do have some knowledge of Cambridgeshire already.

My licensing, which is my start date, will be on Thursday 12 April and I am really looking forward to getting to know people in the churches and communities. Please feel welcome to come along to the licensing and to get in touch after our move.

With prayers and best wishes

Iain McColl

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Thanks to everyone who sent me their answers to the quiz. I hope you had fun doing it – even those of you who were unable to unlock the secrets of my twisted mind.

The answers were:

Cambridgeshire villages: Barton, Balsham, Over, Histon, Little Shelford, Sawston, Reach, Needingworth, Babraham and Earith.

Southern hemisphere capitals: Brasilia, Maputo, Lima, Pretoria, Wellington, Santiago, La Paz, Harare, Quito and Montevideo.

The five answers I received were virtually all correct, although on very close inspection I found a couple of hair-splitting errors. First out of the hat for the prize was Chris Magin.

Peter Grieve

NATURE NOTES

From a hospital bed and then a spell of being mainly confined to the house, my interaction with wildlife has been largely limited to viruses and bacteria, both of which play important roles in the eco-system although from a personal point of view their activity was somewhat inconvenient. Fortunately, Di has been keeping an eye on the activities we normally associate with this column and here are her observations:

'Snow transforms our countryside in many ways, beautifying the landscape, muffling sounds and giving us the means to build stunning snowmen. It makes us cold, makes travelling more dangerous, but somehow still manages to appeal to us humans. Magical it may be to us, it makes finding food more difficult for our wildlife. I love to see what has been in my garden after it has been snowing. There are tell-tale footprints everywhere. Rabbits are easy to spot, but the birds? Their footprints are crisscrossing the lawn, but whose are these tiny prints from the shed to the bird table? I suspect a rat. He gets hungry too!

Our neighbour's ornamental crab apple tree continues to feed the birds and gives us much entertainment. I find it amazing how many different species love this rotting fruit. Fieldfares, big, sassy, noisy birds and migrant blackbirds, with black bills instead of yellow, from Russia apparently and the occasional redwing. The fieldfares are very aggressive, one who seems to like our red crab apple tree defends it fiercely, and Steve has seen it on several occasions attacking itself in the car wing mirror. It also slides up and down the front windscreen viciously pecking at the glass. I know this is commonly reported about robins, but I have never heard of a fieldfare doing it. Many smaller birds visit the seed feeders and the goldfinches continue to 'charm', sometimes 6 or 7 at a time, making their lovely trilling noise as they feed. Pigeons, collared doves, chaffinches, wrens and dunnocks can be seen on the ground under the tree collecting what others have dropped. Lucy from Streetly End tells me that she had a 'first' in her garden recently, a tiny goldcrest. They are quite vocal, making a loud squeaking call, which sounds somewhat like a mouse, and strangely not bothered about the presence of us humans.

The trees are beginning to show signs of spring; the horse chestnuts have got big sticky buds, protecting the tender shoots hidden beneath, and the hazel already has catkins. In some sheltered areas the hazel catkins are open, although with no pollen yet, and we even noticed some red female stars on one tree. One willow tree has already got 'pussy willow' flowers beginning to open, as well as some of the leaves. The aconites and snowdrops are also beginning to show some colour above the soil. Even though its grey and murky, nature is stirring.'

I received an interesting email from Butterfly Conservation, saying that many of the butterflies that overwinter as adults have already been spotted flying in southern counties. Red admirals were seen on New Year's Day and peacock, brimstone and comma have all been spotted flying in the first few days of January, leaving the small tortoiseshell as the only species yet to be seen. We had one inside the house (now deceased) but that doesn't count – it has to be outside and flying.

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

THE DIRECTORY

I haven't been able to produce a 2018 paper version of the Directory due to a combination of factors recently (see Nature Notes for one of them!) The Directory already appears on the village website (<http://westwickham.org/directory/>) and has helpfully been updated during the year (when he is made aware of any changes) by Alex Schuilenburg. I propose taking over that task from him and updating the website directly on an ongoing basis when I have the time. For those of you who would prefer a paper copy, please contact me and I will arrange for you to have one.

Sue Thurston, T: 290503

CAROL SINGING

On 20 December, a cheery band of carol singers sang its way up through West Wickham, collecting donations from villagers along the way. Many thanks to those who gave so generously - we raised £278.30 for AgeUK, to support their Small Villages Community Warden Scheme.

Thank you also to Marcus and Nicky Cornish, who provided us with refreshments at the start to set us on our way. If anyone from the middle or upper end of the village would be interested in providing a brief light refreshment stop for the carol singers next year, do please get in touch - it's a long way from one end of the village to the other!

Georgina Magin, T: 290972

WEST WICKHAM & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

On 15 January the Club were pleased to welcome Alan Shipp, the holder of The National Collection of hyacinths at Waterbeach. He gave us a talk on the propagation and origins of hyacinths illustrated by slides of his 180 varieties. Many of these date from the 19th Century and Alan has been able to make sure that these old varieties are not lost. Every year he opens his fields of 200,000 hyacinths in bloom to the public and this year the dates are March 24/25. Anybody can visit to enjoy the riot of colour and the wonderful perfume.

Our speaker on 19 February is Simon White from Peter Beales Roses on "Who Dares Prune" a timely reminder for us on how to tackle our annual cut back of all types of roses. If you would like to join us for this talk we meet at West Wickham Village Hall at 7:30pm.

Rosemary Yallop, T: 01799584262

LOCAL GARDENER IN PRINT

Shirley Shadford has been selected to have an article written and published in the March issue of the magazine "Country Homes & Interiors" about the snowdrops and early flowering bulbs and plants that are in her cottage garden. The article will also mention that the garden will be opening for the NGS Snowdrop Festival every Sunday from 4 February to 4 March, 2pm to 4pm admission £2.50. There will be snowdrops and other plants for sale, also hot drinks in the summerhouse. You can join her on any of the Sundays at Clover Cottage, 50 Streetly End.

DIG 5

We have a provisional date of 28/29 July for our fifth year of test pitting (later than usual but due to circumstances out of our control). If you can offer us a garden or other space for a test pit, particularly but not exclusively in Streetly End, we would love to hear from you as soon as possible.

Janet Morris, West Wickham & District Local History Club
T: 290863 Email: jmmorris@jmmorris.plus.com

SLOWER THAN A PIECE OF WET STRING

The internet service provider Andrews and Arnold recently managed to reach broadband speeds of up to 3.5 Mbps over a WET PIECE OF STRING. That is more than double the village average in January last year. So if you are still using ADSL, and would like to access online streaming services, consider upgrading to Superfast Broadband. As always, drop me an email if you are having problems getting connected and I may be able to help. I can also provide advice and help you diagnose issues if you are having problems with your Superfast Connection at home.

Alex Schuilenburg

HARE COURSING

Throughout the autumn and winter one of the local issues that police have received the most calls about is hare coursing. Hare coursing is where dogs are used to chase hares for sport and is illegal under the Hunting Act of 2004 and the Game Act of 1831. It is often the case that the hare coursers will be in gangs coming from various parts of the country. They are always very determined to carry out their pursuit and will stop at nothing to do so. They will often drive across fields of newly set crops, often causing thousands of pounds worth of damage and threatening anyone that challenges them. It is fair to say that these gangs have caused a great deal of fear and intimidation in the rural community.

Cambridgeshire Police have set up a Rural Crime Action Team (RCAT) to help to deal with this and other rural crime related problems but they are only a small team and have to cover the entire county. Very often when the calls come in it is the local officers who have to attend and they aren't always best equipped to deal with the problem. The coursers are always in 4x4s and it's difficult to catch them on fields and muddy drives when driving a front wheel drive patrol car. This is why we have to work together and we need you the public to be vigilant. If you see hare coursing taking place please call the police. Note down registration numbers and descriptions of vehicles and phone us on 101.

Over the past couple of weeks we have had some successes in catching and deterring hare coursers. On 7 January a vehicle was seized by police in Somersham and the occupant was caught. On 14 January four people were arrested for coursing in Warboys and their vehicle was seized. But rather than just reacting when they are here we want to try to stop them coming at all. The RCAT are pursuing civil court injunctions in order to stop known offenders from coming here and to give us greater powers to deal with them when they do.

Sergeant Andy Street, Cambridgeshire Police

HOW TO COPE WITH A VIRAL ILLNESS

Colds, sore throats and flu can cause a great deal of worry and frustration. Young children have between 3-8 colds a year and adults 2-4. The onset is 2-3 days and symptoms can last up to 3 weeks. In children, symptoms last 10-14 days.

Here are some tips and good advice that may reassure and speed things up.

- Keep warm – extra blanket at night perhaps and plenty of warm drinks such as hot lemon or blackcurrant and hot chicken soup which may help raise your natural defences as can probiotic drinks recent studies suggest.
- Rest as much as you can.
- Honey can really help with coughing. Children must be over one year old though! Try in warm water and with lemon juice.
- Avoid milky drinks if you find they make you more congested.
- Blocked nose, sinus discomfort? Saline sniffs can help. Take a cup of warm water with a large pinch of salt. Every 2 – 4 hour, make a puddle in your hand with about a tablespoon of water, lean over a sink, block up one nostril and sniff up each nostril twice. Inhale steam! (Place bowl in a sink for safety). Boiling water with a little tea tree oil or eucalyptus, and inhale every 3 – 4 hours. This reduces the viral count in the back of the nose and loosens up secretions.
- Take a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement. Eat vitamin rich, light meals if hungry. Drink plenty of clear fluids.
- Paracetamol and Ibuprofen will make you FEEL better but won't make you better as they lower your core temperature. Your immune system is trying to 'heat treat' the virus so if you take these, your illness may take longer to resolve. Take sparingly when appropriate. If your throat is sore, use a menthol sweet

1ST HORSEHEATH BROWNIES

We started the new term with two new Brownies, Hollie L from Sturmer and Tayla-Mae from Linton, Tayla had previously been a Rainbow. We also said good-bye to Hollie C, Evelyn and Millie.

This term we will be getting prepared for our weekend away in March. We will be going back to the Jarman Centre in Newmarket, the purpose built guiding centre set in 18 acres of woodland. We haven't decided what our theme is yet, we might either have 'All the Fun of Fair' or spend time 'Under the Sea'. I'm sure whichever one we choose it will be lots of fun.

We also have our District Thinking Day celebrations to look forward to in February. We will be joining other units in the Linton area at LVC for an afternoon of fun filled activities. We also have Mothering Sunday and Easter activities planned.

We would welcome any new girls interested in joining our merry band so if you have a daughter who would be interested in joining us please register her at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested or if you would like more information on what we do please drop us an email.

Pauline, Katie, and Laurené; E: brownies@horseheath.info

or a spray to ease the pain.

- Vapour rubs, gargling with salt water and the use of saline or boiled, cooled water nasal drops have also been found to be helpful and can be bought from chemists and some supermarkets. Cough mixtures are generally ineffective. Increasing bedroom humidity works better, as does steam inhalations and honey.
- Antibiotics have no effect on viral illnesses. They can cause rashes, increase resistant strains of bacteria, diarrhoea, sickness, and changes in your natural defences. Please don't expect them!
- Don't smoke and avoid smoky atmospheres.
- Have a flu and pneumonia vaccine if appropriate.
- Use tissues only once and bin them. Wash your hands with soap and hot water frequently to reduce the spread to others.

Children with a history of febrile convulsions should always be kept cool (do not use tepid sponging) and given paracetamol as directed. Burning skin, but cold hands; rashes which don't fade when pressed with a glass are worrying signs and such patients should be examined as soon as possible. Drooling or the inability to swallow are signs of upper airway distress – please seek advice. Rapid and/or laboured breathing and/or low urine output and/or persistent vomiting also need prompt attention. Severe headaches and symptoms that are deteriorating after 3-5 days need urgent review with a clinician.

Anyone who becomes breathless, wheezy or coughs up dark or blood stained sputum MUST be seen. People who suffer with chronic lung or heart disease are prone to bronchitis and MUST be seen if they become breathless or unwell. Diabetics who vomit and are unable to eat or keep down fluids must follow their sick day rules and seek advice.

Granta Medical Practices

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE Adult Community Learning Workshops

We are running Saturday workshops on 10 February and 10 March. Workshops run from 10am until 4pm and the fee is £35 some workshops have an additional cost for materials and you will need to bring your own ingredients for Indian Cookery.

10 February. Indian cookery – Dinner for friends
Floristry - Brides on a budget

10 March. Indian cookery – Street Food. Holiday Spanish.
Upholstery. Pottery. Handmade Easter Eggs

For more details regarding a workshop or if you would like an enrolment form please contact us on 01223 891233 Ext 317 or 303 or email adult.education@lvc.org

Margaret Kiddy, Adult Education & Lettings Manager

DAISY CHAINS PRE SCHOOL QUIZ

**Saturday 24 February
Village Hall**

**7.30 for 8pm start
Bar, snacks, prizes, raffle**

MEADOW SCHOOL NEWS

Although it is only 19 January, it already feels like Christmas is in the distant past. New Year resolutions have been made and, according to both staff and children in the school, many have been broken. We spoke recently to children about the resilience required for making a new start, and how to deal with disappointments when they come our way. As a school, we have had our fair share of discouragements alongside the positives, and yet each time we learn from them and they only serve to make us stronger.

Looking back to the end of the Autumn Term, we had another reminder of how resilient our school community is and why we continue to be so grateful for the support of the staff and families within the school. December began with excitement in the air as the beautiful Christmas tree, kindly given by our anonymous donor, was erected in the hall. Parties were planned and rehearsals began for our production. However, during the last full week of the term, as the Infant Christmas production was about to hit full flow, the school was struck by the dreaded norovirus. As many as 120 children were affected as well as many staff and parents. We are so grateful for the teachers, teachers assistants and office staff who stepped in and put their own health at risk to come and cover classes, deal with poorly children and help to keep the school open so that learning could continue.

Despite this we were determined to continue with the Infant production of 'Christmas with the Aliens'. Fortunately we had enough children in full health to put on rearranged matinee and evening shows on the penultimate day of term and they performed brilliantly. We are so grateful for people who gave up their time so readily to come and help make this a reality.

Thankfully the children and staff were well enough to put on our annual Key Stage Christmas Carol Service in the church. This is always a memorable and thought-provoking evening as we listened to the Key Stage Two children reading passages from the Christmas story so confidently and articulately. Once again the children sang the carols with enthusiasm and the Year 4 children helped to tell the story through a montage. This year, we had added awe and wonder through the visit of 'Declan the Donkey' who helped to bring the Christmas story to life.

2018 has started with a positive spirit in the air, including a disco postponed from the end of term. Learning through new topics is in full flow and four year groups have already been on school trips, either to Burleigh House in Stamford or to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. As the school looks back to the past, either through the Victorians, the Ancient Egyptians or at jobs throughout history, we are once again reminded of how quickly time is passing and yet we can continue to learn some much through the study of these times and the way societies developed.

Nichola Connor

THANK YOU DOG SITTERS

Thanks to everyone who did a shift looking after Kip and Lenny during hospital visits in the week after Christmas. They really appreciated it and so did we.

Sue and Pete

LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE NEWS

With the cabinet reshuffle in January came the announcement of Justine Greening's resignation and a new Secretary of State for Education: Damian Hinds. During my two years as Principal at LVC, there have been three different ministers in this top position. Nicky Morgan was known for her focus on character education, Justine Greening for using schooling as a vehicle for social mobility. We are still awaiting details of Mr Hinds' vision and values.

In many ways, it is great that since Blair's 'Education, education, education' pledge in his 1997 speech, schooling has become a more pressing priority for the government. However, Greening's exit signals yet more change for the profession. Given the amount of turbulence since 2010, teachers are understandably anxious about what policies the new Secretary of State may introduce to make his mark.

In recent years there has been substantial profile given to ministerial priorities including free/grammar schools, free breakfasts/lunches and school funding, to name a few. This has been against a backdrop of significant government-driven reform that has seen the removal of National Curriculum levels, new, more challenging, primary and GCSE testing and a hike in accountability.

The doorstep manifesto released by the Headteachers' Roundtable, a national non-political educational think tank of which I am a member, has the following guiding principles: 1. The pace of educational change should not be affected by party politics; 2. Schools must be able to offer all their pupils the chance to thrive; 3. Educational change should begin by identifying the desired outcomes for children; 4. Prioritising high quality teaching & learning and the curriculum will lead to world class assessment and accountability; 5. The teaching profession should be centrally involved in developing future education policy.

In 2012, Mr Hinds' published an All-Party Parliamentary report in which he stated a need to "focus first on quality of teachers and teaching". I hope that his 18 years in the hospitality industry has given him a disposition to listen to and serve the education community. People are incredibly important in education, but it is children, not political preferences, that need to be at the centre of education policy.

Helena Marsh, Executive Principal

WESTON COLVILLE CINEMA CLUB

On Wednesday 7 February we're showing a Oscar winning western directed by & starring Clint Eastwood. 7.30pm, donations, pre-screening talk, refreshments will be available. For details, look on the Reading Room website: www.thereadingroom.org.uk. Alternatively, email to subscribe to our mailing list.

Enquiries: E: jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com T: 291475

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