

VILLAGE DIARY

Rostrum wishes all readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

DECEMBER 2019			
	Footpaths Walk	Car Park	2pm
	Parish Council Meeting followed by Planning Comm	Village Hall	7.30pm
	Crafters Coffee Break	Church	10.30am
	Bit of an Early Christmas Sing – Voices Across A20	Church	7pm
	Women's Institute	Village Hall	2pm
	Crafters Coffee Break	Village Hall	10.30am
	History Society Christmas Social Evening	Village Hall	7.40 for 8pm
	Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight	Church	8pm
	Crib Service Midnight Mass	Church	5pm 11pm
JANUARY 2020			
	Footpaths Walk	Car Park	2pm
	Parish Council Meeting followed by Planning Comm	Village Hall	7.30pm
	Golden Days of Fleet Street WI talk	Village Hall	2pm
	History of Carriage Driving WI talk	Village Hall	7.40 for 8pm
	24 & 25 Players Annual Panto	Village Hall	7pm
	Wednesdays 8, 15, 22 and 29 Crafters Coffee Break	Church	10.30am

A Bit of an Early Christmas Sing – Voices Across A20 At the Church on Saturday 7th December at 7pm

Come and enjoy music and readings from across the centuries plus opportunities for the audience to join in and sing popular carols
Licensed Bar Tickets on the door £5 (young people free)

Players Panto - Robin Hood and the Babes in the Wood

Tickets Available from Saturday 7th December

Friday 24th January 7:30pm (doors open 7pm) - Tickets £10

Saturday 25th January

2pm (doors open 1:30pm) - Tickets £10 (children £6)

7.30pm (doors open 7:00pm) - Tickets £12

Buy your tickets from The Handy Stores or Flanagan's Post Office

VILLAGE PEOPLE Please let us have your news and tributes by 17th January for our February magazine. Entries are free.

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS to:

Michael Davie celebrating a special birthday in December

Colin Craig who will be 90 years's young on 10th December. Let's hope the weather holds and he can achieve his ambition of playing 18 holes of golf to celebrate.

NEW ARRIVAL CONGRATULATIONS

Toby Bryant wants to let people know he has a baby sister.

Connie Joan Bryant was born to Louise and Ben on 13th October a Granddaughter for Helen and David Commander and Jane and Mark Bryant

RIP - JESSE GOODWIN, formerly of Glebe Meadow, Wateringbury, died on the 16th October 2019 at Gavin Aster House Nursing home after a short illness at the grand old age of 90. He was born at Latters Buildings in Old Road Wateringbury on 12th September 1929, and he lived most of his life in Wateringbury. The funeral took place on 11th November at Vinters Park Crematorium.

JUNE LARGE (nee Milstead) I would like to express my appreciation to Wateringbury Doctors' Surgery for the care and support they provided to my late wife June who passed away peacefully at home on 14th October. June was born in Wateringbury and lived here for her entire life.
Norman Large



SEASON'S GREETINGS

On behalf of the **Parish Council the Chairman Mike Wells and the Clerk Sue Cockburn** wish all residents a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The Council thanks you for your support in 2019 and hope that in 2020 many of you will come along to Parish Council Meetings

St John the Baptist Church continues to flourish at the heart of village life. Despite not having a Vicar at present, we have an amazing team who ensure that the church maintains all the services and activities that we provide and we thank them all. It has been wonderful to see so many regulars and new faces throughout the year. If you have not yet come to one of our events or services, perhaps try one of our Advent services this Christmas. We wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Christmas, and Every Blessing in 2020. *Peter Bond and Liz Gummer Churchwardens*

Benny and Rupal at The Handy Stores wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Over the holidays their revised opening times will be **Christmas Eve 7am - 6pm, Christmas Day Closed,**

Boxing Day 7am-2pm, 27th - 29th 6am-8.30pm, Sunday 30th 7am-2pm, 31st Dec 7am-6pm and 1st Jan 7am - 2pm.

GREETING FROM NATHAN AND THE POST OFFICE TEAM Nathan, Cathy, De, Jenny, Janice, Pat and Penny send Season's Greetings to all readers and remind you of the **Last Posting Dates for Christmas:**

Cards - 2nd Class 18th December 1st Class 20th December
Special Delivery Guaranteed 23rd December
UK Parcels 20th December



ADVERTISING IN ROSTRUM IN 2020

Hopefully all our existing advertisers have received their invitation to renew their adverts in Rostrum for 2020. Those who have not done so and anyone interested in advertising in Rostrum for the first time are asked to email rostrum2@hotmail.com without delay. We are most grateful to all advertisers as their support enables the magazine to be delivered free to 900+ homes in the village ten times a year.



FOOTPATHS GROUP

December 1st meet village hall at 2:00 for local walk
Wednesday 1st January 2020 our annual New Year's Day woodland walk. Meet at the village hall at 2 pm
Sunday 2nd February meet village hall for local walk 2 pm

Again, a change of my intended walk via Livesey Street due to conditions underfoot. We left the village hall to walk to Love Lane, (does anyone still call it Cut-throat Alley?) Then passing the Mill Pond, Brooms Down Mill Oasts to Rock Farm, then on to Nettlestead Lane. After making our way towards Pizien Well we turned off here just past the old Wheatsheaf pub. Some of us collected some sweet chestnuts along the way. Walking towards the waterfall on the Wateringbury stream we joined Old Road and returned to the start via Mill Pond and Warden Path. Good walk dry, apart from catching the edge of a shower near to Nettlestead.

Kevin Reynolds 07713 740 375 kevin.f.reynolds@btinternet.com



WATERINGBURY PLAYERS

Rehearsals for Robin Hood and the Babes in the Wood to be performed on 24th and 25th January in the village hall are going well. If you would like to assist backstage, we would welcome your help with props, costumes, make-up, staging etc please get in touch at wateringburyplayers@hotmail.co.uk

WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

We marked the 101st anniversary of the Armistice with our Remembrance Service in the school hall. Year 6 children read poetry about the significance of the poppy and Bobby Yelf, Year 4, drew our minute's silence to a close with The Last Post. This is quite an achievement for a young brass player as it is played without valves and has a particularly difficult wide range of notes.

Children in Need quickly followed and the children wore spotty accessories to school to raise money for this favourite charity. In addition, our school's Master Baker, Teaching Assistant Vanessa Barnett, raffled off two of her world-famous chocolate cakes to the delight of everyone attending the assembly.

December is a magical time in school but also, certainly, the busiest. Our younger children will perform their Christmas nativities on 10th and 11th December at 2.15pm and 9.15am respectively. Our older children will continue the new tradition of a Carol Concert in St John's Church on 17th December at 2pm. Everyone is warmly welcome.

Rather than a Christmas Fayre this year, we're holding an afternoon of Christmas Crafts and Party Supper with Santa's elves on Friday, 6th December. The children will make festive crafts and decorations after school and then enjoy a special tea with Santa's elves in the hall before visiting Father Christmas in the grotto. Following last year's success, this promises to become a new tradition.

Term ends on Wednesday, 18th December with a slightly earlier dismissal at 2.15pm. The new spring term begins on Monday, 6th January, 2020.

The children, staff and governors of Wateringbury CE Primary School join me in wishing our village community a peaceful and joyful Christmas-time with friends and family.

Chasey Crawford Usher – Headteacher www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk



A PLEA FROM THE GUIDE AND SCOUT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Are you a whizz at auditing? Know someone who is?

We really need someone who would be willing to audit our group accounts for us. In return you can obtain that warm fuzzy feeling felt only when doing something truly wonderful for the greater good. If you can help, please contact group secretary Corinne corinne@wateringbury-scouts.org

With many thanks Guide and Scout Group Executive Committee

BEWARE

We are very lucky to live in a relatively low crime village. In the last few weeks I have encountered a lady from Teston who had her purse stolen in Maidstone and a man who commutes from Wateringbury who had his mobile stolen.

DIPPERS These are people, usually working in teams, who steal purses from a shopping bag or handbag passing the item immediately to an accomplice.

PICKPOCKETS Transport for London reported a 43% increase in theft on the previous year. Most commonly stolen were mobile phones and these are often targeted by pickpocketing teams.

How do we protect our valuables from these very professional fingersmiths?

Put your purse deep down in your shopping bag preferably in a zipped inner pocket or attached to a small security chain. Avoid using your mobile in a crowded place. It should be out of sight when not in use and placed in an inner pocket. Register your phone with immobilise.com. This is a free service and will aid police recovery of your phone or for insurance claims.

TACTICS THEY USE

The Shield - they use coats, bags or newspapers to shield their actions.

The Distraction - they work in teams with one asking the victim for help or directions while the other steals from them.

The Blocker - one thief will block the victim while the other steals from them.

The Sleeper - a thief or a group will target people sleeping on trains or on buses.

Most people are honest, decent folk but beware of those few for whom Christmas is not the season of good will. *Mike Williams*

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL

As we continue to explore the book 'Stick Man' by Julia Donaldson, we will be ice cube painting, snow flake making and designing our very own stickman Christmas decorations to hang on our pre-school Christmas tree. The children will enjoy decorating the tree (unsupervised!!) so parents beware they may like to decorate yours at home!

Regarding Christmas - we will be walking the children along to Teston Church on Friday 13th December where the children will have the opportunity to sing songs from their Christmas concert and listen to a story read by Dawn from the village. Then, as usual, our Christmas concert will be taking place on our last day of term which is Wednesday 18th December at Watringbury Hall. Also to get you in the Christmas spirit we will be running a Christmas Santa Dash on Teston Village green. Fun for all the family. Children, buggies, grandparents, friends and even dogs (on leads) are invited to take part on this year's Santa Dash. Sunday 8th December at 11.30am. Wear red or dress like Santa! £3.50 per participant which includes a hot chocolate and biscuit.

On behalf of all the staff and children, we would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas. We will return on Monday 6th January 2020. *Tina Driver (07805 796353)*

NEWS FROM YOUR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR SARAH HUDSON

It has been a very busy month, as Watringbury has been plagued by problems with the new recycling scheme. Hopefully, things will start improving, as the new contractors become familiarised with their new routes, and the new scheme settles in. If there are any residents who experience either a missed collection, or need a replacement bin, then please report this online at www.recycleforall.co.uk.

Following complaints by many residents about the obstruction caused by the Royal Mail collection vehicle at 5.20pm each weekday evening, I met with the Regional Collections Manager and the Communication Workers Union representative from Royal Mail to discuss how we could change things. I am very pleased to report that they were more than happy to get their collection driver to park up the side road next to the sorting office, and thereby alleviate the problem during rush hour. Hopefully, this will ensure more free flowing traffic at this time of day.

I am happy to report that Liberty have withdrawn their appeal against planning refusal at Heath Farm. However, now that MBC have published their call to sites report, there are still too many potential developments right on our boundary that will have a severe impact regarding infrastructure. Our roads do not have the capacity for all the extra traffic movements proposed.

An application was made to Kent Police Property Fund during the Summer, and the Friends of Watringbury were awarded £200 to improve the amenity area around the village. It is proposed to buy 4 planters – one for each 'Welcome to Watringbury' sign, and to seek sponsorship from a local business.

I am really pleased with the support shown by residents to the proposals to introduce a 20mph speed limit down Bow Road. As I write this, just over 80 residents have signed my petition. I have also written to our County Councillor and our MP asking for their support too. I attended a presentation made at the Joint Transportation Board meeting at Kings Hill, where the proposed alterations to the Crossroads Scheme were discussed. Due to budget constraints, this scheme will now **NOT** go ahead. Kent Highways are now working with the Parish Council and myself to devise a scheme of traffic calming, and simpler adjustments to the crossroads to improve traffic flow, but which still fall within the constraints of the funding criteria.

Under the Economic Regeneration Board, TMBC have launched a Shopfront Grant Scheme, and I am working with Kent Hair to hopefully be successful in applying for funds to improve the shopfront of the hairdressers. If other shops in the village are interested, then please contact me at sarah.hudson@tmbc.gov.uk.

TMBC will be consulting residents regarding a whole range of parking fees across the Borough. Towns such as Snodland, Larkfield and Aylesford will potentially find themselves paying for parking for the first time, and other areas such as West Malling, Borough Green and Tonbridge will see charges rising for the first time in 2 years, and in some cases 4 years. Watringbury will continue to have a free car park. Costs arising from car parks include lighting, maintenance, enforcement, business rates and security, such as height barriers and signage.

WATERINGBURY GUIDES

November was dominated by the Remembrance weekend events. The guides opted to have a sleepover on the Saturday night and we were enormously grateful to the Churchwardens who allowed us to sleepover in Watringbury church as something different from usual. We had some games in the evening and then 10 girls and 2 leaders settled down for the night. I left the infrared heaters on to keep the girls warm but unwisely they complained at around 12.45am that it was too bright so I turned them off. So guess what? In the morning they complained they were cold! I think this was a case of be careful what you wish for!

At the actual service we had 18 girls attend and as leaders we were so proud. Macey led the parade carrying the Union Flag and did an excellent job and Isabel read the names of the fallen in WW1 and set exactly the right tone for the others to follow. Last year I was bitterly disappointed that only 6 guides attended and I set myself a target to double that this year. I'm so pleased that with the new leadership team and many more guides, we trebled our number so I was over the moon.

We also had our Diwali evening and we are very grateful to the parents and siblings who came along to support us. We raised over £100 for Lauren's India trip and a good time was had by all. For the rest of term we have horse riding booked, a trip to see Frozen 2 at the cinema and our end of term trip to Prison Island which is an Escape Room experience. We plan to conduct a small 'chip survey' of the local outlets beforehand which we hope will be enjoyable too.

If you are an adult and would like to join us as a leader, do please contact us as we would be very pleased to welcome you. You don't need to have been a brownie or guide, just keen to work with the girls and have fun yourself. Just email us at wateringburyguides@hotmail.com
Sheena, Emily and Hayleigh.



Paddock Wood Choral Society invites you to join us for "Christmas through the Ages", with carols for choir and audience on Saturday 14th December, 7.30 pm at St. Andrew's Church, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood. Tickets £12.50 (Under 19's free) Online from our website www.paddockwood-choral.org.uk From Box Office: 01892 836250 Email: tickets@paddockwood-choral.org.uk



East Malling Singers' popular Christmas Concert is on Saturday 21st December at 7.30pm at the church of St James the Great in East Malling. You will be able to sing some of your favourite carols and hear a wonderful variety of seasonal music, including highlights of the Messe de Minuit by Charpentier. During the interval mince pies and mulled wine will be available for you to enjoy. Tickets are £12, concessions £10, schoolchildren free, available from 01622 750943

PARISH COUNCIL 125th ANNIVERSARY

Following the 1894 Local Government Act Parish Councils came into existence. In Wateringbury there were 17 nominations for 9 vacancies so an election was held. On the 17th December 1894 Wateringbury Parish Council was formed. The Minutes from that date are held at Kent County Archives. The first lady to be elected on to the Parish Council was a Mrs Lemmens in 1919. Thanks to Terry Bird of the History Society for all his help. More information can be found on the Wateringbury History Society website.

There are at present 3 vacancies on the Parish Council and if you would like to get involved in the village and want more information please contact the Clerk clerk@wateringburypc.org.uk or telephone 01622 817068



HISTORY SOCIETY

Our Christmas meeting on the **18th December** will take the form of a **social evening, with a quiz** and a glass of wine. Our first meeting of 2020 will be on **15th January** with a talk given by Antonia Gallop on the **History of Carriage Driving** and on 19th February Delia Taylor will talk to us about the Roaring Twenties. Our meetings are in the village hall with tea or coffee from 7.40 pm and the talk beginning at 8pm. Visitors welcome £3 a meeting. The Committee of the History Society wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year and look forward to welcoming current and new members in 2020.



WATERINGBURY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The next meeting is for members only and this will be the Christmas lunch party in the Village Hall. Please note that the date will be Wednesday December 11th due to the Hall being used for polling on the 12th. Please meet for a 2pm. start.

On Thursday 9th January at 2pm we look forward to hearing from Maurice Chittenden on "The Golden Days of Fleet Street." The competition will be "An Old Newspaper Article" Visitors welcome at this meeting

In November we enjoyed Yvonne Broad who introduced the art of painting on glass. Using acrylic or water paint and drinking glasses we produced our own painted decorations. The more artistic members produced their own designs but it is possible to use a stencil to produce an attractive design.

A VIEW FROM THE PEWS - Winter is coming. Prepare the way.

Life in the village feels close to nature with the backdrop of a changing landscape as a seasonal clock and winter brings some tricky possibilities such as unexpected snow,

flooding or bitter cold. Nature can transform from gentle loveliness to unimaginable threat of forces beyond control.

Fortunately, humans are a hardy and imaginative bunch. Unlike those animals who are born ready to go, humans arrive helpless requiring time and resources to get to independence. This apparent disadvantage hides the reverse. The unfinished arrival status allows for learning and more rapid change to meet new circumstances. A new baby demonstrates this profoundly to adults. It grows and radically transforms, and the way the new generation reads the world rapidly translates into change that is disorienting for parents. One new life can trigger a revolution. Perhaps, those climate change protesting youngsters hear a whisper in our nature - survive, change, transform.

Nature may be a gift, but it is an ambiguous partner. We rely on knowledge of the future. We can stock up and check-up: A bit of salt in case the snows come; review house/bed warming options (electric blankets have come a long way); check the heating system is in good order; make sure insurance policies are up to date; get draught excluders. Look out for neighbours who live alone, especially the elderly. It is an extraordinary blessing to see the generosity as folk give to charities working for those who are most vulnerable. Don't be sucked into the endless negativity of the media. There are many folk in our community doing extraordinary things for the neediest. Winter is coming, but we can be ready.

The Old Testament stories in the Bible may be far older than we think. Not just 2-3000 years old but maybe 10s or even 100s of thousands of years old, echoes of oral narratives woven from generations of experience. Deeply real and remembered to face the challenges of life. Our memory holds our learning for the forward. One strange story has God commanding Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. Is this an example of what is wrong with the Bible? Perhaps another meaning is deeper down. It might have been born out of the experience of past generations of families, living on the poverty line, having to think the unthinkable to survive winters. Winter is the gravest threat to those with too many mouths to feed. Today enduring winter's hardship is easier than it was for our ancestors. It brings a duty - value the life of every child. We do not need to make that terrible sacrifice to survive **winter** than previous generations faced. We have enough for all and a responsibility to share. Failure to do so is a judgement against us. Our winter festivals draw on all these threads.

Finally, the festival can be a time of unhappiness for all sorts of reasons. It's tempting to drown sorrows in too much booze, so happiness becomes boorishness. Thoughtlessness can leave some alone carrying the burdens of the home festival, which means they cannot celebrate. The temptations of advertisers can lure us into spending far more than we should with a false promise we can 'buy' the perfect celebration. Watch out for those pitfalls and maybe make a few plans to evade them. Prepare.

Winter is coming. A new life will be born. See that it lives. It might save the world.

Top tips for a churchy Christmas in the village at SJB:

Young families have a few options. Sunday the 15th at 10 am is the Nativity and Christingle service. Check out the Crib Service at 5 pm for an early Christmas Eve option. The kids can come dressed up for the nativity. There is a family communion on Christmas morning at 10 am. For something more traditional there is Nine Lessons and Candlelit Carols on Thursday 19th December at 8 pm. And there is Midnight Mass at 11 pm on Christmas Eve. Lots of options. SJB is a friendly and inclusive Christmas community. All are most welcome.

WATERINGBURY CHURCH SERVICES in DECEMBER and JANUARY

[SJB Church web site: www.wateringburychurch.org.uk](http://www.wateringburychurch.org.uk)

[Church Face Book Page: fb.me/wateringburychurch](https://www.facebook.com/wateringburychurch)

[Friends of SJB Church web site www.fowc.org.uk](http://www.fowc.org.uk)

Refreshments are served after most 10am Services please stay if you can

Don't be shy if you have not been to church for a while our services all have easy to follow booklets and we sing well-known hymns and carols.

DECEMBER

Sunday 1st Advent Sunday 10am Communion and Baptism with Rev David Commander

We welcome David (and Helen) and their family as David leads our Communion Service and baptises his little granddaughter Connie Joan Bryant

Saturday 7th Messy Church 3-5pm

Young Children and their carers are invited to Messy Church as they celebrate the Christmas Story with lots of crafts and end with afternoon tea.

Sunday 8th Second in Advent 10am Morning Praise led by Barry Fisher

Come and enjoy a less formal service and sing Advent Carols

Sunday 15th Third Sunday in Advent

8.30am Said Prayer Book Communion led by Canon Derek Carpenter

10am Nativity and Christingle led by the Sundays Cool Team

Tuesday 17th 2pm School Christmas Concert

Thursday 19th 8pm Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight led by Rev Brian Fortnum

A popular atmospheric service with the traditional readings and carols. The Secondary Division Young People will be serving refreshments after the service so stay if you can.

Sunday 22nd 10am Communion led by Rev Jim Brown

We are delighted to welcome an 'old vicar' for the service when lots of carols will be sung

Tuesday 24th Christmas Eve

5pm Crib Service led by Barry Fisher

A popular service where we recall the events of the First Christmas while building our Crib

11pm Midnight Mass led by Canon Liz Walker

The service takes us into Christmas Day

Christmas Day 10am Family Communion led by Canon Brian Stevenson

A less formal Communion Service to which children are invited to bring their favourite gift

Sunday 29th December 10am Benefice Healing Service at Mereworth Church led by **Canon Brian Stephenson** - *The opportunity for all three congregations from our new benefice to join together for worship*

JANUARY

Saturday 4th 3-5pm - Messy Church

Sunday 5th 10am - Communion Service led by Canon Liz Walker

Sunday 12th 10am - Prayer Book Matins led by Barry Fisher

Sunday 19th 8.30 am - Said Prayer Book Communion led by Canon Derek Carpenter
10am - All Age Worship led by our Sundays Cool team

Sunday 26th 10am - Communion Service led by Rev Jim Brown

COFFEE BREAK CRAFT AND CHAT

10.30-12.30 on Wednesdays 4th and 18th December

8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th January

We have our usual two meetings in December and since many find January a dull month we will be meeting four times in January. Crafts are optional, many just come along for the company. We have a really pleasant morning meeting in the social area at the church, so do come along, it would be good to see you. This year some of our members have made items in support of Maidstone Christian Care, the Premature Baby Unit, Dementia Care and Luhuvila Orphanage. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
Pauline and Gillian



CONFIRMATIONS

On Sunday 3rd November six members of Wateringbury Church - Harry Bowie, Martha Bowie, Colin Barker, Daniel Rowlinson, Izaak Wilson-Green and Luka Wilson Green were confirmed by Suffragan Bishop Simon of Tonbridge at St Gabriels Church, Kings Hill which meets at Valley Invicta Primary School.



Big Christmas Card Once again instead of sending individual cards to village friends you are invited to sign the big card in Church and make a donation for this year's chosen charity the Bishop of Rochester's 2019 Poverty and Hope Appeal, which aims to bring hope to those who need it most in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and also here in Kent.



Parish Act of Remembrance 2019 A congregation of 347 filled the church on Sunday 10th November for our annual service and laying of wreaths and individual cross tributes at the War Memorial in the churchyard. There were 151 young people (mainly from our village uniformed organisations) who paraded with their colours along the Tonbridge Road to the service which was led by our lay-reader Barry Fisher. Prof Bob Bowie gave a thought-provoking address and three members of the Scouts and Guides read the names of the fallen. Our church wardens have received many emails from members of the congregation expressing their appreciation of the service. It was a fitting village tribute to those whose lives were curtailed or scarred by War.

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard behind the scenes to make the service run so smoothly and to those who helped give the church and churchyard a deep clean on Saturday 9th.



The Worship Team at Wateringbury Church pray that the Spirit of Christmas may bring you Peace and the Expectation of Christmas give you Hope and Joy.

Messy Church is now a feature of St John the Baptist Church here in Wateringbury and **we celebrate our second birthday on Saturday 4th January**. We are growing steadily with 19 active families. We sing, use our percussion instruments, watch or listen to Bible stories, pray and spend time on various crafts. We always finish with tea!

Messy church implies we get messy – sometimes true but the ‘messy’ bit is just an opportunity for young families to relax as anything goes! A young lady wanted to give families a light touch Christian input that was informal. The vicar went along with it and now Messy Church is an international idea.

We concentrate on young families as we don’t have room for a creche and we meet in the church, usually on the first Saturday in the month, from 3pm – 5pm. I am happy to chat so either come along or e-mail me if you prefer on ruth.dunn33@btinternet.com



Twelfth Night Quiz still only £1 - this year’s theme - Colours

From Jan Pursey ☎ 01622 814324. A family quiz to do with your Christmas Visitors. Completed quiz sheets to be returned before 12th Night – 6th January. Proceeds to church funds.



Christmas Craft Bazaar Thank you to all who supported this year’s bazaar in so many ways. The provisional total raised to help with the day-to-day running expenses of our church is an amazing £1420.



Learn a new skill in 2020 - Become a Bell Ringer

Our bell ringers usually practise on Tuesday evenings and welcome newcomers please ring 01622 812262 for an informal chat and to confirm times and dates for the next practise evenings.



Next time you visit the church, look up to the organ loft where you will see new wrought iron railings. These are in memory of ex church warden Mike Pursey and were funded by donations made to his memorial fund. Sincere thanks go to Jan Pursey for agreeing to the use of some of the fund for this enhancement of the church which Mike loved, church warden Liz Gummer for her work in gaining the necessary faculty (permission) to do the work and to Yalding Forge for doing such an excellent job.

NOVEMBER PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Allotments following letters sent after the recent inspection 7 allotment holders had decided to relinquish their plots, There are therefore opportunities to rent an allotment to grow your own fruit and vegetables at the modest rent of £20 a year.

Cemetery Councillors agreed to accept a quote from Evergreen Rabbit Control to deal with the rabbits at the cemetery which were undermining gravestones and causing other damage.

Crossroads A meeting has been arranged between the Parish Council and KCC to discuss any future plans. Borough Councillor Sarah Hudson asked if she could attend the meeting. It was agreed she could do so as a Borough Council observer. It was reported that repairs to The Old Bakery on the corner of Redhill and Tonbridge Road had been postponed. When the structural repairs are being done this will necessitate four-way traffic controls for about 10 weeks.

Councillors' reports

KCC Councillor Matthew Balfour reported that Paul Carter the chairman of KCC for many years had relinquished his role. Roger Gough had been elected to the chairmanship. Matthew has been appointed Deputy Cabinet Member for Corporate and Traded Services.

T & M BC Councillor Sarah Hudson reported that she had been extremely busy dealing with residents' problems with the new refuse and recycling contractor Urbaser. She had attended a presentation by the company with other Borough Councillors who had all expressed their disappointment that there were so many problems. Urbaser admitted that they had underestimated residents' commitment to recycling. They had now increased the number of vehicles in our area from 4 to 6 and were meeting the cost of an additional two staff in the T & M office dealing with collection problems. To add to their problems the Refuse Incinerator at Allington was unexpectedly being used by two other Boroughs so the refuse trucks were having to queue to unload and this was causing delayed turn-round times. Residents are requested to report all their problems direct to T & M.

£200 had been obtained from a local fund and would be used for four planters which would be placed by the village boundary signs. She hoped to gain sponsorship from local businesses for the plants.

She was concerned about the effect on the village of proposed housing developments in surrounding areas including the proposal for new homes at Barham Court. The developers Liberty had withdrawn their appeal against planning refusal at Heath Farm but were pursuing their appeal against the refusal for 85 homes in the green belt outside the Kings Hill boundary close to Amber Lane. Crime Report the chairman read out the report of recent crimes in the village: Common Assault – a taxi driver was assaulted by his fare, Criminal Damage – a vehicle had its tyres slashed in Old Road. Theft – a man was walking down Tonbridge Road and his wallet was taken from his back pocket. Possession of controlled drug – a person was detained and found to have a controlled drug. Theft from a Motor Vehicle – number plates were stolen from a vehicle in Upper Mill.

Playing Fields a quote was accepted from Maidstone Signs for a sign to be placed on the track to the Playing Fields warning of potholes.

Planning Councillors considered two planning applications. They had no objections to the proposed extension and alteration to existing house and the conversion into five apartments at Little Hermitage 78 Danns Lane. Regarding the retrospective planning application at Ivy Cottage 204 Tonbridge Road the council commented - The original listed building consent should be adhered to and the doors replaced unless the listed building inspector feels that the doors which were installed are acceptable as a substitute.

Remembrance Wreath Councillor David Marks will lay the Council's Wreath at the Annual Parish Act of Remembrance on 10th November.

Village Warden's report was read by the Chairman. The village had generally been quiet. John had picked up some litter at the QE II playing fields and the Car Park. Dog poo was becoming a problem again the football club members helped keep the playing areas clean. He had also found some items which may be connected to anti-social behaviour so he had increased his patrols in the evenings.

Public Forum The matters raised by the public included: Overflowing dog waste bin just off Canon Lane on the path to Kings Hill, Concerns over parking by contractors at the Abbeyfield Orpines site and the low number of onsite parking bays when the Supported Living flats were fully occupied. (Councillors had earlier rejected the application by the builders to use the Playing Fields parking facilities).

A suggestion that when formulating future budgets the council considers raising the precept to pay for traffic calming measures such as speed cameras.

The next meetings of the Parish Council are on Tuesdays 3 December and 7 January at 7.30pm in the upper room of the village hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend.