

Challenge

The Parish Newsletter of Weston Colville and West Wrating

The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.

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Tea and Cakes Starts Again! (in JUNE)

Please join us at the Reading Room on Friday 25th June, from 3.30 to 5pm. We are looking forward to catching up with everyone over a cuppa and a piece of cake. We've missed you all.

To help keep us all safe we are planning to bring the tables and chairs outside for an al fresco gathering. If it rains we will postpone until the following Friday (2nd July).

Melanie and the Tea and Cakes Team

La Course des Tournesols

Come and collect a sunflower seed, pot and some compost for the sunflower race.

How fast will it grow and how high? There will be a small prize for the winner.

Photographic evidence and height to be emailed to becky.gilley@babraham.ac.uk by the August bank holiday.

Your starter kit can be collected from St Andrew's church porch over the early May bank holiday weekend. Limited supply, so please only take one per person.

Bonne chance!

Becky Gilley



On the Threshold

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered as a photographer for this project in Weston Colville.

There is now a team of photographers across the village who have been busy taking your household portraits.

If you haven't yet been photographed please contact me and I will happily arrange it for you. If you would like to get involved as a photographer then there is still time to help; please don't be shy!

Are you a photography student at Sixth Form or Diploma level? If so please get in touch with me. I will need someone, preferably with access to Adobe Photoshop, to help during May/June with editing photos and getting the project ready for exhibition. This is great experience to work as part of a team on an exhibition. Pay £8 ph.

Jane Pryor (janepryor6@gmail.com, 07780 461958)

Tennis in West Wrating: New Season 1st May

The West Wrating d'Abo Tennis Club is open to existing, returning and new members from across the local area.

Our full size, all weather macadam court is located in a peaceful corner of the village recreation ground, great for family fun or more hard core point scoring!

For more information, to sign up and to make court bookings, visit: www.WestWratingTennis.co.uk

Reopening of The Chestnut Tree

Assuming all goes to plan we will be open inside and outside from Monday 17th May. From then onwards we will return to being open our usual hours and serving our full menu again, both lunchtimes and evenings, and you will be able to pre-book tables.



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Reading Room Events

We've been thinking about what we might be able to do with starting up events.

We'd like to begin with a circular walk and if the data allows, according to Boris's road map, the date we can meet outside in groups larger than six will be mid-May. The first Saturday (avoiding West Wickham's plant sale on 22nd) will be 29th May. It would be great if this were as normal as possible, so we'd meet at 10 am and walk approximately 5 miles.

To keep it safe for everyone and to adhere to guidelines, there are a couple of extra details:

- we're asking you to let us know by phone/email if you'd like to join us;
- we'll meet outside the Reading Room;
- where we'd normally bring lunch to eat together in the Reading Room after the walk, if the weather's fine, we can do this in the garden, and drinks from the bar will be table service (though a word of warning that 'facilities' will be out of bounds). The usual British 'indoors if wet' won't apply, sadly, as we won't be able to go inside as a group of more than six. Beyond that, we're hoping the quiz and Cinema Club will return in the autumn, and we'd like to organise

another short series of talks. If you would like to share something that you are passionate about or something of an expert in and think your neighbours in the village might be interested, then please let me know. We've had wonderful talks in the past on silicone model making for adverts, beekeeping, Jupiter, woodturning, Marsh Tits, and work in healthcare in Uganda, so you can see any subject in a wide range is welcome.

Jacqueline Douglas
 (jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com, 291475)

Book Exchange at Church End

You might have noticed that we have done our promised spring clean and complete rotation of books in the phone box. We can now start taking book donations again, and would be particularly grateful for children's books. As always, please do not leave boxes/bags of books in the phone box as it only stops others looking at the shelves. We'd ask you to drop them off on one of our doorsteps, or to call Joyce on 07980 404764. Thanks!

Joyce, Jackie B, Emma Kaye and Jacqueline Community Bookworms



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West Wrating Book Club

Our April book was 'Underland: A Deep Time Journey' by Robert McFarlane.

Winner of the Wainwright Prize 2019 and Stanford Dolman Travel Book of the Year 2020, it covers many different aspects of the world beneath our feet, including the 'wood wide web' (the linked system of tree roots and fungi beneath the soil), the deep potash mines of Boulby, and the hidden tunnel systems beneath cities such as Paris and Istanbul. It was agreed that it was very well written. Other comments were beautiful, brilliant, fantastically well written. It draws together many subjects – geology, physics, glaciology, pre-history, archaeology, nature, mythology, ethics and philosophy. The descriptions were so well drawn that some found it very claustrophobic at times while one person felt that it included the best explanation of dark matter they had ever read, identifying strongly with the descriptions of the climbing and caving from their own experience. However one person couldn't get on with the science. Some of the descriptions of the use made of the amazing caves and tunnels of the Karst country of Slovenia were harrowing, the contrast of these horrors

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with the magnificence and beauty of the land, one of several reminders of how humankind has misused the Earth and Nature, so pertinent at this time of climate change and pandemic. Local interest was represented by the references to the British Antarctic Survey and Nine Wells Local Nature Reserve.

Scores were mainly 9 and 10 out of 10, with a 5 and a 6.

Our next book is 'Circe' by Madeline Miller, to be discussed in person, all being well, at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 19th May at The Chestnut Tree.

Linda Gorman (290653)



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From the Rectory

As we enter May, I am looking forward, like many I imagine, to the further easing of lockdown restrictions which will allow us to enjoy seeing more people face to face. For those with good internet access or reliable smart phones, seeing family, friends and colleagues online has been possible over the lockdowns. Yet we should acknowledge as well the loss of human contact ‘in the flesh’ and reflect on how important the joy of life together is for our sense of humanity.



Church gatherings over the last year have also been a mix of both the online and in person. Our services via Zoom have helped us to worship together during each lockdown and inspired a growth in creative resources for reflection! Before Easter, for example, we produced three short reflective films entitled ‘Life in the Spirit’, ‘Love in a time of Covid’ and ‘After the Flood’, all of which can still be viewed via our website.

Gatherings in person during the pandemic have happened, where possible, both outside and inside church buildings. Services have been held in

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churchyards often dappled in sunlight, or inside our ancient buildings, perhaps allowing us to experience in a fresh way the joy of gathering face to face; a reminder of the incarnational nature of our Christian faith.

In May our services will continue to be a mix of online services and services inside and outside our churches, and please do feel welcome to attend whichever you prefer. During May we will also celebrate Pentecost and remember the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples gathered in Jerusalem after the resurrection of Jesus. This astonishing gift of the Spirit, as described in the book of Acts, bound together the early church in worship and shared life, and empowered them to reach out to others in the name of Christ.

I hope, as we move along our roadmap out of lockdown, we may continue to re-discover the joy of shared life together and allow ourselves to be shaped by the life of the Spirit. For the Spirit draws us into a deeper relationship with God, empowers us to forgive, and creates bonds of mutual love and service, which will help us support and rebuild our communities this side of lockdown and beyond.

Revd Iain McColl

Jo Taylor

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Anne Vidler (290010, or anne.vidler@talk21.com)

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Anne Vidler

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Village Cricket

Linton Village Cricket Club 3rd XI will be playing their home matches at Weston Colville Cricket Field, with the first home match on 8th May. If there are any problems or issues during the season you can contact the chairman, Allan Campbell, at alcap998@gmail.com. The fixtures are as follows, all starting at 1.30 pm.



08/05/2021	Ickleton CC - 2nd XI
12/06/2021	Newport CC, Essex - 2nd XI
17/07/2021	Burrough Green CC - 1st XI
24/07/2021	Birchanger CC - 2nd XI
07/08/2021	Thriplow CC - 3rd XI
21/08/2021	Royston CC, Herts - 3rd XI

There may be a few more fixtures as the season goes on.

Allan Campbell, Chair of Linton Cricket Club


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for information on:

What's On	Directory	Parish Council
Parish History	Local Sports	Village Hall Events
Church News	Parish Matters	Village Calendar

Please send us your contributions, events, notices, photos and comments.

Weston Colville Parish Council

Community Project Funding – a number of different grants are available for community projects, and we would like to raise awareness of this in case any parishioners would like to propose a project for the village, which the parish council could support you with.

Potential projects with funding available range from fixing and repairing community facilities, assisting organisations who need financial support due to the pandemic, projects that support community members' wellbeing, and zero carbon emissions projects covering both buildings and nature.

Full details of all available funding can be found via the web link <https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/supportcamb?bcr=MTIzNA>, or the parish council can provide a recent summary.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Inclusion Project – in conjunction with South Cambs Community Safety Partnership, Weston Colville (along with all other villages) will be producing a village plan for managing unauthorised traveller encampments, should one occur.

We would like to invite any interested parties to work with the parish council in forming the village plan.

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South Cambs Community Partnership are providing us with a toolkit and cultural awareness training, plus other useful information which will be shared with anyone wanting to take part in the planning.

If you would like to be involved with either project, please get in touch with the parish clerk, Jess Ashbridge, at clerk@westoncolville.org.uk or 07779 277647.

Christian Aid



As Christian Aid week falls before the May restrictions are lifted, there will be no local house to house collections this year.

Instead, there will be an open air Coffee Morning in Balsham Church car park or the churchyard after all the restrictions are lifted on 21st June.

The date is yet to be arranged but likely to be sometime in July. This is my seventh and last year organising the fund raising for Christian Aid.

Joanna Sanders
 (sanderschimneys@uwclub.net 893063)

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Nature Notes

Hello and a merry spring to you all. Spring visitors like Swallows and Blackcaps are here. Male Blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*, or Northern Nightingale) have the eponymous black caps and smoke grey bodies, so can be mistaken for Marsh Tits; female and juvenile Blackcaps have bright chestnut-brown caps. Blackcaps appear much bigger and more torpedo-shaped than Marsh Tits. The Blackcaps' black cap does not come down the neck and the bird

is much more uniform grey in colour, and Marsh Tits have a small black bib under their chin, which Blackcaps don't have. The top photo is a Blackcap; the lower one is a Marsh Tit. The Blackcap's song is rich, melodic and deeper, as it's a bigger bird, while Marsh Tits



get by with a call which sounds like a high-pitched sneeze (Bless you!).

Your garden Marsh Tits have moved into mature deciduous woodland to breed. To let them raise their young in peace, we won't be ringing in the woods in May and June, but only in gardens.

Marsh Tit sightings are very valuable now. Please report anything you see to cambsmarti@gmail.com, m_stammers@btinternet.com or Challenge. Thanks!

Feral honeybees are being seen now, as are wasps. Adult bees and wasps are vegetarian and eat sugars, but all their larvae need protein to grow. While bee larvae are vegetarian, getting their protein from royal jelly and pollen (bee bread), wasp larvae are carnivorous, getting their protein from the wide range of animal prey brought in by adult wasps. This includes a lot of garden pests, like greenfly and caterpillars. The wasp larvae then secrete a sugary solution which the adult wasps eat.

In August and September, colonies are winding down for the winter and there are far fewer wasp larvae, so there's less sugar for the adult wasps, who have to find their sweet treats elsewhere – like your picnic!

Another interesting thing about wasp larvae is they don't poo at all. It's all stored within their guts, so entomologists can identify everything a wasp larva has eaten by DNA analysis of its gut. So you can easily determine what animals are present in the local environment, however well hidden they are, from wasp larval guts (I hope you can enjoy your dinner . . .).

Alex Inzani and the South Cambs Ringing Group



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West Wickham & District Gardening Club

On Monday 19th April the club and many welcome visitors enjoyed a Zoom presentation by Gail and John Somerville from Lincolnshire entitled ‘Plant to Pot, growing veg for fun and flavour’. Their aim was to encourage us to grow more vegetables in bags or pots or boxes.

Under normal circumstances the club would hold its Plant Sale in May, but this year we have four venues where tables will be set up with surplus plants for sale. These will be in West Wickham, Streetly End, Hazel Stub, and Castle Camps, on May 22nd from 10 am to 1 pm. Please support us if you can.

Rosemary Yallop (01799 584262)

Balsham WI

For our April meeting we were given a talk via Zoom entitled ‘Horseheath Hall – a Vanishing Country House’. After our Zoom expert, Debbie Mower sorted out the IT goblins, local historian Janet Morris gave us a fascinating talk about the history of Horseheath Hall.

In the 14th century the original Hall was the home of the Alington family who were very good for the

village. They married well and were stable landowners. This was replaced by a huge new Hall started in the 1660s designed by the architect Roger Pratt with a façade of 140 feet and 4 stories high with about 300 windows. The grounds were formally laid out and included a deer park, an orangery, a menagerie and Acre pond complete with boathouse and punts. Janet gave us a potted history of some of the inhabitants of the Hall and of Roger Pratt the architect.

Our next meeting on 11th May at 7.30 via Zoom will be a quiz evening. Should be fun!

Alison Clarke (894031)

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Local Plants

Plants are like vegetables, best bought as local and as fresh as possible. That is the theory behind www.theplantplacewickham.com a small setup that has started growing hardy perennials in West Wickham.

Plants should also not cost a fortune to buy (although some plants and shrubs can be very difficult to cultivate and therefore do become more expensive due to time and care). Also, the miles many plants travel across the continent before they ever reach our shores should be considered, and the environmental cost of everything involved.

As an experiment, Jan Lupton began growing hardy perennials locally. The mantra behind the project is 'local plants for local people'.

This year she has been cautious as to what could be achieved in the greenhouse, but has put together a little website to accommodate the plant details for local gardeners, and is finding out what local people are looking for. She said that they seem to like the idea of buying local.

Jan Lupton



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2523 Linton Air Cadets

We have moved! But not far . . . our return to face to face training has seen us move to new accommodation at the Linton Heights Junior School, after more than two decades at Linton Village College. With fantastic facilities, we look forward to parading from the Heights and offering a fuller and more diverse training programme than ever before.



By the time you are reading this we should already be welcoming back cadets to the squadron for face to face activities for the first time in over a year. We are delighted to be able to return to training and getting on with what we know and love. We will be looking to invite new cadets and staff to join the squadron as soon as possible. Our initial training programme will see practical lessons covering all theory we have successfully completed over the past year on virtual parade nights. We eagerly anticipate a return to shooting, gliding and powered flying.

We will now be parading on Monday and Wednesday evenings, 19.00 – 21.30. Please see www.2523linton.co.uk for more details.

Bradley Wright, Pilot Officer
(07943 873272, training.2523@rafac.mod.gov.uk)

Rapid Covid-19 Testing for All

Since Friday 9th April everyone has been urged to take twice-weekly Covid tests. These are rapid lateral flow tests for people who do not have any of the symptoms of Coronavirus. (Anyone who has symptoms should still isolate at home and organise to take a PCR test.)

Twice-weekly rapid testing will help to identify cases of Covid-19 that would otherwise be missed. With one in three people with coronavirus showing no symptoms and potentially spreading it without knowing, rapid testing of people with no symptoms helps to identify positive cases quickly, preventing the spread of infection. The test usually involves taking a sample from your tonsils (or where they would have been) and from your nose, using a swab. You can get a result in 30 minutes.

There are several ways to access rapid testing:

Community testing: you can take a supervised test at rapid testing sites locally, set up to test asymptomatic adults.

NHS Test & Trace sites: these operate as symptomatic testing sites in the morning but are currently providing an afternoon collect option, where you can pick up a box of tests to use at home.

Pharmacy collect: visit a participating pharmacy and pick up a free box of tests to use at home. Our nearest pharmacy collection sites are the pharmacy in Linton on the High Street, and pharmacies in Haverhill and Newmarket.

The Gov.UK website gives details of how to order the tests, or find local collection or test sites.

LFD Direct: people who can't access tests through the other routes can order a box of tests online or by calling 119, which will be delivered to your home.

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Daisy Chains Preschool

It is with a sad heart that we have to inform you that Daisy Chains Preschool, West Wickham, will be closing its doors for the very last time at the end of this summer term 2021.



The preschool has been running in one form or another for over 40 years, and I have been involved in its history for over 20 of those years. Looking back over those 40-ish years we reckon that over 1,000 children have spent their early years with us preparing them for their next step up to primary school.

We are all very sorry that it has come to the point of closure but the preschool has been running at a considerable loss for over two years now. This, coupled with the fact that we will only have three children registered with us for the next school year, has forced us to take the decision to close.

Over the years the preschool would not have been possible to run without the considerable efforts of staff, parents, and 'helpers'. We would like to take this opportunity to thank anybody (you know who you are!) who has supported us in any manner over the years so, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

A special thank you to the Village Hall Committee who have in the last few years provided us with a beautiful community hall in which to take care of the children in a clean, healthy and safe environment.

Sue Harrow

We are raising a collection to provide the staff with some wonderful thank you gifts. If you would like to contribute please contact me on jess@agrarian.biz or 07779 277647.

Jess Ashbridge (Chair, Daisy Chains Preschool)

Marsh Mail

It has been fantastic to observe the college grounds alive once again with the sights and sounds of grassroots sport. Welcoming back community groups onto site has marked the start of our re-emergence from lock down restrictions. Our Sports Centre has also reopened its indoor facilities and looks forward to even more members supporting this village resource over the coming months.

Within the college, students have benefited from a broader educational experience this term. Our Year 7 and 8 students have moved into new learning bases and all year groups have access to more specialist teaching rooms and practical lessons. A number of extracurricular clubs have also restarted.

A healthy lifestyle is also supported by positive mental health. We have been particularly conscious of our Year 11 cohort and how to ensure that the process of awarding GCSE grades this summer takes account of their wellbeing as well as achieving optimum academic outcomes. At LVC we have designed a schedule of assessment, in line with the government guidance and exam board requirements, that gives students the best opportunity to achieve their potential.

During the first half of the summer term, students will be completing a range of slimmed down assessment tasks within their lessons. We have sought to avoid replicating the pressurised conditions of the exam series that has been cancelled.

I have been incredibly impressed with how maturely students have responded to the significant disruption to their education. I have been equally impressed by the hard work and commitment of teachers and support staff. Having adjusted to the requirements of teaching and learning in the Covid-19 contexts and the challenges that this has presented, students and staff are now adapting to the requirements of a teacher-led assessment process.

It is no surprise that the global pandemic has led to a surge in applications for teacher training. While some of this may have been motivated by the job security associated with the profession, the privilege, job satisfaction and sense of reward that comes from supporting young people in their education has been highlighted in the current context.

Helena Marsh

The Secret Garden

Save the date of 8th August, 4 pm, for 'The Secret Garden' performed by the This is My Theatre Company in St Mary's Church, Weston Colville.

You can book tickets now (www.thisismytheatre.com/secretgardenatwestoncolville) for this lovely performance for all ages by our favourite touring theatre company.

GRANTA Medical Practices

Covid-19 Vaccinations

We continue to deliver second vaccinations, working in date order, vaccinating patients 11 - 12 weeks following their first dose.

Current guidelines state that patients have to return to the venue where they had their first vaccination, as the second dose will be allocated and sent to that venue. Should these guidelines change we will, of course, let everyone know.

We appreciate that everyone wants to know when their appointment will be, and we are working as fast as possible to get through our patient lists. Please bear with us as our team continue to work incredibly hard to deliver the vaccine into our community.

COVID-19 Vaccine Safety – the UK vaccination programme has been very successful. At the time of writing, more than 30 million people have been vaccinated and it is estimated that 6,000 lives have already been saved.

There have been reports of a very rare condition involving blood clots and unusual bleeding after vaccination. This is being carefully monitored and reviewed.

Information is changing rapidly and we will keep our website as up to date as possible. If you do not have internet access, please feel free to ring us with any questions you may have.

Sandra East, Head of Patient Services
(01223 627743, sandra.east@nhs.net)

Church Services

Please do keep an eye on our church website, www.grantavale.org.uk, and our church noticeboards, to see the latest information on church services. Zoom services are held on Sundays, and other services during the week, such as Compline.

Contact parish administrator, Cazzy Walshe, on 7churches.seven@gmail.com, if you would like to receive a weekly newsletter by email or by hand, or find out how to log into the services.

Revd Iain McColl
tel: 890693 email: mccoll.iain@gmail.com
Revd Kathy Bishop, Associate Priest
tel: 892288 email: revkathy@hotmail.co.uk
Mr Steven Wheeler, Licensed Lay Minister
tel: 290396 email: steven@juicyfruitsuk.com
Jeanine Kennedy, Lay Pioneer Minister
email: jeaninekennedygv@gmail.com

Churchwardens:

St Mary's – Ian Ashbridge (291344)
St Andrew's – Sebastian Bain (403415)

Church Administrator: Caroline (Cazzy) Walshe,
7churches.seven@gmail.com, 01223 891443

Weston Colville Parish Clerk: Jess Ashbridge,
jess@agrarian.biz, 07779 277647

West Wrattling Parish Clerk: Jenny Richards,
j.richards597@btinternet.com, 01223 665260

Community Warden: Faye Parker,
Faye.Parker@AgeUKCAP.org.uk, 07436 102865

Parish Nurse: Kim Cox,
7churches.parishnurse@gmail.com, 07498 994205

DIARY

May 2021

Sun 9 Weston Colville Oil Cooperative order deadline
Tues 11 Balsham WI
Wed 19 West Wrattling Book Club
Mon 22 West Wickham Gardening Club plant sales
Sat 29 Circular walk, Reading Room

June 2021

Fri 25 Tea & Cakes, Weston Colville

Mobile Post Office: Thursdays, Reading Room car park,
Weston Colville, 12.30 - 1.30 pm

Mobile library: first Tuesdays – 4th May, 1st June
High Street, West Wrattling 12.15 - 12.45 pm
Weston Green 1.50 - 2.15 pm
Mill Hill, Weston Colville 2.20 - 2.50 pm

Black bins: Tuesday 4th & Monday 17th May,
Tuesday 1st, Monday 14th & 28th June

Blue & Green bins: Monday 10th & 24th May,
Monday 7th & 21st June

Editor: Anne Bragg (290550) or email:
editor@challengemag.co.uk

Thank you for all your articles, news, etc. If these are sent by email, they are always acknowledged; if you don't get a reply, your items haven't been received, so please resend. Some contributions may have to be edited, to fit the space available, and are published at the discretion of the editor.

June issue's copy date
Thursday 20th May