

MARCH 2021



SEMINGTON PARISH MAGAZINE

**Minister for Semington:**

**Rev. John Rees**

**22 Warren Road**

**Staverton**

**BA14 8UZ**

**Tel. 01225 764365**

## Where To Go To Stay in The Know

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### **Canalside Benefice**

The Canalside Benefice website [canalsidebenefice.org.uk](http://canalsidebenefice.org.uk) has a number of useful links on it. It has resources for worship and Messy Church resources for children. In addition there is a link through to YouTube so that you may worship from your own home. Check out the Benefice website for the most up to date link.

### **Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group**

The Support Group is still very active in the community especially during the current Lockdown. The Group has a Facebook page which is the principal source of information, updates, offers of help and requests for help. Search Semington Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group on Facebook to join.

The newsletter is now published to alternate with the Parish Magazine so generally in the middle of each month. Distribution is via the Support Group Facebook page. For anyone who would like a hard copy of an issue of the Support Group Newsletter, including all past issues, the spares are in the Somerset Arms and the Village Hall, which can be accessed when the Post Office is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9.30am to 12.00pm. There is a fantastic selection of books and jigsaws available to buy when the Village Hall is open.

### **Village Websites**

The village now boasts two websites; [www.semington-village.co.uk](http://www.semington-village.co.uk) and [www.semington.org.uk](http://www.semington.org.uk) Back issues of both the Parish Magazine and the Support Group Newsletter are available on [semington.org.uk](http://semington.org.uk)

### **Wiltshire Council Website**

For wider issues such as refuse collections, ancillary and community services, the Wiltshire Council website [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk) should be your first port of call. There are links on the home page for service updates as well as the facility to sign up for e-mail updates.

## Christians in Semington

*Bev Woodward*

**Christians in Semington** - We will be meeting via Zoom in our own homes, to pray for our community, on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the Zoom link, or if there are things you'd like us to pray about.

**Housegroup** - This continues on alternate Tuesdays via Zoom, at 8.00pm. If you'd like to discuss how the Bible helps us to live as God wants us to, please phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for more details and the Zoom link.

## Go On – You Know You Want To!

*Gillian Airey*

It's that time of year again – there's a cheeky little envelope with your magazine this month. We'd like you to put a little something in said cheeky little envelope to go towards the running of the magazine. The contributors and distributors associated with the magazine all give their time on a voluntary basis. Once the cheeky envelope is ready to go, drop it into the address on the envelope.

## Editor's Note

*Gillian Airey*

We have a couple of new advertisers this month so check them out. Neill Newport has been delving back into his memoirs so brace yourself for another superbly humorous account of yet another scrape he managed to find himself in. Our next edition is the Easter edition I can't believe it's nearly a year since Gorgeous Hubby and me were almost stranded in Thailand!

Anyhow, by the time I write to you again the clocks will have gone forward and Spring will be well and truly here, so with that in mind the deadline for contributions to the next magazine is **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March** or if you're John the Landlord **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March!**

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## This Month I've Become Very Remote

*Gilly Airey*

So here we are in Lockdown 3.0 and despite volunteering to be a car park steward at Spencer's Vaccination Centre I have yet to be called into action. In fairness they've probably seen how long it takes me to park in any car park (the emptier the worse my performance) and have decided that I could have single-handedly jeopardise the 15m target by 'helping' people park.

So what to do to feel useful? The Northern Aireys are both key workers, a teacher and an Amazon Operations Manager, so gorgeous George is still attending pre-school. For the Southern Aireys it is slightly different, James is a key worker in logistics but Rachel, my talented daughter-in-law, runs her own business from home so has been juggling home-schooling Princesses Ava and Bella with running her busy business. So I decided to channel my inner teacher and volunteer to help home school albeit remotely. I mean how hard can it be? Ava is 9½ years old so is really quite self-sufficient. Bella is only 6½ so needs more help, encouragement or even coercion to get her work done, so Nanny G was given Tuesday's timetable and let loose in the remote classroom known as FaceTime.

I'll admit I wasn't quite expecting to be teaching Frozen's Princess Elsa – but when the vision of Princess B dressed as said Elsa appeared on screen I did do a double take – I suppose there has to be some upside to homeschooling for the kids. So to say it was interesting would be an understatement, so much of how children learn is clearly hinged on their involvement with their peers in the classroom talking through things six year old to six year old being guided by the teacher. Princess B was very patient with me, I'm not going to lie as I tried five different ways to explain adverbs in a way she could understand and apply...

There were clearly some high points; break times – this meant 'snacks' and idle chit chat, lunch time (simply because it lasted over an hour) and I especially loved the drawing and colouring parts of the curriculum – so much so I think I am going to get me some adult colouring books! We weren't the speediest of learners but at least Mum got to do her own work for the day. At the end of the day I asked Bella if she wanted to do a day a week with me until they went back to school 'Oh no Nanny' she said 'We're going to do two days a week – so I'll see you tomorrow' Am I doing a good job? Who knows, but when she rang to tell me she got 'Lovely Learner of the Week' I couldn't help but feel that maybe I am just a little bit!

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## Down The Local

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*John, The Landlord, John*

It's good news all round in my honest opinion, with hopefully a view of some normality. We feel we can work with BoJo's plan. For us, a phased, restricted opening with no scotch eggs and albeit slightly weather dependent with service outside only to start with, is all good as we have loads of outside space AND we have a big tent. Thanks to Ed Gillian for allowing a late submission so as to know where we might be. As you can imagine there are already a lot of questions in my head around open hours we will operate as well as both the drink and food offerings etc but rest assured I'll update you in the next magazine and newsletter. So in March thankfully schools are back and some of the restrictions starting to lift. Throughout this month we are continuing to offer our special Lockdown menu see our advert opposite.

**Mid-week Madness** continues to be a hit and so far we've had Chinese, Indian and Mexican - what next? Surely we can't be far off pie madness!

**Fishy Friday** - Apparently size matters (who knew) so we've added the option to go large or small/regular. In either case a portion is just £5.00.

**Saturday Breakfast** - Come and collect or we will drop it to the door. Full Monty or simply a bacon bap or sausage sarnie.

**Weekend Warmers** – we're open weekends to warm up that walk – if it's sunny we will be open in the week as well. If the front door is open, then the coffee machine is on. Don't let lockdown end without trying one of our hot chocolates, lattes or cappuccinos. Remember meeting for a coffee with a friend is one of the first things back on the agenda!

**Sunday Roast** - I have decided to give our very hardworking Chef Robbie a couple of Sunday lie ins and so we won't be doing roast for a few weekends - but don't fret its **Mother's Day Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March** and we'll be back with vengeance offering all 4 meats as a treat for Mother.

Finally, you may have noticed a change in our Facebook posts – massive thanks to Kayleigh and Sophie for looking after this for us - great job. If you didn't already find us on Facebook. We have also updated our website head over there and check it out. We are getting there slowly – stay safe and as always thank you so much for whatever support you give us - looks like we might just make it.....

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## Parish Council Matters

*Peter Smith, Acting Chair of the Parish Council*

**Local Plans: Wiltshire Council consultation** – by the time you read this, the parish council will have held an extraordinary meeting on **24<sup>th</sup> February** to consider and approve the village's response to this. The plans will have an impact on village development now and into the future. Hopefully, you will have been able to join that meeting to have your say. The text of our response can be found at **www.semington.org.uk** under the "Planning" menu.

**Problems in the village** – these have in the past few weeks included; fly-tipping, fast driving in Little Marsh, wild camping, and anti-social behaviour both in Little Marsh and along the High Street. The authorities have been informed and our very supportive local PCSO and her colleagues will be increasing their presence in the village. Thanks to all parishioners who helped identify and report problems, and to clear up the mess. As always, if you see something happening that isn't right, report it to the relevant authority. Once out of lockdown, we aim to revive the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, please see Siobhan's article on page 21 .

**Community meeting on possible development of land off Church Street** – a developer, Ashford Homes, has requested a meeting to discuss potential plans for this site. This meeting will not be a Parish Council meeting. Rather, it will be a community event where all parishioners are invited to attend. The meeting will provide Ashford Homes with the opportunity to outline their ideas, and for villagers to ask questions. Because of Covid restrictions, it will be online via Zoom. The date and time are: **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30pm**. Details of how to join the meeting will be published on the parish council's website and on the Support Group's Facebook page nearer to this date.

**Hilperton to Melksham cycle path** – after preliminary consultation which showed 80% support for the path, Wiltshire Council has announced that Cabinet is considering taking forward plans for the path. More consultation will follow.

## From The Church Records

*Victoria Shackleton*

The funeral of Muriel Gover was held at St George's Church on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. We pray that Patrick, Colleen, their families and friends will know God's love and peace at this sad time.

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## Natures Notes

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Coltsfoot is now in flower along the towpath of the Kennet and Avon which is a sure sign that Spring cannot be far away. At first glance, coltsfoot looks like a dandelion but its stems are pink, thicker and scaly. It gets its name because the leaves that come after seed has been set are shaped like a colt's hoofprint. It's also known as Tussilage after its Latin name and can be found in many places including road verges, railway sidings, riverbanks and abandoned land. It's popular with herbalists.

**Justice Shall Be Done You. Sweet-Scented Tussilage** is a brief poem is by Frances Sargent Osgood who was a popular writer in the United States in the early 1800s. She is particularly remembered for her exchange of romantic poems with Edgar Allen Poe.

*They shall own thee the sweetest and fairest of flowers,  
That smile in our woodlands, or blush in our bowers!  
They shall own thee a lovelier gem of delight,  
Than they that illumine the veil of Midnight!*

A slightly longer, if rather less enthusiastic, poem about this Spring flower by Jessica Hornik can be found here: [tinyurl.com/4j5yb5ls](https://tinyurl.com/4j5yb5ls)

## Semington, Little Marsh and Littleton Support Group

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*Vicky Bodman*

The Support group would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has joined the group over what is coming up to a year now! We would also like to say a big thank you to the people who have stepped forward as road leads. Although these people have not been called on as much this time as the first Lockdown, they all stepped forward to help. We really do have a wonderful village. We've just had our Valentine's windows displays and it was beautiful to see around the village.

We'll be heading in to Spring soon and hopefully we can come up with some lovely ideas to bring the village together even more. If you have any ideas that you would like us to explore, please do get in touch at **[semingtonvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:semingtonvolunteers@gmail.com)** By the time you read this hopefully we will have a roadmap out of Lockdown.

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## Parish Council Meeting

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*Abridged Minutes From Meeting Held Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021*

**Present:** Councillors P Smith (Vice-Chairman and Acting Chairman for the meeting), V Bodman, M Kasasian, R Oglesby, W Scott, C Wade, R Bruges, S Chown and the Clerk Roger Coleman. Wiltshire Council Cllr. J Seed attended (Part-time). There were no members of the public present.

**Wiltshire Council Report:** Wiltshire Council, Cllr. J Seed gave a brief report on the following topics: **Wiltshire Council Local Development Plan** – He arranged and attended a meeting at Wiltshire Council offices with Head of Spatial Planning, Chairman of Semington Parish Council and Cllr. Scott to discuss the Local Plan. Cllr. Seed stated that he would continue to support the local villages. **A350 Melksham Bypass Consultation** – This initial consultation has ended and the responses and possible routes will now be assessed. He added that further consultations will ensue with the next one likely to be in the late summer. **Wiltshire Council Budget FY2021/22** – Wiltshire Council has produced a balanced budget totalling some £412m which will be presented to the full Wiltshire Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> February for approval. He commented that the proposed increase in Council Tax was 1.99% plus a 3% levy for Social Care. **Westbury Bypass** – In answer to a question from the Council he commented that the Westbury Bypass project was likely to be implemented but after the construction of the new A350 Melksham Bypass. The intention of the DoT was to progressively improve the heavy goods vehicle route from the M4 motorway to Poole/Southampton starting from the M4 motorway.

**Chairman's Report:** The Chairman report – please see page 9 in this magazine.

**Wiltshire Council Local Development Plan.** The Chairman reported that Cllr. Scott had attended the Wiltshire Council webinar addressing the Melksham and Rural elements of the plan, Cllr. Bodman had attended the webinar addressing the Rural element and that he, Cllr. Smith, had attended the webinar that concentrated on Trowbridge and the Rural elements. The Chairman gave details of the webinars to the Council and explained that Semington and some other local villages, were now in the Trowbridge Housing Market Area (HMA) having been transferred from the Chippenham HMA – a transfer that was implemented with very little overt consultation with the villages involved and, according to Cllr. Scott a proposal that was 'buried' in the plethora of documentation that accompanied the formal Strategic Plan consultation in 2019. Cllr. Smith added that in his view it was a move of HMA designed solely to meet Trowbridge Town Council's housing and expansion ambitions and housing targets.

Cllr. Wade stated that Wiltshire Council should have advised the villages affected directly, through their respective Parish Councils, of this proposed change of HMA and the Council should make their objections to the manner in which this change was

effected known to Wiltshire Council. Cllr. Bruges lamented the fact that despite representations on various issues the Parish Council's view appears usually to be ignored and he questioned whether there was a better way of influencing the views and decisions of Wiltshire Council. The Chairman commented that the Parish Council must strive to change this decision regarding the move of Semington to the Trowbridge HMA.

Councillors expressed the view that the implications of the Draft Local Development Plan, if adopted, could have serious consequences for Semington and that the views of parishioners should also be sought. The Chairman stated that he would convene an Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting to discuss this Plan with a view to drafting a possible response to the formal Consultation that would be sent to Wiltshire Council. The Chairman stated that the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> February, commencing at 7.30pm. Meanwhile it was agreed that notice of the meeting would be advertised on the Website and in the Newsletter.

**Neighbourhood Plans.** Cllr. Scott stated he did not consider that the Parish Council should develop a Neighbourhood Plan and that his reasons for this view were expressed in the paper that accompanied the Agenda for this meeting. Cllr. Oglesby also stated his opposition to the development of a plan based on his experience with a nearby Parish Council. He commented that it would involve a huge amount of work, a large expense, a prolonged timescale and the need for the local community to be supportive and fully involved throughout the exercise – the latter would prove impossible to achieve based on his own experience. Initial enthusiasm soon waned. He added that such a plan would quickly become out of date. Cllr. Bodman stated that Neighbourhood Plans can be very useful particularly in defining possible development areas and protecting other areas, such as green spaces, in the villages. She suggested that a scoping exercise be undertaken to help examine the usefulness of such a plan. This was a view supported by Cllr. Bruges.

Cllr. Scott queried whether the absence of such a plan would inhibit or disadvantage Semington. The Chairman commented that a Neighbourhood Plan could be advantageous by helping to control the development of the village but that it was essential that there was community support for its development and implementation. He suggested that Wiltshire Council be consulted. Cllr. Bodman agreed to make enquiries of Wiltshire Council and others who have been contracted to develop such plans and Cllrs. Chown and Bruges agreed to make enquiries of those villages that have already developed such Neighbourhood Plans. Cllrs. Smith, Scott and Bodman agreed to meet with Wiltshire Council officers who have direct experience of such plans.

The Chairman commented that it was evident that more information was required before deciding whether to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Semington and he invited all parties to research the subject in more detail.

The Council **resolved** not to make a decision at this time regarding developing a Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr. Oglesby added that if a decision was made to develop such a plan it was essential that it was a project managed by the community with involvement from Parish Councillors and not left to the Parish Council to manage it alone. The Council **resolved** to become a member of CPRE and to pay the £36 Annual Membership Fee.

**Future Village Development.** The Council **resolved** to adopt revised text as a statement of the approach of Semington Parish Council to Village Development and planning applications. This can be viewed on the Parish Council website as well as in the community newsletter circulated in February. The request from Ashford Homes for a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss the possible development of land off Church Street was noted by the Council. The Chairman reiterated the Parish Council's approach to such meetings stating that any such meeting would be held in public with the public also invited to attend. The Clerk stated that the meeting would not be a Parish Council meeting and it should be termed a 'Community Meeting', designed to attract interested parishioners of Semington and widely advertised as such. Councillors agreed that **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March** was a suitable date time to be advised on council website..

**Environment and Streetscene.** Cllr. Bruges proposed that a meeting of this Group be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm. The other members of the group – Cllrs. Scott and Kasasian - confirmed their attendance. Cllr. Smith stated that the Littlemarsh residents had requested that the Parish Council provides them with three sets of Litter Picking equipment to allow them to undertake litter picking in their immediate area. The Council **resolved** to provide three sets of equipment not exceeding in total £50.

**Transport and Traffic.** The Chairman commented that he had sent the missive from a Littlemarsh resident to all councillors and that a number of areas of concern had been listed and these areas related to the 'Gate', speeding traffic and Anti-Social behaviour. Cllr. Smith stated that there was strong support for a cycleway between Hilperton and Melksham via Semington and Wiltshire Council is now taking the project to the next stage.

**Finance. Total balance in hand at 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 £37,712.90**

**Date of the next meeting.** The date for the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting was agreed to be **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021** and that it would be a remote/virtual (Zoom) meeting and would commence at 7.30pm.

The date for the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting was agreed to be **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm** via Zoom

## Your Wiltshire Councillor News

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*Jonathon Seed*

I write this in the middle of our blast of arctic weather. This weather has brought its own share of problems in addition to those that are sadly suffering due to the pandemic. Frozen pipes and failed boilers will be followed by burst pipes and the difficulty of finding a plumber to fix them. The pain is shared by rural and urban dwellers alike. Farmers have great difficulty in getting water to animals in frozen conditions and villagers will be suffering similar issues. Let us all hope that with the emergence of the daffodils and our national lead in COVID vaccination that we really do have a spring and summer to look forward to.

Planning is something that local government is required to manage, often on behalf of central government. Planning for future housing in the county is also required, not only by central government but also so that we can manage local housing expansion. The Current Housing Plan consultation is underway with comments required by mid-March. This Plan is a particularly difficult one for us locally and it is not one that I feel has been shared well with local villages. With very little consultation, and decisions that were buried in hundreds of pages of reports, the Cabinet of Wiltshire Council adopted recommendations for further consultation by consultants who have little or no local knowledge. We need to inject that local knowledge.

Our area is being expected to take significant numbers of extra houses and the villages of Semington, Steeple Ashton, Keevil, Bulkington and Great Hinton are being arbitrarily moved HMA (Housing Market Area) without any direct reference to Parish Councils or villagers. The evidence for these extra houses is not firm and we can still influence final decisions. I have been meeting with the Cabinet Member for Planning and senior planning officers in order to negotiate a better settlement for our area. This is a major local issue and we all need to get involved if we want to influence the final decision.

So these planning proposals need careful local analysis because it is clear to me that the consideration and local analysis by decision makers could be better. I urge residents to get involved in this planning consultation and contact me if they need help. The consultation on the Local Plan is still open and can be found at **[wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation](http://wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation)**

Please have your say or let me have your views so that I can represent them - that is what you elect me for! I can be contacted at **[jonathon.seed@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:jonathon.seed@wiltshire.gov.uk)** or via phone on 07770 774463



## Why Doctors Wear Masks

*Neill Newport*

As I occasionally do, I'd like to bring a smile to people's faces whilst we make our way out of these difficult times. As before it's at my expense so hopefully nobody should be offended and it doesn't involve 200 angry fishermen....

Those of you who know me will know I enjoy playing rugby. It's been very frustrating not being able to play at the present times. We all have to make sacrifices. Only another 2 seasons to go and that would have been 50 seasons of club rugby. We were allowed to play senior rugby when I was at school. I started at the tender age of 14. I'm so lucky to have kept my good looks. Never broken a major bone, well not of my own. I have never broken my nose in all of those years of egg chasing. Others have broken it for me 6 times. I was going to say I'm not daft enough to break my own nose but after an incident at work last year, I cannot make that claim any longer.

My gorgeous wife (sorry Gilly, I had to pinch that) comes from a footballing family. Two of her brothers were quite good. When we started walking out together, courting (I prefer the old terms, much more gentlemanly), Shirley wanted me to give up rugby. We were in the first flush of love and reluctantly, I agreed. She thought I might get injured. However, I was missing those male bonding sessions. My brother played for the same club as me back in Bristol. Eventually, I managed to convince Shirley, I wouldn't get injured and returned to play my first match alongside my brother in the 3<sup>rd</sup> team. My team were pleased to have me back as I was normally a first team player, plus I had a young and very attractive girlfriend watching all of us.

It was midway through the season and everyone else was up to match speed. I had a little catching up to do. I negotiated the first half without any incidents. I walked up to Shirley during the half time break and asked her what she thought of watching her first rugby match. I'll never forget her answer. "Oh, it's really good, so much better than football. Which way are you going?" Third team matches aren't as technically clear as first team games.

Second half started and a few minutes into the game and the opposition had the ball. For a third team they were passing the ball quite well. Time to start playing like a first team player. Now I've already mentioned I'm not up to match speed. I couldn't make up my mind if I was going to tackle the guy rushing at me or make a sensational interception and run half the length of the pitch to score a stunning try.

*Continued on page 19*

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## Why Doctors Wear Masks continued

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Sadly, I did neither. I just ran into the guy, bolt upright. We both hit the deck. I was face down and immediately felt the claret making an exit from my nose faster than Usain Bolt in an Olympic 100m final. I rolled over onto my back and went to pinch the bridge of my nose. It was a good 'un! The bridge of my nose was so far over, I totally missed it. My brother came over and just said, "Oh dear." The game stopped and players from both sides came to see if I was OK. Clearly, I had to go to hospital.

Shirley then did something I wish she hadn't. She walked onto the pitch to help me off, cursing as she came on, "Oh you silly little Billy. What have you done to yourself. You did say you wouldn't get injured" Well, words to that effect. I left the pitch helped by Shirley to members of both teams chanting, "who's a naughty boy." My nose was too much of a mess for the doctors to do anything that day and I had to return the following Thursday to have it straightened. The following Thursday in hospital, I put on one of those flimsy dressing gowns that they make backwards, to save your blushes, as I had nothing else on. I was wheeled into a corridor and noticed the clock. 10:05am. After a couple of minutes, I was wheeled into the operating theatre and the nurse left. There was an anaesthetist there, decked out in his protective clothing, including the obligatory face mask we have unfortunately come all too used to seeing. The anaesthetist approached me, syringe poised. He wiped the back of my hand, not saying a word. Next, he started to push the needle through my skin and as he did so he uttered the words, in a deep masculine baritone voice, "You'll feel a little scratch." I felt the anaesthetic. It was cold and I felt it spreading through my hand.

All I could see of the anaesthetist was his eyes. He leant forward and in a hushed, falsetto voice said, "You can try counting backwards from 10 but you'll never get anywhere near zero sweetie." I panicked desperately trying to remain conscious 10,9,8..... 1,2,3 - what's going on? I was feeling drowsy but now I'm nearly conscious again. This could hurt when they straighten my nose. Next, the nurse wheeled me back out into the corridor. I was confused. I looked at the clock again. It was now 10:15am. I called a passing nurse over and explained that I was waiting to have my nose straightened but the anaesthetic was already wearing off. Its going to hurt! 'It's done.' she calmly said. I protested that it hadn't. 'It has' she said. 'Feel it.'

Cautiously, I reached up to my nose. Yes, it was sore but it was also straight! I had been unconscious and hadn't realised. Hooray!

And then the true panic came back. I had been unconscious in that excuse of a dressing gown with that anaesthetist. All I could see was his eyes. And that is why doctors wear masks.....

# CARE AND SUPPORT AT HOME



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## Neighbourhood Watch

*Siobhan Chown – 01380 870197*

### **Can you help us?**

We are lucky here in Semington to live in a very caring, safe environment, but unfortunately we do have instances of inconsiderate behaviour that raise the hackles and make us cross. I wonder then, if you do feel like this on occasions, whether you can help us?

I am sure that many of you have heard of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and even been a member of it in the past. It is a fantastic scheme that encourages neighbours to look out for each other and ensure that the area they live in remains a lovely place to live. “Isn’t that what we all do in Semington anyway?” I hear you cry.....well yes it is, but by being part of the Scheme we would have a recognised framework of communication and a direct link to the local police and other agencies to help solve any issues.

Now for the crunch..... we need a volunteer (or two) who can become the Co-ordinator for Semington. Could that be you?? The role can be tailored around you and how much time or effort you are prepared to put into it, but in essence you would be asked to take on tasks such as :

- Inviting local residents to join
- Being a point of contact for residents and the local police and other agencies
- Distributing information
- Encouraging residents to report problems and promote being a good neighbour
- Get to know who the vulnerable residents are

More information can be found on the website:-

**<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer/become-coordinator>**

If you are interested, then you would receive the support of the Parish Council and particularly from me as the councillor who leads the “Recreation & Wellbeing” theme of our strategic framework. This might be a job for a couple of people to share maybe?

Let’s banish the urban myth that the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator is a busy-body police botherer who is constantly twitching the net curtains and move it forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the benefit of all residents of Semington. If you’re interested or have any questions, then please don’t hesitate to contact me. **[s.chown@bearly-there.co.uk](mailto:s.chown@bearly-there.co.uk)**

## **Catholic News**

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*St. John The Baptist Trowbridge & St Bernadette's Westbury (inc villages)*

**Weekly Timings: Please check newsletter for changes**

### **St John the Baptist – Trowbridge Sunday & Weekday Masses:**

For the duration of the Corona Virus Mass times are:

Saturdays 12.00pm and 6.00pm (Vigil Mass), Sundays 10.30am & 12.00pm

Monday/Wednesday.00/Friday 9.00am, Tuesday 6pm

### **St Bernadette's – Westbury Mass times are:**

Sunday 9.00am and Thursday 10.00am

### **Easter Triduum Services**

Holy Thursday 7.00 pm – Mass of The Lord's Supper

Good Friday 3pm - The Lord's Solemn Passion

Holy Saturday 8.00 pm – Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday Mass; Morning Mass St. Bernadette's Westbury 9.00am, Morning Mass

St. John's 10.30am & 12.00pm

Masses will be live streamed each day and are recorded for later viewing. For social distancing & safety protocols will be followed, and face masks are required to be worn whilst in church.

**Live Streaming Details:** All masses are streamed live on [www.churchservices.tv](http://www.churchservices.tv) or on YouTube 'Mass in Trowbridge'

**Parish Newsletter:** This is available weekly on the Parish website:

[www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk](http://www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk) Should you wish to have an emailed copy please contact Francis Geraghty – details as below.

**The Bible in a Year with Fr Mike Schmitz:** Ascension's Bible in a Year Podcast, hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz and featuring Jeff Cavins, guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes. Each 20-25 minute episode includes: two to three scripture readings, a reflection from Fr. Mike Schmitz and guided prayer to help you hear God's voice in his Word. <https://ascensionpress/pages/biy-registration>

**THE NEW 300 CLUB 2021:** The monthly draws Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. Monthly Prizes are: £200-£70-£50-£10.

For information on any of the above contact **Francis Geraghty tel 01380 871083 and email [fgeraghty303@btinternet.com](mailto:fgeraghty303@btinternet.com)**

## Thought From The Rectory

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*Anne Rees*

We are now in the season of Lent, the period from Ash Wednesday to Easter, when we might stop to take stock of our lives and, if appropriate, our relationship with God. It is common for people of faith or not to “give up something for Lent” – this is often a desire for self-improvement, to lose weight, become healthier or perhaps to make life better for others.

For about a year now we have been living through a pandemic. Covid-19 has affected us all – some more deeply than others. Giving up something for Lent is probably the last thing any of us want to do when daily we are denied the opportunities to do what we enjoy, such as a birthday meal in a restaurant, trips out to favourite places, meeting family and friends, visits to the theatre....and so much more. However, I believe that the awful situation we are in has also given us the opportunity to re-evaluate our lives to consider our priorities and what is really important. So perhaps Lent 2021 is a time to “take something up” rather than “give something up”.

A couple of years ago, the Canalside Churches started collecting food for the local foodbanks as a Lent project to help those struggling. It was so successful that it is now a permanent part of our ministry, needed even more during the last year as more and more people hit difficult times. Although our churches aren't open for worship at the moment, there are Foodbank collecting points in the porches of St Michael's in the Knap, Hilperton, St Mary Magdalen's in Horse Road Hilperton Marsh and St George's in Semington. We are grateful to Bill and Julia who faithfully deliver the items donated to Trowbridge Storehouse and to Melksham Foodbank regularly, both Foodbanks are really grateful for our support. There are also boxes or trolleys in our supermarkets where donations can be left.

So if you can, think about buying one or more extra tin or packet of something when you shop this Lent to make a difference to someone else .... and you might decide to carry on doing it when Lent has finished, because the need is there all the year. Jesus said that the greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbour. Through a simple act of kindness this Lent, we can do both.

With my prayers and best wishes, Anne.

I do hope everyone is staying healthy and that those of you that have had the vaccine have been ok with it.

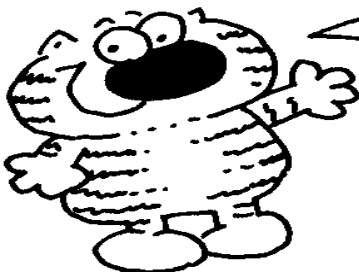
At our Zoom meeting on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February the winners of our Valentines competition were announced and are as follows; 1<sup>st</sup> prize went to Val with a beautiful sugar-craft rose, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize Sue L with a red heart with rose and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize Carole with a heart pin cushion. Once again the entries were excellent and I was very pleased not to be doing the judging.

Our next Zoom meeting will be on **Thursday March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm** this will be our AGM. We will be keeping everyone informed in the ways that we have become used to over the past year.

Sadly on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February we said goodbye to one of our long time members. We stood as a group (socially distanced of course) outside the village hall and clapped as the hearse went by. Muriel Gover was a staunch member of the WI. A truly lovely lady who was a joy to talk to. Her knowledge of all things Semington was second to none. Those of us that were there when she celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday at WI and gave a talk on Semington will always remember that evening. Our thoughts are with her family at this time.

Stay safe. Take care everyone.

### Paws for Thought



'God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!.'

It's in the Bible; John 3 Verse 17



## Melksham Foodbank

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*Julia Wade*

Thank you so much, everyone, for your continuing, generous support for the Melksham Foodbank. Every week I am astounded by the huge amount of food left in the church porch and at the Somerset Arms, when I collect it every Wednesday.

At the moment, the items they are particularly short of are:- UHT milk, tinned fruit, tinned rice pudding, tinned meat, tinned peas, tinned carrots, squash and jam. The full list is on the noticeboard in the church porch or ring me on 01380 870137.

Thank you again - you are making a real difference!

## Valentine Windows

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Left: Linda Hillman – displayed by the Church

Right: Katharine, Hazel and Oscar Way



## Semington Camera Club

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Apologies that there were no photos from the Camera Club in the last magazine. I have the privilege of seeing all of the fantastic images they capture and watching from the side lines when the members take on the various weekly challenges. We have some seriously talented photographers in residence in the village. So if you want to be inspired, take part or generally improve your photography skills search out Semington Camera Club on Facebook or make contact with Roy McDine and he will happily get you involved. I do hope that when all of the madness is over the Club will organise an exhibition to showcase their talents!

But for now – enjoy some of the results from one of their Daily Challenges:

Trees from Week 3 February 2021



Credits clockwise form top left:

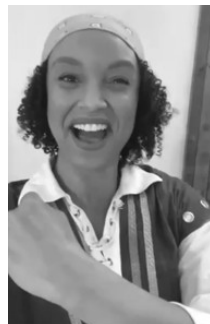
Sue McDine  
Roy McDine  
Milena Sorlini

## News From St George's School

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Sue Cook

Life at St Georges has been quite different so far this year with the children logging on each day for online remote learning. We have been really lucky to have received some personal messages to everyone at St Georges from some very well known names including England Rugby player Jonny May, Cbeebies Gem the Pirate and writer, comedian and TV star David Walliams.



The recorded messages, have praised the children for their great online home learning, encouraging them to keep up the good work. This has been a great boost for everyone helping them to keep going in these difficult times.

Every Friday afternoon, our Head Teacher Candida Hutchinson and Head of School Emma Groom has got the whole school together online for a virtual online Goldbook Assembly. This has been really successful with the whole school getting a chance to see one another and the teachers recognise children in the school that are trying really hard. We have also had a themed day each Friday where everyone has dressed up with different themes in mind.

We are all so impressed by the pupils and their efforts that we sent every pupil a St George's Special Shield Award for their hard work so far.

The children were very happy to receive their award, the children currently in school were given theirs directly and those homeschooling received theirs through the post.





## **WORSHIP**

### **DURING LOCKDOWN**

Following the introduction of the latest national Covid-19 lockdown the Ministry Team and PCC Standing Committees have decided that our worship should now be focused online rather than in church. In this way we can keep everyone as safe as possible. Hopefully the lockdown measures and vaccine programme will mean that soon we will be able to gather together again for worship in church.

All our pre-recorded Online Services can be watched by going to our website <https://canalsidebenefice.org.uk/> and clicking on the link on the front page.

## **PRIVATE PRAYER**

### **DURING LOCKDOWN**

Although our churches are generally closed at the moment St Michael's in Hilpertion will continue to be open for private prayer each THURSDAY FROM 10am-12 Noon.

If you would like to visit any of our churches at other times for a period of private prayer please contact the Benefice Office and we will do our best to arrange that for you.

## **SUPPORT**

### **DURING LOCKDOWN**

This is a difficult time for us all and if you need, or you are aware of others who may need support, please contact the Benefice Office. Similarly let us know if you are able to offer shopping or other help - and thank you to those who are already providing this support. If you would like someone to pray with you or for you, or if you would like to speak with someone, please contact us.

## **CONTACTS**

### **DURING LOCKDOWN**

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RECTOR: John Rees 01225 764365 [canalsidirector@gmail.com](mailto:canalsidirector@gmail.com)  
CURATE: Joy Albone 07931638524 [canalsidecurate@gmail.com](mailto:canalsidecurate@gmail.com)