

MARCH 2023



SEMINGTON  
PARISH MAGAZINE

Minister for Semington:  
Rev John Rees  
22 Warren Road  
Staverton, BA14 6UZ  
Tel. 01225 764365



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**Parish Council Meeting**

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 7.30pm

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**Semington Board Gamers**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March 7.00pm

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Pub Quiz

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March

**Not into Facebook – but want to keep up to date with what's going on in the village? Check out the Parish Council Village Website [www.semington.org.uk](http://www.semington.org.uk) Loads of local information and updates. You can even find back copies of the Parish Magazine!**

## Christians in Semington

*Bev Woodward*

**Christians in Semington** - are meeting via zoom, to pray for our community, on **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the zoom link.

**Housegroup** - we meet every other Tuesday, at 8.00pm. We're continuing to read and discuss Luke's gospel at the moment, to see how this can help us to live as God wants us to. If you'd like to join us please phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for more details, including the venue.

**Breakfast Church** is on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March - 9.15am** for breakfast, all ages very welcome.

## Church Flowers

*Sue Stainer*

Do you enjoy arranging flowers or maybe a complete beginner? We are a small group of volunteers who enjoy decorating our lovely Church and new helpers will be warmly welcomed. Please contact me on **07855 595643** or **01225 703253**.

## Real Easter Eggs

*Bev Woodward*

More than 80 million Easter Eggs are given in the UK every year. The Real Easter Egg is the only Fairtrade egg to include a copy of the Easter story in the box and are not available in supermarkets. The stories range from simple guides to 24 page activity book versions. I will be ordering Real Easter Eggs on **Monday March 13<sup>th</sup>**. They're £4.80 each, please let me know if you'd like any, and how many. You can see them here too - <https://meaningfulchocolate.co.uk/>

## Editor's Note

*Gillian Airey*

A couple of additional bits in the magazine this month, see page 7 for what to do with the envelope, the other a letter regarding proposed closure of the High Street for the Coronation celebrations. The deadline for submissions for our April edition is **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March**. My email as always [semparmag@icloud.com](mailto:semparmag@icloud.com) I look forward to hearing from you.

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## This Month I'm In My Happy Place

*Gilly Airey*

I actually have several happy places I'm not going to lie, each one serving a different purpose. As you know February is not one of my most favourite times of the year, the shortest month seems to last the longest time, so a retreat to a happy place is sometimes just what is needed.

Take the swimming pool at the new Community Campus, you'll find me there three times a week still bobbing up and down with (mostly) ladies of a certain age, sometimes working harder at singing than actually doing Aquafit – but every time I leave happier than when I arrived.

Then of course there are the various skittle alleys in and around Melksham that the mighty Armstrong Angels visit. My skittle-playing skills can at best be described as unpredictable, nay even haphazard, but every time I've had an evening with my skittle buddies I always leave with a smile on my face and if I'm even luckier the unlikely raffle prize of six scouring pads, yes really.

I even share a happy place with Gorgeous Hubby, although if I'm absolutely honest anywhere with Gorgeous Hubby is a happy place. We recently were lucky enough to get a cheeky week away in Majorca and the sun shone and we laughed like drains for the seven days. Even losing the Scrabble championship (again) didn't dampen my happiness.

And then there is the table – not my table but Mrs W's table in Mrs W's kitchen. This the most special of happy places. For so many years girls have gathered, sometimes there may be just two of us, other times eight or ten, and we put the world to rights, we moan about nothing and laugh about everything. Invitations and appointments are never needed and the fabulous Mrs W always, always welcomes you in and if I'm honest I never want this place to change ever, it is that special.

So what connects my happy places? I suppose on reflection it's not so much the place as the rather lovely, happy people I find in my happy places. So this month I would like to send a huge great big thank you to all of you (and hopefully you know who you are – not least Gorgeous Hubby) for making my happy places so very – well let's face it, happy.



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## Down The Local

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*John, the Landlord, John*

I know many of you have been sampling our new Sunday Carvery offering which is proving very popular. It's so nice to see the pub busy. The tables fill up early now so give us a call if you want to book a table. Don't forget it's Mother's Day on **Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>** so be sure to book early for that one.

The February quiz was well supported with 'Drew Peacock and The Letdowns' eventually winning and successfully taking home the cash over the crisps or wine. Thanks to Ant for a great quiz and some interesting rounds. Can't deny I learnt a lot about phobias that night. The next pub quiz is on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March**.

Our monthly meat raffle is also proving popular and by the time you read this we will have awarded over £100 in meat to lucky winners. Tickets are already on sale for the next one in March. Sadly the Post Office has been bugged by technical issues and has struggled a few days (internet related funny enough ..!!). We understand that these are now sorted and they should be back in business Mondays and Thursdays as usual.

We are still closing Mondays but currently open all day otherwise, so don't be shy. As always much love from the Pub.

## Go On – You Know You Want To!

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*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.

## Semington Board Game Night

---

*Stuart Taylor and Kate Stacey*

Sorry we had to cancel the February's board game night at short notice, but myself and Kate caught a sickness bug and didn't want to pass it on.

March board game night is **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00pm** in the village hall.

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## Parish Council Matters

*Peter Smith, Chair of the Parish Council*

**The Byway** – we have received the long-awaited safety audit from Wiltshire Council. It contains one safety recommendation: to introduce signage at the point where the byway meets with the St. George’s Road and St. George’s Place junction. One sign will be to warn cyclists to “Give Way” when exiting the byway, whilst another will warn road users of the presence of cyclists. Whilst this addressed one safety issue, the parish council was very disappointed to note that, although many parishioners had written in raising concerns about multiple use issues along all of the newly surfaced route, the report made no mention of these. Cllr. Scott, in a private capacity, has written to Wiltshire Council about the inadequacy of the audit and posing a number of questions. Both the Parish Council and our local Wiltshire Councillor, Jonathon Seed, have written again to Wiltshire Council in support of the concerns raised Cllr. Scott’s letter.

**Wessex Close Play Area** – many thanks to those of you who responded to Cllr. Chown’s appeal in the last magazine. An initial meeting of “Friends of Wessex Close” will have taken place by the time you read this report. Hopefully, there will be progress to report in the near future.

**Litter Pick** – almost Spring, so it’s a good time of year for a village wide pick. This will happen on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March, meet at 10.00am at the Village Hall car park**. As usual, bags, hoops and picker sticks will be supplied. Please join us. Just bring yourself, gloves and a hi-viz vest if you have one, and enjoy a gentle amble in friendly company.

## ‘Semington Past and Present’ the book about our village

*Peter Smith*

At the beginning of this century, many Semington villagers contributed to the publication of a super book that offered a very accessible history of our village. When I moved here 9 years ago, I found it invaluable in helping me to absorb the essence of the place I now call home. There are still a handful of copies that can be bought from the village hall but, with new villagers arriving at Kendall Lane, and with the natural turnover of properties over the years, the remaining stock will soon be gone.

The Parish Council thinks it would be beneficial to current and future villagers to make this publication available to read via the parish council website. This would mean producing a digital version of the book which could be accessed by visiting the website. To make a digital version is inexpensive and would be funded by the parish council.

Before we do this, though, we need to seek the agreement of those who hold the copyright. For this book, “Copyright” is credited to “the Contributors”, some of whom may still be living in the village.

So I’m directing this request to those contributors reading this article: it would be very helpful to know your views on this proposal, so **please** get in touch with either me (Peter Smith, on 01380 870888) or the clerk to the parish council, Roger Coleman:

**clerksemingtonparishcouncil@gmail.com**

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February Afternoon

Men heard this roar of parleying starlings, saw,  
A thousand years ago even as now,  
Black rooks with white gulls following the plough  
So that the first are last until a caw  
Commands that last are first again, – a law  
Which was of old when one, like me, dreamed how  
A thousand years might dust lie on his brow  
Yet thus would birds do between hedge and shaw.  
Time swims before me, making as a day  
A thousand years, while the broad ploughland oak  
Roars mill-like and men strike and bear the stroke  
Of war as ever, audacious or resigned,  
And God still sits aloft in the array  
That we have wrought him, stone-deaf and stone-blind.

Edward Thomas wrote this in 1916, and was killed a year later at Arras. As Gay and Doug Firmager noted in *Semington Past and Present*, Thomas came to the village in 1913 during his bicycle ride from London to the Quantocks. He wrote ...

“Under elms near Semington the threshing-machine boomed; its unchanging note mingled with a hiss at the addition of each sheaf. Otherwise the earth was the rooks’, heaven was the larks’, and I rode easily on along the good level road somewhere between the two”.

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## Semington Celebrates

*Siobhan Chown*

As we look forward to another momentous event for the country with the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III, we look to mark the occasion along the guidance and wishes of our new King.



We hope that all residents of Semington will enjoy coming together once again at some point over the bank holiday weekend to celebrate.

All weekend - Let's turn the village red, white and blue! We would love you all to join us in decorating your windows, houses and front gardens. Whatever takes your fancy along the patriotic theme. Prizes awarded to the "Best in Village".

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May - Street Parties**

We are hoping that the High Street will be closed for a street party but this is subject to receiving the necessary approval from Wiltshire Council. We can however still hold individual street parties with our neighbours in the quieter roads around the village.

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May - Volunteering Day**

A massive event to work together for the good of the village and its residents. There will be lots of opportunities to join in with activities all around the village and, everyone, of all ages is welcome!

Do you have any secret skills? We'd love to hear from you if you are willing to help out at Semington's "Repair Shop". If you can turn your hand to repairing anything at all, then please get in touch.

Please call Siobhan on 01380 870197, text 07786 980608 or email :  
**s.chown@bearly-there.co.uk**

## Abridged Minutes from Parish Council Meeting

*Meeting held Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023*

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

**Wiltshire Council Report.** Cllr Seed gave the following report: **Wessex Close Play Area.** Cllr. Seed offered his assistance in the acquisition of this asset by the Parish Council if that was the intended action by the Council. **SEMI9a/HILP22/10 'Cycleway' Safety Audit.** Cllr Seed expressed his dissatisfaction with the recently received Safety Audit Report in that the identified concerns of the Parish Council and parishioners had been totally ignored and that the audit had been undertaken with little or no reference to the safety issues previously identified. He added that he had written to the Cabinet member concerned to express his gross dissatisfaction and was awaiting a reply.

**Planning application PL/2022/01367.** This application was on the Agenda of the Strategic Planning Committee meeting to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. He confirmed that he would discuss the strategy to be adopted with the Parish Council when presenting the arguments for the refusal of this application at that meeting. Cllr. Scott confirmed that he would be representing the Parish Council at said meeting. The following matters were brought to the attention of Cllr. Seed by Parish Councillors: Cllr. Wade – A request that Wiltshire Council turn off the lights at night at the now defunct Salt Tip. Cllr. Bruges – The recent report by the Police & Crime Commissioner was particularly uninformative. Cllr. Seed commented that the new policing model represented, in his view, 'Rural Abandonment'. Cllr. Smith – The concerns raised by parishioners and the Parish Council, regarding the extent to which static vans on the Greenacres site exceed the number permitted under planning permissions, continue to be ignored by Wiltshire Council and an update from that council as to why nothing is being done is long overdue.

**Community and Communication.** Cllr. Chown stated that Paul Chown had already introduced significant changes to the website to improve its utility but further changes were necessary to achieve the improvements required by the Parish Council. It was agreed that the Parish Council would provide Mr Chown with a specification defining the Council's requirements. The Council noted that Cllr. Scott had written to the Police & Crime Commissioner regarding the concerns relating to community policing but had not yet received a reply despite the letter being passed to an alternative department. Notwithstanding this, and in the meantime, a widely-circulated report was received from Sgt. Twyford (Melksham Police Headquarters) that failed to address the main concerns of the Parish Council.

**Recreation and Wellbeing.** The Clerk confirmed that Forrester Sylvester Mackett (FSM) had been instructed to represent the Parish Council regarding the transfer of the allotment site and that the Parish Council had had an exchange of correspondence with Newland Homes and including a payment of £500 to FSM on account. *Cont'd*

*Cont'd* Following a detailed discussion, the Parish Council resolved not to engage a Surveyor as proposed by Forrester Sylvester Mackett commenting that the drawings provided by Newland Homes were sufficiently detailed to permit the Council to undertake its own assessment regarding compliance. Details of the water supply were identified as a key issue to be addressed with Newland Homes. Cllr. Wade agreed to draft a specification describing the layout and structure of the land to be transferred from Newland Homes to the Parish Council. Cllr. Wade explained that work is continuing to identify a possible 'allotment management structure'. The Chairman reiterated that a key element of any possible future management/ownership of the Wessex Close Play Area was that the local community and not the Parish Council must be responsible for this project. Cllr. Chown explained that she had taken the initiative and had contacted parishioners to garner interest and some sixteen individuals had expressed interest in the project. She added that she had arranged an online meeting for Tuesday 21st February at 7.30pm for all interested parties to participate and for the project to be taken forward. She added that she had also explored necessary training requirements and costs for the regular safety inspections that would be necessary if a community group were to manage the play area – a cost that would be met by the Parish Council. The Chairman stated that the King's Coronation on **6th May 2023** may be an opportunity for community events to take place in the village over that weekend. Cllr. Bruges offered to consult with The Somerset Arms and Cllr. Hailey with St George's School to establish if they each had any plans for celebration events for that weekend.

**Environment and Streetscene.** Rights of Way. The Chairman reported that the Wiltshire Council SEMI9a/HILP22/10 'Cycleway' Safety Audit Report was woefully inadequate and that the concerns of the Parish Council and parishioners had been ignored in a report that had been written in a most perfunctory manner. Cllr. Scott stated that, as a parishioner, he had written to Wiltshire Council raising a number of issues about the inadequacy of the report and posing questions for Wiltshire Council to answer. The Parish Council agreed to hold a Litter Pick on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023**, commencing at **10.00am** at the Village Hall.

**Other Matters.** Cllr Wade reported that two designs of Noticeboards have been agreed at a total cost of £915 plus VAT. The Council **resolved** that the order be placed.

**Planning and Development.** The Council examined the following planning applications and **resolved** to send comments to Wiltshire Council as shown (in italics): PL/2023/00579 LBC Church Farm, Church Street; Rebuilding of existing barn to form the double garage previously approved under Listed Building ref: PL/2021/09522 *This application is to be referred to the Conservation Office.* PL/2023/00477 Church Farm, Church Street Rebuilding of existing barn to form the double garage previously approved under Planning App. ref: PL/2021/09152 *The Parish Council has no objections to this proposed development.*

## Parish Council Minutes Cont'd from Page 15

### **Finance. Total Balance in hand as at 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023 £83,394.28**

The Clerk stated that the final CIL Payment of £14,162.21 in relation to Planning application 19/07938 had been received by the Parish Council and that a further grant of £3663 had been allocated by Groundwork UK in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan Project.

**The Community Development Fund Working Group.** (CDFWG) indicated that there may be an application from the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for a grant towards the cost of new toilets at St George's Church. Cllr. Scott commented that whilst the restrictions of a Parish Council making donations to a church – as defined in the 1894 Act – may only apply to the Precept money it would be wise to invite the PCC and/or the Salisbury Diocese to comment on the applicability of this Act to the Parish Council providing any grant funding. It was agreed that the CDFWG would write to the PCC for guidance.

**Neighbourhood Plan.** Cllr. Smith reported the following in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NHPSG): The next Village Consultation is to be held on **22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023** at the Village Hall and the primary themes are the issues facing the allocation of land for housing, identification and protection of 'green spaces' and the identification and protection of 'heritage assets'. He added that a possible 'green space' is located contiguously with the existing West Wiltshire Crematorium land.

**Date of the next meeting. Wednesday 22nd March 2023.**

## Community Development Funding

Does your village group or organisation need a grant? The Parish Council has funding available to enable development that will benefit our community. To help it decide how to allocate this money, the Council has set up a working group to communicate with parishioners and advise it on how to proceed with what we're calling Community Development Funding.

If your village group or organisation has a need for a grant that would help enhance what it does or allow it to do other things for the benefit of the community, then please write to us giving a brief account of what you'd use the money for. We'll then get back to you with further details on how to apply.

You can do this by visiting the Semington Website and selecting the "I have a Community Development Funding request" option on the contact page:

**[www.semington.org.uk/contact/](http://www.semington.org.uk/contact/)** There is no deadline for making a bid which should normally be for less than £1000.



## Semington War Memorial

*Raymond Heard*

The Parish Council have approved the funds to restore our war memorial. The photo shows it in 2014 after it was last done. The work will be carried out between **9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October** and a rededication service will take place soon after.

The details of the rededication are being finalised with Revd John Rees and we will let you now the full details once they are in place. Thus it will be completed before Remembrance Sunday this year.



## Melksham Remembers

*Raymond Heard*

I am a member of the historical group "Melksham Remembers". We are currently working on a project for producing a book covering the effects of World War 2 on Melksham and the surrounding villages.

As part of this and in conjunction with the Melksham Oak School we will be producing a "Talking Heads" monologue. Are you over 80 like me? We are looking for people who remember the war and would like to be interviewed by students from the Oak so they can record us talking about their memories. Transport will be arranged to get anyone to the school for the recording. I do hope that the folk of Semington will be able to help. If so call me at **01380 870746** or **07887 841937**.

Mark Your Calendars!  
Village Fete

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Slightly belatedly, here are the statistics for the numbers of bags of food given out to clients of the Melksham Foodbank for 2022, compared with 2021. In 2021, 969 bags were given to single people, in 2022 that had gone up to 1279. In 2021, 2811 family bags were given out, whereas in 2022 it was 3012. They also give out children's bags of food, etc. In 2021, they gave out 2159 to children, but in 2022 that had risen to 2450 bags given to children. In addition 186 Christmas bags were given out in 2022, plus 23 Socks 'n' Chocs were given to women and 43 were given to men.

To put these figures in some context, in 2019 639 bags were given to single people, so that figure has doubled between 2019 and 2022, when it was 1279. Doubled! In 2019, 1114 bags were given to families. In 2022 that figure was 3012 - more than two and a half times as many as in 2019. And this relentless rise is not slowing down... As at the beginning of February, 154 bags had been given to single people this year, whereas in 2022, by the same point, 53 bags had been given out. 244 bags were given to families in the first month of this year, but at the same point in 2022, 210 bags had been given to families. Children's bags had also risen from 167 in 2022, to 226 in 2023. So far.

You can clearly see that the need for help is increasing at a faster and faster rate. To use a much over-used word, this is unprecedented. But, this really is unprecedented. Every tin or packet you give is hugely appreciated. We all know times are tough for everyone at the moment, but we can all think of people in more need than ourselves. I am really proud of the way our village has continued to donate food and other items to the Foodbank. Thank you, everyone.

You can leave items at the Somerset Arms pub or in St George's Church porch, before 6.00pm on Wednesdays. Or a number of the supermarkets and doctors' surgeries in Melksham have donation points. At the time of writing they are particularly short of: UHT milk, tinned tomatoes, tinned potatoes, tinned meat, tinned fruit, biscuits and toilet rolls, but any long life tinned or packet items plus toiletries, are welcome.

If you donate in Trowbridge supermarkets, then those donations go to Storehouse Trowbridge, another Foodbank.

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## Wiltshire Air Ambulance – It's A Knock Out 2023

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It's A Knockout returns to Melksham

Wiltshire Air Ambulance's popular challenge event, It's A Knockout, returns to Melksham on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023**. Based on the famous TV show of the same name, 24 teams will get to take part in eight fun games throughout the day at Melksham Rugby and Football Club on Eastern Way.

There's a unique twist to each of the activities, ranging from inflatables and props to costumes and water slides!

There are still spaces available for teams of ten wishing to take part, with an entry fee of £200 (£20pp) and a fundraising commitment for the lifesaving charity.

Melksham RFC will also be firing up the BBQ and opening the bar for people keen to purchase food and drink.

Last year the event was attended by more than 350 people, including competitors and spectators, who had come along to cheer the teams on. Stonewood Builders won the 2022 event by a single point!

To book, visit [wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/events](http://wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/events) or call **01225 300536** during office hours.

Wiltshire Air Ambulance's events fundraising coordinator Beth Knights said: "Last year's It's A Knockout was a sell out, so we'd advise teams to get in touch as soon as possible to secure the remaining places for our 2023 event.

"Plenty of laughter and entertainment is guaranteed, whether you're taking part in a team or coming along to cheer on the competitors. It should be another fantastic day."

Entry to the venue is free for spectators, with plenty of parking on site. The charity advises spectators to bring their own chairs/picnic blankets, as seating will be limited.

The event will raise vital funds for the charity, which needs to raise £4 million each year to continue flying and saving lives. Wiltshire Air Ambulance receives no regular direct Government funding or National Lottery grants, so relies solely on the generosity of the public and local businesses.

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## Michelle Donelan MP – Chippenham Ward

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Welcome to my latest update, I hope you are well. Many of you will know I have been campaigning over the years on upgrading the hospital in Melksham. The next stage of my campaign is to build the business case for investment, so that we can show an upgraded site would be viable, and to bring the community together to find the best way of making it happen. This would make a real difference for accessing treatment both in Melksham itself and the villages nearby like Semington, so the campaign will involve the community in the wider area.

I met the Integrated Care Board (who manage local NHS services and the budget) last month to make the case to them again, I have invited the Health Secretary to visit the site, and I am also due to sit down with him in the next few weeks to discuss it. I have been campaigning for more funding for our local health services since 2015, and we are putting more money than ever before into the NHS to tackle the problems caused by the pandemic, something I am very supportive of.

Melksham and the wider area has, however, had more than its fair share of housing over the years, and local health facilities have not grown in line with these new houses. This has led to local people experiencing difficulties and long waits getting the treatment they need. Many also have to travel to larger hospitals in Bath, Bristol and Swindon for routine tests and procedures, which can be time consuming, expensive and inaccessible for those relying on public transport to get treatment or visit loved ones. For those in Semington and the other local villages, I know getting to the larger hospitals for treatment can often be very difficult.

The minor injuries unit at Melksham was closed back in 2002 and the last ward was shut in 2007 under the previous Labour Government, something I have always believed would cause capacity issues further down the line. Securing investment to upgrade the site is a long-term goal for Melksham and the nearby villages, and whilst it won't happen overnight, we know that more equipment, staff and services would make a real difference for accessing treatment, as well as increasing capacity for urgent care at our larger hospitals.

Elsewhere, I am running a day of free digital training for local businesses on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March**, in partnership with Google. On the day Google Digital Trainers will deliver in-person digital skills training and mentoring, as well as sharing tips and tricks on how to improve your digital marketing and social media. You can learn at your own pace so you certainly don't have to be an online expert! It is also a great opportunity to network with other local business owners in the area. Since being elected in 2015, I have always supported our small, local and independent businesses however I am able to, and this is a great way of helping to support them.

The event will be taking place at the Business Cyber Centre in Chippenham from 10am, and you can sign up to attend using this link:

**<https://rsvp.withgoogle.com/events/google-event-chippenham>** I have also put the link on my Facebook page, Michelle Donelan MP, and on my website.

If you have any questions about the event, please don't hesitate to let me know, and please do feel free to share with any businesses in the constituency who may be interested in attending. As ever, if there is anything I can do to help, or if you would like to speak to me at one of my upcoming surgeries, please do not hesitate to get in touch – michelle.donelan.mp@parliament.uk or give my office a call – 01249 704465.

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At our February meeting we learned the benefits of medicinal herbs courtesy of Evelyn. It was amazing to realise we all have these plants (and weeds) in our gardens that can be of great benefit to us all. We were also treated to nettle tea (easy to make & free) which was very pleasant.

Our next meeting on **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm** in the Village Hall will be the AGM.

## Village Hall News

*Stuart Taylor*

### **2023 New Booking Rates**

New booking rates are now in place following all the crazy electricity price increases for businesses.

Standard Hall Booking - £14.00 per hour villagers / £18.00 per hour non-villagers

Wakes - £50.00 villagers / £65.00 non-villagers

Commercial Hall Bookings - £20.00 per hour

**\*New\*** Lounge Bookings - You can now book the lounge for meetings and get-togethers up to 7.00pm for £12.00 per hour

### **New Groups Coming Soon**

We have 2 new groups joining us in March and April. One will be a monthly group for under 6s and the other a programme of activities for primary school children over the Easter holidays.

More information about bookings and these new groups can be found on the new village hall website **[www.semingtonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.semingtonvillagehall.co.uk)** or by calling **07519 393669**

## Catholic News

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

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

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

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9.00am and Tuesday 6.00pm

**St Bernadette's – Westbury** Mass times are: Sunday 9.00am

**The Catholic Church in Trowbridge:** Please remember to let Canon Tom know if you have any ideas regarding how we celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. John's in 2026 a working party will be set up. If you would like to be involved in a working party to arrange and co-ordinate our parish celebrations, please let Canon Tom know. Once we have a viable working party, a date will be arranged to meet (probably not until September).

**Lectio Divina in Lent: St. Bernadette's, Wednesdays, March: 1st, 15th & 29th: 10:00 - 10:45am.** An opportunity to listen to the Gospel and then, in the silence that follows, to reflect personally on what we have heard and on how we can put this into action in our own lives. The passage each week will be the Sunday Gospel. If you have access to a copy of this, please bring it with you. All welcome.'

**St. Patrick Celebrations:** St Patricks Night Dance tickets are now available, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March - see notice boards in churches and Parish Centre for details.

**Happy Retirement:** After 55 years of selfless and dedicated service to the parishes and the people of the Diocese of Clifton, Canon Liam has made the decision, with the agreement the of Bishop Declan, that he will retire at the end of April. We wish him every blessing as he begins this new stage in his life. We keep him in our prayers.

**CAFOD Soup Lunch:** We are hoping to hold bread and soup lunch on **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March** in the Parish Centre. Anyone able to help and who would like to be involved, please contact Becky on 01225 767215 or Mary Turner 01225 767089

## Paws for Thought



Where God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love takes away fear.

It's in the Bible; 1 John 4 verse 18

## Thoughts From Joy

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*Joy Albone – Associate Priest Canalside Benefice*

What makes you worried? We are living through troubled times, what with the ongoing war in Ukraine, concerns about our climate, the effect of the major earthquake in Turkey and Syria, let alone the current financial crises and the effect of strikes in the NHS, teaching etc., there is plenty to worry about. This list does not include our personal worries about our health, or the health of a loved one, our finances, our time - too much or too little to do, our children or grandchildren, the list goes on. There are plenty of things that make me worried, plenty of things that keep me awake at night.

So, let me ask another question, what makes you happy? For me, it can be some of the simplest things in life that make me happy; the giggle of a child, a glorious sunset, a stroll with a loved one along the coast, the sound of birdsong, or at this time of year the sight of spring flowers opening in the warming sun.

One of the most repeated phrases in the Bible, is 'Do not be afraid.' Jesus expressed this another way, 'Do not worry.' It is a phrase that makes me smile. Like many people I suspect, I find plenty to fret about, and as an insomniac I am often kept awake by my concerns. And even when I can't find anything else to fret about, I will agonise about being awake!

It seems it is easy to worry, but when we let our worries take over, we cease to see the positive things in life. This is why Jesus told his followers not to worry, for often we are worrying about things we cannot change, the things that are outside of our control. Jesus compares this to the birds who for all their worrying can do nothing to ensure there are enough worms or berries for the following day, or to flowers that cannot change the effect of the weather on their fragile beauty. In these circumstance worry does not change a thing. Jesus recognises that we still need to plan and prepare for those things that are within our control. We still need to go shopping for our next meal, or plant crops in time for them to grow and ripen.

Most of us worry about the things we cannot change. However, when we set aside these worries and we start to see the positive things, the simple things that make us happy, then we become happier people. Our worries get put into perspective and we can concentrate on those things we can do, those things we can change rather than fret about what we cannot change. So, I pray that you will find a way to concentrate on the simple things that make you happy in the coming weeks, and place your concerns where they belong, rather than letting them dominate your life.



# CHURCH SERVICES in SEMINGTON and WHADDON

In addition to the 'LIVE' services detailed below ONLINE services will also be available each weekend. See our WEBSITE for full details  
**CANALSIDEBENEFICE.ORG.UK**

Date	Time	Service
Sunday 5th March	3pm	<i>HOLY COMMUNION from the BOOK of COMMON PRAYER at St Mary the Virgin, Whaddon</i>
Sunday 12th March	9.15am	<i>BREAKFAST CHURCH at St George's, Semington</i>
Sunday 19th March <b>MOTHERING SUNDAY</b>	9.15am	<i>MOTHERING SUNDAY ALL AGE COMMUNION SERVICE at St George's, Semington</i>
Sunday 2nd April <b>PALM SUNDAY</b>	3pm	<i>HOLY COMMUNION from the BOOK of COMMON PRAYER at St Mary the Virgin, Whaddon</i>
Sunday 9th April <b>EASTER DAY</b>	9.15am	<i>ALL AGE EASTER COMMUNION with Breakfast at St George's Semington</i>

## Contact Details for The Canalside Parishes:

Administrator – Michael Gamble, please contact Michael for initial enquiries about baptisms, weddings and general matters on **07795 400262**

E-mail: [canalsideoffice@gmail.com](mailto:canalsideoffice@gmail.com)

PCC Secretary/Treasurer - Jack Woodward **01380 870784**

Church Warden – Mr David Wildsmith

Lay Pastoral Assistants are co-ordinated by Marilyn Stubbs. Please contact Marilyn on **01225 753118** or John if you would like a visit.

Curate: Revd. Joy Albone **07931 638524** email [canalsidecurate@gmail.com](mailto:canalsidecurate@gmail.com)

Rev John Rees, Rector, Canalside Benefice **01225 764365**

Email: [canalsiderector@gmail.com](mailto:canalsiderector@gmail.com) [www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk](http://www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk)