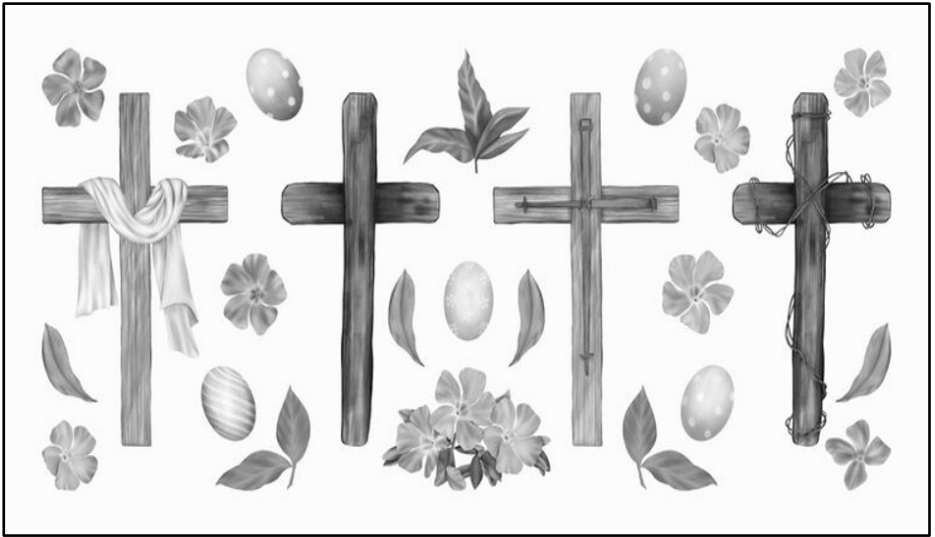


MARCH 2024



SEMINGTON
PARISH
MAGAZINE



Post Office

Mondays 11.00am to 12noon

DG Car Sales

Food Bank Collections

Wednesdays 6.00pm deadline

Church Porch

Coffee Mornings

Thursdays 10.00am to 12.00pm

Village Hall

Bingo

Mondays 7.30pm

Village Hall

Semington WI

Thursday 14th March 7.30pm

Village Hall

Semington Book Club

Tuesday 7.45pm

The New Inn

Semingtones Choir

Fridays 6.00pm

Village Hall

Semington Crib Club

League Match Wednesday 13th March (Page 25)

Village Hall

Fridays 8.00pm to 10.00pm

Village Hall

Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 13th March 7.30pm

Village Hall

Neighbourhood Plan Events

Deadline for comments 15th March

Village Hall

Village Litter Pick

Saturday 9th March 10.00am

Village Hall

Zumba in Semington

Wednesdays 6.15pm to 7.15pm

Village Hall

Christians in Semington

Bev Woodward – 870784

Our next **Breakfast Church** is on **Sunday March 10th, 9.15am** with a breakfast of baked goodies, fruit and drinks, followed by a short service with songs, story and prayers. Everyone welcome!

Christians in Semington - are meeting via zoom, to pray for our community, on **Wednesday 6th March at 8.00pm**. Please contact Jack Woodward, 870784, for the zoom link.

Housegroup - we meet every other Tuesday, at 8.00pm. We're enjoying the Bible Society's films about the book of Romans, and learning a lot! If you'd like to join us please phone Jack/Bev 870784 or David/Pam 870030 for the dates and venue.

What To Do With a Spare Ten Minutes

- Have a cup of coffee
- Mindlessly scroll the 'Gram
- Help shape the future of the village you have chosen to live in.....please read Peter's report on page 7 and make some time to respond or go straight to **semington.org.uk/NP** and crack on with the online form and even better have a cuppa at the same time. *#winningatlife*

Easter at St George's Church

Details of the Easter services at St George's can be found on the back cover of the magazine. As well as Easter Sunday All Ages Communion there is also a Mothering Sunday service. The ladies of the village will once again be decorating the church for Easter with their usual stunning floral displays – why not pop in for a moment of reflection and to enjoy the flowers?

Editor's Note

Gillian Airey

Well thank you February – that extra day of rain made all the difference! If you celebrate Valentine's Day I do hope you were knee deep in fizz and red roses, me I'm looking forward to being knee deep in chocolate as Easter is around the corner. Deadline for April's edition is **Friday 22nd March**, I look forward to hearing from you all.

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This Month I'm A Little Bit Cool

Gilly Airey

A memory popped up on my Facebook page the other week. Unlike some of my memories that make me squirm because I believed at the time that they were newsworthy enough to share with the world, this one popped up with such an uncanny sense of timing I actually looked over my shoulder to see if there was a spy from Facebook checking on me. The memory in question? Seven years ago I received in the post the first letter Princess Ava, our eldest granddaughter had ever written to anyone except Santa and it was to me.

Fast forward seven years and it's half term time we whisked Princesses Ava and Bella away to some Spanish sunshine for a few days. I was even convinced that I would survive for five days with cabin baggage only, so out came the IKEA sandwich bags for our sub-100ml toiletries. Gorgeous Hubby and I did quite well only about ten items in total for us (and no the shaving stuff was definitely his – cheeky!). When we arrived to collect the girls and help finalise their packing said two bags morphed into five bags with potions and lotions even I didn't know what you did with them, so a little thinning out was called for.

What then happened was like a game of Top Trumps for all things toiletries as items were discarded in preference for others. That was the moment that I realised Ava was no longer a little girl writing to her Nanny G about Paw Patrol or which Barbie she wanted for her birthday, but a young adult who could advise on primers, concealers and mascaras. Just like that, seven years had whooshed by and we had different stuff to talk about.

I have had the privilege of making very many special memories with all our grandchildren, none really take precedence over the others, but it must be said the 'firsts' are always the ones that spring to the forefront over time and this holiday was one of them.

Princess Ava's look of amazement when she saw I had had an email from Cult Beauty was priceless and a particular favourite. 'Nanny G, how do you know about Cult Beauty' she asked, 'Because I've bought stuff from their website' was my rather simple response. And here's the special moment, 'I didn't know you were so cool' was her genuine response – yep ladies and gentlemen I am now a COOL NANNY and that memory can pop up on my Facebook page every day forever!

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Wiltshire

Gutter Cleaning Services

Parish Council - Chair's Report

Peter Smith, Chair of the Parish Council

Semington Neighbourhood Plan. COME ON SEMINGTON! The draft plan has been out for consultation for 4 weeks now, but at the time of writing this, the number of response forms sent back is 10. Maybe you're leaving it until later? Please don't, the closing date for responses is **15th March**. Find a few minutes to read the response form and send in your reply.

We really do need to know what you think....if you support the policies in the plan, take 10 minutes to fill in the form and tell us so. And if you want to see changes, we need you to let us know what these are. The plan, which includes the allocation of a site for a village shop alongside 40 additional homes, will shape the way the village is protected and developed for the next 15 years, so it's very important to hear from all who live and work here.

Your February village magazine gave you the options on how to get your response form filled in and returned, but here's a reminder:

- Completing the online comments form on the council's website www.semington.org.uk/np
- Completing the comments form at the village hall (hard copy plans, policies and response forms are on the two small circular tables near the bookshelves) and posting the form in the box provided
- Downloading and completing the online comments form and emailing to: reg14@semington.org.uk
- As above, but delivering the form as a hard copy to 18 St. George's Court, Semington, or 24 Pound Lane, Semington.

PLEASE: get your comments back quick as you can!

Land South of Pound Lane. The appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against Wiltshire Council's refusal to allow 30 houses to be built at the end of Pound Lane has been rejected. These houses will not now be built. This was one of a number of speculative and unwanted planning applications that we as a village, together with Wiltshire Council and Jonathon Seed (our Wiltshire Councillor) have challenged over the past 8 years. Our Neighbourhood Plan (see above!) allocates a site for future housing development which will better serve the village's needs with the provision of a shop on a site which will be of our choosing, not that of a speculative developer.

Too much dog excrement. The Parish Council had lots of concern, including frustration and anger, expressed about the increase in dog excrement on pavements, the byway, bridleways and footpaths. Mostly, this filthy stuff is in its raw state; sometimes in little plastic bags. Both constitute anti-social litter, and leaving it around is both disgusting and illegal. It's not the dogs that are responsible for this, it's the owners. And whilst the vast majority of Semington dog walkers are conscientious in clearing up, I don't think we can blame the regular dumps in the same areas on incomers. The Parish Council is exploring adding to litter and dog bins around the village. But this won't change the behaviour of the "don't cares". So any suggestions, especially from regular dog walkers, on what we can do to stop this anti social behaviour would be very welcome.

Litter Pick. Not including dog poo, we'll be doing the Spring litter pick on **Saturday 9th March**. Meet at **10.00am** at the Village Hall. Bags, bag hoops and picker sticks all provided. Just bring your gloves and hi viz vest if you have one. See you there for a fun packed morning!

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Semington Social Club Quiz Night

Derek Edwards

January's quiz saw nine teams battle it out. There were some fantastic moments. Who knew when Heinz baked beans were first sold in the UK and that it was at Fortnum and Masons. The quiz night has been a great night for bringing the village together. Following on from January's quiz, we donated £68.00 to Melksham Food Bank, £80.00 to Semington FC to help with security at Little Marsh and £40.00 to Wiltshire Air Ambulance. I want to continue donating the money to Semington groups, and I know that sometimes these groups go unnoticed. If anyone knows any groups that are looking for donations please feel free to get in touch via the Village Facebook page.

January's quiz was won by the Orchard Pigs closely followed by Pam's People, and in third place the Nice But Dims. Some great moments during the evening, with plenty of laughter and community spirit. Putting on the quiz really is a collective effort and I would like to thank Lewis for the posters, Andrea and the hard working bar staff. Also Michelle, Brian and Sally with help tidying up and the lady who I missed her name who helped me set up.

At the time of going to print we will have just held our February quiz and haven't set a date yet for March so keep an eye on the village hall notice boards and on the Village Facebook page. If you don't have a team or want to come on down on your own please do, there's always some spare space on team tables for you to join in.

Chatty Cafe – Melksham Campus

A new service has opened at the Melksham Campus. A café to reduce isolation and loneliness launched last month in Melksham at the Community Campus.

The Chatty Café was set up by Melksham and Bradford-on-Avon Primary Care Network – Giffords Surgery, Spa Medical Centre and Bradford on Avon Health Centre – and is hosted by the Poolside Café at the Campus every Tuesday from 10.00am to 12.00pm.

The Chatty Café Scheme started in 2017 to encourage conversations between people in spaces such as cafés. This involves having a designated area, as 'Chatter & Natter' tables, for people to sit at if they would like to have conversations with other people.

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Nature Notes

Edna St Vincent Millay was a revered 20th century, Pulitzer Prize winning American poet and playwright. She wrote lyric poetry including over 100 sonnets. This is her third. Thomas Hardy said that the United States had two great attractions: the skyscraper and Millay's poetry.

Mindful of you the sodden earth in spring,
And all the flowers that in the springtime grow,
And dusty roads, and thistles, and the slow
Rising of the round moon, all throats that sing
The summer through, and each departing wing,
And all the nests that the bared branches show,
And all winds that in any weather blow,
And all the storms that the four seasons bring.

You go no more on your exultant feet
Up paths that only mist and morning knew,
Or watch the wind, or listen to the beat
Of a bird's wings too high in air to view,—
But you were something more than young and sweet
And fair,—and the long year remembers you



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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 (cash preferably) 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. Alternatively if you prefer to make an electronic payment email me at sepmarmag@icloud.com and I will send the BACs details to you. Thank you!

Action for Children

Eric Clifford

The marvellous sum of £700 has been forwarded to Action for Children as a result of home collection boxes held by our wonderfully loyal supporters. Thank you again for thinking of, and praying for, the UK's most vulnerable children. The December coffee morning raised £152 which has also been sent to AFC. Thank you for your support in this too.

Should you wish to support by having a home collection box, please get in touch with Eric or Helen 870922, who will be delighted to rush a box round to you. Thank you.

Semington Book Club

Angela Grodzicka

Nine members met on Tuesday 20th February to discuss 'A Perfect Child' by Lucinda Berry. The author is a psychologist who has drawn on her experiences to write this story. It is a depressing read as the child at the centre of the story kills her biological mother, the family cat and her aunt and admits to liking 'to hurt people'. It is not a book to enjoy or to become involved in and although it is harrowing it is also gripping and interesting. It raises questions of nature versus nurture and also the existence of evil.

The next meeting has been fixed for **Thursday 11th April at 8.00pm** in The New Inn to discuss 'The Italian Daughter' by Soraya Lane - hopefully a happy book!

Abridged Minutes from Parish Council Meeting

Meeting Held Wednesday 7th February 2024

Present. Councillors P Smith (Chairman), M. Carberry, S Chown, J. Hailey, C. McGarvey, W. Scott, C. Wade and the Clerk, Roger Coleman. There was one member of the public present.

Apologies. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. R Bruges and Wiltshire Council Cllr. J Seed.

Community and Communication. The Chairman reported that there had been no further information relating to the Post Office. Cllr. Chown enquired whether the existing Parish Council website should be reclassified as a 'Village Website' and local organisations be encouraged to use it for promulgating information relating to the Semington community. The Chairman asked the Clerk to include this matter on the Agenda for the March Parish Council meeting. Cllr. Wade stated that, to date, he had been unable to confirm that the 'old' Semington website had been removed when searching for the 'new' Semington one. The Chairman confirmed that Mr Turpin was continuing to progress the application for the two names to be added to the War Memorial and that Mr Turpin had been requested to ask the Parish Council to provide a letter in support of the project, if required.

Recreation and Wellbeing. The Chairman confirmed that the allotment site now belonged to the Parish Council with effect from 2nd February and that this transfer would be marked by a small ceremony. Cllr Wade confirmed that all fourteen plots had now been allocated and that the tenancy agreements were in the process of being signed. He added that there appears to be an enthusiasm by the tenants to form an Allotment Association. The Chairman commented that investigations were in hand to identify a suitable shed to be placed at the allotment site for use by all tenants that accorded with any extant planning requirements. Cllr. Wade added that a request had been made by the tenants for the allotment car parking area to be marked as such by means of a sign to deter 'non-tenants' from using that area for parking cars. The Council **resolved** to allocate a maximum of £250 for the purchase of a sign. The Council further **resolved** to allocate £100 for the hire of the Village Hall for meetings relating to the allotments.

The Chairman confirmed that that the formal transfer of the Wessex Close Play Area to the Parish Council would take place on **1st April 2024** and that he was arranging a 'final' meeting with Wiltshire Council (Craig Campbell) which would include the Parish Council representatives to confirm some relatively minor residual issues. A date and time of 28th February and 2.00pm respectively was agreed. Cllr. Smith stated that three persons had now completed the Safety Inspection course. Councillors commented that there needed to be various procedures agreed for the regular maintenance and inspection of the Play Area and that prior to meeting with the Friends of Wessex Close Play Area Group it would be helpful for the councillors involved in this project to meet first. It was agreed that they would meet at 11.00am on 25th February.

The Chairman stated that a neighbour of his had offered to clean the surface of the Tennis Court. The Council asked the Chairman to accept his offer and to thank him for being prepared to undertake this work. The Council **resolved** to meet the cost of any necessary materials.

Environment and Streetscene. The Parish Council noted that following concerns expressed relentlessly to Wiltshire Council regarding the safety of the 'Cycleway' (SEMI9A/10 and HILP22/10), Wiltshire Council was intending to reclassifying this path as a 'restricted byway' by means of an 'experimental road traffic order' (ERTO). The ERTO will come into force at Wiltshire Council's discretion which is likely to be in the Spring and would prohibit vehicles using the Byway as a 'through route' and would permit it to be used for 'access only'. The Chairman added that this order would last for eighteen months and Cllr. Scott cautioned that it was only during the first six months that its utility would be assessed by Wiltshire Council. Cllr. Scott requested the Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council and to obtain details of the criteria to be used by Wiltshire Council to judge success, or otherwise, of the 'experimental traffic order'.

Councillors expressed their dissatisfaction at the failure of Wiltshire Police to respond to the request from the Parish Council for the accident report relating to an earlier incident on this byway and that it had been necessary to chase Wiltshire Police for a reply that also involved the MP making representations. The Parish Council was unimpressed with the holding reply received from Wiltshire Police stating it was a masterclass in obfuscation. The Clerk was asked to write regularly to Wiltshire Police until the accident report was received or a satisfactory explanation was provided for the refusal of Wiltshire Police to release it.

Cllr. Carberry stated that he had contacted Wiltshire Council to obtain a statement on the current Waste Bin Policy (including size, location, contents, emptying) to ensure that any proposals he makes accord with current policy.

Cllr. Hailey reported that Path SEMI28 was now in a reasonable condition, although there was a need to cut back some overgrown vegetation.

Cllrs expressed their concerns regarding the failure of some dog walkers to clear up after their dogs and that the presence of dog faeces on public footpaths had increased over the years. It was agreed that a note alerting parishioners to this problem would be included in the Newsletter.

Other Matters. The Chairman confirmed that further work to clear vegetation from the base/apron area of the Pill Box was necessary and he proposed **16th March or 23rd March** as possible dates for the next working party visit. The Council acknowledged that clearing the inside of the Pill Box and disposing of the accumulated rubbish would prove more difficult. It was agreed to take no action in respect of the inside of the Pill Box for the time being.

Securing the entrance door and embrasure was discussed and the fabrication of metal 'gates' was suggested and Cllr. Carberry agreed to make enquiries regarding their manufacture. Councillors remarked that the owner of the pill box which is located on adjacent farmland needs to be consulted regarding any work involving the pill box or access to it. Also, it was noted that any tree work to expose the Pill Box needed further careful consideration.

It was agreed that a litter pick is to take place on **Saturday 9th March** – meeting at the Village Hall, 10.00am.

Transport and Traffic. Councillors noted that the Parish Council had received the Wiltshire Council Report on the bus gate monitoring and violations following the Wiltshire Council traffic survey and the correspondence from Wiltshire Police regarding their intended enforcement action. Cllr. Wade commented that there had been some 1300 movements recorded, of which perhaps 800 were violations of the no entry sign, and he was very disappointed that Wiltshire Council had made light of these results. The Council noted that Wiltshire Police are now taking some enforcement action and that this action had been publicized on Facebook. Councillors expressed their thanks to Insp. Andy Lemon for taking a more proactive approach and that they look forward to welcoming him and/or his team to a Parish Council or Parish meeting. There ensued a discussion on the availability, acquisition, use and associated cost of obtaining a camera to monitor the Bus Gate – as had previously been proposed. The Council decided that the cost of this project could be prohibitively expensive and not be justified. Cllr. Smith was asked to raise the findings of the Wiltshire Council Report at the forthcoming LHFIG meeting and to invite those present to propose possible enforcement methods.

Cllr. Scott stated that the Parish Council was still awaiting a written response from the Melksham Area Board to the Highway matters raised by the Parish Council at the recent Area Board meeting – as had been promised.

Cllr. McGarvey stated that residents in Pound Land had complained to her regarding the speed of some traffic along that road. The Chairman stated that he would address this matter via a note in the Newsletter.

Planning and Development. There were no planning applications received for consideration by the Parish Council.

Finance. Total balance in hand as at Wednesday 7th February £80,286.12

The Council reminded the Clerk to transfer additional funds from A/C 2149025 to A/C 7754288 such that no less than £15,000 is to be left in A/C2149025. The Clerk replied that this was in hand.

Cllr. Hailey, on behalf of the Community Development Fund Working Group (CDFWG) stated that no other qualifying applications for funding had been received. The Clerk explained the details of the use of CIL funds and that an annual report has to be submitted to Wiltshire Council regarding its disbursement. An annual report will be required from the Parish Council in March 2024 for CIL expenditure in FY2023/24 and the Clerk was asked to examine the proposed FY2024/25 Budget and to identify items that would qualify for CIL funding. Cllr. Scott commented that it may be necessary to identify the total CIL expenditure to date for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and this would include expenditure in FY2022/23.

Neighbourhood Plan. The Chairman confirmed that the Draft Neighbourhood Plan is now out for public consultation from **1st February 2024 to 15th March 2024** under Regulation 14. The Chairman confirmed that this public consultation is being very well advertised and added that there was to be a Public Consultation meeting at the Village Hall on 24th February. The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, thanked the Webmaster (Mr Paul Chown) for ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan was available, in full, on the Semington Website.

Date of the next meeting. Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

Michelle Donelan – MP for Chippenham Ward

Parliament is in recess for the half term, so I have been busy getting out and about in the constituency. I have been knocking on doors to speak to local residents about local and national issues.

I wanted to update you on a matter that has been concerning people in Semington, where there have been ongoing issues with illegal vehicle access on the old A350 road to Melksham. Despite it being a no-through road, some drivers keep bypassing the rules by going through the gate near the Air Ambulance HQ.

This not only poses a danger to pedestrians and cyclists but also affects the peaceful atmosphere and air quality of your village. We have tried various measures, like a 'No Entry' watch scheme and occasional police enforcement, but unfortunately, they have not provided a solution.

That is why I have been working with Cllr Seed and we are urging Wiltshire Council to install an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera at the entrance of the old A350 road. Please do sign the petition on my website at: **<https://www.michelledonelan.co.uk/semington-bus-gate>**

In our area, 139 pharmacies have signed up to treat a range of common conditions, which will free up 10 million GP appointments a year. We are massively expanding pharmacy services so that they will be able to assess and treat patients for: sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bites, impetigo, shingles and urinary tract infections in women - without the need for a GP appointment or a prescription.

On a similar topic like many of you I know from personal experience how painful toothache is. I have met with lots of local residents and dentists to discuss this and I have been taking people's experiences right to the door of the Health Minister to push for extra support for our area, successfully securing an extra £4.7 million for Wiltshire. The simple fact is that we need to pay dentists more per NHS patient, so we are increasing the per-patient payment by £15 - £50 – to treat 1 million new patients. We are also giving one-off payments of up to £20,000 to attract new NHS dentists in under-served areas, and will be deploying dental vans to help reach the most isolated communities. I will keep prioritising this topic to ensure we get the NHS dental service we need.

If you would like to arrange a surgery appointment with me or need my help, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me by email: michelle.donelan.mp@parliament.uk, or by calling 01249 704465.

Melksham and District Link

The group that takes people to their medical appointments and home again needs more drivers and people to answer the telephone and organise trips.

Some drivers only do local trips whilst others are happy to go further afield. Drivers get paid expenses for their trips. Co-ordinators work two to three days every five weeks.

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Semington Magpies News

Neil Taylor

A fantastic league victory over South Newton at Little Marsh, which saw the Magpies score four goals in the opening twenty minutes. The Magpies went on to win 7-1. With the weather still playing havoc with the fixtures we got to play our quarter final on the 17th February. The pitch at Warminster was a mud bath, the team fought hard but lost 4-2.

We have nine league games left and whilst it's a tough ask we need to win them all to gain promotion. I firmly believe that the young side we have at Semington definitely have the ability to achieve this. We start our promotion push with away games in the coming month, if you fancy a trip out why not come and support our promotion campaign – all matches kick off at 2.00pm.

Dilton Marsh - Saturday 2nd March

Trowbridge Tigers - Saturday 9th March

Aces - Saturday 16th March

We return to Little Marsh on Saturday 23rd March, we'd love to see you there!

Valuation Day In Aid of Wiltshire Air Ambulance

Popular TV antique expert, Paul Martin, will be sharing his knowledge and experience with Wiltshire residents on **Saturday 16th March** by hosting a free community valuation day at The Corn Exchange in Devizes. Paul is an ambassador for Wiltshire Air Ambulance and will be donating 100% of the seller's commission from all sales on the day to the charity. The valuation day, which is being run in partnership with world-renowned Devizes auctioneers Henry Aldridge & Son, for which Paul is Head of Valuations.

Entry will be free (pre-registration via Wiltshire Air Ambulance's website) and will run from 10.00am - 4.00pm. The event is intended to encourage members of the public to dust off any items they've always been curious about and bring them along to be valued and perhaps sold. Any sales will help raise funds for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Whether it's antiques, collectables, gold, silver or jewellery, anything can be brought along. Wiltshire Air Ambulance ran a similar event in Melksham a few years ago which proved extremely popular, so visit the website now and register your interest.

<https://www.wiltshireairambulance.co.uk/get-involved/events/valuation-day>

SEMINGTON SLOG

10k ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL, SEMINGTON

MAY 11 2024

10AM

£16



- Fun for the whole family
- 1k and 2k fun run
- BBQ, Bouncy castle, ice creams and more

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Semington's favourite choir mistress has made the news recently. Lorraine Mahoney, The Semingtones's choir mistress has recently won the Award for Achievement and Innovation at this year's Little Voices Annual Symposium in Leamington Spa.

The event brought together Little Voices franchisees from across the UK to share knowledge and best practice and plan for the next 12 months.

"It was totally unexpected but I love being creative within my business," says Lorraine. "Last year I was able to take Little Voices to Gibraltar and work with the children on the military base there. This year we have specific workshops aimed at 12 to 16 years olds to give them a chance to look at various musical theatre shows without a long ongoing commitment, giving them a safe space to explore emotions, friendships and to be expressive.

"Little Voices is not a stage school or a drama club but a place where we prepare pupils for their futures through the medium of performing arts. We focus on helping them with good eye contact, communication skills, correct posture, the ability to deal with anxiety and nerves, effective speaking and presentation skills and so much more. Exams with LAMDA are also an option for those wishing to gain qualifications."

Little Voices NW Wiltshire & Bath was established in January 2019 and has continued to grow. With centres currently in Melksham, Trowbridge, Corsham, Westbury and Derry Hill, parents have choices of varying days and times to suit them. Lorraine has already booked in the Easter Holiday workshops and Summer Theatre Week and more information on Little Voices can be found at www.littlevoices.org.uk or WhatsApp Lorraine on 07756 312881.

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Your Wiltshire Councillor News

Jonathon Seed

Snowdrops, followed by crocus and daffodils are a sure sign that winter is giving way to spring. We have had a difficult winter for our roads with serious damage caused by alternating heavy rain and freezing conditions. Wiltshire Council has struggled with basic maintenance however, because the Council has managed its finances pretty well it was able to divert an extra £1million into road repairs and then add this to further significant government help for further road repairs. It will take time to see the full effects of this highways funding but every little helps.

The political climate has not been good for the party that I represent and I am not proud of some of the antics in Westminster. However as a local Councillor I have the freedom to put national politics to one side and concentrate on representing local residents. I have always found that local people value local solutions to local problems and that is what I have tried to deliver. I have also started a round of spring door knocking and have been heartened by the reaction of local residents who are seeing and appreciating the difference between local and national politics and what they deliver.

In Semington I recently joined our MP in an afternoon of talking and listening to people in the village. Together with a great group of local helpers we knocked on virtually every door. Whilst clearly not everyone agrees with our politics almost everyone was appreciative of our visit and recognised the fact that we are trying our best in difficult times. Real issues like the unacceptable use of Gypsy Lane by-way, the unacceptable misuse of the Bus Gate and the unacceptable unregulated growth of local traveller parks are being addressed and resolved. In particular the by-way is having a restrictive traffic order applied and electronic enforcement looms for those illegally using the bus gate. Local residents can also help by logging and reporting every single dangerous use of the by-way.

So local problems are being addressed and I will continue to work with your Parish Council to resolve as many local issues as we can.

Tel. **07770 774463** Facebook: **JSforWC**
Email: **Jonathon.seed@wiltshire.gov.uk**

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Our February talk was given by Stephanie. The papers that Stephanie read from were written by her mother on Stephanie's request. She asked that the details be written down so that they would never be forgotten.

Stephanie was a Magdalene baby born in Castlepollard mother and baby home Ireland. It was a home for unmarried mothers. Stephanie was one of the fortunate babies who was kept by her own mother who refused to sign any adoption papers. Her mother and herself were rescued by one of her mother's brothers before she could be taken from her mother. The terrible ill treatment that her mother went through as a very young girl, not only in Castlepollard but at the hands of others was truly beyond belief, absolutely appalling. We have seen things on the television about the Magdalene babies, watched dramas, read novels etc., but it's entirely different to hear someone speaking from personal experience. It was hard to listen to but a truly extraordinary talk.

It was great to see some new ladies at this meeting. Anyone wishing to come along will always be very welcome.

Our Annual General Meeting is on **Thursday 14th March 2024 at 7.30pm** in the village hall as usual.

SAS Crib Club

Eric Clifford

Semington's crib season starts on **Wednesday 13th March** with a home match (social club) against Westbury Labour Club A, a team of ladies. We shall be looking to improve on our league position of last season (wooden spoonists - yes we have the trophy) and therefore new cribbers welcome.

A fun card game, easy to learn, giving hours of enjoyment employing mental arithmetic. Do pop in to village hall on **Wednesday 13th March** from **8.00pm** to see what crib involves and arrange FREE tuition from our friendly players. Thank you.

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

Where are you staying? The Cistercian Sisters of Holy Cross Abbey, Whitland Pembrokeshire, are holding two 'Come and See' weekends. Inviting single catholic women to experience the life of a Cistercian Sister. **Friday 24th to Monday 27th May** and **Friday 16th to Monday 19th August**. Email comeandseehca@gmail.com

Stations of the Cross in Lent: This will take place as follows: St. Bernadette, 10:30am, every Thursday in Lent preceded by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament which will start at 10.00am, St. Thomas More, 5.00pm every Friday in Lent, St. John the Baptist, 5:30pm, every Tuesday in Lent.

Legion of Mary: Again this Lent we are inviting you to join us, the Legion of Mary. We meet every Wednesday at 1.30pm in the Parish Centre. Our aim is to bring Jesus to the world through Mary. For more information please contact Maria Conway on 07799102347 or email mgrconway@hotmail.co.uk

St. Bernadette's Drop In: St Bernadette's Drop In will be on **Wednesday 6th March 2.00pm to 4.00pm**. Everyone welcome for tea, cake and chat.

St Patrick's Night Dance: Friday 22nd March at the Parish Centre **8.00pm – 10.45pm**. Tickets £8.00 each (including a filled roll). Bring your own drinks, local Irish group 'Crossing The Rockies' will be providing the entertainment. Email to reserve tickets mike284305@btinternet.com or phone 01225 762966

Paws for Thought



When I was burdened with
worries you comforted me and
made me feel secure

It's in the Bible; Psalm 94, verse 19

Thoughts From St George's Church

Most of us are aware of the practice of fasting for health reasons, and there are numerous diet plans for intermittent fasting around these days, as any magazine or social media app will advertise to you immediately after the excesses of Christmas indulgence. We are told that even our Prime Minister fasts for 36 hours every week.

The church is now in the season of Lent, a time when traditionally Christians have fasted or abstained from certain foods. Depending on your church tradition this could be for the entirety of Lent (40 days), following in the footsteps of Jesus in the wilderness, or one day a week or even the restriction of certain foods and/or drinks for the period of Lent. Whichever tradition Christians follow they use this as a time of prayer and study that will draw them closer to God.

I am aware that some even fast from social media during Lent. I tried this four years ago, only to find that, as we retreated into lockdown, the use of social media became a vital way to connect with our communities and churches. As much as I commend those who manage to fast, I know I struggle to follow their example, I love my food too much, and lack the self-discipline!

In the Old Testament part of the Bible we are told not to make a public show of our fasting but to keep it between ourselves and God. Many of the Israelites at the time of the prophet Isaiah and indeed during the time of Jesus, made a show of their fasting. The phrase 'sackcloth and ashes', relates to those who made a great show of their piety by wearing sackcloth and covering themselves in ash. Yet we are told that this is not the kind of fast that God requires of his people. Rather he wants us to fast from injustice, removing the chains that burden people (especially the poor) unnecessarily; to share our food with the homeless, (for example the generous contributions that are made to the foodbanks from our villages); to give shelter to the homeless; to give clothing to those in need (donating our good quality excess clothing to charity shops and charities that work directly those in need is a good way of doing this); and to not hide from those who need our help.

Isaiah wrote these words over 2500 years ago, and yet they remain as relevant now as they were then. You do not need to be a Christian or indeed to follow any religion to follow such a fast, and to work for justice and provision for those weaker than ourselves. So may I commend such a fast to you, whoever or whatever your 'god' might be. And may those of us who follow Jesus use this time to be with him in prayer and in the reading and study of scripture.

SERVICES COMING SOON

Sunday
3rd
March

HOLY COMMUNION
from the Book of Common Prayer
3pm at St Mary's Whaddon

MOTHERING
SUNDAY
10th
March

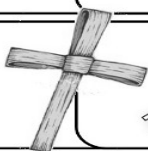


BREAKFAST CHURCH
for Mothering Sunday
9.15am at St George's Semington

Sunday
17th
March

HOLY COMMUNION
9.15am at St George's Semington

PALM
SUNDAY
24th
March



HOLY COMMUNION
for Palm Sunday
10.30am at St Michael's Hilperton

MAUNDY
THURSDAY
28th
March

HOLY COMMUNION
for Maundy Thursday
7.30pm at St Michael's Hilperton

GOOD
FRIDAY
29th
March



GOOD FRIDAY
BREAKFAST@theTIN
with a Light Breakfast
9.30am at St Mary Magdalen's

MEDITATION for
THE LAST HOUR
2pm at St Michael's Hilperton

EASTER
SUNDAY
31st
March



ALL AGE
EASTER COMMUNION
9.15am at St George's Semington

Contact Details for The Canalside Parishes:

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

Email: canalsideoffice@gmail.com Benefice website www.canalsidebenefice.org.uk

PCC Secretary/Treasurer - Jack Woodward 01380 870784

Church Warden - David Wildsmith

Associate Priest - Rev Joy Albone 07931 638524 email canalsidecurate@gmail.com

Please contact Joy if you would like a visit from someone from Church.