

# Challenge

The Parish Newsletter of Weston Colville and West Wrating

The views expressed herein are those of the contributors.

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## ***Book Exchange at Church End***

Thank you for using the new book exchange – it's been a successful start! We visit regularly to keep it clean and tidy so it's easy to see the books. It's now well stocked and arranged with fiction, children's, teens' and some non-fiction – and we'll do a rotation of what's inside at the end of each month. The bench next to it, at 2.4 metres long, is also perfect for social distance chats.

If you have accumulated a bag of books, the phone box is not the place for them, as it's a cosy space and we'd like books to be on display. Bags could be dropped off with one of us for storing and rotating – just put your name on.



There's another way you can help, too – if you're going past and it's raining and the door is propped open with the stone, can you please close it, and vice versa? We'd appreciate any feedback, too. Happy reading!

***Joyce, Emma Kaye, Jackie B. and Jacqueline, Community Bookworms***

## ***Weston Colville Village Map***

Since lockdown there has been a significant increase in the number of delivery drivers in the village, and many spend some time driving around looking for a particular house. When they ask me for directions I inevitably stumble and so I thought that it would be beneficial if they could refer to a village map. My request for volunteers on the village Facebook group, didn't provide anyone, so I made a start. I have completed the Church End area but this attempt needs to be improved by someone with skills in layout and design. Also it needs to cover the whole village and to be of value it should be on display, even in its truncated form. In the meantime it has its own

Facebook page: *Weston Colville Village Map*.

If you have the time to help in some way, by collecting the basic data or compiling the results, please post on the Weston Colville Facebook page.



***Peter Milner (290540)***

## ***West Wrating Oil Syndicate***

There will be a West Wrating oil syndicate fill-up this month, with an order cut-off of Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July at 6.30 pm.

Place your orders either by email to me at *WestWratingOil@gmail.com* and put your surname in the subject box, or by phone/text on 07982 291922. If you require a 'fill-up' please provide a rough estimate of the quantity and also make sure that you tell me if you have any special delivery requirements. In addition to the regular suppliers, I may use BoilerJuice or another order consolidation website, whoever gives the best price. Remember that syndicate orders take at least a couple of weeks from the cut-off date to be collated, brokered and delivered, but if you take the minimum of 500 litres every time there's a fill up, you'll always be buying at the best price.

The next syndicate order is anticipated to be in October.

***Phil Tempest (westwratingoil@gmail.com)***

## ***Weston Colville Parish Council***

The council will be meeting via Zoom on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 pm. The planning application for the Ivy House development will be discussed. If you would like to attend and/or make comments, please apply to me via email to receive the login details.

***Jess Ashbridge, Weston Colville Parish Clerk***  
(*jess@agrarian.biz*)



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## Volunteers Needed

1. **St Mary's Church** – volunteers are needed to help clear ivy from the gravestones behind St Mary's Church in Weston Colville. Come and help to discover a bit of history! Young, old, students, children ... please call 290807 or 290524.
2. **Cricket Field** – as part of efforts to keep the cricket ground in good order we are organising a work party to clear the ditch which runs around the edge of the field to the Reading Room car park. Once we have a list of volunteers we will set a date for the work (probably a Saturday). To allow us to stay safe we propose family groups are allocated a specific section and work using their own tools. Having surveyed the ditch, most of the work will involve removing undergrowth, saplings and low hanging branches. Please let us know if you can help out. Many thanks.  
**Melanie (07890 296998) and Jo (07798 525300)**

## Churches open for the public

It's very welcome news that our churches are now open for individual visits: for prayer, reflection and moments of peace. Whilst we do need to apply all the necessary precautions and rules including social distancing and the use of hand sanitisers on entering and leaving, I hope they may once more become places of welcome for all, places where we acknowledge that, in the words of T S Eliot, "prayer has been valid". Sunday services at 10 am – usually lasting around 30 to 40 minutes – will continue via Zoom, and information about how to join these services is available from Cazzy Walshe, Parish Administrator, at [7churches.seven@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.seven@gmail.com)

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## Covid-19 Weston Colville Helpers

As Covid-19 guidelines are starting to ease, we wanted to acknowledge and thank you all for helping and supporting our community during this time. In particular, Suan Rowland, Alan Chamberlain and Peter Causton for their weekly collection and deliveries of medications, Emma Kaye for her daily delivery of papers, medications and essential shopping items, Rosemary Davenport for her compost and plant drop offs, Ruth Hazleman for organising the delivery of veg and fruit boxes and Anne and Ray Vidler for delivering them, Steve Gibson for leading on our VE day celebrations and weekly DJ, Claire Gillet the Parish Nurse, Anne Bragg for compiling Challenge, The Chestnut Tree (again) for providing home-cooked meals and the countless people in West Wrattling and Weston Colville who help deliver them, Balsham Post Office (Peter the postman), Plumbs Dairy (Paul the milkman), The Old Butchers café and Field Compost Ltd who have continued to support our village under unusual circumstances. A special thank you is extended to those who have set up the plant and book exchanges, hoping these will continue to serve the village in the future, and The Mills and Green families for setting up the Weston Colville 2.6K challenge and raising £295 for Suffolk MIND charity.

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Also to everyone who has used the village WhatsApp and Facebook pages for their eternal cheery outlook, and countless friends and neighbours who have purchased extra or swapped food items to keep us safe at home.

THANK YOU SO MUCH. Let's keep going . . .

*Mel Stammer and Jo Jackson*

## Base for Parasol – Free to Collect

We have a white plastic parasol base, 10 kg when filled with water/sand. It'll be on the verge outside 20 Spring Terrace, Church End, Weston Colville.

*Alastair and Jacqueline*  
(291475, [jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com](mailto:jacquelinetheteacher@hotmail.com))



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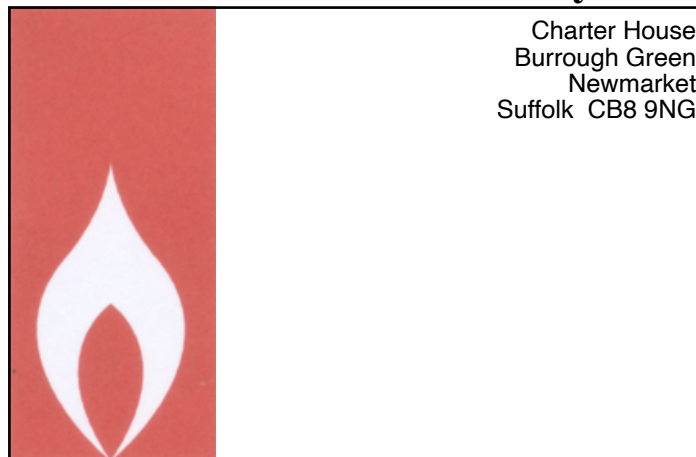
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## Parish Matters

What a change the world has undergone in a matter of months. Restrictions imposed on us by the government to only go for a walk each day, and stay at home the rest of the time, and with all unnecessary travel prohibited; it is the small things we take for granted that suddenly are important. Simple things like a hair cut or meeting friends at the pub.

Many have faced big challenges with their jobs, illness and loneliness. Many have sacrificed their time to help others, especially supporting the NHS. Thank you to all those who have helped in any way at all at a very vulnerable time for those living in our villages. Friendships have been forged and old friendships renewed, with more time on our hands.

It has not all been negative because what we have received is, in the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins, "the world charged with the grandeur of God". We enjoyed good weather, which has been so warm and dry, and with the lack of traffic on the roads and aeroplane traffic in the sky, nature emerged in full swing for us to hear varied birdsong. Flowers and butterflies drew our attention to what we have missed



in years gone by – such a great joy. Best of all are moments to appreciate the bigger picture of life. Time to take stock of who we are and what we are. Do we want to go back to how we were or do we want to take with us the blessings of living in the moment and not rushing on to the next task? We all will benefit from this.

And now change is happening again as we emerge from lockdown with our churches opening for private prayer, giving us the chance to visit as we walk in the villages. A sanctuary and a chance to be still.

Although we can pray anywhere, at home or in the garden, our church buildings have been the physical space where we can connect to God. The Eucharist was presided and the word of God proclaimed, and remembering the saints offers a depth to prayer.

Added to this, our memories of special events enables our spirit to soar to a new level with hope restored.

We come back to life ready for the next challenge; coming back to life to 'go and experience the grandeur of God'.

So whilst we might want to have our haircut, or have a pint today, hopefully in the near future that will happen. Blessings.

*Revd Kathy Bishop*



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### West Watting Book Club

Our June book was one with local interest, 'Stuart: a Life Backwards' by Alexander Masters. This was a biography of a homeless man, Stuart Shorter, whom the author came across on the streets of Cambridge in 1998 and who was helped by outreach workers to obtain a flat and to start sorting out his life. Many will remember the 'Cambridge Two' who were imprisoned having been found guilty of allowing drug trading on the Wintercomfort site, and the campaign which eventually obtained their release. Stuart was heavily involved with this campaign and also appeared in a TV documentary.

Early on in the book we discover the sad end to his story, whether deliberate or accidental. We are taken back to learn how his life had unfolded and, eventually, what had caused him to 'go off the rails' and his life to become 'chaotic'. Nearly everyone agreed that it was worth reading, well written and very revealing about the lives of the homeless on our streets. It highlights the reasons for them becoming so and aspects of the systems set up to deal with and help them, with both positive and negative results. Not least is the view of life in prison and the treatment by other prisoners and warders at the time. It also shows Stuart's native intelligence, and one wonders

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what a different person he could have been had events taken a different direction. One person, who had 'not enjoyed' the book, wondered how much truth there was in Stuart's description of what had happened to him and the things he had done but, as another of our number said, allowing for all the damage done to his mind, both physically, psychologically and by alcohol and drugs, this was Stuart's reality. It was also pointed out that Masters did consult others including family who would have added to and corroborated what he said, as well as official documentation. One would hope that some things have changed for the better since Stuart's time but it is not always obvious that it has. There are also moments of humour, not least in the descriptions of Stuart's 'business' ideas.

Someone was surprised at how the book ended, but then it was pointed out that this was, in effect, the beginning. Some said it was difficult to like Stuart. Was it the system that failed Stuart or he who failed the system by not making the most of the chances of help he was given? Had he been too damaged? Scores varied between 7 and 10 out of 10, and it was thought to be well worth reading.

Our next book is 'Girl, Woman, Other' by Bernadine Evaristo, 7.30 pm on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July via Zoom.

*Linda Gorman*

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# Ellis Miller

The global enforced and protracted period of self-isolation in our own homes due to Covid 19 is historically unprecedented. Our homes, however big or small, old or new, have had to adapt quickly to whole families making 24 hour demands on space, for homework, work, for play and so on. It will, for some, be the longest they have ever had to stay in their homes or immediate environs. Even for those who work from home, new challenges for how our houses function efficiently, or not, will have become increasingly apparent. Many of you will have noticed badly performing spaces, or the need for more clearly defined spaces, or have possibly even wondered if you are in the right house at all.

A well-designed house is one that exploits its ability to function as well as look great, one that works for everyone in the household. This need not demand moving home or huge extensions; sometimes it can be a small intervention that has a really big impact. My role as an award winning architect (six RIBA awards) for buildings ranging from small scale domestic dwellings to commercial projects and large urban planning, means that I work with a range of clients and am able to suggest the huge potential in each home, and can often create and suggest subtle or major interventions to really make your home even more of a dream and less of a restriction. You can see more of my work on [www.ellis-miller.com](http://www.ellis-miller.com) and I have a long history of working with both historic (often listed) buildings and contemporary architecture. I am nearing the end of building the family home on Padlock Road so have very personal and first hand experience of the demands and rewards of building and renovating your own home. Do get in touch if you want to chat through any projects you might want to explore. Contact: Jonathan Ellis-Miller, 07711 953316.



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## Swarming Honeybees

A recent flurry of messages about a swarm of bees spotted at Mill Hill prompts me to explain what is happening and what to do if you see a swarm of honeybees.

Swarming is just the honeybees' way of ensuring that there are new colonies of bees to replace those colonies lost through disease, lack of forage, failure of the queen bee, or poisoning due to pesticides and pesticide residues.

Competent beekeepers work hard to prevent their bees from swarming but even the most diligent can be caught out and 2020 has been a unusual 'swarm year', which means many apiaries are full.

### Some facts about swarms:

- The main swarming season lasts from April to June but beekeepers will not relax until the end of July.
- A colony of honeybees preparing to swarm may raise as many as 10 or 12 new queens to head new colonies.
- There can be several swarms from a hive, until the bees judge that there would be insufficient bees left to have a viable colony.
- A swarm emerging from a hive is an impressive sight and can be very noisy whilst the bees decide which are leaving and which will stay. Most importantly they check that a queen is swarming with them. If a swarm finds that they have not got a queen with them, they return to the hive.
- A swarm doesn't initially fly very far, often settling in the same location as the apiary or within 100 metres or so.
- The swarming bees will soon cluster in a tree or a bush, sometimes for an hour or so but sometimes for days, waiting for scout bees to report on the

location of a suitable new home for the colony. Some beekeepers put out bait hives to lure swarms to take up residence.

- The bees will suddenly fly off from the cluster as a single body and fly straight to their new chosen home, which will be some distance from their old home.
- Swarms are not usually aggressive and, as long as they are accessible, a beekeeper can catch the swarm and rehome it.

### If you see a swarm clustered:

- If you know there is an apiary very close by, let the beekeeper know that they may have lost a swarm.
- Google 'BBKA Swarm' or go direct to [www.bbka.org.uk/swarm#swarmmap](http://www.bbka.org.uk/swarm#swarmmap) where you can enter your postcode and you will be shown the location of the nearest swarm collectors, together with contact numbers.
- The swarm collector will ask you some questions to check that you have got a honeybee swarm (many calls are for other bees or even wasps).
- Covid19 means that there must be strict social distancing. If this is not observed the swarm collector is advised not to collect the swarm.
- Swarm collectors are volunteers, they do not expect to be paid but may ask that their travel expenses are covered.
- Do not expect to sell a swarm to a collector, they may just invite you to keep it.

### A swarm collector or beekeeper may be unable to help – why is that?

- The swarm may not be accessible.
- If the bees have taken up residence in a new home they are no longer a swarm and that is a very different matter.
- The collector may not have space in their apiary, or spare hives in which to accommodate the bees.
- Swarms can bring disease into an apiary – they may not be able to quarantine the swarm. There is an outbreak of disease north of Cambridge that currently means beekeepers are not allowed to move bees in or out of their apiaries.

*Andrew Durham*

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### Weston Colville Marsh Tit Study

A bright thought for today: there are 183 Covid-19 vaccines in development, of which 11 have been granted clinical trials. Last month, one passed its early (Phase I) trial as effective and well tolerated. There is light at the end of the tunnel . . .

Your Marsh Tits are deep in the woods. They have just finished breeding in warm, dark corners (a bit like wire coat hangers). If we don't get a second wave of the virus, we shall be ringing in the woods again this month, as we need to see how many young have been produced. Juvenile Marsh Tits are flushed with patches of banana yellow, and a stroppy teenage attitude, so look out for them taking silly risks, which predators love of course. This foolhardy young Marsh Tit tried to fly through Johnny and Emma Kaye's window. It made a full recovery with Emma's TLC and gained a hard-earned lesson about the nature of glass.



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You probably know that Collared Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) came here by themselves from India. They have an ultra-cautious disposition with quick reflexes and are extremely difficult to catch. So imagine our astonishment when we discovered this 200g bird happily making repeat visits to a fairly confined cage trap meant for 11g Marsh Tits. Clearly, this animal has no fear. It was totally relaxed in the hand, but to human eyes they always look surprised! If you get the electronic copy of Challenge, you'll see the scarily scarlet eye of these beautiful creatures.



We hope you enjoy your high summer, taking advantage of the peace and quiet as much as the wildlife is.

*Alex Inzani and the reawakening  
South Cambs. Ringing Group*

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### Marsh Mail

While still officially closed, the college is increasingly busy as we accommodate growing numbers of students on site, and continue to provide childcare for key workers and vulnerable children. We have also welcomed back groups of Year 10 students to benefit from face to face time in school before the summer holidays.

The site feels rather different with partitioned zones, floor markings and signage to support with social distancing and hygiene measures. However, the human connection with our students and being able to see them engage with their learning in person has been brilliant.

Our staff, students and their families are doing a great job at adjusting to online learning. We are increasingly making use of technology to enable our students to benefit from dynamic, engaging and interactive teaching content.

The Cambs Youth Panel has been amazing with supporting our families with access to IT. The group, which originally began as a means for Cambridge Constabulary to build a stronger relationship with young communities in the county, has reinvented itself to lend laptops and Chromebooks to students



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without technology devices at home. They have also constructed low-cost Raspberry Pi devices for families to purchase ([www.cambsyouthpanel.co.uk](http://www.cambsyouthpanel.co.uk)). Phil Priestley, ex-police sergeant, who works at LVC as an Inclusion Officer, leads the initiative.

If you have a laptop or other personal device that you no longer need but is still in working order that you would like to donate, please contact Mr Darby, Deputy Principal at LVC ([tim.darby@lvc.org](mailto:tim.darby@lvc.org)).

*Helena Marsh*

### VE Anniversary

I know the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary for VE has passed (VJ had yet to happen), but I recently came across my father's official regimental record of their Italian campaign. My father was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). He was already a Lieutenant-Colonel, and at 39 he would not have been in the front line, but more involved in Intelligence. At the time of this action he had been called back for 'battle experience'.

This is just one of the many actions, as they (and many other regiments) worked their way through Italy. My father never really talked about it, but did mention sleeping in his open jeep at -10 deg C with just a greatcoat for cover (worth remembering when our central heating goes on the blink), and that during the peach season most of his men got diarrhoea.

My overall impression (apart from the constant danger) is that the soldiers got very little sleep, and yet, at one point you might get the impression that the Quartermasters Company was off to a cricket match.

This may not be typical Challenge material, but I hope you will find it interesting and, perhaps, it helps put our present travails into some sort of perspective.

*CRM*

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## ***Extract from History of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)***

At 13.00 on 19th October 1944, the battalion moved up to an assembly area north of Monte Romano. Some 2000 yards ahead lay a long steep ridge running southwards from Cesena, with beyond it the Savio river. This ridge, with a large monastery prominent on its northern tip, was to be taken by 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Leicesters of 46<sup>th</sup> Division. The task of the Royal Fusiliers was to take over from the Leicesters on the monastery ridge and to be ready, when darkness fell, to send patrols forward to the river bank to search for possible crossing places. If the southern bridge in Cesena (Keatings) was intact, or if a suitable crossing place could be found, they were to establish a bridgehead across the river by first light.

At 18.45 the commanding officer went ahead to the village of Ponte Abbadesse to contact the Leicesters, and learnt that although they had captured the monastery, the rest of the ridge had still to be cleared. The battalion followed by a different route, and although the road had been swept for mines the commanding officer's carrier in which the signals officer, Lieut L E Cox, was riding, blew up on a mine and Lieut Cox was killed. Shortly afterwards the ambulance carrier was blown up, killing Sergt Englefield, the medical sergeant.

Only slight opposition was encountered along the ridge, but there had been no opportunity to reconnoitre the ground in daylight, and the night was very dark and the going rough. Progress was therefore of necessity slow, but by midnight the objectives had been reached and battalion rear headquarters had been established in the village.

Two patrols were sent out to search for crossing places, and at 03.00 it was reported that Keatings bridge had blown up as a patrol set foot on it. Half an hour later the second patrol reported finding a place 600 yards south of the bridge where it was possible to wade the river, though the water was chest deep, the bottom slippery and uneven, the width about 50 yards, and the current considerable. Not knowing whether the opposite bank was held by the enemy, Lieut Townsend, who was in charge of the patrol, had waded across alone to find out and to test the depth of the water. For this, and for his gallant leadership in the battle next morning, he was later awarded the Military Cross.

Company objectives were selected from aerial photographs, and at 04.45 the battalion started to scramble down the steep slopes to the river bank and wade across. Laden as they were with their weapons, ammunition and equipment, they did not get across without a struggle and one man was drowned.



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RIVER SAVIO. WHERE THE ROYAL FUSILIERS WADED ACROSS.

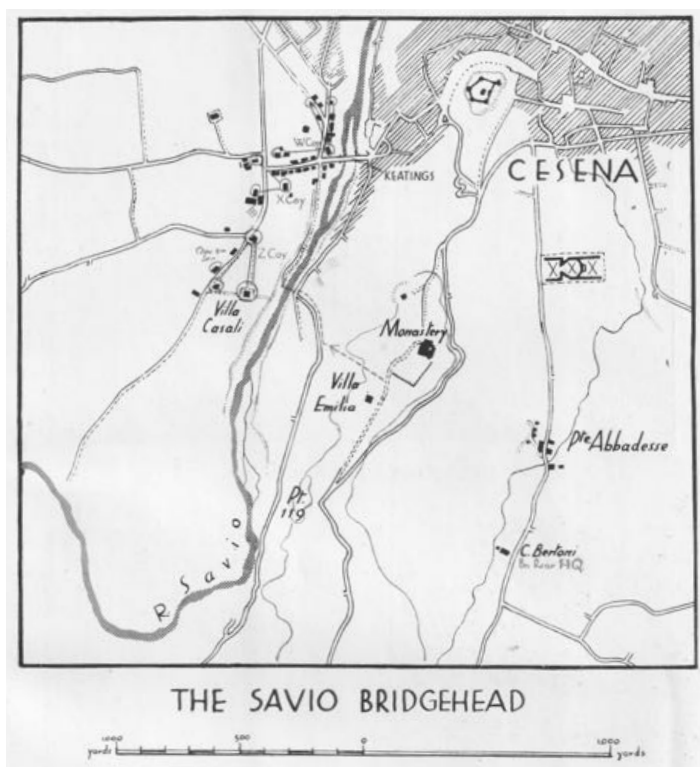
In the grey half-light which precedes the dawn, complete surprise had been achieved, and a number of Germans were found asleep in the village at the western end of the demolished bridge. Before long, however, all three companies were engaged in sharp house to house fighting as they fought their way through. W Company captured a horse harnessed to a trailer containing the Germans' breakfast ration, of which they made full use. The horse was afterwards sold to an Italian farmer, to the benefit of the company's funds.

By 07.00 a bridgehead had been established, 400 yards deep and 700 yards wide.

At intervals throughout the morning enemy infantry, supported by tanks, infiltrated into the bridgehead. The infantry were easily dealt with and caused little anxiety, but the tanks, although only three in number, were a constant source of worry. It was obvious that the battalion could not have carried any large anti-tank weapons, and the enemy took full advantage of this fact, their tanks constantly coming to within 150 yards range and engaging the houses occupied by the fusiliers.

Many acts of individual gallantry were performed that day. There was, for example, Cpl E Smith, who led his section in the face of frontal and enfilade fire to

storm and capture a house at an important road junction, himself killing two of the enemy and wounding another before his men rounded up the remainder; there was Cpl W Crockett who led a handful of men in a successful attack on three strongly defended houses in succession; Fusilier S Jones who volunteered to go with an important message back across the river and up the hill in full view of the enemy, to be wounded on the return journey after having accomplished his task; and many others, some of whose deeds inevitably passed unnoticed in the general turmoil. There was among the men a feeling of complete confidence in themselves, and in their individual and collective superiority over the enemy.



Enemy shell fire, which had been slight during the morning, became very much heavier during the afternoon. Casualties, considering the nature of the operation, were not unduly heavy, but it was impossible to evacuate the wounded across the river.

At 22.00 a small party of men arrived, having waded the river with boxes of sandwiches and containers of tea held above their heads. They had encountered heavy shell fire down by the river, and Major Galsworthy, the acting second in command, was killed at the water's edge. In the resultant confusion and darkness the party became split up, and it was due to the determination of the company quartermaster sergeants and numerous individual men, separated

from their comrades, that all the men in the bridgehead were fed by the morning.

During the night the sappers succeeded in putting an Ark bridge across the river north of Keatings, and three Churchill tanks managed to get across before it was damaged by shelling. The sappers worked on the bridge all morning under shell fire, and several more tanks crossed over before it was again put out of action by a direct hit. Although incapable of taking a tank the Ark could still be crossed on foot, and the casualties were all safely evacuated, the 35 German prisoners being used as stretcher bearers. Many of the wounded had been lying under almost incessant shell fire for twenty-four hours or more, and all had shown the utmost courage and patience under the constant care of Capt W F Caldwell, the Medical Officer, who went about his work as calmly and cheerfully as if he were working in a base hospital.



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RIVER SAVIO. THE ARK BRIDGE.

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## Healthwatch Survey

Local people are being asked to give their experiences in a new survey from Healthwatch Cambridgeshire, the local champion for people who use health and social care services.

The way most services are provided is changing to help keep people safe from Covid-19, so Healthwatch wants to know how this has affected you and those you care for, and the impact on your mental health and wellbeing.

The survey is online, takes 10 minutes to complete and is anonymous, so you can share experiences in confidence. What you say goes back to the people running the health and social care system, so they understand what is working well or what needs to change and why.

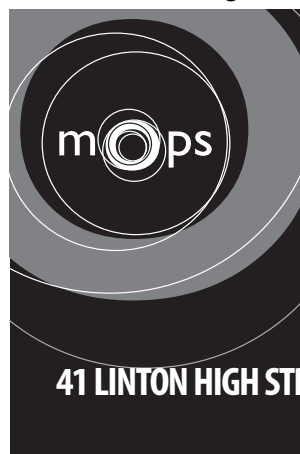
Take the survey at:

[www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/coronavirus-yourviews](http://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/coronavirus-yourviews) or contact Healthwatch on 0330 355 1285 if you would like a paper questionnaire.

## Online church services

We are currently streaming two services a week online: Evening Prayer (Compline) on Thursdays at 9 pm, and a service, Time for Prayer, at 10 am each Sunday.

Details of how to access these services are sent out in the twice weekly church newsletter. If you would like to start receiving the newsletter please contact Cazzy Walshe, Parish Administrator, at [7churches.seven@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.seven@gmail.com)



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 Mr Steven Wheeler, Licensed Lay Minister  
 tel: 290396 email: [steven@juicyfruitsuk.com](mailto:steven@juicyfruitsuk.com)  
 Jeanine Kennedy, Lay Pioneer Minister  
 email: [jeaninekenedygv@gmail.com](mailto:jeaninekenedygv@gmail.com)

## Churchwardens:

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

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

**Weston Colville Parish Clerk:** Jess Ashbridge,  
[jess@agrarian.biz](mailto:jess@agrarian.biz)

**West Watting Parish Clerk:** Jenny Richards,  
[j.richards597@btinternet.com](mailto:j.richards597@btinternet.com), 01223 665260

**Parish Nurse:** Claire Gillett,  
[7churches.parishnurse@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.parishnurse@gmail.com), 07498 994205

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**Black bins:** Monday 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> July,  
 Monday 10<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> August

**Blue bins:** Monday 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> July,  
 Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> August

**Green bins:** Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July,  
 Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August

(SCDC says: "We guarantee to empty your green bin every four weeks, but put it out every fortnight and we'll empty it if we can")

**Editor:** Anne Bragg (290550) or email:  
[editor@challengemag.co.uk](mailto:editor@challengemag.co.uk)

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

**August issue's copy date**  
**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July**