

# 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**

Following the success of the seed and plant exchange on the Green, we are happy to say that permission has been given to use the phone box at Church End, Weston Colville, for books. We've cleaned it up and at some point, it will be painted.

We've cleared nettles from under the bench next to it too, so maybe sit and browse a while? At 2.4 metres long, the bench is also perfect for social distance chats. Bring a pre-loved book or two to swap.

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. Happy reading!

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



## **Old Laptops Wanted**

We are attempting to source enough devices for all those students who are struggling to complete work due to a shortage of technology in their household. The fantastic Cambs Youth Panel initiative is struggling to meet the demand within the county, and we are appealing for donations to enable us to provide more.

If you have an old working device that you no longer need, we will happily take it off your hands and rebuild it to allow students to make use of it. So long as it switches on and has a genuine Windows sticker on it, we can make use of it.

Please contact me if you have a device you are willing to donate to the college for this purpose.

**Tim Darby, Linton** (Tim.darby@lvc.org)

## **Facebook**

The Weston Colville Facebook page continues to grow and provide an additional source of information for village residents. Its main use is to give details of matters of immediate concern, such as changes to local services that have been made during this difficult time. To join just search for 'Weston Colville' on Facebook and click 'join'.



**Peter Milner**

## **Home Made Pizzas**

I'm Katie Hodge, and I am lucky enough to have the opportunity to go to Borneo with Camps International 2021. I am raising money by making pizzas in our wood fired pizza oven, and they will be delivered to your door (West Wrating/Weston Colville/Balsham/West Wickham) from 5 to 9 pm, on Friday 5<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> June.



If you would like a pizza, please choose from:

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**Katie Hodge (290815, 07941 844328)**



## **West Wrating Oil Syndicate**

There will not be a syndicate order for oil this month. The next syndicate order will be in July.

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



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## Scrub Making

Many of us have been sewing scrubs, including two local ladies, Jo Taylor (owner of Jo Taylor's Cleaning Services) and Lesley Williams (owner of Designer Drapes), who have been using their lockdown time making NHS scrubs for Symonds House, Linton Health



Centre, and local hospitals.



Over £600 has already been raised. If anyone would like to donate to the making of NHS scrubs, please go to the Designer Drapes Facebook page or drop into the shop in Linton Rd, Hadstock.

We also have a selection of masks for sale. These can be seen on the Facebook page. Cost is £3.50, with 50p donated to the NHS.

*Jo Taylor*

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## Lockdown Project in Balsham

Five of us have been knitting 6" squares, then I sew 48 of them together to make a blanket which was due to go to a maternity hospital in Ethiopia. Because this is closed at the moment, it may go via Christian Hope International to eastern Europe.



*Joanna*

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## A Message from Claire Gillett, Parish Nurse

Greetings, from my home to yours. I am writing to you to assure you of my love and support for all the villages I serve: the Abingtons, Hildersham, Balsham, Weston Colville, West Wickham and West Wrating.

I am so pleased that I am able to offer support to the villages, as they set up the amazing community response; so many of you are getting involved with caring for each other so admirably and in so many different ways during this Covid-19 crisis.

We are super blessed to have such a wonderful array of gifted, kind and compassionate people in our villages.

Please be assured, I am at your service and although working from home, I am able to have direct contact with many NHS services and ways of support. Therefore please don't hesitate to contact me if you need some guidance or advice.

I am available Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 - 4.30, on 07498 994205. I will ring you back if you wish.

May I also remind you that, although many services and support agencies are facing challenging times, the teams at Granta Medical practice are available to you and have safe systems in place to see you or speak to

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you about any medical issue you may have. Also Addenbrookes is functioning and if you need to attend A&E there are safe 'green' areas in which to treat you. Of course if you have Covid-19 symptoms you must follow the government advice. Ring 111 and get the safest and most appropriate help.

There are challenges ahead, but I am sure as a team, working together, we can come through with stronger communities and love for each other.

I look forward to meeting many more of you face to face in the coming months, but do ring if you need to. God bless you.

*Claire Gillett, Parish Nurse*

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## New Found Ways

Since lockdown and social distancing was announced we have come face to face with many concerns for our health and social well being. For the most part we have managed to avoid the worst of the outbreak. We may know family and friends who have struggled with the illness and we care for them as best we can.

As well as those of us who are directly affected by the illness, there are those who are concerned about loss of income and what the work place will look like in future. There are those who are concerned with mental health issues and the fear of domestic violence in the home. These are very real concerns and we need to reach out to those in need and refer them to specialist helplines.

### HELPLINE NUMBERS:

**Mental Health** – Mind, 0300 123 3393

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline** –  
Freephone, 24-hour, 0808 2000 247

The challenges we face have to do with both loss and life. We see much loss on our news programmes, but there is new life in our villages, with many friendly gestures being exchanged. Our imagination has come into blossom with innovative ways to reach out to others: that long distance smile by the road side, set to



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brighten the day; those homemade cakes or flowers on the doorstep, come to frame our love. Staying in may have become the new going out, home cooking the new restaurant standard, but we are certainly rising to the challenge.

I don't know about you, but everything seems to have played out in slow motion. Easter seems like ages ago; Mothers' Day; that first Thursday clap for the NHS. We have certainly had a lot of time to ourselves. Time perhaps to enjoy the sunniest April springtime on record, time in the garden to soak up the rays, a long drink perhaps, a drift off in the sloping chair. Apart from the trauma of Covid 19, these may turn out to be our halcyon days, a precious time to reflect on the true meaning of our existence. Just when we thought it was normal to run around in ever decreasing circles, we have come to a time of relative calm, a time to take stock and realise that half of the things we were chasing after don't matter and the other half were here all along. I sense that we are set to become a different people, ready to come out of this stronger with a greater love for ourselves and each other. As we come to realise our new perspective on life, we will be like Jacob, who when he awoke from his sleep shouted to God, "You were here all the time, and I never knew it!"

*Steven Wheeler, LLM*



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## Footpaths and Bridleways

I am sure we have all noticed a considerable increase in the use of our footpaths in the present crisis for walking, running and cycling. The estate management would like to remind all users that the land is constantly being worked, both for crops and gamekeeping, and they would very much appreciate it if everyone keeps to the designated footpaths and bridleways.

There was a recent incident where the estate foreman pointed out to a runner that he was on private land, and the runner became abusive. It is likely the runner was an outsider, but in any case this sort of behaviour is unacceptable.

If anyone has problems with the footpaths, please contact me and I will do my best to help.

**Colin McCall (290036), West Wrattling**

Many people have been enjoying our glorious countryside and wildlife during the time of restriction. However, please would everyone remember that our public footpaths are for walkers only. A pushchair is an acceptable accompaniment; a bicycle or child on a pony is not. This is a statutory requirement reflecting the original designation and use of the route. Cyclists and riders should stick to

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bridleways and byways open to all traffic, unless given specific permission to do otherwise by the landowner. Permissive paths, unless granted in perpetuity, are at the discretion of the landowner, and may be withdrawn. A lot of the tracks in regular use are not rights of way. If they are abused, then there is the possibility they may be closed to public use.

Dog walkers are reminded that they are required to pick up after their animals. Bins are provided, and should be made use of. It is an offence not to remove the deposits from any public right of way. Your animal should not be allowed to mess on private property.

Further, although we are all trying to follow the social distancing guidelines, please stay on the paths, rather than trek across someone's crop. There are plenty of gateways and other areas to wait while someone passes at an acceptable distance without straying on to the fields. If we can stick by the rules, and clear up after dogs, then our pathways and bridleways will remain as safe as possible, and so shall we. If on your travels you find a right of way obstructed, please let me know, and I shall have it dealt with in as timely a manner as possible. Thank you for your co-operation.

**Bridget Durham (290082)**

**Weston Colville Parish Council Footpath Officer**

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### West Wrattling Book Club

We are meeting via Zoom to discuss our books; April's book was 'The English Patient' by Michael Ondaatje, which was to have linked with the May Weston Colville film club. It is still hoped to do this when we are through the worst of this crisis. All felt it was well written but some had problems with the way in which events were ordered, in reverse and "darting around", while one person did not enjoy reading about the events covered in the story. Other comments were "beautifully interwoven", "had done a lot of research, a bit too much about the defusing of bombs". Some found these details and the insight that it gave into what the sappers were doing very revealing. However one of our number had checked some of the facts on this and other aspects of the story and found some major errors, not least that the supposed identity of the 'English Patient' cast serious aspersions on a real person and the mention of Geiger counters in relation to defusing bombs is a total fallacy. These glaring errors made it difficult for them to enjoy the book, feeling that the central situation was contrived and unbelievable. However, it was felt that the descriptions of the desert were very evocative and the Sikh sapper was a well-drawn and very



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interesting character. His reaction to a particular piece of news near the end of the book could be easily explained as a natural outcome of the pressure he had been under for so long, and his conflicted feelings exacerbated by his brother's situation. Most of us had seen the film, which some had enjoyed and others not, in particular the fate of one female character. One person had approached reading the book with some trepidation as they had loved the film but found that the book added so much to the story, giving an insight into the characters' thoughts. Views on the ending varied, with some initial confusion amongst some, but it was thought by most to be a good ending. Scores

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ranged mainly between 7 to 9 out of 10 but with one 5. All except the latter would recommend it.

Our book for May was 'Hamnet' by Maggie O'Farrell. This is a fictional account, based around what few facts we have about Shakespeare, his wife Agnes (known to us as Anne), his son Hamnet (interchangeable with Hamlet), and the events leading up to the latter's death (apologies if this is a plot spoiler) and the consequences, not least the writing of the play 'Hamlet'. There was an obvious relevance to our current situation in the references to the plague and how it was spread.

This is yet another book which takes us backwards and forwards between two periods of time. Interestingly, Shakespeare is never named in the book, perhaps a way of concentrating our mind on the two main characters of the story, Agnes and Hamnet, one person commenting that it was nice to see the events from a different perspective. However, one of our number was disappointed that there was not more about Shakespeare's character.

All agreed that it was a very good read, and had enjoyed the author's style of writing, one reader describing it as charming. She struck a very good balance between the language of the time and modern

speech, with nothing that jarred. The author had obviously done a lot of research into the period, not least on the use of herbal remedies and medical treatment. We all thought that the descriptions of the grief of the parents and how they deal with it in different ways, as well as that of a twin, were very well described and very poignant. Scores ranged from 8 to 9 out of 10, and all would recommend it.

Our next book is 'Stuart: A Life Backwards', a biography by Alexander Masters, to be discussed at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June. We usually take a break through the summer when people are away but, as things stand, we will be carrying on.

*Linda Gorman*

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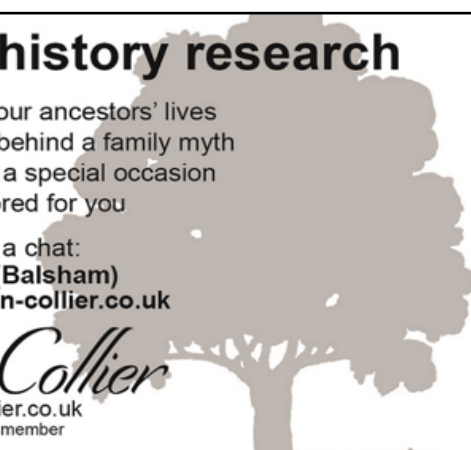
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### Weston Colville Marsh Tit Study

Welcome to early summer 2020. Isn't it quiet and peaceful, without the nitrogen dioxide and unburnt fossil fuels from traffic?

I'll pass on just one bit of good C-word news, then move swiftly on: sunlight causes oxidation. In other words, it's a bleach. Bleach rapidly destroys SARS-CoV-2. So if you're out and about, any sunlit surface, like gates and stiles, are free of any Covid-19 within minutes of a person touching them. Food for thought.

Your Marsh Tits are feeding chicks sixteen hours a day, as are most other birds. The chicks need protein to grow, so the parents are collecting insects and caterpillars to feed to their young, rather than the carbohydrate and fat-rich seeds and fat balls put into garden feeders. Tits in particular are now seen gathering prey from bushes around your feeding stations. Seed-eaters like Greenfinches are still hitting the feeders hard; my garden suet block gets regular visits from a female Great Spotted Woodpecker. (Male and female Great Spots both develop brood patches, so they share incubation duties.)

At this time of year a ridiculously large number of bird species nest right on the ground in short grass, eg. Chiffchaffs, Willow Warblers and Skylarks. Linnets,

Robins and Nightingales often nest within a metre of ground level, perfect for nosy pet dogs or hunting pet cats. The pictures show Skylark nests in grass and



even on a ploughed and planted field. You can see how small and vulnerable they are to disturbance (*the hands have nothing to do with me – the photo is from BBC News*). If you like the sound of

Chiffchaffs and Skylarks heralding summer, please be careful with your feet and keep your dog on a short lead in wild, grassy fields.



Speaking of summer, the Cuckoos are back. Their famous call 'cuc - koo' is from the male or cock bird. The female, or hen, Cuckoo makes one of the weirdest noises you'll hear in the woods. Imagine a rapid bubbling noise, rather like the whickering of a horse. If you find that hard to imagine, listen to this link: <https://www.xeno-canto.org/557857>. If you hear this, keep your eyes peeled for a male Cuckoo coming a-running!

If you see our colour-ringed Marsh Tits or hear a hen Cuckoo, please let us know on our usual . [Cambsmarti@gmail.com](mailto:Cambsmarti@gmail.com), [m\\_stammers@btinternet.com](mailto:m_stammers@btinternet.com) or Challenge.

*Alex Inzani and the incarcerated  
South Cambs Ringing Group*

### Egg Thefts

Thank you to all my lovely customers who buy my eggs. Unfortunately a lady on a bicycle is regularly stealing them or leaving a derisory amount. I sell the eggs only to pay towards food for the birds. If you call me I will arrange a place to leave the eggs for you to collect.

*Margaretha Galt (290726)*

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***The Meadow School***

The last month at The Meadow School has once again been a strange one. The school has continued to stay open for key worker children and vulnerable families and as more people have returned to work, the need for school places has increased. It has been a pleasure to invite these children into school each day and help parents out. It has been so lovely to see these children find a routine for their day, with teachers and TAs helping them access learning in the morning, either on a 1:1 basis or in small groups. The afternoons have been a mix of creative arts and sports outside, which the lovely weather has allowed for.

Teachers have continued to work hard to provide online education outside the physical school building. Children have been accessing their work via Google classroom and teachers have been available every day to answer any queries and help when children need it. We are so grateful to parents who have been balancing helping their children alongside their own work.

One of our major concerns has been the mental health of our children during this time. In order to help, the PTA, alongside the school, funded a 'goodie bag' for every child to enjoy. Staff spent several days ordering, stuffing and delivering bags full of helpful and fun activities, including a sketch book, paints, sewing, playing cards, exercise books and even some chocolate! One of the highlights of this time was delivering the bags to each child, chatting to them from a social distance and receiving lovely pictures of the children enjoying their activities.

With different information and regulations being published daily, it has been a logistical challenge as to how to open for three different year groups within the restraints given. We have spent a lot of time with tape measures trying to ensure groups can fit into our classrooms, with class lists to build

'bubbles' of no more than nine or ten children, looking at staffing these groups, and planning a school day so that no group



of children interact at any point. We have fully supported parents who have had concerns about children coming back to school, but we hope that our

fully risk assessed plan will ensure that children and staff are as safe as possible, within the guidelines, when school does eventually return.

We do hope, along with everyone else, that school is able to return to normal as soon as it is safe. In the meantime, we continue to thank all our families for the amazing job they are doing.

***Helen Loe, Deputy Headteacher***

***Marsh Mail***

While the college's building has remained largely empty, its staff and students have been busy engaging in remote learning. Teachers have set work online and our students have responded well to this challenge. Our Linton Learner attributes of independence and responsibility are coming to the fore at the moment.

As I write this, we are in the throes of making plans to consider how we might be able to safely accommodate small groups of our Year 10 students in school, in response to the government's announcement regarding the intention for schools to begin to re-open in a phased way to specified year groups from 1<sup>st</sup> June. We are also considering how best to support Year 6s with their move up to LVC.

This means that the vast majority of our students will continue to be educated virtually until at least the start of the new academic year. While this is disappointing for us all, we recognise that ensuring the health and safety of our students, staff and families is of paramount importance. It will clearly be quite some time before we return to experience the bustle of a thriving and busy school environment.

We also miss being able to open our doors to the college community. The sports centre remains closed for the time being and adult education classes and lettings are also on hold. You may have noticed some exercise challenges being posted on the Sports Centre social media accounts.

You may also be interested in following the Linton Learner twitter feed (@LearningatLVC) to see some of the amazing learning outcomes being achieved by our students at home. While we aren't able to teach and interact with the vast majority of our students in person, we continue to be very proud of them. Their resilience, motivation and engagement with their learning at this challenging time is to be celebrated.

***Helena***





**Caroline Pinkham-Smith**

MCFHP MAFHP

## Foot Health Practitioner

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### A Notice from our Churches

As with many churches around the country, we are engaging with people in many different ways during the lockdown, with Zoom services, online home groups and supporting local community networks. We are also encouraging people to transition to online giving as well, as the need to support Christian ministry and mission in our parishes and around the world continues, as does the need to maintain our beautiful places of worship.

If you would like to commit to giving to the church online, either regularly or as a one-off, or would like to discover more about how you might financially support the work of the local church and our places of worship, please do contact our parish administrator, Cazzy Walshe (891443 or [7churches.seven@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.seven@gmail.com))

**Revd Iain McColl**



Revd Iain McColl

tel: 890693 email: [mccoll.iain@gmail.com](mailto:mccoll.iain@gmail.com)

Revd Kathy Bishop, Associate Priest

tel: 892288 email: [revkathy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:revkathy@hotmail.co.uk)

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)

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[7churches.seven@gmail.com](mailto:7churches.seven@gmail.com), 01223 891443

**Weston Colville Parish Clerk:** Jess Ashbridge,  
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**West Wrattling Parish Clerk:** Jenny Richards,  
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**Parish Nurse:** Claire Gillett,  
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**Community Warden:** Carol Poll,  
[carol.poll@ageukcap.org.uk](mailto:carol.poll@ageukcap.org.uk) 07436 102865

### 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)

**Black bins:** Monday 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> June,  
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> July

**Blue bins:** Monday 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> June,  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> July

**Green bins:** Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June,  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July  
(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.

**July issue's copy date**  
**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June**