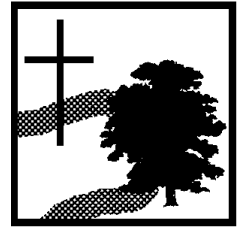


# PARISH NEWS



## *The Beane Valley Benefice*

[www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

St Mary the Virgin Aston, St Andrew's Bramfield, St Mary the Virgin Stapleford,  
St Michael and All Angels Waterford, St Andrew and St Mary Watton at Stone

**February 2024**

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### Are we listening and leaping?

Listening to news on the media we can see how difficult situations arise or deteriorate when people, groups or nations will not listen, hear each other out or negotiate. We know for ourselves, things may not be as simple as they appear to be at times. It's easy to miss the point if we haven't listened carefully to a report or what others say or if we have only heard half the story. We can all too easily make assumptions and jump to the wrong conclusions or be judgmental about events, whether far away or closer to home.



When we communicate with each other we know how important it is to listen carefully and understand what the other person is saying, and not just hear words. On a personal level listening and responding patiently, prayerfully and lovingly can be time consuming and hard work when life is busy, but so worthwhile when we try. We all need the help and support of each other in life and just as others can be there to listen to us in our time of need, we can listen to others.



When Jesus was on earth, He reminded people to 'love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbour as yourself'. What a difference there would be in our world if everyone kept trying to do that. When we observe consideration of others taking place around us, what an encouragement it is. We only need to see recent media reports to hear the converse about people who have not thought about the needs of others let alone shown them love.

Incessant difficult news can drag us down and be depressing and we might feel we cannot do much to help change some of the awful situations people face. Mother Teresa said: not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love. Whilst another saying that many may know, is that: evil triumphs when good people do nothing. When we read that and ponder those words, it can help galvanise us into action.

We can all do something to make a difference, which is something to keep thinking about as we make our leap into the rest of the year. There will be ample opportunities to make that difference for those we meet in life near and far, and we can encourage each other too with a sense of humour as we go, in these wintry months.

So, all good wishes as we leap into spring, and a special Happy Birthday to you if your birthday is on 29<sup>th</sup> February.

Revd Angela





Revd Canon Jenny Gray



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
DIOCESE OF  
ST ALBANS

## Beane Valley Benefice Services

### February 2024

**ALL are welcome**

*Just pop in, take a seat, and you'll be guided through. It's a great way to meet people and feel part of the community. Hope to see you there.*



### Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February CANDLEMAS

(end of Missing You Ribbons)

10am (new time – not 9.30am)

**Watton** Contemporary Worship

11am **Aston** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Stapleford** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Waterford** Holy Communion followed by PCC meeting

### Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 'The Transfiguration'

9.30am **Watton** Holy Communion

11.15am **Bramfield** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Stapleford** Holy Communion

### ASH WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> February –

#### Start of LENT

10am **Bramfield** Morning Prayer for Ash Wednesday *with imposition of ashes to mark the start of Lent*

7.30pm **ZOOM** Night Prayer service for Ash Wednesday

### 18<sup>th</sup> February 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of LENT

*with imposition of ashes to mark the start of Lent*

10am (new time – not 9.30am) **Watton**

Contemporary Worship

11am **Aston** Holy Communion

11.15am **Stapleford** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Waterford** Morning Prayer

### 25<sup>th</sup> February 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of LENT

9.30am **Watton** Holy Communion

11.15am **Bramfield** Holy Communion

11.15am **Stapleford** Holy Communion



### 3<sup>rd</sup> March 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of LENT

10am (not 9.30am) **Watton** Contemporary Worship

11am **Aston** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Stapleford** Prayer and Praise

11.15am **Waterford** Holy Communion

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 10am** Holy Communion 128 High St (Linda Tyler) followed by coffee and chat– all are welcome



**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2.30pm**  
**STAPLEFORD VILLAGE TEA AFTERNOON**  
in St Mary's Church. All are welcome for tea, coffee, cake and chat.

### **NIGHT PRAYER** Alternate **WEDNESDAYS** on **ZOOM**

14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm

Please contact Rev Angela

[clergy.angela@gmail.com](mailto:clergy.angela@gmail.com) for links

### Midweek Service

**Bramfield** Open Church **WEDNESDAYS**

10am - 11.30am. 10am Morning Prayer - short said service. Coffee and chat 10.30am – time to catch up with the ministry team. All are welcome.



**TUESDAYS** **Waterford** church and churchyard working parties – Contact Churchwarden Malcolm Wandrag to help.

To help in Stapleford or Watton or Bramfield please contact the Churchwardens.

**ASTON** church open Sundays 12 noon – 4pm and Wednesdays 10am – 5pm. Church and churchyard working parties first Tuesday of month 10am to 12 noon. Contact Churchwarden Sara. Thank you to all our Volunteers.

**WATTON BOOK WORMS** Usually third Friday of the month at 7pm to share supper and thoughts on our book of month. All are welcome contact [peterevernden@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peterevernden@hotmail.co.uk)





## RIP – We Remember With Love

**Mr Roger Watson** whose ashes were buried in St Mary's Stapleford on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Mr Colin Hammond** whose ashes were buried in St Michael and All Angels Waterford on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023

**Mr Martin Nash** whose ashes were buried in St Mary's Aston on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Mrs Rosemary Stille** whose memorial service was held at St Mary's Aston on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023 following a cremation at Harwood Park

**Mrs Margaret Spring** whose funeral was at St Andrew and St Mary's Watton at Stone on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 followed by a cremation at Harwood Park

**Mrs Margaret West** whose funeral was at St Andrew and St Mary's Watton at Stone on 26<sup>th</sup> January followed by a burial in the churchyard

**Miss Janet Cramp** and her twin sister **Mrs June Riley** (Margaret's nieces) whose ashes were buried with Margaret West in St Andrew and St Mary's Watton at Stone on 26<sup>th</sup> January

**For bereavement support** contact the ministry team

**You can access online help with grief** at [griefshare.org](http://griefshare.org) [thebereavementjourney.org](http://thebereavementjourney.org) [cruse.org.uk](http://cruse.org.uk) [teardropgrief.co.uk](http://teardropgrief.co.uk) [ataloss.org](http://ataloss.org)

*'Those whom we love and lose are no longer where they were before; they are wherever we are.'* (St John Chrysostom)



**Need someone to talk to?  
YOUR MINISTRY TEAM IS HERE  
FOR YOU...**

Rev Jenny Gray: 01920 830035

email [jennygrayrectory@gmail.com](mailto:jennygrayrectory@gmail.com)

Revd Angela Lynas 01992 877188 email [clergy.angela@gmail.com](mailto:clergy.angela@gmail.com)

## Pray for World Peace!

### Day of Prayer - 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024

As we remember the 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine on 24<sup>th</sup> February why not make this a day to pray for world peace wherever you are.

*Pray without ceasing*

## **CHURCHES OPEN as listed for quiet prayer and visits:**

**WATERFORD St Michael and all Angels open DAILY 10am – 4pm** for more information Contact Church Warden Malcolm 01992 552531

**WATTON at STONE St Andrew & St Mary open DAILY 10am – 3pm** for more information Contact Church Wardens Ian and Helen

**ASTON St Mary open Wednesday and Sundays.** For visits contact Church Wardens Tim 01438 880519 Sara 01438 880750

**BRAMFIELD St Andrew's Church** For visits contact Church Wardens Dorothy 01992 582132 or Peggy 01992 550467

**STAPLEFORD St Mary** For other visits contact Peter 07870 681542, John 07773 392991 or Lesley Atterwill 07773 392992

**A huge 'thank you' to the churchwardens of all our churches for all the work they do**

For all enquiries about baptism, funerals, blessings, visits, confirmation or offers to help, please contact Revd Jenny by phone or email. Please note *Mondays* are my usual day off.



**NOTE for wedding bookings and administrative enquiries:**

Pauline Manley

[Pauline.manley1966@gmail.com](mailto:Pauline.manley1966@gmail.com)

## **PRAYER for PEACE in ISRAEL, GAZA, UKRAINE and all areas of conflict**



Lord God, though peace seems humanly impossible, we continue to pray for an end to violence and bloodshed.

We pray your comfort for the fearful and broken – hearted.

Change the hearts of those set on revenge and destruction.

Give wisdom to world leaders as they respond to aggression.

Bless all who work for understanding, reconciliation and justice

which alone bring lasting peace. Amen.



**THANK YOU** to the ministry team, churchwardens, treasurers, secretaries and PCCs of our churches and to everyone who helps maintain the churchyards and buildings. **THANK YOU** to everyone who brought joy in decorating all the churches and our villages for Christmas

**SCAM ALERT...** if you receive an email from an account Revd Canon Jenny Gray it is a scam - this is not my email address! Do not open it. Do not reply to it. Report it as JUNK. If content is suspicious/involves money check the sender's email address.

## KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS .....



We are on Facebook

- St Andrew and St Mary Watton at Stone
- St Mary's Aston
- St Mary the Virgin Stapleford
- St Michael and all Angels Waterford

And you can also access an electronic version of the Parish News from any of the following websites:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7907/>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7898/>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7885/>

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7903/>

[www.watton-pc.org.uk/news/](http://www.watton-pc.org.uk/news/)



**The Bishop of St Albans, Rev Dr Alan Smith** asks for our prayers.

He has been diagnosed with prostate cancer and is due to go into the Lister Hospital on 8<sup>th</sup> February for surgery. He has

been told the prognosis is relatively good but he will be off work for three months (until May). Bishop Richard will act as our diocesan bishop, supported by Bishop Jane and the Archdeacons.

# Play Space



## Watton at Stone

### Tuesday mornings

Memorial Hall, High Street, Watton at Stone.

Parking available.

**Time: 9.00am – 12pm**



**Age Range: Baby to 3 years**

**Cost: £3.00 per child, and £1.00 per sibling**

A lunch snack will be provided for the children.

Singing time at 11.30am

Home-made cakes and refreshments available to purchase from TAC Tea Room.

Run by Take Away Church (TAC), in conjunction with the Parish church. Contact details:

Sharon @ 07931 325288



Come along and play, draw, paint, read, create, build, listen, sing, ride, eat and have fun!!!



# KIDS SPACE

## WATTON AT STONE

### Friday afternoons

Memorial Hall, High Street

Parking available

**Time: 3.30 - 5.30pm**

**Age Range: Up to Year 6**

Activities: Crafts, play, games, sewing, Bible story and singing.

Cost: £3 per child, and £1 per sibling.

Hot chocolate and fruit on arrival and finish with Pizza and Pasta.

Homemade cakes and scones available to purchase from the Tea Room.

Run by Take Away Church (TAC), in conjunction with the Parish church. Contact details: Sharon @ 07931 325288



# TAC Tea Room

Memorial Hall,  
Watton at Stone

Open:

**Tuesdays (TERM TIME only) 9am – 1pm**

**Fridays 2pm - 5pm**

A selection of homemade cakes, cookies, brownies, shortbread and scones to enjoy in our Tea Room or to take away.

We supply gift packs of shortbread and cream teas.

Cakes may also be ordered and delivered to your door.

If you are unable to pop into the Tea Room, please phone or text Sharon @ 07880 994321 to order any of our products for delivery.

**Card or cash are accepted.**

TAC Tea Room is enabling us to support the community. Please support us too!!



## Rev Jen 10 Quotes for 2024

1. "What the New Year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the New Year." (Vern McLellan)
2. "Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go. They merely determine where you start." (Nido Qubein)
3. "It's never too late to become who you want to be. I hope you live a life that you're proud of, and if you find that you're not, I hope you have the strength to start over." (Scott Fitzgerald)
4. "Life is about change, sometimes it's painful, sometimes it's beautiful, but most of the time it's both." (Kristin Kreuk)
5. "Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties." (Helen Keller – born blind)



6. "Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbours, and let every New Year find you a better man." (Benjamin Franklin)
7. "If you're brave enough to say goodbye, life will reward you with a new hello." (Paulo Coelho)
8. "The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide you're not going to stay where you are." (P. Morgan)
9. "I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes. Because if you are making mistakes, then you are making new things, trying new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something." (Neil Gaiman)
10. "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...' (Ecclesiastes 3)

"Let our New Year's resolution be this: We will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity" (Göran Persson)

### InTouch Age UK Hertfordshire

offer confidential, non-judgemental emotional and practical support on bereavement, physical & mental health issues, cancer, end of life, a partner with dementia or any other problem. Call 01992 634964/630623 or email

[intouch@ageukherts.org.uk](mailto:intouch@ageukherts.org.uk) Web page [Age UK Hertfordshire | Our Services](#)



### HUGE CONGRATULATIONS to Janet Bird and Peter Ruffles who were given the Freedom of Hertford on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December.

Previous recipients include Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel!

Janet takes services in our village churches, St Mary's School Aston and All Saints Church Hertford, is Chair of St Mary's School Governors, serves on St Albans Diocesan committees, organised Christmas Alone in Hertford for many years, is involved with the Hertford Food Bank and more. She does everything quietly and efficiently with grace and humour...truly a Local (if not a National) 'Treasure.'

## GOING DEEPER INTO GOD' in the BEANE VALLEY BENEFICE ZOOM BIBLE STUDY SPRING 2024

Questions Jesus asks... then and now  
2pm TUESDAYS

Tues 30 Jan *Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?* (Mark 4:35-41)

Tues 6<sup>th</sup> Feb *Why do you worry?* (Matthew 6:25-26)

Tues 13<sup>th</sup> Feb *Does this offend you?* (John 6:52-65)

Tues 20<sup>th</sup> Feb *What does Scripture say?* (Luke 10:23-28)

Tues 27<sup>th</sup> Feb *Do you want to get well?* (John 5:1-15)

Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Mar *Do you believe that I am able to do this?* (Matthew 9:27-31)

Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Mar *Do you also want to leave me?* (John 6:52-71)

Tues 19<sup>th</sup> Mar *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* (Mark 15:25-41)

### EASTER BREAK

Each session stands alone – try one and see. Click the link on Monday or Tuesday's Thought for the Day to join the 40 minute session. Each week looks at the story, how people in the bible respond to Jesus' questions, our feelings and response today.

QUESTIONS  
JESUS  
ASKED ?

### Concern for our World: FEBRUARY

This month we pray for:

those in authority who have power to bring about positive change

those negotiating for peace behind the scenes

those caught up in devastating circumstances



remove any buildup, especially creosote, a fire risk.

**Don't forget the basics.** A good chimney cowl keeps out unwanted guests like debris and critters, reducing the chance of blockages. Give your chimney a visual once-over, fixing any wear and tear pronto.

Think of an open fire like an open window, you'll soon notice the cold air when your fire isn't lit. This is the reason why many people choose to go for a log burner, you take your efficiency from 10% to 85%. If you're not using it, it's well worth capping the chimney at the top.

Now, let's talk about building the perfect fire. It's an art, not a science!

#### Choose Dry Wood:

Opt for seasoned hardwoods like oak or maple. Dry wood burns cleaner, making less smoke and reducing the risk of creosote buildup.

#### Start Small:

Begin with small, dry kindling before adding bigger logs. It's like giving your fire a warm-up, ensuring a steady burn without a smoky start.

#### Leave Some Ash:

A little ash between uses (about an inch) acts as insulation, helping the fire maintain its warmth and radiate heat into your space.

#### Add Detectors:

Install carbon monoxide detectors. While it's uncommon, blockages can lead to this odourless gas. Safety first!

We're always here if you need any advice, just give us a call. **Tim's Chimneys - 07791 741860**

**THANK YOU** to all our faithful Parish News distributors. Special thanks to our longest serving volunteer, Primrose, from Waterford, for her record 46 years!

### RIVER BEANE RESTORATION ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETING

TUESDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024  
7pm STAPLEFORD VILLAGE HALL

- Butterflies of the River Beane – Andrew Wood (Herts county recorder for butterflies)
- Woodhall Estate's River Beane restoration project phase 3 – James Champkin (Affinity Water)

[rbra.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:rbra.secretary@gmail.com)  
<https://www.riverbeane.org.uk/>

### CHIMNEY SAFETY

As winter settles in, there's something magical about gathering around a crackling fire. To make sure your cosy moments are also safe, we've put together a helpful guide to chimney safety and creating the perfect, secure blaze.

Let's start by looking after your chimney. Think of it as the heart of your fireplace. It needs a little TLC to keep things running smoothly. Schedule a visit from a chimney sweep before the winter chill sets in. They'll



### Women's Fellowship and Mothers' Union

There will be no Mothers' Union meeting in February.

# NEWS FROM THE VILLAGES

## BRAMFIELD

### WHAT'S ON IN BRAMFIELD

#### **Bramfield Carpet Bowls**

Meets Village Hall

Monday eve 7.30pm to 9.30pm

**COME AND TRY IT** Everyone Welcome

Enquiries Mike Jones

01992 550182



#### **Exercise Dance Class**

Monday 1.15pm to 2.15pm

£5.50 per person

Contact Sofie Porter

07761 768059

#### **Parish Council Meets Every other 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month**

Clerk Chris Underhill

07714 711253

#### **Village Hall Committee Meets**

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the Month 8pm

Contact Cheryl Jackson

01992 583958

#### **Bramfield Book Club**

Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

Contact Louise

01992 583173

[Gibbslouise83@gmail.com](mailto:Gibbslouise83@gmail.com)

[LOOK US UP ON FACEBOOK And BRAMFIELD VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE](#)

It seems the village of Bramfield has its very own yarn bomber, and I'm sure everyone in the village would join me in saying "thank you" to whoever it is. For the second year running we were treated to some superbly knitted decorations. We had a group of carol singing snowmen on the postbox joined by an audience of charming little birds and animals sitting along the back of the bench, which were all beautifully made and such fun. We don't know who knitted them for us, but we do want to say "thank you" and to tell them that these small acts of kindness are much appreciated.

## WATERFORD

### Waterford Parish News

One of Waterford's annual highlights is that Father Christmas visits our village hall on the first Saturday in December. We like to be his first visit and start Advent

with a flurry of hall decorating and Christmas trees, this year most generously donated by the Woodhall Estate. Never ones to stand still though, we decided to tweak tradition and focus on our community with a Christmas Cafe and Craft sale. So, whilst the bric-a-brac may have been missed by some, the craft stall selling wares all hand-made by our talented locals, the jewellery stall and the well-stocked kitchen all did a roaring trade and the raffle was the busiest in living memory with everyone trying to get their hands on the gorgeous hamper generously donated by a local resident, all bringing in an impressive £600 profit. Not bad for two hours of fun and another drop into the new hall fund- raising bucket!

Thanks must be given, as ever, to Waterford's volunteers, shining examples of the spirit of giving and also to the committee for always delivering. All this effort would be for nothing, were it not for you who show up and support your village. So huge thanks to all who came.

#### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**

##### **Waterford Coffee & Chat Morning with Book Sale**

Saturday March 2nd 10.30 - 12.00

Free coffee

##### **Easter Bazaar**

Saturday March 30th

##### **Village Picnic**

Sunday May 5th

Live Music, Tug of War, family fun

##### **AGM**

Thursday June 13th 8pm

##### **CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

We are thinking of having a group of us, pro and not so pro, singing a few carols in Waterford Church next Christmas. If you'd be interested in joining us, do let us know by email. If we have enough people, we will start rehearsing in the Autumn so we can learn a few descants.

Here's to another year! Sending you all good wishes for 2024!

### **Sponsor a Tile in Waterford Church**

**Your initials, those of a child or a loved one in their memory, will be painted on a tile.**

Waterford church is restoring the reredos (the decorated wall behind the altar). Many of the beautiful, gold tiles and the equally beautiful glass tiles painted with a geometric design have become broken and damaged over the years and 30 new tiles are now required.

To replace the tiles requires expensive materials and skilled craftspeople to make and paint the tiles and to fix them in place so we are aiming to raise money towards this by offering the opportunity to sponsor a tile.

In return for sponsoring a tile for **£50** your initials, those of a child or a loved one whom you wish to commemorate will be painted onto a tile, additionally, a plan of the sponsored tiles showing the names of the sponsors,

whose initials are on the tile and where each tile has been placed will be permanently displayed beside the reredos. Because there is a limited number of tiles, allocation will only be made upon receipt of an application form and payment of £50. Until Friday 16th February residents of Waterford Parish will be given preference, after that applications will be allocated in the order they are received.

For more information or to receive an application form contact:

Malcolm - 01992 552531, or email either

[m.t.wandrag@gmail.co](mailto:m.t.wandrag@gmail.co)

or

[sarahebaldwin59@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahebaldwin59@hotmail.com)

### Waterford 200 Club Winning Prizes

	December	January
1 <sup>st</sup> prize	£80.00	£80.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	£40.00	£40.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	£30.00	£30.00
4 <sup>th</sup> prize	£21.00	£21.00
5 <sup>th</sup> prize	£16.50	£16.50
6 <sup>th</sup> prize	£16.50	£16.50

## WATTON AT STONE

### The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2023



Thanks to all the shops, pubs, churches, train station, especially the schools and all the house to house collectors in helping to raise £3,656.61 this year. The Royal British Legion have informed me that I will be notified of the amount collected via the QR codes in January.

Thanks also to the residents of Watton-At-Stone for their generosity and continued support.

Lyn Oakman

**A poem for Margaret West who** celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday in May 2023, written by her niece Janet (now also deceased). Janet and her twin sister June's ashes were buried with their aunt Margaret in Watton at Stone on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

She is very well known in Watton at Stone,  
a pillar of the community,  
knows everyone by name;  
without her trips through the village  
it wouldn't be the same.  
Our lovely Auntie (Arnie)  
delivering the Parish News,  
swapping news and views!  
A staunch supporter of the fete,  
always welcome through her gate;

if not in, try the Church or – maybe the pub!

Givin' pots and pans a scrub,  
always at the hub,

so unique – a precious antique,  
beloved and cherished as we speak.

Though born in Fulham, we have roots in Scotland,  
McDonald by name, not the burger chain!

Born in an era for make do and mend,  
was the trend,

Arnie always there – to patch, match, repair,  
knew all the tricks of the trade – Bespoke Handmaid -  
Picked up some tips when she worked at Harvey Nicks

Then came the Blitz

had to make do with pie & mash, Corned beef hash  
or dumpling stew -

Bread Pudding was favourite too!

Bread 'n' dripping a treat – with cold fat from the meat  
Happy memories of days gone by

Doodle bugs, Jitter bugs, Tanks 'n' Yanks  
Arnie – Many Thanks

## WATTON WOOLLIES



St Andrew and St Mary's Church would like to say a **HUGE** thank you to the Watton Woollies for their amazing Christmas displays around the village and for the amazing £83 which was raised for our Parish Church.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES 2024

Saturday 27 April	Quiz Night
Monday 27 May	Village Fete
Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 July	Flower Festival
Sunday 7 July	Strawberry Teas at the Church
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup> October	Quiz Night

Further details will be featured in the Parish News



## 1<sup>st</sup> Watton at Stone Guides

1st Watton at Stone guides took part in the Hertford Remembrance parade. Well done to Eva and Lucy who did an amazing job laying the wreath for the Hertford district.

We had a climbing session and won the district Christine Culham cup.

Thanks to all the parents who supported the bingo night and raised enough money for our pledge of support to the Kanyike project and we also collected for our local food bank.

Last but not least a huge well done to Isla who has completed her Gold Award.

## WATTON AT STONE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council are delighted to announce the unanimous election of Richard Lewis to the role of Vice-Chair of the Watton at Stone Parish Council. Richard is currently Chair of the Nigel Poulton Community Hall Trustees and this new position reflects his dedication to the parish and our beautiful village

### DO WE WANT TO KEEP THE METHODIST CHURCH BUILDING ?

**I DO**, the Methodists may have closed their church in Watton-at-Stone, but the Chapel and its Hall have been a valued asset to the village for many years and I would like to see it retained for use by the village.

The Chapel has been the home to the Methodists since 1891 situated in a prominent and central position in the High Street. Apart from its main use as a place of Christian prayer and worship it has also been used for exhibitions, fundraising events, meetings, the very popular lunch club, exercise classes plus children's events including parties. The buildings which have been well maintained and equipped including a very good kitchen, are surrounded by a reasonable car park and a Meditation Garden. All this means it is a substantial village asset which would be missed and lost for good if it is sold and commercially developed assuming planning permission can be obtained.

I declare I do have a vested interest because there already exists in the village a viable Christian organisation, endorsed by the Parish church, providing very young children's activities and a kids' club during week-days. The Methodists building lends itself perfectly for these activities which could be developed further and offer opportunities for village organisations to hire the premises including the lunch club which is currently having to use a less suitable venue. The New Contemporary Church could also meet there on Sunday mornings.

I am contacting you as residents because I feel if the buildings are sold it would be a great loss to the village. It is probably the best equipped building for community use that we have and should be retained in some form. The Methodists seem intent on selling unless they can be persuaded otherwise.

If you feel as I do, please let me know and put forward any ideas that you think may help this cause.

**Maurice Gordon - maurice.g@ntlworld.com**

## News from Watton at Stone Primary and Nursery School

*A successful, highly praised, well-resourced school in the heart of the village with One Form Entry (one class per year group) for Pre-school, Nursery, Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5, and Year 6*

Things at Watton at Stone school were very busy last month in the run up to Christmas. The children and teachers all worked very hard to produce some outstanding and well-received Christmas shows with songs, poems and Christmas jokes.

The whole school was treated to the pantomime "Jack and the Beanstalk" run by a theatrical company. The children thoroughly enjoyed this morning of entertainment which launched our Christmas celebrations this year.

December also saw the Christmas lunch, Christmas jumper day and the Santa run, when the children ran 1964 laps of the playground to represent the number of miles between Watton at Stone and Lapland! We also welcomed parents and families into school for our annual Christmas Enterprise Day – the children made various items to sell and ran their own stalls in their classrooms.

Some of the children in Key Stage 2 attended an activity day at Wodson where they got to experience sports such as archery, boxing, volleyball and bowls. And the school choir took part in a carol service at All Saints Church in Hertford where they sang as a combined choir with four other schools.

In January, we are celebrating International Week and learning more about far flung places. While in February we will be learning about internet safety and enjoying no pens day - where children focus on learning without using pens. The teachers always come up with creative alternative ways to learn! The year sixes will also be sitting their mock SATs, and we wish them the best of luck. They have prepared hard, so we hope to see excellent results.

Watton at Stone school recently retained its Ofsted status as a "Good School" and is a friendly, supportive local school. We have a very active PTA, "Friends of Watton" who organize some excellent events that are fun for adults and kids alike and raise valuable funds to enable additional activities and resources to be purchased by the school.

If you're considering whether Watton at Stone could be the right school for your child, please contact the school office on 01920 830233, or email [admin@wattonatstone.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@wattonatstone.herts.sch.uk)

## WATTON-AT-STONE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Open every Tuesday 10:00 – 12:00 in the Nigel Poulton Community Hall .Loads of books to choose from including Children's books, plus various jigsaw puzzles. No charges or fees involved or borrowing time constraints. Come along and have a browse





## Watton at Stone Parish Council

### Are you our next Councillor?

After nearly 30 years of outstanding service, one of our Parish Councillors is standing down which means we have a vacancy that we would very much like to fill. If you have a genuine interest in the village, this would be an ideal opportunity to further that interest and make a difference - you are an ideal candidate.

We are a dynamic new team and meet every second Tuesday of the month in the Nigel Poulton Community Hall at 19.15. If you would like to know more, please contact our Clerk, Jane, in the first instance. Or visit our website [Parish Council | Watton At Stone \(watton-pc.org.uk\)](http://Parish Council | Watton At Stone (watton-pc.org.uk)) and give us a call.

Jane Allsop, Parish Clerk  
9 Beane Road, Watton at Stone, SG14 3RG  
Telephone : 01920 830330  
Email : [clerk@watton-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@watton-pc.org.uk)



Instagram - Wattonatstonecc

Website - [www.wascc.co.uk](http://www.wascc.co.uk)

Email - [wattonatstonecc@gmail.com](mailto:wattonatstonecc@gmail.com)

X - @Wattonatstonecc

We are always on the search for new players. We currently have a Saturday League XI and a Sunday Friendly XI.

We are a fantastic club to be part of and we welcome everyone. If you are looking at getting back into cricket having played previously, or are looking for a new challenge, then let us know.

## ANSWERS TO CHRISTMAS QUIZ

A. Food and Drink Related		
1.	T H a v e Y C A E I	To have your cake and eat it
2.	A D a s A L	As drunk as a Lord
3.	O O T F P I T t h e F	Out of the frying pan into the fire
4.	T P o f T P I s I T E	The proof of the pudding is in the eating
5.	F W P n o P	Fine word butter no parsnips
6.	A W P N B	A watched pot never boils
7.	A n A A D K t h e D A	An apple a day keeps the doctor away
8.	B W M i n H M	Butter wouldn't melt in his mouth
C. Christmas on Stage and Screen		
1.	I A W L	It's a Wonderful Life
2.	S W a n d T S D	Snow White and the Seven Dwarves
3.	T W o f O	The Wizard of Oz
4.	T h e L T W A T h e W	The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe
5.	M M e I S L	Meet me in St Louis
6.	J A t h e B S	Jack and the Beanstalk
7.	T S	The Snowman
8.	D W a n d H C	Dick Whittington and his Cat

B. Children's Books		
1.	T T W C t o T	The Tiger Who Came to Tea
2.	T H a t P C	The House at Pooh Corner
3.	G H M I L Y	Guess how much I love you
4.	W e D M T G t o S	We didn't mean to go to sea
5.	H P A t h e O O T P	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
6.	D T C o f T W	Danny the Champion of the World
7.	T h e C I N H	The Cat in the Hat
8.	T T H E N B C	Twas the Night before Christmas
D. To Do With Numbers		
1.	L B A t F	Life begins at 40
2.	A P W A T W	A picture's worth a thousand words
3.	A S i n T S N	A stitch in time saves nine
4.	T F C o f T E	The four corners of the earth
5.	T H a r e B T O	Two heads are better than one
6.	T S a n d Y O	Three strikes and you're out
7.	B t o S O	Back to square one
8.	C a t H t h e P	Cheap at half the price

E. Good Old Proverbs		
1.	E C H a S L	Every cloud has a silver lining
2.	A F in N I A F I	A friend in need is a friend indeed
3.	A B I T H is W T I N B	A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush
4.	T G I A G on T O S	The grass is always greener on the other side
5.	D C Y C B T are H	Don't count your chickens before they are hatched
6.	D J a B B I C	Don't judge a book by its cover
7.	N P O U T what Y C D T	Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today
8.	T P is M T T S	The pen is mightier than the sword

G. UK Prime Ministers		
1.	Who was the first Prime Minister	Walpole
2.	Which Prime Minister was a bachelor	Heath
3.	Which Prime Minister married Miss Booth	Blair
4.	Which Prime Minister created the police force	Peel
5.	Which Prime Minister had been First Lord of the Admiralty in WW1	Churchill
6.	Which Prime Minister was assassinated whilst in office	Percival

F. Royalty	
1.	Charles Philip Arthur George
2.	Anne Elizabeth Alice Louise
3.	George Alexander Louis
4.	Balmoral Castle
5.	Sandringham House
6.	Anmer Hall

H. How Well do you Know James Bond 007		
1.	Name James Bond's ancestral home	Skyfall
2.	How many Bond actors have been knighted	Two (Sean Connery and Roger Moore)
3.	Which Bond film is name after Ian Fleming's Jamaican estate	Goldeneye
4.	Which actor has played Bond the most and who has played him the least	Roger Moore/ George Lazenby
5.	Which is the only Bond novel narrated from a woman's point of view	The Spy Who Loved Me
6.	Who is the only singer to perform more than one James Bond theme	Shirley Bassey



A gentle reminder that Christmas wreaths and other decorations must be removed from graves in our churchyards by the end of FEBRUARY. Graves belong to the Church of England and are subject to the **2020 Church of England Churchyard Regulations** (summary in each churchyard, in full on the C of E website). Our village churchyards are inspected regularly by the Archdeacon. Churchwardens are required to **REMOVE** items which are **NOT PERMITTED** to protect the environment and aid churchyard maintenance.

The 2020 Church of England Regulations state:  
**No candles or solar lights / No plastic, china or glass containers / No photographs, letters, cards or other mementoes / No faded artificial or dead flowers / No shrubs or bushes / Bulbs or flowers may be planted *in* but not *outside* a grave. The grave space may not be extended. Gravel or surrounds may not be added. Headstones, additions and alterations require approval on a blue form (available from stonemasons)**

All our churchyards are cared for by volunteers.

Donations and offers of help are welcomed.

To include a loved one in the church's Book of Remembrance contact the churchwardens.

For a visit from the ministry team contact the Rector Rev Canon Jenny Gray [jennygrayrectory@gmail.com](mailto:jennygrayrectory@gmail.com)

01920 830035.

# Waterford Nature Notes

## (December and January)



The first Fieldfare and Redwing that I saw were in Yorkshire in late October, around Waterford, I saw Redwing in the second week of November but didn't see any Fieldfare until late November, I suspect they were around but I just didn't spot them. I reported in November on the huge crops of berries such as Holly and Hawthorn, the trees in the field at the top of Timber Orchard still bore their crops on the morning of 13th December, by late afternoon on the 14th, almost every berry had been stripped. Because I had seen Redwing and Fieldfare around that area, I think they would have been feeding on the berries.

Over the course of two days while walking alongside the plantation over the reclaimed land at the top of Timber Orchard the 'Merlin' app on my phone identified the following bird calls/song Meadow Pipit, Blackcap, Siskin, Goldcrest, Nuthatch, Redwing as well as all the common, garden species.

We had a Magpie trying to behave like a Blue Tit under the eaves of our shed, perching on the roof then flying down and trying to cling onto the vertical wall, while pecking at something. After the Magpie gave up, I investigated and found a number of hibernating ladybirds as well as a few sacs of spider eggs that seemed to be what had attracted the Magpie but how it found them in the first place is a mystery.

The American Society of Ornithology (AOS) has begun a project to rename birds that are named after people; there are two reasons for this, firstly a bird named 'Reed Warbler', for example, tells us something about the bird whereas 'Cetti's Warbler' tells us nothing, secondly, there is much discussion on aspects of, for example how colonialism continues to affect cultures, so to avoid controversy over which names are acceptable, they are taking out all names of people. As an aside to this, the vast majority of people names are those of men.

My Southgate correspondent reported a confirmed sighting of a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, I read an article recently that stated there are only an estimated 2-3,000 nesting pairs in the UK so this was a wonderful spot and worthy of reporting to the County Recorder.



As I was getting into my car in a car park in Hertford, I happened to glance up and saw two birds perched in a tree. The birds had a distinct crest so I went for a closer look and saw that they were Waxwings - the first time I have ever seen this species so a real thrill. There have been many articles in newspapers and magazines on Waxwings in the past couple of months so I won't say any more about them here.

I had a report of a Peacock butterfly in a garden on 8th December, this is one of the species that can wake from its dormant, Winter state on a mild day and return to it when the day cools again.



One evening in late November when locking the church, I noticed a flock of about 50 -100 small birds swooping, diving, circling in changing patterns, it has been repeated every evening since. Even with binoculars, it was impossible to identify the birds as they were silhouetted against the sky. At this time of year finches come together to exchange information on sources of food and safe roosts, etc. just as Starlings do in their well-known aerial displays. A bird that hasn't fed well during that day might position itself next to one that seems to have done so (sleek, glossy, etc.) and will then follow it when it leaves the roost in the morning hoping to be led to the source of its food. The flocks might include our common finches as well as Bramblings, Tits, Linnets, and other, similar species. Small birds can lose up to a third of their bodyweight overnight in cold weather; as I have written before - survival depends upon an equation between energy expended in feeding and energy gained so why do these flocks expend energy to no benefit as they are not feeding? The answer is believed to be that the energy expended in these aerial manoeuvres serves to warm them up before going to roost, where they will conserve that warmth. The reason they fly in formation is that it makes it harder for a predator to prey upon them.

Malcolm



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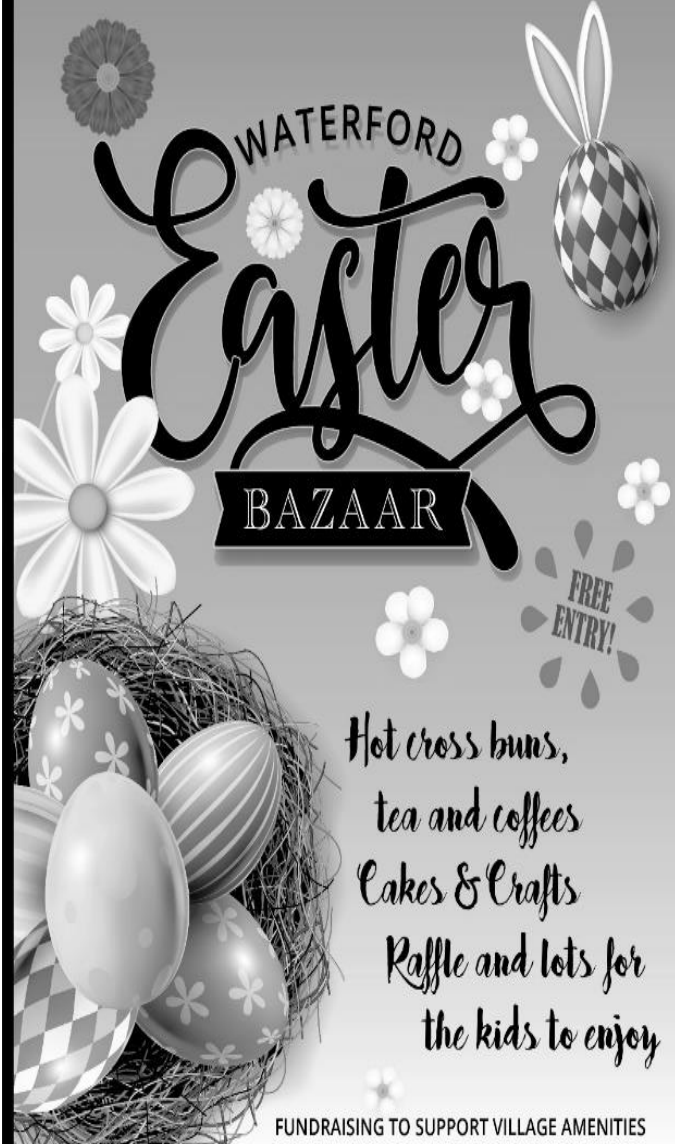
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To book contact Adam via email:  
adam\_gundy99@hotmail.com

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 Please send any items for the next edition  
**BY 12<sup>TH</sup> OF THE MONTH**  
 To the Parish Reps or the Editor:

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Denise Hodgson

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 Tim Alexander (01438 880519)  
**Bramfield:** Peggy Wareham (01992 550467)  
 Dorothy Abel Smith (01992 582132)  
**Stapleford:** Nicola Page (Church rep) (01992 302501)  
**Waterford:** Malcolm Wandrag (01992 552531)  
**Watton:** Ian Knight (07778 401799)  
 Helen McCash (01920 830665)



# Watton-at-Stone

## Sports Clubs Newsletter

Issue

225

Feb 24

### Watton Ramblers

#### Beating the Bounds: Leader Maurice Gordon

After fuelling up with mince pies and mulled wine, 12 set-off on this annual walk around the village boundaries. Among the group were a couple of ladies from Stevenage looking for a walk in the area who happened to find us and joined in.

It was a bright and pleasant morning after all the recent rain and not surprisingly the route was wet and very muddy in places. From the sportsfield, we traversed the allotments path to reach the church field and crossed the High Street by the War Memorial. Over the fast-flowing river and passed Watton Nursery we then took the path across the field behind Watton House and up towards the by-pass slipping and sliding a little to reach Mill Lane for a brief stop where we could view the village below in bright sunshine. Continuing northwards along the Memorial Path we slipped and slid a bit more as we headed alongside the developing woodland created by the Woodhall Park Estate many years ago to reach the high point near the footpath crossing of the by-pass and the fairy grove established by young children a while back and looking a bit neglected. Now on firmer ground we continued round the field to reach the Walken Road near the bridge. Many had had enough of the adventure in the mud and although no one had lost their footing we decided to take the Lammas Path and returned home. A walk of not much more than 3 miles but a great way to start the New Year.

#### Walk Programme – February / March

##### Tuesdays in February/March

Short 1-hour slow morning walks for all starting at the Watton Community Hall at 10.00am. These walks are available for allcomers and worth a try if you are recovering from something or need a little gentle exercise.

(Further details from Maurice Gordon 01920 426344)

##### Sunday 18 February

Meet at 9.30am at the Watton Community Hall car park to arrange lifts for a half day walk of approx. 4 to 5 miles in the Bramfield area. Leader Derek Henley.

##### Thursday 12 March

Meet at 1.30pm at the Watton Community Hall car park to arrange lifts for an afternoon walk of approx. 3 miles in the Dane End/Whitehall area. Alternatively, if going direct, meet at 2.00pm at The Horses Meadow car park in Dane End. Which is near the Munden Road/Whempstead Lane junction.

### Watton Tennis Club

The Annual Newsletter and Membership Details for the 2024 Season have been sent out to current members.

If anyone else would like a copy, please contact [wattontennisclub@outlook.com](mailto:wattontennisclub@outlook.com)

#### Newcomers are always welcome.

The new season starts March 1st.

Club Sessions will continue to run throughout February weather permitting. Adult sessions are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings plus Saturday afternoons and Junior Coaching is on Thursday afternoons.

We have a team in the East Herts Mixed Doubles Winter League as well as a team in the Mens Vets competition which are now underway on Saturdays and Sundays throughout the winter and into spring. The rain has been playing havoc with the schedule and we've had some mixed results.

The Club Sessions on Monday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday afternoons are organised via *WhatsApp* groups. If you are a club member who would like to join one of these groups, please contact the club on the email below.

Adult Coaching runs on a Wednesday evening with Mark Roskilly coaching. The session runs from 7.30 – 9pm. A reminder is sent out via *WhatsApp* but sign up for this session is not necessary. Club members please contact the club on the email below to be added to the group.

Junior Lessons are on Thursdays from 3.30 – 7.30pm. Newcomers are always welcome. Please contact the Club Coach, Ian Vosper, with any coaching enquiries: [vosperlorri@aol.com](mailto:vosperlorri@aol.com) or 07960 519373

#### Dates for your Diary:

The Club Tournament will be on Saturday June 29th 2024

The Christmas Party and presentations will be on Saturday 7th December 2024.

The AGM will be on Tuesday 7th January 2025

If you would like a copy of the Club's Annual Newsletter or information about joining the club please contact the Membership Secretary at: [wattontennisclub@outlook.com](mailto:wattontennisclub@outlook.com) or [07984690727](tel:07984690727).

## Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club

Even in the deep mid-winter Watton-at-Stone Cricket Club remains active. We have been playing in the Herts and Essex Indoor Cricket League where we won two thirds of our games and came fifth. There is then a knock-out cup in which we made it to the final where we were beaten by a strong Harlow side. It has been great fun time and keeps us ready for the pre-season which starts now.

Nets, at this time of year, are indoor too. They take place on Thursdays from 9:00 pm at HECC. More information and to book, contact Brad on 07801 790915.

As the weather improves, we will be holding supervised outdoor net sessions at The Meadow and you are also welcome to use the nets on a casual basis at any time whenever they are not being used by the club (please, no spikes or studs on the 'all-weather' surface).

The outdoor season starts before the league programme with the first of our full schedule of friendlies being a home game against Boxmoor on Saturday 20 April. We are in the same division of the league this year as last, starting away at Pinner on 11 May and playing every Saturday through until the last game on 7 September away at Rickmansworth.

As ever, we welcome new players to the club. If you are new to the village, looking for a new club or looking for a first club, get in touch and you are sure to receive a warm welcome. Call Brad on 07801 790915.

You may be receiving this edition of the Parish News in time to come along to our Annual Quiz on Friday 2 February at Watton School – doors open at 7:00 pm. There will be a licensed bar and entry includes an ample ploughmans platter. To book, contact Adam at [adam\\_gundy99@hotmail.com](mailto:adam_gundy99@hotmail.com) or message us on Facebook: [@WattonatStoneCricketClub](https://www.facebook.com/WattonatStoneCricketClub)

If you want to enjoy cricket, call Brad on 07801 790915.

Follow us at <http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wattonatstone>

## Pilates

Happy New Year to you all!

Curious about pilates and don't know where to start?

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You can send me an email from there for more information and to request a free trial to one of my classes.

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Laura xx

07710. 408974

<b>Contact Points</b>	<b>PILATES</b> Laura Jeffs 07710 408974	<b>CYCLING</b> Alan Headland 01920 830351	<b>WATTON VETS FOOTBALL</b> Steve Betts 07970 698139	<b>YOUTH FOOTBALL</b> Derek Hill 01438 813684	<b>LADIES FOOTBALL</b> Steve Betts 07970 698139	<b>SATURDAY FOOTBALL</b> Paul Reynolds 07794 791978
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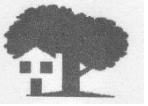
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