

PARISH NEWS

The Beane Valley Benefice

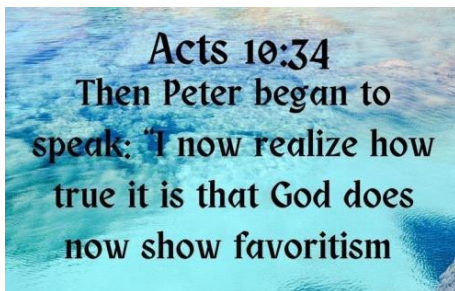
www.achurchnearyou.com

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

March 2024



Religion is often used to justify war, as we see in Russia, Gaza, Israel and elsewhere today. '*Dieu et mon droit*' ('God and my Right') has been the motto of British monarchs since Henry V, on coats of arms, military badges and flags. '*Gott mit uns*' ('God is with us') appears on Prussian heraldry from 1701, adopted later by the German military. Many people ignore the truth St Peter reluctantly learns that '*God shows no partiality*'. God doesn't take sides.



God is not a tribal God. Despite passages in the Old Testament which suggest the contrary, (like verses quoted by Netanyahu equating Gaza with the biblical Amalekites), Jesus makes it clear God has no favourites. God loves the people of Israel *and* her enemies unconditionally and equally. God makes no distinction between Jew, Arab or anyone else - 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' writes St Paul in his Letter to the Galatians (3:28).

Throughout the bible, God invites us to share in the flourishing of life, for *all* creation and *all* people. Jesus never told us life would be free of suffering and injustice. Bad stuff happens to everyone. The world is often very dark. But Jesus assures us God is with us *in* the darkness, calling us to meet every dispiriting situation head-on, with faith, hope and loving action.



Jesus' agony on the cross on Good Friday shows there are no short cuts to a better world. But his resurrection on Easter Day tells us suffering, evil and death do not have the last word. Love wins through.

God calls us to be people who love, using each day to make a difference for good, building the world we want to see, becoming the people we want to be. Acts of generosity and kindness change the lives of those who receive *and* those who give.

'There is no bad religion, there are only bad people,' said Nelson Mandela.
'If it is not good, it is not of God' (Anon).

Love Life, Live Lent 2024

Revd Jenny



Revd Canon Jenny Gray



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS

Beane Valley Benefice Services

March 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 3rd March 3rd SUNDAY of LENT

10am Watton 'Church in the Pub' New informal contemporary worship in George and Dragon

Contact Sharon **07931 325288**

11am Aston Prayer and Praise

11.15am Waterford Holy Communion

11.15am Stapleford Prayer and Praise

Sunday 10th March MOTHERING SUNDAY

with blessing of daffodils to give away from 'Mother Church'



9.30am Watton Holy Communion

9.30am – 11.30am Watton Memorial Hall Mothering Sunday FREE

Breakfast to book Contact Sharon 07931 325288

11am Aston New Family Service for Mothering Sunday – all welcome

11.15am Bramfield Prayer and Praise

11.15am Stapleford Holy Communion

Sunday 17th March PASSION SUNDAY

10am Watton 'Church in the Pub' New informal contemporary worship in George and Dragon. Contact Sharon **07931 325288**

11am Aston Holy Communion

11.15am Waterford Morning Prayer

11.15am Stapleford Prayer and Praise



Sunday 24th March PALM SUNDAY

10am Watton Benefice Holy Communion for all the churches with reading of the Passion Gospel story of Holy Week



HOLY WEEK

MAUNDY THURSDAY 28th March

7.30pm Waterford Benefice service. Simple Last Supper Meal in church, followed by a short service of Holy Communion and stripping of the altar – please join us. Contact Malcolm m.t.wandrag@gmail.com

GOOD FRIDAY 29th March

Reflective service with readings, prayers and hymns

Aston 11am

Bramfield 11am

Watton 2pm



Sunday 31st March EASTER SUNDAY

9.30am Watton Holy Communion

11am Aston Holy Communion with Easter Egg Hunt

11.15am Bramfield Holy Communion

combined service for **Stapleford** and **Waterford**
No services at Stapleford and Waterford today

You are welcome to attend a service in ANY church on any Sunday. Activity bags or activities are provided for children

NIGHT PRAYER Alternate WEDNESDAYS on ZOOM

13th and 27th March at 7.30pm

Please contact Rev Angela

clergy.angela@gmail.com for links



Give up...take on...care more... for LENT

PRAY to grow in love

FAST from unhealthy and unnecessary

GIVE time and money

Make a difference to the community, to someone in need, to the planet

Midweek

Tuesday 19th MARCH 10am Holy Communion
128 High St (Linda Tyler) followed by coffee and
chat – please ring **Linda 01920 830469**



Wednesday 20th MARCH 2.30pm
STAPLEFORD CHURCH TEA AFTERNOON
all are welcome for tea, coffee, cake
and chat.



WEDNESDAYS 10am Morning Prayer
Service in St Andrew's Bramfield
(short said service) Coffee, chat and
sometimes cake 10.30am
Time to catch up with the ministry
team.

2pm MONDAY 9th February ASTON Bible Study
Fellowship, 3 Long Ridge Aston with tea and
biscuits (1st and 3rd Mondays) contact Pauline
Manley pauline.manley1966@gmail.com

TUESDAYS Waterford Church and Churchyard
Working parties – Contact Churchwarden Malcolm
Wandrag to help m.t.wandrag@gmail.com

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
wardenstmarys@gmail.com **Thank you to all our**
Volunteers.

For bereavement support contact the ministry team

You can access online help with grief at
griefshare.org thebereavementjourney.org
cruse.org.uk teardropgrief.co.uk 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

Revd Angela Lynas 01992 877188 email
clergy.angela@gmail.com

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



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/



TAC Tea Room

Memorial Hall
Watton at Stone

Tuesdays 9am – 1pm
Fridays 2pm - 5pm
(CLOSED 29 March—16 April)

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!!



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



PRAY for PEACE in ISRAEL and 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.




KIDS SPACE

WATTON AT STONE

Friday afternoons
CLOSED 5th and 12th APRIL
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

Play Space



Watton at Stone

Tuesday mornings (CLOSED 2nd and 9th April)

Memorial Hall, High Street

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!!!



Rev Jen 10 Quotes for Lent 2024

Give up something...take something on...think of others. Lent invites us to care more deeply for ourselves and our neighbour... to grow closer to God and

be healthier/more alive in body, mind and spirit, for our own sake and the world's.

1. 'What if we view Lent... as not just a time to reflect or to lament or to confess or to fast, but a time where we learn to be free?' (Megan Westra)
2. 'Lent is like snowfall in the soul'... an invitation to find new clarity, lightness and joy in our lives. (Mark Oakley)
3. 'O Lord, make this Lenten season different from the other ones. Let me find you again. Amen.' (Rev Henri Nouwen)
4. 'Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves... What is it that stands between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and God?...' (Catherine Doherty)
5. 'Seek a relationship when you pray, not answers. You won't always find answers, but you'll always find Jesus.' (Father Schmitz)
6. 'Give something, however small, to the one in need. For it is not small to one who has nothing. Neither is it small to God, if we have given what we could.' (St. Gregory)
7. Lent comes...to shake us from our lethargy...helps us cultivate the style of the Good Samaritan who bent down to his brother in need and took care of him.' (Pope Francis)
8. 'It is not just about giving up our favourite food but ... giving up things like hatred and un-forgiveness'. (Amanda Jobs)
9. 'There's something about it that makes sense, Lent. You give something up, and everything's more joyful.' (Elaine Stritch)
10. 'Have patience with all things, but first of all with yourself.' (St. Francis de Sales)

God says: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice...to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them?" (Isaiah 58:6-7)

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 Web page [Age UK Hertfordshire | Our Services](#)

Beane Valley Women's Fellowship and Mothers' Union

Our next Social Gathering will be on 13th March 2024 in Stapleford Church at 2.30pm.

At the end of the meeting tea, coffee and biscuits will be served. We do hope that you will join us for a relaxing afternoon.

Elizabeth and Jean

Concern for our World: MARCH



This month we pray for:

Safe transport and improving connections for food provision for needy populations

Sufficient rain for crops to continue to grow in vulnerable areas

Protection of young people from damaging online content

Riding Lights Theatre Production:

The Narrow Road

Hertford United Reformed Church

Tuesday 12th March – 7.30pm

As part of the Hertford & District Churches Together Lent Events, Hertford URC has commissioned the Riding Lights Theatre Company to perform their Passion Play which is touring through Lent and Holy Week. *The Narrow Road* is more than a play to be performed for an audience; it is also a communal experience of theatre and worship. It is aimed at adults and young people aged 12 and older. The performance may be suitable for younger children who are familiar with theatre-going experiences.

*Amid the heat and beauty of ancient Palestine, a man stands alone on a dusty road. An extraordinary journey before him; one that will re-trace the footsteps of Jesus into a world of miracles and madness, violence and liberation. As **The Narrow Road** is walked this turbulent world is turned upside down; its inhabitants confronted by an unexpected challenge of a life beyond. Compellingly performed. **The Narrow Road** asks each of us to step out in faith on the journey today.*

***The Narrow Road** is a communal experience of theatre and worship for the season leading to Easter.*

GOING DEEPER INTO GOD' in the BEANE VALLEY BENEFICE
ZOOM BIBLE STUDY SPRING 2024
Questions Jesus asks... then and now
2pm TUESDAYS



Tues 5th Mar *Do you believe that I am able to do this?* (Matthew 9:27-31)
Tues 12th Mar *Do you also want to leave me?* (John 6:52-71)
Tues 19th Mar *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* (Mark 15:25-41)
EASTER BREAK
Tues 16th April *Do you understand what I have done for you?* (John 13:1-20)
Tues 23rd April *Do you love me?* (John 21:15-22)
Tues 30th April *Don't you know me, after all this time?* (John 14:6-14)

Each session stands alone – why not try one. Click the link on Monday or Tuesday's Thought for the Day to join the 40 minute session.
Email Rev Jenny to receive this Weekly Newsletter and Thought for the Day jennygrayrectory@gmail.com
You can unsubscribe at any time

**Exploring Woodhall Estate:
A Haven of Conservation and
Management**



Firstly, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Mike Treffry and I have recently taken over as Operations Director for Woodhall Estate. My family and I will shortly be relocating to Stapleford and very much look forward to joining the community. I come to Woodhall having served 23 years in the British Army. I was an officer in the Corps of Royal Engineers and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. I thought I would take the opportunity to update those in the Beane Valley area about activity on the estate.

Currently, the estate is bustling with activity aimed at enhancing its sustainability and protecting its natural habitats. One notable endeavour is the ongoing hedge trimming being conducted until the end of February. While this process may appear severe at first glance, it plays a vital role in boosting the resilience of our hedgerows. By carefully managing the hedgerows, we not only maintain their structural integrity but also provide a vital habitat for countless species of wildlife. Please be aware of this activity when driving around and give a wide berth to the tractor when it is operating.

Additionally, forestry works are underway to ensure the safety of public rights of way across the estate. These efforts are crucial in maintaining accessibility while safeguarding visitors from potential hazards. By responsibly managing our woodland areas, we create safe and enjoyable

spaces for all to explore and appreciate. The recent storms have helped weed out those trees that are weak and for every tree that falls, opportunity comes for new trees to rise. Woodhall has its own tree nursery and the team here grows our own trees from seed cultivated from the estate, protecting the environment from imported diseases.

One area that we ask for local support is in tackling fly tipping. It is now a frequent occurrence across the area and we ask that if anyone spots any fly tipping occurring or suspicious vehicles late at night along the back roads, that you record their details and inform the police. Fly tips can be reported direct to the local council at:

<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/dumped-rubbish-fly-tipping-and-littering>

Please also ensure that anyone removing waste from your property, correctly disposes of it and provides evidence to you. By working together, we can ensure that the local area remains a beacon of biodiversity for years to come.

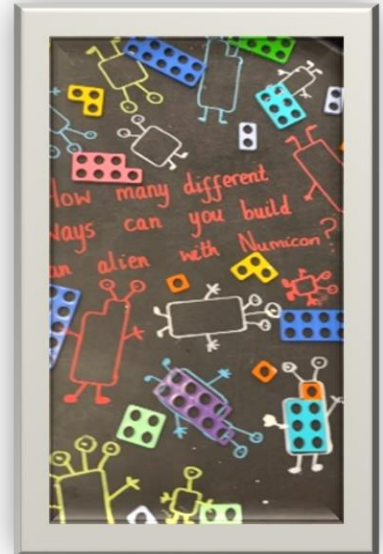
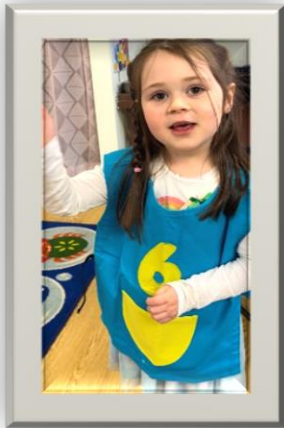
Should you spot a safety issue on Woodhall Estate, such as a fallen tree, or any other concern, please contact the estate office on 01920 830286, or email: estateoffice@woodhallestate.co.uk

Mike Treffry, Operations Director, Woodhall Estate



STAPLEFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL – NUMBER DAY!

Here at Stapleford Primary School we had a huge amount of fun by participating in the NSPCC Number Day. All day, our pupils were encouraged to embrace numbers and mathematics in creative and enjoyable ways. Our Reception and Nursery children were still enjoying their SPACE topic so their teacher set them the task of creating their own Numicon aliens. Numicons are plastic shapes that help children to visualise the relationship and value of numbers. They also make great aliens! Our older children watched a video of an athlete leaving a tube train and running to the next station only to get back into the same carriage he had just left. This took him 80 seconds! The children had to design their own obstacle courses that they could also complete in 80 seconds. They measured their heart rate before and after completing the course using stop watches. So much maths, science and fun!



Stapleford Primary is a small, rural, Church of England school in a beautiful setting. It is situated in the picturesque village of Stapleford on the outskirts of Hertford (just off the A119 between Waterford and Watton-at Stone). Surrounded by the Woodhall Park Country Estate, the River Beane and delightful farmland our pupils enjoy taking advantage of our location and getting out into nature whenever they can. Our Forest School is thriving, the children love taking care of our chickens and we are looking forward to harvesting honey from our new bee hives in the very near future.

Children can attend Stapleford Primary School once they have turned 3 years old. Our Nursery class now provides both 15 and 30 hours of childcare provision in a wonderful setting. A few places are still available so contact the school office to arrange a tour.

The extremely experienced, committed and stable staff team provide excellent staff:pupil ratios within the classes. Class sizes are never above 24 pupils. The size and ethos of our school leads our pupils to believe in themselves and their learning capabilities. We like to think that our pupils develop into well rounded individuals who we are proud to send out into the world by the end of Year 6.

The school works very closely with the village church, which extends our links with the community. They, in turn, provide the school with enthusiasm and valuable support. Pupils from all faiths are welcome at Stapleford Primary School.

**Places are available at Stapleford Primary School in certain year groups.
Call 01992 583 341 to arrange a tour.**

Email: admin@stapleford.herts.sch.uk **Website:** www.stapleford.herts.sch.uk

Instagram: [staplefordprimaryschool](https://www.instagram.com/staplefordprimaryschool) **Facebook:** [staplefordprimaryschool](https://www.facebook.com/staplefordprimaryschool) **Twitter:** [@staplefordps](https://twitter.com/staplefordps)



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
January was off to a great start with a brand new School Vision which was written following several months of work and consulting with the whole school community:

“Our school community will:

**INSPIRE a love of learning so children reach their full potential.
ENCOURAGE understanding and acceptance of themselves and others.
NURTURE emotional wellbeing and build resilience.”**

Despite the inclement weather, the children all started off the year by enjoying a Caribbean-themed International Week. Each class focused on a different Caribbean island, learning about local foods, flags and all about their culture. The children had a performance from a real live steel band in their assembly. Also, all children in Years 1 - 6 had the opportunity to play the steel pans and create some simple tunes and rhythms.

Year 4 went to Wodson Park for a P.E. Developmental Day where they learned Bollywood dancing, indoor bowls and Boccia (a Paralympic sport similar to indoor bowls).

At the end of January, we organised for the children to have an amazing day of science when we arranged for a company called Fab Science to come into school. Those in Years 3-6 were able to take part in a hands-on “Potty Potions” science workshop, while those in Years 1-2 enjoyed a science assembly workshop.

Year 5 went on their class trip to the British Museum in Hitchin where they took part in reading, writing and arithmetic lessons in an authentic classroom setting - with a very strict teacher from the museum. They also enjoyed a drill/PE session in the yard.

Year 6 and some children in Year 5 went to Wodson Park for a Sportshall competition against other local schools. We were thrilled that our boys team came first overall and our girls team came third overall. All of the children returned to school with their medals and were extremely proud of their achievements. To round off this half term, the children took part in this year’s Safer Internet Day and all classes had an age-appropriate lesson with their teacher to help them to learn to enjoy navigating the online world safely.

The final workshop of this half term was for Year 2 who welcomed the Bubble Theatre Company for a Great Fire of London workshop.

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

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 3rd Tuesday of the Month

Clerk Chris Underhill

07714 711253

Village Hall Committee Meets

1st Tuesday of the Month 8pm

Contact Cheryl Jackson

01992 583958

Bramfield Book Club

Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

Contact Louise

01992 583173

Gibbslouise83@gmail.com

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

WATERFORD

News from Waterford Recreation Committee

Believe it or not, Spring is just around the corner, despite evidence to the contrary in our recent weather, with the floods and high winds, and we have some lovely community events coming up to herald warmer weather and lighter days!

The first is a **Coffee Morning and Book Swap** on **Saturday 2nd March at 10.30am**. Amazingly the refreshments are free and it's a just a great opportunity to meet up with neighbours and friends old and new, to have a chat and a cuppa and sample the homemade biscuits and scones. There's also a **Book Swap**; so if you've got a book you've finished reading, perhaps that last best seller that you read on holiday, bring it along and swap it for someone else's pre-loved book. Again, no cost, just a chance to chat about books and get a book for free!

We are also opening our Village Book Shop, where for a donation, you can buy from the shelves any book that takes your eye.

So do come and join us for delicious refreshments, a friendly chat, and perhaps a book or two. What's not to love!

The next upcoming event is our **Easter Bazaar on Saturday 30th March from 10am to 12 noon** where the whole family can enjoy some Easter fun – children's crafts and games, an Easter Egg Hunt, a Raffle and a Crafts and Plants stall and of course delicious refreshments from our Tea Room. As always, we need your support to make these events a success. So, look out for your unwanted books to bring to our Book Swap and as you're doing your Spring Cleaning do look out for any jewellery you no longer wear, that you can donate for the jewellery stall at our Easter Bazaar (***please no other bric-a-bac donations***). You can also get baking your star bakes for our Easter Bazaar produce stall, donate chocolate for our Raffle and plants for the plant stall.

And most importantly come along to these events and enjoy a lovely community get-together, meeting village friends old and new!

Future dates for your diary

5th May Village Picnic

13th June Waterford Recreation Committee Annual General Meeting

15th September Village Summer Fete

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.com or sarahebaldwin59@hotmail.com

Waterford 200 Club Winning Prizes

	February
1 st prize	£80.00
2 nd prize	£40.00
3 rd prize	£30.00
4 th prize	£20.00
5 th prize	£16.50
6 th prize	£16.50

WATTON AT STONE

WATTON VILLAGE FETE – CRAFT AREA



This year's Watton fete will feature an area for crafters to sell their products. If you would like to reserve a place or request further information, please contact either Helen McCash mccashandhay@yahoo.co.uk or Ian Knight iancknight31@gmail.com 07778 401799.

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 th October	Quiz Night



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



Are you interested in Bell Ringing or
Just curious?

We ring at Watton and Little Munden on
alternating Mondays from 7pm

All ages and abilities are always welcome
email for more information and to join a
practice session.

bellringing111@gmail.com

The Lammas - Tree planting

Have you been down to the Lammas lately? Apart from the vast expanse of water, there are new trees by the Mill Lane entrance! The Parish Council would like to thank Tony Bradford for his amazing efforts in securing a grant from the Hertfordshire Environmental Improvement Grants to enable us to plant more trees. However, not only did Tony obtain the grant funding, he also led the planting team joined by Parish Councillor Annabel Kirk. We all feel strongly about removing trees, and the Council had to remove a large cherry tree from the allotment area. This new planting helps restore and add to our total tree life in our beautiful village. Please do go and have a look!

Watton at Stone Parish Council

The Watton-at-Stone Parish Council Outstanding Effort Award 2023

Grace Fisher

This award is to a member of the Watton-at-Stone Scout and Guide Beaver or Rainbow group (ages 5 to 8 years).

Grace is recognised for her outstanding contribution and commitment to the Watton at Stone Beavers. Grace has consistently demonstrated leadership – and has earned her Leadership Stripes, gained her Bronze Chief Scout award and 26 badges covering a wide range of skills. Grace's effort and her dedication to attending meetings and events is excellent. Grace sets a very high standard as a role model for all Beavers and the Scouting organisation.



Waterford Nature Notes

A few days after I wrote about the Finch flock over the Marsh, I was watching the flock one evening when a pair of Sparrowhawks flew past, they ignored the flock but were clearly hunting as one of the pair suddenly changed course and went after a pigeon. I didn't see the outcome as they disappeared from my sight. The strategy of the finches obviously worked on this occasion.

A few years ago, when at Abbotsbury for the Cygnet release, I was chatting to the Swannery manager when a flock of small birds flew past, he glanced at them and said, "finches". Some minutes later another flock of small birds flew past, he glanced at them and said, "Linnets". When asked, he explained to me that finches fly in loose formation whereas Linnets fly in a tight group. I was reminded of that when listening to "Tweet of the Day" on Radio 4 and the presenter repeated that observation.

I watched two Robins posturing at each other in our garden, both were puffing out their chests, shaking their wings and bodies and generally behaving like a Mod meeting a Rocker on Brighton seafront. In other birds this might have been a mating display but in Robins it is most likely to be a territorial dispute. Robins are very territorial and will defend their territory even outside the breeding season. On this occasion both birds seemed to reach an understanding and flew away without coming to blows but Robins can fight to the death. Another way in which a Robin proclaims his territory (it is the males that do so) is to sing from a perch sometimes high and often exposed, the range of the notes, the strength and the melody all serve to show that the bird is in full health and strengths which helps deter encroachers. When walking the dog early morning or late night, in the dark, Robins have been singing; over the last few decades they have begun to sing throughout the night, often selecting a perch near a light source such as a streetlamp. This change is believed to have been caused through light and noise pollution in the hours of darkness. It is unlikely that it was a Nightingale that sang in Berkeley Square, more likely a Robin but then Angels probably weren't dining at The Ritz.



For the past week or ten days there has been a very active Wren in our garden, Wrens do sometimes begin their nesting early. The male will build several nests in the hope that a female will find them satisfactory and become his mate. Male Wrens don't always stay with one mate, but might have several partners, in which case the female will be left to raise incubate the eggs and raise the brood alone. For the feminist cause there is the Red-necked Phalarope, the female will build the nest lay its eggs and then push off to find another mate, leaving the male entirely responsible for the eggs and chicks. In keeping with this role reversal, the female is the one with the bright plumage.

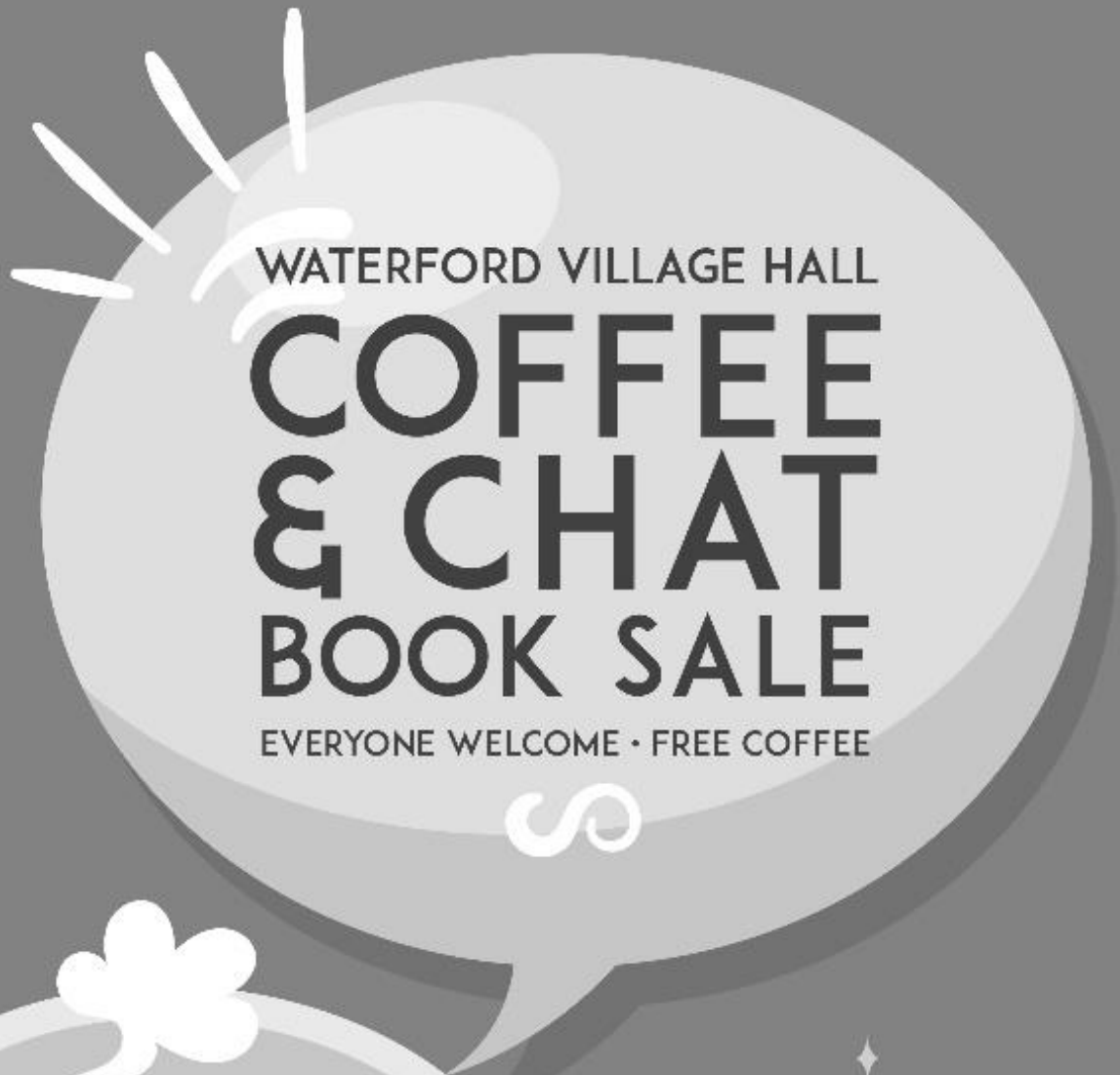
For a week now, a female frog, obviously full of eggs, has been lying on the bottom of our pond, as I thought waiting for a male to come along. I commented on this to my Somerset correspondent, he replied that it is obviously a lazy female because the usual procedure is for a male frog to find a position from which to croak in order to attract a female, it is not the role of the male to seek out the female - one lives 'n' one learns. The frogs in Somerset are already spawning.

Thoughtlessly, I left a bucket the right way up in the garden, a couple of inches of rain fell in it, so, unfortunately, did a Wood Mouse, which couldn't climb the smooth sides and drowned. The Wood Mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*), also known as Long-tailed Field Mouse is quite common and is a staple part of the diet of Tawny Owls. I should have known better but will now ensure that there aren't any such traps in the future. I put the body on our shed roof and, within an hour, it had gone, Red Kite, Buzzard, all members of the Crow family will all take carrion.

While walking in Trent Park, Enfield with my Southgate correspondent, we saw a flock of a dozen or so Siskin feeding on the ground. Siskins are similar to Greenfinches but much brighter, the males have black caps. The group consisted mainly of males with only two or three females. As we didn't wish to disturb the flock, we didn't approach to see what they were foraging for amongst the leaf litter.



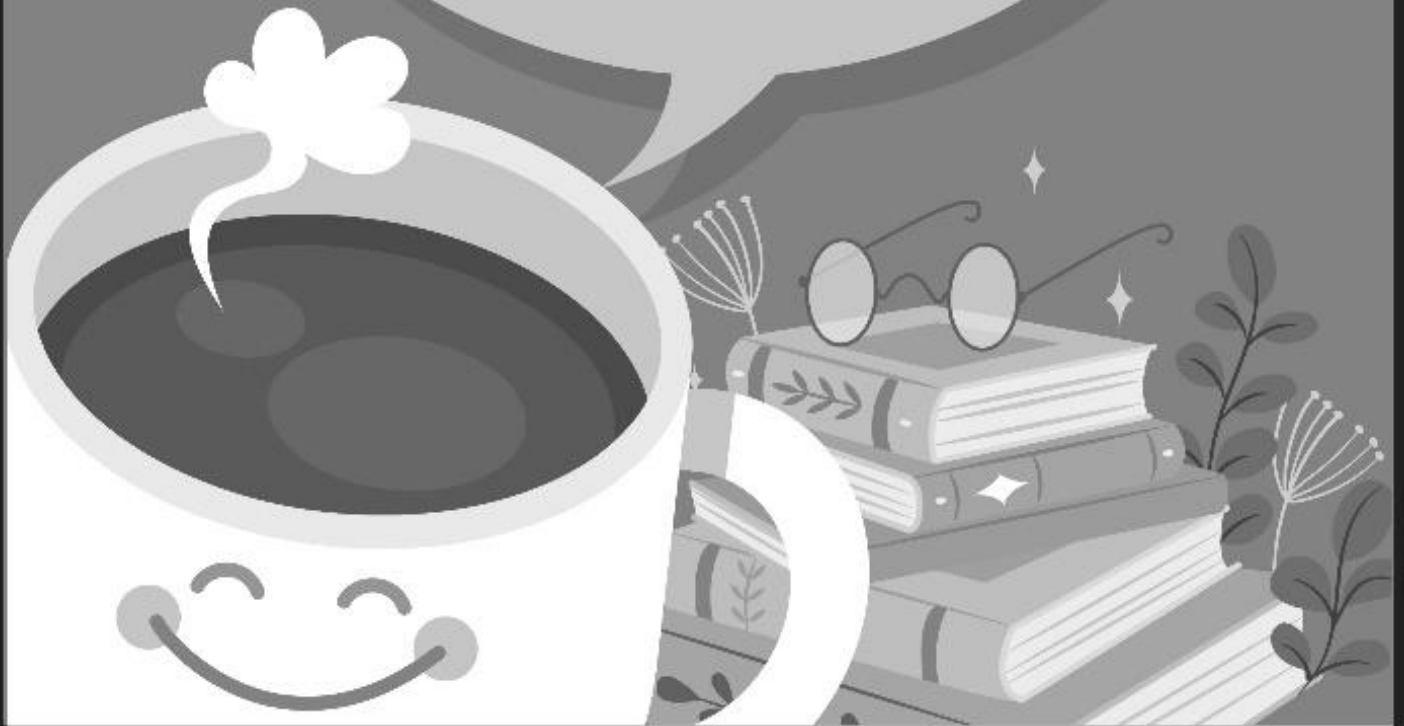
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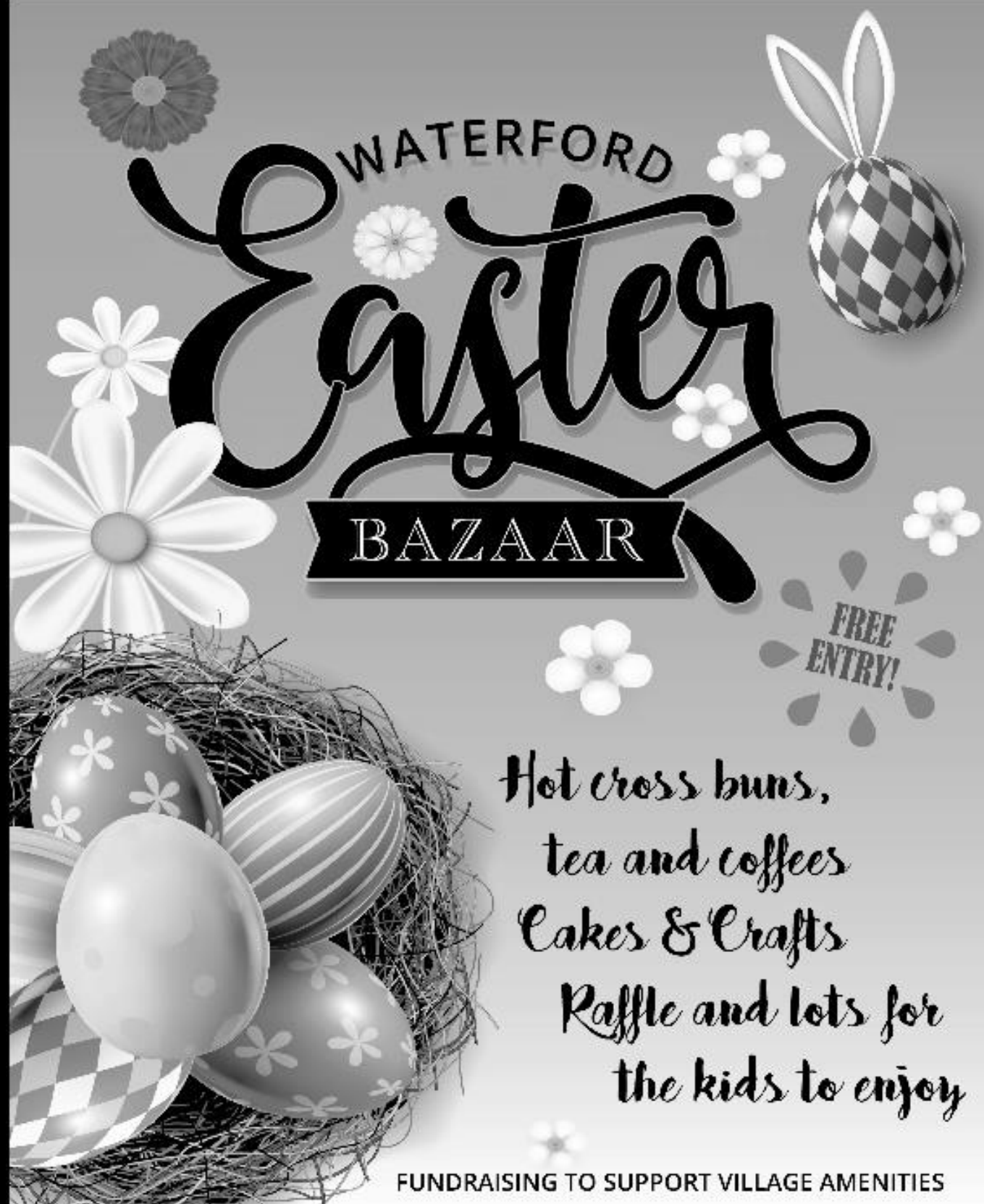
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Watton-at-Stone

Sports Clubs Newsletter

Issue

226

Mar 2024

WATTON RAMBLERS

Saturday 27 January: Leader Becky Howard

It was a clement Saturday morning when eight ramblers set off from the Community Hall along Church Lane and across the railway bridge towards Back Lane Woods. The route was a nice mix of roads and bridleways but nonetheless we managed to find a reasonable amount of mud. We skirted Bramfield Woods, stopping for the obligatory photo before heading back down Perrywood Lane to the village and to the George and Dragon where we were joined by some non-walking members making our total thirteen. This was a great opportunity to meet and catch-up with the news. A new idea enjoyed by all: something to repeat sometime.

Walk Programme – March/April

Tuesdays in March/April

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)

Thursday 14 March

Meet at 1.30pm at the Watton Community Hall Car Park to arrange lifts for an afternoon walk of approx. 5 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 (opposite Pearman Drive).

Friday 12 April

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8pm Watton Community Hall

Thursday 25 April

Weekday morning walk – Details to follow.

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

Newcomers are always welcome.

The new season starts March 1st.

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

Our team in the East Herts Mixed Doubles Winter League has almost completed their matches and after a few good results look likely to finish mid table.

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 or 07960 519373

Dates for your Diary:

The Club Tournament will be on Saturday 29 June 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 or 07984690727.

Contact	PILATES	CYCLING	WATTON VETS FOOTBALL	YOUTH FOOTBALL	LADIES FOOTBALL	SATURDAY FOOTBALL
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Contact	ARCHERY	CRICKET	SHOTOKAN KARATE	TENNIS	RAMBLING
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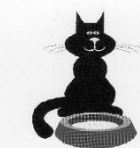
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