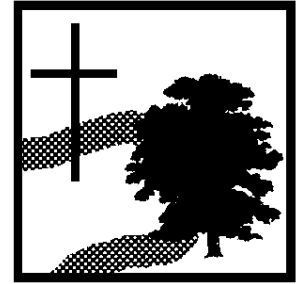


# PARISH NEWS



## *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

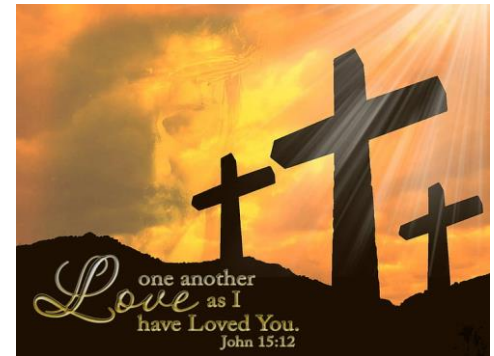
**May 2024**



*'If I knew that tomorrow was the end of the world I would still plant an apple tree today'* the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Reformer, Martin Luther, is supposed to have said. The stubborn refusal to give up when things seem hopeless and we feel helpless is a mindset our 21<sup>st</sup> Century world needs in the enormity of the problems around us.

The world might indeed end tomorrow, with global warming or nuclear war. There's little most people can do about the terrible injustice and suffering we see in the News, the desperate plight of people in Ukraine and Gaza, refugees, victims of famine, earthquakes, floods, poverty, exploitation etc. Hardship in our own country is increasing. There's uncertainty and pain in the lives of family and friends. The scale of need is depressing. It is easy to despair, to 'switch off' from problems we can't fully understand or solve. But Jesus calls us to care and act. To pray and do whatever we can to help our neighbour, anyone in need, because each person is unique and precious to God. Every child matters. This is the world God made and loves. And God is in the business of transformation, healing and making new.

The Christian faith is not reciting creeds and keeping rules, it's trying to live like Jesus, making the world a place where everyone can flourish. The cross calls us to trust God's unconditional love, whatever befalls, and reach out to others 'with generosity and joy, imagination and courage', refusing to give up, look the other way or retaliate. Caring, compassion, forgiveness etc. gives meaning and joy to the giver and the receiver. Everybody wins.



There's no 'quick fix' to making the world as it should be. It's down to us and *together* we make a difference. Individuals planting a tree, recycling rubbish, buying Fair trade and ethically produced goods, limiting consumption, challenging abuse, volunteering etc. add up. Each donation to organisations like Christian Aid to provide food, shelter, medicine etc in places of war and disaster matters. *Together* we can pray for God's Kingdom to come in the Archbishops' annual Prayer between Ascension Day and Pentecost (9<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> May).

Helping one person might not change the world but it could change the world for one person. May we be part of the change we want to see.

Rev Jenny





Revd Canon Jenny Gray



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
DIOCESE OF  
ST ALBANS

## Beane Valley Benefice Services May 2024

**ALL are welcome**

### 5<sup>th</sup> May 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

**10am Watton 'Church in the Pub'** 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

### 12<sup>th</sup> May Sunday after Ascension Day (9<sup>th</sup> May)

**9.30am Watton** Holy Communion

**11am Aston Family Service** – all welcome

**11.15am Bramfield** Prayer and Praise

**11.15am Stapleford** Holy Communion



**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**  
**12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024**  
**DONATE to Christian**

**Aid in our churches or**

**[www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals)** Appeal is focused on Burundi, one of the poorest countries in Africa, badly affected by climate change, droughts, floods and landslides.

### 19<sup>th</sup> May Pentecost 'Whitsun'

**10am Watton 'Church in the Pub'** 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

### 26<sup>th</sup> May 5<sup>th</sup> Trinity Sunday

**9.30am Watton** Holy Communion

**11.15am Bramfield** Holy Communion

**11.15am Stapleford** Holy Communion

**2pm Watton** Baptism

### 27<sup>th</sup> May 12.30pm BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY WATTON CHURCH FETE

Offers of help to churchwardens Ian and Helen

### 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Trinity

**10am Watton 'Church in the Pub'** 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

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

**9<sup>th</sup> June 10am Watton Benefice Service led by The BISHOP of HERTFORD, Rt Rev Dr Jane Mainwaring with consecration of churchyard extension**

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

### Midweek

**NIGHT PRAYER Alternate WEDNESDAYS on ZOOM**  
**8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May at 7.30pm**  
Please contact Rev Angela  
[clergy.angela@gmail.com](mailto:clergy.angela@gmail.com) for link

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2.30pm**  
**STAPLEFORD VILLAGE TEA AFTERNOON**  
in St Mary's Church all are welcome for tea, coffee, cake and chat.



**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> MAY 10am** Holy Communion 128 High St (Linda Tyler) followed by coffee and chat – please ring **Linda 01920 830469**



**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 9.15am**  
**Stapleford School Pentecost**  
**(Whitsun) Service in Stapleford**  
**Church** – for Stapleford School  
 children, staff, parents and carers and  
 villagers. Join us in church when you drop off your  
 children at school. All welcome.



**WEDNESDAYS 10am Morning Prayer**  
**Service in St Andrew's Bramfield**  
 short said service followed by coffee,  
 chat and sometimes cake. Time to  
 catch up with the Ministry team.

**MONDAYS 2pm ASTON Bible Study Fellowship**  
 3 Long Ridge Aston with tea and biscuits (1<sup>st</sup> and  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays) Contact Pauline  
[pauline.manley1966@gmail.com](mailto:pauline.manley1966@gmail.com)

**Annual General Church Meetings APCMs 2024**

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May 12 noon Waterford**  
 APCM in Church after service  
**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 8pm Stapleford**  
 APCM at the Old Vicarage



**THANK YOU to all**  
**our Volunteers**  
**TUESDAYS**  
**Waterford Church**  
 and Churchyard  
 Working parties.  
 Contact

Churchwarden Malcolm Wandrag to help  
[m.t.wandrag@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:wardenstmarys@gmail.com)



**Baptisms - we welcome**

**Florence Armitage** who was baptised  
 in St Michael and All Angels Waterford  
 on 7<sup>th</sup> April

**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 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.

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)

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

**WATERFORD St Michael and all Angels open  
DAILY 10am – 6pm** for more information Contact  
Church Warden Malcolm 01992 552531  
[m.t.wandrag@gmail.com](mailto:m.t.wandrag@gmail.com)

**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**



**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/)

**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)



**Do you know?...** May 1<sup>st</sup> is halfway  
between the Spring Equinox and Summer  
Solstice. The May Day holiday was rooted  
in agriculture – songs and dances  
celebrated the sown fields starting to  
sprout...a wonderful mix of ancient

Roman, Druid and Christian practices. On May 1<sup>st</sup> cattle  
were driven to pasture, special bonfires were lit, doors  
and livestock were decorated with yellow May flowers.  
Children would dance around the maypole, holding  
onto colourful ribbons. People would “bring in the May”  
- picking wildflowers and green branches to put in their  
homes - weave floral hoops and hair garlands and  
crown a May king and queen.

Maypoles began as a living tree which the Ancient Celts  
danced around, praying for the fertility of their crops  
and all living things. Young people began courting –  
hence the popularity of June weddings. Washing your  
face with dew on May morning would beautify the skin  
and bring good luck. Beekeepers traditionally moved  
bees in May, fishermen expected to catch fish, farmers  
planted turnips on this day.

In Devon, Cornwall and Scotland, the ancient custom of  
Beltane continues - fires are still burnt on May 1<sup>st</sup> to  
cleanse the old and welcome summer and the hope of  
new life. Children in our village primary schools still  
learn to Maypole dance. Long may this continue!

*'All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and  
small,  
all things wise and wonderful: the Lord God made them  
all.'*



**TAC Tea Room**

Memorial Hall,  
Watton at Stone

**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!!



# Play Space

## Watton at Stone



**Tuesday mornings** Memorial Hall, High Street  
Parking available.

**Time: 9.20am – 12 noon**



**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!!!

## Take Away Church (TAC) Update

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Village and Rev. Jenny Gray and the Parish Church for their support and encouragement in the community ventures we have been involved in since last summer.

We have been fortunate to be able to hire the Memorial Hall twice a week to run **TAC Tea Room** on a Tuesday morning and on a Friday afternoon. This is overseen by Sharon, and she does all the baking. We offer a selection of teas and coffees along with a wide selection of homemade baking. Come along and have a slice of your favourite, or take a risk and try one of Sharon's weekly 'Show Stoppers'!!

Here we can offer a friendly, safe space for people to come, take time out and have a change with a bit of 'me' time. Cakes and beverages can be bought to eat-in or alternatively to takeaway. Sharon is also able to take orders for any of the items for sale in the Tea Room as well as Birthday cakes.

Thank you again for your support of this venture. There is an important 'value added' to the Tea Room...the Children's work. The money raised through the Tea Room is used to help fund and subsidise the Children's groups.

We have **PlaySpace**: this is a Mums and Toddler group, supporting Mums and children from the village and the surrounding area. This is on a Tuesday morning in the Main Hall at the Memorial Hall at the same time as the Tea Room offering a variety of activities and lunch, to children of all ages who are **pre-nursery / pre-school**. A great opportunity for support, friendship and building relationships with people in similar situations...so good to know and appreciate that you are not alone.

The other group is **KidsSpace**. This is aimed at children of **primary age**, again taking place in the Main Hall at the same time as the Tea Room. At present all the children are from the village. We offer a range of play and craft activities, along with a bible story and singing. The session finishing off with supper.

Since the closure of the Methodist Building, we have maintained contact with the local leadership. We have taken every opportunity of expressing that we feel the building is an important resource within the community and voicing our interest.

Church has been slightly nomadic...In September Rev. Jenny very kindly offered us the use of the Parish Church when it wasn't being used twice a month. We used to meet there on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month. In January, we felt it was time to find a community space. We spoke with Helen and Mike at the George and Dragon...They very kindly said we could have space there, offering us great hospitality, teas, and coffees. We currently meet there at 10.00am on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. This is an informal and relaxed contemporary service. All are welcome. If you

# 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



are interested, intrigued, haven't been to church for a while for whatever reason and are thinking of re-engaging, please come along and feel free to join us... We don't bite, but we do laugh!

Any questions or queries, or how you could support us, please contact us.

- Richard: Mobile:07780452478
- Email: [Richard@Takeawaychurch.com](mailto:Richard@Takeawaychurch.com)
- Web: [Takeawaychurch.com](http://Takeawaychurch.com)

### 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](#)

### Concern for our World: MAY



#### This month we pray for:

Leaders who stand for justice and integrity in tough circumstances

Children who are carers for loved ones

Those who have experienced or witnessed life changing injury

**Rev Jen 10 Helping Others.** Whatever their beliefs, the seven Aid Workers killed in Gaza were living out God's call to 'love our neighbour as ourselves', to be 'Good News' for the poor and oppressed. The refusal to do nothing when people are suffering is shared by overseas charities like Christian Aid and volunteers in our own country. 'Helping one person might not change the world but it could change the world for one person'.



1. 'What does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.' (The Old Testament prophet Micah 6:8)
2. The Golden Rule 'do to others as you would have others do to you. This summarises the Law and the Prophets' (St Matthew 7:12)
3. 'There can be no greater gift than that of giving one's time and energy to helping others without expecting anything in return.' (Nelson Mandela)

4. Yet 'to ease another's heartache is to forget one's own.' (Abraham Lincoln)
5. 'Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.' (Proverbs 11:25)
6. 'When you do nothing, you feel overwhelmed and powerless. But when you get involved, you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better.' (P Kezer)
7. 'As you grow older you will discover that you have two hands. One for helping yourself, the other for helping others.' (Audrey Hepburn)
8. We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.' (Winston Churchill)
9. 'If you want to touch the past, touch a rock. If you want to touch the present, touch a flower. If you want to touch the future, touch a life.' (Anon)
10. 'No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted'...'If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.'" (Mother Teresa)

'We believe in life before death'. Find out more at [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)



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

Questions Jesus asks... then and now

**2pm TUESDAYS**

- Tues 30<sup>th</sup> April *Don't you know me, after all this time?* (John 14:6-14)
- Tues 7<sup>th</sup> May *Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign?* (Mark 8:1-13)
- Tues 14<sup>th</sup> May *Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?* (Luke 12:49-53)
- Tues 21<sup>st</sup> May *Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?* (Matthew 20:17-23)
- Tues 28<sup>th</sup> May *Who are my brothers and sisters?* (Matthew 12:46-51)
- Tues 4<sup>th</sup> June *Who do you say I am?* (Mark 8:27-38)

**Each session stands alone – why not try one. Click the link on Monday or Tuesdays' 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](mailto:jennygrayrectory@gmail.com) You can unsubscribe at any time

# NEWS FROM THE VILLAGES

## BRAMFIELD

### WHAT'S ON IN BRAMFIELD

#### **Bramfield Carpet Bowls**

Meets Village Hall  
Monday eve 7.30pm to 9.30pm  
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](#)

### **Bramfield Parish Council**

We meet on the third Tuesday of every other month at 19:30 in the village hall. So, this means January, March, May, July, September and November. The AGM this year is on May 21<sup>st</sup> and will start at 20:00.

Did you know we have a parish website? We have a bit of history, contact details and all documentation such as minutes posted there. Feel free to have a look at [bramfieldparishcouncil.co.uk](http://bramfieldparishcouncil.co.uk)

We have had an update from the Police in terms of likely crimes in the Bramfield area. Two main areas of focus plus the obvious opportunistic checking for unlocked cars and sheds. Off road motorcycles. There is an ongoing issue where these vehicles are not sticking to their allowed rights of way. These are not allowed on footpaths or Bridleways but there have been recent incidents. If you see these please call 101 or if you feel threatened it's fine to call 999. Note it is possible you will see an increased police presence particularly at the weekends.

Fly Tipping. There have been incidents of industrial scale fly tipping. If you see this please call 101. If you actually see a crime in action then please note the number plate and call 999.

## WATERFORD

### **Recreation Committee News**

The traditional Easter Bazaar was held on 30 March, and a wonderful event it was. As well as many hot cross buns consumed, beautiful craft items were purchased, raffle prizes won, easter eggs hunted and eaten, and a wide array of plants were sold to adorn local gardens. Thanks to the generosity of all those who attended, over £650 was raised - a record for our easter festivities. All proceeds go towards the upkeep of the village green and hall, and towards the costs of a new hall.



You may have noticed that the Village now has a defibrillator attached to the side of the hall - for the use of anyone local who may be in need. Many thanks to the local Parish Council who has funded this facility - if you ever need it, call 999, and the call handler will give you the code to open it and talk you through what to do.

A couple of dates for your diary:

**Thursday 20 June at 8pm**, the excitement that is the Waterford Recreation Committee's AGM is happening. Please keep the date free and come along to hear about what we have been up to, what we are hoping to do, and we can also promise some free wine and quality nibbles for any who come. If you wish to know what constitutes a quality nibble, you will have to come along!

**Sunday 15 September** - the Village Fete! Make a note of the date and come along to a splendiferous occasion.



W A T E R F O R D V I L L A G E H A L L A G M

J U N E 2 0 T H 2 0 2 4 8 p m S T A R T

**Everyone welcome.** Stay on afterwards and meet your neighbours over a glass of wine and nibbles. Meet the Committee, ask questions, join us, volunteer as a helper, or just listen and smile.

## Waterford 200 Club Winning Prizes

	April
1 <sup>st</sup> prize	£80.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	£40.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	£30.00
4 <sup>th</sup> prize	£20.00
5 <sup>th</sup> prize	£16.50
6 <sup>th</sup> prize	£16.50

## WATTON AT STONE



This year's **fete** will be held on Bank Holiday **Monday, 27<sup>th</sup> May** on the Church Field. Gates will open at 12.30pm and entrance will be £1.50 with under 12s free.

We've got a lot of new attractions planned for this year including a **Beer and Pimms Tent**, **craft area** and **new games** for children. We're hoping the **Fire Engine** will be able to attend as long as it is not called out to any incidents. This is a popular favourite with children.

We're inviting any crafters out there who would like to rent a stall to sell their goods to contact either Helen McCash [mccashandhay@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mccashandhay@yahoo.co.uk) or Ian Knight [iancknight31@gmail.com](mailto:iancknight31@gmail.com) 07778 401799 for further information and to book a space.

We've already held two collection events and thank you so much to everyone who has kindly given good quality items for us to sell. We will be holding final collection events on **25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May from 10am to 2pm** in the **Memorial Hall** in the village. Please donate any **good quality** items that we can sell. Unfortunately, we can't take any electrical items.

As usual, there will be a bottle tombola and we would be very grateful for any donations of drinks for that stall.

Our popular cake stall will be there. We usually sell out of cakes quite quickly so, if you are able to bake a cake for us, please deliver it to the cake stall on fete day. **PLEASE** ensure that you stick a label to the bottom of your cake container detailing the ingredients to avoid any allergy problems.

The first prize in our Grand Draw this year is a **voucher for £500** towards a new bike kindly donated by **Highway Cycles**. Make sure you get

your Draw tickets which will be available at the fete.

Most of all, come and join us for what promises to be a really fun event. All proceeds will go to the upkeep and maintenance of our beautiful historic church.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES 2024

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



## WATTON PARISH COUNCIL

### *A WARM WELCOME TO ABI*

The Watton at Stone Parish Council is delighted to welcome **Abigail Brown** as our new **Parish Clerk**. Abi was formally appointed into role as Proper Officer of the Parish Council and Responsible Financial Officer at the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 27 March 2024. Abi's appointment into role is effective from Friday 29 March 2024.

Not only is Abi a resident of Watton at Stone, but her children also attend our local Primary School. Abi has a wealth of knowledge about our wonderful village and I am certain will make an excellent Parish Clerk and serve us well.

Abi can be contacted on **07493 097867** or email [clerk@watton-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@watton-pc.org.uk)

### *AND A FOND FAREWELL TO JANE*

The meeting also formally thanked Jane Allsop as the outgoing Parish Clerk. Jane has devoted 31 years to the role and will be sadly missed in our Council rooms. Nevertheless, Jane is still in the village and will, I am sure, always be here to help us all.

*Nicola White, Chair, Watton at Stone Parish Council*



## 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

## TINA BURTON

I would like to thank everyone who attended the funeral service at Harwood Park on the 8th of April for Tina Burton. Tina was not born in the village but arrived as a young child with her mum and she attended the village school along with other classmates. They were in the 1976 year to 1981 and carried on until she left and went to Presdales school in Ware but the friendships made at the village school were never forgotten.

The reason I write is because I would like to thank all the old friends from the 1976 to the 1981 years who attended Tina's last day out, the service was well attended and I would like to thank all these people who knew her, the boys in that group were known as the

posse back in the 70s, but they all stuck together in times of good and bad.

And the amount of them who travelled to come to her funeral and some of their parents who also attended was really heart lifting that being a village person you're never forgotten.

It's times like this you realise how many people know you and what being part of a village community is really like, because people will always offer a hand of friendship if you need one, because we are a community and everyone needs someone at some point.

Once again thank you for giving Tina a grand day out.

Janet & Alan Illott



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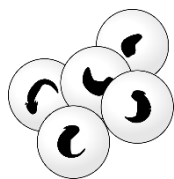
07775337270

or at the door on the day.

The recital will last approximately one hour after which we will be providing tea and cake in the village hall.

Toilet facilities will be available in the village hall throughout the afternoon.

# Waterford Nature Notes

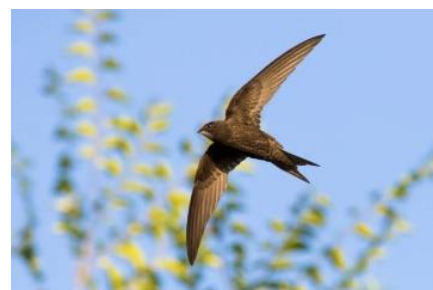


The continuing and rather sad tale of the frog spawn, the spawn that I transferred to a bucket proved to be unviable, it sank to the bottom of the bucket and no embryos developed. On 15th March a pair of mating frogs appeared in the pond, a couple of days later there was another clump of spawn but, yet again, this proved unviable, sank to the bottom of the pond and no embryos developed. I knew many places where I could find spawn, even tadpoles, to transfer into our pond but that is unsound practice, just dipping a net into a pond could transfer alien bacteria, invertebrates, eggs, seeds, etc., the reverse would be true when I deposited what I had taken into our pond.

Jo, from Waterford Common, asked whether Ravens are seen locally as one had been calling from the top of a fir tree in her garden. There are occasional sightings around Hertfordshire, including several that week in Welwyn and at Therfield Heath. I have seen the occasional Raven over Waterford, which I assume were passing through as I don't know of any having nested locally.

Reports from Abbotsbury Swannery. The first egg was laid on 25th March, then Storm Nelson arrived and the nests floated away, only two having an egg. Steve, the swanherd, and his team will rebuild not only the nests that had eggs but also the others that were destroyed, in their original spots. They will replace the eggs and all will be well.

Each year I am thrilled by the arrival of the Swifts and, to a lesser extent, Swallows. I came across a page on the Hertfordshire Natural History Society (HNHS) website that lists 21 migratory species that visit Hertfordshire, it gives the average date of first sightings, the date of the first sighting for each year, the latest arrival and the last sighting of the year, I was surprised to find that usually Swifts arrive during the second week of April, I have never seen one that early locally. This year, the first sighting of a Swallow was at Tring on 19th March, there have not yet been any sightings of Swifts (11th April).



There have been several sightings of Ospreys on passage to their breeding grounds so keep an eye out as they often pass through, some years ago, I saw one following the River Beane northwards being harried by a Kestrel.

Anyone that listens to The Shipping Forecast will be aware that the waters around The British Isles have been subjected to constant gales since before Christmas. There hasn't been a day that there haven't been gale warnings in at least several sea areas, sometimes in all or nearly all. "Severe Gale, 9" and "Storm, 10" have not been infrequent with quite a number of forecasts of "Violent Storm, 11" and, on one occasion, "Hurricane Force, 12" - the first time that I can recall hearing that. Pity the poor mariner. I once read that crewing a fishing boat is the most dangerous occupation in the land, spare a thought or prayer when you are eating your fish'n'chips.

Farmers are still having it rough. I read and hear many stories of the effects of the wet weather. One example is a farming family in Lincolnshire - they planted their Winter Wheat and Rape on schedule but then came the wet winter, the land became waterlogged, the seed was lost and the land is still too wet to even consider planting Spring Wheat or replanting Rape. This must be disastrous for that family unless they can find an alternative crop that they can plant when the land dries out eventually. There will be many, many other farmers suffering the same problems. Both of these last stories highlight how climate change is affecting us every day and how important is the work of the research institutes that are trying to develop new strains.

Butterflies have been scarce so far, my most frequent sightings have been male Brimstones, I have seen several Peacocks, a couple of male Orange Tips, a couple of others unidentified due to distance away from me and that is about it.

I have reported in past years on the Cowslips that first appeared from nowhere in the churchyard, 1 in 2020, second in 2021, a third in 2022, this year a fourth has appeared.



Ladybirds seem to be waking from hibernation but then either returning to it or dying. Inside the church there are many dead or dying and several clusters that are still dormant.

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Malcolm

# Watton at Stone Village Fete

Monday **27th MAY**  
Spring Bank Holiday

Gates open at 12.30pm



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For Further Enquiries

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# Watton-at-Stone

## Sports Clubs Newsletter

Editor: [vernon.dunhill@ntlworld.com](mailto:vernon.dunhill@ntlworld.com)

Issue

228

May 2024

### Watton Tennis Club

Please visit our new club website:

<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/WattonatStoneTennisClub>

The 2024/25 Season is now well underway, and the ever-popular Datchworth Spring League has started on Monday evenings. The Club has five teams in the competition including more or less the entire adult playing membership of the club as well as a few older juniors too. The Mens Vets still have a few matches left in their League and the Mens and Womens Hot Rackets competitions have also started now and we have two Mens and one Womens team in these Leagues so plenty of competitive tennis for everyone. Good Luck Teams.

**NEW:** We are trialling a new Adult Club Session on Tuesday Evenings from 7pm for match play. If you are a club member and would like to be added to the *WhatsApp* group for this session, please contact the club on [wattontennisclub@outlook.com](mailto:wattontennisclub@outlook.com)

The Club Sessions on Monday, Tuesday 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 sessions are 7.30 – 9pm. There is a *WhatsApp* group for information. Club members please contact the club on the email below to be added to the group. Newcomers are always welcome, please contact [wattontennisclub@outlook.com](mailto:wattontennisclub@outlook.com) for details.

Junior Lessons are on Thursdays from 3.30 – 6.30pm. New juniors are always welcome. Please contact the Club Coach, Ian Vosper, with any coaching enquiries. 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). Coaching enquiries: [vosperlorri@aol.com](mailto:vosperlorri@aol.com) or [07960 519373](tel:07960519373)

#### Dates for your Diary:

The Club Tournament will be on Saturday 29th June 2024.

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

The AGM will be on Tuesday 7th January 2025.

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

The AGM will be on Tuesday 7th January 2025.

### Table Tennis

Table Tennis sessions are held in the Community Hall on Tuesday afternoons from 1.30 – 3.00pm. The cost is £4 per session, but the first taster session is free. All abilities are welcome.

Three tables are available, and a mixture of doubles and singles are played depending on numbers present.

For further details contact Steve Block on 07870 779949

### Watton Ramblers

#### Tuesdays in May/June

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)

### Watton at Stone Cricket Club

The cricket season has crept up on us quite quietly this year, but it has already started with Watton having had three games scheduled for April. The league programme doesn't get under way until 18 May, when we are at home for a local derby with Weston.

We will have played six friendlies before then so there will be no excuses for a rusty start. Indoor nets have been well attended since the New Year and outdoor nets have benefited from a structured approach designed by our coach, Ryan, to address the areas of greatest opportunity.

Joe has led the efforts to get our square in good shape despite the challenges the weather has

thrown at us, and we foresee good cricketing wickets helping us deliver entertaining games.

Fixture schedule for May:

Date	Opposition	H/A	Start
4/May	Stevenage	H	12:00 PM
11/May	Pinner	A	12:00 PM
12/May	Hoddesdon	A	1:00 PM
18/May	Weston (league)	H	12:00 PM
19/May	FM Arthurs	H	1:00 PM
25/May	Welwyn Garden City III (league)	A	12:00 PM
26/May	Datchworth (festival)	A	10:30 AM

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

Follow us at

<http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wattonatstone>

## Watton Wheelers

### Watton Wheelers Ride Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May

About fifteen riders gathered at the Nigel Poulton Hall on a bright but windy and cold morning. Five of them set off on an offroad ride in the hope of seeing some bluebells. It began with a climb up the tracks towards Whempstead and then continued down through the carpets of blue in Coombs Wood. The Old Bourne then led us past lots of sheep waiting for their breakfast and on via the outskirts of Haultwick and across another track to Great Munden. A lot of the riding was tough as there was still a lot of mud and water on the tracks and avoiding it was not generally easy!

Passing some lovely houses, the ride then continued along the road to Cherry Green where it joined a straight track to Hare Street (about 3.5 miles) which is near Cottered. This was in fact a Roman Road where we saw more bluebells. From the end of the track, it was only about a mile to Ardley Farm shop which was the lunch stop; a very welcome break. After that, the ride continued down more muddy tracks to Wood End and then over the fields, past more sheep, lambs and bluebells. A downhill section was followed by a very steep incline up to Hebing End and then, after a breather, the homeward descent from the Lordship Arms back to Watton.

A total of about 20 miles was cycled with two punctures which delayed our return somewhat.

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Contact Points	<b>PILATES</b> Laura Jeffs 07710 408974	<b>CYCLING</b> Alan Headland 07866 568681	<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
Contact Points	<b>ARCHERY</b> John Meischke 07970 083256	<b>CRICKET</b> Brad Williams 07801 790915	<b>SHOTOKAN KARATE</b> Peter Khera 07866 374674	<b>TENNIS</b> Ian Knight 0777 840 1799	<b>RAMBLING</b> Maurice Gordon 01920 426344	<b>TABLE TENNIS</b> Steve Block 07870 779949

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