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# THE WESTWELL

166 December 2016



**Every Mon, Wed, Fri 6am Early Morning Fitness - Parish Hall**  
**3rd December 9am Christmas Bazaar**  
**13th December Book Club The Wheel, p13**  
**18th December 4pm Carol Service - St. Mary's**  
**24th December 3pm Christingle - St. Mary's**  
**24th December 11.30pm Midnight Mass - St. Mary's**

## December 2016

SUNDAY	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Jan 1 2nd Sunday of Advent 11am Family Worship St. Mary Westwell	2 Bank Holiday	3	4	1 Re.F.T 9.15am Pilates 10.30am Dog training	2 6am Early Morning Fitness 10am Eucharist 10.30 Coffee The Wheel	3
4 3rd Sunday of Advent 11am Iona Eucharist St Mary Westwell	5 6am Early Morning Fitness 7pm Fitness	6 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	7 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	8 R.F,W,G 9.15am Pilates No Dog training 7.30pm WI	9 6am Early Morning Fitness	10
11 4th Sunday of Advent 11am Iona Eucharist St Mary Westwell	12 6am Early Morning Fitness 1.30pm WI Painting 7pm Fitness	13 11am Book Club p13 The Wheel 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	14 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	15 Re.F.T 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	16 6am Early Morning Fitness	17
18 4th Sunday of Advent 8am Holy Communion 4pm Carol Service St. Mary Westwell	19 6am Early Morn 7pm Fitness	20 Players' rehearsal	21 6am Early Morning Fitness	22 R.F,W,G 9.15am Pilates No Dog training	23 6am Early Morning Fitness	24 Christmas Eve 3pm Christingle 11.30pm Midnight Eucharist St. Mary Westwell
25 Christmas Day 11am Family Eucharist *Hotfield*	26 Boxing Day	27 Bank Holiday	28 6am Early Morning Fitness	29 Re.F.T	30 6am Early Morning Fitness	31 Christmas Bazaar

## From the Editor's desk...

Christmas is here again, I am sure it is only children who think it was twelve months ago! Since last writing we've had Guy Fawkes day, that seemed to go on for weeks, and Remembrance day and Sunday that lasted for only as long as intended! In Lenham the Town Crier called for silence in the square at 11am on both 11th November and on Sunday 13th and the village stopped.

I am sure parents and grandparents are not only busy getting ready for Christmas this month, but also going to school entertainments of one kind or another, I know we are going to several. This should be delivered in time to remind you of the Christmas Bazaar on 3rd December, this Saturday; on the same day, but at the later time of 10am – 12.30pm Charing Scouts are holding a bazaar; see p13 for details of both events and if possible support both! Being Christmas the church is busier than usual with a carol service, Christingle and other special Christmas services.

Look at the calendar to check on the dates of regular events as there are few alterations due to Christmas.

As some of you will know, Sheila Cox has broken her jaw by falling and landing on her chin, I am sure you would like to join me in wishing her a speedy recovery, never a good time to do this, but Christmas time for a vicar couldn't be much worse!  
Wishing all my readers a Very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

*Carolyn Thorneloe* 

**Stop press:** No time to get this proof read, so apologies for any mistakes!

The views of any contributor to this publication may not necessarily be those of the editor and team, nor can the Westwell Eye accept any responsibility in connection with any companies or organisations mentioned or any advertiser.

Correspondence to: Carolyn Thorneloe, Gaoler's Retreat, 5, Faversham Road, Lenham, Maidstone Kent ME17 2PN.Tel: 01622 859376, Email: westwelleye@gmail.com

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## Westwell Community Watch Scheme (WCWS)

As we approach the festive season we often “shop early for Christmas” or grab “Black Friday” deals which might mean we have a number of expensive presents stored around the house. Following these top tips from household insurers may help ensure it really is a Happy Christmas.

1. If you’ve bought lavish presents ready for Christmas then the best way to keep them safe is to keep them out of sight. If a passer-by can see presents under your tree then this could suggest that you have items worth stealing. 2. Check that your contents cover is high enough to cover the value of any new expensive gifts. 3. Some insurers will automatically increase your cover over the Christmas period - check to find out what your policy says. 4. Don’t forget the cost of Christmas food, alcohol and visiting guests belongings all add up and you could find that you are under insured. 5. If you are hoping to be lucky enough to receive a new gadget check that your away-from-homecover protects you when using these out and about.

### 2-WATCH-4 From the Kent Police Rural Crime Team – November 2016

Whilst we have had no reports of crimes in our area the police have been busy around the county. Thanks to the NFU messaging system information about a Suzuki Vitara which was believed to be involved in crime was relayed to the Rural Liaison Team (RLT) who found the vehicle. The vehicle was taken from a very upset owner. Whilst on site a further vehicle was spotted which was of interest to the police. This was also seized.

A man who unlawfully kept a valuable ring he discovered while metal-detecting has been ordered to pay £600 compensation to the landowner. The item found was a gold posy ring believed to date back to between the 15th and 17th centuries and estimated to be worth at least £1,200. He discovered the treasure in February 2016 during an organised metal-detecting event in Lydden, Dover, which had the permission of the landowner.

Thanks to quick thinking owners of a stable in Ryarsh called the police reporting suspicious people on their site. The police attended and a vehicle pursuit ensued. Three people were arrested and are being interviewed by the police.

The Gypsy Liaison Team (GLT) conducted a search at an address in the Gravesend area. A large sum of cash and mobile phones etc. was seized. Approximately £80,000 in what was believed to be forged bank notes was found. Two people were arrested and are being investigated by the serious crime department.

### Policing in Kent 2017-2021: Autumn 2016 survey

#### From the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner

As Kent’s Police and Crime Commissioner I must produce a Police and Crime Plan setting out the strategic priorities for Kent Police. The existing Plan ends on 31st March 2017, to be replaced with a new plan for 2017 – 2021. In writing the plan I have a duty to consult with victims and the wider community, so I need to know what matters most to you. To have your say please complete the survey at <http://kent-pcc.gov.uk/take-part> by 2nd December 2016. This is only the first stage of a consultation process about Policing in Kent which will continue throughout my term as your Police and Crime Commissioner.

For more on these and news of other local criminal activity go to the Police and Community Watch page at [www.westwell.org](http://www.westwell.org)

To report suspicious activity call 101 or use Country Eye – in an emergency call 999

Keep Vigilant - **Tony Bartlett – WCWS Co-ordinator**

### This is the 28th in a series of interviews with Westwell-dwellers who have had interesting lives.

Who do you know who had a narrow squeak on Copacabana beach and has dissected carcasses of sheep for a living?

Born in Cornwall to parents who were youth workers, and descended from French and German immigrants, our mystery guest attended 3 primary and 4 secondary schools as the family moved around Southern England.

Her first teacher insisted she used her right hand for writing despite being left-handed until parents intervened. Her school strengths were mostly academic – writing, literature - but her greatest interest was natural history. Her French teacher, Miss English, was a great inspiration. A difficult relationship with ink and pens resulted in her nickname ‘Smudge’. She blames childhood visits to the Edinburgh Zoo Penguin Parade for her love of penguins. Changing schools and uniforms provided lots of patchwork materials - useful as she had developed a love of needlework alongside music. She admits to being a naughty church choir girl. Her final school was Wells Blue School where as Buttercup in HMS Pinafore and Mrs Malaprop in The Rivals she played jokes on the cast in the riotous school matinees.

She worked for a while dissecting sheep carcasses for the Meat Marketing Board to measure the fat-to-meat ratio, until she contracted glandular fever.

Then to Edinburgh University and a Masters in French and philosophy, (a degree in “Arguing in French” according to her husband). She sang in the University Renaissance Choir. Year three was spent at the University of Caen, sharing digs with Canadians who became lifelong friends, and singing in the University Chamber Choir. Her outgoing attitude gaining her a scholarship for travel in France. She finished her thesis just in time, camped in a friend’s flat during the Edinburgh Festival.

She met her husband in their home village in Somerset during his first year at the University of Kent; they married after their separate university careers and term-time overnight trips up and down the A1. Even in the 70’s certain career routes were closed to her as a married woman. Their first home was in Lancaster where after a year training as a bilingual PA and learning German she worked at the new University.

They returned to Somerset, where she worked at the Horstmann Gear Company then as assistant to the Town Clerk in Frome where she planned the first Frome in Bloom campaign, still running today. Then with their 15 month-old son to Sao Jose dos Campos north of Sao Paulo, Brazil, where her husband installed the first sheet-vinyl flooring production line in South America.

She joined a Chamber Choir before even moving into their house. Over the next 4 years, she became fluent in Brazilian Portuguese, and their second son was born there. They experienced the transition from military dictatorship to democracy and rampant inflation, so all purchases had to be made at the beginning of month before their money lost half its value. More lifelong friends were made in this exciting but edgy time. She, her sister and her son were hassled on Copacabana beach but escaped unharmed as they had no valuables to steal. Travelling in the south of Brazil, a burst tyre turned their car over. As she and her husband crawled out through the windscreen and released their sons from their safety seats the older son said in Portuguese “That’s never happened to me before!”.

Their visas gave them permanent residency in Brazil but allowed only her husband to work. In 1984 his work brought them to Kent and to her current home in Westwell. The first three winters were bitterly cold with prolonged snow – a nasty shock.

**Continued on p6**



## Community News

### Useful telephone Numbers

Age UK	642094
Ashford Volunteer Bureau	633219
Bees (swarming)	
Andy Bithell	740650 / 07933892413
Borough Councillor:	
Larry Krause	01233 643497
CAB	626185
Carers Support Group	664393
Childline Freephone	0800 1111
Cinema	0871 2208000
Citizens' Advice Bureau	626185
Cruse Bereavement Counselling	878225
Doctors (Charing)	01233 714490
(Hayesbank)	624642
Dog Warden	01233 330340
Hospital (William Harvey)	633331
KCC Community Warden for Hothfield and Charing - Dave Beckley	07811 271306
CROP	01622 851200
Library (Ashford)	03000413131
(Charing)	713177
MS Therapy Centre	01227 470876
NHS Direct	0845 4647
NSPCC	0800 800500
Parish Hall Booking	01233 712016
doriscackett@btinternet.com	
Parish Council (clerk, Sue Wood)	623902
Pilgrims' Hospice (Admin)	504100
(Patient enquiries)	504112
PCC Secretary (Heather Lister)	712981
PCSO angie.burden@kent.pnn.police.uk	
Samaritans	610000
Shopmobility	621196
Solicitor (Thorneloe & Co.)	01622 859416
Victim Support	0845 30 30 900
Water Supplies Queries	0333 000 0002
Water Leak Line	0333 000 3330
Wealden Wheels	01233 840000
Wheel Inn (landlord James Meire)	712430
Westwell Community Website:	
<a href="http://www.westwellpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/">http://www.westwellpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/</a>	

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## Plans

16/01387/AS Oakover Nurseries, Maidstone Road Change of use from sui generis to B8 (storage and distribution) and erection of a warehouse with car parking, hardstanding and landscaping The PC objected to the proposal and a decision is awaited from the ABC  
16/01470/AS Vineyards, The Street, Westwell Erection of a side conservatory. The PC had no objections to the proposal and a decision is awaited from the ABC..

Mystery Guest  
revealed:

Margery Thomas



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## Birch in a bog... or how to spend a warm, sunny October day.



### December on Hothfield Heathland

The subtle colours of autumn still hold their own on the Heathland as our seasons stretch beyond the traditional dates. The low sun adds an extra glow to the bracken, blonde gasses of summer and turning leaves. Wider views of the North Downs around Charing and the rise up to Little Chart Forstal are opening up as oaks finally release their leaves. There are deep carpets of leaves to swish through in the woods, green springy turf to lighten your step on the open slopes, and plenty of muddy puddles on the lower walks. Water is trickling everywhere, in the lower stream, and almost imperceptibly through the upper and lower bogs. Delights for all ages and levels of energy.

In November the gorse was already out, providing pollen for late foraging insects. On a still day get close up for a whiff of its coconut scent. Exotic and spiny! On bare branches next year's hazel and birch catkins can be found, still tight furred. Unlike the hazel, the silver birch carries both male and female catkins, the latter lengthen after wind pollination into a loose tassel of tiny winged nutlets which in late summer and autumn are carried far and wide on the wind and quickly germinate simply lying on the surface of the soil. Anyone with a birch tree near them will know that the seeds are wafted high through every crevice and gap in upstairs windows. This makes the birch a very efficient and often first coloniser, indeed the only trees on Iceland are just two species of birch. Every stage of that colonising process is visible as you walk through different sections of the heathland, from carpets of soft seedlings to sturdy saplings to graceful adults, described by Coleridge as 'the lady of the woods', but all intent on a total takeover. As millions of seeds are produced every year, balancing the benefits to birds, animals and insects that the tree brings in all its stages with the needs of less vigorous plants in this specialised fragile mosaic is a permanent factor in decision making on the management of the heath. And a permanent item on the to do list for volunteers who this summer cut down the burgeoning copse of birch on the slope immediately west of the upper bog, you may have noticed piles of birch brush on the slope, leaving the slopes fully open to the sun again and available for more fragile plants to colonise.

You will notice piles of timber around the reserve, some of which will be transformed into logs for heating homes, whilst others are left to create a home for reptiles and insects, something we can all copy in our own gardens.

Warm clothes and sturdy footwear, or wellies for puddle-lovers, are all you need to enjoy a breath of fresh in this special space on our doorstep, open to all, including dogs that are kept in check. The noticeboards at the entrances give the location of the livestock, the noticeboard down the main slope from the Cade Road car park gives recent wildlife sightings. For email alerts on the location of the livestock, or to join the volunteers who help maintain the reserve or check the livestock contact the Warden on [ian.rickards@kentwildlife.org.uk](mailto:ian.rickards@kentwildlife.org.uk), tel 01622 662012.

*Margery Thomas*



## Westwell WI

November was our Annual Meeting. Our Chairman, Barbara Gardiner reminded members of the past year, not just of our monthly meetings but the other many and varied activities and events, such as Tenpin Bowling, a Segway experience, lunches and outings. We heard a report from our Treasurer Sue Fowler on the finances over the past year and it would appear that we are in a good position and, provided we continue to fund raise to aid our finances, we will continue to function well. Margaret Carden has stood down from the Committee and was thanked for her invaluable work over the past year. Her place will be taken by Lindsey Peddle. Our three Officers remain the same – Barbara Gardiner, chairman, Tracy Shaikh, secretary and Sue Fowler, treasurer.

Barbara did ask members to think whether anyone was prepared to take over one of these roles in the future as some Officers only wish to act for one more year.

After the more formal part of the evening, we were treated to a Craft Evening when some of our members demonstrated and shared their skills with the rest of us. We were able to try our hands at decoupage, knitting, cross stitch, making a Christmas table decoration or an icing decoration in the shape of a snowman or a mouse wearing a red pompom hat. It was a fun and informative evening. The competition for something 'crystal' was won by an elegant glass slipper.

*Marilyn Warner* ✍️

Painting Group (open to non-members)  
December 12th., January 9th, 23rd.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday 8th December at 7.30pm.

**Christmas Party** – members only (remember to bring your own cutlery, drink and glass, plus a gift for Santa's sack, minimum £3)

**Hostesses:** Committee

**Vote of thanks:** Margaret Carden

**Competition** - Plastic

**Continued from page 3**

A full time Mum to start with, she immediately joined a chamber choir, and sold crafts and plants at the WI market while developing her work as a freelance interpreter (French, Portuguese) for HM Customs, Immigration, Police and courts, and the Foreign Office. Assignments included the Attorney General of Angola during a cease-fire in the civil war and the first Brazilian Minister for Human Rights.

She organised lunchtime concerts in the town centre for Ashford Borough Council and arranged and accompanied concert tours for youth music ensembles, taking the Kent County Youth Orchestra to Brazil, Argentina and Portugal. She became the first full time Coordinator for Ashford Town Centre Partnership, then was Assistant to the Vice Principal of Canterbury Christ Church University College who became the first Deputy Vice Chancellor on achieving full University status.

Needing to work closer to home she finally achieved her lifetime ambition to become a professional gardener and has also been a volunteer gardener at Godinton House since 2005. Widowed at 60, singing, gardening and friends and family keep her grounded. She has just returned from Canada, where she visits her son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter, this time via Australia and New Zealand, where she saw lots of penguins, and travelled on the railway destroyed a few weeks later by the latest earthquake. **Turn to page 16**

### B & B in Westwell The Lodge - at Glebe Cottage



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## Parish Council

The Parish Council met on Monday November 7th in the parish hall. Minutes of the September and October meetings were agreed and Matters Arising taken; these included the results of a meeting with the editor of the Westwell Eye to discuss the Parish Council taking over responsibility for the magazine's finances (including invoicing subscribers and advertisers) now that it meets the printing costs.

The financial report was presented; the Parish Council has received the balance of this year's Precept and grants from the Borough Council plus a contribution from the contractor carrying out the works on the Airey houses at Downs View – this was for using the Downs View green for the skip etc. It was agreed to purchase a defibrillator, which will be put on the outside wall of the Wheel. The bus shelter at Potters Corner was damaged irreparably when an HGV reversed into it and drove away without stopping – the Parish Council is claiming the cost of replacement from its insurance company. KCC and the borough council are due to come back in December with further proposals to deal with overnight HGV parking problem. It was agreed to increase the cemetery fees from 1st January 2017; because there are now fewer plots available, those without a local connection will be charged a higher fee. The draft Budget was presented and will be finalised at the January meeting, after which the Precept demand will be submitted to the Borough Council.

There were no planning applications to discuss, but an update on the review of the Local Plan was given. The working group set up to comment on the Woodside site will continue, and arguments against the Beechbrook site prepared (this is not, however, a site put forward for inclusion in the revised plan). A meeting was arranged at Oakover Nurseries with Vatre Terracotta (Apta pots) to discuss their planning application to use the area opposite the Holiday Inn as a site for warehousing and distribution.

Reports from council representatives were given, these included an update on the KCC Highways' seminar held in November: the Highways budget has been cut further. Advice on responsibility for hedge cutting will be put in the Eye. It is hoped that local organisations such as the WI, Players, will take responsibility for uploading their own content to the new community website: <http://www.westwell.org/>

It was agreed to put a Christmas tree on Church green and an offer of a memorial bench for the Garden of Remembrance accepted with thanks.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 4th January at 7pm in the parish hall. All meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

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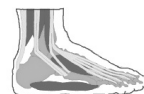
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[doriscackett@btinternet.com](mailto:doriscackett@btinternet.com)



# Letter to the Parishes

Writing for the December issue of the parish magazines and Pew News always poses a particular challenge because of the mid-November deadline. I am writing this on the afternoon of Remembrance Day with some of the rousing hymns still swirling round in my head. It won't be long, however, before the Church moves almost imperceptibly into its new year, one that begins, unlike our calendar year, on November 27th, Advent Sunday. Many churches will begin their worship with the beautiful hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" signifying the start of our waiting and watching. Through the four Sundays of Advent, the longing increases as we pray that the light of Christ would come into our darkness to light the pathway and to bring new hope.

As I write, there is a small team of people, members of the Cornerstone congregation, who are leading an eleven-hour vigil in Little Chart Church with prayers for peace. Each hour has been dedicated to a particular country that is experiencing hostility or persecution. It is a sign of a world in turmoil that there was no lack of countries in this situation to be able to populate the eleven hours. At the end of each hour, following prayers for that country, a lantern is lit and placed outside the church for all to see. The light of Christ burning in the darkness bringing hope and comfort. 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel'.

It has been a year of political turmoil both here and in America culminating in the Brexit decision in the UK and the election of Donald Trump in America. There have been claims and counter claims, character assassination, accusations and name-calling leaving behind a trail of confused and bewildered people. And from our place in these nations we cry out 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel'.

We hear of acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism on an almost weekly, if not daily, basis. We read of the devastating effects of natural disasters and we see the results of human-made disasters in the faces of the refugees moved from one place to the next as they seek some sort of security and stability. Often not knowing how else to respond we say 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel'.

Christmas Day dawns and with it the celebration that Emmanuel, 'God with us', does come, not just for one time in history more than 2000 years ago, but to each and every one of us today. Let us be ready to welcome him into our communities, our homes and our hearts and allow his presence to transform us, and through us, the world. "Joy to the world, the Lord has come".

On behalf of the Churchwardens, the PCCs and all who minister here in the benefice, may I wish you all a blessed Christmas and joy and peace in the New Year.

*Sheila* 

Rev. Canon Sheila Cox

Rector of the G7 Benefice

## Etc

**Future Fund Raising events.**  
Bazaar. Saturday 3rd December.

### Coffee at The Wheel Inn

Coffee at The Wheel **Friday 2nd December** from 10.30 - 11.45am. Before coffee there will be Iona Eucharist at 10am in St Mary's



### Christmas Bazaar

As you all know this year's Christmas Bazaar which is scheduled for the **3rd December** in the Parish Hall as usual from **9am - 11.30am**. All are welcome for Christmas shopping, Christmas fun and delicious bacon sandwiches. Maybe a surprise visitor will appear for the children!

We are still looking for any **volunteers** to help set up on the Friday, help run stalls and help clear up.

We are also looking for raffles prizes, tombola prizes, good quality bric a brac, any unwanted gifts, homemade cakes and other delicious goodies, jams and chutneys and anything Christmassy to get us in the festive spirit.

Many thanks and please contact me if you are able to help. Looking forward to seeing you all. **Penny Knatchbull**

**pennyknatchbull@gmail.com**



### 1st Charing Scouts

Please support our coffee morning on Saturday 3rd December.

Charing Church Barn. From 10am - 12.30pm, so there's time to drop in and do the Westwell bazaar as well. Relax and be served by beavers cubs and scouts.

I hope to see you there

### Book Club,

November 2016. The Elegance of the Hedgehog, by Muriel Barbery. The book this month was a very interesting French novel written by a philosopher, hence it is full of references to Proust, as well as admiration for Opera and Art as essential to a person's happiness...as are cats! The main protagonist is a concierge in a Paris apartment building, who is much more sophisticated than most of the residents she serves. The plot revolves around the 'upstairs/downstairs' atmosphere, until some of the people in the building begin to uncover the secret life and interests of Renée, our lady in question. A new resident moves in and the story takes a surprising turn. the book becomes all the more lovely to dive into. It is a very good translation from the French. You get the feel for Paris and can see the characters come alive.

Our next meeting, **13th December**, will be a celebration for Christmas as well. Our book is any work by Jan Morris, the very celebrated journalist.

Happy reading.





## Westwell Church Services for December

[www.g7benefice.org](http://www.g7benefice.org)

**Friday 2nd:** 10am Iona Eucharist

**Sunday 4th: 2nd Sunday of Advent**

11am Family Worship

**Sunday 11th: 3rd Sunday of Advent**

11am Iona Eucharist

**Sunday 18th: 4th Sunday of Advent**

8am Holy Communion

4pm Carol Service

**Saturday 24th: Christmas Eve**

3pm Christingle

11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

**Sunday 25th: Christmas Day**

10am Family Eucharist - \**Hothfield*\*

**Tuesdays: - not 27th December**

9am The Eucharist - Charing

7pm Prayer and Bible Study - Charing Heath

## Family Church in December 2016

**All Age service 4th December** 11am Theme Getting Ready.

Join us to explore the ideas of Advent, with activities for all and finishing with Coffee and Cakes.



## Carol Service

Sunday 18th December at 4pm

Come and sing your favourites with mince pies and mulled wine to keep the winter at bay.



*Joy to the World!*

## Christingle

We invite you to join us for the Christingle Service on Saturday 24th December at 3pm. Specially designed for families with young children.



The last **Messy Church** for a while will be held in Charing Church barn on Sunday January 22nd at 3.30pm. Come and say goodbye with the usual mix of fun, crafts, games, bible story, songs and food.

We are looking at our options and are hoping to build a good support team so that we can start up again soon.

Do you enjoy getting MESSY with children?

Would you be interested in joining in with crafts and games once a month, helping families with sticking and glueing, preparing tea and generally joining in with fun and games. We are looking to create a team of people who could support the work of Messy church on one Sunday afternoon a month from 3 to 5.30 either in Westwell Parish Hall, Hothfield Village Hall or Charing Church barn. There may be some optional preparation work involved for a couple of hours on top of the Sunday afternoon. Warning Glitter may be involved!

If you think you'd enjoy this, either every month or now and again please contact Heather Lister ([hlist@hotmail.com](mailto:hlist@hotmail.com), 01233712981) or Mim Oliver ([miriamjoliver@gmail.com](mailto:miriamjoliver@gmail.com)) to find out more.

Last Messy we made gingerbread men and I thought you might like the recipe as we enjoyed our gingerbread so much. This is a Delia Smith recipe online.

In a saucepan mix 75g / 3oz soft brown sugar, 2 tablespoons golden syrup, 1 tablespoon treacle, 1 tablespoon water, 1tsp cinnamon, 1 tsp ground ginger, pinch of cloves, grated zest of 1 orange, 100g / 4oz butter, 1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda. Bring to the boil, take off the heat and add 225 / 9oz plain flour and mix to a smooth dough. Roll out to about 5mm thick and cut out shapes. Place on silicone paper on a baking tray and cook at 180 for 10-15 minutes.

Decorate as the spirit takes you. Enjoy.



## Whose Hedge is it Anyway ?

At this time of year many of our hedges and shrubs are showing the effects of the unusual growing conditions we have been having in the South East. High temperatures, a wet spring and little signs of frost have meant our shrubs and hedges have become unusually large and sometimes, overgrown. Kent Highways have been inundated with complaints from road and footway users about overgrown hedges and shrubs that are narrowing our lanes and making footways impossible to walk along, necessitating walking in the road, which, in an already narrow lane, creates a hazard for drivers and a danger to pedestrians.

However, Highways have asked Kent's parish councils, including ours in Westwell, to remind landowners and householders alike that it is not Highways responsibility but that of the landowner or householder to keep boundary hedges and shrubs as well as overhanging trees, trimmed back to the boundary. In fact there are only two places in the whole of Kent that contain hedges on land owned by Highways!

So please make sure your hedges, shrubs & overhanging trees are kept trimmed back as close to the boundary as possible – it will keep everyone safe and prevent Highways having to deal officially with any repeated requests to trim hedges & trees overland they don't own! As a last resort, if asking nicely fails to work, Highways do have the authority to trim back the offending hedges and trees – and then send a hefty bill for the work to the owners. Please help by your good husbandry of our living landscape.

*Ron Butcher (Westwellpc)*

## Charing and District Local History Society.

**There is no meeting in December 2016.**

**12th January 2017** speaker: *Sheila Boyd Horatio Nelson and Emma Hamilton*. The more human side of Admiral Lord Nelson - through his relationship with Emma Hamilton.

Meetings are held in the Parish Hall, Station Road, Charing TN27 0JA. The lecture starts at 8pm. Annual Membership: £9 for adults, £8 concession for senior citizens and a joint family fee of £15. Full time students are free. Non-members: £3 per meeting.

## Church Cleaning Rota.

**Cleaning:** Sarah Stevenson

**Flowers:** Advent, Christmas Team

**Brass:** Rosemary Harding





## Westwell Players

Amateur dramatics is many things to many people. I have been involved now for most of my life, starting at school (who didn't?) and continuing with a group in Herne Bay that my mother belonged to. My mother was an elocution teacher and I grew up entering competitions reciting poetry and later dancing too, so it is really in the blood as they say! Since joining the Westwell group I have learned so much, taking part whether on the stage in large or small parts or off stage – shifting scenery, handing out props, prompting or on sound, lighting, or even doing the task of making the tea, all can be hugely rewarding. For Pinocchio I was in charge of 'front of house', an easy job – or so I thought but in fact it can be very hectic with people trying to buy tickets or swap them or having lost them, then wanting to buy a drink or a raffle ticket, I went home each night of the performance with my head buzzing! However, I digress, I have many letters and comments from past and present Players saying how much their involvement has meant to them and what they have gained from the experience. One lady lost her stutter completely and gained in confidence so much that she went on to have a very successful career and (in her words) it is all thanks to the Westwell Players. Another member, a man this time, said that he had previously suffered agonies when having to speak in public, but once he had a few 'parts' under his belt he found that his nerves had almost gone and he was therefore better at his job. All this leads me to this question? Why don't you come along to the Westwell Hall on a Tuesday evening now that rehearsals are under way for "Life Goes On" this has more hidden meanings and jokes than I have met in many a script. Just turn up at 7.30 and offer to make the tea or just sit and watch what goes on, I assure you a warm welcome awaits with a tea or coffee and even a biscuit if you're really lucky and who knows – it might be a move that changes your life!! Next month there will be details of dates and where and when tickets will be on sale!

*Mary Anne Pitt* 

### **Building of the New Ashford College Moving Forward. Report by Pat Crawford.**

The state-of-the-art new build Ashford College is proceeding according to schedule and Phase 1 (undertaken by BAM Construction) will be open to welcome students in September 2017. As well as general teaching areas, this part of the project includes the hair and beauty and catering departments which will be offering highly specialised services to people in the community. Mark Lumsdon-Taylor, Deputy Principal and Deputy CEO, commented 'We are delighted that we shall be the first of Ashford's Big 8 Projects to be up and running. The second phase of the new build incorporating construction and engineering is due to be completed in September 2018. In the meantime these departments, which are making essential contributions to Ashford's very buoyant business community, will be fully operational at the current Jemmett Road site. Mark added 'I would like to pay tribute to Councillor Gerry Clarkson and his team at Ashford Borough Council for their superb cooperation. We are delighted to be working closely with business and the community and very much welcome new links and partnerships. Our prime objective is the provision of education, training and apprenticeships that fulfil the current and emerging needs of the region's employers'.

For further information contact:

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### **On the Roads - Winter 2016/17 - Kent County Council Advice**

We are now entering the winter period for 2016/17 and I would like to take this opportunity to remind you about Highways and Transportation's winter service provisions.

Please take time to visit our website below:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service>

This section will provide useful information on:

Salt Bins (including locations).

Gritting Routes.

How and when we salt the roads.

Clearing snow in the community.

The latest weather updates,

How we deal with rural roads with help from the local farmers.

### **Tips on Winter Driving**

Please also have a look at the Snow Code web site below, which you may find has some useful information and hints. <https://www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway>

We also work closely with the local farmers and provide them with the necessary equipment in order to clear country lanes and act as extra resources when we are fully mobilised during a snow emergency.

Our website also provides information on all aspects of highway management, such as our tree policy, information on roadworks and planned works, crash and casualty data. It also allows you to report faults online: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

*Please take great care on the roads this winter.*

Highways and Transportation will continue to work hard to keep the roads as safe and clear as possible; however you can also help us in the following ways:

Drive to the conditions of the road at all times, especially during times of rain, ice and snow

If we do get snow on the roads, please don't make any non essential journeys

Thank you for taking time to read this article.

**The Ashford District Team**

**Kent County Council Highways and Transportation**

