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Christmas Menu details on website

# THE WESTWELL LIFE

165 November 2016



*Clockwise from top left:- The former Jennifer Stuart-Smith after her marriage to Jonathan Dixon. Cakes at the Macmillan coffee morning. Washing-up after the Harvest Supper. George Horne - 'Please don't make me wash-up'.*

- Every Mon, Wed, Fri 6am Early Morning Fitness - Parish Hall**
- 1st November - 29th December Wheel Christmas Menu bookable**
- 7th November 7pm Parish Council Meeting - parish hall**
- 8th October Book Club The Wheel, p13**
- 13th November \*10.45am\* Service of Remembrance**
- 3rd December Christmas Bazaar - Parish Hall**

	SUNDAY	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Dec 4							
6	3rd Before Advent 11am Family Worship St. Mary Westwell		1 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	2 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	3 Re.F.T 9.15am Pilates 10.30am Dog training	4 6am Early Morning Fitness 10am Eucharist 10.30 Coffee The Wheel	5
13	4pm Commemoration Service for departed loved ones - Pluckley	7 6am Early Morning Fitness 7pm Parish Council Parish Hall	8 11am Book Club p13 The Wheel 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	9 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	10 R.F.W.G 9.15am Pilates 10.30am Dog training 7.30pm WI	11 6am Early Morning Fitness	12
20	Remembrance Sunday 10.45am Service of Remembrance	14 6am Early Morning Fitness 1.30pm WI Painting	15 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	16 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	17 Re.F.T 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	18 6am Early Morning Fitness	19
27	Christ the King 8am Holy Communion St. Mary Westwell	21 6am Early Morning Fitness	22 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	23 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	24 R.F.W.G 9.15am Pilates No Dog training	25 6am Early Morning Fitness	26
	3 - 5.30pm Messy Church Parish Hall						
27	Advent Sunday 11am Eucharist St. Mary Westwell 2pm Players' rehearsal 6pm Ecumenical Service - Charing	28 6am Early Morning Fitness 1.30pm WI Painting	29 7.30pm Players' rehearsal	30 6am Early Morning Fitness 11am Over 50s Fistepps	Dec 1 Re.F.T 9.15am Pilates 10.30 Dog training	2 6am Early Morning Fitness	3 Christmas Bazaar

# From the Editor's desk...

Another month has raced by and the clocks are about to go back, the only advantage being an extra hour in bed!

The Harvest Supper and Auction of promises was the highlight of last month, being enormous fun and also a great money spinner. I have had no less than 10 photographs of the men washing-up!, obviously most people feel it is a phenomenon worth recording! I shall print only one so my apologies to all of you who have sent me photos that I have not included.

Tony Bartlett is the co-ordinator for the new Westwell Community Watch Scheme, read all about it on p18

The Wheel's Christmas Menu is available from 1st November to 29th December, see their advertisement on the back page of this issue and get a more detailed menu from their website. Ashford Borough Council has produced an article about a new land management scheme, do read about it on pages 10 and 11, also on page 11 you can read about new car park matting on the village green.

*Carolyn Thorneloe* ✍

## Harvest Supper and Auction of Promises

This was a fun occasion and raised around £3.800. A huge thank you is due to everyone who took part.:

Great team providing excellent food as always.

Many Thanks to all who gave and helped. make the evening so enjoyable, especially Sarah Scarratt and her team of helpers who produced wonderful food, also all those who donated puddings.

David Harding for collecting the promises and the money.

Everyone who donated a 'Promise'.

Everyone who paid generously for the promises.

Everyone who attended and made the evening so enjoyable.

The men who proved they can do washing up after all!

**Thanks indeed!! PCC**

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)

Those attending the fete this year will have seen the stall launching the Westwell Community Watch Scheme. As well as distributing WCWS literature, Registration Forms and Home Safety literature we raised funds for the fete by running our "How Safe is your Home" quiz. The winner, of the bottle of Champagne, was John Hardie who was presented with it, at the Harvest Supper. Thanks to John Hobbs (Medash Signs) & Andy Peddle (ANP Security) for sponsoring the WCWS banner, quiz literature and prizes.

For Neighbourhood Watch, weather and traffic alerts, home safety advice, "lost & found", details of rural crimes and to register for email or SMS alerts to your phone, visit the Westwell Community website – [www.westwell.org](http://www.westwell.org).

2 - WATCH - 4 - our regular update of local crime

Telephone and email scams – you are more likely to lose your money from the comfort of your home than by being burgled or mugged. See details on our webpage of five local scams, including those claiming to be from Barclays Bank or BT, recently reported to Kent Trading Standards.

From East Kent Neighbourhood Watch:

Between 4.10am and 4.20am on Friday 14th Oct., damage was caused to an out-building at Ashford Golf Club, Sandyhurst Lane and a Kabota trailer, colour silver, was stolen. If you have any information regarding this incident or saw any suspicious activity/vehicles, please call 101 quoting: ZY/036910/16.

From Kent Police Rural Crime Team:

Hare Coursing – seen as important at a senior police level as quite often there are other crimes being committed such as theft and criminal damage. Some vehicles being used are registered to a false address. These vehicles are now on the police national computer and will be caught when they are seen by any Automatic Number Plate Recognition camera.

Wild life crime :

A badger set was reported destroyed in the Gillingham area. The Rural Liaison Team is fully trained in dealing with incidents of wildlife crime.

Stay SAFE and SECURE this Bonfire Night – see advice from Kent Police on our website or visit ROSPA at <http://www.saferfireworks.com>

**To report suspicious activity call 101 or use the Country Eye mobile phone app - <https://countryeye.co.uk> .**

**For crime prevention or nuisance activity concerns contact our PCSO: [angie.burden@kent.pnn.police.uk](mailto:angie.burden@kent.pnn.police.uk)**

**For emergencies, or to report a crime in progress, call 999**

**Tony Bartlett - WCWS Co-ordinator Phone 07770 596650  
Email: [westwell.watch@gmail.com](mailto:westwell.watch@gmail.com)**

### **This is the 27th profile of people who live in the Parish who have interesting lives.**

Who do you know who nearly lost a senior surgeon overboard from a yacht and narrowly missed being attacked by a fur seal in the Arctic?

Our guest was born in Blackheath to a ballet-dancing mother and a father who bunked-off school to learn to fly at the age of 15 and volunteered for the Royal Flying Corps in WW1. There is a recording of him in the Imperial War museum relating his flying exploits. She lived in Sidcup where Father started a garage business and at one time helped keep band-leader Bill Cotton on the road in his mission to keep morale up during the war.

His father gave flying lessons to Prince Birabonz - (playboy and car-racing driver) grandson of the King of Siam (who was immortalised in 'The King and I') and put him up in our guest's bedroom making her sleep on the sofa - much to her displeasure.

As a child she often went gliding and had an outdoor upbringing but couldn't read when arriving at school. When appointed to the school band she announced to her mother that she was playing 'the stick' by which she meant she was conductor!

The family moved to Eltham, where she attended the Girls' School.

During the WW2, she recalls sheltering from bombs under a steel table with Mum and Dad (the maid was only allowed on top).

She was evacuated three times: first to Swavesea (near Cambridge) avoiding school and spending time outdoors. Returning to home to Eltham in time for the Blitz, the house backed onto the HQ of the Canadian Bomb Disposal Squad where bombs were defused. The troops taught local kids how to jump out of first floor windows without injury and kids often took lifts on their lorries, even when a red flag flew indicating a live bomb on board.

The second evacuation was to Ringwood to live with a maiden aunt school-teacher meaning a return to school where they discovered her difficulty with reading and writing. Now recognised as Dyslexia, she was just regarded as a dunce. Returning home just in time for the Battle of Britain, she was evacuated a third time to Abersoch, in Welsh-speaking North Wales. Now 15, she decided to swim across the bay with her dog. However, he became tired and she had to complete the swim with two dog paws on her shoulders!

Returning to boarding school in Hatfield, in the gym, a bat (the animal not rounders!) became entangled in her hair much to her fright. She played Edith Cavell, the heroic nurse, in a school play.

Her young headmistress recognised her talents and encouraged her to go to Medical School. She attended the Royal Free London School of Medicine for Women in 1947 - the first year men were accepted.

Social life was full, and joining the sailing club, met her husband-to-be who was studying medicine at Guy's hospital. They once nearly lost the Head surgeon of Guy's (Sir Heneage Olgilvie) who fell overboard and had to be lashed to the side until harbour was reached.

After 6 years training, she went to work at Beckenham A&E near the rugby club, where she was allowed to take in her large German Shepherd dog to protect her against the rugby players who became injured and frequently inebriated.

She moved to St Nicholas Woolwich A&E where as a junior doctor she was found asleep on the floor after 36 hours of non-stop duty. Then to Bethnal Green Hospital where the results of knife-fights kept her busy. An Australian Registrar taught the junior Doctors how to pick the pantry locks so they could steal food to keep them going through the night shifts.

**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)	620649
(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:	
http://www.westwellpc.kentparishes.gov.uk/	

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## Charing and District Local History Society.

**10th November** speaker: **Mark Withers** *The Rebirth of Paris, 1853-69* The exiled Napoleon Bonaparte returned to be elected President of the second French Republic, later becoming Emperor Napoleon III. To realise his vision of a glorious France, with its capital a latter day Rome, he appointed Georges Haussmann to rebuild medieval Paris, transforming it at great expense into the spacious modern city we see today. In 1870 Haussmann was sacked; shortly after, following the disastrous outcome of the Franco-Prussian war, the Emperor himself was exiled again.

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.

### 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. This will be further discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council  
 16/01469/AS Church Barn, Westwell Court Variation of Condition 7 of application  
 90/00614/AS (Conversion of redundant barn and former stables into 5 dwellings) to allow planting of boundary hedge. The Parish Council objected to the application; a decision is awaited from Ashford Borough Council

Mystery Guest revealed:

Celeste Muir



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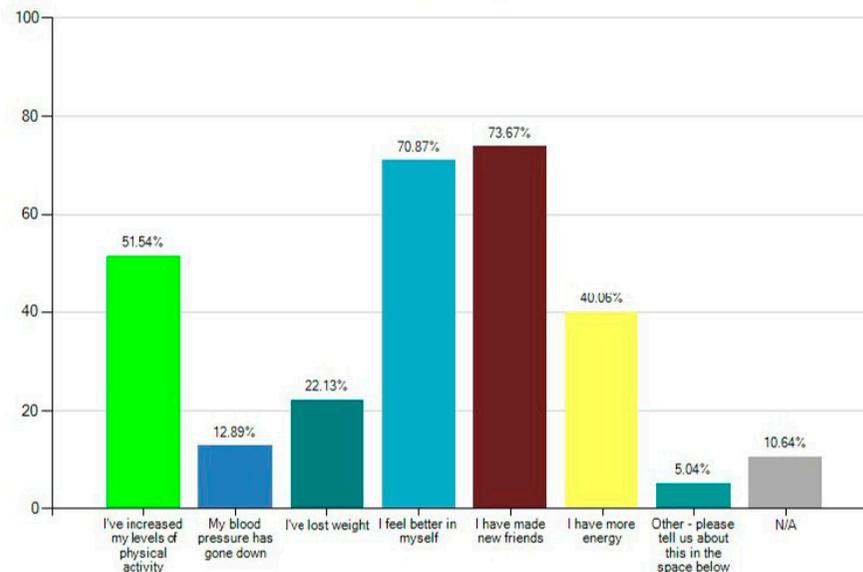
## Health and Wellbeing at Hothfield Heathlands.

Hothfield Heathlands is a wonderful place for wildlife, but this also provides massive benefits for the people who use the site and the people who live nearby. The health benefits of walking are well known, but combined with an opportunity of immersing yourself in a beautiful surroundings, with all the wildlife, colour and peacefulness of the Hothfield nature reserve are a tonic for the body and the mind too.

The data in the table below has been collected from participants involved with local health walks around the county, and demonstrate just a few of the benefits of walking.

8. If yes please tell us how your health has improved

Non Scoring, 1024 responses



For those wishing to go that step further, our volunteer groups are an excellent way of keeping fit, getting outside and socialising with likeminded people. Many of our regulars are recently retired, looking to keep active, but to do something meaningful and worthwhile. There are opportunities ranging from livestock checking, wildlife gardening, wildlife surveying and tree felling. When our volunteers were asked if their health and wellbeing had improved since volunteering, 89% had noticed improvement in that time. There are lots of opportunities of getting involved with wildlife, getting outside and getting fitter.

1. Walk out of your door, if you're nearest nature reserve is too far, visit a nearby park or just go into your garden. There is wildlife all around us, take the time to look for it.
2. Join a local health walk, you can find your nearest group by following this link <https://www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder> or ring 020 7339 8541
3. Volunteer at a nature reserve. There are lots of opportunities with the Kent Wildlife Trust, start with this link <http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/volunteer> or call 01622 662012

## Westwell WI

The speaker booked for this month was unable to come so at short notice Lee Ault stepped in with a talk on the 1920s and 1930s. At the start of her talk, Lee opened a large trunk and one by one she drew out a garment or accessory from the 1920s and talked about each one. She had a fabulous collection, passed down from her grandmother and great-aunt, of clothing and underwear, including handcrafted beaded dresses which Lee explained would never have been used for dancing as the cut-glass beads would have easily cut the thread if the wearer 'jiggled about' in a Charleston!

Lee showed us silk under garments, beaded handbags just about big enough for a lipstick and powder compact, colourful shawls with long fringes that would 'hook' a passing man. She also modelled a beautiful evening coat of devore velvet

When we thought the trunk could reveal no more, Lee next brought out items from the 1930s, including satin pyjamas, nighties and a very elegant bias-cut dress. Not from the trunk but a very large circular hat box, Lee produced an enormous sunhat of the sort seen in Hollywood films of the time.

We heard about a recent coach trip made to Windsor Castle by four of our members to see the collection of the Queen's dresses. We also had a report on our WI Quiz night, attended by husbands, friends and others. This was a successful evening, although the Marathon 'Dingbats' Round stumped many contestants (sorry!!).

Members were reminded that at our AGM next month we would also be having a Craft Evening where members will be demonstrating their skills and letting you have a try. There will also be a stall on which craft items can be sold.

There were more entries this month for the competition for something tin, including some very old biscuit tins and an old Oxo tin. Doris Cackett won with her well-used tin of sewing necessities.

*Marilyn Warner* ✍️

Painting Group (open to non-members)  
October 31st.  
November 14th, 28th.  
December 12th.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday 10th November at 7.30pm.

**AGM and Craft Evening** – members only

**Competition** - Crystal

**Hostesses:** Natalie Harman, Pat Westhead and Lindsey Peddle

**Vote of thanks:** Liz Jamieson

### Mystery guest, continued from p 3

She married at this time and moved (now with 2 daughters and a son) to Westwell in 1961, practising as an MD locally as did her husband. She travelled the world for the Soroptimist in '80s and 90's. Her guests at the Westwell house have included an Indian Sikh Colonel, an American Coroner and a Surgeon from Mendoza (Argentina). Retiring in 1995 she has taken holidays in the Arctic and Antarctic where she narrowly escaped being attacked by a grumpy Fur Seal. She now has 2 dogs, 2 cats, 2 horses, 11 grandchildren. She smiles: "I have had a really lucky life".

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



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## Westwell Players

What is 'amateur dramatics' - well to me it has been a very large part of my life; if I am not learning lines of either a script or song, I am practising my dance moves or helping Kip to design the set or what about trawling the charity shops for that unusual 'prop', the list is endless and all of it fun. Kip and I have spent many a happy holiday planning our next variety show or looking out for shorts for a cub-scout routine we were rehearsing! Most of all though, it has meant friendship, to both Kip and myself and we are both so grateful to the great and lasting friendships we have formed through being members of Westwell Players. There is something very special about that adrenaline rush that comes as you put the finishing touches to your costume and make up before the curtain goes up, waiting in the wings for your cue, giving someone else's hand a squeeze as you climb the few steps before being thrust into the spot light, I have loved it all and so has Kip, my better half. He has played the drums for more than 50 shows and often done a small stint on stage as well, and he too, loves every minute. We hear Neil Cackett is planning a different type of show for early next year and the dates for your diary are - 9th, 10th and 11th March with a Dress Rehearsal on Monday, 6th March and you may be able to pop in to the Sunday rehearsal on the 5th when it will be in dress and almost there!! The Show is called "Life Goes On" and promises some surprises, so please put those dates in your new diaries NOW!

*Mary Anne Pitt* 

### Bonfires Advice from Ashford Borough Council

It is not against the law to have bonfires, but care must be taken to make sure that the bonfire does not cause a nuisance to your neighbours. If the bonfire causes a problem then this may mean you are causing a statutory nuisance. Before having a bonfire:

- DO 1.** Tell your neighbours so they can close windows or remove washing from clothes lines.  
**2.** Check the prevailing wind direction and try to burn when the wind will carry smoke away from neighbouring properties, remembering the wind changes direction quickly. **3.** Make sure everything to be burned is tinder dry, this way it will burn quickly and cause little, if any smoke.  
**4.** Ensure the fire, once lit, is kept under supervision and should be completely extinguished before being left

- DO NOT 1.** Have a bonfire if people are out in their gardens. **2.** Have a bonfire if neighbours have their washing on the line. **3.** Have a bonfire if your neighbours have their windows open. **4.** Burn until an hour before dusk. **5.** Burn on hot and humid nights (people could be sleeping with the windows open) **6.** Burn plastics **7.** Burn foam or foam filled furnishings due to risk of dark smoke and offensive fumes. **8.** Burn household refuse as many constituent parts are unsuitable for burning. **9.** Burn rubber. **10.** Burn conifers. **11.** Burn damp material like grass. Anyone lighting a bonfire should ensure that no nuisance is caused to neighbours by smoke, burning particles or odour and that the bonfire is sited so that it reduces the likelihood of nuisance.

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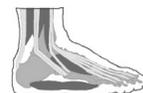
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Please contact:  
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# Letter to the Parishes

November sees us move from Harvest to Remembrance to Advent: from celebration to contemplation to anticipation. But, friends, I am troubled. Despite holding services of remembrance each year we still live in a world where there is war. Only the other day I found myself stirred to anger at the news as it reported yet another airstrike on a hospital in Syria. It was a ‘double tap’ meaning they came around for a second run to target people as they were fleeing. What happened to the Geneva Convention? What’s the point of remembering past conflicts when we still can’t live at peace with one another? This is not to say we shouldn’t keep these special days, but when will we learn from them? One of my favourite War Poems is Wilfred Owen’s Futility. I’ve always been struck by its gentle imagery starkly contrasted with the surrounding brutality of its setting. Here, a century after its creation the words seem to ring out louder than ever:

Move him into the sun  
Gently its touch awoke him once,  
At home, whispering of fields half-sown.  
Always it woke him, even in France,  
Until this morning and this snow.  
If anything might rouse him now  
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds—  
Woke once the clays of a cold star.  
Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides  
Full-nerved, still warm, too hard to stir?  
Was it for this the clay grew tall?  
O what made fatuous sunbeams toil  
To break earth’s sleep at all?

Yet, as the echoes of October’s harvest celebrations fade I’m also reminded of a passage in the book of Micah that says:

The Lord will mediate between peoples  
and will settle disputes between strong nations far away.  
They will hammer their swords into plough-shares  
and their spears into pruning hooks.  
Nation will no longer fight against nation,  
nor train for war anymore.(4:3)

It gives me hope. Furthermore, people are living this scripture in places like Mozambique where, after decades of civil war, a treaty was signed and people surrendered their weapons in exchange for tools to be able to work the land and make a living. Some of these weapons have been melted down to make those tools and machinery while others have been made into art. Let us remember the great cost once more but with renewed vigour and resolve to learn from it. Today more than ever, our young people look to us to make sense of the crazy world they encounter. What will we tell them? What world will they inherit from us? As we move towards Advent let us continue to work for a better world, inspired by the God who promised peace and came down to us in form of an innocent child. Not a warrior. Whose message was one of peace and of radical love especially for those on the fringes of society.

*Mim* ✍️

# Etc

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

**Coffee at The Wheel Inn**  
Coffee at The Wheel **Friday 4th November**  
from 10.30 - 11.45am. Before coffee there will be Iona Eucharist at 10am in St Mary’s



**Book Club,**  
This month, on 11th October, we had decided to discuss any work by the author Alexander McCall Smith. We had read the ‘Ladies’ Number One Detective Agency’ about three years ago, so some of us cheated by not reading anything this time!

There were 7 of us this time. The titles we discussed were ‘Sunday Philosophy Club’, ‘44 Scotland Street’, ‘The Dog who came in from the Cold’, and ‘La’s Orchestra Saves the World’. The characters are very likeable and the plot usually has a happy optimistic flow and ending.

Some of us thought the African detective series deals with the status of women and their ingenuity in a very light way. There is no gruesome fighting or tabloid-type crime description that makes you cringe. You read these books and feel happy.

La’s Orchestra story takes place during WWII and deals with marriage, divorce, and love for music.

In all books there is an aspect of women’s issues, ethics, music and medicine. These reflect this very prolific writer’s career as Medical Ethics Lawyer. His love for Scotland is evident.

Having read ‘Girl on the Train’, we decided to watch the film together! A group of seven went and came out with 50/50 views for and against! How refreshing!

Next month we discuss ‘The Elegance of the Hedgehog’ by Muriel Barbery. **Tuesday 8th November.**



ASHFORD BARBERSHOP HARMONY CLUB  
PROUDLY PRESENTS

Grand Raffle Refreshments

**VARIETY SHOW**

STARRING  
THE EAST KENT CHORUS  
INVICTA UKULELE CLUB BAND  
SAM & DAN FINEMAN  
MISS KATIE McCALLUM  
KIZMEE DANCE TROUPE

In aid of  
Pilgrims Hospices  
and chorus funds

**SATURDAY  
12th NOVEMBER  
7.30pm - Tickets £8**

SINGLETON VILLAGE HALL  
HOXTON CLOSE, SINGLETON, TN23 5LB  
For tickets contact Barry on 01233 632317

**Westwell Church Services for November**  
[www.g7benefice.org](http://www.g7benefice.org)

**Friday 4th:** 10am Iona Eucharist

**Sunday 6th: 3rd Sunday before Advent**

11am Family Worship

**Sunday 13th: Remembrance Sunday**

10.45am Service of Remembrance

**Sunday 20th: Christ the King**

8am Holy Communion

3.30pm Messy Church

**Sunday 23rd: Advent Sunday**

11am Eucharist

**Tuesdays:**

9am The Eucharist - Charing

7pm Prayer and Bible Study - Charing Heath

**Family Church November 2016**

**Family, All Age**, service on 6th November, 11am. Theme Swords into Ploughshares.



**Messy Church 20th November**, at 3.30pm Westwell parish Hall. Theme, Giving Thanks



The **worship group** continue to plan the All Age service and identify suitable hymns for other services, we hope we have chosen singable hymns that everyone can have a go at and hopefully enjoy.

**Christmas Services** will be planned in more detail in November but you can put these dates in your diary.

**Carol Service** Sunday December 18th at 3pm

**Christingle Service** Saturday 24th at 3pm

**Communion** 11.30pm Saturday 24th



**A Time to Remember.**

6th November Service of Commemoration for lost loved ones' will be held in Pluckley Church at 4pm. This is an opportunity to come to church for a short service of hymns, readings and prayers to help you to give thanks for the

lives of those you have loved and lost and to find support for your continuing journey. The Service All are very welcome.



**'A Time to Get Ready'.**

27th November - Advent Services. Advent is a time of preparation, of reflecting on the birth of Jesus Christ and looking to His second coming. Advent services often feature candlelight, a reminder of Christ the Light of the World, and hymns that suggest waiting and hoping. As well as all the morning services taking place in each church in the benefice there will be an ecumenical service at Charing Methodist Church at 6pm. All are welcome.

**St Mary Parochial Church Council (PCC)**

You may have noticed the nice new finish to the church path. Thanks to the Parish Council who did this work to make it easy for us all to get to and from the Church. We recommend that if cars are taken up there that they do not drive over the new bricked edge onto the grass but reverse out to avoid damaging the edge.

We are pleased with new pew cushions and there are projects to improve the heating and for the installation of a hearing loop. A more ambitious and longer-term project is the installation of a loo and kitchen facilities.

We are facing new challenges following the departure of Rev Bob and Rev Chris to his new role as Rural Business Chaplain and Part-time Parish Priest. With Rector Sheila as the only licensed priest in the benefice it may be necessary to rethink our current patterns of worship. Fortunately we have a good team of authorised Lay Ministers and retired clergy who are able to assist Sheila throughout the benefice making changes minimal.

We will do our best to let you know progress on these issues and if you have any comments or ideas to help us, we, the PCC, would be delighted to hear them.

Contact Heather Lister, PCC Secretary on 712981.

**1st Charing Scout Group**



What a busy time of year for the group! We are trying to grab the last bits of evening light before winter sets in. Our Cub Scouts are particularly hectic as we are celebrating 100 years of cubs. I bet we now know more about the secrets of Ashford than most of you after a fascinating Local Knowledge day.

The race night was a great success. Organisers Phil and Lorna were well supported by an enthusiastic team. All races were sponsored. Special thanks to: Paul at Saddlers Estate Agents; Martyn from GM & M Johns; Alan from F. Hogben & Son; Martin from Thanet Plastics; Vin at Wady & Brett; Christina from Ashford Valley Tickham Hunt; The Barrow House, Egerton, and Mrs Myra Smith. Thank you to all who attended and helped us raise over £900 for our new headquarters.

Beavers are getting ready for their sleepover in November. On December 3rd we are hosting a coffee morning in the Church Barn. Please come and say hello and enjoy being waited on by our beavers, cubs and scouts. [gsl\\_charingscoutgroup@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gsl_charingscoutgroup@hotmail.co.uk) **Terry Lister**

**Thank you**

We would like to thank everyone who came and/or contributed to Macmillan Coffee morning. Thanks to your generosity and support we were able to raise £480. Together with our contribution Macmillan has been able to raise £8,641,243. But most importantly we had the most enjoyable time, a wonderful choice of delicious cakes, pastries and biscuits, as well as teas and coffees for every taste. **Katya de Vere Walker**



**Glebe Cottage B&B - see advertisement p 15**

The Lodge at Glebe cottage is a most delightful place to stay and can be highly recommended. I recently had some cousins from Norway who stayed there for a long week-end. After a long journey they arrived tired and hungry and had a very warm welcome from Geraldine. She had kindly phoned the pub and so when they walked to The Wheel a table was ready for them and they had a delicious meal. My feeling is that The Lodge is a real asset to Westwell and how lucky we are! **Helen Stuart-Smith.**



**Church Cleaning Rota.**

**Cleaning:** Tanya French

**Flowers:** Rosemary Heddle

**Brass:** Sheila Filmer

## Aspire Landscape Management,

From October Ashford Borough Council will be bringing the responsibility for grounds maintenance across the borough back in-house. The new service, will cover the day-to-day work of mowing pruning, planting, clearing and litter picking on various spaces owned by the Council including open green space, parks, floral beds, cemeteries, areas around housing sites, hedges, sports pitches and associated footpaths.

The service is also working with Kent County Council (KCC) Highway Services on areas of work that we can perform in order to maintain quality standards. Until now, this work was undertaken by Landscape Services, but from this autumn it will come under the responsibility of ABC. This initiative is a key part of delivering the adopted Land Management Improvement Plan, which aims to make the borough a pleasant and enjoyable place to live, work, visit and enjoy. Enhance Ashford's overall appearance and attractiveness and raise civic pride and make the borough more attractive for residents, visitors and businesses.

### Improving borough presentation

The new in-house service will give us greater flexibility as we will be able to move resources where they are needed most, with an ability to be more fluid with changing priorities. It will also be more cost effective. This links to Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan – Attractive Ashford where the council's aspiration is to achieve an environment that creates higher standards of public space design, alongside improved standards of presentation of key green spaces. The Land Management Improvement Plan therefore aims to tackle these issues, with one of the key components being the in-house grounds maintenance service.

### Our vision

'To provide a high quality, responsive and flexible grounds maintenance service to the residents of Ashford, offering a proactive and best value solution for the maintenance of the borough's green spaces'.

### The new depot.

Since receiving planning approval from the council in July, Gallagher Properties have been redeveloping the former Rimmel factory site at Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate, which has been derelict for nearly a decade after it was destroyed by fire. The plans for the site include the Aspire grounds maintenance depot, a ready-mix concrete plant and 70,000ft<sup>2</sup> of industrial warehouse units. Overall the development is expected to create at least two hundred jobs.

### Contact details

To find out more or to report an issue please contact Aspire Landscape Management on: Email: [info@aspirelandscapemanagement.co.uk](mailto:info@aspirelandscapemanagement.co.uk) Tel: 01233 331111 Address: Aspire Landscape Management, Carlton Business Park, Carlton Road, Ashford, TN23 1EF.

### Frequent Asked Questions

What will the service cover? The new service will cover the day-to-day work of mowing, pruning, planting, clearing and litter picking on various spaces owned by the Council including open green space, parks, floral beds, cemeteries, areas around housing sites, hedges, sports pitches and associated footpaths.

### How can I establish who owns the land?

As a general rule of thumb, grass verges along the road side are owned by Kent Highway Services, in most cases they commission Ashford Borough Council to maintain them. High speed roads over 60 miles per hour tend to be the responsibility of Highways England, who also maintain them.

### Will you be able to maintain privately owned land too?

Only if we receive permission from the land owner to do so and to access their land. It is important to note there are large areas of land which the council does not own and therefore we are not able to maintain these areas.

### Where land is not being maintained and falls out of the responsibility of Ashford Borough Council, will you use enforcement plans to force the owners to comply?

The enforcing authority is Kent Highway Services who receive reports via their website

### Why have you brought this in-house?

The council has looked at various options, including outsourcing, an in-house service, creating a trading company or via a joint venture. An in-house service is considered the best approach as it supports the need to deliver the best combination of control, quality, flexibility and affordability.

### So we can expect to see standards improve straight away?

Actually no, the changes won't be seen overnight. In fact the impact is not likely to be really seen until spring/summer next year. The focus for the team over the next few months will be trimming down the landscaping to manageable levels. Some areas may therefore appear a little bare and/or brown during the winter months.

### How can I report land or areas which need attention?

Please contact via the means above.

### Where did you come up with the name?

We wanted a name which was engaging and meaningful. This links to Priority 4 in the Council's Corporate Plan matches the aspirations of members to improve the presentation of the borough. The name and branding was created in-house.

### New Matting on the Parking Area of the Playing Field.

Remember all those soggy slippery days last winter when we had to say "no parking" on the playing field? Hopefully that won't happen again this winter

Thanks to a big project by the Westwell Playing Field Association there is now matting over the parking area. Cars and other light vehicles can now drive on it without slipping.

The grass has grown through as planned over most of it, so it is already almost invisible: "now you see it now you don't"

Park on the upper side of the field above the goal and the seesaw and you will be on the matting. If the rest of the field gets very soggy we may need to mark the edge with temporary A-board notices or a white line.

Any comments please contact the parish Clerk Susan Wood 623902, who will pass them on to the Playing Field Association.

It all cost a little more than originally planned: it is a large area. More news soon of fundraising activities to balance the books! Thanks to Ron Butcher, Val Hooper, other members of PFA and helpers we got the job done before this winter.

### What? Where?

Now you see it, now you don't!

