



Contents

- Village Helpline - latest
- Local Surgeries - latest
- Wiltshire Council News
- Wiltshire Police
- Edington Parish Council News
- Musings Of A Villager
- A Tale Of Two Villages
- Omega
- Where Have All The Animals Gone
- Edington Parish Hall - update
- View From The Boundary
- Margaret Barker
- Contacting us
- Small ads / Swaps
- Sharing your newsletter



Welcome to the ninth edition of the Edington Village News and a happy new year to all of our readers.

We must offer congratulations to one of our regular contributors, Mercedes Henning who was awarded the MBE

for services to education in Wiltshire, in the Queen's New Years Honours list.

This month we have an article on living in France, an answer to the question of "Where have all the animals gone", the musings from Mercedes and the latest from Erlestoke Cricket Club.

Remember if you have anything that you would like to swap, sell or give away please email us at our usual address, newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk with your name, details of the item(s) and even a photo of the item if you wish. Please ensure that we have this information by the 1st of the month.



Village Helpline Latest

Now that we are back in lockdown again remember that the helpline is still operating for anyone requiring assistance.

The Edington Village Helpline can provide assistance with shopping, collecting prescriptions, dog walking and a listening and talking service along with many other things that we can find access too. If you need help please call the helpline and we can help you in these difficult times, if we cannot help we will find someone who can help you.

The Parish Council has received some donations to help villagers experiencing difficulty in these times, if you are struggling to purchase essential items or pay outstanding bills please contact the helpline and we may be able to assist you.

This newsletter is published monthly but we may produce it more frequently if there is a change in information or events, the village website will also be updated on a regular basis to help keep everyone up to date with the latest information. The newsletter can be delivered directly to your inbox just visit

www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/newsletter and enter your details.

Don't forget to contact the help line on **07933143021** (available 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday)

Edington Farm Shop



The farm shop will be open throughout the lockdown period. Please try and use it as much as possible, this is a vital asset in our village but it can only stay open if we all use it.

Mon - Sat 9am-5pm Sun 9am-4pm



Local surgeries latest

**REMEMBER YOU MUST WEAR A FACE COVERING
WHILST IN THE BUILDINGS**

White Horse Health Centre and Bratton Surgery



Westbury surgery TELEPHONE 01373 828330

Bratton Surgery TELEPHONE 01380 831911

**Covid 19 – Westbury Group Practice
update 4th January 2021**

We can confirm that our over 80 year old patients who are booked for their 2nd dose of the Covid vaccination this weekend (9/10th January 2021) must attend for their pre-booked appointment. The clinics are running as planned.

There has been conflicting messages in the media in regards to patients receiving the 2nd dose of the Covid vaccination with the three week interval. On this occasion the 2nd dose will continue at three weeks, however any further vaccinations given will have a 10-12 week interval between doses.

Please remember you do not need to contact us about the vaccination, we will contact you.

Covid 19 – Westbury Group Practice update 16th November 2020

Important Changes to Access at Whitehorse Health Centre to keep our patients and staff safe

It is the priority of Westbury Group Practice to protect the safety of our patients and staff.

Whilst we are still open and continuing to provide the majority of services, to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid-19 the main doors to the Health Centre will now be accessible via an intercom system only.

When attending the Health Centre you will need to press the intercom button to the right of the main doors and wait for a receptionist to check your details before opening the door. When you need to exit the building please follow the one way system. For those patients who may need additional help when entering the building, and have reason where the intercom is not suitable, our reception team will be readily available.

To avoid unnecessary queues, we are asking all patients not to attend the White Horse Health Centre or Bratton Surgery unless you have a pre-booked appointment or have been advised by a member of staff that you are required to make a delivery or collection.

We appreciate that this may not be the preferred way of contacting the Health Centre for some patients, however, we have to reduce the footfall in the Practice and appreciate your cooperation with this.

Alternative ways to contact the Health Centre:
For booking appointments:

E-consult - [E-Consult WGP](#)

Telephone - **01373 828330** or **01380 831911**

Further information about the various services offered can be found on the practice website.

www.westburygp.co.uk

HM Government

COVID-19 VACCINE PRIORITISATION

1. Residents in a care home for older adults, and their carers
2. Over 80s, frontline health and care staff
3. Over 75s
4. Over 70s, and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. Over 65s
6. Under 65s with underlying health conditions
7. Over 60s
8. Over 55s
9. Over 50s



Courtyard Surgery West Lavington



TELEPHONE 01380 813 300

We will be inviting you to ring the surgery shortly, to book two appointments for Covid vaccinations.

We hope to be able to book appointments from Monday 4th January 2021, however, this will be dependent on the vaccine arriving very soon. At the moment the actual vaccination dates have not yet been confirmed but are likely to be in the first few weeks in January.

Vaccinations will take place at:

The Michael Herbert Hall on South Street, Wilton, SP2 0JS

There is good parking alongside the hall.

There are no toilet facilities at the Hall. A short sleeve blouse or shirt under your coat will make the clinic run smoothly.

Please check the practice website for any further updates.

www.courtyardsurgery.co.uk

Market Lavington Surgery

TELEPHONE 01380 812500



No new information about current working practices, please check the practice website for any further updates.

www.marketlavingtonsurgery.nhs.uk



I hope that you all had a very happy Christmas and hope that you were able to celebrate in the best way possible within the guidelines. Let's hope that 2021 allows us all to go back to something that we used to consider 'normal' and that the programme of vaccinations is rolled out as quickly and as effectively as possible. We may well wish to forget most of 2020 but we should all be grateful for the new skills that lots of us have had to master even though we may have never heard of 'Zoom' at the beginning of the year!

Without doubt we are fortunate to live in Wiltshire where residents have behaved responsibly and complied with the rules designed to keep us safe. However, COVID19 has still had a huge impact on us all. To gain a better understanding of the emerging themes that are affecting people's lives, our Community Engagement Managers have been focusing on four main areas – business, older people, working age families and younger people. After input from Community Groups, Parish Councils, Schools and other local professionals, a local status report is being prepared to highlight the challenges ahead. The aim is to publish the Westbury Community Area COVID-19 Recovery Plan, in the New Year. This will help identify the areas where additional support to individuals and communities is required.

In order to make sure that as many people as possible can contribute, an online survey has been created that is open for participation up until 21st January 2021. Please do log in and complete the questionnaire, it will only take you





a few minutes, but will help to provide a board view of how the pandemic has affected daily lives.

Simply go to:

www.slido.com and input the Event number which is #2666

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you think I can help with any local matter.

Best wishes

Suzanne Wickham

Email – suzanne.wickham@wiltshire.gov.uk

Tel - **07967 213336**



Wiltshire Police

Wiltshire and Swindon's Police and Crime Commissioner is asking all residents for feedback on the proposed policing precept for 2020/21.

PCC Angus Macpherson has launched a survey to collect feedback on policing: what is being done well and where improvements could be made, as well as a proposed increase in the policing element of the council tax.

The suggested increase equates to £15 a year, per household, on a band D property.

This follows a recent national announcement made about central police funding which was based upon the assumption that all PCCs would seek to use the maximum flexibility afforded them by the Government to increase local precepts.

In 2020, Wiltshire recorded the lowest policing precept in the South West. Even with the increase, the band D average for Wiltshire will remain lower than the regional and national average.

Mr Macpherson warned that if the policing part of the precept is not increased next year, Wiltshire Police would need to find savings of

more than £3m and would have no alternative but to reduce staff undertaking essential services.

"In normal times an increase in contributions will be felt by our communities but after this year, I realise this increase will be felt more keenly than ever before," added Mr Macpherson.

"The pandemic has bought additional new challenges for all – it is evident the effect impacts all corners of our community. As well as the physical impact, I know the economic impact has affected many.

"The decision to ask for your support for a £15 per year increase has been a difficult one – and one that I would not make if there was an alternative. But there isn't.

"Simply put, your agreement to this increase will mean Wiltshire Police will be able to continue to maintain and improve our essential, frontline, services."

The extra £15 a year funding, or £1.25 a month, means that Wiltshire Police will recruit 46 additional officers for Wiltshire in 2021/22. The Force is also on track to recruit this year's target of an additional 65 police officers by March 2021.

This will take officer numbers to 1,050 - the highest number of Wiltshire Police officers in six years. The additional 46 officers in 2021/22 would see officer numbers rise to 1,096 by March 2022. Mr Macpherson added: "We need to keep up the investment in order to continue with progress. We are the lowest-funded Force in the South West and I believe Wiltshire Police is delivering significant value for money.

"Our police service does a tremendous job, against ever-changing demand, in keeping crime low and providing the service you demand from your police service."

The consultation is open from Tuesday 5 January to Tuesday 2 February.

[PCC survey can be accessed here](#)



Edington Parish Council News

Firstly we would like to thank everyone who helped to make Edington a brighter place over the Christmas holiday, the village was alight with decorations and for those of you who ventured towards Bury Road you can't have failed to see the display put on by the residents there, now we have to wait for December 2021 for the next display, unless of course another road wants to take up the challenge and go one better!

If you have walked along the Coal Path recently you will have noticed that the volunteers have started clearing the undergrowth as part of the project to turn this field into a community green space.

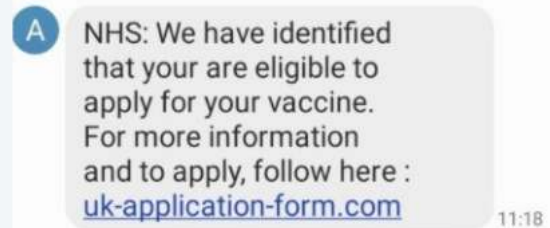


Once the latest lockdown has finished the volunteers will be back out carrying on improving this green space for everyone to enjoy. The long term aim is to put some seating in the field and turn parts of it into a wild flower meadow.

The group normally meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 9.30am so why not come along and join in helping to improve the village. Further details about sessions can be found on the village website nearer the time of the next meeting.

The latest government advice is that the play field can remain open for people to use however please ensure that you conform to the most recent requirements - Exercise outdoors (limited to once a day) in your local area. This includes meeting one other person from another household in an open public space to exercise whilst maintaining social distancing.

Please watch out for a fake NHS text telling people they're eligible to apply for the COVID-19 vaccine. The link leads to a fake NHS website asking for personal details. Sadly scammers are looking to exploit the most vulnerable so please make sure your loved ones are aware.





Village Musings

We are very fortunate in this beautiful village to have a most extraordinary church in our centre – it is like a little cathedral! Whatever your faith or non-faith philosophy, you will find an inspiring grandeur in this exquisite building, with its sense



of peace and welcome. Sitting in the church, one has an awareness of centuries of people coming here to find

their own quiet, spiritual path. The stained glass on the north side dates all the way back to the opening of the church in the fourteenth century – and the clothing depicted was modern dress in those days!

And how hard the church community worked this extraordinary year, to ensure that the Christmas feast, so important to Christians, was marked in a Covid-safe but prayerful way. The outside of the church itself had been lit up with trails of light which can be seen from the ends of



the village. An outdoor carol service and an outdoor Crib service were held in the church

yard on the west side, and they were both stunning services. People arrived in the light and left in the dark, looking out for the alignment of the planets, Jupiter and Saturn as they sang Star of Wonder!

People of various faiths, and none, took part in the services. We had a brass band, a bell ringing choir, a donkey, and a scene made up of



nativity scarecrows which had been displayed throughout the village in Advent. It was wonderful to experience the sense of community as we gathered, well distanced, well wrapped

up and joyfully having fun together.

Midnight mass, held in the candlelit church, with just a few singers calling out from the east end of the church, was an amazing event. There was deep sense of spiritual immediacy and brightness in the shadowy, flickering light.

We are very grateful to all those who worked so hard to ensure that these services were so



moving. There was a real sense of a whole community coming together and

celebrating, which fed our souls. Regardless of our faith or non-faith philosophy, we are spiritual beings, and coming together to celebrate improves our wellbeing.

Mercedes Henning MBE



A Tale of Two Villages

We are very fortunate to have a home both here in Edington and also in Cussay, central France. The two villages are very similar in many respects: Both rural communities, some 10-15 minutes away from their nearest town, resident age profiles not dissimilar and likewise around 600 people living in the commune. Community spirit is much the same, with people getting together for social events whenever possible.

But, apart from the weather, there are also some stark contrasts too because of the political background of the two countries, one essentially socialist with social expenditures financially devolved down to commune level, and the other essentially capitalist and centralised. This leads to some profound differences in how the villages are managed and the priorities given to different activities.

Perhaps most stark difference is the fact that the money available to Edington's parish councillors specifically for the benefit of the village is £13,000 pa. in total, equating to £20 per person per year. In contrast, our mayor in Cussay receives £200,000 pa., £300 per person per year, to cover all village costs, and he can also apply for further grants if there is a need!



Cussay high street

Our mayor in Cussay is charged with deciding on expenditure priorities and managing a publicly declared budget. We have a village

newsletter there too, but you can imagine that the villagers are not afraid to bend his ear personally if they think there is something that needs doing. The resulting difference is very



Village cross roads

marked. Village roads around Cussay are very well maintained as are pavements and roadside kerbs and verges. Main state roads are regionally funded. Motorways are privately run, again in excellent condition, and toll financed. Cars do not require a road licence and MOT's are every two years only. We have two permanent gardeners to keep the village full of



Car charge point

flowers, picnic areas clean and litter off the streets. We have an excellent village hall, outdoor dining facilities, post office, a junior school, fishing pond, free tennis and boules courts, outdoor bbq's, children's play area, BMX and skateboard course, fibre broadband, car electric charge-point, and fresh bread delivered twice a day via a baguette machine in the centre of the village, annual free firework display and an annual new year's village dinner which





lasts 6 hours with sometimes bizarre entertainment. You can even pick up free supplies of dog poo bags from the mairie. The mayor is currently also applying for additional government funds to purchase our village bar



Baguette machine

and restaurant's buildings, which has become financially distressed, so that it can be let at a very low rent and thus maintain an important community resource for the village.

Our mayor, Alain, who was once a chef working in Bournemouth, says his income always exceeds expenditure and he saves the rest for special projects, as needed, but can apply for extra funds for special more expensive one-off projects such as a new car park or outdoor dining facility.

In addition to village funds, volunteers come forward, as here, to facilitate projects and activities. The latest being to renovate an old nearby communal lavoir (outdoor natural clothes washing place) close to our home, and the volunteers were treated, of course, to an alfresco three course lunch and wine, care of the mayor! Our ancient communal bread oven is fired up for special outdoor events but alas the communal wine press and still are still under wraps in one of the barns.

As throughout France, the State is responsible for our historical church, its maintenance and repair, so it too is maintained to a high standard but separate to the mayor's responsibilities. Interestingly many buildings of architectural interest are renovated at government expense and tourist information offices exist in most attractive villages.



Lavoir

The consequential difference in roads, pavements, children's recreation facilities, ancient buildings, flowers and litter freedom is very obvious and putting expenditure choices at local level to enhance the environment, clearly has its beneficial impact.

Healthcare provision is also excellent, the state pays 70% of all costs of medicines, doctors and hospitals, and you can pay a small top up insurance to cover the remaining 30%. You choose which hospital you prefer, which are privately run. Prescriptions, glasses and dentists are all covered and in the event of cancer or diabetes 100% is always covered. University education is free and student living allowance grants of up to £7000pa are available.

So how does this all get paid for?





Well the rates for our 3 bedroom house there are £1300 pa against £2600 here.

There is no car road licence so car usage on all but motorways is free. If you insure your car, anyone is covered to drive it, so that gives great flexibility particularly when youngsters learning to drive. Petrol is the same price and VAT the same at 20%.

7% of your salary is taken to cover your state retirement pension, the start date of which is much earlier than in the UK. The government there keeps trying to make the start date later, but the people resist it forcibly. Hence the frequent public demonstrations of late.

11% of salary is taken to pay social security costs, 12% in UK..

A family with two children and a joint income of £30,000 pa pays no income tax.

A family with two children and an income of £70,000 pa pays £3300 tax

Very high-earner taxation is higher, as are employer's costs, together covering a high proportion of the financial burden.



The mayor treating all volunteers to lunch. The first priority of the day was to erect the tent for lunch after we had done a little work!

Certainly not everything is perfect in France, bureaucracy can be overwhelming and slow and their cities have their social problems too. The countryside towns and village bars,

restaurants, bakers and shops are slowly dying through lack of industry and jobs and due to aging populations but, thankfully, our mayor's income is protected! Where shops have closed, villages are installing convenience machines offering fresh food, bread and other essential items for villagers that cannot easily travel. There is a reasonable supply of lovely country houses which were one-time small farms and these are the ones preferred by incomers as second homes, by Parisians, the Dutch and Brits of course. Ours is such a renovated longere, once a home and cattle shed rolled into one with hayloft above. The locals however tend to favour easier to maintain newer homes situated close into the village rather than on the outskirts.



Village hall

Interesting aside: Both villages have strong historical context and during the second world war, Cussay sat exactly on the dividing line between occupied and free France. The left hand side of the village was "free" the right "occupied". A very old neighbour tells us stories that during the war he was 14 or so and because his workplace in the boulangerie was on the right hand side of the village, he had to get permits to visit his family a couple of kilometres on the left. Our house was in occupied territory and engraved by the door is an inverted V which is supposed to have denoted resistance sympathies. Our neighbour also has a number of caves, typical of the area, on his land and of course stories exist of hidden wartime airmen! There are indeed numerous





roadside signs around us which denote the sites where all the males of the family were shot, some as young as 8 years old. At a nearby village, on the day Paris was liberated, some 144 people were slaughtered as the troops pulled out. For a lot of years apparently, it was best not to drive a VW in the area!



Village school

Cussay is situated in the Touraine Sud in the south Loire Valley. The region is famous for wine and historically very important having many chateaux and many of Richard the Lionheart's castles. It is a delightful sunny rural region full of swimmable rivers, good food and excellent sauvignon blanc and cabernet franc wines. Great for relaxed holidays.

Edington Resident



Omega is a small charity based in Shrewsbury that

supports socially isolated people.

Two of the projects they operate, both of which are free of charge, may be of interest to the people of your area. We would like very much if you could promote the following to the residents your council serves.

Chatterbox

This is a telephone befriending scheme. Our volunteer befrienders are matched with clients and are happy to talk about anything as well as offering emotional support. You can see more information at - <https://www.omega.uk.net/chatterbox-action-against-loneliness-programme-p-173.htm>

A Letter from Louise

This is a penpal befriending service. As with Chatterbox our volunteer befrienders are matched with clients with similar interests so they can share stories and experiences. All post is directed via our office using a freepost system, so clients addresses are confidential. Many of our befrienders include photos and pictures with their letters. You can see more information at - <https://www.omega.uk.net/a-letter-from-louise-p-214.htm>

We find that people who are lonely or socially isolated are hard to find. We hope that with your help our service can be promoted. If you require more information please contact my colleague Claire at community@omega.uk.net who will be able to help you further.

Coincidentally, as part of our recycling initiative I also collect used postage stamps to raise funds for Omega and would be grateful for your help with this. My colleague, Gavin also sells or reuses old mobile phones to support our telephone project, Chatterbox. You can read more about our recycling schemes at <https://www.omega.uk.net/please-donate-your-unwanted-items-p-226.htm>.



Where have all the animals gone?

We are currently living through winter here in Edington and possibly the only wildlife we are seeing are the birds on our bird feeders.

We know a lot of our bird species such as swallows, martins, swifts, cuckoos, turtle doves, and many other species are just summer visitors and migrate long distances in autumn to spend the winter in Africa. These birds all arrived in spring from the south to breed. Many of them are insect eaters. They spend summer here, then they – and their new young – return south in autumn.



Swallows gathering together on telephone wires in September before starting their migration to Africa

But you might be surprised to learn that many birds we see at this time in our gardens in Edington are winter visitors. Even the blackbirds in your garden in January could well be winter visitors from Eastern Europe. In the far northern regions, such as Scandinavia and Russia most species migrate south to escape winter. In temperate regions, such as the UK, about half the species migrate – especially insect-eaters that cannot find enough food during winter.

So, our winter visitors here in Edington are birds that arrive in autumn from the north and east to spend the winter in the UK, where the weather is milder, and food is easier to find. In spring, they return to their breeding quarters.

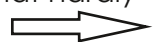
Starlings, though, are residents, and most never

leave us. However, this number almost doubles every winter with the arrival of thousands more birds from Eastern Europe. Hard weather there forces them to migrate west in search of food. In October and November, you can see flocks of migrant starlings arriving along the east coast of England. Most have flown across the North Sea from Belgium or the Netherlands, after travelling across northern Europe. Most of these birds continue migrating westwards until they have spread across the whole country. They join our resident starlings here in Edington to form huge flocks, often roosting in parks, reedbeds or city centres. In our area you can see these huge flock of starlings on Redhorn Hill, near Urchfont. Here before they roost, they perform a mass aerial stunt called Murmuration - thousands of birds all wheeling, swooping and diving in unison. It is completely breath-taking to witness. The starlings do it for many reasons. Grouping together offers safety in numbers – predators such as peregrine falcons find it hard to target one bird in the middle of a hypnotising flock of thousands. They also gather to keep warm at night and to exchange information, such as good feeding areas.



Watching the murmuration of starlings on Redhorn Hill near Urchfont on the 12th December 2020

Chaffinches, robins, and many other common birds we see in our gardens also have the partial migration we see in starlings. Partial migration depends upon the weather, so it is never the same from one year to the next. Birds that hardly





move at all in the UK may migrate in huge numbers elsewhere in Europe.

We have all seen various mammals in our gardens over the year, but we usually see less of them over winter. Two of them, hedgehogs and bats, go into hibernation and basically 'sleep' the winter away. Hibernation is not actually sleeping but it is when an animal slows its heart rate and breathing to save energy and survive the winter without eating much. Our hibernating animals get ready for their winter sleep by eating extra food and storing it as body fat which they then use as energy while sleeping.

Some hibernators, such as hedgehogs, go into such a deep sleep that it is almost impossible to wake them, and they appear to be dead! One December, a couple of years ago, my daughter found one asleep among the leaves of her artificial Christmas that she had stored in her



Hibernating hedgehog

garden shed. It did not stir when she picked it up and transferred it to a nest of leaves, she made on the other side of the shed.

Bats also hibernate in our rooves or sheds or holes in trees in Edington and I was once even shown roosting greater horseshoe bats hibernating in a neighbour's basement. Bats also sometimes change roost sites during the winter, especially if their roost site becomes too hot or cold. We also occasionally see bats, especially pipistrelles, foraging outside in our garden for insects on warm winter nights, but they soon return to hibernate again.

Most animals found around Edington don't hibernate, they just slow down and move less frequently during winter. Lots of animals that we think should be hibernating actually do not. Mice and voles in our gardens, for example, are

active and alert all winter, and squirrels do not just stay awake, they breed in January. Shrews also found in our gardens should be a perfect candidate for hibernation as they are small fast moving with bodies that lose heat rapidly, a high metabolic rate and an insectivorous diet. In the winter, they sleep longer, hunt mostly underground, yet rarely go dormant and they do not hibernate.

Badgers which we occasionally see in our gardens in summer, enter a state known as winter lethargy. Between November and February, they spend most of their time underground, putting on weight and their body temperatures may drop. But they do not undergo true hibernation.

Foxes also do not hibernate when it gets cold in the winter. I have actually seen their tracks in the snow on the hills above Edington and even blood in the snow when they caught a rabbit out foraging. During the autumn and winter, they simply grow more fur to keep warm and look heavier. When extreme weather hits, foxes sometimes seek shelter for a couple of days, but they resume their normal activities once the weather passes.

In Edington most of us have frogs, toads and newts in our gardens or ponds. These all change their behaviour as soon as the frosts start, in October or November. And if you search in your gardens, you can find them under logs or piles of stones, inside a hole in the ground or in a compost heap for example. In the common frog, some adult males will also over winter in the mud at the bottom of our ponds.

In winter, you may find adult butterflies, such as tortoiseshells, finding shelter in your home or in your garden shed, in holes in trees, in leaf litter, under logs and under rocks. Sometimes you will notice on a warm winter day that there is a butterfly trying to get out of your conservatory window – it has "woken up" briefly. Other species of butterflies may overwinter as larvae, pupae, or eggs.





Hibernating peacock butterflies which find dark places such as sheds, roof spaces, tunnels and tree cavities to close up their wings and wait for spring to return.

Of our 58 resident butterflies in the UK, 9 overwinter as an egg, 32 as a caterpillar, 11 as a pupa and 6 as an adult, including the brimstone, small tortoiseshell, red admiral, comma, and peacock.

Bees survive the winter in a number of different ways - Honey bees last out winter in the hive, huddling together and remaining semi-active, while bumblebees 'hibernate'. For many species of wasp and bee, only the queen hibernates. We have often found queen wasps 'hibernating' in our roof during winter. New queen bumblebees leave the hive and 'hibernate' over winter and they do it in a small nest in the ground, often in a hole made by a mouse or vole. The rest of the bumblebee colony perishes. Solitary bees, meanwhile, often seal themselves in hollow stems, or in bug hotels, to survive the winter.

Stephen Henning

Edington Parish Hall - Update

In order to comply with the new National Lockdown regulations, regrettably the Parish Hall is now closed to all groups and we cannot accept any booking for the duration of this Lockdown period.

We will of course post updates as and when the regulations change and the restrictions are eased; hopefully we can once again open the doors of the Parish Hall to the community in the not too distant future.

The Parish Hall Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Edington Station Yard Ltd for their generous donation to the Parish Hall, a most welcome 'Christmas Present', which will enable us to continue with some of the planned renovations. We would also like to thank the Village Volunteer Group for their continued support in painting both the porch and the railings, something that has needed doing for a long time! Their help is very much appreciated.

You may have noticed that there is something different about the outside lights. Having secured a Westbury Area Board Grant in 2020 (the grant covered the total cost of this project), we were able to improve the path and porch lighting – the porch lights are now movement activated and no longer will we have to grapple with the idiosyncrasies of the push button switch in the porch to illuminate the path!

Thanks to the efforts of David, our Treasurer, limited funding from Wiltshire County Council's Restrictions Support Grant has been secured which will help to cover our ongoing running costs. The support of Suzanne Wickham our county councillor has also been invaluable in securing these grants.

Do stay safe and well.

Wendy Pollard



View from the boundary

With the cold grip of winter starting to tighten, it's hard to believe that this crazy year has almost come to an end.

The Covid crisis of 2020 has impacted so many parts of our lives, but for the village cricketer, the prospect of having the sanctuary of a Sunday game removed from the weekly calendar was heart-drooping. But as you may be aware, Erlestoke managed to salvage their season and actually had a very successful year of cricket. New members were welcomed, plenty of runs were scored and we even managed to make it to The Bell Inn post and pre-match, whilst Boris allowed!

The season ended in sunshine and the ground was resown, rejuvenated and put to bed, ready for next year. But if you've been to the ground recently, you would think the season is about to start next week, such is the skill and dedication of the club's groundsman, Patrick. He was greatly assisted in his task by a sit-on mower kindly donated to the club by Bryan and Margo Mulligan-Scaiffe. The grass is lush, the outfield green and the square looks playable. Roll on April and that first game!

Last week the club's committee had its final meeting of the year and has already started putting together plans and actions ready for the new season. Membership and ground improvements were top of the agenda and our thanks go to the many dog-walking locals who use the carpark and woods regularly at the ground, who have approached us and expressed an interest in joining the club as social members. Their recognition of the importance to look after and maintain the club and ground, as well as the carpark and surrounding woods is much appreciated and we look forward to welcoming you all in the coming season. If you would like to become a social member of

Erlestoke Cricket Club then contact Joe as below.

Our pavilion plans have also taken a very positive turn over the last months and we have become more confident that we will be able to produce a building that is not only suitable for the club, but a fitting addition to the ground and the local community. We hope to have a more secure plan moving forward over the next 2 months, but it is looking very exciting for the club's future. Thanks to all that have been involved so far and our new friends that have joined the project. And many thanks to Edington Station Yard for their kind donation of £600 towards the club and its new pavilion fund.

Unfortunately it looks like there will be no winter net practice any time soon, but as soon as restrictions allow, we will be putting a plan together to give all the members a chance to find some form inside.

Until then, have a very happy Christmas and a Covid free New Year!

Joe Dorgan

Chairman, Erlestoke Cricket Club

07846 213702

joedorgan@hotmail.co.uk

No Comment

An Indian friend of mine sent me this:

A British national newspaper recently conducted a survey asking people "What does it mean to be British?". A respondent from Switzerland replied..

"Being British is about driving a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer, then driving home picking up an Indian takeaway or Turkish kebab on the way, to then sit on Swedish furniture to watch American films on a Korean TV. He goes to Spain for his summer holidays, skis in Austria, fancies Swedish girls, has his Amazon delivery by a Pole and when necessary visits his Indian doctor. He constantly complains about the French and the most British thing of all is his suspicion of anything foreign".



Margaret Barker

Margaret rarely spoke of her life before she moved to Wiltshire but in later years some of her life history began to be related. She was born in Chertsey in the county of Surrey in 1921 where her father was a dentist. The family moved to Jersey then returned to England at the outbreak of war, leaving Margaret and her younger brother to follow on later. Before they could do



this the island was occupied by the Germans and life became very hard. Everything from food to essential commodities began to run low and the islanders as well as the English-born suffered deprivation. Then Margaret, along with her brother, was transported first to an internment camp in France

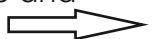
and later to Biberach Camp in Germany. Initially everyone lived in appalling conditions within one large room with no sanitation. Fortunately conditions slowly improved even though food was still in desperately short supply. Eventually Red Cross parcels began to get through and these proved to be a lifeline as well as a link to the outside world. Whilst in the camps Margaret organised schooling for the young children, a foretaste of the career that lay ahead of her. Her blackboard was a patch of dirt and her chalk a piece of stick with which to scratch her lessons in the dust. After the war she returned to Jersey to discover that her house had been stripped of everything. Some things had been

stolen for gain but mostly it was because no goods were coming into Jersey. Even the lino had been ripped up to make soles for people's worn-out shoes.

When the war ended, Margaret was repatriated to Britain. She said, "I arrived at Waterloo Station – totally alone. Five years I had waited." She soon enrolled at St Mary's College, Cheltenham to train to be a teacher. There, as her 1948 certificate shows, she gained five distinctions and two credits in her final examinations. In her early teaching career she taught a variety of subjects including Mathematics and P.E. and word has it she was a fine hurdler in her younger days.

Margaret's teaching career led her to Trowbridge where in 1969 she became Headteacher of Nelson Haden Secondary Modern School for Girls, and purchased the bungalow in Edington which was to be her much-loved home for the next fifty-two years. In 1974 she was appointed Headteacher of Clarendon Comprehensive School, newly formed by the amalgamation of Nelson Haden Girls' and Boys' Schools. She relished the opportunities this afforded despite being confronted by a number of challenges. Firstly the staff and pupils had never worked together in a mixed environment before and each of the Nelson Haden schools had their own distinctive traditions and practices. New, young teachers with experience of teaching "O" and "A" levels were brought in as heads of department to lead teachers who had hoped in the fulness of time to fill these positions themselves. Also, Margaret faced the problem that there was another new comprehensive school in Trowbridge which had been formed by the amalgamation of two grammar schools with a reputation for academic excellence. Indeed house prices remained stubbornly high in the catchment area of John of Gaunt for many years after the two comprehensives had achieved parity.

Margaret demonstrated skill, resilience and





drive as she determined to raise the profile and status of Clarendon in the community. Against the odds, within a year of the School opening, she had argued successfully for Clarendon to have its own sixth form, suspecting that if the officials in the Education Authority had their way and delayed starting it until the 1974 intake had worked its way up to the fifth form, it might never happen. Through all of this Margaret remained a teaching-head. After her retirement at Easter 1983 she quietly returned during the summer term to teach her CSE mathematics group until the examinations in which the children achieved better results than those in the group above.

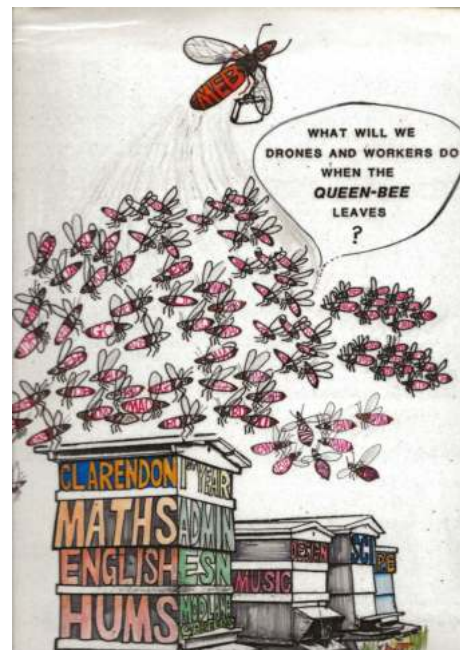
Margaret was the ultimate professional, yet she showed many acts of kindness which often went unnoticed: visiting staff who were sick, calling on teachers with presents for new born babies and providing breakfasts at her own expense for the children of poorly off parents. Margaret's leaving card from her staff depicted her as a queen bee flying above the other bees in the Clarendon hive who were wondering what they would do now that the Queen "B" was leaving!

In retirement Margaret immersed herself in the warmth and friendship of her beloved village of Edington. She lived there for another thirty eight years. After giving up her car she became actively involved with the Three Villages Minibus scheme. She joined the TVM committee and was always keen to participate in decision making about new vehicles and the general running of the minibus. She was a regular on its shopping trips to Warminster and Devizes as well as on the journeys to visit other towns further afield.

Margaret was also a regular at Edington's monthly lunches and was happy to make many of the puddings. She generously covered the cost of everyone's lunch on her 90th birthday with the words that she would now step back and let others do all the cooking. Fortunately this intention did not last and she continued to make her famed specialities: her sherry trifle was a must for the December lunch.

On the afternoon before she died Margaret said, "When I think about it, it seems to me as if my life has gone full circle. When I was young there was the separation and deprivations of war and now we have covid-19 with all its consequences and curtailment of liberties." Then to lighten the mood she smiled and went into the hallway where she tweaked a toy Christmas robin so that it flapped its wings and sang "We wish you a merry Christmas".

I'm sure that those who knew Margaret will remember her bright "Hello!" when answering the phone, her cheery wave when spotting a neighbour from her kitchen window, her beautiful garden – she was such a keen and knowledgeable gardener, and the genuine interest she took in the lives of her friends, relatives and their families; remembering the names of their children, grandchildren and even great grandchildren.



Although Margaret's unexpected death was a shock to so many of us, it is a consolation to know that she passed away quietly in her own home.

Margaret's funeral is being held on Thursday 14th January at 10.45am and it is intended that the hearse will leave from her house passing along Court Lane to Tinhead Road. Further details will be posted on the board outside of the Post Office.



Useful Contacts if you need help and support

If you are self isolating, you could contact one of these organisations for help and support, all of them have websites and most have phone numbers:

Age UK Wiltshire 0808 196 2424

Asthma UK 0300 222 5800

BHF 0300 330 3311

CALM helpline for men open 5pm to midnight
0800 55858

Diabetes UK 0345 123 2399

Mind 0300 123 3393

No Panic helpline for young people
0300 606 1174

Samaritans 116 123

Scope 0808 800 3333

Silver Line independent support for older
people 0800 470 8090

Wiltshire Council Wellbeing Hub 0300 003 4576

For information and extra help as to how keep
safe online visit

www.actionfraud.police.uk

Also victim support either through the website

www.victimsupport.org.uk

or their support line – 03003030157

Contacting us

Email the newsletter at

newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk

by phone on the Edington Parish Council help

line on **07933143021** (available 9am to 6pm,

Monday to Friday) or via the village website

www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk

Future editions

We welcome your comments on this new venture, please send them to the address below. If you would like to contribute an article to a future edition of the Edington Village News please email us with details of your article and we will contact you.

newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk

Small ads/swaps

We are giving readers the opportunity to advertise any items that they want to sell or swap. If you have something to sell or swap that you would like advertised in a future edition please either hand your advertisement into Pauline at the post office or email it to the newsletter, deadline 1st of each month.

Sharing the Newsletter

We are still hearing about villagers who say that they haven't heard about this newsletter, next time you speak to any of your neighbours and friends why not ask if they are receiving a copy and if not inform them that they can register for an emailed copy through the village website or send an email, the address is below. If they are unable to receive an electronic copy a paper copy can be obtained from Edington Post Office or perhaps you could volunteer to print out a copy for your neighbour.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically please visit the village website

www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/newsletter

and enter your details or email

newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk

and you will be added to the mailing list.

