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Welcome to the tenth edition of the Edington Village News .

This month we have as always a selection of articles including bell ringing news, an article on the history of wassailing, the regular cricket club update and also starting this month we

are introducing a poetry page. We welcome our readers to submit their verse for inclusion in a future edition

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](mailto: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

Whilst we are still in lockdown 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](http://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 28th January 2021**

We have recently had discussions with Shaunaks Pharmacy who share our accommodation and have become a mass vaccination site, and we are looking forward to working with and supporting them in delivering as many vaccines as possible to all our patients. Please do try and be clear as to which service will be administering your vaccine so that you attend the correct area of the site. If you have been called by the surgery, you should attend the surgery main doors or the portacabins. If you have booked via the National booking service, you should attend the Shaunaks pharmacy entrance.

Our progress is as follows but is changing on a daily basis:

- We have attempted to contact all our patients who are over 80, these patients have received their 1st dose. If you are 80yrs and over and have not been contacted, please telephone the practice to let us know.
- All nursing and residential homes have been visited and most residents have received their 1st dose.
- We are currently booking appointments for Health & Social Care workers and Frontline

Staff. If you are a health and social care worker and would like a vaccine, please contact us on [wccg.wgppatientvoice@nhs.net](mailto:wccg.wgppatientvoice@nhs.net).

- Plans are in place to visit and vaccinate our housebound patients who are 70yrs and over.
- We have attempted to contact our 75yrs and over and have booked appointments for their first dose. If you are 75yrs and over and have not been contacted, please telephone the practice to let us know.
- We are in the process of contacting our 70-74 year old and clinically extremely vulnerable patients to book their appointments. Please do not contact us, we will contact you.

We do have to redeploy some of our staff, both administration and clinical to help deliver this campaign, this could mean you may have to wait longer when accessing some of our services.

Thank you for your understanding.

**Dr Edwards & Partners**

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

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](http://www.westburygp.co.uk)



## 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:

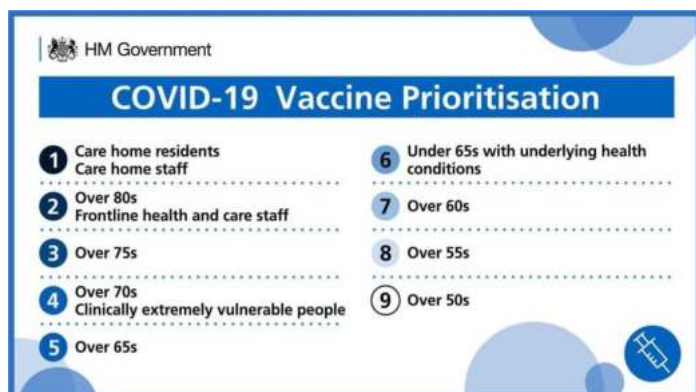
The Michael Herbert Hall on South Street,  
Wilton, SP2 0JS

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](http://www.courtyardsurgery.co.uk)



## Market Lavington Surgery



**TELEPHONE 01380 812500**

As everyone is aware Coronavirus Vaccines have been approved for use.

We understand how excited and keen people are to get the vaccine. However, we have been given a priority list from the government that as a surgery we have to follow.

If you are in one of the top priority groups our reception team will get in contact with you.

**Please do not** call the surgery to find out when we will be booking you in.

We are all working incredibly hard to get everyone in as soon as we can. You may be offered an appointment at the weekend and at the moment these clinics are taking place in the Corn Exchange in Devizes. You may also be vaccinated by a different GP surgery. If you are offered an appointment at one of the vaccine centres which is far away, if you can, please attend the appointment. If you cannot attend this appointment you will be offered another, however, this may take more time.

Please check the practice website for any further updates.

[www.marketlavingtonsurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.marketlavingtonsurgery.nhs.uk)







## Wiltshire Police

Following reports in other parts of the country we are warning the public to be wary of messages claiming to be from the NHS asking the recipient to apply for their

vaccine.

At a time when people are already feeling anxious and eagerly awaiting details of the impending vaccine, scammers are using this to their advantage to commit fraud. If you receive such a text, don't follow the link or share any personal or financial details. The link will take you through to a fake NHS website which is purposefully designed to exploit vulnerable people.

Fraudsters have tried to use the vaccine as a convincing subject to hook potential victims since the pandemic began. Thankfully reports have been relatively low, however there has been an increase in the last two months. The vaccine roll-out brings further hope of fighting coronavirus and keeping people safe. Now that this is imminent and has been so widely covered, some people may be more easily misled.

You will be contacted by the NHS when you're invited to receive the vaccine which will be offered in some hospitals, some pharmacies

and hundreds of local vaccination centres run by GPs. Remember that the vaccine is free of charge, at no point will you be asked for payment details.

Detective Sergeant Sean Tregunna commented: "Although we've not been made aware of any cases in Wiltshire yet, it's likely to only be a matter of time before we are. The text message some people have received was shared on social media over the Christmas period and although this does help to raise awareness of the issue, the most vulnerable may not be on social media themselves so we're asking people to share the information and warn their friends and family.

"The same scam has also been reported as being conducted over the phone, the caller often asks for a number to be pressed on their keypad, resulting in a charge likely being added to their phone bill, so you simply need to hang up.

"We're keen to prevent as many people falling victim to these scams as possible and urge people to not only share the warning but if they do receive a suspicious text, forward it to 7726 which is free of charge."

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, report it to Action Fraud at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or call on **0300 123 2040**.



UK  
**CORONAVIRUS**  
SCAMS

Get the latest information about coronavirus-related scams here: [actionfraud.police.uk/covid19](http://actionfraud.police.uk/covid19)



## Local Elections - MAY 2021

Local Elections are taking place in May for Wiltshire Unitary Council, Local Town and Parishes and for Wiltshire's Police and Crime Commissioner. All residents are being encouraged to vote by post. If you are not already registered for a postal vote, please consider applying for one.

Polling Stations will be open, but no one knows what the situation in May will be, and even if you normally vote in person, you may be unwell or having to self-isolate and not be able to visit a polling station.

Voting by post is simple, the forms are sent to you ahead of Election Day, and you return your vote in the envelope provided.

To provide a COVID safe environment counting will take place over four days.

For more information and to register please visit the Wiltshire Council Website by copying the link below.

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/elections-register-to-vote>

If you are unable to go online or cannot print an application form at home, please call 0300 456 0112, where the team will be able to assist you.

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](mailto:suzanne.wickham@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Tel - **07967 213336**

## Edington Parish Council News

**Council budget and precept for 2021/22** - At our meeting on Monday 11th January the Council adopted a budget of £15,500 for the coming financial year. This will mean a band D property owner will pay an increase of £7.27 or an additional 14p a week from the current years charge.

The increase has been necessary to meet increased demand upon the Councils finances some of which are outlined below.

We are now required to have all of the larger trees situated on Council land inspected regularly and reported upon. This year it has cost us a total of £1154 for the inspections and necessary tree works.

Regular monthly inspections and repairs to some of the equipment in the playfield has cost us £2352, this was necessitated by some of the equipment showing signs of wear and tear.

As you will be aware from previous articles we are in the process of having a 20mph speed limit introduced throughout the village with the exception of the B3098. The Parish Council have to contribute £1000 towards the overall cost, with the Westbury Area Community Transport Group also contributing £1000 and the remainder, if we are successful in our bid for this project, coming from the Department of Transport via Wiltshire Council.

We are also having to contribute £365 towards the cost of reducing the speed limit between Edington and Bratton to 40mph. We have been working with Bratton Parish Council and have been supported by our Wiltshire Councillor Suzanne Wickham in getting this approved. The total cost for this project is £2918 but after some negotiation with the Westbury Area Board who initially wanted the two councils to contribute 50% of the cost we were able to reduce the cost to 25% shared between Bratton and Edington.





**Pavement improvement work** - Work is due to start in Monastery Road on Thursday 25th February and will run until Wednesday 3rd March between 07.00 and 17.00 each day. This is to enable Wiltshire Council to repair and improve the pavement between the Church and the bend before the Weir junction. During this time the road will be closed between the Church and the junction with the Weir.

**Salisbury Hollow** - Some progress has been made in the Council's efforts to get the surface in Salisbury Hollow returned to its previous condition that is suitable for both walkers and horse riders. Unfortunately due to Covid the work has been delayed again, although some of the material for the repair work has appeared at the junction of Salisbury Hollow and the perimeter road on the Plain. We look forward to the work starting in the near future.

**Westbury Incinerator** - You will be aware that the Environment Agency have received an application from North Acre Energy for a Waste Energy Facility at Westbury. The Council are aware that a number of villagers have expressed their views on this proposal both for and against it. If you wish to find out more and to register your views the links to the relevant websites can be found on the front page of the village website. The consultation period closes on 21st February 2021.

**Finally** - It has been brought to the Councils attention that someone who owns a large dog and frequently walks it along the Coal Path between Inmead and the Church does not think that it is their responsibility to clean up after their dog. In recent weeks a large dog has left a number of "offerings" on the grass along this path. All dog owners have a responsibility to clear up after their dog **at all times** not only on footpaths but also in the fields surrounding the village. This also means the owner depositing the "offerings" in the nearest bin and not leaving them on the ground, hanging in a hedge or in one recent case left on someone's gate for them to dispose of!

## Bell Ringers (Edington/Bratton/Erlestoke)

We are part of the SDGR (Salisbury Diocesan Guild of Ringers - Devizes Branch)

There was a great response to join the Ringers 100 Club and we thank all the members who participated in 2020 and hope that you will continue in 2021.

It is not too late to join for 2021, please contact Graham Preuveneers for an application form

**01380 830692** or [graham.preuveneers@msn.com](mailto:graham.preuveneers@msn.com)

Some of the funds raised has already been given towards the cost of urgent maintenance work on the Edington bells and together with a generous donation from The Friends of Edington Priory Church this work has now been completed satisfactorily.

Unfortunately we still haven't been able to ring the bells regularly due to Covid restrictions, however Edington was chimed on Sunday 31st January in recognition of the 100,000 covid victims.

The Bratton bell chamber flooring, that supports the bell frame is rotten and unsafe and therefore not in a fit state for ringing the bells, there is some urgent work needed to make it safe.

The club has given a donation to St James PCC.

We are also concerned with the bells at Erlestoke, which we haven't been able to ring for at least two years. The main problems here are the bell wheels which need rebuilding and the bell frame which is not securely fixed.

**John Richardson - Bell Ringers, Treasurer.**





## *Village Musings*

### **Snow in Edington!**

It is well known in my place of work that I enjoy the snow more than the children. And that takes some doing! Children sledging down every slope in the village, children building snowmen, making snow angels, throwing snowballs – what a joyful and wonderful experience! Nothing is lovelier than the sound of happy children outdoors, and even more so in the enchanting snow landscape.



Perhaps because we don't see snow very often, it is extra special here in the south of England. There is a lightness and brightness about our community when we wake up and see everything decorated in the soft icing of snow. Sounds are muffled and yet

clearer and different features of the landscape are more noticeable. People laugh more and someone quite rightly said, "Everyone is a child in the snow!"

The walk along Baynton road was very special on our Sunday snow walk. As well as the sparkling, magical sculptures of the countryside,



we also noticed how many wild animals live here, alongside us, in Edington. Their footprints, usually entirely obliterated in the mud and on the grass, are clearly visible in the quiet snow. And there we saw Roe deer prints and rabbits, as well as many birds.

Walking along to the farm with its "moat" was especially lovely on that day – the hush and the snow allowed us to see the wildlife more clearly, and the brittle frosting on the water brought a new aspect to this beautiful spot.

That snow day felt like a holiday, a break from the often difficult times we are all living through at present. A very special gift.





## Edington and District Gardening Club

We had our first Edington Garden Club meeting for 2021 on Thursday the 7th January 2021. Due to the Covid-19 Lockdown the meeting was held on Zoom. Our speakers for this meeting were Dr Stephen and Mercedes Henning who discussed South African garden plants found in the United Kingdom. How we treat these plants in England depends on where they originated in South Africa. In England we find some of these South African plants growing happily in the garden and tolerating temperatures down to -5°C while others we can only keep as house plants on a windowsill.

South Africa is a large country some five times larger than the United Kingdom and has a huge variation in climate and topography. Most of South Africa sits at a high altitude or height above sea level. It is largely a dry country, with most of its western region being semi-desert. Rainfall increases in the east and most of the rain falls in summer. The summers are warm to hot, while the winter temperatures can vary, depending on locality from bitterly cold to cool. The eastern side of the country on the Indian Ocean is lush, well-watered and warmed by the Mozambique Current. There is winter rainfall in the west (on the Cape Peninsula and its surrounds) and the climate is Mediterranean.

So, if we use plants from the cooler to cold regions of South Africa, we find that they will grow quite happily in the gardens here in southern England. The plants from the more tropical eastern regions don't do so well during our winters but can be brought inside until spring. The plants and succulents from the arid semi-desert regions can be grown in our rockeries as long as the soil is sandy and there is good drainage. A lot of South African plants can tolerate temperatures down to -5°C but must not stand in waterlogged ground. This is because

although the winters in South Africa are very cold, they are always dry. Rain often does not fall for 3-4 months over winter and the grass all turns brown.

Some of the plants discussed from the harsh inland, highveld from altitudes between five and six thousand feet were the Agapanthus, Gladiolus, Pelargoniums, Acacia karoo – the sweet thorn, and the succulent *Cotyledon orbiculata*. These can grow quite well in the UK as long as they don't get too wet in winter. From the Lowveld, plants such as Arum Lilies (or Calla lilies) grow well in the south of England. Also, from the Lowveld and Kwa-Zulu-Natal are *Crocasmias* which do well here in Edington. Another plant doing well here from these regions is the *Kniphofia* or Red-hot poker.

From the more arid regions of South Africa there are Aloes and various succulents which can do well in our rockeries as long as the drainage is good. *Gazanias* from Namaqualand also do well in England but need dry, sunny, well drained and fertile soil. *Mesembryanthemums* from the same area can also do well here but they can be very sensitive to frost.

*Osteospermums* from the Western Cape has also been found to grow very well here in Edington and grow easily from cuttings.

The talk ended with the possibility of growing the King Protea (*Protea cynaroides*) here in Edington. It is very tough, tolerating wildfires, drought, and frost. It requires acidic soil that is poor in nutrients. Someone in Cardiff has kept one in a container outside for many years, so they should do well here.


Thank you Stephen and Mercedes.

Our meetings at present will be via Zoom, please check the village website for information about our forthcoming meetings. Please contact Jacky for joining information **01380 830133**





## ~ BY THE FIRESIDE ~

 The flickering firelight flashes full  
And shadowmen jump the walls  
Of whitewashed rotting plaster stained  
Before a room of watching eyes.

The silent brooding tallboy stares  
And glowers upon this dancing scene  
And rag-rugs rusty and dusty and black  
Lie stretched in prostrate piety.

Flagstones old and cold and damp  
In their squareness crude and rough,  
Echo the frameless pictures bare  
Upon crumbling walls, so fairly hung

Yet still the molten embers flare  
And warm the legs of tables and chairs  
While o'er the fireplace ticks the clock  
Right referee to all that he surveys.

Now spiralling, swirling sooty smoke  
From Yorkshire's railway best  
The slaggy coal in the grate grows grey  
And fuel from ashes to ashes it makes

In quiet moments such as these  
When smells and sights and sounds compete  
A rude cottage clings to its own delights  
And frees my mind and soul at night.

~



Thank you to CS for this poem.

If you have written a poem and would like to share it with our readers please send it to the usual email address.



## The change of seasons for wildlife

Winter is drawing to a close and it is now all change for the wildlife around Edington. The first snowdrops were out in my garden in mid-January. Everything is now getting ready for Spring. In a couple of weeks our winter migrant birds will be heading back north and east across to Europe to their summer breeding grounds and our summer visitors will start replacing them in March.

These winter visitors have delighted us in our gardens and on our walks in the countryside with their antics over the past couple of months. These birds arrived in autumn to spend the winter here, where the weather is milder, and food is easier to find than in their summer breeding grounds.

This year in Edington they included redwings, golden plovers, and surprisingly blackcaps (usually only a summer visitor), to name just a few. We also had robins, lapwings, starlings, chaffinches, and many other common birds migrating from northern and eastern Europe where the winters are colder to join our resident birds here where the winter is milder.

One of the sights I have enjoyed this year



**Flocks of golden plovers were seen around Edington this year.**

were the flocks of Golden Plovers up on the plain above Edington. They were often in the company of lapwings. They had been here since last November and will soon be leaving us to fly north to their breeding grounds where they will start breeding from the end of April. A lot of the lapwings will also be leaving us as well to return to their breeding grounds on the continent. Our resident lapwings should start breeding in March.

Our winter visitors will soon be replaced by our summer visitors which are birds that arrive in spring from the south to breed here in England. Many of these are insect eaters. They will spend summer here, then they – and their new young – return south in autumn. Around Edington these will include swallows and martins, yellow wagtails, cuckoos, swifts, and turtle doves.

Our most famous summer migrant is the barn swallow which spends its winter in South Africa - they travel through western France, across the Pyrenees, down eastern Spain into Morocco and across the Sahara. Some birds follow the west coast of Africa avoiding the Sahara. Migrating swallows cover 200 miles a day, mainly during daylight, at speeds of 17-22 miles per hour. In their wintering areas the swallows feed in small flocks. Swallows usually arrive back in the UK in April and May to breed, returning to their wintering grounds in September and October.

Swifts are also famous migrants. They arrive in the UK in late April but stay only long enough to breed. They start returning to Central Africa in late July or early August. The onset of the



**Barn swallow**





migration is believed to be triggered by the lack of insects high in the air. Swifts need warm weather to provide a constant supply of flying insects, so they spend only about three months in the UK each year. Young swifts are independent as soon as they leave the nest and set out immediately on migration. They cannot roost overnight during the journey, like swallows do, so they travel quickly. There is a record of one young swift that left its UK nest on 31 July, being found in Madrid (Spain) on 3 August. By mid-August, most swifts have reached central Africa. They do not spend the winter in one place but travel around according to food supplies and weather conditions. Swifts can live up to 21 years, so one individual may fly more than one million kilometres during its lifetime. Except when nesting, swifts spend their lives in the air, living on the insects caught in flight; they drink, feed, and often mate and sleep on the wing. Some individuals go 10 months without landing.

Spring in England is never the same without the call of a cuckoo. These are also huge migrants from Africa. Our cuckoos spend the winter months in Central Africa, mainly in and around the Congo rainforest (in DRC, Congo, or



**Swift**

Gabon) and in similar habitat as far south as Angola. One of the longest migrations recorded by any land bird was that of a cuckoo. A cuckoo was recently recorded to have flown

more than 7,500 miles (12,000km) from southern Africa to its breeding ground in Mongolia.

It is not only birds that migrate to the UK every year, but insects do so as well. The most famous of these is the Painted Lady butterfly. In 2009, 11 million Painted Lady butterflies arrived in Britain from southern Europe during their migration from northern Africa. These strong-flying migrants were spotted everywhere from the Highlands in



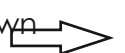
**Cuckoo in flight with its long-pointed wings, long tail and small head are reminiscent of a hawk (left); a cuckoo when perched often appears ungainly and seems to have difficulty folding its long wings (left)**



Scotland to central London and produced millions more offspring. Two fields in Cornwall were recorded containing 500,000 Painted Lady caterpillars.

On their return journey at the end of summer the Painted Lady butterflies rise to an average of 500 metres to take advantage of prevailing winds, flying south at 30mph. The butterflies end up in Morocco and some also cross the Sahara. Then, when it gets too hot for the sub-Saharan African generation, they move north again. The Painted Lady migration route can span up to 7,500 miles but this may be via three or more quickly reproducing generations.

The Painted Lady may be our best-known







migratory insect but there are many others, including moths, dragonflies, ladybirds, hoverflies and even aphids.

Radar has also revealed the miraculous powers of Britain's only confirmed obligate migrant moth, the Silver Y. It was discovered that the Silver Ys were choosing the altitude that gave them most advantageous tailwinds. Radar



**Painted Lady coming into land.**

also revealed that Silver Ys could even orientate their bodies in the correct direction to compensate for crosswinds. Most incredibly, Silver Ys were revealed to be travelling as

fast as – and sometimes faster than - migrating birds such as thrushes. This was because the moths identified the best spot in the air column for favourable tailwinds, whereas the larger birds did not bother.

But how do these insects know which way to go? Research has revealed that the lengthening or shortening of days is the Painted Ladies' cue: caterpillars growing while days are lengthening become adults who fly northwards. When days shorten, the butterflies are born with an awareness of the need to travel south, to warmer climes. The Painted Lady orientates itself using the sun, but night-flying moths cannot use a sun compass. Research has shown that they use the Earth's magnetic field to guide them.

So soon our gardens will be alive again with returning birds and insects. With the lengthening and warming days our hibernating hedgehogs will be soon shuffling around our gardens again and the bats again fluttering about at dusk. The frogs and toads will be awakening from their



**The Silver Y moth**

sleeps and we will soon see tadpoles in our ponds again. Our gardens will be alive again

with bird song and the hum of the bees. Hurry on the spring!

**Dr Stephen Henning**

## Three Villages Minibus (TVM)

Tuesday 19th of January was the day that the waiting was over and our new TVM arrived. As you will see from the photo, it looks like our previous vehicle from the outside except it is a Citroen rather than a Peugeot. Three of us were there to welcome it and to discover any difference in the workings of the vehicle and to check everything conformed to the specifications. Sadly, there was a few problems; the rearmost seat did not fold away, and we had no spare wheel. We had been told that the spare wheel could be fitted on a rack underneath the vehicle, but it subsequently transpired that this was not possible as we have a tail lift.

After a quick photo opportunity to show that it had arrived in Edington we asked them to take it back and make the necessary changes. This will mean waiting at least a further month for a foldaway seat to be ordered and fitted and for the spare tyre to be put inside. It is fortunate that, because of Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions, we are not intending to start using it for regular shopping trips in the immediate future. We shall have to be patient and look forward to its return.





On a positive note, we are humbled by the generosity of donations in support of TVM. We have received donations from Edington Station Yard Ltd., who also gave a donation towards the running of the Edington lunches, and from the Henry Smith Trust, which gives funds to support transport initiatives in Westbury and its environs. Eileen Terry, from Bratton, a regular user and supporter of TVM over many years sadly died in October and very thoughtfully left TVM a bequest.

**Joy Fraser**



## Four Villages Link News February 2021

It is with great sadness we learnt about the death of Margaret Barker from Edington over the Christmas period. Margaret was a founder member of Four Villages Link and played an active part as a volunteer driver for several years. In the early days of The Link there were no Sat Nav's and Margaret would often have to do a trial run before each appointment to make sure she knew the location of a new client. She discovered many little lanes in the area which she never knew existed that way. She said that some clients-men in particular - would be surprised to see that their driver was a petite capable female. In later years Margaret was house bound herself and was able to use the link service for appointments. We know she was a popular and much loved friend and neighbour and we will miss her.

We are pleased to say that we have been successful in recruiting some new volunteer drivers, and are delighted to welcome Col Peter Sharland to our team as our new secretary.

The four village's link has continued throughout this difficult time to help those needing assistance - providing transport for necessary journeys, e.g.; The White Horse Health Centre, the local surgery, local hospitals, and dental appointments. All drivers are equipped with PPE. We endeavour to be Covid safe. We can also offer support with shopping or small jobs where possible. If we can't help we probably know someone who can!

Call us on **07852 256939** 9am -6pm Monday to Friday



## Edington and Tinhead WI Wassailing

We are hoping you will join us in celebrating Valentine's Day by sharing friendship around the village.

We are planning a heart Trail for children and the young at heart to follow over half term. The idea is to put hearts in your window, garden etc. RED ones to show your appreciation for key workers, GREEN ones for show your love for action on climate change. Children can see how many of each colour they can find, similar to the rainbow and teddy bears last year. You could post some photos and results in next month's Newsletter. We hope as many of you as possible will join in and share the idea with your neighbours. We look forward to seeing some creative ideas as we walk around the village.

The WI have been thinking of how to spread a bit of good cheer during this bleak lock down. Some members would like to share hearts of card, biscuits or cake to help bring a smile to their neighbours. These will be prepared and delivered in a covid safe way with as little handling as possible. If you are unhappy to receive a gift feel free to say so. These are going to be very local so its pot luck whether you will get anything. If villagers would like to join us in spreading a little love feel free to join in providing you observe strict covid guidelines.

Our March meeting is an open zoom meeting. We have Martyn Whittock talking on Ethandun: Alfred the Great.

So put 9 March 7.30 in your diary and contact me for joining instructions.

[elizabethdpike@aol.com](mailto:elizabethdpike@aol.com)

**Liz Pike**

Wassailing is another of our mid-winter ceremonies that has been practised for centuries it almost died out in the 20th century but is now enjoying a revival.

'Wassail' probably derives from the Saxon Waes bu Hael meaning 'Be of good health' but may have links to Scandinavian waes hael. It is documented in several medieval texts but is thought to be of much older origins but all relate to drinking. An anonymous Anglo- Norman poet witnessed this toast before the battle of Hastings in 1066.

*Rejoice and wassail  
Pass the bottle and drink healthy  
Drink backwards and drink to me  
drink half and drink empty*

Wassailing was common throughout the country and has developed into several different customs covering the winter months, most relate to the Christmas period, particularly twelfth night, when a wassail cup was passed round; these are usually 2 handled cups. In high society they were highly decorated and made out of gold and silver frequently decorated with ribbons. Wassail cups were filled with warm ale or cider and often with fortified wines and spirits together with exotic spices such as cinnamon and cloves; eggs and cream were frequent additions as were baked apples. These were sharing cups to drink a toast and pass round and no doubt they added to the merrymaking associated with the twelfth night excesses of past times. Certainly by the 13th century wassailing referred to a festive occasion associated with drinking, pledging good health, singing and other entertainments.

Wassailing was not the preserve of the wealthy and took place across the county. The poor would take a wooden wassail cup, usually made of white wood such as Ash, around the village. Calling at homes particularly to their







employers, singing wassailing songs and sharing the cup, while requesting food and or money. These seemed to happen any time from November to February. It is thought that these formed a type of benevolent aid to help the poor through the worst of the winter. Certainly the wassailers were expected, as many of the songs refer to shutting the door and demanding a rhyme before flinging the doors open and inviting them in for a feast or asking for silver to fill empty purses. The caroller then frequently blessed the farmer, his animals and crops. Many songs have been collected from all over the country, often troupes were formed of children or women and girls. Wassailing is thought to be the fore runner of carol singing around towns and villages and probably of first footing in Scotland. Most of the surviving songs were collected from this type of wassailing. The song below being one of the common tunes but words varied depending on where collected.

*Here we come a wassailing among the leaves  
so green*

*Here we come a wandering so fair to be seen*

*We are not daily beggars that beg from door  
to door*

*but we are neighbours' children whom you  
have seen before*

*We have a little purse made of stretching  
leather skin*

*we want some of your small change to line it  
well within*

*Bring out a table and spread it with a cloth,  
bring us out a cheese and of your Christmas  
loaf*

*God bless the master of this house likewise  
the mistress too  
and all the little children that round the table  
go*

This tradition seems to have declined rapidly with industrialisation. Maybe the large towns were not so cohesive or the factory owners as benevolent. Also poor laws were being introduced so maybe the rich did not feel they needed to personally support the poor. Music hall music was also replacing much of the traditional songs which were seen as old



fashioned.

However the tradition persisted in the countryside until the early 19th century but seems

to have largely died out between the wars.

Growing up alongside the above traditions was orchard wassailing, this also goes back before medieval times. This seemed to be a much more private affair, involving individual farms or orchards, rather than the whole village. Some medieval accounts refer to groups of young men travelling from farm to farm with cow horns and sticks, regaling the trees with blowing the horns and beating the trees and toast soaked in cider being put in the branches. Alcohol of course was central with pails of warm cider or ale brought to the orchard or the revellers invited into the farm house. Some accounts say the participants carried their own cups. The dregs were sprinkled around the roots of the trees to return the apple spirit back to the trees, usually a verse or chant was made and in some areas songs were sung.

Example of chant  
*health to thee good apple tree  
Well to bear, pocketful hat full  
Peck fulls bushel bag fulls*

By the 19th century, accounts record guns and blunderbuss's being fired into the tree and this was becoming common practice.

Orchard wassailing seems to have been commonplace throughout the country but died out in most areas a lot earlier than house to house wassailing, surviving only in the strong





holds of the West County, Sussex and Kent also Hereford and Worcester, all of which were important fruit growing areas.

The origins of events is tied up by mythology magic and sprites but in principle the noise was to wake the trees from their winter slumber. The bread was to appease the robin who was believed to be the guardian spirit of the orchard and the pouring of cider to the roots to return the apple spirit back to the tree, so ensuring a good crop. Although sounding pagan today it was condoned by the church and formed part of the cycle of the church festivities for centuries



although banned by Cromwell and the puritanical Victorian church. Traditionally Wassailing took place towards the end of the 12 days of Christmas before work resumed. It

is not certain when or why the ceremony moved to 17th January. The calendar moved back 12 days in 1752 but there is little evidence to support the ceremony moving to the old twelfth night until the early 20th century. Today 17th January is generally regarded as Wassailing Day.

As with house to house wassailing, it had almost died out before the folk revival of the 1970's, largely brought back by Morris sides (drinking and sticks being a good fit). Today it is enjoying a huge revival with many organised events by cider producers, community orchards and Morris events. The green man seems to have merged into the ceremonies as part of this revival possibly because of the need for an MC at modern events.

There is an old apple tree in the area behind the burial ground which the Parish Council hope to rewild and open up for more public use. Maybe we could hold a village wassail there next year. What do you think?

**Liz Pike**

## 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](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

Also victim support either through the website

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

or their support line – 03003030157



Elections in 2021: Police and Crime Commissioner, unitary, town and parish, neighbourhood planning referendums

**Don't forget to register to vote by post**

If you can't print an application form at home, please call 0300 456 0112

[wiltshire.gov.uk/elections](http://wiltshire.gov.uk/elections)

**Wiltshire Council**



## View from the Boundary

For the average village cricketer, the first months of a new year can be a frustrating and tempestuous time. The dawn of a new

season can be seen just over the horizon, England are playing in some sunny foreign climate (and winning) and things are starting to get a little greener. However, as the covid crisis continues to linger, we all find ourselves longing for a return to normality; and for the village cricketer the hope that the season might start on time!

But at Erlestoke CC there are things to be positive about; a promotion to Division 4 for the Saturday league team, the return of the junior section and the prospect of a brand new pavilion up at the ground are keeping spirits high and everyone enthused and engaged. Regardless of when the season starts, Erlestoke and Coulston CC will be ready and eager for that first delivery of the season. In the meantime, the members continue to work on their preseason fitness to ensure they can fit back into their whites, perfect their excuses for all those poor shots and dropped catches and practice perfect forward defences in bedroom mirrors, all in preparation for that first game.

We are also excited about the new faces that we will be welcoming to the club this year. Due to the many requests over the winter months from local residents and regular dog walkers to the ground, we have adjusted our social membership and look forward to your support for years to come. Your understanding of the importance of keeping the ground, woods and carpark safe and maintained is much appreciated and membership forms can be picked up from Edington Post Office in due course.

The most exciting development for the club over the past months is the progression of the new pavilion project at the ground. For many years we have been working towards the goal of improving the facilities at The Walled Garden and develop a structure that not only benefits the club and the community, but also fits the beauty of the surroundings. Thanks to the efforts of many members behind the scenes, the generosity of local residents who have donated to the cause and some grant schemes, this dream has become closer to becoming a reality. We are so thankful to everyone who has been part of this journey so far and recently got on board. If you or your business would like to contribute to the cause we would love to hear from you so please get in touch.

Hopefully in the next edition we will have some cricket confirmed. Until then, stay safe and stay positive..... it's brightening up!

### Joe Dorgan

Chairman, Erlestoke Cricket Club

### Stop Press

The 2021 season fixtures have just come in and Erlestoke's first game will be away to Ramsbury on Saturday 24th April. The team will be hoping to hire TVM (The Fun Bus!) subject to approvals from the TVM management team and a solemn undertaking from all cricketers not to eat even a packet of crisps on the new bus.

The season will be with us before long!  
Hooray!

### Joe Dorgan







## This month's bargains

### Cat scratching / climbing frame

As new, cost £30 sell for £10  
Can be seen in Edington.....**01380 830396**



### Politi steam cleaner

Cleans without chemicals including tools and bag £20  
Can be seen in Edington.....**01380 830396**



### Pair of wrist supports

Medium size, left and right hand, new, unworn. Not suitable for my wrists. £8 ono  
Can be seen in Edington.....**01380 830396**



Don't forget to make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday 16th February





## Edington in the past - with snow forecast for this week at look back to the winter of 1981



Court Lane 1981



Salisbury Hollow 1981

## 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](http://www.edingtonwiltshire.org.uk/newsletter) and enter your details or email [newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk) and you will be added to the mailing list.

## 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.

## Contacting us

Email the newsletter at [newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:newsletter@edingtonwiltshire.org.uk)