

Whatlington News

APRIL 2022

GET IN TOUCH: STEVE TURNER 01424 870041

Volunteers needed for

ROYAL DUTIES

Appeal for help to stage Platinum Jubilee party

As plans to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee gather pace an appeal has been made for villagers to help make the occasion a fitting tribute for the whole community.

A street party style event is to be held on the afternoon of Sunday 5 June with a free hog roast, music and children's games.

But key to staging the party to mark the Queen's 70 years on the throne will be the willingness of local people to lend a hand.

The event is being organised by the Village Hall committee whose Annette McBride is seeking volunteers to commit

to turning up on the morning of the event to help set up stalls, gazebos and anything else that requires heavy lifting.

The parish council is paying for the hog roast and a 1950s era buffet being prepared by residents of Woodman's Oak.

Royal Oak
brewery Shepherd

Neame is supplying a barrel of beer and, as with the Diamond Jubilee party ten years ago, villagers are urged to bring additional food and drink both for their own consumption and to add to the general feast.

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**Church to
be filled with
flowers for
Jubilee Holiday
Weekend
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Share your royal stories

For a special Jubilee Weekend issue of Whatlington News I'd like to feature some of your royal memories. Do you remember the coronation celebrations in the village? Have you attended previous jubilee events here? Perhaps you've met Her Majesty? Tell editor Steve Turner by calling 01424 870041 or emailing steveturner807@gmail.com

Here's how to get involved

If you can help out on the morning of the event or want to contribute in any way contact Annette on 01424 871629 or by emailing wildblueyonder@btinternet.com

Appeal for volunteers

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People should also bring their own picnic tables and chairs or blankets for the party, which starts at 2pm in the field behind the Village Hall.

Annette said: "To make it a truly royal occasion it would be brilliant if villagers dress in red, white and blue.

"There will be music, stalls, a raffle, lots of children's games and a balloon modeller to make it an event for all the family.

"This will be a great opportunity to bring the village together after the difficulties of the past two years as well as to celebrate the Queen's amazing life on the throne and her service to the country."

Music, flowers and hymns at church

Whatlington Church will open across the four-day Jubilee Weekend and will be filled with flowers and memorabilia relating to the Queen's coronation.

Flower arranging will take place on Thursday 2 June in the morning.

On that evening there will be a musical event with songs, hymns and appropriate readings. Music will be provided by members of the Whatlington Singers.

On Sunday 5 June there will be a 10.30am Platinum Jubilee Service with Communion and refreshments afterwards.

■ *Quest for new vicar latest: page 7*

Jubilee beacons to light up Sussex

The Jubilee weekend will be marked on Thursday 2 June with more than 1,500 beacons lit throughout the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories, and one in each of the 54 capital cities of Commonwealth countries. More than 100 beacons will be lighting up across Sussex between 10-10.30pm. Among the locations are:

- Galley Hill, Bexhill
- Pevensey Castle.
- St George's Church, Crowhurst
- Ninfield Working Men's Club
- Ashburnham Sports Field.
- East Hill, Hastings at 9.45pm

Nation goes to lunch

The Whatlington event is part of the nationwide Big Jubilee Lunch that has so far seen more than 1,500 similar events arranged.

The Sunday 5 June gatherings will be the highlight of the four-day extended Bank Holiday weekend to celebrate the fact that on 6 February this year the queen became the first British monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee.

Rother's royal reward

Whatlington Parish Council has secured a grant of up to £500 for its Jubilee Weekend celebrations. The money, from Rother District Council's Jubilee Grants Scheme, will cover half the cost of any event.

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What's good for the heart is good for the brain

More than a dozen people are better able to save the life of somebody who has had a cardiac arrest thanks to retired GP Jenny Bell's Hearts and Minds session at the Village Hall. Jenny, a former heart specialist who retired to look after her husband who has dementia, explained that essentially what is good for the heart is also good for the brain. And should the worst happen she gave a demonstration in the use of a defibrillator and how to perform CPR (chest compressions). These are among the main points of her presentation.

Saving a life sounds such a dramatic concept and performing CPR and using an AED (defibrillator) when someone has a cardiac arrest is certainly dramatic.

However there are other ways in which we can save lives:

- preventing disease in the first place – the risk factors for heart disease and dementia are the same and recently it has been established that 40 per cent of dementia cases (nearly a million in the UK) are attributable to lifestyle. Giving up smoking, increasing physical activity, controlling blood pressure and eating a healthy diet are the main factors.

- getting to know the signs and symptoms of a disease is important so that medical advice can be sought and diagnosis and treatment initiated.

- knowing what to do in the event of cardiac arrest – when you see no response and no breathing – could be the single most important thing you ever do.

Sadly, in the case of dementia, there are no known treatments and that is why we need to support [Alzheimer's Research UK](#) so that ground-breaking research can achieve the same progress that has been seen in heart and cancer treatments.



Dr Bell, right, instructs Lois Richardson in CPR and use of a defibrillator

What is coronary heart disease (CHD)?

CHD occurs when the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the heart muscle is blocked or reduced and can lead to angina, heart attack and cardiac arrest.

What is dementia?

A collection of symptoms, including a decline in memory, reasoning and communication skills, and a gradual loss of skills needed to carry out daily activities. It is a physical process NOT a mental illness nor an inevitable part of ageing.

- *Donations were made at the event for*

[Music for the Memory](#)

Help to spread the word

If you know a group of people who would benefit from Jenny's talk – it could be family, friends or a club or society – contact her on 07968 771232 or email jennybell25@btinternet.com

Help save vital minutes in a cardiac emergency

Whatlington's defibrillator is in a cabinet on the wall of the Royal Oak and if you live close by would you be prepared to offer to collect the kit and take it to the scene of an emergency in one of the outlying parts of the village? It would involve offering your phone number to be published in the Whatlington News and village noticeboards. If you can help email the editor at steveturner807@gmail.com

Church car park plan appeal turned down

The proposal to build a car park on land next to the village church has been refused again, this time by the Government Planning Inspectorate.

The plan, which sought outline planning permission for a house on the land as a way to finance the car park, was initially turned down by Rother planners.

The team behind the scheme, led by landowner Pam Butcher, lodged an appeal against Rother's decision in November 2020.

But after visiting the site in January this year the inspector concluded: "The proposal would introduce built development that would represent a new encroachment into the countryside.

"This would be at odds with the intrinsic character and beauty of the field to the rural area.

"The proposed urbanisation of part of the agricultural field would detract from the rural setting of the Grade II listed church, and visitors being able to appreciate this.

This is not the end of the road

Pam Butcher, whose land the car park and housing development would be built on, said the inspector's decision came as a "surprise and a disappointment".

She told Whatlington News: "But it is not necessarily 'the end of the road'.

"We are exploring the options left

"I note that a number of representations were made from interested parties at both the application and appeal stages.

"This included a large number in support of the proposal and the need for the creation of a safe car parking area in order to support the continued use of the church.

"The church is clearly a well-appreciated asset in aesthetic, historic and usage terms to the local community.

"However, I do not find that the matters raised in these representations provide the justification for overcoming the harm I have identified in this instance.

"I have found that the proposal would result in harm to the High Weald AONB and the Listed Grade II Church of St Mary Magdalene and these provide clear reasons for refusing the development proposed."

■ You can read the inspector's full report by [clicking here](#).

open to us to get a much-needed car park for our beautiful church, without which it cannot be used to its full potential and move into the 21st century.

"We would like to thank everyone who supported the application and very much hope that we can count on your support again in the future."

PLANNING REFUSALS AND APPEALS

■ A proposed glamping site at Mill Farm in Whatlington Road has been refused by Rother planners.

The plan would have seen six shepherd huts with nine parking spaces, six fire pits with seating areas and the enlargement of a pond.

But the planning authority decided the scheme would introduce a "man-made and engineered landform into this tranquil location.

"This would represent a significant visual intrusion into this part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty."

■ Rother planners have refused permission for a four-bedroomed house to be built on land at Little Dorrells/Hillside Nursery in Woodmans Green Road.

The two-storey building would, said the council's refusal decision, result in "the urbanisation of the site and the domestication of an essentially rural environment.

"The impacts would be all the more pronounced as a result of the scale and massing of the proposed dwelling, which is substantial."

■ The refusal of an application to build a house on land at Benham Cottage, Whatlington Road, is to go to appeal before the Government Planning Inspectorate.

Rother planners rejected the plan stating it "would appear incongruous in the street scene, significantly eroding and out of keeping with the spacious character of the wider area."

Sedlescombe and District Garden Society

By Christine George

Foraging talk and plant market

During April and May, Sedlescombe and District Garden Society has two exciting events planned. Both events will take place in Sedlescombe Village Hall.

Wednesday 20 April at 7pm
Michael Wachter from Great Dixter will speak about *Foraging for a Sustainable Future*.

Entrance fee for members is £1 and non-members £3. This will include tea or coffee and biscuits and there will be a raffle.

Saturday 7 May 10.30am-12noon
Fantastic Plant Market

There will be a range of great value plants for sale, many of which have been grown and provided by members of the society. Friary Gardens will have bedding plants for sale and a range of cacti and succulents will also be on sale courtesy of the Rother branch of the British Cactus and Succulent Society. Please note: we can only take cash at the plant market.

Become a member

By becoming a member of SDGS you can enjoy reduced entry to most of our events, receive regular newsletters, attend special 'members only' events plus have full access to our excellent website, which includes topical gardening tips.

Interested? Contact Membership Secretary Mrs Shirley Coleman on 01424 871604 or sdgs.membershipsec@gmail.com

For further details about the society contact Secretary Brenda Page on 01424 870 455 or sdgs.secretary@gmail.com

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Only one application for village vicar vacancy so far

The daffodils are flooding the churchyard in glorious profusion. One would almost believe that things are getting back to normal, and in many ways they are: we are slowly getting more people back to services (not that our numbers dropped much during the pandemic); we can now sing the hymns without the encumbrance of mask wearing, and refreshments are being enjoyed after the non-communion services.

The only missing element is having our own minister.

On that front an advertisement was placed and to date only one applicant has come forward.

The wardens from the two churches are in discussion with the Diocese regarding whether the applicant will be invited to interview.

In the meantime we are grateful to Rev John Hawkins for taking the majority of our services, plus a variety of other ministers and lay readers.

As previously reported we have a case of

deathwatch beetle. We have now received advice from the church architect and estimates for the work. We will shortly be arranging for the preventative work to be carried out and give notice that during this week, the church will not be opened to the public. Advance notice will be posted on the website and noticeboard.

Finally, returning to the churchyard.

As many of you are aware, we leave areas to encourage the growth of wild flowers, while maintaining the remainder. This work is undertaken by a small group of volunteers, often working individually.

If you have a little time, and would be interested in helping us maintain the churchyard, then please get in touch.

It is hoped that over the coming year a review of the churchyard, and

how it is maintained for maximum benefit for all, will be undertaken. Any input from the community would be appreciated.



FORTHCOMING SERVICES

10 April – Palm Sunday, 10.30am Family Service

15 April – Good Friday, 6pm Reflections

17 April – Easter Day, 10.30am Communion

24 April – Evensong for St George's Day, 6pm
The Village Hall car park will be open on these days.

Over the Easter weekend the church will be decorated with flowers, in particular lilies, and open for visitors as follows: Easter Saturday 2-5pm; Easter Sunday from morning service until 5pm; Easter Monday 10am-5pm.

For details of our Jubilee Weekend services

see page 3.

The Patronal Festival will take place over the weekend of 22-24 July. The church will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday and filled with flowers. Flower arranging will take place on Thursday 21st. On the Saturday there will be afternoon teas. Sunday evening brings a special Patronal Evensong led by Rev John Hawkins.

For any special services – baptisms, weddings or burials – contact one of the wardens.

ANNUAL PARISH REPORTS

The following annual reports were submitted to the parish assembly in March. These are abridged versions – the full reports can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Storms highlight lack of infrastructure support

**Whatlington Parish Council
Chairman: Roger Fisher**
clerk@whatlingtonparishcouncil.com

It is unfortunate that despite easing of restrictions we still find it necessary to be cautious. However, such caution has been a feature of council meetings this year and, understandably, few parishioners have attended.

Despite this we have continued our activities, which those of significance were:

- The council agreed to join other parish councils in the South East in writing to Michael Gove (as Minister responsible) voicing our concerns on the increasing urbanisation of the region with little infrastructure support. As many parishioners will appreciate this was subsequently demonstrated by a significant portion of the village being without water for some 24 hours and an electricity supply for six days as a result of the February storms.

- Continuing to press for action on the expected safety improvements to the A21 through the parish. It was anticipated we would see further action with a promise of local consultation in October/November – we still await notification of



this happening.

- A conclusion to the issue of road naming – Woodmans Green Road and Hoath Lane – which has only taken three years to be delivered!

- After significant discussions, councillors agreed a revised Planning Policy and the process for handling applications more effectively.

- It was also agreed not to raise the parish precept of the council tax in recognition of the affect of increasing inflation on household budgets.

A2100 speed restrictions and more plans to reduce reliance on cars

**East Sussex County Council
Councillor Kathryn Field**
cllr.kathryn.field@eastsussex.gov.uk

- Following the start of the building of 50 homes at Lillybank Farm the council proposes to move the 40mph limit north to protect the development. I am campaigning to have it extended even further so that it includes the junction with Canadia where, as many of you will know, there have been accidents and fatalities over the years.

- The County Council has a target to be carbon neutral by 2050 and is committed to reducing its carbon output by 13 per cent a year. County Hall is to have a further 128 solar panels on its

roof and it is estimated that these will generate all the electricity used in the building and save 11 tonnes of CO2. The council is keen to stress that all its climate change mitigation work is evidence-based. Work is centred on those areas over which the council has direct control but the highways contract is being re-procured and this presents an ideal opportunity to influence the sustainability plans of a major supplier of services to the council.

- The council is working on sustainable transport and has a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan that aims to make these activities safer and therefore easier for us to

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ANNUAL PARISH REPORTS

Full reports can be viewed [here](#)

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leave our cars behind. The council is also working with partners to improve bus accessibility.

■ The County Council has been judged outstanding for its children's social care and here I will put in a plea for foster carers: **we need more!** This rewarding work is well-supported by the County Council and the East Sussex Foster Carers Association, which has worked hard and successfully in spite of the pandemic to enrich the lives of both children and carers.

Disappointment at car park plan refusal and tackling deathwatch beetle

St Mary Magdalene Parish Church

Jeffrey Bridges Churchwarden

whatlingtonparishchurch@gmail.com

■ The refusal of the plans for a new church car park is naturally a disappointment to the PCC and we will now consider what, if any, measures can be taken to facilitate improved access to the church. We would welcome any support the Parish Council may be able to give in this respect, such as speed restrictions on the road, signage or indeed a footpath between the hall car park and the church, considering the dangerous bend in particular.

■ Rev Kevin Mephum, our priest-in-charge since early 2012, retired at the end of October. We are immensely grateful to him for all that he did in his time with us and wish him a long and happy retirement.

■ The Christmas Pageant was regrettably cancelled due to concerns relating to Covid and Omicron variant. The Christmas Carol Service and the Christmas Eve services both saw good attendances.

■ There is some concern about our being able to cover heating costs with the rise in energy prices. In addition we have to fund the annual maintenance service of the heating system. We also face a substantial bill to deal with an infestation of deathwatch beetle in an area of the roof, which is estimated to cost some £1600 to treat.

■ The opening of the church two days a week on Wednesdays and Sundays between 10am and 4pm has proved a success and allows access to the building not previously available. This is something that could be expanded were we able to grow the list of people available to open and

then lock up.

■ The church is available for hire to bodies whose activities would be appropriate to a church and in doing this we have no intention of seeking to compete with the village hall.

Looking to find more customers after hall repairs and new boiler

Whatlington Village Hall

Annette McBride Chairman

wild.blueyonder@btinternet.com

This year has been strange for everyone and no different for the Village Hall as far as income goes.

We have had many repairs carried out and a new boiler has been installed so hopefully we will build up our customer base again to combat all these necessary expenses.

We still have the weavers, the Guides and two bands each week and the occasional party but we are hopeful of recovering more customers.

Whatlington Road session recorded just one speeder but even 40mph is too fast

Whatlington Speedwatch group

Anne Smith

anne@topclasssport.co.uk

■ Roadside sessions have been limited in the past 12 months as a result of Covid restrictions, poor weather and the difficulty of arranging as many sessions as possible given the small number of volunteers – currently six.

■ Just under 170 vehicles were reported to the police in the past year for exceeding the 40mph A21 speed limit.

■ A trial session was held in Whatlington Road by the Village Hall but only a single vehicle was measured doing the required 47+ mph in order to be reported to the police. However it was noted that 40mph or less was still too fast for this narrow stretch of road with extremely poor visibility and barely any pavement or verge space for pedestrians.

NEXT PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting of Whatlington Parish Council takes place on 19 May, 7.30pm, at the Village Hall.

New road tax must not penalise rural areas

The ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030 will eventually lead to a £35bn black hole in public finances.

As sales of electric vehicles increase, revenue from motoring taxation will decrease, because neither fuel duty nor vehicle excise duty is currently levied on electric vehicles.

Whatlington MP Huw Merriman, a member of the Transport Select Committee, believes a road pricing system, based on the number of miles a driver travels and vehicle type, would enable the Government to fill this black hole and maintain the existing link between motoring taxation and road usage.

But it must not penalise those who live in the most rural parts of the country, he says.

The committee has called for the Government to ensure that the new charging mechanism:

- entirely replaces fuel duty and vehicle excise duty rather than being an additional tax
- is revenue neutral with most motorists paying the same or less than they do currently
- considers the impact on vulnerable groups and those in the most rural areas
- does not undermine progress towards increased active travel and public transport
- ensures that any data capture is subject to rigorous governance and oversight, and protects privacy.

Hospice open gardens 2022

Following the success of its 2021 Open Gardens, which raised more than £36,000, St Michael's Hospice has announced its season for 2022, starting next month.

This year's scheme covers Hastings and Rother with 55 gardens opening their gates in aid of the charity.

The hospice committee thanks all the owners who open their gardens, the volunteers who give their time, the businesses that display the booklets, all the visitors who ensure vital funds are raised and event sponsor Crest House Care Home.

For more information visit: www.stmichaelhospice.com/opengardens22

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