

SAVE A LIFE!



Learn how to use new village defibrillator for free in less than an hour

Whatlington has a new defibrillator – a vital piece of kit that could save the life of somebody suffering a cardiac arrest.

The previous machine had reached the end of its useful life and so the Parish Council has bought a new one from the British Heart Foundation for £750.

Defibrillators apply an electric charge or current to the heart to restore a normal beat.

The machine is in the same place as the previous one, on the wall of the Royal Oak near the bus stop.

As defibrillators have been the target for thieves, with those in Battle and Robertsbridge

both having been stolen, the new machine is now in a locked cabinet.

Dial the ambulance service on 999 and give your location and you will be given a code to unlock the cabinet. All the information you need is clearly marked.

Defibrillators are easy to use and give spoken instructions, but you can learn what to do in a life-or-death situation at free one-hour sessions in the Village Hall, organised by the Whatlington Connectors.

Run by a retired GP, the sessions will teach you how to use a defibrillator as well as how to perform vital CPR.



The defibrillator outside the Oak

BOOK YOUR SESSION

Email your name, contact details and preferred day of the week to attend (if you have one) to info@whatlington.com or call 07941 669678. A session will be arranged in June or July to meet as many people's preferences as possible.

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Areas on either side of the A21 through the village have been roped off to protect nesting birds.

The temporary measure is to ensure contractors do not disturb the birds while the verges are cleared as part of preparations for a possible pavement from Hoath Lane to Whatlington Road.

The nests were spotted by a Highways Authority ecologist during survey work along the road.

Roger racks up 30 years in the chair

Roger Fisher is to continue his near record-breaking stint as chair of Whatlington Parish Council.

He was elected unanimously as leader for the 30th consecutive year at the council's May meeting – the second longest holder of the title. He has been a parish councillor for more than 40 years.

By contrast the new deputy leader is one of the council's most recent members Amanda Davis, who was elected onto the parish authority last year.

■ The next Parish Council meeting takes place on Thursday 19 September at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Further delay for A21 safety plans

The next stage in the public consultation over A21 improvements in the village will not now be held until September.

National Highways is still surveying the stretch of road and, it is hoped, will come forward with proposals for:

- a pavement from Hoath Lane to Whatlington Road
- improvements to the junction of the A21 and Whatlington Road
- improvements to the A21 junction with Riccards and Stream Lanes.

The Parish Council is pressing the authority to pin down a date for a public meeting to be held in the Village Hall.

Council chair Roger Fisher said that while it was frustrating to be kept waiting to learn what works are proposed as part of the £20m A21 Safety Package, he hoped it would mean highways officials will have had time to come up with firm schemes for residents to discuss.

Among the proposals being considered for the A21 is to make speed limits more consistent, which may include reducing limits

in some areas and increasing them in others. The authority explains its thinking here: <https://shorturl.at/znzz7>

Call for action on danger verge

National Highways is to be asked to take on board a further A21 hazard raised by residents living between the B2090 Park Lane and the B2089 Battle Road.

In a letter to the Parish Council the residents say the verge outside their homes is raised and not maintained, making it dangerous to walk to the bus stop opposite Battle Road.

Heading in the opposite direction towards Park Lane, the letter states: 'There is a Whatlington name sign straddling the verge which is not high enough for an average person to walk beneath.'

In addition the difficult verge along the length of the road means people must cross and recross the A21 several times to reach the garage and pub.

Parish councillors agreed to send the residents' concerns to the team currently looking at other safety measures.

Summer serenade evening



The Twilight Serenade, an integral part of the village summer, takes place on 27 July in the field behind the Village Hall.

The Bodiam Concert Band will once again be playing favourite tunes old and new before an audience that is usually more than 100 strong.

Bring along your picnics,

Annette steps down . . . and steps up



Annette Williams has stood down as chair of the Village Hall committee after 10 years. Poor health led to her

decision to move away from day-to-day involvement in hall activities but she has not severed all her ties with the committee.

A new post of president has been created that will allow her to continue a connection that began when a new committee was formed in 2014.

It saw an upturn in regular bookings and Annette oversaw new annual events including the Festive Supper and Twilight Serenade. A new chair of the committee has yet to be announced.

blankets, tables and, if you've got one in case of rain, a gazebo. There are also a limited number of gazebos available to use on the evening – but get there ahead

of the 6.15pm start time.

The event, which is free to attend, is organised by the hall committee with money raised going towards the upkeep of the building.

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Good month for a quiz? Maybe

A pub quiz with questions around the month of May was the latest successful event organised by the Whatlington Connectors.

The upper bar of the Royal Oak was jam-packed for questions ranging from which day of the month is known as Star Wars Day and who penned the words 'the darling buds of May'.

Money from entry fees, including that raised by a virtual quiz emailed to people who couldn't make it on the night, and a raffle meant a £50 donation was made to Cancer Support UK.

It brought the total support for local charities raised at Connectors events to more than £400.



DOG SITTER WANTED

I'm looking for an occasional sitter for my two dogs, either in my home in Whatlington or the sitter's. I have a 13-year-old rather lame, medium sized mongrel called Annie and a four-year-old energetic but well-behaved small working cocker cross called Laddie. They're good on walks on or off the lead and well socialised. For more information ring Bridget on 07971 010228 or 01424 775065.

MP Huw quits ahead of July election

Whatlington MP Huw Merriman is not standing at the General Election on 4 July.

He has decided to step down after nine years as MP for Bexhill and Battle.

The 50-year-old has not given a reason for his decision but said he quits with a 'heavy heart' adding: "The constituency is a beautiful place, with wonderful people in every town and village.

"I've been lucky enough to work across the community, and political divide, with some fantastic people."

Huw, who was the Government's Rail Minister, had a majority of more than 25,000 at the last election.

In November last year he attended a meeting at the Village Hall to offer his support for A21 safety improvements.



Huw, centre, at last year's A21 meeting in the Village Hall

End of a 'constructive relationship'

"During Huw's nine-year tenure the Parish Council has developed a mutually constructive relationship," says council chair Roger Fisher.

"I believe we have given him an informed understanding of our (very) local issues.

"It takes time to create such a relationship with any MP who has a wider brief than just parish or constituency, but he has been an assiduous representative for us, while being a Government Minister. Not something many of his predecessors could claim.

"Whoever wins this seat I can only hope for a successful continuation of such local engagement from them."

About St Michael's Hospice

St Michael's Hospice Hastings and Rother supports and enables people with advanced, serious, life-limiting illness to live as fully as possible until they die.

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For more information visit stmichaelsospice.com or call 01424 445177



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Urgent need for foster carers

Kathryn's plea to support looked after children

F East Sussex County Council's Children's Services has recently been inspected by Ofsted and was judged to be 'Good' with 'Outstanding features'.

The outstanding features are our services for Looked After Children. Currently, the majority of foster carers are 'in-house' with the balance being sourced, expensively, from agencies.

The council has reached a point where a number of foster carers are retiring so we need to recruit more. We offer competitive rates of pay and continuous support, including out of hours, and regular 1:1 supervision. This year has seen new training packages tailored to individual needs.

There are young people's groups for both children who are in care and those who share their homes with fostered children – everyone involved is supported. There is also a very active East Sussex Foster Care Association.

East Sussex is a local authority, not a private company which means that there are no shareholders wanting dividends.

By **Kathryn Field**
East Sussex County Councillor
Battle and Crowhurst



■ For more information contact
eastsussex.gov.uk/EastSussexFostering

When young people leave care, and are ready to embark on the next stages of their life, the council does not cut off support, but levels and type of support change as young people become adults.

Again, I'm asking for help.

The council would love to hear from anyone who can offer work experience, apprenticeships etc. If any of you thinks you can help I'd be more than happy to hear from you: cllr.kathryn.field@eastsussex.gov.uk

Caring for young people and supporting them into adulthood is a vital part of our work. It would be great if you could help as well!

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Carbon target headache as gas boiler fails

By **Jeffrey Bridges**

The church gas boiler has failed and, although only installed in 2013, it is the way with modern appliances that it has reached the end of its life.

Gone are the days when a boiler would last for 30 odd years; ten now seems to be what one can expect.

The quote to repair the boiler, coupled with recent problems, leads us to conclude that it's time to cut our losses and look at a replacement.

The Church of England has decreed the church should achieve net-zero in its carbon emissions by 2030. The effect for us is that, should we wish to install a new like-for-like gas boiler replacement, we would need to work through the church's own planning process, known as a Faculty Application.

The intention is to point churches towards

electric sources of heating, such as air source heat pumps, electric under pew heaters, radiant panels or electric boilers.

Whatlington Church already has 'wet' underfloor heating, installed in 2013 and coupled with three additional radiators.

The advice received so far suggests that while a heat pump may be adequate for the underfloor heating, new pipework would be needed for the radiators and possibly new radiators as well, at considerable cost.

New pipework would disturb the engineered oak floor and other areas and then may not actually prove effective. We need to consider the likely running costs of an electric boiler as well as those for installation.

The other electric options, such as under pew heaters, would not be suitable for our church, which has free standing and stackable pews.

Fortunately, the boiler has failed at the right time of the year and we have the summer in which to sort out the best course of action.

Churchwarden John steps down

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, held at Sedlescombe Church, we had some changes, with John Crouch standing down as a churchwarden.

As nobody else came forward Whatlington has a single warden again. John will continue to be on the PCC and to cover the Electoral Roll Officer as well as being the wedding co-ordinator. John's contribution to the church as warden over the past few years has been much appreciated.

Forthcoming services

1st Sunday 9.15am: Holy Communion, with hymns

2nd Sunday 10.30am: Family Service, with refreshments after

3rd Sunday 9.15am: Holy Communion, with hymns

4th Sunday 6pm: Evensong, with refreshments after

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A moment of reflection

Ninety years on and Percy's eye-dea still shows me the way to go home

Martyn Hole traces the journey of cats eyes from Halifax to Whatlington



On my wanderings up and down Whatlington Road on my way to and fro the Royal Oak, one thing it is impossible not to notice are the cats eyes in the centre of the road. I have always been fascinated by them.

Their inventor was Percy Shaw from Halifax, Yorkshire. The story goes that when the tram rails in the suburb Amber Thorn were removed in 1934, he realized that he had been guided by the polished steel at night.

Inspired by the retroreflection from a real cat's eye, he designed a mirrored lens that would reflect the light back in the same direction.

Percy founded Reflecting Road Studs to manufacture it. The original design was made from a base of cast iron and the eyes were housed in a rubber dome. This had the clever property that when a vehicle drove over it, the dome would compress and clean the eyes.

The initial uptake was slow but the black-outs of the Second World War showed their worth.

The company still exists but technology inevitably moves on, and the old-fashioned version is being replaced by an LED type.

This has solar cells on the top which can provide enough charge for 200 hours of

operation. A friend of ours says he's seen them and (naughty boy) switching off his headlights, the road was brilliantly lit.

The company that manufactures them is controlled by Sir John Madejski, the former owner of Reading FC and former beau of Cilla Black.

Old-style cats eyes cost about £10 and the new ones about £30 but the company claims they last three times as long.

Both types eventually fail and probably more rapidly than in the past. Why? Well, the average car width has increased by 1cm every two years in recent times so more drive over the top of the cats eyes. Secondly, the average car weight has grown, despite all the new lighter-weight materials like aluminium and composites.

There are two types of failure: in the case of the old style, it is the rubber perishing, or just wear and tear. Even our new friends succumb.

One final point: as I walk up to the pub there are about 75 cats eye sites but only about 45 are still there and functioning. RIP Percy.



THE NEW



THE OLD



THE ORIGINAL



Ceramic artist Amanda Westbury, whom some will remember from the Easter Fair in the Village Hall, opens her studio to the public for the first time in June.

It is part of Open Artist Studios in the South East – an opportunity to meet artists and makers in their own environment and watch demonstrations as well as a chance to buy unique artworks directly from the makers.

Amanda, whose studio is in Solomon's Lane, Mountfield, specialises in bright Mid Century Modern inspired vases, platters and ceramic flowers. She will be opening her studio from 11am to 5pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout June (with the exception of the 1st), so look out for the banners and arrows pointing you to the house.

■ More information at www.seos-art.org/artists – Amanda is Studio 43 in the catalogue.



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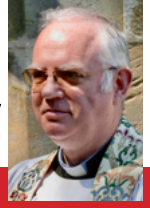
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How a boy and a bucket helped unravel a mystery



By Rev John Hawkins, Rector, Whatlington Church

I guess this will be read just after Trinity Sunday and it made me think more about what that word that word means: trinity – the doctrine of ‘threeness’ that somehow sets Christians apart from others and seems impossible to explain.

St Augustine of Hippo wrote a long treatise on the subject. It’s probably one of the most convoluted and difficult pieces ever written and when he had finished, the great saint admitted he was no wiser than when he had begun. But one day he went for a walk on the beach, seeking inspiration, when he came across a lad playing with bucket and spade as children do.

The boy had dug a hole and rushed to the sea to scoop up a bucket of water which he emptied into his newly dug dam. Over and over he returned with his bucket of water. ‘What are you doing?’ asked Augustine. ‘You see the sea?’ the boy replied, ‘I am going to pour all that sea into my dam.’

For Augustine this was a moment of revelation. He realised that he was doing to God what that boy was doing to the sea: trying to contain

something limitless into what was entirely limited. It set him free to contemplate the mystery rather than try to define it.

Of course, it’s always tempting to avoid the hard question by saying, ‘It’s a mystery,’ yet sometimes that’s the only real answer we have. Then we must simply take off our shoes in awe and wonder before that which is beyond our human understanding.

If we do that we’ll discover that there’s an immense power that draws us into life. We can begin each day by calling on this great God - Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer of all life – and say, like St Patrick: ‘I arise today through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, through belief in the threeness, through confession of the oneness of the Creator of Creation.’

May we each find time in the midst of our busy lives to be still and contemplate the mystery of God who is revealed in Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and as children of God may we know his love and forgiveness and restoration.



A fewer number of punters than last year came to the Church Spring Fair but spent and donated just as generously. Stalls, covering gifts, cards, toys, plants and cakes, were supported by teas and coffees and a wide selection of edible treats. Just over £550 was raised towards church funds, which have taken a serious hammering with the treatment of Deathwatch beetle and the need for a new boiler. Our thanks to everyone who ran the stalls and those who came and supported.

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