

February 2021 issue of Look-Out.

As this is the first issue of 2021, may we wish you all a **Very Happy New Year**, have patience, it can only get better.

May I say just a quick thank-you to Vernon Nott of Twinstead, who provided us with another splendid Christmas tree. This one was so tall, (20-feet), Phil Weavers had to lift Martin and I up in a cradle to fix the star on top! Thank you also to ~~Satan's~~ Santa's Little Helpers, who helped to secure it and hang the lights.

The Coronavirus is still with us and it was back in March 2020 that we sent out a flyer to all residents assuring them that there was support available particularly for the elderly, vulnerable, the isolated and those confined alone at home. We may be nearly a year on, but that help is still there from your Parish Council, the W.I., our Church and of course your friends, neighbours and relatives.

There have been many support volunteers and Mary Bingley is just one of them and still has this message.

*'My name is Mary. I live in the village and find myself in a similar position and wondered if anyone would welcome a simple 'phone call just to chat. My number is 01787 269090'.*

Please don't feel isolated, we do live in a caring community and people are there to help. Thank you and keep safe and well.

### **Looking back ....**

There was a Parish Council meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. November 2020, but it was too late to get the report into the December / January edition of 'Look Out', so here's a brief summary. The full minutes are on the notice boards and website.

### **Planning matters.**

#### **Ref: 20/01779/FUL**

Proposed one and a half-storey dwelling on land between Westview and Chestnut Cottage with new vehicular access onto Church Road.

Objections were made to Braintree Planning by Parishioners and the Parish Council also made objections to the application. Full details on the BDC website.

#### **A131 Long Gardens – Traffic Calming.**

We have now applied to the Local Highways Panel (L.H.P.) for them to consider a request to reduce the speed of traffic through that area. Some of the properties come within the Twinstead boundary, so we will be working with Twinstead Parish Council to hopefully resolve the situation.

#### **Trees Planting on the Village Green.**

We have successfully planted five indigenous trees on the village green in preparation to replace some of our established trees, which we may sadly lose in the future owing to age and disease. Thank you to the Parishioners who contributed to the cost and to whom these trees have been dedicated. Do have a look at the plaques when you're out walking, I feel they represent the spirit of our village and will become part of its history.

#### **Village Hall Ponds.**

We have cut back and removed the brambles and willow on the car park side of the Hall and you can already see a great improvement, it really does open up that area. We have also taken out the willow tree stumps to stop them returning and this will give an opportunity for our specimen trees to flourish. We have hawthorns, alders, oaks, ash, and two rare ancient woodland Service trees (*Sorbus torminalis*).

We have also started the same work on the pavilion side of the pond. We are aiming to excavate the pond to a reasonable depth to stop it drying out in summer and this will hopefully attract more wildlife when completed.

### **New Post Box on Church Road.**

The Post Office has now replaced the box on Church Road for one with a larger opening that will take A4 envelopes and small packages. Collection times for Church Road are 9:00 a.m. weekdays and 07:00 a.m. Saturday and for the one by the side of the Green, collection times 4:30 p.m. weekdays and 10:30 a.m. Saturday.

### **Neighbourhood Plan.**

We have delivered flyers to all W. St. P. residents inviting them to form a 5-person committee with the Parish Council to set out the policies on the development and use of land in the Parish to meet the needs of its parishioners. Residents of all ages, business representatives, local groups, landowners and developers are invited to form the group.

Your commitment in time is just a couple of hours a week, not every week and no specific times, except for a monthly group meeting, presently via Zoom.

### **Additional Dog Litter Bin.**

We now have another dog-waste bin sited at the top of the lane leading to Bullocks Hole Farm, which means that dog walkers don't have to carry any waste collected, too far. We don't have a real issue with fouling, because of the consideration of our dog owners, but unfortunately, the odd 'deposit' does get abandoned.

### **Precept/ Budget 2021/2022**

We have set our budget for the next financial year and have also set our Precept (local tax) and you'll be pleased to know that there will be no increase in the Precept.

The information is on our website, but if you would like a hard copy of how we have calculated the budget and what our income is, please ask our Parish Clerk, Mrs Diane Jacob or ask your Councillors.

### **Parish Council Meeting Dates.**

Although these look like they will be held by Zoom for the foreseeable future they are: 30<sup>th</sup>. March, 25<sup>th</sup>. May, 27<sup>th</sup>. July, 28<sup>th</sup>. September, 30<sup>th</sup>. November, 25<sup>th</sup>. January 2022.

### **General.**

Our agendas and minutes are posted on the village notice boards and are on-line, but if you can't get access to these and would like hard copies or in large print or in Braille, please let our Clerk know: Mrs Diane Jacob, tel: 07907 63 11 72 or e-mail: parishclerk@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org

### **Salt Bins.**

As we're now entering winter, here is another reminder that we have two rock salt bins available for residents use. One is sited at the Village Hall and one opposite the bus shelter on Church Road. Please feel free to use the grit for your own paths and please spread some at the homes of our more vulnerable neighbours. If distance is a problem, please let your Parish Councillors know and we'll drop off a bag so you have one locally. Stay safe and warm and as always, be aware of yellow snow warnings.

### **Flag Flying Programme.**

|             |   |             |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| 6 February  | Her Majesty's Accession + New Zealand Day | New Zealand |
| 19 February | Birthday of the Duke of York              | Union       |

The St. George flag will be flown most of the time in between other appointed flags.

We fly some of our Commonwealth Country flags, particularly those which include the Union flag, as an acknowledgement of our proud British heritage. We also fly flags from other countries to mark important historical events, you'll remember these from your school day's history lessons.

A full list of our flag flying days is posted on the village notice board and on the W.St.P. website.

*Derek*  
090121