

Living Villages

A photograph of a wooden playground. In the foreground, a wooden fence with a picket design runs across the frame. Behind the fence, there is a wooden play structure with a slide and a wooden fence. In the background, there are trees and houses under a clear blue sky.

March 2016

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Sutton, Wansford & Thornhaugh*

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EDITORIAL

The Living Villages email post bag has been overflowing during the past month with a wide variety of correspondence on a wide range of subjects.

John Stannage's notice (page 27) announcing the official opening of the new toddlers' play area in Wansford was worthy of a front cover photo. As our image shows, the impressive new facility is now poised to greet and entertain its first young visitors.

Correspondence resulting from Martin Lewis' article and David Brown's photos of the building of The Christie Hall in 1952 generated, more than 60 years on, a post bag of sufficient size to warrant two more pages in this month's magazine (pages 28 and 29). Whilst the older generation today enjoys reflecting on the early days of The Christie Hall, perhaps in 60+ years time today's toddlers will be writing to the local magazine (will there be one, and what form will it take?) to share their memories of the opening of their new play area in March 2016?

Other news this month includes special Easter events at local churches (page 5) and Easter-themed activities at several venues in the area.

On health matters, there is good news on breast cancer screening (page 18) and a chance to find out more about healthy eating (page 16).

Thanks to Rod Sortwell, there is even a fascinating article on the work of a Cricket Bat Willow Inspector (page 36). I wonder how many readers were aware of the existence of such a role? Remember, you read about it here first!

Rosie McDonnell

Editorial team *For contact details see p 4*

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Reporter: Martin Lewis
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Local History: David Stuart-Mogg
Nature Notes: Graham Blagden
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Read your magazine on-line at www.livingvillagesmagazine.co.uk



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Churches

Ministers: Thornhaugh & Wansford		01780 782271
Stibbington & Water Newton Parish Office		01733 380900
	admin.castor@btconnect.com	

Churchwardens:

St Andrew's Thornhaugh:	Stuart Foreman	01780 783220
	Liz Kemp	01780 782333
St Mary's Wansford:	Caroline Ashley	01780 782408
	Alan Jones	01780 783205
St John the Baptist, Stibbington	Richard Winfrey	01780 782431
	Carol Lindsay	

Friends:

St Mary's & St Andrew's	Dora Baker	01780 782519
St John the Baptist	Helen Facer	01780 782932
St Remigius Water Newton	Tony Capon	01733 237500

Other useful contacts

Neighbourhood Policing 101	P'boro City Council	01733 747474
Wansford Surgery	01780 782342	Royal British Legion 01780 782200
(Out of hours	01733 293838)	Stibbington & Wansford WI . . 782510
Wansford Pharmacy	01780 781616	Cricket Club 01780 782109
Communicare	01780 470437	Horticultural Society 01780 782446
H'don District Council	01480 388388	

WORSHIP MARCH 2016

Date	Time	Location	Service
6 Mar	9.30 am	St. Andrew's, Thornhaugh	Mothering Sunday Sung Holy Communion
	10.15 am	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Holy Communion
	4.00 pm	St Remigius, Wate Newton	Mothering Sunday Service
13 Mar	9.00 am	St John the Baptist, Stibbington	Morning Worship
	9.30 am	St Mary's, Wansford	Sung Holy Communion with choir
20 Mar	9.30 am	St. Andrew's, Thornhaugh	Palm Sunday Sung Holy Communion
	10.15 am	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Holy Communion
21, 22, 23 Mar	8.30 pm	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Night Prayer
24 Mar	8.00 pm	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Maundy Thursday, Commemo- ration of the Last Supper
25 Mar	10.00 am	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Good Friday, Family Activities and Service
	2.00 pm	St. Andrew's, Thornhaugh	One hour at the Cross
	2.00 pm	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Good Friday Liturgy
26 Mar	8.30 pm	St. Kyneburgha, Castor	Easter Eve Vigil
27 Mar	9.00 am	St. John the Baptist, Stibbington	Easter Day Holy Communion
	9.30 am	St Mary's, Wansford	Sung Holy Communion

Wednesdays at Wansford

Wednesday 9th and 16th, 11.30am Morning Prayer,
followed by frugal lunch at The Christie Hall at 12.15.

Wednesday 23rd onwards, return to 10am Morning Prayer.

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Fire is something that has fascinated human beings since the dawn of time. Today it is very easy for us to create fire with a box of matches or a cigarette lighter. However for our ancestors lighting a fire was very tricky. Many of us may have tried as children to make fire by rubbing two sticks together. My attempts to do this were never successful. For our forebears fire was something that was treasured and guarded. It was a mystery that was revered and respected. Fire provided warmth, light and protection and it also enabled people to cook their food.

Bearing all this in mind it is not surprising that for the early Christians fire became a potent symbol of the power and presence of God. By thinking of fire in this way the members of the early Church were drawing on a more ancient tradition. In the Old Testament we can read about the Pillar of Fire which was one of the manifestations of the presence of the God. According to the Book of Exodus (Ch13), the pillar of fire provided light so that the Israelites could travel by night on their journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the promised land. Fire was a sign of God's powerful presence bringing light and protection for his people.

At the end of this month we will be celebrating the great Festival of Easter when once again we will call to mind the events that led to Jesus' trial and agonising death on the Cross; to be followed on the third day by his glorious resurrection. Since the days of the early Church fire had played an important part in the celebration of Christ's triumph over death. It is there as sign of God's power to transform the darkest and most hopeless situations by bringing light, warmth and life.

Many people think of the Easter celebrations as being confined to Easter Sunday. But the full meaning of Easter only really becomes apparent when one takes part in the services commemorating Our Lord's Last Supper on Maundy Thursday and his death on Good Friday. In addition to these services there is also a very ancient custom of holding an Easter Vigil service during the night of Easter Eve. During this service a fire is kindled to symbolise Christ's triumph over death and his power to overcome the darkness of evil. This is one of the most powerful and moving services to take place during the Christian Year. Traditionally the service takes place at midnight to mark the beginning of Easter Day. However for practical reasons, in most parishes who celebrate an Easter Vigil, the service takes place earlier in the evening. In the parishes in which I have served I have always been saddened that the Easter Vigil is a service that very few people attend. I am sad because I feel that folk are missing out on an ancient and powerful act of worship which takes people to the very heart of the Easter celebrations in a unique way.

This year we will be holding an Easter Vigil service at St Kyneburgha's at 8.30pm on Saturday 26th March. Do try to come if you can. You will be missing out if you don't.

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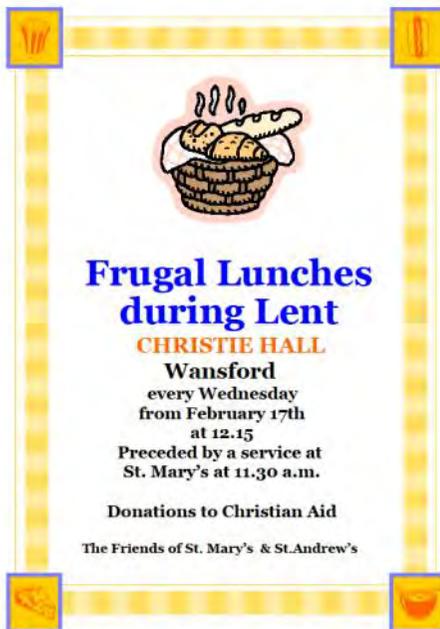
FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S AND ST. ANDREW'S

THE FRUGAL LUNCHEES DURING LENT HAVE STARTED!

The first one on February 17th was a lovely occasion. We would like to thank everyone who supported us so far. Please, come again and bring friends and neighbours. There will be four more:- every Wednesday during Lent at 12.15 in the Christie Hall after Morning Prayer at St. Mary's at 11.30. You will not only have a lovely lunch and meet lots of charming friends and neighbours, but you will also help to support Christian Aid in their struggle to help the very needy people in South Sudan.

On March 9th we hope to have Chris Wild , the Christian Aid Area Rep., with us, to speak to us on the current projects in South Sudan and show a short film.

So **PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THIS VERY WORTHY CAUSE AND MEET OLD AND NEW FRIENDS.**



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FRIENDS OF ST REMIGIUS WATER NEWTON

We will be holding our annual Mothering Sunday Service on Sunday 6th March at 4 pm. This is always a lovely occasion so please do come along and do bring friends and family should you have guests for the day. Following the service, refreshments will be available to include delicious cakes and puddings giving us all the opportunity to meet up with friends and neighbours after the long winter.

Tony Capon

FRIENDS OF STIBBINGTON CHURCH

Stibbington Graveyard "Clear Up"

It's that time of year once more; how quickly it comes around! We have set the date for our "clear up" to prepare our churchyard for the Spring, on the **20th of March**, at 10am for two hours, and would love to see you there as usual with your wheel barrows etc. All we need is the weather on our side as it is so early. There will be light refreshments in the porch for us all to have a well deserved break at 11am, please come along if you can. See you there.

101 Draw

The lucky winner this month is Mr Ken Wallace. Well done and your cheque is on its way to you.

Suzy Story

THE CHRISTIE HALL COMMUNITY LOTTERY

Great support for the Hall has again been provided by over 400 of our residents who have bought Lottery tickets. Thanks are due not only to them but also to the distributors who visited so many addresses, sometimes calling several times in the recent cold weather in order to find someone at home.

The monthly draw starts in March and prizes totalling £2,100 will be distributed through the forthcoming ten monthly draws. The remaining net income will continue to provide valuable funds for the ongoing maintenance of the Hall.

The hall supports many functions including Yoga, Karate, Pilates, Tumble Tots, Renaissance and Lindy Hop Dancing, Mothers and Toddlers, Stretches for Wellness and Dog Training. It is also available for parties.

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STIBBINGTON & WANSFORD WI



Our February gathering was entertained by the ups and downs of the Green Backyard project as told by Sophie Antonelli. It was interesting to hear how the project grew from one allotment to the plot that it is today, and also of the on-going battle that the project has faced to be able to stay where it is. Tales of high voltage electricity cables and ponds caused us to smile ruefully.



The meeting also considered which charity we would be supporting in 2016. There were several suggestions but at the end of discussion a majority voted for our charitable efforts to be focussed towards the local branch of MIND.

The WI Bloggers reported that they had met for the first time and will be meeting again at the beginning of March to start to put a template together for the proposed site. More news at the next meeting.

We have our supper club meeting at the Exeter Arms on February 25. We hope to take advantage of the early-bird menu – foodie review next month perhaps?

Our other new venture “3C’s” (Craft, Community and Coffee) will meet for the first time on Friday February 26th at 9.30 in the Community Hall, Wansford. Please do come and join us. We shall be bringing crafts of our own and some small projects to complete if you are looking for a craft to do. We are happy to teach knitting, crochet, sewing, embroidery.... So if you have always wanted to learn a new craft, perhaps now is the time! Alternatively, if you have a project underway, please feel free to bring it with you to work on. There will also be cake and coffee and chatter. We hope to make this a regular event in the community, so please do support us.

The book club will also be meeting at The Haycock on 31st March at 7.30p.m.

Next month we will be entertained by Bob Laurie with his topic “Around the World”. If you would like to hear more about Bob’s trip, please join us at 7.15 in the Community Hall.

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WANSFORD HORTICULTURAL & CRAFTS SOCIETY

On 4 February our first speaker, Joe Whitehead of Gardenwise, was greeted by an audience of over 50 members, all eager to hear his talk on **"The Winter Garden"**. They were not disappointed, as Joe was informative and knowledgeable as well as entertaining. He presented a comprehensive range of slides showing how to add winter impact and colour into our gardens and passed around a wide selection of specimens, cut from his trees and shrubs, most of which were snapped up at the end of his talk to be used as cuttings! Many of the hardy perennials and shrubs he had brought along for us to buy will already be enhancing members' gardens. We will definitely pay a return visit to Blatherwycke Walled Garden in July, when he will update us on progress made, date to be finalised.

On **Thursday 3rd March** our second speaker, Ray Biggs, manager at Grimsthorpe Castle since 1997, will present an illustrated talk on **"Grimsthorpe – a quintessential English Estate."** Ray is an expert on the history of the gardens, castle and all aspects of the estate and will certainly entertain us with amusing anecdotes. The talk will start at



7.30 p.m. and be held in **the Christie Hall**. Please do come along and join us. Entry is free. We are hoping that this too will be followed by a private evening visit to Grimsthorpe in the summer.

Advance warning of our third and final Spring talk which will take place on **Thursday 7th April**. Entitled **"A Year in the Life of a Cottage Garden"**, it will be presented by Andrew Sankey, an eminent plantsman, designer and lecturer from Cambridge.

Lists for **our two coach trips** are already open, as members have been emailing to sign up. The first, on **Sunday 19 June** is to **Helmingham Hall and Ickworth Hall**, and the second, on Saturday 16 July, is to **R.H.S. Harlow Carr** with a stop at **Knaresborough Castle** en route. The costs are not yet finalised, but we aim only to cover our expenses, assuming a full coach. The coaches will be 49 seaters and are already more than a quarter full! The first visit will be more expensive as there are entry charges to pay, although National Trust members will have free entry to Ickworth Hall. (Please inform me if you are a N.T. member when reserving a place.) Our second visit will be less, as we only need to cover the cost of the coach.

Membership of the society is only £2.50 per annum and is not restricted to those living in Wansford so please do consider joining us.

Gill Fisher fisher.gill@yahoo.com 782446
www.wansfordhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

COMMUNICARE

(Wansford & Kings Cliffe Surgery Patient Group)

The next meeting will be held
on
Wednesday 2nd March 2016
at
Wansford Surgery at 12.30 pm



Are you a healthy eater?

Would you like guidance on a healthy diet?

Would you like to know more about foods that might help prevent common ailments such as diabetes, heart disease, high cholesterol, etc?

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Rebekah Conway – Specialist Dietitian**



All patients are invited to attend meetings and to take an active part in the proceedings and discussions.

Regular agenda items include finance, transport, local healthcare matters, equipment purchase and AOB

Wendy Spencer

***For an update on breast screening services
for women registered at Wansford Surgery,
see page 18.***

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BREAST SCREENING UPDATE

Further to my note which was published in Living Villages in the autumn of last year, I am now able to forward for publication an email I have received from Sue Marsden who is the Screening and Immunisation Manager for the Central Midlands Cancer Screening Programme.

The contents of Sue Marsden's note are self-explanatory and I am delighted to report that, in practical terms, those female patients at the Wansford and Kingscliffe Surgery who were being invited to attend screening facilities at Kettering, Corby etc, will now have the option when their next screening appointment falls due, to self-refer themselves to the breast screening unit at Peterborough City Hospital. I'm sure many patients will find this a much more satisfactory outcome. It might be useful too if those who wish to avail themselves of the new Peterborough appointment arrangements keep at copy of the email below for future reference.

Also, would those wishing to use the Peterborough option, please note that I have been asked to emphasise that the self-referral option only applies when the invitation to attend a Northamptonshire facility for the purposes of the regular three yearly screening programme has been received.

Finally I should express my thanks to Dr Takhar, the staff at the surgery and especially to our local MP, Mr Shailesh Vara, and his staff for their help and support in arriving at this outcome.

Trevor Rogers

Email sent on 9 February 2016 from Sue Marsden, Screening & Immunisation Manager Cancer Screening Programmes & AAA, Central Midlands (Sub-Region), NHS ENGLAND

Dear Mr Rogers

I am emailing you to let you know that the situation with women registered with the GP Practice in your village is now resolved.

Women registered with the Wansford Practice will be invited to attend for screening by Kettering Breast Screening Unit to keep in line with National Guidance on calling women by registered address rather than their postal address. The good news is however is that if they wish to then self-refer to Peterborough Breast Screening Unit, Peterborough will accept them for screening obviously provided screening is due.

This arrangement will formally come in to action from 1st April 2016 but quite honestly if a woman wished to self-refer prior to that date I would be surprised if Peterborough declined.

I would be happy if you could share this information with interested parties in your community.

Kind regards, Sue Marsden sue.marsden2@nhs.net 01138248869



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LOCAL HISTORY by David Stuart-Mogg

MR. CHARLES KENT

Few men in the Wansford district are better known, or more generally respected, than Mr. Charles Kent. He is about 4 or 5 years younger than Mr. Thomas Hazeldine [see most recent LV Local History articles] and is the senior resident of Wansford on the Huntingdon side of the bridge. He related the following interesting facts [in 1911].

"I was born at Wansford in 1832, so I am 79 years of age. My father and my grandfather were born here, and I was an apprentice at the Wansford Paper Mills. When I married I became the tenant of the 'Cross Keys Inn', which I had for over 50 years, and [police] Superintendent Allen used to be proud to say that during the whole of that half-century there was never a case or complaint brought against me. I also had a butcher's business for 40 or 50 years, and also for a good many years I had a farm. Now, however, I am resting on my oars". [The Cross Keys Inn, as did the Red Lion Inn on the other side of Wansford Bridge, traded also as a butcher's shop with an abattoir to the rear].

THE CHURCH BAND

I used to take my place in the Church choir for many years. In former days we had a band with the choir. The leader was Mr. Glithero, who was an excellent musician. He played the bass viol. There was also a cornet and two clarinets. I played one of the last named instruments until a harmonium was introduced, and then took my place in the choir as a



singer. Subsequently the harmonium gave place to an organ. Mr. Vipan gave us the harmonium. [Captain Vipan of Water Newton owned a steam launch (above) and possessed a prodigious brass punt gun for wildfowling].

We had the band in the church when the Rev. William Wing was the clergyman. He was an excellently good man. He was very fond of a bit of fox hunting, and was in every respect a famous good old sort. He kept two or three good hunters in his stable.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE PAPER MILLS

With regard to the Paper Mills, they were at first the property of Mr. Richard Newcome, and afterwards of Mr. Robert Nicholas Newcome, who lived at Stibbington House, Wansford, and also had a residence in Stamford at Rock House. The paper made at the mills was white and of excellent quality, being manufactured from rags. It was made chiefly for printing the "Stamford Mercury", the "Weekly Despatch" and, occasionally, some would be made for the "Times". A large number of people were employed at this paper mill. Many of them were women, who were engaged in rag cutting and these came not only from Wansford but also from Yarwell, Nassington and other villages around. About 40 or 50 women would

Final instalment in the fascinating testimony of TWO VENERBLE WANSFORD STALWARTS, 1911

be so employed and about 20 men. The mills are now pulled down, but Stibbington House remains. The oreman at the mill was a Scotchman, Mr. McCallum. The mill ceased working about 40 years ago. The reason for closing the mill is not generally known, but when the works were closed it made a good deal of difference to the general prosperity of Wansford and district.

[Paper making in Wansford ceased in 1859. The increasing use of wood pulp and greater mechanisation meant that the manufacture of hand-made paper became uncompetitively labour intensive and the raw materials too costly].

THE LOSS OF THE SAW MILLS

Another great industry which Wansford has lost is the timber yard and saw mills. The proprietor was Mr. Langdon, who lived in London. He purchased the timber from the Purlieus and the surrounding woods which was brought to his yard which stood beside the river and near the bridge, round the corner of the road which Wansford people still speak of as Peterborough Lane [*now Peterborough Road*]. Here the timber was sawn up and manufactured into planks, posts, beams and hosts of other things. It was then despatched in strings of lighters which came up the Nene to Wansford chiefly for these freights, and was by these means conveyed to various destinations. Mr. George Mills, the well known timber merchant of King's Cliffe, commenced life as a lad in the Langton timber yards at Wansford. There would be 20 or more pairs of sawyers – that is 40 men – at work in sawing timber in the yard at a time. A short time ago Mr. George Miles

of King's Cliffe celebrated his 50th year, his jubilee, as a timber merchant. He gave a champagne supper in my house here in honour of the occasion, because it was at Wansford that he first made a commencement. For a time Mr. Miles had the management of the Langton yard at Wansford. This industry employed a great number of men, and materially contributed to the prosperity of Wansford at that period.

Mr. Kent has many other stories to tell of Wansford, some of them similar to those told by his senior neighbour, Mr. Hazeldine. He speaks of many old coaching incidents, of the old drivers and guards, of Charlie Barrow, a famous stage wagon driver, of the gun powder celebrations at Wansford, of floods, of feast incidents, of Mr. Boyall who drove the "High Flyer" coach, of poaching incidents, and a host of others, to which we must return at some future time. W.H.B.S.

Pictured above: Captain Vipian on his steam launch 'The Vampire'. The photo was possibly taken at the old Staunch lockgates between Sutton and Wansford. Captain Vipian's main residence was Stibbington Hall, though in the Huntingdon archives I have seen a glass plate of Vipian (unfortunately cracked) which is titled, in Gilbert's hand, 'Captain Vipian of Water Newton'.

(Here the fascinating testimonies of Messrs. Hazeldine and Kent conclude. It is not presently apparent that WHBS ever resumed his compelling narrative).

david@stuartmogg.com



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WANSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meeting on Monday 8th February 2016, at 7.30 pm, in the Community Hall, was attended by five Councillors, the Parish Clerk, Kate Wood from Carter Jonas, Becky Eames from Nene Tots and Yvonne Banke from Old Sulehay Lodge. Apologies were received from City Cllrs John Holdich, Diane Lamb and Cllrs Richard Clarke and Graham Garner.

PLANNING: 15/02200/FUL There was an extensive discussion of the proposed additional development of five flats on the land adjacent to the old Little Chef. The Parish Council welcomes the provision of smaller dwellings on this site but has reservations over vehicle parking provision. Kate Wood of Carter Jonas assured the submitted plans met all guidelines and that a Management Company would oversee the residential site once developed.

15/00092/WASFUL Proposed development of Stonehill Quarry was discussed at length, with the restoration of this site welcomed. However, the proposal to extract stone from a previously unworked limestone reserve caused some concern, as it was thought this had already been started. Residents have raised concerns over this site, which is in Northants bordering Wansford, and will make representations to Northampton County Council.

15/02014/FUL Similar concerns are expressed by residents over a proposed outdoor activity park planned for the Old Sulehay Quarry, again in Northamptonshire, but likely to predominantly affect Wansford. This application will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

Highway Matters: It would seem that many items of concern with footpaths, roads and parking are subject to limited funding, as indicated by Peter Tebb of Peterborough City Council Highways. However, the Parish Council will continue to progress these issues, and a handrail to the footpath steps from Peterborough Road to Nene Close is a priority

Finance: Various invoices were approved and agreed for payment.

The Precept for 2016- 2017 was unanimously agreed to remain the same as the previous year.

Further approaches to local builders are to be made to install a handrail to the footpath at the Community Hall. This will form part of the **WI Centenary Donation** to the Hall. Other projects in the village, restoration of the old pump, erection of notice board etc. are also required to be completed.

Toddlers Play Area: The play equipment is installed, but ground conditions need to improve before it can be used. The opening of the Play Area is planned for Easter Saturday 26th March and this is to be publicised ahead of the event. Nene Valley Tots are to investigate providing a bench/table and some shrub planting.

Neighbourhood Watch/ No Cold Calling Signs: Twenty signs have now been ordered and will be erected in strategic locations within the village.

Correspondence: Various items of correspondence were received via email to the Clerk, with responses sent.

The **next meeting** will take place on **Monday 14 March** at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall. All are most welcome to attend. Cllr John Stannage

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SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

The special Parish Council met on 17th February. Cllrs Peter Lee - Chairman, Craig Kidd, Keith Yerbury, Anne Bodily and Patricia Stuart-Mogg (Parish Clerk) with 10 residents.

Peterborough Local Plan (Preliminary Draft).

A new Local Plan is now being prepared by the City Council to cover the period to 2036. The Council was consulting on a 'preliminary draft'. It will go through two more drafts before submission to Government for public examination and then adoption in two years time. This stage included an invitation to land owners to submit sites for consideration for development. This early Draft does not allocate land for development.

The following issues were discussed:

1. Settlement Hierarchy. The existing plan's Core Strategy sets out a hierarchy of settlements:

- Urban Peterborough and its urban extensions
- Large Villages (Eye and Thorney)
- Medium Villages(eg Barnack, Ailsworth, Castor, Wittering)
- Small Villages (eg Sutton, Upton, Marholm, Thornhaugh, Wansford)

The new plan will retain this hierarchy. This means for Sutton that it remains as a village where minimal development will be acceptable - eg small scale infill, but not peripheral expansion. No sites for development will be formally allocated.

The Parish Council welcomed the continued placing of Sutton in the Small Villages category in view of its unsuitability for significant development.

2. Village envelope boundaries. These are lines drawn round villages to define the limit of their spread. Sutton's is drawn tightly round the built-up area. Alterations to it may be proposed by land-owners as part of this consultation.

The Parish Council agreed to request that no alterations are made to the existing Village Envelope for Sutton.

3. Designation of Local Green Space. This is a recent government initiative as a means of protecting from development certain parcels of land which do not fall under existing statutory designations. The Parish Council decided not to submit any such proposals. The only potential candidates did not comply with the criteria.

4. Former Wansford/ Stamford Railway line. This line (passing through Sutton) is seen as a potential walking/cycling route. It is safeguarded in the current Local Plan and intended to stay as such. The Parish Council decided that, in view of the Cycle West proposals and upcoming improvements to the A47 that no opinion be offered. *Continued*

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5 The need for a further urban extension to Peterborough. The City Council expects to have to allocate land for over 10,000 dwellings in the Plan but a growth study remains to be completed. This situation will undoubtedly bring forward some large-scale proposals by land-owners. The Parish Council agreed that there was insufficient information to enable comments to be made at this time.

Planning application Extension at 9 Manor Road.

Following consideration at its last meeting of a two storey extension to the property, subsequently refused by the City Council, the applicant had submitted a reduced scheme with the rear part reduced to single storey with a pitched roof. The Council resolved to make no comment on the new application. It noted that the refused scheme was now the subject of a planning appeal.

Application to reduce tree at 15 Manor Rd Sutton.

The Council had been notified of a proposal to reduce the crown of a copper beech tree by 25%. No objection was raised.

Next Parish Council meeting:

Thursday 24th March at 7.45pm in Sutton Church.

Peter Lee Tel: 01780 782703

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF TODDLERS PLAY AREA
Nene Close, Wansford**



When representatives from Wansford Parish Council and the Nene Valley Tots sat around a kitchen table to discuss the vision for a toddler's play area, little did we know that it would take nigh on **FOUR** years to see it built!

But built it is, with a picture on the front cover of Living Villages no less.

To celebrate this long awaited addition to village facilities, the Official Opening will take place on **Easter Saturday, 26th March 2016**, at 2pm.

This promises to be a real family occasion. All we need on the day is dry, sunny weather and some toddlers to enjoy their wonderful new play area!

John Stannage

THE CHRISTIE HALL: correspondence resulting from photos and information sent by David Brown, together with Martin Lewis' report.

The photograph of the Christie Hall under construction (see *LV* February 2016, and reproduced below) appeared in the local press in 1952. A copy of that press-cutting was given to me by the late Doug Stafford when I was researching *The Story of Wansford* (pub. 2007). Doug had a keen lifelong interest in local history, doubtless first stimulated by his father, Tom Stafford, who was the headmaster of Stibbington School. Tom Stafford was chairman of the Christie Hall building committee and is seen wearing the trilby hat, second from the left, in the group of four on the right hand side of the construction photo consulting a paper (plans?). Standing with him in the photo are J. T. French (secretary of the building committee), Frank Coles and F. Elkins.

A licence to build the hall was granted by the Ministry of Works for work to commence on January 1st, 1952 on the strict condition that no paid labour was employed. It therefore fell to local villagers, mostly all ex-servicemen and members of the British Legion, to provide the necessary skills, time and labour required *gratis*.

Other than £300 donated by a trust fund, all the remainder of the money required to build and furnish the hall was raised through the numerous efforts and entertainments organised by the building committee. At the time of the photo £800 had already been spent on materials. The hall was built as the headquarters of the Stibbington British Legion and to be used as a recreational centre for the parishes of Waternewton, Wansford, Thornhaugh and Stibbington

It was Tom Stafford, as chairman, who prevailed upon farmer Jack Patston (not Paston [sic] per February's *Living Villages*) to donate the land upon which the hall is built for the mutual benefit of the local villages. I am very much indebted to Mrs. Dorothy Stafford for confirming my understanding (and indeed my memory!) of Doug Stafford's testimony.

David Stuart-Mogg



The name "The Christie Hall" was proposed by Val Reeves of the Old Rectory, Stibbington in recognition of the financial contribution from the Major Christie Trust Fund which was used to purchase construction materials for the Hall,

Major and Mrs Christie had lived at Stibbington Old Rectory in the 1940s.

Dear Rosie

Have spent a wonderful nostalgic morning reading February's booklet and in particular the wonderful article on the Christie Hall.

I was away at uni while it was being built but had my wedding reception there on 5.2.55! (see photo, right) I can remember a lot of the faces at the table but could not put names to them, so rang Don Tebbutt to satisfy my ever present curiosity! We had a lovely long natter about old times - but we just could not remember the surname of "Jimmy" who owned the pit where now languish all those wonderful homes!

Sent this photo taken on my 85th birthday, just in case there is anyone there who remembers me! I keep really well, two new knees and two new hips several years ago but I still drive and enjoy shopping! All that hockey, tennis and cycling in my youth!

Regards to your team, **Nan Alden (Nancy Death as was)**



Cousins reunited, thanks to Living Villages

It was photos sent by David Brown that initially prompted last month's article about the Christie Hall. Previously, David had sent information about Wansford Cricket Club which was published in Living Villages last year. This article resulted in long lost cousins being reunited:

My name is Ivan Ward and I spent my first two or so years growing up in Wansford. We had relatives who lived in one of the cottages at Wansford station, Uncle Harry was the signal man at Yarwell junction and it's Harry's son David who is the other half of my story.

The last time we spoke to each other was at my Dad's (Joe Ward) funeral 16 years ago. Then somehow addresses got lost and although we received Christmas cards from David we couldn't reply due to the lack of address. Then just after Christmas I was searching the internet for information about Wansford station and the Nene Valley Railway when I came across, "LIVING VILLAGES" and Martin Lewis's article about David Brown and Wansford Cricket Club. Having contacted Martin we agreed that he should contact David with my info and let David contact me. Nearly a month had gone by and I'd almost given up hope of a reply until on the 8th of February David phoned me. We had a quick chat and discovered that we both have health problems and have had to give up a favourite sport. His sister Barbara is a grand mother with I think David said 7 grand children. Finally we exchanged phone numbers and agreed to stay in touch.

Thanks Martin and the rest of you at Living Villages. It's rather strange that a short article about cricketing memorabilia in a rather good village news letter could end up so well. Thank you Thank you Thank you.

Ivan Ward



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STIBBINGTON CENTRE NEWS

Quiz Night success

Stibbington Centre's Quiz Night on 5 February proved to be a very successful event, both in terms of the numbers attending and the funds raised for our charity: A most impressive £1020! Even those who claimed "I don't usually like quizzes" pronounced it a very entertaining and enjoyable evening.

Funds raised at the event will go to Stibbington Centre's charitable trust which aims to improve the Centre's facilities and to provide bursaries to enable children from disadvantaged backgrounds to take part in educational visits to the Centre.

For anyone interested in running their own quiz, all components of the recent Stibbington Centre quiz are available to purchase on a CD. The 2016 "Quirky Quiz for Fuss-Free Fundraising" disc includes questions and answers for 9 rounds of 10 questions on this year's theme, together with a template for the answer book, images for the photos round, instructions for the ice cube tray round and the electronic score sheet. To order a copy for £10, contact Stibbington Centre.

Little Acorns

Our monthly activities morning for 3 to 5-year olds and their parent/carer continues into the Spring, with sessions at 10 till midday on the second Thursday of the month: **March 10 and April 14.**

These friendly, informal sessions, offer a morning of engaging activities, including story, song and craft, all with an environmental theme, in the inspirational grounds of Stibbington Centre.

We would be pleased to welcome those with youngsters approaching their third birthday to join our group. For more information and to book places contact Stibbington Centre.

Community classes

Spring time Community Classes are almost fully booked, so if you'd like to reserve one of the few remaining places, don't delay:

Print making with Iain Hodgkinson on Saturday 12 March and

Willow weaving with Sue Kirk on Sunday 17 April.

Details are at www.cees.org.uk/news.



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NATURE NOTES

By Graham Blagden

HEDGEHOG HABITAT

Hedgehogs have been in the news recently but not for the best of reasons. The relatively warm winter, particularly December and January this year, has encouraged many of our hedgehogs to stir from their hibernation and seek food. Normally hedgehogs will eat well in the autumn, building up their fat reserves, so that they are capable of withstanding hibernation throughout the winter until they awake in the warm spring ready to fill up on all the new food available to them.

Waking up early to be immediately hit by a cold spell in February can be disastrous. There will be very little food about, and they

will survive for a bit by drawing on their fat reserves before hibernating again. However it will be touch and go whether their reduced reserves will be sufficient to last the rest of the winter.

Hedgehogs are grey brown in colour, covered mainly in yellow tipped spines. If threatened they will roll up into a ball. Only badgers manage to get through this defence as their major predator. However hedgehogs will also roll into a ball if they hear a car coming - an unfortunate habit as this common roadkill demonstrates.

Hedgehogs are already in danger through major reductions in their numbers caused by several factors; global warming and pesticides to name but two. Although hedgehogs are wild animals of our countryside, more and more are finding that the suburban or cottage garden plays a large part in

their habitat. Studies have shown that a hedgehog family needs at least twenty acres to live adequately and the variety of habitat within gardens is ideal in terms of cover and food options. Hedgehogs need to roam and may walk up to a mile during the night as they are mainly nocturnal on their hunt for food or a mate.

To provide the best opportunity of assisting these lovely creatures you

can encourage them to enter, and leave, your garden by ensuring there is an adequate gap, at least 100mm square, at the base of a fence or wall into a neighbour's garden or adjacent field. This will allow roaming hedgehogs



to come in and eat your pests. Their natural food consists of slugs, ground beetles, caterpillars and worms. During very dry or frozen conditions food can be hard to find so the provision of some water to drink is important. Leaving out meat-based dog food, crushed unsalted peanuts or sunflower hearts will be appreciated.

Whilst still in winter conditions please take care in the garden and look out for hibernating hedgehogs. Individuals may be huddled down in piles of leaves, under bramble brakes or at the base of future bonfires or compost heaps. Please take care and check before starting a bonfire.

There is increasing concern about hedgehog numbers and I would be grateful for any hedgehog sightings in the village.

graham.blagden@btinternet.com



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Willows at Wansford

Those of you walking over the river bridge and looking towards Yarwell, or regular dog walkers using the field beyond the horse paddock, will have noticed the planting of more than 100 large trees across the middle of the field which is actually in Northamptonshire. As I found out, this field now belongs to The Countryside Restoration Trust and they have taken the initiative of planting some fine cricket bat willow sets which will be ready for 'harvest' in around 15 years. Until then we will be able to see their rapid growth with masses of grey/green foliage in the summer.

The planting was carried out on behalf of J S Wright the country's largest producer of bat willow which is then supplied to the bat makers for the skilled art of crafting the finished article supplied worldwide to cricketers. I have seen other bat willow plantations in Cambridgeshire but the traditional home is more frequently the river valleys of Essex and Suffolk. I understand that the intention is to plant the whole field eventually and presumably harvest in stages. There is no reason why our field should not produce some of the finest bats, and we shall soon see just how well the trees are developing. Well how do I know all this?

My knowledge goes back a long way and to working for three summers with Essex County Council Cricket Bat

Willow Dept. The responsibility of this group was to inspect all willows in the county and adjoining counties for Watermark disease which makes the trees fragile and totally unsuitable for bat making. The owners of these trees in those days were required by Statute to fell and destroy them by burning to prevent spread of this bacterial disease by birds and insects to nearby trees. Unfortunately Watermark disease can be present in other species of willow of no commercial interest growing in gardens and wetlands. These trees could be a source of infection and obviously required similar costly destruction. Fortunately Weeping Willow does not seem to be affected.

During my time with the team we were engaged in a field by field inspection of Essex as well as regular visits to the willow beds where the new sets were cut, and inspection of river valleys in adjacent counties. Walking the countryside every day and getting paid for it still ranks as the best possible job. The only downside was wet days and telling a farmer he had a large number of trees to destroy, before he set the dogs loose. More information can be found on line by visiting the East Anglian Film Archives (EAFA). Search for Watermark Disease and there is really good public information film about bat willow cultivation starring some of my former colleagues.

Rod Sortwell

rosied@globalnet.co.uk



Thursday 21st April 2016

In Celebration of the 90th Birthday
of Her Majesty the Queen

The Christie Hall Committee

warmly invites you to join them
in the hall for

Afternoon Tea

at 2p.m. to 4 p.m.

Music and tea provided,
please bring cake or sandwiches

**Easter Family
Fun Day & Craft Fair
in aid of Sue Ryder
Thorpe Hall Hospice
Friday 25 March,
10m—2pm at
Rose Landscapes,
Padholme Road**

Attractions will include
an Easter egg hunt,
Craft Stalls full of
beautiful handmade
crafts and designs
from local artists, a
digger discovery zone,
face painting, Tombola
and Lucky Dip.

Refreshments and
cakes will be available,
plus there will be FREE
juice for the children
and FREE tea and
coffee for the adults!

Rose Landscapes
Marketing Manager,
Rachel Mount said
"As part of a local
family business that's
been around for over
100 years we wanted
to give something
back to the communi-
ty, so what better way
than to have some
family fun while raising
funds for this special
local charity".

Activities will have a
minimal £1 charge and
all event proceeds will
go to Sue Ryder.



International Working Women's Day Festival, Peterborough
Peterborough Women: Past, Present and Future

Peterborough Town Hall, Bridge Street, Peterborough
Saturday 5th March 11:00 – 15:00

With speakers

Megan Dobney (SERTUC)

Nicola Oldfield (Civil Engineer)

Sophie Antonelli (Green Backyard)

Opened by Gillian Beasley (Peterborough City Council)

Poetry from

Charley Genever

Keely Mills

Plus info and craft stalls, refreshments, traditional dancing and exhibitions

More info from:

peterboroughtuc@gmail.com

www.ptuc.co.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/events/454679104656752/>

International Women's Day, celebrating the
social, economic and cultural achievements
of Women

<http://www.internationalwomensday.com>



DIARY DATES – MARCH 2016

Date	Event	Time	Venue	Contact	Phone	p
Wed 2	Communicare Healthy Diet meeting	12.30pm	Wansford Surgery	Wansford Surgery	782342	16
Wed 2	Sibson cum Stibbington Parish Council meeting	7.00pm	Environment Centre, Stibbington	Stibbington Centre	782386	31
Thur 3	Horticultural Society talk on Grimsthorpe Estate	7.30pm	The Christie Hall, Wansford	Gill Fisher	782446	16
Sat 5	International Women's Day Festival	11am—3pm	Town Hall, Peterborough			37
Sun 6	Mothering Sunday services at local churches					5
Wed 9	Friends of St Mary's and St Andrew's Frugal Lunch	12.15pm	The Christie Hall	Dora Baker	782519	9
Thur 10	Little Acorns for 3 to 5 year olds & parent/carer	10.00—midday	Environment Centre, Stibbington	Stibbington Centre	782386	32
Sat 12	Community Class — Print making	9.30am or 2pm	Environment Centre, Stibbington	Stibbington Centre	782386	32
Mon 14	Wansford Parish Council meeting	7.30pm	Wansford Community Hall	Wendy Gray	01778 441312	23
Wed 16	Friends of St Mary's and St Andrew's Frugal Lunch	12.15pm	The Christie Hall	Dora Baker	782519	9
Sun 20	Stibbington churchyard clear up	10am—midday	Stibbington church	Suzy Story		11
Thur 24	Sutton Parish Council meeting	7.45pm	St Michael's church Sutton	Peter Lee		27
Fri 25 - Sun 27	Easter weekend special services at local churches					5
Fi 25	Rose Landscapes Easter Fun Day	10am—2pm	Rose Landscapes	Rose Landscapes		37, 39
Sat 26	Toddlers' Play Area Official Opening	2.00pm	Play area, Nene Close, Wasnford			27
Thur 31	WI Book Club	7.30pm		Jean Yerbury	782510	13

Copy deadline next month: Thursday 24 March
rosied@globalnet.co.uk

This magazine is available online at www.livingvillagesmagazine.co.uk

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- Digger Discovery with JCB • Cakes and FREE drinks
- Tombola • Lucky Dip... And much more in store

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