

Westcott Village

Magazine

April 2024



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Westcott has a population of over 2,000 and this is the only magazine written specifically for the Westcott area by the people of Westcott. It is hand delivered, free of charge, to every household and further copies are available at the church, local shops, pub and doctor's surgery.



If you have any articles, photos, letters, etc that you think we may like to feature in the next issue, please email the Editor on:

editor@westcottmag.com

But please note, publication will always be subject to space and at the discretion of the Editor.

Copy deadline for

May issue:

8th April 2024

This magazine, published by the Church in Westcott, is printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) accredited paper from a sustainable source. The views expressed are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Church, Editor or Westcott residents.

FROM THE EDITOR



April already! Where does the time go? Now the clocks have changed - I hope you all remembered - the evenings will get longer very quickly (I

know it's actually the same amount of time each day but that is how it feels!) and we really have finished with winter.

I have been admiring the magnolia trees around the village this week - they are always a good sign that spring has sprung, and they seem particularly good this year.

This month in the magazine there are some beautiful spring photos to share, please keep sending them in so we can all enjoy them.

The Leith Hill music festival is at the Dorking Halls in April, which is always fun, and the Village Hall is hosting a table top sale on 20th. The coffee morning is on 3rd, again with cakes and books and jigsaws - so much more than just a coffee!

On page 39 there are details of a bumblebee survey being run by the RHS, where you take photos of bumblebees on flowers and upload

them to the survey, so they can work out which flowers are most important to the bees as they come out of hibernation.

Enjoy the sunshine that is hopefully coming, although maybe take a broly and watch out for the April showers too, and get out on the footpaths that we are lucky enough to have all round us in Westcott.

I'll leave you with some important dates for your diary in April - the 2nd is World Autism Awareness Day, while 9th is Unicorn Day. 11th April is National Pet Day, and 23rd is St George's Day and also World Book Night (just to be different!) The favourite in our house, however, is Penguin Day which falls on 25th April. I think you'll agree that covers all bases - something for everybody!

See you in May,

Cath
editor@westcottmag.com



...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



THE ART OF GATHERING

What are your gathering places? I have just returned from the village coffee morning which happens on the first Wednesday morning of every month and it was a joy to see people from across the village gathering together for conversation, coffee and cake. It got me thinking about the significance of gathering places in community. Both contemporary social-sciences and the biblical narrative make the claim that we are, at heart, social creatures. At the heart of our being is not so much the claim that 'I think therefore I am' (sorry Descartes) but rather that 'I am because we are'. Even as a form of radical individualism has taken hold in the western world over the past sixty years, this reality still seems to hold true on a fundamental level: It is the art of gathering in community that makes us fully alive human beings.

“TRUE COMMUNITY
TAKES TIME,
COMMITMENT,
DIFFERENCE AND THE
ART OF GATHERING.”

We live in a world where many of us can find like minded people to gather with virtually at the touch of a button. Yet while an online world of individuals who share opinions or interests has some value, it is merely a shadow of true community. True community takes time, commitment, difference, and the art of gathering. True community is both costly and at the same time worth every ounce of effort that it takes to build.



When you hear the word church, it may well bring to mind big old buildings with steeples, but the Greek word found in the Bible which is normally translated as 'church' is ecclesia, which means a public assembly or gathering. It is the act of bringing people from across an area together for a shared purpose. This is one of the reasons why church is for all – the non-religious, the devout, the questioning, the doubters, the desperate, the content, the happy, and those at the end of their rope.

...FROM THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT



Church is a gathering of people—all are invited – to explore the possibility and plausibility of faith, hope and love in an individualistic age. You are always welcome through our doors. What are the spaces where you gather in person with others? We are blessed in the local community with an abundance of groups, communities and spaces where we can gather with others. Groups like the cricket club, our wonderful school, Cookie Club, the WVA, the local history group, the gardeners club, the community garden,

the coffee morning. Communities like the mountain bike community that connect through Nirvana Cycles, the dog walking community, Green Westcott, Alcoholics Anonymous. Spaces like the amazing new café space at St John's Chapel, our village pub, corefit physio, the village hall. [Apologies to the countless other groups, communities and spaces that I haven't mentioned here.] Where are the spaces that you help create the art of gathering which is the lifeblood of a community like ours?

Rev Tim

APRIL SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY



8.30am Book of Common Prayer Communion, A warm welcome in our beautiful, traditional service.

10.15am Friendly, relaxed service, using Common Worship and a range of music styles. This service is also livestreamed on Zoom.



For 10:15am Zoom service connection, please scan this QR code, or visit the Online Services page of thechurchinwestcott.org.uk and follow the link.

The church is open every day, 9am-4pm for private prayer & reflection

DATE	8:30AM	10:15AM
7th April	Book of Common Prayer Communion	All Age Morning Worship
14th April	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Holy Communion with Sunday Club
21st April	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Holy Communion with Sunday Club
28th April	Book of Common Prayer Communion	Holy Communion with Sunday Club



MARKING LIFE EVENTS

All who live in Westcott or have a connection here are very welcome to have christenings, funerals, weddings in Holy Trinity. Contact vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk for more information.

MIDWEEK PRAYER & WORSHIP

Wednesdays

10am

Communion at St John's

BUILDING
FRIENDSHIPS



SHARING
LIFE

THE CHURCH IN
WESTCOTT

Thursday
18th April
7.30pm
Holy Trinity
Worshipright
traditional reflective worship



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THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

Join a Life Group

Small groups of people who meet online or in person every 2 weeks to chat and pray about life & faith.

Life groups:

- explore ways we can bring God's love, justice and joy into our relationships with other people and creation, into our leisure and into our work
- give you an opportunity to explore the Bible and consider what it says
- use worship, simple contemplation and prayer to help us encounter God

Contact: Tim Armstrong, Vicar, vicar@holyltrinitywestcott.org.uk for more information

BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS SHARING LIFE



Westcott's baby & toddler group

snacks
crafts
games
music
friendship
fun

**COOKIE
CLUB**

parents
grandparents
guardians...
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St John's Hall, Westcott
9-11am every Thursday during term time
£2 voluntary donation



THE CHURCH IN WESTCOTT

The Church in Westcott is part of the Westcott Good Neighbour Scheme and we are always here for a chat, prayer, pastoral need.

Debt advice: Paul Stacey (paulstacey88@gmail.com)

Holy Trinity Pastoral Assistants: Mark Shakespeare (01306 888010), Ali Mabley (alimabley.htw@gmail.com)

For help, or more information, please contact
Tim Armstrong, Vicar: vicar@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk
or visit thechurchinwestcott.org.uk



Floodlighting

The church floodlighting for April has been sponsored by Sandra Ede to mark the 80th birthday (in March) of her, and her twin sister Jackie, who died in 2016 - remembered with much love and greatly missed.

If you would like to sponsor the floodlighting, please contact Sarah Massey at admin@holytrinitywestcott.org.uk
(Suggested donation of £75 to Westcott Church Funds).

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Thank you to everyone who came to the WVA Open Meeting at the Prince of Wales on the 21st March. The update on village news included the review of the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan, Surrey County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Consultation and Mole Valley District Council Local Plan. We also had some guest speakers including Marisa Heath, Cabinet Member for the Environment at Surrey County Council, and Westcott's own Tim Way BEM who spoke about the Community Foundation for Surrey, which is a new grant-making charity focused on supporting local good causes.

We are keen for people to step forward and help with the review of the Westcott Neighbourhood Development Plan please. The current plan, which has been in place since 2017, expires in 2026 (a copy of which can be found on the village website). The NDP is an important document which enables us to play a much stronger role in shaping Westcott's future and setting out a positive vision for the future development and needs of our community. Decisions on planning applications are made by reference to both the MVDC Local Plan and Westcott's Neighbourhood Development Plan policies. If you are interested in joining a steering group to review and update the current plan alongside a professional adviser, please

get in touch by emailing contact@westcottvillage.com

Turning the clock back a little....in 1840 when St John's was built, a box tree was planted in the grounds. The tree stood for 180 years until 2020 when it had to be felled due to rot in the trunk. Local carpenter, Alan Waring, salvaged some of the wood and after carefully seasoning it in his workshop has now made a beautiful clock which has been hung in St John's for all to enjoy. Pictured is Alan Waring presenting the clock to Rev. Tim Armstrong on behalf of St John's.



Finally, looking ahead, the **Westcott Village Association AGM** will be held on Thursday 27th June 2024 at 7.30pm at Holy Trinity, please pop the date in the diary and come and join us.

As always, in the meantime, do get in touch via contact@westcottvillage.com with any queries or to find out more.

WVA Committee

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The Mid Surrey Community Fridge van now visits Westcott
every Tuesday opening at 2:45pm

It stays in the village for up to half an hour from opening at
St John's Chapel in Chapel Lane

Many come early to queue and chat –
it's a good catch up!

Please come along and stop this food going to landfill

If you can make a small donation, it would be appreciated
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MUSIC IN DORKING



9th at 7.15, ballet screening at Dorking Halls, £19, 01306 881717

12th & 13th at 7.30, Leith Hill Music Festival at Dorking Halls, £17-24, 01306 881717

24th at 7.15, ballet screening at Dorking Halls, £19, 01306 881717

30th at 7.45, ballet screening at Dorking Halls, £19, 01306 881717

The main event for April is the Leith Hill Music Festival, with two days of competitions and concerts. On Friday 12th, five choirs from Dorking and the surrounding towns and villages will sing in competition in the morning, rehearse together in the afternoon with the festival conductor Jonathan Willcocks, and then give a concert in the evening. On Saturday 13th another five choirs will take their turn. Both concerts will have the benefit of professional soloists and the Southern Pro Musica orchestra.

Friday's concert will begin with Mendelssohn's *Hebrides overture* played by the orchestra, after which the choir will sing Vaughan Williams' ravishingly beautiful *Serenade to Music* and Mozart's highly dramatic *Requiem*. Saturday's programme will comprise *Lux aeterna* by the American composer Morten Lauridsen, and Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, an impressive setting of the mass, named for its exuberantly joyful Gloria section. This will be Jonathan's final festival after ten years at the helm, so we hope for a full Dorking Halls for his last two concerts.

There are three Royal Ballet screenings at the Dorking Halls this month. First comes a triple bill celebrating the choreographer Kenneth Macmillan, and then Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* with a live screening plus a later encore screening.





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Programme Delay, Fundraising and Community Support

Following the village consultation in November the trustees' professional advisers submitted a document and request for pre-application advice from Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) Planning Department just before Christmas. At the time of writing MVDC planners have confirmed that they have not yet started reviewing this which sadly means a delay to our programme. In the meantime, the Development Group and their advisers continue to use the waiting time constructively and have tendered quotations for all reports which might be required to support a planning application. We await MVDC planner's response before the planning application is submitted. This is unlikely to be before June 2024. We will ensure that details of the proposed planning application scheme are shared with the neighbours of the two sites and the village is notified before the application is submitted. Please keep an eye on <https://www.westcottvillagehall.com/> and other digital communication channels to keep up to date. The application will primarily be focused on access, site layout, building scale and massing and materials. Details on the developed internal design of the new community building will be the subject of further consultation with the village and existing users after planning consent has been secured.

It is a priority for the trustees that we have and maintain funds for the operation and management of the Village Hall to ensure that it remains open for business. In addition, we currently have sufficient funds to meet the cost of submitting the planning application. However, there will be some further technical information that will be needed post planning consent and further funds will be needed to meet these costs. The trustees are therefore focusing on fundraising initiatives. We are holding a Table Top Sale on 20th April, a Pie and Mash – Quiz Evening on 18th May and a Rock Choir Evening on 7th June 2024, details of which are elsewhere in this issue. Please get involved in our endeavours, this project is now at the stage where we all need to start to work together to deliver our new village hall.

The trustees have recently been successful in a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) application for a sum of money needed for health and safety work on the existing building and have recently initiated two grant applications to help meet the professional fees post-planning. We expect to make further grant applications as and when they are needed.

Jim Brodrick has recently joined the trustees and we are extremely grateful to have his extra help and support. There is an open meeting on April 24th at 7pm at the Village Hall. Please come along and get involved.

Sally Hewetson, Interim Chair

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Notice of a Meeting of the Trustees of Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO at the Westcott Village Hall on Wednesday, April 24th 2024 at 7pm



Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO is governed by its trustees. With limited exceptions (and reflecting how modern charities are generally run) only the trustees are entitled to attend and vote at meetings. However, in the interest of transparency and good governance, the trustees have adopted a policy to declare their quarterly meeting to be held in April each year as an 'open meeting' which residents may attend as observers.

This year, the trustees' April meeting will be held in Westcott Village Hall at 7pm on Wednesday, 24th April 2024 and all residents of Westcott and the neighbourhood are warmly invited to attend as observers. The business of the meeting will include:

- (i) a review of the CIO's report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are currently in the course of preparation;
- (ii) the appointment (or, if eligible, re-appointment) of trustees;
- (iii) a proposal to defer the review of the CIO's report and accounts for this and future calendar years to the trustees' meeting to be held in September or October of the following year to allow for the possibility that the preparation by the trustees of the accounts, and their review by an Independent Examiner, will become more complex if the redevelopment project proceeds as is intended, annual accounts not being due for filing with the Charity Commission until the end of October in the following year;
- (iv) a proposal to increase the quorum requirement for meetings of trustees from two to four;
- (v) consequential amendments to the Governance Rules and to the Constitution to reflect items (iii) and (iv) above, if adopted; and
- (vi) such matters concerning the operations of the CIO as may arise and be appropriate for discussion in an open forum.

Sally Hewetson, Interim Chair, Westcott Village Hall Trust CIO



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WESTCOTT VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

*Wednesday 3rd April
at
The Village Hall
10.30 - 12.00 midday*



*Jigsaw and Book exchange
Sandra's delicious cakes & scones*

Come and join us



Westcott Baby/Volunteer Meals

Calling all new and expectant parents in Westcott, Did you know, the village of Westcott has a long tradition of delivering "baby meals"... contrary to the name, this is a hot meal for the family (rather than the new baby!), delivered to your door every evening for two weeks. It's a welcome respite from the chaos a new baby brings and a pretty unique service we are incredibly proud of. We have a list of 40+ volunteer cooks in the village who will buy, cook and deliver a meal. Many of the residents of Westcott will tell you how incredible it was to have people from their community arriving on the doorstep with dinner every day as they struggled to adjust to life with a new baby, and what's more, we love to do it! If you're living in Westcott and expecting a baby or know someone who is, PLEASE get in touch we'd love to help!

By the way - if Westcott residents need meals while adjusting to a family crisis, illness or discharge from hospital we can also help. Please get in touch.

Anna & the Westcott Volunteer cooks team

Anna Kemkers 07710425487

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Dawn Chorus

Many forms of wildlife watching involve a degree of discomfort – Arctic cold, tropical humidity, windswept headlands or small boats in choppy seas. At this season, however, we can enjoy one of the world's best wildlife experiences while still in bed. Even in cities, but certainly in our area rich in mature gardens with shrubs and trees, the dawn chorus reaches its peak in May. As the breeding season hots up, male birdsong reaches its zenith because the territory for food-gathering must be protected. For many species, strong musical performance also offers the opportunity for liaisons with willing females.



Almost all birds sing as the day gets light. This proclaims "I've survived the night and this is still my patch." It also makes good use of the time between waking and having enough light and warmth for insects to take wing and the serious business of food gathering for a hungry brood to start. For many migrants such as the warblers, the males arrive first to set up territories, so the dawn chorus provides the first point of contact for prospective pairs.

It is worth getting up in the dark (around 4am) at least once in May to enjoy the

full benefit of the experience outdoors. Wear a fleece, take a plastic bag and a cushion to sit on, settle quietly and wait. The tawny owl hoots as it retires to its daytime roost in a large tree after a night of hunting. Not long after, a robin begins to sing. Then every robin within earshot competes. Blackbirds soon join in with their melodies. Robins and blackbirds have large pupils and so see more at dawn and dusk than most garden birds. The chaffinches, the pigeons and doves are heard next. Then the others join the chorus in rapid succession. The dawn chorus is an experience, not a tutorial, so don't expect to learn to identify birdsong during the dawn chorus. Lots of individuals of every species are all singing at once in a glorious cacophony.

RSPB Dorking & District are holding a dawn chorus walk on Saturday 4th May at Bookham Commons. Meet at 5am at Bookham Tunnel Car Park, Commonside, Great Bookham KT23 3ES [what3words///same.most.gently](https://www.what3words.com/same.most.gently)
Leader: Glenn Tel: 07483 848837
(Car Park run by NT, walk is free to RSPB members or £5 to non members, no toilets.) Listen to the sounds of spring awakening & learn about the birdsong of our resident songbirds and migrants that arrive each spring.

Facebook: RSPB Dorking and District
Website: <https://group.rspb.org.uk/dorkinganddistrict/>
Email: rspborking@gmail.com

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The house was built in 1872 for Arthur Powell, the son of a wealthy London wine merchant. He was not particularly interested in wine making but he appreciated that the business depended on bottles and decanters and he developed a glass making factory in the Whitefriars area of London that had once housed a Carmelite monastery. Whitefriar's glass soon became a household name and the family fortunes were



enhanced by the company's stained glass. Examples of this can be seen in church windows throughout the country, including at Holy Trinity Church here in Westcott.

After Arthur Powell's death in 1894 the house was bought by James Carr Saunders, a London Underwriter but it was his granddaughter, Madeleine Slade, who lived at the house while her father, Admiral Sir Edmond Slade, was serving overseas. Her name is now remembered because of her association with Mahatma Gandhi. She read Gandhi's biography by Romain Rollands in 1924 and was so fascinated by his principles of 'non violence'. She wrote and asked Gandhi if she could become his disciple and live in his ashram in Gujarat.

In 1925 Madeleine, aged 33, travelled to India where Gandhi gave her the name Mira Behn (Sister Mira). She learned to speak Hindi, took a vow of celibacy and as Mira Behn accompanied Gandhi throughout his non-violent campaign for India's freedom from British rule. She was also at his side in England in 1931-1934 when they attended the Round Table Conferences on the future of India. Before returning she had interviews with British politicians including Lord Halifax, Churchill, Attlee and Lloyd George on Indian independence. She was active in spreading the spirit of non-violence and was considered by the British to be important to India's independence which eventually led to the partition into India and Pakistan in 1947.



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Gandhi was assassinated on 30th June 1948 by a Hindu nationalist because he was considered too outspoken in defence of the Muslims. The assassins were executed. Mira Behn remained in India for the next 11 years before returning to England in 1959, and a year later went to live near Vienna where she died in 1982 aged 90. She wanted to live in the country of Beethoven whom she greatly admired and whose music she enjoyed playing on the piano. The Indian government awarded her the Padma Vibhushan medal - the country's second highest civilian honour for distinguished services to the development of farming and rural communities. She wrote an autobiography entitled *The Spirit's Pilgrimage* in 1960.



1930 Cartier clasp for £121,000

The next family to live in this house in the early 1900's was that of Jacques Cartier of the Paris jewellery firm. He had numerous contacts with the Maharajahs in India, many of whom came to stay at Milton Heath during the 1920's and 1930's. The firm of Alfred Cartier had been long established as a jeweller in Paris but at the beginning of the 20th century the founder entrusted its international future to his three

sons. Louis took over responsibility in Paris, Pierre went to New York and Jacques Cartier, the youngest, was assigned to the London office. He purchased Milton Heath House (and Sondes Place next door). From there he travelled extensively buying pearls from sheikhs in the Middle East, and establishing profitable contacts with India's Maharajahs.

After Jacques' death in 1944 his son, Jean Jacques, continued to live there and it was 'JJ' who successfully objected to a proposal to build a large housing estate on Milton Heath citing, in addition to other environmental arguments, the additional traffic entering the Westcott Road where his grandson had been killed in a motor accident in 1962. The house is now used as an office by TMB Marketing and some other firms.

The next event will be a talk by David Rose on 'Surrey Villages, Past and Present' on Tuesday 21st May at our usual venue in St John's Church Hall at 8pm. The WLHG committee encourages suggestions for talks and relevant articles from the members. Contacts by email at westcottlocalhistory@gmail.com and for local information at our website - www.westcottlocalhistory.org.

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PLAYING THE ORGAN AT HOLY TRINITY

When I bought a house with my wife Mary in the Paddock, we were delighted to find we were near the church. We started going to Evensong, and after a few months I became aware that there was a vacancy to play the Organ. I had a chat with the organist, Charles Helier, and he encouraged me to have a go. I started playing for the small congregation.

The vicar, Alan Jonas gave me cover as he had a strong singing voice, and set the tempo. During the week, I practiced and Mary came to listen. I asked her if it was OK, and she gave an honest answer "no!" So I went to see Martin Ellis, director of music at St Martin's Dorking, and an erstwhile pupil of the famous organist George Thalben Ball. Martin was reluctant to take me on as all his other pupils were teenagers aiming for organ scholarships at university. I said I just wanted to improve my playing at Westcott, and he agreed to teach me, but only on the condition that I practiced hard. He introduced me to playing Bach, then moved to more modern works once I had made progress, but I was relieved to find that most organ works were simpler than the ones he set me to learn.

I continued to play at Westcott, I also started playing at funerals. The most bizarre was for Matt [name changed for privacy]. Matt was a bit of a rogue, but very likeable. His son gave a great

eulogy, the drift of which was that Dad had been a good influence on the youth of the village. At this point, there was an audible stage whisper from the body of the church "have we come to the right funeral?" Rather too much laughter. Things then got even odder. It had rained all week, and the grave digger had not been able to complete his work. Alan went to check that all was in order, when there was a loud shout from the grave "I forgot my ladder and can't get out!" Matt would have enjoyed this.



Johann Sebastian Bach at the organ

Shortly after, I received an invitation to play once a month at St James Tunbridge Wells. This was an honour, as the organ was as big as a cathedral one. The Saturday before my Sunday debut, I thought I would go and test the organ. The church was locked so the verger had to come and let me in. When he had left, I remembered what Bach used to say when he faced a new organ, "let's see what this box of

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PLAYING THE ORGAN AT HOLY TRINITY (cont.)

whistles can do!". Then he pulled out all the stops. I did the same. There was a huge sound, and the whole building vibrated. The next day as I sat at the console ready to play, the irate vicar approached and said "yesterday the verger reported that the new organist was mad, and tried to blow the roof off the church. Please play quietly!" I never pulled out all the stops again.

Back in Westcott, I sometimes played for 3 services on a Sunday. Then Covid came. I resigned from St James, and

Evensong at Westcott was scrapped. Now the family service has a band, but the organ is still played at the 8.30 communion service, to the satisfaction of the congregation.

I have really enjoyed playing the organ at Holy Trinity, and would like to thank the congregation for their appreciation and support.

Gordon Williams
Sub Organist, Holy Trinity Westcott

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Table Top



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Up, up and away! Passports at the ready!! Whilst it has been raining and pouring outside we decided to take a trip to sunnier climates. On a flight piloted by Henny and stewarded by Hayley – in an authentic uniform- we buckled in and enjoyed a zoom through the skies - landing first in Brazil before nipping to Paris then onto Canada. What a whistlestop tour!

It's been dinosaur season inside and out with the fabulous addition of our own Jurassic Park in the garden. We have helped to cultivate a landscape to rival the land before time and even had time to add a magnificent bug hotel too! Watch out for the dinosaur roars if you are passing by. Inside the floor is lava!! We have taken an old tepee and carefully dribbled fire coloured paint at the top to create an utterly amazing volcano.



Who knew you could find fossils in Abinger? Well neither did we but we thought the Jurassic Coast a little too far after our trip around the world so

we made our own! Carefully rolling out the clay and pressing shells and bugs into it to make our mark. Once suitably painted we were able to take them home and hang them up to marvel at.



There probably aren't that many bones you'd feel like nibbling on except the yummy ones we created- our very own funny bones! We dipped pretzels into melted white chocolate and added popcorn and marshmallows at each end to create the perfect bone shape. We then discussed the bones in our bodies and made sure to have a few x-rays in our doctor role play area.

If you have a child looking to start Nursery please don't hesitate to get in touch. Please call 07842 978823 or email abingercommonnursery@gmail.com We can't wait to show you around!

Kate Fairbrass



*Dorking Group of Artists
Spring Exhibition:
Betchworth Village Hall, Station Rd,
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Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th May 10:00 - 17:00,
Monday May 6th 10:00 - 16:00*



The Dorking Group of Artists, are delighted to be returning to Betchworth Village Hall for their popular Spring exhibition. The original art in our exhibition is all for sale at affordable prices and the paintings demonstrate a wide range of different subjects, styles and media. Entrance to the exhibition is free. Betchworth Village Hall is opposite Knights Garden Centre.

For more information see www.dga.org.uk,
Facebook @dga4art, or contact@dga.org.uk.

Angela Hall, Chair, Dorking Group of Artists
Email: jackycowdrey@hotmail.com



Holy Trinity, Westcott

Wednesday 10th April, 7.30 p.m.

The King's Men Cambridge are returning to Westcott for another concert, with a repertoire including early church music, spirituals, folk and pop songs.

Tickets £18

margaretj.stephen@gmail.com

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Bees

Bees have had a wonderful day celebrating 100 days of school. They commemorated the event with a delicious cupcake, a badge and a game of Simon Says. Fun was had by all!!



clothing in history. In Art, we have been looking at prehistoric drawing techniques using charcoal. We then went on to create our own cave wall drawings (made from lentils and pulses) and created our own cave drawings.



Hedgehogs



Hedgehogs have been looking at all things Stone Age across the curriculum. They have completed some brilliant story writing based on 'Stone Age Boy' alongside learning about Stone Age houses, jobs and



Hedgehogs have also been busy making their own Roman shields. We then practised our marching in our Roman legion formation. We made sure to march in time with our partner and to make our turns very sharp. We had so much fun marching around the school and practising moving our shields above our heads to create the testudo formation for protection. We even filmed our marching so that we could evaluate our own performances on the big screen!

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Thank you to KSSX - Air Ambulance Charity for Kent, Surrey and Sussex for



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coming in to see us and giving us an inspiring insight into the critical work this charity does on a daily basis. The children thoroughly enjoyed wearing red for Feb recently and we raised over £100 for this amazing charity.



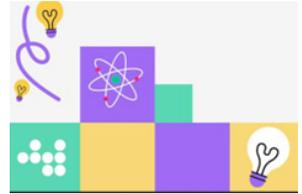
ROAR Project Winners!

In the Autumn Term, all Year 6 children at Surrey Hills were fortunate to be able to take part in the ROAR Project: an innovative competition from Lions International delivered by 8billionideas. This is designed to promote an entrepreneurial spirit for all students, unlocking their innovative DNA. Our winning entry was judged by Cranleigh Lions who entered it into the National Competition - it was deemed to be 'very strong'!



World Changing Idea

Congratulations to our winners with their 'Friend in your pocket' mental health app: Evie, Ethan, Maddie, Nancy and Lila.



Our runners up with their 'Re-roller' invention, to reduce unnecessary packaging waste were: Odett, April, Betsy, Vika, Amelia-Rose and Maya.

Also highly commended were Aidan, Alex and Noah who designed the 'Super Support Suit' to help alleviate problems for people with physical disabilities and issues with movement.

A special note to Will, Zach and Daniel for their invention 'The Arthritis Helper' which impressed the judges.

We were reminded that in this age of Artificial Intelligence, we still rely on the wonder of the human brain to create innovative and groundbreaking ideas.

**Mrs Fyson
Headteacher**



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Can you be a bumblebee spotter?

This spring the RHS are calling on gardeners to help them record bumblebees on flowers in gardens and parks. Bumblebees are a key group of wild pollinators, and like many pollinating insects, bumblebees face the challenges of habitat loss and climate change.



Bumblebees mostly overwinter in the UK as queens, which emerge from sheltered places as spring progresses. The emerging bees need flowers to provide nectar while the protein-rich pollen from flowers is fed to the developing larvae of the worker bumblebees.

More information is needed on which flowers do bumblebees use. To help find the answer, the RHS are hoping gardeners will become community scientists and help spot bumblebees on flowers this spring. To help capture this information, they are using a popular wildlife recording tool called iNaturalist. This can be downloaded as an app onto a smartphone and used to capture records when you are out

in your garden or local park, up to 31st May. Records can then be submitted to the 'Bumbles on Blooms' project within iNaturalist.



As an alternative, you can also add photos to the Bumbles on Blooms project via the iNaturalistUK website. You will need a minimum of one photo clearly showing the bumblebee on a flower, but ideally, take two photos from different angles of the bee on the flower, plus a third photo of just the flower it was on, particularly if you are unsure about the type of flower it is.

For more information about the survey check out

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/help-our-research/bumbles-on-blooms>



(Idea provided by Babs Lawry, following a Daily Mail article on March 2nd - details from RHS website)



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SPRING PHOTOS



These top 3 photos were taken by Melanie Banner, showing Westcott off in all its spring glory!



The bottom 2 photos were sent in by Babs Lawry, The daffodil one was taken at RHS Wisley and the crocuses at Snell Hatch cemetery, so not quite local, but they are so spring-like I couldn't not share them!



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DORKING MUSEUM

Family Activities at Dorking Library:

In conjunction with Dorking Library, on Tuesday 2nd April, 10am to noon, we will be celebrating April's Earth Day, an annual event to demonstrate support for environmental protection. Children can use WWF craft materials to make a snow leopard doorhanger. Aimed at 4-11-year-olds, materials are provided free and children must be accompanied.

Easter Challenge: Up until 13th April, during normal opening hours, families are invited to come and follow the clues around the Museum to spell a name. When you have completed the challenge, collect a small edible prize!

Walking in Dorking: As the weather improves, what better way to make the most of the attractions this area has to offer than with the Museum's popular programme of guided walks which starts a new season. These include two on the edge of town. A Betchworth Castle tour includes exclusive access to the Castle enclosure: Sunday 14th April, 2pm, from the gateway opposite the



Hillier garden centre on the A25 Reigate Road. The walk on the Deepdene Trail takes in the grotto, woodland walks, parterre and temple, and offers exclusive access to the grade 2* listed Hope family Mausoleum: Sunday 21st April, 2pm, from the Dorking Golf Club clubhouse.

In the town centre, the Family Treasure Hunt for young history detectives (£4 per family) offers a prize for all participating children: Thursday 4th April, 2pm. Our ever-popular Dorking Historic Pub Walk reveals stories of hostelries, pubs and inns both past and present: Saturday 6th April, 6pm. See Dorking as you have never seen it before on the guided walk of Hidden Historic Dorking: Sunday 14th April, 11am. Preceding walks all start at the Museum.

And, a new itinerary for this year, the Blue Plaques and Statues walk tells of



some of the famous people who lived or were active in Dorking, revealing a diverse range of interests and activities: Sunday 21st April, 2pm, from the Cubitt statue opposite Dorking Halls.

All walks last around an hour and a half and should be booked in advance: details and booking at dorkingmuseum.com.



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DORKING MUSEUM (cont.)

org.uk/guided-walks-around-dorking/.

Walks may also be arranged for private groups on these or other itineraries: see website for details, enquiries and group booking.

South Street Caves tours:



One of Dorking's most popular attractions, the 17th century South Street Caves lie beneath Dorking's busy streets, complete with graffiti carved into the walls, the oldest dating back to 1666. A series of staircases, galleries, wine vaults and chambers lead down to the 'Mystery Chamber', 50 feet below street level. Guided tours take place on the last Saturday of each month of the season. Open Day on 27th April. Tours start at 10am, 11am, 1pm and 2pm, each lasting about 45 minutes and led by a trained guide. For details and open day bookings (which sell out fast!) see dorkingmuseum.org.uk/south-street-caves/. Private group bookings may also be made, e-mail caves@dorkingmuseum.org.uk to arrange a date.

A Call to Arms: The History of the Surrey Yeomanry: The Museum's current temporary exhibition follows the history

of the Surrey Yeomanry from its original formation as a voluntary unit in 1794 during the war against Revolutionary France. Having been disbanded at least twice during the early 19th century, it was revived in 1900 at the time



of the Boer War, being commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Cubitt. It was based in Dorking during the First World War, when many of its members served in India and the Middle East. The exhibition includes historic uniform jackets presented to the Museum by the Surrey Yeomanry Trust, weaponry and profiles of some who served.

Get involved: The Museum is looking for new volunteers who can spare a few hours a month at the front desk or in a range of other roles with flexible working in the Museum, in the community or from home. Current opportunities in digital communications, school/youth visits, artefacts and guided walks. See dorkingmuseum.org.uk/about/volunteer-opportunities for further details.

Dorking Museum, 62 West Street, Dorking RH4 1BS. Open Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. 01306 876591.

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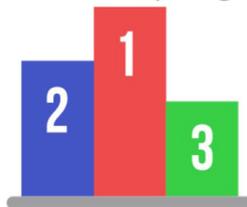


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Tuesday 9th April 10.30

Our April lecture features The Great Sun King, Louis XIV, best remembered for the creation of Versailles, an extraordinary and lavish court which became the seat of French government and the envy of every other European monarch. Lecturer Jane Gardiner will talk about the sumptuous state apartments, the vast gardens and pleasure pavilions and the spectacular entertainments which took place at one of the greatest courts in Europe.



The talk will take place in the Martineau Hall, Dorking Halls with coffee available from 9.30am. Visitors are welcome for a fee of £7.50 but please contact Sue Bax on 01737 223932 (email - sue.bax1@btinternet.com) to book as seating is limited. For more information and details of the forthcoming programme, please visit www.theartssocietydorking.org.uk

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or email davina@kidsforkids.org.uk for more information.

Please do share with friends and family - we would love to hear from you!

Charlotte Allum

We have had an extremely busy lead up to Spring at the woodland and with our Charity work including our Easter Egg Hunt. The woodland wildlife have really been busy too. The birds



are nesting in many of our nest boxes which are located on trees around the woodland, the spring bulbs are in full and glorious

bloom, the buds on the bushes are ready to burst and the ferns are showing signs of unfurling. Its all coming to life which always makes me feel fortunate to be able to spend time in the woodland enjoying the wonders of nature.

We also recently had to say farewell to our 'Woodland Padre', Reverend David Grundy and his wife Reverend Judith Grundy. It was a sad day for us, David has been so supportive to the woodland during his time in Holmbury St Mary but we of course wish both him and Judith a very happy and long retirement; although from the plans they were telling me about maybe not such a quiet retirement!

We also had a visit to the woodland by Reverend Kia Pakeman and sat on the balcony of our Visitors Centre

for an hour or so having an extremely interesting conversation. We know she is going to be immensely busy over the next few months and wish her well. Kia is unable to attend our 10th Anniversary and Commemoration Service on 1st June due to another pastoral engagement however, Reverend Virginia Smith will be joining us and participating in the Commemoration Service which is being held for the loved ones of 6 families of Veterans who are no longer with us.

We welcome Virginia and hope she enjoys the day with us which is



also a celebration of our Memorial Woodland having been officially opened for 10 years on Saturday 1st June. Everyone is welcome to this special day so do come along. I will be making my welcome speech at 12.30 when the programme for the afternoon will commence.

Our Charity work has been very busy too, some of the work has been quite sad when we were needed to help Veterans in times of difficulty. But this week, although distressing to see



one of my own army mates suffering with poor health issues, it was very rewarding that we were able to help him in a small way, which is quite an emotional story. About six months ago a Veteran sadly lost his wife and he came down to the woodland from the Midlands to deliver and donate her almost new mobility scooter to QRMW. This week it was brought to our attention that another Veteran was housebound due to severe health issues and unable to walk more than a few yards. It was mentioned that if he had a mobility scooter it would make a huge difference to his life and wellbeing. So I charged up the mobility scooter we had been donated and delivered it to him.

It was quite an emotional hour or so we spent talking about old times

in the boxing team, and looking at photos of when we were young fit soldiers. The photo with this article I think speaks for itself! Not only will this piece of equipment make a big difference to this Veteran's life, it was a very rewarding experience for me and my fellow Trustees, Debbie and Colvin. This is what The Quick Response Memorial Woodland Charity does but not without help from other people, like the Veteran who donated the scooter, and from donations we receive or the fundraising we do ourselves. We are five volunteers who receive no benefit from the Charity, we do not have a regular income nor a Sponsor but with others' generosity we are able to assist those Veterans who are very often in need of assistance quickly.

I hope this month's update has given you a small insight into the work that we do not just at the woodland by providing a place of Remembrance, Reflection and Comradeship, but also working alongside our charitable organization that can help those who are suffering, be it by paying a bill that keeps them in their home or providing the basics to live.

Paul Cooling, Chairman
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Dorking Local History Group

The DLHG continues its popular programme of both live and Zoom talks on a fascinating range of topics. These are free to members, but non-members are welcome. Upcoming dates include:

- **Germany's WW1 Bomber Offensive against London:**

Live talk by Ian Castle on the bombing of London in the First World War from Zeppelins through to the Gotha and 'Giant' bombers. Monday 8th April at Crossways Community Baptist Church, Junction Road, Dorking RH4 3HB, 7.15 for 7.30pm, £2 at the door for non-members.



- **Woking 1919-39: Photographs by Sidney Francis:** Zoom talk: Jane Lewis and Jill Hyams of Surrey History Centre with images that give glimpses of what Woking was like in the interwar years. Monday 22nd April <https://www.meet-up.com/Surrey-History-Meetup/>.

For further details of talks and other activities – or to join DLHG – go to <https://dlhg.org.uk>.



Jan Wylie - Rest in Peace

Sadly Jan Wylie passed away on 29th February after a long period of living with motor neurone disease. There will be a remembrance service at Holy Trinity soon but as we went to press the date had not yet been set.

Jan was a keen participant at the church for many years, as well as being a member of Westcott Wives, and she was also a valued member of the team here at the magazine, helping with the distribution allocations and doing deliveries round the village herself before she could no longer do so.

Jan will be missed by many in the village, and we send our good wishes to her husband Glenn, and all of her family and friends.



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GREEN WESTCOTT

Plastics Inside – the hidden crisis

'In March 2022, scientists confirmed they had found microplastics in human blood for the first time'. This rather alarming fact is taken directly from a BBC article and you can be sure that, if these plastics are within us, then they are definitely in many other species that we share our planet with too. We all know the issue of plastic is huge – we have seen numerous images on the news and in social media, of plastics being washed up on beaches around the world and turning up in the bellies of starving birds, fish and mammals.



In 2014 a study concluded that there were 250,000 tons of floating plastic debris in the oceans and that, even then, this number was increasing. Not only is this impacting directly on wildlife, but these very same plastics have been shown to be connected to diseases in humans and in reductions in fertility rates in people around the world.

Micro and Nano plastics

The term microplastics refers to pieces of plastic which are smaller than 0.5mm in diameter, which is roughly equivalent to a grain of rice. While nano plastics

are far smaller, at just 100 nanometres or less. In December 2023, a published paper looked at the impact of micro and nano plastics, specifically on their impact on reproductive systems. They concluded that the plastic particles which enter our bodies via skin contact, inhalation, or ingestion, target reproductive systems by disturbing cell development. Indeed, another study looking at the trends of reproductive systems, analysed sperm counts in the 20th and 21st century. Their analysis showed that in 1973, sperm counts had fallen on average by 1.2% but post 2000, this rate of decline had increased by 2.6%. The researchers state that *'this world-wide [reproductive] decline is continuing in the 21st century at an accelerated pace'*.

These studies clearly show that plastics are causing not only a fertility crisis, but they are also impacting us through other diseases. Studies show that plastics are increasing rates of diabetes, respiratory system issues, low birth rates, neuro toxicity and cancer, to name but a few. One study reported the link between Parkinson's disease and dementia, as a direct result of exposure to plastics. This 2023 study found that *'Nano plastics interact with a particular protein that is naturally found in the brain, creating changes linked to Parkinson's disease and some types of dementia'*.

Our world is full of plastic, and it is

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GREEN WESTCOTT (cont.)

estimated that by the year 2050, plastic will be found in the digestive tract of



99% of all sea bird species!

Millions of us, including us, are also at risk with approximately

63,000–430,000 tonnes of micro plastics, entering farmlands annually through sewage sludge applications.

What is in the plastic?

There are more than 10,000 chemicals identified as plastic additives and 2,400 have been classified as detrimental to marine and terrestrial eco systems. 1,000 of these chemicals are identified as endocrine disruptors which lead to endocrine difficulties, including insulin release and growth and developmental abnormalities. Many of the chemicals within our systems are able to cross the blood brain barrier, leading to multiple issues in our health and reproduction. There are specific endocrine disrupting chemicals now found to have the ability to cross the placenta, from mother to child, resulting in infant abnormalities and low birth rates.

So where does it stop?

Plastic is a byproduct of the fossil fuel industry, with over 99% of plastic made from chemicals sourced from fossil fuels. In 2019 the production and incineration of plastic produced 850 million metric tons of greenhouse gases. It is estimated

that, if allowed to continue at this rate, this will rise to a staggering 2.8 billion metric tonnes by 2050! Since 1950, 90% of all the plastic produced has never been recycled. This is, in part, due to the difficulty in recycling mixed materials although other factors also play a role. The point is, that plastic is still being produced and if we are to halt the plastic problem in our world, we need to cut it off at the source. If your bath is overflowing and the plug is blocked,

you don't keep scooping the water out with a bucket, you turn off the tap first!



We too must turn off the source of the plastic in the first instance. Big corporations must invest in innovative solutions to this problem and commit to reducing their reliance on fossil fuels. But we have a voice too and should demand better from these companies and support sustainable ways out of this crisis. Our planet deserves our support in this, we are in this together and need to strive for a plastic-free future for all our sakes.

For links to articles referenced, please visit our website: <https://greenwestcott.org>

Nancy Lund



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FROM YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLORS



The last few months have been quite a busy time at MVDC. As I am sure you are aware, there is an ongoing crisis in local government financing across the country, with many councils going bankrupt and introducing sky high council tax rates which impact residents and local businesses. However, we are pleased to state that MVDC is nowhere near this level, with our budget delivering £1.8 million worth of savings while maintaining services from waste management, playgrounds, holiday activities, planning and much more that I know residents in our village rely on.

The Council has also unpaused the Mole Valley local plan which designates housing and development sites in order to meet housing targets. The local plan should be implemented later this year and ensures a minimum 40% affordable homes in all development sites, with development being carbon neutral and mandating increases in biodiversity. In Westcott, the land at Mill Way House, Bramley House and Heathcrest (Policy DS63) has been allocated for 15 flats to be built. Further information on the local plan can be

found at futuremolevalley.org.

We have been busy with public works around the village, alongside Hazel Watson, our County Councillor: including fixing the kerb stones by the bus lay-by near UNUM. We have also installed a new handrail on the sloped path from Springfield Rd to Cradhurst Commons, which should make walking there much easier!



Finally, Westcott has received 2 further grants through CIL funding: £7,500 to replace a solar powered vehicle activated sign with an electric one and £2,600 for works at Westcott Village Hall, following a recent fire safety assessment.

As always, if you have any concerns or need help with anything, do not hesitate to email us and just before signing off, remember to mark May 2nd in your calendars; that's local government election day so no matter who you support, it's always important to get your voice heard and vote!

Leah, Abhi and Chris

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