

The Welwyn Magazine

with Woolmer Green



October 2023

60p

The PARISH of WELWYN and WOOLMER GREEN

www.welwyn.org.uk

CHURCHES IN THE WELWYN TEAM MINISTRY

St Mary's Welwyn . St Michael's Woolmer Green . Ayot St Peter

All Saints Datchworth . St Peter's Tewin . St Giles Codicote

TEAM RECTOR

The Rev'd Canon Dr David Munchin, The Rectory, 2 Ottway Walk, Welwyn AL6 9AS.....rector@welwyn.org.uk

Not available on Fridays.....01438 714150

TEAM VICARS

The Rev'd Susannah Underwood, The Rectory, Brookbridge Lane, Datchworth SG3 4SU.....teamvicar@welwyn.org.uk

Responsible for Datchworth & Tewin. Not available on Tuesdays.....01438 817183

The Rev'd Canon Philip Waller, The Rectory, Bury Lane, Codicote SG4 8XX.....vicar@stgiles-church.org.uk

Responsible for Codicote. Not available on Saturdays.....01438 504318

ASSISTANT CURATES

The Rev'd Dr Christie Gilfeather, St Michael's House, 3 London Road, Woolmer Green SG3 6JU.....curate@welwyn.org.uk

Not available on Thursdays.....01438 561702

The Rev'd Ryan Gilfeather, St Michael's House, 3 London Road, Woolmer Green SG3 6JU.....curate@welwyn.org.uk

CHURCH OFFICE

Tina Hassan, Team Secretary.....secretary@welwyn.org.uk01438 840964

Opening Hours: Mondays and Tuesdays 9.00 am until 1.00 pm, and Fridays 9.00 am until 12 noon.

CHURCHWARDENS

Diane Jenkin (St Mary's Welwyn).....01438 840710

Stuart Westley (St Mary's Welwyn).....07921 568187

Vacant (St. Michael's Woolmer Green)

James Nall-Cain (Ayot St Peter)01582 831083

READERS

John Burnapp01438 717707

Colin Hull01438 813974

Usha Hull01438 813974

Catherine Jupp07811 255311

Michael Simmons01438 817510

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Robert Milner - Director of Music, St Mary's Welwyn.....milnerrobert1@me.com.....07540 847599

ORGANISTS

Penny Howes - St Michael's Woolmer Green.....01438 716742

Vacant - Ayot St Peter.....

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL SECRETARIES

David & Louise Hughes (Welwyn & Woolmer Green).....louise@elhughes37.plus.com.....

Richard Armstrong (Ayot St Peter)richa2002@hotmail.com.....01438 715823

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL TREASURERS

Maggie Varco (St Mary's Welwyn)margaret.varco@btinternet.com.....01438 715450

Simon Horne (Ayot St Peter).....ayotstpeterchurch@gmail.com.....

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PUBLISHERS

St Mary's and St Michael's
Churchwardens

COVER

"Apples" Rita McNeill

MAGAZINE ARTICLES

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EDITORS' NOTES

Please submit articles by the 1st of the month preceding publication. We aim to publish reports and articles that will be of interest to our local community. If you would like to suggest a theme or article please email: magazine@welwyn.org.uk

The Editors reserve the right to shorten or omit articles or refuse advertisements.

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The Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

October is a time when many of our churches have their Harvest Festival (1st October – St Mary's Welwyn, 8th October – St Michael's Woolmer Green). It is always a joyful occasion, but in the past 80 years has become an increasingly decorative and sometimes rather idealised one.

People have generally migrated to urban areas, and with mechanisation, a far smaller proportion of the workforce is involved in agriculture.

It may need to be taken with a pinch of salt (or something stronger) I know, but Clarkson's Farm highlighted the fact that farmers and agricultural workers are not at the top of the tree when it comes to rural decision making – people living in rural villages, are far more likely to be professionals, often working remotely and often retired.

However in the past year, partly as a result of Europe's grain basket sadly becoming a war zone, inflation has soared, and food inflation is more than average.

How we produce our food, where we produce our food, and how we can afford to feed a growing population has gone right up the political agenda.

Linked with this is of course issues of climate change – not only does agriculture significantly affect (for better or worse), the health of the planet – but extreme and unpredictable weather has also had a significant impact on crop production.

In a nutshell, food and certainly cheap food can no longer be taken for granted. So just as the various Harvest festivals (and in older calendars there was not just one, but three or four associated with different times in the agricultural year) in the past were a time of real prayer and concern, as well as simply being celebratory, so we now are having to think rather more seriously about what Harvest means. Of course, it will be a celebration and thanksgiving, but perhaps a more poignant one this year, one in which we are all made to think a little more about what and how we consume.

Yours



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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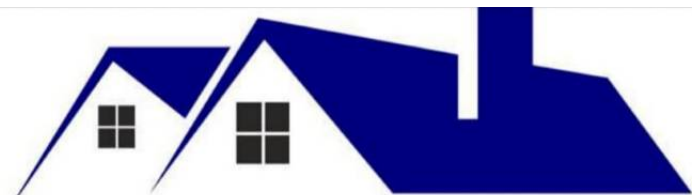
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Jessie the Rectory Dog

It's Harvest, as I always say, one of the few religious festivals which Labradors can really get on board for, because it's all about food.

Though perhaps there are rather too many green vegetables around the churches for us to get really enthusiastic about. Why can't we just decorate the church with meaty chunks, cakes and cheese? – after all let's not pretend that isn't what humans like too.



Harvest is rather an odd term as well, because with modern agriculture, I have seen that most of the combine harvesters have come and gone by the time we get to October. However autumn is the time that some of the most Labrador friendly crops are ripe – fruit and in particular – APPLES.... Apples are great because there are generally so many that no one can be bothered to pick them, and so when I'm out on my walks there are always plenty lying around on the ground. And a few hours later, it is me lying around on the ground because I have eaten rather too many...

Jess

Make a pledge

No, I am not asking for your money (although anything you can give to St Michael's or St Mary's to ameliorate the deficit would be most gratefully received!), and I'm not even asking for your time. I am asking you to think about the tiny things you could do to make the world a kinder, better, cleaner, more environmentally friendly place.

It doesn't have to be something difficult – how about “Pick up two bits of litter on my way to the shops”, or “I will give the shopkeeper a compliment and a smile”, or even “I will bite my tongue when I want to make a sharp comment about whatever”? Start each day with a pledge and see where it takes you. You might be surprised

Rita McNeil



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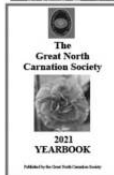
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Woolmer Green Parish Council

Despite all the planning for Village Day and Woollyfest the Parish Council continued with normal business in June and July but had a break from meeting in August. The Hall heating upgrade is complete and we hope will enable energy efficiencies to be made next winter. The £5,000 grant funding for this work is anticipated soon. The Parish Council is going to seek advice from a Hertfordshire County Council green space audit with a view to potential further tree planting and improvements to the Jolly Garden.

The Clerk has been following up with Hertfordshire County Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council for an update on when the puffin crossing may be installed on the B197 near the new shopping area (Kellard House) as this was always planned as part of the development. All the permissions have been confirmed as in place and hopefully the work can be done very soon.

The Parish Council also responded to the planning application in Knebworth for 200 homes south of Watton Road on a site that was included in the North Herts Local Plan. The plans include closing Swangley's Lane just past the school. It is a concern that the infrastructure for medical services, roads and schools is not adequate to cope with this increase in the population. The impact of closing Swangley's Lane could also result in increased traffic through the lanes around Woolmer Green and neighbouring villages.

Woolmer Green Allotments

We are lucky in Woolmer Green to have a lovely allotment site tucked behind the churchyard. The site has been fully let almost all of the time since it opened in April 2010 and we have an enthusiastic group of plot holders. August is the time of year when all the work pays off and we are picking fruit and vegetables to eat and give away. Some of the plot holders enjoyed a barbecue get-together on a Sunday in August and created the small produce display table pictured. If you are interested in having a plot then please email wgallo-ments@gmail.com for more information and put your name on our short waiting list.



Sarah Hall
Woolmer Green Parish Council
sarah.hall@woolmergreenpc.org.uk



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A new doctor in the house

You may not know, but while Christie was adjusting to her new life as Curate at Woolmer Green she was also finishing off her thesis on ‘Widows in the Old Testament’ This was the final hurdle to be crossed before she was awarded the distinction of a PhD.

Such was our confidence in Christie’s academic prowess, that when having our notice board refurbished earlier in the year we left a space after her name in which to fit the much deserved letters.

Last month we heard that her thesis had been accepted, so after our morning service we congratulated her and presented her with the necessary letters. We then adjourned to the notice board where, helped by husband Ryan, Christie stuck the long awaited qualification after her name. It all looks very impressive now that we have two PhD clergy persons on our ministry team.

Sue Keach





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Could you help stop animal cruelty?

The RSPCA reports that last year there were 194 reports of animal cruelty in Hertfordshire. This was a 22% increase on 2021, and well above the national average increase of 14%.

It is thought that the rise in pet ownership during the pandemic coupled with the cost-of-living increase has created an animal welfare crisis. The high demand for pets during lockdown led to more unscrupulous breeders who saw the opportunity to make a profit. Some animals the RSPCA rescues are former breeding stock that have been poorly treated, or puppies and kittens discarded for being unsaleable.



Animal cruelty is where an animal suffers as a result of a deliberate human act, for example being beaten or repeatedly subjected to a fearful situation. Neglect is where an animal is suffering because their needs are not being met, for example not being fed, not having vet treatment or being kept in a small cage. Neglect can be unintentional.

When the RSPCA attends a case of neglect, they will often negotiate for the animal to be legally transferred to their care for future rehoming, rather than proceed with a prosecution. Not far from us, a three-year-old mastiff cross named Buddy came into RSPCA care after he'd been burned by hot water and the owner had failed to get him to a vet. Buddy would have been in excruciating pain, but after months of rehabilitation he recovered and was adopted by a Baldock family.

If you are concerned about the welfare of an animal, you can get more information and make a report to the RSPCA. Herts police request that you contact RSPCA, not them, although they [work with the RSPCA to investigate animal cruelty](#).

The RSPCA website is www.rspca.org.uk or you can call their cruelty and neglect hotline 0300 1234 999. You can request that your name is withheld in any proceedings. In many cases of cruelty, it is the RSPCA that brings the prosecution, rather than the police. In 2021 the Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill increased the maximum sentence for the worst offenders from six months to five years in prison.

John Mitchell and Valerie Richards

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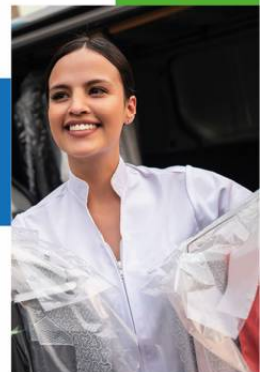
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Discoveries on the Mimram

It must be about a year ago when our programme secretary, Robin Cole, gave us a talk about what he had discovered on the Mimram. And, lucky us, here he is again because that was only the first part of the talk!

He has been really excited to have actually discovered something new – and on our river too!! So this second part of his talk is entitled:

Discovery of a Yellow May Dun

I'm afraid that, because it's all so new, I cannot tell you much about it. It is very exciting for us to be the very first people to have a talk about this river fly with a very peculiar name which has been found on the Mimram. I am aware though that river flies, and there are about 50 different species, are very important and give a good indication as to the health of our rivers. This has been on many people's minds recently. If we have this good population of river flies in our lovely Mimram there can't be too much wrong with it, one of the few chalk streams in the world.



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Herts at War - London Colney Airfield



The History of the Royal Flying Corps and US Air Corps at London Colney Airfield 1916-1919

Speaker Guy Thomas

Guy Thomas has a lifelong interest in Aviation Heritage and has written and published several aeronautical drawings and articles. He has recently developed an 'Aviation & Auto Heritage' website and as a Tour Guide with the RAF Museum, he has been researching the history of London Colney Airfield and the various squadrons that operated from the site.

As an employee with the University of Hertfordshire, he helped develop the Hatfield Aerodrome Heritage Trail and now provides guided tours of it.

The Talk: The presentation will cover the airfield's location, characters, the aircraft and incidents that occurred during a short period of four years of local aviation history in Hertfordshire during WW1.

Location: Welwyn Civic Centre

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Scouts autumn update 2023

1st Welwyn Scouts – going from strength to strength – but can you help?!

Yes, we now have approaching 90 boys and girls from 5-13 years old across beavers, cubs and scouts and a long waiting list!

So can you spare two hours a week to help in one of our sections?

We have helpers from their 20's to their '80's!

Here is why we need you!

Your youngsters joining us!

If you want your youngster to join 1st Welwyn, then register them with me at least 2 years before their 5th birthday, or they may not be able to join as a beaver, and the cub pack and scout troop are very full too.

Badges and awards

Our leaders are constantly increasing the range of activities and camps that they provide for our members. Each section has up to 50 badges which the youngsters can try for, appealing to the full range of “Skills for Life” which we aim to give them as they progress through the sections. These can range from outdoor skills, to artistic creations, to puzzles and challenges for the individual, or more than ever in their teams, the lodge, pack, or troop.

We see quiet insecure children gradually grow in self-confidence as they are encouraged by their leaders and their friends to take on more and more activities.

Camps

What starts with a few nights away as beavers, round a camp fire in the dark, looking up at the stars, progresses to weekends away as cubs. They recently to Brownsea Island, where Lord Baden Powel held his first experimental camp. They then can progress to a week long camp in East Anglia, the Peak District, the Lake District, the Wye Valley, and maybe eventually abroad.

As they leave us the 14-year-olds can move on to become Explorer Scouts from 14 to 18 years old, and Network for 18 to 25 years old, which are in Welwyn and WGC, but also at most of the universities around the country.



Continued on page 19

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Scouts autumn update 2023

Continued from page 47

Jamborees

The most recent World Jamboree hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons, but the leaders of our contingent took the necessary actions quickly to safeguard the youngsters in their care.

Scouts from the Group have attended Jamborees in America with 60,000 scouts from virtually every country of the world. They have also attended jamborees in South Africa (Explorer Scouts) and around Europe (our scout troops) and in the Far East, so your scouting can take you as far as you want in the world!

Duke of Edinburgh/Chief Scout Awards

The beavers, cubs and scouts can work towards either DoE or our own Chief Scout Awards, and can if they really stretch themselves, eventually qualify as a King's Scout, going to Windsor to be presented with their award by Bear Grylls and/or a member of the Royal family.

Bear Grylls – Chief World-Wide Scout

We cannot think of a better leader of our movement than Bear. He exemplifies all that we want our youngsters to look up to, not just his adventurous activities, but his moral and character traits. He wants youngsters to gain in confidence by facing challenges, both personal and physical, in a well-managed inspirational environment.



When we take the youngsters off site, if the terrain or tasks require an extra level of skill to show the youngsters canoeing, hill walking, archery, or abseiling, then either our leaders will take specialist skill training, or specialist leaders will join us to ensure the safety of all concerned.

Girls in the Movement

30% of our numbers is made up of girls of all ages in the range for which cater.

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Scouts autumn update 2023

Disabilities

We pride ourselves in adapting what we do to cope with visible and invisible disabilities, and it is rewarding when we see such youngsters tackling tasks that they thought were beyond them.

Scouting for All

We want to welcome through all youngsters, whatever their gender, ethnicity, and physical or mental capabilities.

I joined as a parent helper in 1988, when both of my sons came into scouting, I then became a leader and eventually scout leader in the mid nineties.



I then moved on, but returned to the Group in 2013 to run the major (£140k) refit of the hut, and I started the rebuild of the Group from the initial 18 youngsters

I have found my involvement with scouting inspirational, rewarding and fun

You cannot beat seeing the youngsters at weekly meetings or most of all at camps, gradually learning the “Skills for Life” and moving on to older scout sections and/or to other interests as they become more rounded and self-assured.

New helpers/trainee leaders

You will see from this article what I think we can offer an increasing number of local youngsters, but we can only do this by widening our team of 15 leaders and rotas of parent helpers.



Come and try out with us. We are a very friendly supportive fun-team of people.

You do not need to have been a scout or guide. We offer on the job and on-line training to build up your confidence and skill set. 18 to 80 year olds

are all welcome.

Andy Trotter
Chairman
1st Welwyn Scout Group
Mobile 07580942319

Problems of being a lefty

No, this is nothing to do with politics. Simply the problems of being left-handed in a right-handed world.

As a child, I had no idea I was a problem until I had my first cutlery set and my parents laid it for a left-hander. I was quite indignant and immediately changed the knife and fork round to eat right-handed saying I wasn't going to be different from everyone else. To this day, I always use my cutlery and crockery right-handed.

The next major hurdle came when I was about 9, soon after WW2 ended and I was sent briefly to one of my eight primary schools, who insisted on children writing in italics. Unfortunately, they only had pens for right-handers, so I painfully had to learn to write with my right hand – which I now only do in an emergency!!

I was always very keen on sport. Tennis, squash and table tennis I could play left-handed, but when I wanted to be in the hockey team, I had to play right-handed – which I did with vigour!

My father played the violin and encouraged me to learn so I could join an orchestra. Well, you couldn't have a left-handed fiddler in an orchestra, so I had to learn to play it right-handed. Then followed many happy sessions playing in a group.

When I was eighteen, I went for an interview at a Domestic Subjects Training college. The principal, a very stiff-lipped lady said, 'Oh dear, I see you are left-handed. How are you going to be able to demonstrate cookery? If I had been bold enough, I should have replied 'it's an advantage, because the pupils will see it as a mirror image'. However, I meekly promised I would be able to do demonstrations right-handed. To demonstrate sewing was much more difficult – especially when it came to smocking.

I was always very keen on painting, but, like writing, I do this left-handed.

Many years later, I wanted to learn to play golf, but ladies' clubs, especially for left-handers, were almost non-existent, so I had to play right-handed – or not at all. My father taught me to play and was always most encouraging. I couldn't hit the ball as far as most people, but made up for it with a very accurate short game and good putting.

So, to all left-handers, if you don't try to be right-handed for some things, you will inevitably be left out of lots of activities. As the years have gone by, I have had very few aches and pains and now wonder if it is because I have been largely ambidextrous, so never put a strain on one side of the body.

Daphne Skinner

Elizabeth and Sarah Ashby

In today's technological age, it is an easy matter to capture memories; click with a digital camera or even mobile phone and the scene is preserved. But of course it is only relatively recently that this has been possible.

At the end of the 1800s, such an idea would have seemed preposterous and the only way open for the vast majority to capture their memory would be through the medium of the picture postcard. A brief history is given below (Reproduced courtesy of Don Gillian (Copyright), www.stagebeauty.net)

Postcards, as distinct from letters, were first used in Austria from around 1869. The idea behind their introduction was to provide a cheap means for brief communications. Since postcards were lighter and more easily handled than letters, due to their standard size, they could be offered at a lower postal rate. They proved very popular with the public and were soon copied by other European countries, including Great Britain.

The postcard was first introduced to Great Britain in 1870. At first they were just plain unadorned cards, with the address to be written on one side and the message on the other, and could only be issued by the Post Office with a pre-printed 'stamp'. It was not until 1894 that the Post Office relinquished its monopoly on the publishing of postcards, and allowed their private publication for use with an adhesive stamp as proof that postage had been paid. This led the way to the widespread introduction of illustrated postcards, but since the Post Office still insisted that one side be used for the address only, the size of any illustration was limited by the need to reserve at least some space on which to write the message. Picture postcards of this type might allow space for only the very briefest of messages. Because of this, and the poor range of subject matter (mainly limited to seaside and city views), picture postcards did not immediately become a big success.

The major change that allowed the introduction of picture postcards as we still know them today came about in 1902 when the Post Office gave the green light to the divided back postcard (a British innovation). On this kind of card, the message and the address are contained on one side of the card, usually with a dividing line down the centre, thereby freeing up the whole of the other side of the card on which the publishers could print a full-size photo or artwork. Many early photographic cards were printed in Germany since photo-reproduction was more advanced there than elsewhere on the continent. This simple innovation of the divided back card led to a massive proliferation of the types of cards available as the publishers explored different subject matter, from places to people, and cartoons to fine art. From then on, postcards exploded in popularity, and they quickly became the standard medium for transmitting short messages, often as a precursor to a full letter. They were cheap and reliable, and could be used to set up appointments with just one day's notice. They also became collectors' items.

Elizabeth and Sarah Ashby (continued)

People bought them to keep as souvenirs and exchange with friends as relatives, so that the card itself often became the reason for the communication as well as the means of its carriage.

Many producers of picture postcards appeared, some supplying cards depicting scenes from all over the country. Probably the most famous of these was Francis Frith, whose archive of photographs is recognised as a highly valuable historic resource.

The Frith Archive covers the periods from 1860 to 1910 when the primary business was purely selling photographs and from 1910 to 1970 when the business evolved into mainly publishing postcards.

The company closed in 1970, upon retirement of the owners but the archive has been preserved.

Many other companies produced postcards, some small and very local. Such a company was run in Welwyn High Street by Elizabeth and Sarah Ashby



Elizabeth and Sarah Ashby's shop 1904 from a postcard by Storeys of Baldock

Elizabeth, born 1873 and her sister Sarah, born 1875, were born in Welwyn, the daughters of William Ashby who worked as a Manager or Bailiff on various local farms, ending up in 1901 as the Estate Steward for George Dering on Lockley's Farm. Interestingly he is also listed in the 1911 Census as 'Tenant of Welwyn Gas Works'.

Elizabeth and Sarah were clearly businesswomen, trading in their High Street shop as a 'Stationers and Fancy Repository'. It seems they may have taken over this business from the previous owner, a Miss Emma Lawrence who is listed as also running a 'Fancy Repository' in the building around 1881. The business appears in Trade Directories from 1895 to 1922. It had certainly ceased to be Ashbys by 1926 when Sydney Adams is listed as trading as a Stationer here (Sydney was also the landlord of the Wellington).

Elizabeth and Sarah Ashby (continued)

Continued from page 23

Initially the owners are listed as both Elizabeth and Sarah, but by 1906 only Elizabeth is listed. It seems that in 1875 Sarah married and left the area—she married a James Royle, apparently an outfitter.

The sisters published some charming local scenes as shown in the examples here. The Society holds copies of some, the earliest dating from 1905. Early examples are reproductions of hand coloured prints, in colour as well as black and white. Later cards appear to be reproductions of actual photographs.



Above:
An Ashby card posted in 1905—the
original QVM Cottage Hospital



On the left: St. Mary's School, from
an Ashby card posted in 1908

However, the early cards cannot be taken as 100% faithful representations of the scenes, perhaps understandably. A fine example of this artistic licence is seen in the view of the Codicote Road.

This view of the Codicote Road is one of the most common used on postcards from various publishers. But no other card, even published by the Ashbys, shows the rustic thatched building to the left of the picture. Nor, it should be said, are the trees in the centre of the picture quite so well developed in any other view.



Paul Jiggins



Codicote **Food BANK**

Foodbanks have seen a prolific increase in the number of people asking for support. People struggling with the cost of living and energy crisis, lack of access to public funds and just not enough money to make ends meet. People are going to bed hungry.

Codicote Foodbank was set up in April 2020 to meet the needs of residents during the Covid Pandemic. At that time, it was not expected to be a long-term project. Yet here we are 3.5 years later with demand increasing. We have expanded to cover the local villages surrounding Codicote, providing food parcels to circa 50 families (100 people) weekly. The service runs entirely on the commitment of around 25 volunteers covering a range of tasks.

Our food supply chain used to be based on food donations and a small financial spend. In August 2023, our monthly spend was over £2000, food donations received were about 250kg. Every week we deliver over 300kgs of food.

We are funded in the main from private monthly donations to our "Community Donation Club" which raises approximately £1000/month. The rest is from charitable donations, local businesses and NHDC and parish council grants.

It costs just £5.00 to provide emergency food parcels to 1 person for a month. If you would like support us, a small regular donation to our bank account would be gratefully appreciated. "Every little helps".

Thank you. We couldn't survive without the support of the local community.

Codicote Foodbank

55-50-44 72593482

For information about how we can help with food parcels

<https://www.facebook.com/codicotefoodbank/>



2023 Welwyn Festival Charity Donations

The 2023 Welwyn Festival hosted its charity cheque presentation on Wednesday 9 August at the Welwyn Sports and Social Club.

The Community raised over £16,000 for local charities - The 2023 Welwyn 10K run broke all records and gave the charity fund a whopping £8,810, so a huge thanks to our sponsors, local businesses and everyone who supported the Festival this year.

Here's a list of the charities and amounts distributed so far (more is given out during the year):

SERV Herts	£2000
Herts Young Homeless	£2000
Digswell Riding for Disabled	£1000
Herts Air Ambulance	£2000
Defibrillators in Public Places	£1000
Tenterfield Garden Project	£1000
Digswell Community Café	£500
Herts MIND Network	£1000
Making Life Beautiful	£500
Community Portable Defib.	£750
Codicote Food Bank	£500
St Mary's/St Michaels Food Tables	£600

Other organisations who benefitted this year were Oaklands School Choir £400, and a new hot water boiler for hot drinks for St Mary's Church.

The Andy Trotter Award of £600 went towards the St Mary's/St Michael's church food tables.

Paul Jiggins of the Photographic Society kindly videoed the event.

Opal Reid

2023 Welwyn Festival Charity recipients



Codicote Foodbank with
Andy Trotter

Tenterfield Nursery with Catherine Farrell



Crane & Staples (sponsors)
Herts MIND Network with
Catherine Farrell

Welwyn Parish Council



A full English breakfast courtesy of the Digswell residents breakfast club was a fine start to a warm Saturday at the beginning of September. A lively discussion followed the food with topics including the removal of the chicanes on the Hertford Road, Digswell's new 20mph limit on most residential roads, aerated concrete in schools (thankfully not in Digswell). Our MP, The Rt Hon Grant Shapps, at the time of writing this is the Defence Secretary. Despite being a tad busy at the moment he has taken the time to hand write a two page letter to a 106 year old resident in Digswell.

Following this and feeling in the need of some exercise I took our red setters for a walk around Welwyn. Starting from the Whitehill carpark, the dogs (Brunel and Bernoulli) were not that interested in the new Welwyn Parish Council notice board at the foot of the steps but were eager for a run in the adjacent wildflower meadow which is maintained by the Parish Council and is looking very pretty at this time of year. Looping up and around the tennis courts we swung down to the playing fields, the girls now on leads of course, and watched the last game of cricket for this season being played between Welwyn Garden City CC 3rd team and Watton at Stone CC 1st XI, on an immaculate wicket, prepared by our Head Groundsman, John.

With the start of the football season upon us there will be a quick change to get the football pitches marked up ready for Welwyn Sports and Social Clubs Blue & Green Vets' (over 35) teams on Saturday games mornings. There will now also be football on Sundays with Watton ladies' Football club booking the WPC football pitches at Ottaway Walk as their new home ground. If you'd like to go and support them, their next games in October are Sunday 8th and Sunday 29th with kick off at 2.00pm. We understand that they are looking for players, to get involved contact them at www.wattonladiesfc.co.uk.

Taking a wander over to the recreation area it was lovely to see so many young families using the play equipment, particularly the "spider" climbing frame – as the oldest piece of equipment there the Parish Council has recently treated it to a repaint. The team who rubbed it down to bare metal reported the numerous layers and colours that had been used over the years. It's now blue and red, I'm pretty sure though that when I was hanging upside down from it 50 years ago it was red and green with yellow eyes !!

Welwyn Parish Council

Walking down Welwyn Hill the dogs stopped at the White Hart for a bowl of water in the sunshine on the patio before moving on to inspect and sniff the planters in the High Street. The planters were put in by Hertfordshire Highways to restrict the road width and are required for the 20-mph zone. The shrubs within the planters are looked after by the council and look great. Unfortunately, where the planters get nudged by cars they get knocked off of their paving slab supports. They bunch together and can't easily be moved which makes them a little unsightly. In the first place they are not a very good design but I'm sure that at the Parish Council can come up with a solution.

Heading on towards Singlers Marsh the girls strain on their leads and unexpectedly take a right turn up Church Street. I wonder if they are taking me to the fernery in Danesbury but I soon get the answer as they enter the Rose and Crown and sit down looking at the Mini Cheddars – duly purchased and enjoyed by the dogs in the beer garden – along with a pint for their thirsty owner.

Alex Bardett

01438 716667

office@welwynpc.org.uk

<https://welwyn-pc.gov.uk/>

Parish Registers

St Mary's Welwyn

Baptisms:

20th August Wilfred Terence Brede

20th August Betty Florence Brede

Last month the above was incorrectly reported as having occurred in July.

Wedding:

7th August Charlie Turner & Kayleigh-Marie Young

Funerals:

31st August Elizabeth Ann Brown (Harwood Park Crematorium)

Sherrards house and Ayot St Peter church

Sherrards stands along Rectory Road, opposite the Red Lion on the B197. The house, originally in Welwyn, is now in Welwyn Garden City, but has a long association with Ayot St Peter church. A glance at an old map shows that, before the motorway was built and Homerswood Lane truncated, our church was the closest one to Sherrards, and thus many people associated with the house were members of our congregation.



Sherrards was built around 1861 and was in use as a private residence by 1865. The connection with our church began in 1867 when the Wills family arrived - William Henry Wills, his wife Janet (née Chambers) and William's much younger brother, Frederick. William was Charles Dickens' editor and also his friend. Janet was part of the Chambers publishing family, and a popular hostess. The three Wills are remembered in stained glass windows in our church and are buried in our old churchyard.

Janet moved to London after she was widowed in 1880, and the next family to live in Sherrards were Robert Drummond Balfour and his wife Catherine Elizabeth, who featured in the June issue of this magazine. Their nephew is buried in our old churchyard. Catherine moved to Harmer Green when she was widowed in 1915. The next occupants of Sherrards were James Gray-Hill, a retired East India merchant, and his wife Christina. James Gray-Hill and his daughter, Rosalind Trench-Watson, are buried in our new churchyard.

After James Gray-Hill died in 1933, the house became a woodwork instruction centre for the de Havilland aircraft company. Interestingly, it has only recently come to light that from 1939 to 1941 Sherrards was used as a secret refuge for Jewish boys who had been brought to England via the Kindertransport to escape the holocaust. After that it was taken over by the RAF.



Sherrards House in war time.
Photo from the school prospectus May 1945

In 1956, Sherrards was purchased by the charity now called Scope as a training

continued on page32

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Sherrards house and Ayot St Peter church

Continued from page 30

centre for adults with cerebral palsy. In 1997 the property was extended, converted into several homes and renamed Sherrards Mansion.

Back to the present day, we are greatly honoured that The Right Reverend Dr Alan Smith, the Bishop of St Albans, will be taking morning service at our church on Sunday 8 October at the usual time of 11.15am. Do come to meet him if you can!

Valerie Richards

Mardley Heath WI Garden Visit

Waterend End House in Wheathampstead was our first visit. The weather was sunny which was a surprise this summer!

Our first glimpse of the garden was seeing a large oval pond with fountains overlooked by the wonderful Jacobean house. There were many mature trees such as yews and acers and several herbaceous borders, beautifully designed and containing a variety of flowers.



Waterend House Garden is part of the RHS Charity Gardens Scheme and is open for pre-booked tours.

The second visit was our August meeting which was held on a member's beautiful lawn. The committee (with several volunteers) had erected gazebos to keep us out of the sun (which surprisingly shone again on us!). We wandered around the delightful garden and admired an incredible vegetable plot. We have never seen such tall runner beans.

The second part of the meeting was an afternoon tea followed by garden games with plenty of laughter and friendship.

Most meetings are held at Oaklands School on the third Thursday evening of the month. Email us at mardleyheathwi@gmail.com if you are interested in joining our group. You would be most welcome.

Joyce Norfolk



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Friends of Danesbury and QVM

In our article last month we explained something of the history of the two hospitals we have in our midst and what happens in them.

I thought you might like to know a little more. Patients at the Danesbury hospital suffer from a range of neurological conditions, many are young and as I am sure you can imagine, have been devastated by what has happened to them. Although both the hospitals are part of the Herts Community NHS Trust funding is always an issue, so during the summer the trustees of the Friends of Danesbury and the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital charity have been busy reviewing funding requests from doctors and other clinicians at the hospitals, ensuring that the revenue from our high street shop is used for the benefit of patients.

The trustees agreed to fund several computerised GripAble gaming devices which the senior occupational therapist at Danesbury explained could be used independently so that therapists could attend to other patients. These were fun for patients to use and helped with upper body and mental co-ordination. They cost approximately £3000 and could not have been funded out of the NHS budget.

Similarly, the lead physiotherapist explained that the Community Neurological team who run out-patient clinics and provide community home visits within North & East Herts have a loan service for standing frames. These help patients with multiple sclerosis who cannot stand independently because of weakness or balance issues and who often develop disabling complications because of immobility such as muscle weakness, spasms or pain. Some of these complications can be prevented, slowed down or even reversed with regular standing facilitated by standing frames. The Community team had run out of stock and wanted to buy two more at a cost of approximated £2400, a sum which would have wiped out the Team's whole annual budget. The trustees agreed.

In the Queen Victoria Memorial hospital where patients come for rehabilitation after stays in the Lister and other acute hospitals, the Trustees have recently agreed



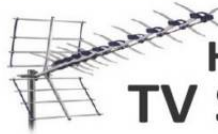
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to fund individual TVs for all patients ,including those in the new two bedded bariatric ward where they will need to be put on trolleys.

On a lighter note, we were most grateful to Councillor Terry Douris, the chairman of Hertfordshire County Council, who paid the two hospitals a visit in August and was given a guided tour by Tony Stowe, a longstanding trustee of the charity. The Chairman met several members of the clinical teams and seemed impressed by the facilities and rehabilitation on offer.

Please note we have our AGM on Thursday 19th October at 5:30pm at the Danesbury Neurological Centre. All appropriate notices will be issued soon but please keep the date now – we will be delighted to see you. In the meantime please do continue to support our very worthwhile charity.

Jennifer Fowler

Friends of Danesbury and QVM

Editor’s note. I consulted Google to find out what Gripable is:

“GripAble is a two-in-one assessment and training device to help people with impaired upper limb movement.

GripAble is used by neurological, paediatric and MSK therapists in both therapy and community settings.

The handheld device connects to an app on a tablet and tracks four key hand movements – grip and release, wrist extension / flexion, radial / ulnar deviation and pronation / supination, together with repetitions, and minutes of training.

The device is highly sensitive and can be used by most people, even those with limited grip or movement. Easy to set up, GripAble can be calibrated and personalised to each user’s ability, with real-time feedback to help build motivation and engagement”




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Saturday Lunchtime concerts

The new season of chamber music recitals at St Mary's got underway on 9 September with an amazing concert by two Ukrainian artists – Alla Kravchuk (soprano) and Oksana Germanchuk (piano). Alla was a soloist with the Hannover State Opera for over 10 years, appearing at the Edinburgh International Festival and opera houses throughout Germany. Oksana came to England in 2022 as a refugee. The church was packed for a highly professional and emotional event.

The Cambridge Chamber Ensemble return on 14 October to play piano trios by Haydn and Mozart, plus a selection of 'Palm Court favourites' to end their programme.

The 'Second Saturday Recitals' at St Mary's are free concerts and now attract audiences of 100 or more. They are the brainchild of Stephen Foster, a Welwyn resident since 1999. As a teenager, Stephen led the City of Oxford Youth Orchestra and was in the National Youth Orchestra. Rather than taking up a place at the Royal Academy of Music he went to Oxford University to study science, before joining the 'Sunday Times' and then running his own management consulting business. As a result he left his violin aside for over 25 years before undergoing a violinistic 'rehab' in his 50's and establishing the Cambridge Chamber Ensemble in 2008.



Anastasia Matkovskaia was born in Odessa (where she still has three grandparents) and, as a prodigiously talented young pianist, trained at the Moscow Conservatoire before coming to the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she graduated with the highest honours.

Dietrich Bethge studied the cello with William Pleeth (teacher of Jacqueline du Pre) and read Law at Christ Church, Oxford before deciding to make his life in music. He has had a distinguished career as a professional cellist, including over 30 years as co-principal cellist of the world famous English Chamber Orchestra, making recordings with Daniel Barenboim, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Benjamin Britten and many other world-class artists.



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KATE WHITELAND BSc (Hons) MSc MMACP MCSP

Member of the Health Professions Council

The Therapy Rooms, Natural Health,

36 Wigmores North, Welwyn Garden City,

Herts AL8 6PH

Peter Scoats

Carpentry

&

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01438 715986

07962 318840

scoats007@gmail.com

Isabel hospice shop

Local charity, Isabel Hospice has opened a new shop, dedicated to women's pre-loved fashion, located on Welwyn Village Highstreet, on the former site of the much-loved shop Susu.

The exciting new addition, called 'Always Loved by Isabel Hospice', is a step away from the 'traditional' charity shop and focuses on affordable, sustainable fashion in a boutique environment. The shop sells high end, quality women's clothing and accessories, whilst raising vital funds for the palliative care the hospice provides to the local community.



Isabel Hospice's Head of Retail & Marketing, Charlotte Greenwood, commented on the opening, "We are so excited to launch our new shop to the people of Welwyn. The pre-loved fashion market is experiencing a surge and it has become fashionable to shop second hand. It is great that shoppers are changing their mindset and becoming more mindful of the effects of fast fashion on the environment."

We do need the community's support in donations to help us keep the new shop fully stocked so if you've been meaning to have a wardrobe clear out, then now is your chance to donate those items to us and really make a difference. You can drop your donations off at the new shop, open Monday to Saturday, 9-5pm, and don't forget to Giftaid it!

As a charity, Isabel Hospice also relies heavily on volunteers to support the running of Isabel's shops. Even giving 2 hours on an ad-hoc basis, or a morning or afternoon of your time each week benefits the charity immensely.

If you have an interest in retail, fashion, and sustainable shopping, get in touch today. Email volunteer.office@isabelhospice.org.uk, or call 01707 382500, option 4.

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In conversation with Beth Bates

Looking back over a very varied career which included a pathology lab technician, histology technician, biology teacher, deputy-head, acting head during the closing of Heronswood School, working with children as a social work assistant, Beth Bates says the most exciting was working in the post-mortem room at St Tydfil Hospital in Merthyr Tydfil.



“I left Cyfarthfa Castle Grammar School at sixteen because my father's grocery business had been taken over by a supermarket. Along with five boys I started training as a lab technician at the brand new laboratory attached to the old St Tydfil

Hospital,” (one of those boys was Clive Bates who became her husband). “It was 1954 and we were the first cohort, taught by a pathologist who was Scottish and a chief technician from Yorkshire, both of whom found difficulty in understanding our English with its Welsh lilt and phrases.

“I had loved sciences at school, but the challenge on day one was real... to test five bottles of urine for sugar and protein using chemical tests and then a centrifuge to look at deposits under a microscope. If we confused the bottles it could mean grave consequences for the patients.” Beth thrived with this work and studied haematology, biochemistry and bacteriology at evening classes at Cardiff Royal Infirmary.

“I then got further qualifications by studying histopathological techniques to gain my HND, while working my way up to senior lab technician. But my real love was anatomy and physiology, and life as histology technician in the post-mortem room was every bit as exciting as *Silent Witness*. My job involved cutting tissues which the pathologist took from post-mortems or the surgeon took from operations for the pathologist to study under the microscope.

“For example, following a fight in a factory a 17 year old boy was fatally stabbed in the heart with a stiletto knife. Obviously the police were involved, Our task

Continued on page 44



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In conversation with Beth Bates

Continued from page 42

was to look for the pin-prick in the heart which had caused the fatal bleeding, if we couldn't find it the police would not be able to prosecute. But we did succeed, finally, while the Coroners Officer had haunted our department for days. Sadly as well as murders we had to deal with many suicides, to make sure there had been no foul play." Beth was obviously never squeamish: "People would jump off high buildings with nasty results."

"Once we had a unqualified doctor, posing as a GP who had signed many death certificates, so that meant many exhumations, and it was just as shown in TV dramas, under a large tent at dawn. After six month's burial the smell was awful. Despite putting Dettol inside our masks, the smell clung to our bodies and clothes afterwards. I was there with jars and formalin, which is a preservative. Once again the police were endlessly asking how much longer would we be. Eventually the bogus GP went to prison."

In 1966 life changed, Clive got a job with Smith Kline and with their two sons the family moved to Welwyn Garden City where their daughter Sian was born. They stayed here for the next thirty years, Beth retrained to teach biology, and there's a whole other chapter here with more anecdotes. Needless to say there are many people in Welwyn Garden City who remember Mrs Bates as their teacher, their head of science at Heronswood School, their deputy head at Sir John Newsome School, or perhaps even as the teacher who taught them about contraception or the danger of drugs. When Beth worked with Social Services as Social Work Assistant other people might have a childhood memory of the lady with the lovely big Mercedes, who took them on access visits to their parent or to court. This was her last job. Finally after seven year's retirement in the North East where their son Steve was coach for Newcastle Falcons, Beth and Clive returned to settle in Welwyn where Beth now lives alone but with her daughter and family nearby.

Vernonne Allan

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Church Notice Board

ST MARY'S - Welwyn www.welwyn.org.uk

Sunday	8.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday	9.30 am	Parish Communion / Junior Church
Sunday	6.30 pm	Evensong (2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays)
Wednesday	9.00 am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday	9.30 am	Holy Communion
Saturday	9.00 am	Parish Prayers

Confessions By arrangement with the Clergy.

The Ministry of Counsel and Absolution is available to anyone who seeks it at any time.

Clergy Surgery Hour

Saturdays 10.00 am to 11.00 am

A member of the team will be available in church for any enquiries. Mainly intended for Baptisms or Weddings, but not exclusively restricted to those matters.

ST MICHAEL'S - Woolmer Green www.stmichaels-wg.org.uk

Sunday	11.15 am
1st and 4th Sundays	Parish Eucharist:
2nd Sunday	Family Service
3rd Sunday	All Age Eucharist
5th Sunday	Morning Prayer

AYOT ST PETER www.ayotstpeter.com

1st Sunday	11.15 am	Matins: (<i>Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible</i>)
2nd and 5th Sundays	11.15 am	Holy Communion: (<i>Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible</i>)
3rd Sunday	11.15 am	Family Service: (<i>Common Worship, NRSV Bible</i>)
4th Sunday	11.15 am	Parish Communion: (<i>Common Worship, NRSV Bible</i>)

EVANGELICAL CHURCH - Welwyn www.welwyn-evangelical.org.uk

Sunday	9.45 am	Bible Classes (All ages 7+)
Sunday	11.00 am and 6.30 pm	(Facilities for young children)
Wednesday	7.30 pm	Bible Study (except 3rd Wednesday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH of the HOLY FAMILY - Knightsfield, Welwyn Garden City

Fr Norbert Ferbandes T: 01707 323234 www.wgc-catholics.org.uk

DIGSWELL VILLAGE CHURCH www.digswellvillagechurch.org.uk

Methodist/Anglican LUG	T: 01438 510391
1st and 3rd Sundays	11.00 am Methodist (1st Holy Communion)
2nd Sunday	11.00 am Anglican
4th Sunday	11.00 am Family Service
5th Sunday	11.00 am alternate Methodist/Anglican

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Meditation The Greatest Gift

A hint for today's Wordle was the stereotypical "good" answer to the question, "if you had one wish, what would you wish for?". The answer was PEACE. There appears to be common agreement that peace is something to be strived for and desired – above health, wealth, happiness and riches.

The US National Peace Academy promotes active and transformative learning and pursuit of peace in five spheres – personal (managing our internal conflicts, attitudes, and emotions); social (friendship and harmony with others), political (diverse groups collectively cooperating with each other); institutional (governments promoting justice, mercy and compassion); and ecological whereby we establish right relationships with the Earth and its ecosystems of which we are a part and on which our survival and quality of life depend. Contact, communication, cooperation and conciliation are key.

Many people strive for inner peace – through self-reflection, meditation, or religion. If Christians rely on a "good Shepherd" to provide for, protect and guide them, it allows them to be content in all situations, freeing them from the need to promote, justify and protect themselves, and enabling them to value and serve others. Jesus promises that it is the meek (not the grasping, greedy, warmongering or power-hungry) that will inherit the earth whilst, interestingly, the Lord's prayer can act as a template for finding inner peace.

Peace does not mean being in a place where there is no trouble, need or adversity. True peace is not situational and does not rely on others. It is a place of security and freedom where we can live within all the trials and tribulations of life whilst remaining calm, thankful and content whatever the situation; can support and promote others; are free of anxiety, fear and jealousy; and can be generous to others with our words, time, actions and possessions.

Liz Tillson

Bell Tower Secretary.....	John Williams	01438 715679
Book Stall.....	Pat Brooks.....	01438 715811
Christian Aid.....	Vernonne Allan.....	07710 271896
Church Bookings (inc Ayot St Peter)	Church Office	01438 840964
Church Fabric	Stuart Jenkin	07958 230007
Church House Manager.....	Stuart Westley	07921 568187
Coffee Rota (St Mary's Welwyn, Sundays).....	Vernonne Allan.....	01438 716732
Electoral Roll Officer.....	Diane Jenkin.....	01438 840710
Fair Trade	Maggie Varco	01438 715450
Fellowship	Marcia Khan.....	01438 716625
Flowers (St Mary's Welwyn).....	Jenny Wiseman.....	01438 715426
Gift Aid Secretary.....	Maggie Varco	01438 715450
Giving Action Group.....	Geoff Cummings	01438 820271
Hand Bells (Arpeggios).....	Pauline Anderson.....	p.anderson390@btintnet.com... 01438 716783
Play and Praise.....	Susan Wray.....	01438 715187
Sacristan.....	Linda Dobbs.....	07817 933352
Sidespersons' Rota.....	Elizabeth & Martin Browne.....	01438 716359
Sunday Notices (by <i>midday Tuesday</i>)	Tina Hassan	01438 840964
The Big Breakfast.....	Jim Read.....	jimread55@gmail.com.....01438 714 111
The Junior Choir.....	Robert Milner.....	07540 847599
Time for God Group.....	Mavis Francis.....	01438 487851
Verger.....	Nikki Lewis.....	
Welcome Team.....	Jenny Wiseman.....	01438 715426

SCHOOLS

Welwyn St Mary's C.E. Primary School.....	15 London Road, Welwyn AL6 9DJ	01438 714169
<i>Head teacher - Mr Stuart Whiteland</i>		
Woolmer Green St Michael's Primary School.....	London Road, Woolmer Green SG3 6JP.....	01438 813267
<i>Head teacher - Mrs Jan Martin</i>		
Oaklands JMI School.....	Great North Road, Oaklands, Welwyn AL6 0PX	01438 715278
<i>Head teacher - Mr Tom Hassan</i>		
Tenterfield Nursery School and Children's Centre.....	London Road, Welwyn AL6 9JF.....	01438 714564
<i>Head teacher - Mrs Vicky Beare</i>		

WELWYN MAGAZINE e:mail: magazine@welwyn.org.uk

All articles and information for the magazine to be e:mailed to the magazine address above or placed in the 'Magazine' pigeon hole in St Mary's Church. Publishers are the Churchwardens.

Editorial Team	Daphne Skinner	01438 715672
	Evelyne Welch	07977 069454
	Joyce Davis.....	01438 717567
	Nita Gowans.....	01438 717609
	Peter Branchflower.....	01438 717965
	Rita McNeill.....	01438 880488
	Tony Keach.....	01438 716657
	Vernonne Allan.....	01438 716732
	Helen Thompsett.....	adverts@welwyn.org.uk.....
	Rita McNeill.....	01438 880488
Treasurer	Tony Keach.....	01438 716657

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - October 2023

4th	2.00pm	Welwyn Floral Group	Garden in the Sky - Arnaud Metairie <i>joycefurssedonn7@virginmedia.com</i>	Civic Centre Welwyn
8th	10.00am / 1.30pm	Welwyn Craft and Farmers Market	Craft and Farmers Market <i>clerk@welwynpc.org.uk - 01438 716667</i>	Civic Centre Welwyn
10th & 24th	11.00am / 2.00pm	Dementia Friendly Community Cafe	Dementia Friendly Community Cafe <i>Contact: Jane Andrews 01707 240 650 jane.andrews@homeinstead.co.uk</i>	Digswell Hall 30 Harner Green Lane, Welwyn
10th	2.30pm	Fellowship St Mary's Welwyn	Israel-Palestine talk - Will there ever be peace? Bob Niven <i>marcia.khan.emk@gmail.com</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn
12th	8.00pm	Garden Club Welwyn	<i>Ancient Woodland and Trees tonycoxall25@gmail.com</i>	Civic Centre, Main Hall Welwyn
14th	12 noon	St Mary's Church Welwyn	Second Saturday Recital <i>See page 38 for details</i>	St Mary's Church Welwyn
15th	11.00am	Rubbish Action Group Welwyn	Rubbish Action Group Collection <i>Contact: Sarah Butcher 07885 875977 welwynrubbishactiongroup@gmail.com</i>	Car Park opposite Welwyn Drs Surgery
19th	10.00am	Danesbury Fernery and Nature Reserve Work Group	Fernery: gardening and maintenance Nature Reserve: clearing and habitat Mgmt <i>chairman@danburyfernery.org.uk</i>	Nature Reserve, Fernery Field (top North Ride) Welwyn
19th	7.30pm	W.I Mardley Heath	Good News/Bad News - Reflections of a News Correspondent - Bill Hamilton <i>Jean Stephens 01438 714693 mardleyheathwi@gmail.com</i>	Oaklands Primary School Welwyn
19th	7.30pm	W.I Digswell	The Story of English Almshouses - Simon Smith <i>kate.stabler@talktalk.net</i>	Village Hall Digswell
19th	7.30pm	Herts at War	The History of the Royal flying Corps and US Air Corps at London Colney Airfield	Civic Centre Welwyn
22nd	9.00am	Village Market Woolmer Green	Food and Craft Village Market <i>https://www.facebook.com/ farmersmarketwoolmergreen/</i>	Village Hall Woolmer Green
25th	8.00 pm	Welwyn Natural History Society	<i>watson.winfield @btopenworld.com</i>	Civic Centre Welwyn
Tuesdays	10.00am / 12 noon	Community Cafe	<i>Contact: Liz Hesketh 07825 093855</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn
2nd Weds of month	2.30pm/ 3.45pm	Afternoon Book Club	<i>Contact: Joan Spruce 01438 840821</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn
Thursdays	2.00pm/ 3.00pm	Arpeggio Bell Ringers	<i>Contact: Paulline Anderson 01438 716783</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn
Thursdays	7.00pm / 10.00pm	Welwyn Bridge Club	<i>Contact: Cheri Pemberton 01438 360522</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn
Saturdays	10.00am / 11.30am	Fairtrade Cafe	<i>Contact: Maggie Varco 01438 715450</i>	St Mary's Church House Welwyn