

# The Welwyn Magazine

with Woolmer Green



**April 2023**

*60p*

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**April 2023**

## PUBLISHERS

St Mary's and St Michael's  
Churchwardens

## COVER

St Giles Codicote - with sheep!  
by Rita McNeill

## MAGAZINE ARTICLES

Send by 1st of preceding month.  
Include your contact details.  
email: [magazine@welwyn.org.uk](mailto:magazine@welwyn.org.uk)

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Monthly hard copy deliveries  
arranged by Jane Carr and  
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## EDITOR'S NOTES

**Articles by the 1st of the month preceding  
publication, see details below.**

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:

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# The Rector's Letter

## Dear Friends

As I was pondering what to write in this letter, Lent was only a week in (and having my annual abstinence from alcohol always puts me in a slightly downbeat mood) and my thoughts were rather sombre. As I sat down to write, I realise that of course this is the 'Easter edition' – and everyone will want something fluffy about bunnies, eggs and spring. So, I thought I'd write about sin.



Perhaps also at the top of my thoughts was the sad year anniversary of the conflict in Ukraine – and for those who think I don't care enough about other conflicts, nothing could be less true – a lot of the rest of the world is just as bleak.

Sin is of course an unfashionable word. I read once in a Zadie Smith novel of a character who said the word he dreaded hearing most to describe his behaviour was 'inappropriate' – which does sound like a distinct watering down. But sin simply means the wrong, unkind, selfish things which human beings undoubtedly do – most of us, each day. Lent is a time when we are honest about that. The great propaganda victory of evil is convincing us that sin is somehow fun – plenty of advertisers describe sex, drink and food as 'naughty but nice' – sinful as a synonym for fun. Let's be clear the bible understands entirely that sex, food and drink (and other things) are great. Of course you can overindulge, but Jesus consistently talks of heaven as a huge banquet – a big night out with friends. The truth is that sin, and the pictures of conflicts around the world show us this all too graphically, is bleak, boring and terrifying – it is no fun.

So to Easter – Easter is the victory of good over evil, of life over death, of love over hate – Lent may be sombre because it reminds us of the starkness of the reality of sin, but Easter by contrast, should be fun and exuberant, because ultimately life, good and love win out – that's cause for celebration, even a banquet.

David

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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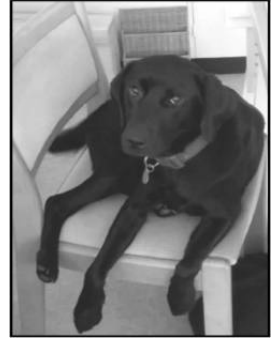
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## JESSIE THE RECTORY DOG

I normally refrain from political comments, as I know that I hold undue influence over the voters of Welwyn, and should not abuse that unelected, though not unmerited, power. However for the past few days I have been making my 'We Love You Rishi' poster, working out my 'Come on Rishi' cheer leaders' dance, and making myself a 'Rishi for Prime Minister – oh you already are' outfit.



Let us support this titan amongst humanity, and more importantly his new deal with the EU. You can argue all you like about Northern Ireland, trade borders, single markets, customs unions, regulatory coincidence – but what is really important is that it includes.... Pet Passports! Which we have not been able to use for the past couple of years. This surely is Easter come early, and something that the whole nation can get behind.

Jess



## Parish Registers

### St Mary's Welwyn

#### Funerals

1<sup>st</sup> February – Evelyn Maitland ALLUM

21<sup>st</sup> February – Felicity Ann SPARROW

#### Baptism

19<sup>th</sup> February – Henry John ELLIS



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# Mimram Quilters Exhibition



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## Mimram Quilters - A short history

Mimram Quilters was formed in 1984, encouraged by Dieuwke Philpott. A founder member of the Quilters' Guild, she had been giving classes in patchwork and quilting in Codicote for some time, but a move to High Wycombe seemed to spell the end of what had become a very enthusiastic friendly group of about 12 ladies. She had taught us every week



*Some of the original Mimram Quilters founder members – the Mardigras Girls – enjoying a day out at Luton Hoo from the kind donation of a past member, Olive Garside, on her death at the age of 96*

in all aspects of patchwork and quilting and the founder members owe a lot to her. She made us promise two things, that we would carry on meeting each other once a week – and thus the Mardigras Girls were born, meeting every Tuesday morning in each other's houses. This is still going to this day with members having come and gone and some sadly dying. Our last one to pass away was Margaret Bessey, at 94, marbles still intact and quilting to the last (see photo, 3rd from bottom).

The Mardigras Girls needed little persuasion to formalise themselves into a bigger group, and on 1st October 1984 they held their first evening meeting at Church House, Welwyn. The membership stood at thirty, with Pauline Willis elected as Chairman. It had already been decided that Dieuwke would be their President. The name 'Mimram' was chosen, as it is the name of the small river running through the village, and many of the original members lived in outlying villages through which it passes. By the end of the first meeting, we realised that Church House would be too small, and in November 1984 the group moved to the Welwyn Civic Centre, its home to this day. There is only one founder member still attending – me – albeit irregularly, and I am proud to have been given Honorary Membership.

The Committee plans an annual calendar of speakers, a social in July and December, demonstrations and 'teach-ins' of techniques in which members have become proficient – our 'Four Corners' evenings. Some of the members of

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## Mimram Quilters—a short history (continued)

Mimram Quilters have also been members of the Quilters Guild and have served on the Committee of Region 7.

Over the years we have held 13 exhibitions and raised considerable amounts for charity. Husbands are very supportive at these events and we use them to help put up the quilting stands. We have bought badges for them – they say “Rare Breed” around the edge and “Quilting Devil” in the middle! We used to invite judges and ask them to judge four categories: the open competition for Journal Quilts, a Theme category for members, the best Traditional Quilt for hand quilting, and finally a Judge’s Choice entirely up to them.

However, this year at our exhibition in May (see date in diary in the May magazine), we shall just have a Visitors’ Choice awarded at the end. Most quilts used to be hand quilted, but nowadays our younger members are becoming proficient in machine quilting. It would be a shame to see hand quilting disappear but some of the machine quilting patterns are stunning. Sadly we are having to hold our exhibition in Datchworth, as the price of hiring our hall is just too much for a small society, but their village hall is lovely. Entry will be £4 and it runs on 13 May, 10-5. There will be a raffle, sales table, a tombola and lots and lots of quilts to admire.

We are a varied group, from our 30s to 80s, and varied in skills. Some of us are very traditional and love hand quilting, and others love the patchwork piecing and get it long-arm quilted by a professional. Others are very arty and really are textile artists. Some of these belong to other groups that concentrate on art quilts. Some of us enter major competitions and just occasionally one of us might get an award. Mimram Quilters is now in its 39th year and is as enthusiastic as ever. It is a much smaller group now as more and more groups have set up in the area over the years. But we do have a batch of younger members amongst us now, which is good. They are so enthusiastic and we hope they will continue the group long after the earlier members have reached quilting heaven! We don’t like calling our evenings ‘stitch and bitch’ but getting things off one’s chest can be very liberating. You can’t be depressed in a group. Research has also shown that quilting can help against the dreaded dementia! Long may we continue!

If you want more information on joining our group, visit our website: <https://mimramquilters.com>

*Michele Moody*

Continued from page 9



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## FRIENDS OF DANESBURY AND THE QVM



We hope you all have or have had a very happy Easter. Welwyn shop was full of Easter goodies and bargains, but sadly no Easter Eggs!

At QVM Hospital and Danesbury Neurological Centre our attention is on preparing the gardens for the summer. Each year we purchase plants to refresh the displays and this year we have the new courtyard area at QVM to prepare ready for patients and their families to enjoy when the weather permits. As part of our support the Friends fund all garden purchases as well as paying for the garden maintenance.

It is money well spent – we know this because we regularly receive grateful thanks from our patients.

We are pleased to be able report that we have purchased two iPads and accessories for use in cognitive assessments and interventions with patients by the Neuropsychology Clinical Team. We have also purchased relaxation devices to train patients in relaxation, as an effective method to address heightened anxiety and distress, which are very common in our patient population.

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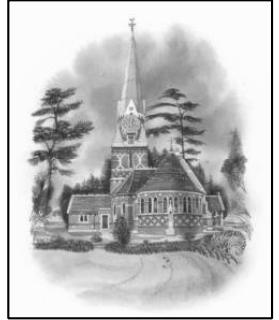
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## NEWS FROM AYOT ST PETER

### A new hiding place at Ayot St Peter

We have an old wooden coffer in Ayot St Peter church that had been in the vestry for many years. According to our former churchwarden, the lid had been broken “forever” and as a result the chest was difficult to open and hardly used. We have recently had the coffer repaired and restored and it has been moved into the church to provide useful additional storage.



The coffer is an oak chest on legs, with a lock and a special compartment for storing candles. It has unusual iron loop hinges, where the hinge is formed by two iron rings, at right angles to one another. Experts have told us that the coffer is probably late 17th century or possibly very early 18th century, and is typical of English chests of that period.

We were surprised to learn that this piece of furniture is much older than the church itself. When the coffer was made, Ayot St Peter church was the medieval structure that stood from 1282 until 1750. The second church lasted from 1750 until 1862, when the ill-fated third church was built. We will probably never know whether the coffer was used in the earlier churches, or was a later donation. When our third church burnt down in 1874, it is said that the Rector rushed into the burning building and rescued the registers and silver plate. Perhaps they were stored in this sturdy chest, in which case someone strong must have helped him carry it out!

Our churchyard is looking lovely this Spring, with bulbs and primroses blooming. The weekend before Easter we celebrate Palm Sunday (2nd April), and this year we will mark the start of Holy Week with the evocative service of Matins, led by Colin Hull, and beginning at 11.15am.

The Easter Sunday service will be led by the Rector, Revd. David Munchin, and also begins at 11.15am. At Easter the church is beautifully decorated with seasonal flowers to mark the end of Lent. The service will be followed by our traditional Easter egg hunt, for everyone who is both young at heart and likes chocolate. As ever, we hope to have the hunt around the churchyard, but if the weather is bad then the eggs will be inside the church, where we now have a crafty new hiding place!

Valerie Richards



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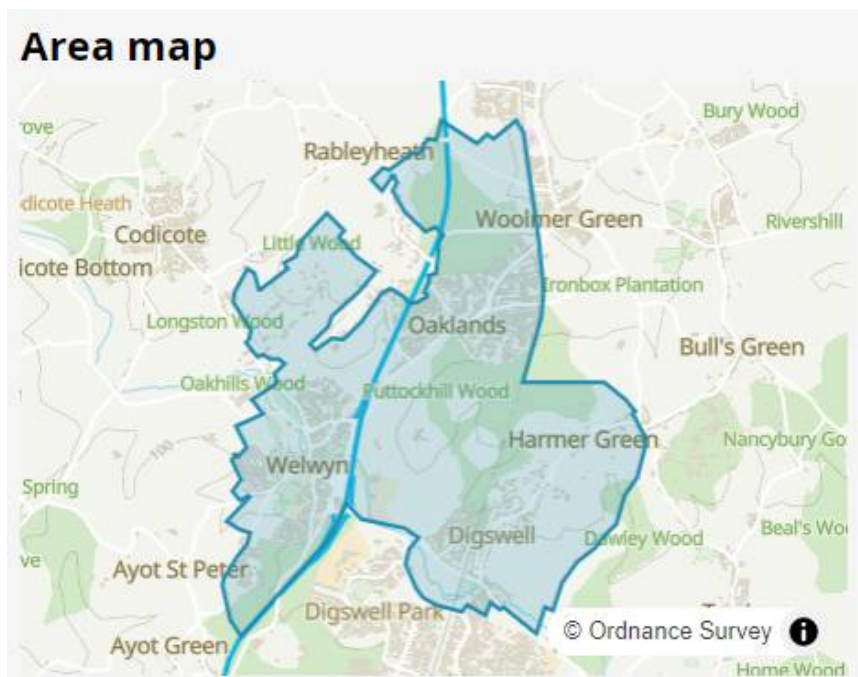


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## 2021 Local Census Data

The recently released 2021 Census data gives some insights about our local population. This is just a snapshot and more information is available at [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).



- The population within the area of this map was 9,300 comprising 3,800 households.
- 18% were schoolchildren or in full-time education.
- There was almost an equal number of women (51%) and men (49%). The census question asked their sex as registered at birth, with a later question asking about gender identity.
- 58% were married or in a civil partnership, 26% were not, 9% were separated or divorced and 7% were widowed.
- 86% were born in the UK and 94% held a passport either British or other nationality.



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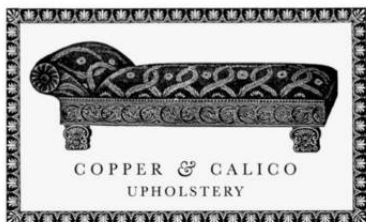
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## 2021 Local Census Data (Continued)

- Household size ranged from one person (24%), two people (37%), three people (16%) and four or more people (23%).
- Ethnicity showed 90% as white with 10% from other ethnic groups.
- On the question of religion, 38% said they had no religion, 51% were Christian, 1.7% Hindu, 1.2% Muslim, 1.1% Jewish, 0.5% Buddhist, 0.5% Sikh and 6% as other, or didn't answer the question.
- 90% live in a house or bungalow and 10% in a flat or maisonette. 5% live in a one-bedroom property, 18% two-bedroom, 30% three-bedroom and 47% in four-bedroom or more. There are 6% with a second address.
- 44% own their home outright, 37% had a mortgage or shared ownership, 11% social rent and 9% in rented or living rent-free.
- Regarding cars and vans, always a thorny problem given local parking issues, 8% of households did not have a vehicle, 34% had one, 40% had two and 18% had three or more.
- Employment showed 58% are in work, 2% are unemployed and 40% are economically inactive. Of those not in employment 10% have worked in the last year, 72% have not and 18% have never worked.
- The occupation question shows 24% in senior managerial/director jobs, 26% professional, 16% associate professional and technical, 10% administrative, 7% skilled trade, 5% caring or leisure, 5% customer services, 3% plant and machine operatives and 5% elementary occupations.
- Of those in work, 71% work full time, 17% work up to 30 hours and 12% work 15 hours or less.
- 20% travel less than 10 km to work, 13% travel up to 30 km, 5% over 30 km with 51% working mainly from home. A further 11% said 'other'. Slightly strange that kilometres are used to measure this.
- From a travelling to work perspective, 51% work mainly from home, 37% drive themselves, 3% are passengers in a car or van, 4% travel by train or tube, 0.5% by bus, 0.4% by taxi, 0.2% by motorcycle, 0.6% by bicycle and 3.2% on foot.

*Continued on page 20*

## 2021 Local Census Data (Continued)

Deprivation is measured by a classification system of 'dimensions' which include unemployment, illness or disability, less than level 2 education (CSE, GCSE intermediate apprenticeship), living in an overcrowded or shared dwelling, or without central heating. In this area:

- 60% were not deprived
- 31% were deprived in one dimension
- 8% were deprived in two dimensions
- 1% was deprived in three dimensions

This census took place during Covid so the number of people mainly working from home is likely to be skewed.

Jane Carr

## Saturday concerts

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2023 dates



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APRIL 23RD  
MAY 21ST  
JUNE 25TH  
JULY 23RD

AUG 20TH

SEPT 24TH

OCT 22ND

NOV 26TH

*Christmas Fair*

DEC 10TH

9am-2pm



@farmersmarketwoolmergreen

## WNHS Healthy Rivers—What needs to be done

The speaker at this talk on 26<sup>th</sup> April is Thames Water's Sustainability Director, Richard Aylard. This seems a bit controversial to me considering all the publicity there has been recently about the discharge of sewage into rivers and coastal areas... but Thames Water are the company who deal with all aspects of foul water removal in our area so...



I can remember that, when I first arrived in Hertfordshire, in Harpenden, some thirty-five years ago, I couldn't think why people near me talked about 'Smelly Batford' but, of course, I know now: the River Lea takes a lot of the treated water from the sewage works at Luton and, not that long ago, there was a big problem at Luton Hoo when nearly all the fish in the lakes died – something went wrong at Luton.

A long time before that, in the early seventies, when I was living in Basel, Switzerland, we formed an English women's group so we could learn more about where we were living. We

had an interesting talk about the River Rhine which flows through Basel on its way to the sea. "Of course," said the speaker, "by the time the water gets to the North Sea, it will have been drunk seven times already!" Naturally we all gasped... But, it seems, this will have to be the future in this country as well.

We are quite lucky living in Welwyn or its near neighbours: almost all our surface



## WNHS Healthy Rivers—What needs to be done

water runs away to soakaways so that, in theory, the foul water drains are not overloaded; but there are still problems – the soakaways are not dug deeply enough; the foul water drains do not have sufficient capacity when new estates or commercial development takes place: Woolmer Green still has a problem with standing lakes of sewage and no-one prepared to take responsibility.

And then there is always the dilemma of run-off from farmed fields, chicken farms, pig rearing etc.. What is the solution? I hope to hear it! In addition, I see that the press are calling for the Environment Agency to take over supervision of foul water discharge instead of the water companies being self-regulating. It should be an interesting evening!

Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at 8pm in Welwyn Civic Centre: £4; Children free.

Picture credit: Peter Neville

**Judith Watson 07884946565**

## St Michael's Coffee Morning & Bring Buy and Plant Sale



Bring and Buy Plant Sale and Coffee Morning is taking place on Saturday 20th May from 10.00 am - 12 noon at St Michael's Church, Woolmer Green.

If you are dividing plants this Spring, please pot up and label some spares for us to sell. Also any spare bedding plants and vegetables would be greatly appreciated.

Sue Keach 716657 and Chris Allday 716859



# Holy Week and Easter Services



## **Palm Sunday – 2<sup>nd</sup> April**

8.00am St Mary's, Welwyn - Said Eucharist with distribution of Palms

9.30am St Mary's, Welwyn - Parish Eucharist begins at The Plain (end of School Lane) with the blessing of the Palms and procession to St Mary's. The service will include the reading of the Passion Gospel in dramatic form.

11.15 St Michael's Woolmer Green – Parish Eucharist Including procession, blessing of psalms and dramatic reading of Passion Gospel

11.15am St Peter's, Ayot –BCP Matins with distribution of Palms

6.30pm Evening Prayer at Welwyn

## **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April**

9pm Compline at St Mary's Welwyn

## **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April**

9.30am St Mary's, Welwyn – Eucharist with prayers for healing

8.00pm St Mary's, Welwyn – Taize Service

## **Maundy Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April**

11am Chrism Mass at St Albans Cathedral

8.00pm St Mary's, Welwyn - Eucharist of the Last Supper with washing of the feet followed by the Watch until midnight

## Holy Week and Easter Services

### Good Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April

9.30 – St Michael's Woolmer Green – All Age Stations of the Cross

12.00 – 1.30pm St Mary's, Welwyn – The choir sing J Stainer's 'Crucifixion' with readings and congregational hymns

1.30-3pm Liturgy of the Passion at St Mary's Welwyn

### Easter Day, Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> April,

8.00am St Mary's, Welwyn – Said Eucharist

9.30am All age Eucharist St Mary's, Welwyn, plus Easter egg hunt

11.15 St Michael's Woolmer Green – Family Service

11.15am St Peter's, Ayot - BCP Holy Communion plus Easter Egg hunt

NB No evening service



### Easter Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April – Pilgrimage to St Albans Cathedral

Meet for Breakfast at Welwyn at 8.30am.

**Jazz Mass - Join us on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April** for an afternoon of rehearsing Don Gillthorpe's Jazz Mass. All singing abilities welcome. Save the date! Rehearsal: 3–5.45pm. 'Jazz Mass' service in which the setting will be performed: 6.30pm. More information to follow.....

## Beyond the Farm Gate

Welcome back beyond the farm gate. As I write, sleet and gusty winds are washing over the farm. Farmers love to talk about the weather; indeed, it has been central to most of my articles, and this will probably be no exception! For what has felt like quite a wet season, until now we have had relatively little rain. Dig down into the ground and you will find that below the superficial mud, there is little real moisture (at the time of writing). I am hopeful that the rain of the next fortnight is a 'real rain'- gentle, steady rain that will reach down through the various strata of the soil so that our crops will have something to fill their grains and keep them going in the event of a dry spring, or worse still, another drought.



While one might be led into a false sense of security that winter is for farming hibernation and we can all sit by the fire and take a nap, this is not to be. On the contrary, the winter is the time to get everything done that has been pushed to one side during summer, namely paperwork. Heaps and heaps of paperwork! Every business will be all too familiar with the mountains of red tape and paperwork to be tamed on a regular basis, and farming is no exception, especially as our farm is Red Tractor accredited. It is essential that we keep up with our records, grain passports and farm maintenance to maintain the high standards set by Red Tractor, so that when a customer buys a Red Tractor product, they know that quality is assured. This is something we take great pride in.



When the weather allows, we have been out on the land, rolling the fields and adding some much-needed nutrients to the crops in the form of fertilisers. While fertilisers have helped boost yields to feed an ever-growing population, we, like most farmers, use them very sparingly. Not only are they hugely expensive, but we also like to let nature take its course wherever possible and try to use passive techniques such as boosting soil health to aid in productivity. Still, to keep up with demand and to ensure the health of our crops, some nutrients can be highly beneficial. We have also been rolling the land. Heavy metal disks are pulled behind the tractor to press down the delicate crop and soil. The timing of this is crucial as we must not damage the crop. However, if undertaken

## Beyond the Farm Gate

correctly, rolling is an excellent way to preserve moisture and create an even soil surface by pushing down the flints, which will benefit the combine harvester in summer. We have also rolled the alleyways in the vineyard for the same purpose.

The vineyard entered a very busy season from the moment we took down the Christmas decorations. Since January we have been pruning the vineyard like mad, taking the vines back down to the ground and leaving just two buds on the young plants. Eventually one of these buds will provide our trunk and, in the meantime, maximum energy and nutrients will be pushed down into the roots. Fortunately, the cold has not disturbed the sleeping vines. However, we will be keeping alert for a late April frost as this could easily burn the baby buds and stop them in their tracks.



We have been very grateful for the continued interest in the vineyard and in volunteering too. We are delighted to announce that we plan to hold our next event, VineyART, on the 3rd & 4th June 2023, 10am - 4.30pm. VineyART is a celebration of quality art and craft, with many other goodies in store, including a glass of fizz with your ticket and the chance to add on a vineyard tour too. Tickets are on sale from April and can be booked online (link below) or by calling 01438 718641.



Volunteering opportunities can be accessed on the same website, with a quick sign-up process for each session.

But for now, back into the sleet and wind. Thank you for reading and join me again next time as we venture beyond the farm gate.

Farmer Hannah

Farm & Vineyard information: [www.lockleyfarm.co.uk](http://www.lockleyfarm.co.uk)

My website *Agri Unwrapped* for more on British farming:

[www.agriunwrapped.com](http://www.agriunwrapped.com)



## Welwyn Parish Council



I am grateful to Councillor Bill Morris for agreeing to write the article for the March edition of the Welwyn Magazine, while I was on holiday. I have just received my copy and on reading his excellent article I thought perhaps I should try to persuade him to always write them in future! Thank you Bill.

When I returned from holiday, in February, I was very sad to hear about the death of ex Councillor Dennis Spruce. An enthusiastic councillor it is thanks to Dennis that we have the automatic doors, the new access barrier and the electric charging points at the Civic Centre. Just a few of the many ideas that Dennis had and worked hard to provide. We miss his contribution to council work. His wife Joan and her family are in our thoughts.

We were delighted, in January, to hear that the Council would be receiving a grant of £5,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The money had to be allocated by the end of March but we were very quick off the mark in making the decision on what to spend it on. The projects we agreed on were improved access to the Whitehill Flower Meadow with a new handrail and graded slope, purchase of vertical table storage trolleys for use at the Civic Centre, two replacement toilets at the Whitehill Centre and a dishwasher for the Parish Centre. All of these will be a benefit to residents who use our facilities and we thank the Assistant Director (Economic Development) for his work in securing the grant.

This time last year Welwyn Parish Council entered into a contract with the company, Making Life Beautiful, to plant and maintain the planters in Welwyn Village. Although they received a mixed reception when first installed, they have now blended in well and, importantly, allow us to retain the 20 mph speed limit. Over the last year the company has done

## Welwyn Parish Council (Cont)

a good job of, not only making the planters more attractive, but also keeping the area of the high street by the planters clear of soil. Councillors have now agreed to a further twelve month contract and look forward to the spring and summer plantings.

We have now installed a defibrillator at the Civic Centre. We were aware that there was a need for one at this end of the village, although we hope it won't have to be used.

As Bill wrote in his article last month there has been a number of consultations taking place recently including the one held by WGC Solar Ltd. The company is seeking planning permission to build a 100 acre solar plant on land in Ayot St Lawrence. I am sure that some of you will have attended the consultation meeting in February but if you were not able to attend you can get more information from their web site.

This year we are hoping to have our Annual Meeting with residents on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. As it is an election year, with the election being held on 5<sup>th</sup> May, we are awaiting confirmation that we will be able to hold our meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Although it may be too late to notify you in my article in May, details will be on our web site, notice boards and social media. We hope you will be able to attend as it is important for us to tell you what Welwyn Parish Council is doing for the benefit of Parish residents and to have the opportunity to hear your views.

Take care of yourselves and each other.

Marj Otty  
Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council



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## Mardley Heath WI Report for February 2023

Once again my lovely readers I bring to you  
Reports of an evening that gave sights that  
were new

With Stafford Steed we travelled to far away  
Peru

And scaled new heights to reach Machu Picchu  
He told us of the Conquistadors who captured  
the land in 1532

Pizarro's soldiers came and there was nothing  
the Incas could do

168 soldiers attacked with their arrows and weapons galore

The Incas, though many, had nothing, through them they tore

Their last emperor Atahualpa was executed and died

And so the Inca Empire was sadly destroyed

Our speaker travelled on a journey of our time

Down the Inca trail from Cusco to Machu Picchu (hopefully in rhyme)

We saw temples on rocks where Incas offered a human sacrifice

And old men foretold the future, using pools as their only device

And so on by train and a trek to Machu Picchu with feet so sore

The magical, mysterious, city of the Incas lost no more

To tread where once Inca Emperors ruled with iron rods

A sacred place where Incas worshipped their Gods

To feel part of history by empathising with their lives

Is a magical thing, that's how their story survives

(One thing Stafford omitted was the delightful morsel served in Peru

'Twas a tasty dish offered to me which I had cause to rue

When guinea pig was presented as dish of the day

I had to decline, I'm sorry to say!)

So what else has Mardley Heath for you?

Lunches out – and day trips too

So why not visit us at Oaklands School

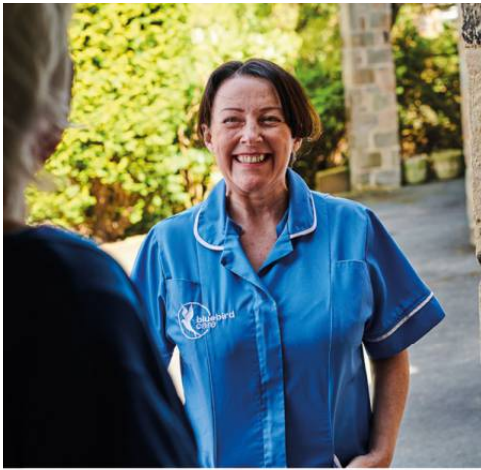
The friendship and camaraderie you'll find is super cool!



Most meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Oaklands Primary School, Gt North Road, Welwyn. For any additional information, please contact our Secretary by e-mail at: [secretary.mhwi@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.mhwi@gmail.com) New members and visitors are always welcome.

Brenda Bigland CBE





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## Crime in Welwyn 2022

Higher or lower? Up a bit, down a bit? No, this is not going to be a tribute to a retired TV programme. We're wondering whether you'd be expecting crime last year to be more or less than the previous year. Crime in 2021 was 10% lower than in 2020. Now we're pleased to report that this trend has continued, with a further year-on-year reduction of 21% in overall crime (excluding scams) during 2022. Incidentally the areas we count for crime in Welwyn include the Ayots, Welwyn village, Oaklands & Mardley Heath, Woolmer Green and Digswell.



The overall total is made up of 14 categories, which are used by the police nationwide, not all of which have reduced. Nine have reduced, two have stayed the same, and just three have increased. These three are Anti-Social Behaviour (up 12%), Drugs (up 25%) and Other Crime (up 37%). Though the latter seems a big increase there were just three more instances. This category includes racist and religious hate crime, homophobia and antisemitism. You may be reassured to learn that there was just one Robbery recorded in 2022, and just one Theft from the Person. As has been the case for the past few years, the most frequently reported crime categories were Violence & Sexual Offences, Anti-Social Behaviour and Other Theft.

Earlier this year, the local press reported that in the Welwyn Hatfield District (including Welwyn) there had been a year-on-year increase of 44% in Vehicle Theft. That's theft of or from vehicles. In Welwyn we've bucked that trend, recording a 34% reduction. Nevertheless, there were still 31 instances, very distressing for the victims. Your authors have joined with all the other Neighbourhood Watch ward Coordinators in encouraging the police to allocate more resources to this with a view to catching the thieves. CCTV could provide important evidence. If you've installed a doorbell camera but not yet told the police, could you please ring 101 and get your address added to the list of households they could approach should there be a crime in your road?

John Mitchell and Valerie Richards

[www.owl.co.uk/herts](http://www.owl.co.uk/herts)

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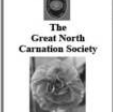


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# 1st Welwyn Scouts Need You!



*Bear Grylls—Chief Scout*

## Can you help?

The Group restarted in 2014 with 18 youngsters, we now have 87! Initially we could not camp as we did not have enough leaders to make it worthwhile or safe.

This year we will run more camps than ever before, 6 in total, going to the home of scouting, Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour, to the Peak District, Hertfordshire County scout

sites and Harmer Green in Oaklands, our local 40 acre forest site.

Each of the age groups have around 60- activity badges to aim for, giving the more ambitious ones two full arms of badges on their uniforms!

What ever your age, be it 18 or 80 (yes one of our helpers is over 80 years young) then we can give you on the job training to help the youngsters enjoy and learn their “Skills for Life”.

Bear Grylls, our Chief Scout, advocates giving the Groups the chance to run well planned and supervised, stretching and exciting, interesting things to do every week, and especially at camp.

If you want to learn more, call me on 07580942319, and I can explain more of what makes 1<sup>st</sup> Welwyn one of the most successful Groups in Welwyn Hatfield.

Andy Trotter  
Chairman



*Andy Trotter as Lord Baden-Powell*



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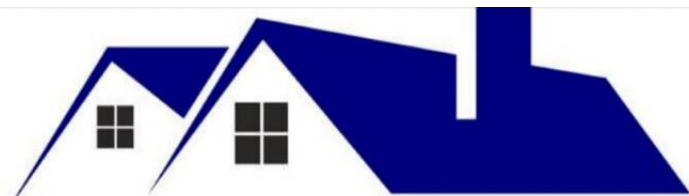
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# NEWS FROM WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

## **Local Plan**

As reported last month, the Parish Council is still very unhappy with the excessive housing growth planned for Woolmer Green in the Local Plan and, in particular, for the plan to build housing on the Green Belt farmland behind Lessiters. The Parish Council has responded to the Local Plan Main Modifications consultation setting out objections again and wrote to Mr Gove, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government about the situation. The letter was copied to Grant Shapps, MP for Welwyn Hatfield, and he invited the Parish Councillors to meet him and discuss the concerns.

Councillors Andy Gribble, Rob Horton and I went with the Parish Clerk, Janet Pearce, on Friday 24 February to meet Grant and his team at his constituency office. He was familiar with the concerns as we have discussed the issues with him in the past and he was supportive and understanding of the Parish Council's concerns about excessive development of Woolmer Green and loss of the Green Belt agricultural land. The village has accepted that more housing is needed and has supported the development of the Entech site and the proposal to develop the former Marshalls site. The Parish Council still hopes that a way can be found to save the Green Belt from housing development.

## **B197 Safer routes to school**

Hertfordshire County Council consulted on Oaklands and Woolmer Green Safer Routes to School projects from 31 January until 27 February 2023. This was well publicised by post and on social media so hopefully many residents have responded. The Parish Council discussed the proposals and agreed the content of a response on behalf of the Council. The plans to reduce traffic speed and introduce more crossings are welcome after many years of campaigning for a 30mph limit through Woolmer Green.

## **Dates for the diary**

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 18 April 2023 at Woolmer Green Village Hall.

Wheels on Woolmer Green – Monday 1 May

Village Day – Sunday 4 June

Woolmer Green's first Food Festival – Sunday 20 August

**Sarah Hall**

**Woolmer Green Parish Council**

**sarah.hall@woolmergreenpc.org.uk**

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## Saracens Foundation

*Regular readers of this magazine will know that I am an avid supporter of Saracens Rugby. From time to time, I share reasons why I love Saracens so much. This press release, which I received on 7th March, is one more reason.*

*Rita McNeill*

In March we were so excited to announce the launch of our Junior disABILITY Hub - a weekly sports provision for young people aged 8-13 with disabilities. Our existing DisABILITY Hub provides 14–24-year-old participants with learning disabilities access to inclusive physical activities in order to improve their physical & mental health. Due to our successful impacts across 10 years the growth of this provision, allows us to support more young people and reach a younger target audience.

The Junior DisABILITY hub allows participants to be regularly active, develop important social skills and feel positively empowered. Beyond this, the DisABILITY hub acts as an inclusive community, through which participants' families and carers are given the opportunity to take respite from their caring duties, make meaningful connections with their local communities and feel less socially isolated.

Our new Junior Hub follows suit of our existing DisABILITY provision and delivers our much-loved programmes; Sarries RFC, Strictly Sarrie, and Sarrie Track Club. Despite the cold weather, our new and old participants have loved developing their rugby skills on the pitch and making new friendships off it. Inside the stadium, the beat of the music can be heard echoing around the walls as our participants take part in strictly Sarrie, showing off their dance skills and learning and developing new dance routines. For our Senior hub participants, this begins the build-up to The Showdown 3 on 25th March at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, where they will have the opportunity to perform in front of a huge crowd!

Our inside track is also back into action playing host to Junior Track Club. This programme provides a safe and fun environment to improve their fitness and develop skills through the support of highly qualified staff and dedicated volunteers!

The importance of having these programmes is unmatched, and to be able to deliver to a new younger cohort is incredible. Seeing the progress of our participants week on week, from improvements in



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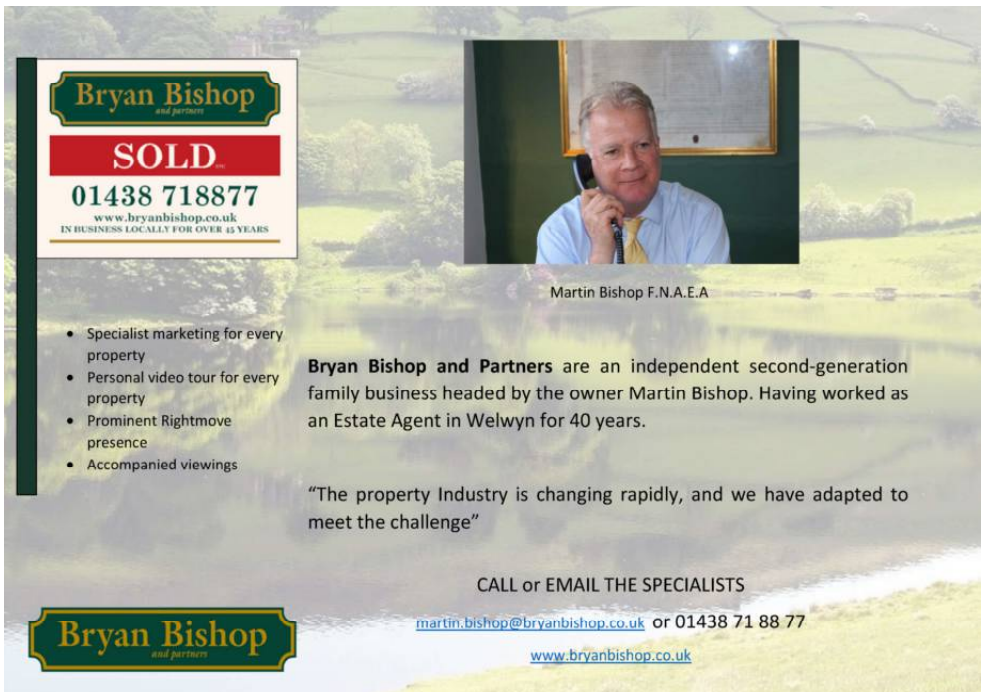
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# Church Notice Board

## **ST MARY'S - Welwyn** [www.welwyn.org.uk](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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	8.00 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](http://www.wgc-catholics.org.uk)

## **DIGSWELL VILLAGE CHURCH** [www.digswellvillagechurch.org.uk](http://www.digswellvillagechurch.org.uk)

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2nd Sunday	11.00 am Anglican
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## Saracens Foundation (continued from page 42)

physical capabilities to social skills, is something we are very proud of and we endeavour to continue to be able to deliver.

By introducing the Junior Hub, we have developed employment pathways for our Senior Hub participants, transitioning them into employment with the Foundation as Disability Delivery Assistants. This is a fantastic opportunity for our senior hub participants to gain employment and develop key employability skills, as well as offering our younger participants mentors and coaches they can look up to.

A special thank you to our project Funder the London Marathon Charitable Trust, for making this new project possible.

### Saracens Foundation



#### **Your magazine needs you!**

This magazine, which donates all profits to our local churches, is produced entirely by a small band of volunteers. There are many different ways you can contribute, for example: editing (no more than three times a year), managing distribution, treasurer, contributing ideas and/or articles—and the list goes on. Please contact any member of the magazine committee if you are able to help in any way. We would love to hear from you.

Prices held at 60p per copy for another year!

We are pleased to let you know that, at a time of rising costs everywhere, the magazine committee has decided to keep the cover price of the magazine at 60p for another year. Of course, if you choose to donate more, we should be delighted!

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# Meditation

“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me for ever? .. How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?”

I am writing this on the first anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine, and as we embark on the season of Lent. This cry of the psalmist will no doubt reflect the feelings of many Ukrainians today. How long must they endure - and where is God in all this? And why do dreadful things happen to good people? These are proper questions with no easy answers. The psalmists felt able to express their fears and suffering, their thoughts and emotions. Any real relationship has space for lament, fear, expressions of betrayal and loss. If God cannot be confronted in this way then what sort of God do we have?

Ukraine has a rich cultural tradition. It is said that for Ukrainians poetry isn't a luxury, it is a necessity during war, even though you cannot protect your family from a rifle with a poem.

Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) is one of Ukraine's most cherished poets. Some words of his:

*It is terrible to lie in chains  
To rot in dungeon deep,  
But it's still worse, when you are free  
To sleep, and sleep, and sleep  
And to fall asleep forever  
And to leave no trace  
At all, as if it were all the same  
Whether you had lived or died!  
Fate, where are you, fate where are you?  
I have none!  
If you begrudge me a good one, Lord,  
Then give me a bad one! A bad one!*

This is a psalm of lament and despair. So where do Christians find hope in the bleakest of circumstances? God's Son was sent into a broken world, entered fully into human life, suffered extreme cruelty and died the death of a hardened criminal. In his darkest hour he called out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" If his death was truly the end and Jesus had not been raised from the dead, then in the words of 1 Corinthians 15 "our preaching is useless and so is your faith". Christians are "Easter people" and therein lies our hope.

Нехай в Україні повернуться справедливість, милосердя, мир і любов. Хай живе Україна!

Happy Easter

*Mike Carpenter*