

Semington Parish Magazine
December 2016/January 2017



Drawn by George Hillman

Semington Diary



DECEMBER 2016 **(in the Village Hall unless stated)**

1st	Thu	Steeple Ashton Skittles	8pm
4th	Sun	Xmas Tree light up/Semingtones	6pm
5th	Mon	Semington WI Skittles	7.30pm
7th	Wed	Armstrongs Angels Skittles	8pm
7th	Wed	Book Club (in the Somerset Arms)	7.15pm
8th	Thu	Semington WI	7pm
10th	Sat	Senior's Christmas party	5pm
12th	Mon	Christmas Bingo	6-11pm
18th	Sun	Christmas Quiz	7.30-10.30pm
21st	Wed	Armstrongs Angels Skittles	8pm
22nd	Thu	Coffee Morning & Xmas Draw	11am
26th	Mon	Boxing Day Bar	12-3pm
29th	Thu	Social Club Skittles & Pate Supper	7.30-11pm
31st	Sat	New Year's Eve (£4 incl. buffet)	8.30-1am

JANUARY 2017

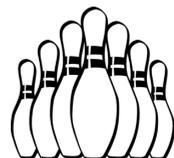
1st	Sun	Hot Meat Rolls	12-3pm
4th	Wed	Semington Parish Council mtg.	7.30pm
12th	Thu	Semington WI (at the Barge in Seend)	12.30am
16th	Mon	Semington WI Skittles	7.30pm
18th	Mon	Armstrong's Angels Skittles	8pm
19th	Thu	Steeple Ashton Skittles	8pm
30th	Mon	Semington WI Skittles	7.30pm

Ladies Skittles

8pm on Tuesdays - 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th December,
3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st January

Men's Skittles

8pm on Fridays - 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th December,
6th, 13th, 20th, 27th January.



Modern appliances make time for more work



Christians in Semington - Wednesday 7th December & 4th January, both 7.45 - 9pm, 9 Somerset Way. Join us to pray for our community.

Join us at Church on Christmas Eve, 2pm, for a very special Celebration. All ages welcome - there will be a portrayal of the Christmas story with carols and drama. This is informal and particularly appropriate for children. We'll need children, of any age, to take part in the play, and there will be a few practises in the week beforehand. If you are interested, please contact Victoria Farmer, 870796, or Bev Woodward, 870784.

Messy Church - Two to let you know about this time - the next one is on **Saturday 3rd December**, then **Saturday 28th January**, both 11-1pm in the school hall. There will be more activities, suitable for all ages, and lunch included so that you can forget about cooking for the day. (Suggested donation £1.) Please let us know if you can come so that we'll have enough food! Phone Bev/Jack on 870784 or text 07922 105084. *Please note that Messy Church is for all ages, but children must bring an adult.*

**EVERY WEEK IN THE VILLAGE HALL
(unless otherwise stated)**

Bingo	Monday	7.30pm
Post Office	Monday & Thursday	9.30am - 12.30
Baby/Toddler Group	Tuesday	10 - 11.30am
Bridge Club	Tuesday & Friday	9am - 1pm
Zumba Fitness	Wednesday	6.30pm
	(Zumba at St' George's School)	
Musical Theatre	Wednesday	4.45 - 6.15pm
Coffee Morning	Thursday	10 - 12noon
Alzheimer's Support	2nd Thursday of each month	10 - 12noon
Semingtones Choir	Friday	6 - 7.30pm
Men's Choir	Cancelled - insufficient support	

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Trowbridge Town Hall
Mondays 11:30am, Market Street, BA14 8EQ

Paxcroft Mead Community Centre,
Thursdays 10am, Hilperton, BA14 7GW

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patperry@yahoo.com www.boozuca.com

This Month... a man went to the doctors

And said “Doctor, doctor, I feel like a pair of curtains”, the doctor replied “for goodness sakes pull yourself together”. Oh the old ones really are the best! But to tell you the truth I really am going to have to pull myself together over these damned curtains I’ve agreed to make.

Firstly it has entailed me and my gorgeous hubby working together to get 17m of fabric cut into the correct lengths. Now in real money that is 55 feet of fabric, 55 opportunities for us to get it wrong. We’re both very definite people, me and hubby, one day he will realize I am definitely right all the time..... I mean how hard can this be? Well we have pattern repeats to factor in, plus the fact that the youngest children had measured from the curtain rail to the floor (that’s going to look lovely then...) and then leaving us very little room for error.

It took us two hours to pluck up the courage to make the first cut we measured, re-measured and then measured again when the cat took up residence in the middle of the fabric. I had naively assumed I was simply sewing some oblongs of fabric together then when you Google ‘curtain making’ you realise this is anything but, we have measuring, matching, basting (yes basting but not as you know it!), interlining, lining, taping, mitering, hemming, seaming and then hanging – and hopefully the curtains and not me out to dry!

You’ll be pleased to hear I have started sewing them together once I worked out how not to go missing in action under 97 sq. ft. of fabric (that’s just half of one curtain). It has struck me that my gran and mum used to make their own curtains like lots of ladies of their generations, often with manual sewing machines, I mean that is really hardcore.

My only hope is that I manage to make a truly individual pair of curtains for all the right reasons! As for the work front I finished in Oxfordshire as you know, and have just started a new temporary assignment on my door step (my bike beckons once more). This time in an industry I cannot claim to know anything about which makes it all the more interesting – but not half as good as the job title I have bestowed upon myself – EMEA Executive Avon Rubber PLC. Sounds so much more glamorous than Customer Services Executive.

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If at first you don't succeed, try a gin



MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY!!! Yes, it's time to get out your tinsel, dust off last year's novelty Christmas jumper and check if the battery is still working on its flashing lights (that means you, Sue and Steve Connor!). **The Christmas Quiz is on Sunday, 18th December, 7.30 for 7.45pm start, in the Village Hall, dressing up encouraged!** There will be a prize for every round and the winner of each round will be decided by a draw, not the score. It's good fun, so do come along (teams of up to 6 people, please, and we can put you in a team if you come alone). **January's quiz is on the 15th.**

November's quiz was set by my husband, Colin, and daughter, Helen, so many thanks to them. I definitely did not have an advantage, despite the Music Round being from our shared music collection, as proved by my team coming joint third in that round! The Walking Wounded team were in the lead at half time, and kept it till the end, with Terry's Turnips coming second. The Marathon (a sheet of celebrity photos to identify plus a sheet of Dingbats) was won by Team 22½, with, extraordinarily, 22½ marks!

Julia Wade

SCAREY THANKS!!!

Halloween was never my celebration, the excitement for me was fireworks in the back garden. But now home fireworks have died out, and consumers that we are, Halloween has become the children's winter celebration. This Halloween the villagers of Semington showed their generosity and kindness by smiling bravely, when out of the fog appeared a whole hoard of wizards, witches, morphs (not too sure what a morph is but scary it was), zombies and evil fairies. A small group gained momentum as children joined in with 'trick or treating' and we roamed the village, extracting sweets with menace!

A big thank you to the residents of Pound Lane and Somerset Way, houses and pumpkins delightful, and the children spoilt by boundless generosity.

Thank you one and all, for your smiles and tolerance, proving Semington is a lovely place to live.

Jacquié Pocklington, 18 St Georges Place

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A good mirror is a discouraging piece of equipment

Christmas and New Year waste and recycling collection changes

There will be no waste or recycling collections on Monday 26 December 2016.



All collections during this week will be one day later than normal, with a collection on Saturday 31 December.

Collection days will return to normal from Monday 2 January 2017.

Garden waste collections will be suspended from Monday 26 December and restart on Monday 9 January.



If you have paid for a garden waste collection you can leave your real Christmas tree alongside your garden waste bin on your first garden waste collection day in January and we will ensure it is composted.

To check your collection days at anytime visit: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/rubbish-collection-days

Normal collection day	Revised household waste, black box, plastic bottles and cardboard collection day	Revised garden waste collection day
Mon 26 December	Tues 27 December	No collections
Tues 27 December	Wed 28 December	No collections
Wed 28 December	Thurs 29 December	No collections
Thurs 29 December	Fri 30 December	No collections
Fri 30 December	Sat 31 December	No collections
Mon 2 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Tues 3 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Wed 4 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Thurs 5 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Fri 6 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Mon 9 January	Collections as normal	Collections as normal

Household recycling centre opening hours

All household recycling centres will be closed from 1pm on 24 December and all day on 25 December, 26 December and 1 January. At all other times normal opening hours will apply, 10am – 4pm, five days per week. Visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centres to check which days your local centre is open.

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MAGAZINE DEADLINES & ADVERTISING

This month we have a combined December/January issue, but then you must have noticed that.. The deadline for the February 2017 edition is Monday 23rd January 2017.

Email Leon, the Editor, at semparmag1@outlook.com.

For all advertising enquiries, please contact Jeremy on 870708 or jez_tyler@hotmail.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: It's a busy edition so if I got all the events and dates right, it must be a minor miracle! My thanks to everyone over the past year who made my task easier and delivered their contributions in good time, and never complained (at least not often!) when I edited something down and they didn't quite like it. Thank goodness the Editor's decision is final! Remember those less fortunate than yourself. **HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL.**



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NATURE NOTES

A Calendar of Sonnets

Helen Hunt Jackson (1830 – 1885) was an American poet, writer and activist on behalf of Native Americans. In this calendar, she wrote a sonnet for every month of the year. This is December which is full of shivering references to ice and snow.

The lakes of ice gleam bluer than the lakes
Of water 'neath the summer sunshine gleamed:
Far fairer than when placidly it streamed,
The brook its frozen architecture makes,
And under bridges white its swift way takes.
Snow comes and goes as messenger who dreamed
Might linger on the road; or one who deemed
His message hostile gently for their sakes
Who listened might reveal it by degrees.
We gird against the cold of winter wind
Our loins now with mighty bands of sleep,
In longest, darkest nights take rest and ease,
And every shortening day, as shadows creep
O'er the brief noontide, fresh surprises find.

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Every silver lining has a cloud

BOOKCLUB

Bookclub met on Wed 19 October to discuss *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood. They found this book, set in a dystopian futuristic North America, both disturbing and violent. It was written just after 1984 and before the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and gives a warning of how the world might function if violence increased and the balance of power changed. Scarily, echoes of her thoughts and ideas can be seen in the modern world today. The book provoked much thought and a lively debate although it was not one that the group enjoyed'.



The next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 7th December at 7.15pm in the Somerset Arms. We will be having our Christmas meal and sharing with each other our thoughts on any book we think worth reading. No homework.

Angela Grodzicka 870 756

A CAUTIONARY TALE - CAVEAT EMPTOR!

Like many local families, we have for some years had our oil from a well known company who take a monthly direct debit and regularly top up our tank. A few months ago we had a large delivery, and I remember noting that the price was over 50p a litre, which mildly surprised me, and I made a mental note to check it. The following day I gave a lift to a fellow villager and the conversation got round to oil (Sad lives we live!). She mentioned that her daughter had just paid 25p from the village consortium. When I got home I checked, and sure enough, the previous delivery had been 36p and the price of a barrel of oil had come down considerably since. Incensed, I telephoned the oil co, and was immediately told there had been an 'administrative mess-up', and I was given a credit note for nearly £300!

A couple of days later I was telling the tale to another villager who said that he had had a delivery from the same company whilst we were out playing golf! Yes, you guessed it, same deal. Exorbitant price, quickly credited once they were confronted. I would suggest that anyone who is paying for oil by DD checks the price they have been paying for the last year. I think the market price has been well below 30p for some time. A few weeks ago we had our water meter changed. Luckily my wife had the foresight to ask the man doing it what the final reading on the old meter was. A few days ago we had a letter saying we owed them £150 and did we know why our usage had gone up. When my wife rang them, they had a totally different reading! My wife was told 'customers don't usually check!' We are still waiting for the credit! It appears that 'administrative errors' can relieve us of our hard earned cash with more efficiency than e-mail scams. In the case of the oil co we have voted with our feet, but we don't have that option with ~~the~~ the water monopoly!

Mike Pocklington, 18 St George's Place

Minutes - Semington Parish Council (PC) meeting - 23 November 2016

Present: Cllrs. Robert Oglesby (Chairman), P Bowyer, K Lockwood, S Rimmer, R Robinson, W Scott, P Smith, B Smyth, C Wade and the Clerk, Roger Coleman. Wiltshire Council (WC), Cllr. J Seed attended. There were three members of the public present initially.

Apologies for non-attendance: PCSO Helen Wilson of the Community Policing Team.

Declaration of Interests: Cllr. Lockwood declared an interest in planning application 16/06564/OUT.

Community Policing: PCSO Helen Wilson had sent a written report included in italics below:

The force as a whole saw an increase in thefts from vehicles. Please remember to lock your car and to not leave items on display, particularly overnight or when parking in isolated locations.

22/09/2016 – Transport RTC, Semington A361 - 3 vehicle collision; slight injury .

06/10/2016 – Transport RTC, Semington Crematorium – no injuries.

17/10/2016 – Transport RTC, Semington A361 – RTC Injury.

Cllr. Oglesby stated that there had been a non-injury road traffic collision opposite the school in Pound Lane that had not been reported by the CPT and Cllr. Lockwood reported that the parking of vehicles in Pound Lane opposite the school continued to cause a major problem. Cllr. Scott commented that there was a significant discrepancy between the events reported by the CPT and those recorded in the 'detailed breakdown of crimes in your area' accessed by the www.police.uk website. Cllr. Smyth stated that he had a number of concerns relating to the report from the CPT and that he would be contacting their Coordinator for clarification on a number of points including those raised by Cllr. Scott.

Adjournment: The Chairman adjourned the meeting to invite members of the public present to raise any points of interest and concern, and then reconvened the PC meeting.

Wiltshire Council Report: Cllr. Seed gave a brief report on the following topics: Air Ambulance planning application – Funding now made available via the LLIBOR fines, Planning applications including those recently refused, Neighbourhood Plans, Remembrance Day Services, WC Budget and Precept, Flooding in Wiltshire following the recent heavy rain.

Planning:

APPROVED 16/01678/OUT Land at St Georges Road Erection of up to 24 dwellings with associated access and parking and land for allotments (Reserved matters: Access.)

REFUSE 16/05783/OUT Land to the North of Pound Lane The erection of 75 dwellings including 30% affordable homes, with ancillary public open space and play areas and access from Pound Lane (Outline Application relating to access).

PENDING 16/06564/OUT Land North of 554 Canal Bridge Outline application relating to access – Erection of two detached dwellings and new access.

(continued on page 15)

REFUSE 16/06956/OUT Land North of St George's Road Outline Application – All Matters Reserved (Residential development up to 72 units).
NEW 16/09699/FUL Land opposite Outmarsh Farm New home for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance Charitable Trust.

The PC resolved to send these comments to WC: *The PC objects to this planning application because of the absence of any reference to the relocation of the existing No Through Road Barrier to a position detailed in the PC comments submitted in application 15/10766/OUT. The relocation of this gate/barrier is considered ESSENTIAL in order to prevent traffic movement to the Air Ambulance site via the village. Melksham Without PC also fully supports this.*

The Clerk reported that he had been contacted by a Sean Lewis of Tetlow King Planning who wished to hire the Hall for a presentation on a proposed planning application in Melksham Without Parish. Mr Lewis had said that the proposed application was at an embryonic stage and that it was too early to submit a planning application to WC.

Finance: full details available on request to the Editor.

The Clerk reported the current financial balance at 23 November 2016 as £15,227 and presented the PC with the Financial Forecast dated 31 October; the PC resolved that no action was necessary. The PC resolved unanimously that in future it would receive PC meeting Agendas and associated papers by e-mail.

Allotments: Councillors commented that it was too early to decide on the development and management of the allotments because no building or preparatory work had yet been undertaken by Hannick Homes. The Clerk was asked to put this item on the agenda for the March 2017 meeting.

Highways/Environment: (a) Cllr. Smyth stated that in view of the refusal of WC to consider reducing the speed limit along the A361 road locally he would contact Wiltshire Police for A361 road accident data. (b) The PC noted the petition that it had received from a number of signatories in respect of car parking in High Street; the Clerk commented that he had reintroduced this as an Agenda item because he considered it necessary to seek a view from the PC on the proposals contained within the petition before contacting WC. The PC resolved that it did not support the introduction of double yellow lines and the erection of parking cones. Following further discussions the PC resolved that the Clerk should write to the petitioners to explain the decision of the PC and to invite them to write to WC directly if they wished to pursue the matter. (c) The Clerk confirmed that he had written to BT Payphones and to WC stating that the PC wished to purchase the telephone kiosk opposite the Village Hall. It was agreed that a notice be put in the Village Newsletter inviting parishioners to offer suggestions for its use. (d) Cllr. Wade confirmed that a Christmas tree had been purchased and delivered. It was agreed that a Working Party be formed and that the tree is erected at 2pm on Saturday 26 November. Cllr. Rimmer stated that he would investigate whether the use of a 'cherry picker' could be secured. (e) Cllr. Scott reported that the Council had received a letter regarding litter in the village. Cllr. Robinson offered to undertake a 'litter pick'.

(continued on page 17)

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SEMINGTON BASED



(continued from page 15)

(f) Cllr. Scott added that he had been contacted by a parishioner living at The Orchard complaining that owing to the recent rainfall her toilets were overflowing. He added that she had already informed Wessex Water. Councillors advised Cllr. Scott to invite her to contact Wiltshire Council and Cllr. Seed. (f) Cllr. Rimmer reported that there had been a recent tree planting exercise but some fifty trees still required to be planted. Cllrs. Scott, Smith and Rimmer would attempt to complete the planting the next day.

Melksham Community Area Board/Transport Group Meetings: Cllr. Robinson stated that he had attended the recent CATG meeting and that there were three issues relevant to Semington raised:

1. Independent Living Centre Direction sign – WC had noted that the erection of this sign is supported by the PC.
2. Speed limit on the A361 road. WC was adamant that there would be no change to this speed limit because the current speed limits were based on a county-wide survey and analysis of speed limits on Classification A and B roads that were undertaken recently.
3. Safe crossing over the A361 road near to The Turnpike. This received support from WC who is to investigate this further with a view to utilising the existing central reservation and introducing 'dropped kerbs'. Cllr. Robinson commented that some of the cost of the 'dropped kerbs' will fall to the PC – possibly a third of the cost.

Wilts & Berks Canal: Cllr. Robinson had been contacted by Mr McKenzie to see if the PC had examined the latest Melksham Link development plans. He invited Mr McKenzie to give a presentation to the PC when the new plans are available. The Clerk was asked to contact the Chairman of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group regarding representation on the Steering Group by Semington PC. Cllr. Scott reiterated his view that such representation was essential.

Tennis Court: Councillors reported the hedge alongside the Tennis Court was very overgrown and that a Working Party was required to cut it back. The Clerk was asked to place this item on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Any Other Business: Cllr. Robinson – Requested a sum not exceeding £25 for preservative oil for the Commemorative Bench. Cllr. Smyth gave a description of the Tesco 'Bags of Help' Grant scheme and argued that it was not suited to PC grant applications. Cllr. Lockwood re-emphasized the parking problem near to the school.

Date of Next Ordinary Meetings:

4 January 2017, 8 February 2017, 8 March 2017, 12 April 2017.

R A Oglesby, Chairman, Semington PC



SEMINGTON WI NOVEMBER MEETING

All of us got together under a very patient Jeannie Baileys guidance to create Christmas wreaths and table centres. We all took bits and pieces of greenery, Christmas baubles, candles, etc. to share and ended up with (surprisingly in my case) lovely wreaths. They made a lovely Christmassy sight altogether laid out on the table.

Next month we will be playing skittles with our partners etc. on Thursday 8th December at 7.30 pm. January 12th 2017 will be our WI birthday party which once again will see us at the Barge Inn at Seend at 12.30 pm. February 9th 2017 will see us back in the village hall.

Semington WI would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Peaceful Happy New Year.

Deb Hurn

BEWARE—OIL LEAKS!!!

Dear Editor,

Last Sunday (28th October) a 700 litre loss of heating oil was reported by a householder in Highfield Close. The oil got into the storm drain system and is making its way down the High Street toward Semington Brook. The Environment Agency and County Council Environmental Health have been informed and are taking action to remediate the contamination but it all takes time. Meanwhile our house is full of extremely unpleasant kerosene fumes and the oil itself will certainly get into the brook. Please encourage villagers with oil fired heating to be vigilant especially at this time of year to avoid both financial loss and environmental problems caused by leaking oil tanks. If you have any problems please call the Environmental Protection team on 01225 770411. Don't hesitate!!



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH



Christmas is coming – make sure the crooks are not getting fat at your expense! It is very important that motorists are vigilant to prevent themselves from becoming a victim. A thief only needs a few seconds to steal things from your car or bag and leaving them on display is an invitation to opportunist thieves who will strike anywhere and at any time. Beauty spots and car parks are hot spots for this type of crime .

- Don't leave any valuables on display including laptops, satnavs, mobile phones, handbags, credit cards or vehicle documents in your car. If it is unavoidable – place them in the boot and ensure that any electrical equipment is switched off. (Satnavs left switched on give off signals that can be detected from the outside and advertise your car as being worth breaking into.
- Don't leave coats/jackets on show in the vehicle as a thief will want to see if there is anything valuable in the pockets.
- Clean satnav suction marks off your windscreen, as leaving them is an immediate advertisement to thieves that a satnav may be in the vehicle. Make sure no satnav attachments are left visible in your vehicle.
- Remove your stereo if you can, mark it with the vehicle registration number if you can't.
- Leave your glove box open to show there is nothing in it; this is a good tip! The trouble is mine is stuffed full of bits and pieces!
- If you own a van, make sure you remove your tools overnight and display an appropriate sign in the rear window making this clear.

These tips are important throughout the year but are especially at Christmas, when your car is loaded with presents. Similarly a thief is ensured of rich pickings when he breaks into your house at this time of the year. Anyone who sees suspicious activity should contact police on 101; if a crime is in progress ring 999 and if possible record the registration number of any vehicle involved.

In spite of all this, have a Happy Christmas – just bear in mind how easy we make it for them. And think of this – that expensive laptop or camera which you spent a lot of money on will be sold for a few pounds at the pub or shady backstreet shop which deals with stolen property.

Paul Bowyer 870 512

You can always count on an abacus

News from the Friends of St George's Christmas Fair Friday 11th December



We are busy organising an exciting Christmas Fair for all. There will be Carols sung by the school on the field (weather permitting) and lots of stalls and fun inside. As well as the opportunity to visit Father Christmas in his special grotto. Please come along and enjoy the festive spirit.

Semington Slog 2017

Entry for the Semington Slog has now opened. Please visit entrycentral.com/Semington Slog to enter. The 'early bird' offer runs out on 31st December 2016 so book your place at a discounted rate now. More information about the event will appear in future editions.



Jumble Sale Thank You

Thank you to everyone who donated or came along to the Jumble sale on Saturday 12th November. **We raised £650, which was great!**

CHRISTMAS CRIB FESTIVAL

10th -11th December 2016
10am to 4pm
Christ Church, Bulkington
Inspiring display of nativity cribs
from around the world
Non-alcoholic mulled wine/juice
and cakes. Free entry (donations
welcome). Colouring competition
for children. Special closing
service 4pm on Sunday.



WILTSHIRE COUNCIL NEWS FROM JONATHON SEED

As the end of the year approaches there is always an increase in activity in County Hall as we all try to clear our desks before the Christmas break and make sure that we hit the New Year running. This year we have been trying to organise and set the four year budget plan that central government has virtually demanded. We are having to do this in the face of the abolition of the Rate Support Grant by the end of the decade; this is significant as at the start of this Council term it was over £200million. The backfilling of this funding gap with non domestic rates is not easy when we still do not know the percentage of the Business rates the government will allow us to keep. If it were 100% of the business rates we raise in Wiltshire the county would be in financial heaven. However it is likely to be around 35% with the rest going to subsidise those areas of the country that are not as successful in their business development and retention as Wiltshire. Whatever happens we will have to balance our budget - and press reports of a £10million overspend are nonsense.

Wiltshire Council has made severe cuts in its administrative spending and it is inevitable that further efficiencies will affect service delivery. We are trying hard to avoid this and we have had some real successes. Sometimes these are best measured by a look across our borders and seeing how neighbours are faring. For instance in one of the service areas where I have Cabinet responsibility we still have the same 31 libraries that we had in 2009 and have also built four new ones. Libraries in Wiltshire are becoming community hubs and meeting places and are now supported by a small army of local volunteers. At the same time we have made them much more efficient and have cut 25% of the administrative and staff costs over the past three years. Some of our neighbours have simply shut their libraries whilst in Wiltshire we have built new ones. Wiltshire libraries are very different to the libraries they were and both the services that they offer and the way they are run are also very different. In Calne, for instance, as well as making the library a community hub we have installed an electronic access system meaning that the library is not just restricted to normal staffing and opening times. People can now borrow books and use the computers at weekends and on days when the library is normally closed.

The message is that as the year changes all is not lost in local government and we are doing a great deal to ensure that in 2017 and future years we can deliver services that people want and as best we can with the available funding.

With that thought may I wish all residents of Semington a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



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St John's Social Group Invite You to
An Evening of Christmas Carols & Songs

Mince Pies, Mulled Wine & Christmas Raffle
In St John's Parish Centre,
Wingfield Rd., Trowbridge
Sunday December 11th
7.00—9.00 pm

Admission £2.50 (on the Door)

Comperer: Denise Drew

Music: Christiana Turner

To help plan for numbers put names on the porch list.

Or phone/email Frank Geraghty 01380 871083

f.geraghty303@btinternet.com

Donations of Mince Pies greatly appreciated.



STEEPLE ASHTON FILMS

As we are all so busy during December and January, we will be starting the Spring season on **Saturday 11 February 2017** with **Bridget Jones's Baby**. Tickets will be available from Steeple Ashton Village Shop from the end of January, but, if you prefer, you are most welcome to reserve tickets for collection on the night, if you ring me on 01380 871345.



Thank you to all those of you who have attended our Film Nights and hope to see you again in the New Year. Wishing you a very Happy Christmas.

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Alison Wilson, Steeple Ashton Films

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He who sees a need and waits to be asked is as unkind as if he had refused it

CATHOLIC NEWS

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST TROWBRIDGE & ST BERNADETTE'S
WESTBURY (including VILLAGES).**

**Parish Priest Canon Liam O'Driscoll, Telephone 01225 752 152
www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk**

St John's Sunday Masses:

Saturday (Vigil) 6pm; Sunday 10.30am & 6pm

Weekday Masses:

Mon: 9am; Tues: 6pm; Wed: 8.30am; Fri 6pm

Sat: 10am; 6pm (Vigil)

Rosary: Weekdays before Mass. SVP Fri 6.45pm

Confessions: Sat: 10.30-11.15am and 5-5.45pm

St Bernadette's Sunday Mass - 9am

Weekday Mass -Thursday 11 am

Confessions/Reconciliation before Mass and any time on request

SHARING OUR FAITH

The Group meets in the Parish Centre, Trowbridge on Wednesdays from 8-9pm. This is open to anyone wishing to learn more about the Catholic Church.

THE NEW 300 CLUB - SUPER CHRISTMAS DRAW—11th December

Subscriptions: £50 annually - £13 quarterly - £4.33 monthly. New members are most welcome to join at any time. **Prizes are: £400-£200-£100-£50.** For information and application form contact Francis Geraghty.

SICK AND/OR HOUSEBOUND

Any catholic who is sick or housebound should let Canon Liam (01225 752152) know as he would be pleased to arrange a visit and bring Holy Communion, if desired.

Francis Geraghty 01380 871 083

email: f.geraghty303@btinternet.com



**The Canalside Benefice
St. Michael and All Angels, Hilperton
with St. Mary the Virgin, Whaddon;
St. George's, Semington;**

**St Paul's, Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilperton Marsh;
near the Kennet and Avon Canal, within the Dioceses of Salisbury**

Thought from the Rectory:

Do you find waiting easy? I admit that I often find it a struggle. When the traffic news comes on the car radio telling of delays ahead I try to find a short cut – and they often turn out to be anything but.

Yet often a period of waiting can help us appreciate something even more. Last summer Anne and I had a wonderful holiday in Snowdonia. We had planned it months before and the joy of resting, walking in beautiful scenery and exploring castles and riding on the Ffestiniog railway did not disappoint.

In our schools and churches during the coming weeks of Advent, we will be thinking about those who waited for the first Christmas, such as Mary and Joseph who had to wait to see where the special baby promised by God would be born and the Wise Men, who had to wait to see where the star they had followed would lead them.

Once the waiting is over, at Christmas, God invites us all to receive the greatest gift of all. At the first Christmas God sent his son Jesus into the world as a sign of his love for us and to offer all who follow him new peace and wholeness in their lives. The travellers at that first Christmas were aware of God's love in a new, deeper way. This would sustain them in lives that often remained challenging.

Jesus would later teach us to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength and to love our neighbours as ourselves. As we approach Christmas, it is in our care and support to those in need, whether our neighbours or those many miles away, that God's love is revealed to the world.

This Christmas we, like the first travellers, are invited to “worship the new born king”. Everyone is welcome at any of our Christmas services. Full details are given elsewhere in this magazine.

With my best wishes for Christmas and 2017.

John Rees (Rector)

FUNERAL : NORMAN BOND

The funeral of Norman Bond took place at St George's Church on Thursday 27th October 2016. We pray that Susan, Jenny, Christine and Lisa, their families and friends will know God's love and peace at this sad time.

ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2016

ST JOHN'S CHURCH TROWBRIDGE. PENITENTIAL SERVICE.

The Advent Penitential Service is on Wednesday 14th December at 7.30pm with visiting priests for the Sacrament of Confession. This is a family service in preparation for the Nativity of Our Lord.

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH TROWBRIDGE:

Saturday 10th Dec: 10.30am – 11.15am.

5.00pm – 5.45pm. Saturday 17th Dec 10.30 – 11.15 am. 5.00-5.45pm

Saturday 24th Dec: 10am – 11am and 3pm – 4.00pm

CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH TROWBRIDGE:

Saturday 24th Dec: First Mass of Christmas (children's Mass) 7.00pm.
Christmas Carols from 6.45pm.

Midnight Mass 12.00 midnight. Carols 11.30pm.

Sunday 25th Dec: Mass of Christmas Morning 10.30am. (Note: No evening Mass).

Monday 26th Dec: Mass of St Stephen at 10.00am

Paws For Thought



The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you - joyous news for all people. Your Saviour is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord."

**It's in the Bible:
Luke 2 verses 10 & 11**

St. Michael's Hilperton with St. Mary's Whaddon
St. George's, Semington
St. Paul's Staverton with St. Mary Magdalen, Hilperton Marsh
 YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN ANY SERVICE IN THE BENEFICE

DECEMBER/JANUARY 2017 SERVICES

St. George's Semington

4th Dec	9.15am	Parish Communion
11th Dec	9.15am	Morning Service
18th Dec	3pm	Carol Service
24th Dec	2pm	Christmas Eve Celebration
25th Dec	9.15am	Christmas Communion
1st Jan	NO SERVICE	
8th Jan	9.15am	Methodist Service
15th Jan	6pm	Evensong
22nd Jan	9.15am	Together in Worship
29th Jan	NO SERVICE	

St. Michael's Hilperton

4th Dec	8am	Holy Communion
4th Dec	11am	Together in Worship & Baptism
11th Dec	9.15am	Parish Communion
11th Dec	11am	Methodist Service
18th Dec	6pm	Carol Service
24th Dec	5pm	Crib Service
24th Dec	11.30pm	Midnight Communion
25th Dec	10.30am	Christmas Communion
1st Jan	11am	Benefice Service

St. Mary Magdalen Hilperton Marsh

4th Dec	11am	Parish Communion
11th Dec	6pm	Carol Service
18th Dec	11am	Parish Communion
24th Dec	3.30pm	Crib Service
24th Dec	8pm	Christmas Communion
29th Jan	11am	Benefice Service

St. Mary's Whaddon

11th Dec	8am	BCP Communion
16th Dec	6pm	Carol Service