

ROSTRUM MAY 2014

VILLAGE DIARY

MAY

- 4 **Footpaths Walk** – Village Hall Car Park – 2.30pm sharp
- 6 **Parish Council Meeting** – Village Hall – 7.30pm followed immediately by the Planning Committee Meeting
- 17 **First Cricket Club home match v Teston** – Playing Fields – 2pm
- 20 **Annual Parish Meeting** – Village Hall – 7.30pm a chance to meet the Parish Council on an informal basis to talk over local issues
- 21 **History Society Members' Buffet and Wine Evening**
- 24/25/26 **Flower Festival – Dreams of Chelsea and Plant Sale - Church**
- 25 **Wateringbury Wanderers FC Trials** - Playing Fields – 1-3pm
- 28 **Coffee Break** – Church – 10.30-12.30
- 31 **An Evening with Whitney Houston** - Wateringbury Club

JUNE

- 1 **Village Fete – Playing Fields** - from 12.30
- 3 **Parish Council Meeting** – Village Hall – 7.30pm followed immediately by the Planning Committee Meeting
- 8 **Footpaths Walk** – meet Shipbourne Common – 2.30pm
- 18 **History Society AGM then talk Jane Austen's Kent Connections** - Clare Graham – Village Hall - 7.40pm
- 21 **A Loving Tribute and Teas** – Church – 2-5pm
- 21 **Lee Highwood Band** – Wateringbury Club

VILLAGE FETE – SUNDAY 1 JUNE 2014 – 12.30-4.30

We have 26 stall/activities already confirmed for our **'HAVE A FIELD DAY'**.

There will be **live music by Les Blackburn, Cricket Club BBQ, Mark's Ices, Alcoholic refreshment courtesy of the North Pole Pub, Friends of Wateringbury Church Pimms Tent, Tea and Coffee, a Raffle with great prizes, and much more.**

Enter a side in our **KWIK CRICKET TOURNAMENT first games at 12.30**. Only 6 players required, of which at least two must be female. 20 balls per innings. Orange wind ball and blue plastic bats. No age limit – Great fun! The number of teams will be limited so don't delay – (01622 812027

There will be organised **RACES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS. At 2.30pm** Enter your dog in our **'NOT TOO SERIOUS DOG SHOW'** Has your dog got the waggiest tail? Can it catch a ball at the greatest distance? etc.etc. – Let's find out!

Test your footballing skills in our **PENALTY SHOOT OUT**. Why not Donate a Prize for our **GRAND RAFFLE**.

We are a very small Committee and to make this an enjoyable experience for everyone, we need

more assistance on the day. **PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP.** Contact John Ibbs 01622 813101 or Mike Witts 01622 812027.

VILLAGE PEOPLE

90th Birthday greetings to **Mark English** who celebrated on 22 April

A Message from Where Memories Meet After almost 3 years, we have passed on the business reins to Joseph and Carolyn. We hope they enjoy their new way of life as much as we did. The joy and fulfilment we experienced was in large part thanks to the support we received from many of you (you know who you are!) - a special thank you to each and everyone that helped make our time there so memorable. Please join us in welcoming Joseph, Carolyn and little Elizabeth to the village. We wish them and Where Memories Meet lots of joy and success. Mark and Sze Lin

WATERINGBURY TO GET FAST RESPONSE FOR AMBULANCE CALL-OUTS

The NHS Ambulance Service Community Responder Scheme announces that **Bob Ede of Old Road** is now qualified and licensed to give life saving treatments in advance of emergency ambulance attendance. Equipped with a defibrillator, oxygen and other medical supplies, Bob, who joins Harry Mallows of Red Hill, will be alerted at the same time as the standby ambulance that in the majority of call-outs will be with the patient within 8 minutes. However, where circumstances cause delay, this local service should save vital minutes, especially in the case of strokes or heart attack.

Bob said 'I regard it as a great privilege to be able to offer help when needed to the community but, unfortunately, Harry and I will only be on standby for a limited number of morning, afternoon, or evening shifts during the week and the service would be greatly enhanced with a few more volunteers.' Bob went on to say that he regarded himself as far from the ideal person and if he could do it, so could anybody who could drive and had the time to be on standby for just a minimum of one shift a week. Possible additional volunteers are asked to please contact Barbara Plum RGN, Team Leader, who is anxious to hear from them either by phone on 01892 722945 or by e-mail barbarakpc@aol.com.

Flower Festival - 'Dreams of Chelsea' and Plant Sale -
at the Church Saturday 24 May and Monday 26 May 10.30am – 5pm.
Sunday 25 May 2pm – 5pm
Lunches, Home made cakes,clotted cream teas
Plus much more

JOIN WATERINGBURY WANDERERS FC A new Football Club has been formed to play at the Playing Fields. We are looking for good standard players (age 17 to ?) of all positions to join a progressive and ambitious club. The club will be playing in the Maidstone & District League (Saturdays) and have ambitions to join the Kent County League. A main sponsor and all background staff are in place. For all our home matches the pavilion will be serving refreshments. Thanks go to Farmers Farm Shop who have agreed to be our main sponsors for the next few seasons. For signings we will

be holding **TRIALS on SUNDAY 25 MAY 1-3pm** at the Playing Fields. So if you want to play first class football or just have a chat about our new team then contact Dennis 07535-486963 web-site <http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/wateringburywanderersfc/>

CRICKET CLUB FIXTURES FOR MAY Do support your village cricket team. Our May matches are: Sat 3rd Tonbridge Forresters A 2.00pm Sat 10th Gills Green A 2.00pm Sat 17th Teston H 2.00pm Sun 25th Penshurst Park A 2.00pm Sat 31st Stone A 2.00pm

WATERINGBURY F.C PLAYERS REQUIRED FOR U 9's Wateringbury Football Club is a small village club promoting values of skill, respect, fairness and competitiveness. We endeavor to play football as it should be played. We are not Barcelona, but we would rather score from 5 or 6 passes than the half way line. We are struggling for numbers, but not passion or commitment. **To qualify for our age group you must be under 9 on the 31 August 2014.** We love football, we want to win, but our aim is to do so with class and integrity. If you would like your children (**Boys or Girls**) to learn to pass a football rather than just win at any cost, please contact **Richard Dickety on 07779 563 678.**

PLASTICS RECYCLING SERVICE It's good news – from 1 May more of our plastics can be recycled. So we can take along to the T & M recycling points all types of **plastic bottles as well as yoghurt pots and margarine tubs – if the container has a number 1, 2, 4 or 5 it can now be recycled.** More information online at www.tmbc.gov.uk/waste.

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP

Term 5 sees Teston & Wateringbury Nursery Group in full bloom, with our little petals learning all about springtime. There will be lots of garden based activity with the children planting and growing varieties of vegetables as well as sunflowers for the “tallest sunflower competition”. They will also be bringing in spring related items from home (no mattresses please!) including potatoes for potato printing, spring pictures, and baby toy animals to name but a few.

We would like to take this opportunity and extend our thanks to all those who attended the Easter Fun Day. The event was a huge success with an amazing £310 raised on the day. The animal petting corner was particularly popular and it was especially lovely to see a new born lamb, along with chickens and rabbits. The children also enjoyed the excitement of the Easter egg hunt, and of course, eating the fruits of their labour! If you would like to find out more about events or our Nursery Group please visit us at www.testonandwateringburynursery.co.uk

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE

Locally and nationally one of the big problems is litter thrown from vehicles. It costs Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council about £1 million a year to deal with this litter. Nationally about £1 billion. T & M is encouraging everyone to pick up and bin some bits of harmless litter and help to keep our locality tidy.

The Big Scoop (Dog Fouling) will be coming back in June for its second year, following the success of last year's launch with Dogs Trust. The plan is for caped 'Scooper Heros' and their 'Scooper Hero' pets to visit parks and open spaces around the borough to clear dog fouling (through Bag & Flag). If you want to be a 'Scooper Hero' contact Tamsin Ritchie Environmental Projects Coordinator 01732 876295 or email tamsin.ritchie@tmbc.gov.uk

WATERINGBURY WI

On Thursday 8 May 2014 members will be debating the resolution *Increasing Organ Donation* when the result will be given to our link delegate to take to the National Federation of Women's Institute's annual meeting in June.

Our May meeting is also our annual meeting when the committee for 2014-2015 is appointed and the president for the coming year is elected. Tea and cakes, and a silent auction of items provided by members to raise funds, provide an opportunity for members to socialise after the business.

At our monthly meeting in April members and welcome visitors enjoyed a talk and slides by Sue Fisher about *Life on St Helena* and were fascinated to see the island in the South Atlantic where Napoleon ended his days. In June our speaker will be Barbara Stevens who will tell us about the properties and benefits of using olive oil. If you would like to join this friendly group who meet in Wateringbury Village Hall at 2.30 pm on the second Thursday of each month please call 01622 812018 or 079771 125000. elizabethastrid@aol.com

HISTORY SOCIETY

In May we will be holding our Members' Buffet and Wine Evening, which is not taking place at the village hall, and we do not have a speaker on this occasion. On 18 June, following the AGM, Clare Graham will be telling us about 'Jane Austen's Kent Connections'.

Ian Porter came along in March to tell us about Charles Dickens' life as a boy and young man, these years had mainly been spent in London, and the experiences and the people he met whilst there were to remain with him all his life. Ian described vividly what life was like in the early 1800's, with the complete absence of a socialised system, neat sewerage flowing into the Thames, and you would not walk the dark streets of London without the services of a 'Link Boy', who carried a flaming torch to guide your way. Ian reminded us of characters who appear in Charles Dickens books, who had been based on people Charles had met and worked with in London, before his Father's fortunes changed and the family moved to Rochester. We were given an insight into the influence London had made on Charles Dickens, especially when Ian took us on a descriptive 'walk' around the streets, houses and pubs, frequented by Dickens. Ian leads walks around London on a regular basis, and some members of the audience were interested in joining him on one of these in the future.

QUOTES FROM REV THOMAS FULLER (1608-1661)

Charity begins at home but should not end there (*Frequently only half quoted*)

Nothing is easy to the unwilling

No man can be happy without a friend nor be sure of his friend until he is unhappy.

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES Visit our website for full details www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

Sunday 4 May 8am Holy Communion – Teston 9.45am Family Service – East Malling 9.45am Family Service – Teston **10am Matins– Wateringbury**

Sunday 11 May 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling **10am Holy Communion - Wateringbury** 6.30pm Evensong - Teston

Sunday 18 May 8am Holy Communion – Wateringbury 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling **10 am Family Service – Wateringbury** 6.30pm Eucharist - Teston

Sunday 25 May 8am Holy Communion – East Malling 9.45am Eucharist – East Malling **10am Rogation – Wateringbury** 6.30pm Holy Communion - Teston

Every Monday (except Bank Holidays) – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – **Toddler Praise**

Tuesdays 7.30pm in Wateringbury Church May 13 Taize, May 20 Communion May 27 Evensong with Choir

Every Thursday - 9am in East Malling Church – Holy Communion

For Baptisms, Weddings and other arrangements please attend the Parish Office at the Vicarage on Wednesdays 6.30-7.15pm parishofficeemwt@gmail.com

Pilsdon Community, 27 Water Lane West Malling - Rev Pam Rink invites you to the Barn Chapel to join members of the community for a Eucharist Service every Wednesday at noon and 6pm on Sundays

SPECIAL SERVICES

Ascension Day – Thursday 29 May – Service of Holy Communion in East Malling at 9am

Quiet Hour Wednesday 14 May 8-9pm An opportunity to spend time in the tranquil setting of the village church in private prayer – come and go as you please.

Service of Healing and Wholeness 6 May. This month the service will be at 8pm in Wateringbury Church.

EASTER PROJECT Yet again we were blessed with sunshine for our annual event up at the church. This year we had nearly 70 children attending a full morning of fun activities around the Easter story. We didn't have an egg rolled out the gate this year but they loved to keep trying! A big Thank You to my wonderful team of helpers and to everyone who very kindly donated the many chocolate eggs. I believe every child left with smile on their face. Debbie Bond

PRIESTLY PONDERINGS

parishofficeemwt@gmail.com Canon Derek Carpenter

'Let no man boast that he has got through the perils of winter till at least the seventh of May', wrote Anthony Trollope. May – the month of maypoles and blossom, of two Bank holidays, the month when, say the Cornish, it's unlucky to buy a broom; the month when, according to the Roman poet Ovid (for part of his life a contemporary of Jesus), "bad girls wed"!

But also the month of Christian Aid Week which those in Watlington and Teston, I know, take seriously. We glibly talk about millionaires without understanding what a vast number a million is: it is not yet a million days since Christ died – we won't reach that for another 700 years or more! Yet millions in our world are dying of starvation. One of my more poignant memories is speaking many years ago to the then Director of Christian Aid, Alan Brash, who had just returned from one of the poorest parts of Africa where he had witnessed the bodies of dead children being pulled from the sewers where their mothers had thrown them to save them a worse death through starvation – and they are mothers who love their children no less than we do ours.

Last year 218 million pounds were blown up in fireworks around the world – how many children might that have saved? I think it's true that in this country we spend more on slimming tablets and slimming foods than we give in charity: it's a salutary fact that the West slims while the East starves. More than fifty years ago the Roman Catholic economist, Barbara Ward, speaking in Geneva, said: 'At the moment when we can incinerate this planet, we have also been given the means to feed the human race and lift it up.'

Christians straddle the whole spectrum of rich nations, and therefore Christians are a lobby, or can be a lobby, of incomprehensible importance in this field. If we don't do it, when we come to see God ultimately, he will say: 'Did you feed them, did you give them a drink, did you clothe them, did you shelter them?' If we say: 'Sorry, Lord, but we did give 0.3 of our gross national product', I don't think it will be enough.' Well, it's now 0.7% – but I don't think that will be enough either.

Wordsworth wrote – The world is too much with us; late and soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers. But we need not. Well done, Teston and Watlington, for what you're doing in Christian Aid Week: and may this month of May be one that attracts our generosity and our response.

HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN AID CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 11-17 MAY

Give people a future without fear War tears lives apart You can help put them back together For a growing number of people across the world, the horror of war is part of daily life. The good news is that individuals, communities and churches can make a real difference this Christian Aid Week. Thanks to your efforts, many more people can look forward to a future free from poverty. Please support the village house to house collections as much as you can. More volunteers to deliver and collect donation envelopes would be very welcome. Please contact Gillian Sessions 01622 813076.

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES

Thank you all for your continued support for the Children's Society, the total raised this year from

the House boxes was £410.20. On behalf of the Children's Society thank you all, the boxes raise much needed funds to help vulnerable young people. MW

COFFEE BREAK - Wednesday – 28 May - 10.30-12.30

We have a really pleasant morning so do come along, it would be good to see you. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the church for tea, coffee and fellowship, Everyone is most welcome. At the moment some of us are knitting coasters and tea cosies plus blankets for premature babies. Pauline and Gillian

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

At the meeting on 1 April Eddie Scarlin and Joanna Fyson were re-elected as Church Wardens. Ian Betts, who is moving from the village, was thanked for all his hard work as church treasurer over the past few years, Richard Dunn was appointed in his place.

Elected to serve on the PCC are: Patricia Berry, Christine Byron, Liz Gummer, Kate Millar, Emma Palmer, Joy Searle, Gordon Self, Sheena Stewart and Jack Tate. Sidespersons will be: Jane Bates, Patricia Berry, Angela Billinge, Percy Billinge, Debbie Bond, Sylvia Buss, Liz Gummer, Kate Millar, Cathy Miller, Mandy Mitchelmore, Jan Pursey, Mike Pursey, Joy Searle, Gordon Self, Gillian Sessions, Sheena Stewart, Syd Thompsett, Alison Tibbals, Dawn Underwood and Maria White.

LENT LUNCH THANKS

A big thank you to those who donated delicious home-made soup, cakes, bread and croutons for the Lent Lunches and to all who supported the lunches. Your kind donations raised £134 for The Community First Responder Scheme, £108 for The Blood Runners (SERV Kent) and £67 for Christian Aid.

Flower Festival - 'Dreams of Chelsea' and Plant Sale - at the Church Saturday 24 May and Monday 26 May 10.30am – 5pm. Sunday 25 May 2pm – 5pm

Beautiful flower arrangements designed by local talent will be on display over the Bank Holiday weekend and superb quality Nursery and home grown plants will be on sale **Saturday and Sunday**. **Cake Raffle** (decorated and baked by Vera Tate); Lucky programmes draw ; **Children's 'Garden in a Seed Box' Competition** on Saturday (two categories: 4-7 and 8-11 years) to be judged at mid-day with prizes for the winners
Plus lots more
Lunches, Homemade Cakes, Clotted Cream Teas Free Entry. Further Info: 01622 813076

A LOVING TRIBUTE SATURDAY 21 JUNE - 2PM TO 5PM - AT THE CHURCH

An opportunity to dedicate a favourite flower in memory of a loved one or to mark a special occasion. Dedication cards and vases will be provided. Home Made Cakes and Clotted Cream Teas available for you to enjoy.

BENEFICE MOTHERS' UNION

The next Mothers' Union meeting will be an afternoon of reflection at Pilsdon, 27 Water Lane, West Malling on **Thursday 1 May 1pm - 3pm**. Please do not worry if you need to slip away early for any

prior commitments.

SPRINGING INTO SUMMER AT WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spring term closed with a joyful Easter Service at St John's. The children presented a sung version of the Easter story with each class singing one part of the story. Year 6 pupils and members of the Jesus and Me Club contributed readings from the Gospel of Matthew and closing prayers. The children filled the church with their singing and energy to create a beautiful service, enjoyed by parents, teachers and the children themselves.

The final week of spring term was also 'Maths Week.' Children spent the week solving maths investigations. The hall was transformed into a circus of maths activities, including a giant snakes and ladders calculation game and ten-pin bowling with addition and subtraction sums. Year 6 pupils wrote outdoor maths trails for the younger children, who loved working out the clues and discovered that numbers and maths are all around us! The week closed with a Maths Assembly for parents, followed by an Open Morning to see how our new SmartBoards are used in the teaching of maths.

Summer term has arrived with sunshine and the children are enjoying the field and lots of outdoor learning. For Year 6, however, it is the term of SATs. They have worked hard all year and should feel very proud of their progress. The SATs examinations are our pupils' chance to demonstrate their achievement within a national context. We wish them all the very best. SATs week, fortunately, is followed by the residential trip to Swattenden. This four-day trip is a highlight of Year 6 and is a time that is packed with activities, teamwork and cementing the children's years of friendship through primary school. Chasey Crawford-Usher, Headteacher

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL (FOWPS) *Registered charity 1038836*

We will be holding a **Bag2School textile recycling** collection on **6, 7 and 8 May**. Tied sacks of clothes, shoes, hats, bags and belts can be dropped off at school. The more we collect, the more money we will raise for the school. Plans are taking shape for our next **School Discos** on **Friday 9 May**. We are very grateful to DJ Lee Harman at Sounds Alive Disco (www.discosoundsalive.co.uk) for his help with these popular events.

This is the final call for local golfers to join our annual **Golf Day** at Poulton Wood Golf Centre on **Friday 13 June**. Entry costs £40 per player which includes coffee and a bacon sandwich on arrival, 18 holes of golf and a meal afterwards. Forms can be downloaded from our website. The Golf Day has been generously sponsored by Wateringbury-based general builder John Evans.

URGENT APPEAL: We desperately need to replace a large wooden playhouse for our youngest children at school. If you or your company would like to help us with this in return for lots of positive publicity, please email chairman@fowps.org.uk as soon as possible. Thank you. Gail Isted, FOWPS Chairman – www.fowps.org.uk

WATERINGBURY IN MAY 1914 From the pages of the parish magazine

CRICKET CLUB Subscriptions of £40 have been received or promised towards the total estimated cost of the new Pavilion, which is now completed. The first match of the season, Wateringbury v Teston, is fixed for May 2nd, on the home ground. The club's financial position is sound. Last season it played 31 matches, of which it won 13 and drew 3. The President's Bat was handed to Cecil

French, who played 20 innings and had an average of 21.26. The Captain, Horace French, who played 20 innings, had an average of 23. Mark Tapply played only 7 innings with an average of 23.28. H. French headed the bowling averages with 7.97 for 39 wickets; C. Acott took 56 wickets at a cost of 9.58 a piece; and F. Court (who did the Hat Trick was awarded the Ball) 90 at an average cost of 10.9.

(The Club played its matches in the Park – so probably somewhere in the grounds of Wateringbury Place). For more details of the village in days gone by visit the History Society's website, to which more information is regularly added.

WATERINGBURY SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION (WSRA)

LEATHER JACKETS AND INSECTICIDE SPRAYING. WSRA discovered on the 24 March that the reason for the grass dying over large areas of the playing fields was due to Leather Jackets (larvae of Crane flies). WSRA sought advice from Collier - Turf-Care and they stated that the playing fields should be sprayed as soon as possible with an insecticide called TIPULEX. Both Collier - Turf-Care and the spraying company recommended that the playing fields should be closed to the public for two days after the spraying had been completed. This was due to the fact that the insecticide being used is one of the nastier products still on the market. WSRA acting on behalf of the Parish Council erected barriers at all entrances onto the playing fields. Notices were pinned up warning the public that insecticide spraying was taking place and that the playing fields would be closed until further notice. The local Primary School were also notified that spraying was taking place and the fields would be closed. The spraying was completed over an area of 13,000 sq.metres on the morning of Friday 28 March. The fields were re-opened early on Sunday 30 March. Unfortunately in the meantime members of the public had ignored the notices, trampled down the barrier fences and continued using the playing fields. When WSRA committee members enquired why they had acted in such a manner they were subjected to verbal abuse. We would remind people that the WSRA committee are volunteers who spend hundreds of hours working to improve the facilities for the village to enjoy, and should not be treated in this manner. WSRA may have to repeat the spraying exercise and we ask all the public to act in a responsible manner. After all it is to protect your health and safety.

COME AND TRY ZUMBA FOR FREE! Come and join friendly and fun ZUMBA classes Mondays 10am Paddock Wood Masonic Hall and 8pm Wateringbury School and Tuesdays 7pm Wateringbury Village Hall. Suitable for all fitness levels. If you love to dance this is the class for you! No need to book, just come along on the night. www.tanyashepelev.zumba.com

RNLI WEST MALLING BRANCH The recent annual collection in Wateringbury made £244.99 – a wonderful total! Grateful thanks to our team of collectors and everyone who contributed so generously. The Branch total was £2,719.27 (6 villages). E J Corfe, Chairman

EAST FARLEIGH FARMERS' MARKET The next market is on **Sunday 4 May** from 9am to 12 noon and we will be welcoming all our regular stalls, so please pay us a visit and see all the treats on offer. If you are looking for vegetable plants, shrubs or bedding plants for the garden you will find excellent value from Low Wood Nursery and the Kenward Trust. Our chosen charity is Porchlight who work with those struggling with homelessness in Maidstone.

WEATHER WATCH After the wettest 6 months on record at the end of 2013 the deluge continued in January and February 2014. Then in March it suddenly stopped and since then we have had almost drought conditions; plenty of water still coming off the hills though. Amazingly the temperatures still stayed way above normal owing to predominantly Southerly winds. Although these have now turned to the North and East the sun is now of a strength to counteract the cool breeze and we have had a

really early spring with bulbs and bluebells earlier than ever. However now that the jet stream has settled down into a more normal pattern I cannot

APRIL PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

The planning committee would appreciate the opinions of parishioners in relation to planning applications prior to its meeting to help formulate the response to T & M. Please send comments to the Parish Clerk, Redhill Cottage, Redhill or e-mail susan_jc@btinternet.com Alternatively come along to the planning subcommittee meeting which is held directly after the monthly parish council meeting in the village hall on the first Tuesday of each month

Allotments There are now two vacant plots available for rent at the Old Road allotments. Having an allotment is a great way to grow your own fruit and vegetables and meet people who are very happy to share their knowledge with new allotmenters. The annual rental is £20.

Bank Account Signatories Two additional signatories Councillors David Marks and Chris Stones were added to the mandate.

Borough Councillor Simon Jessel said that following a review by T & M he had been asked to serve on two more committees – arts and general purposes making a total of 6 committees. Maidstone and T & M Councils were in consultations re Local Plans. The Hermitage Lane developments were a major concern for Watlington. He had investigated the water on the Tonbridge Road coming from Watlington Place grounds but there was little that could be done until the volume of water draining down the hill abated.

Cemetery Wildwood Tree Surgeons were dealing with the conifer tree which had fallen over during the recent wet and windy weather. **Crime** Kent Police sent written notification of crimes that had been recorded in February and March. There were 4 thefts – a postman's trolley was stolen in Warden Mill Close, a painting stolen from Where Memories Meet Antiques, tools stolen from the side garden of a property in Tonbridge Road and an engine stolen from a boat at Medway Wharf Marina. There was also an attempted theft from a motor vehicle. One instance of Criminal Damage in Bow Road occurred when a drink was thrown at a vehicle window causing damage. One instance of Drugs (Cannabis) use was recorded after a warrant was executed at an address in the village.

KCC Councillor Mathew Balfour informed the meeting that KCC was undergoing a transformation review. All services were being reviewed in a major re-organisation with public and voluntary sector organisations being approached with the aim of KCC continuing to provide current services but at reduced costs.

Planning The Council had no objections to the following applications: Single storey side extension at 7 The Brucks Single storey rear extension at 50 Phoenix Drive. As long as the Conservation Officer is satisfied the Council had no objections to the erection of a single storey side extension and first floor front extension at 38 Mill Lane.

Speed Watch The speed watch team was again active during March making a total of 186 observations of vehicles passing through the village at or above 35 mph and the relevant information was passed to Kent Police. When added to the Kent Police's Speed Watch County database they identified that 32 vehicles had previously been observed speeding in various parts of the county of which 25 had offended for a second time, 6 for a third time and 1 for a fourth time. Also 17 vehicles were travelling at excessive speeds ie at 45 mph or above. Appropriate warning letters will have been sent to the registered owners of the vehicles concerned accompanied by Speed Awareness advice.

Sports and Recreation Association The playing fields were closed on 28 and 29 March following the spraying of the fields to combat the severe damage being caused to the grass by leatherjackets. Councillors were dismayed and disappointed to hear that a member of their staff and a representative had been verbally abused by several adults who objected to the closure. Others ignored the closure signs and used the fields with their children and dogs and thereby chose to put themselves, their children and their dogs at risk. They were pleased to learn that many children had been very polite and interested in the need for the closure and had respected the closure and its representatives. They thanked all the volunteers concerned for their hard work in improving the fields to enhance the area on behalf of the whole village. **Drayhorse car park** tree plantings had been completed.

Next Meetings There are two council meetings in May to which the public are very welcome. Both **start at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**. On **Tuesday 6 May** is the Annual Parish Council Meeting which elects the Chairman and other officers for the coming year before dealing with the usual agenda. Then on **Tuesday 20 May** is the Annual Meeting which has no formal agenda but is an opportunity for residents to meet and discuss issues with the council on an informal basis.