

VILLAGE DIARY

MARCH

- 1 **Local Footpaths Walk** - leaving Hall Car park sharp at 2pm
- 3 **Parish Council Meeting** then Planning Committee - Hall - 7.30pm
- 12 **Annual Competitions Social Afternoon** - WI - Hall - 2.30pm
- 14 **Village Hall Quiz Night** - Hall - 7 for 7.30pm
- 18 **Talk on Rudyard Kipling** - History Society - Hall - 7.40 for 8pm
- 28 **MICHAEL** - entertaining you with music and songs – Bob Marley, UB40, Maroon 5 and Michael Jackson – Wateringbury Working Men's Club

**Lunches for Lent Wednesdays: 4, 11, 18 March
between 12.30 and 2pm at the Church**

APRIL

- 7 **Parish Council Meeting** then Planning Committee - Hall - 7.30pm
- 11/12 **Village Bash the Trash weekend** to clean up the village - Volunteer with your neighbours to tidy up an area important to you.
- 15 Everest Pioneer – Sandra Noel – Hall – 7.40 for 8.00pm

DIARY DATE - VILLAGE FETE SUNDAY 7 JUNE

VILLAGE PEOPLE *Please let us have your news and tributes by 17 March for our April magazine*

Big Birthday Congratulations x 2 to Phil Rex and his twin sister **Sophie Lawrence**, who will be celebrating their 80th birthday in 'vintage' style on 21 March.

Ann Honor A Memorial Service to celebrate the Life of Ann took place in Wateringbury Church on 25 February. Ann, with her husband Roy, lived in Red Hill, Wateringbury for many years with their sons Simon and Andrew. She was a gifted teacher and contributed much to village life. She had a great sense of fun which she retained to the end. Recently failing health necessitated Roy and Ann move to the Woking area to be closer to family. A cremation service took place in Woking and Ann's ashes interred in the Honor Family plot in Maidstone. The Honor Family were corn and seed merchants and traded from Honor's store in Earl Street.

Goodbye and Hello Best Wishes to **Viv and Nell Rubin** who have made a down-sizing move to West Malling. They moved into Southview on the Tonbridge Road in 1975 when their children Peter and Emily were young and were very supportive of village life. However we hope to see lots of them as their daughter **Emily**, husband **Thomas Best-Shaw** and their sons Joshua and William are moving into Southview.

Congratulations to Wateringbury Players on their Best Ever Pantomime **Dorothy And The Yellow Brick Road** based on The Wizard of Oz. The script, written by the production's director Amy Westgate and her mum Brenda Johnson, was witty, with lots of jokes, both local and well presented 'old chestnuts'. The choice of music, with many from the well-loved musical, added to the enjoyment of the sell-out audiences at all three performances. The panto however was not Amy and husband Joe's main production - in November their son Noah was born and he came along to the panto too.

A TEAM OF LEADERS NEEDED



Do you like working with children? Do you embrace a new challenge? ..Are you adventurous? Do you derive satisfaction through seeing children being fulfilled and enjoying themselves? Work well as part of a team?

If you have answered yes to any of the above, then this role could be for you! 1st Wateringbury Brownies need new leaders or a group of leaders that could lead the unit. We meet on a Thursday evening from 6.15pm - 7.45pm during school term times. This role would start now with full training and support being given from Girl Guiding. If you would like more information then please contact: Lesley Barker on lesle.barke@o2.co.uk or call 07856 291121 Or Tina Tuton on tinatuton@live.co.uk or call 07790 428663

HISTORY SOCIETY

Geoff Hutchinson is our speaker in March who is coming along to speak about the life and verse of 'Rudyard Kipling', a topical subject with the many commemorations taking place regarding WWI.

Our first talk in 2015 was by Peter Ewart entitled 'Smuggling in Kent'. Smuggling in Kent thrived from the late 16th century until the early 19th century because of very high excise duty that was placed on imported goods such as alcohol, tobacco, lace and tea. The government quickly increased the legal penalty from 7 years imprisonment to death by hanging for those found guilty of this crime, but because of the huge profits involved this did little to stop it. Several large gangs eventually formed to control most of the trade, the most notorious of which was the "Hawkhurst Gang" who used most of the Kent coast to bring in contraband before transporting it to London. Peter related many blood curdling tales of torture and murder committed by them, illustrating his talk with slides showing the places in Kent where these crimes were committed. The public were largely unsympathetic to the taxes, and many helped the smugglers by hiding contraband until it could be safely moved, including some of the clergy who allowed church premises to be used. The land based customs officers were usually outnumbered and badly paid, and often in the pay of the smugglers, making them fairly ineffective. After the Napoleonic War had ended in the 19th century, the government formed an amphibious naval force to combat the smugglers. Equipped with fast ships, well trained and well-armed officers and men the smugglers were no match for them, and the problem was at last brought under control. This amphibious naval force was later named "The Coast Guard".

THE WATERINGBURY CLUB (Wateringbury Working Men's Club)

The club is situated behind Numbers 208 and 212-214 Tonbridge Road. The entrance is about 100 metres from the traffic lights on the right hand side through a wrought iron gate with a signboard over the gate. There is also a vehicle access off Red Hill between Numbers 5 and 7.

In 1886 a plot of land was bought by Mr. Apps at an auction in Maidstone containing a coach house and stables and this part of the site was then bought by the Trustees of the Working Men's Club and Institute. The members gave freely of their time to convert the buildings into a suitable Club House. The trustees at the time were William Blest of Broomsdown, Richard Fremlin of Mays Lodge and George Cheeseman of Pizien Well. The Rev. E.C. Leslie, Vicar at Wateringbury was the Club Secretary.

For over 100 years the Club has been used by many Village organisations and the Church and it was the main centre for their social activities and some schools as far away as Paddock Wood used the Club for Domestic Science Lessons.

In October 1981 a serious fire completely destroyed the large hall and this gave the club an opportunity to upgrade the facilities and install new furniture and fittings to equal or surpass other local licensed premises. Also more ladies and families were allowed and encouraged to use the premises.

The Club celebrated its centenary on 3rd November, 1986.

Snooker, darts and pool still remain popular with matches against other local Pubs and Clubs. Sky and BT Sports Television give coverage of most major sporting events such as World Cup and European football and Test Match Cricket.

There are also frequent social evenings, Bingo and Karaoke as well as Professional Entertainment. It is also used by other organisations for Committee meetings and for the occasional private parties and celebrations, and even Wakes.

Primarily it is a friendly, pleasant well kept facility that makes a good addition to the social scene in Wateringbury. Membership is open to both ladies and gentlemen and includes entrance to other affiliated clubs.

If you are interested in becoming a member and require more information, this can be obtained from the Secretary on 01622 812167.

A fuller history of the Club has been published by the Local History Society in "About Wateringbury" obtainable from the Post Office or the Wateringbury Local History Society. S.T.

WHICH VILLAGE'S MEMORIAL – East Malling

War News, February 1915

4 th February	Germany starts unrestricted submarine warfare
7 th – 22 nd	Russia defeated by Germany at Second Battle of Massurian Lakes
19 th	Beginning of Gallipoli campaign with naval bombardment of outer forts of Dardenelles

As we saw last month, Wateringbury Parish Council met infrequently and its minutes make limited references to the war. Such is not the case of the school logs which are dominated by war issues. The school logs are a hand-written record, kept daily by the three (boys, girls and infants) schools in the village.

The schools were on the one site up Red Hill with about 240 pupils (100 boys, 80 girls and 60 infants) from a village population of 1,260 (1911 census). Numbers varied considerably in times of bad weather, such as the heavy snowfall on 24th February 1915, or illness (chicken pox, diphtheria, scarlet fever, whooping cough, flu, ringworm, etc.). School holidays were structured around hop picking. Some children started school as young as 3 years of age, allowing their mothers to work, and all finished by 14. Some tried to leave earlier by getting exemption certificates that they were doing war work. Exclusions for dirty hair or clothes were frequent. Getting to Maidstone Grammar was for the few.

The logs record a constant stream of war-related activities: collecting eggs for the wounded, clothes for Belgian refugees, collections for war charities, sending cards to troops, entertainments staged in aid of the wounded etc. A typical girls' school entry in February 1915 is as follows: "A parcel of mittens (made by the girls) also containing chocolate, matches, candles & soap, was sent to the West Kent Regiment at the front on the 13th. Each pair of mittens contained a letter from the maker. Answers from the recipients have been received in two cases.

"On 25th February the girls' school log records: "As some thousands of Kitchener's Army were to march through Wateringbury from Maidstone early this morning, all the departments with the staff marched down & lined the road along which the troops were to come. They remained until all had passed through. It was a practical lesson in patriotism & history." The infants log adds that there were about 3,000 soldiers on their way to Aldershot.

The Diocesan inspector's report of February 1915, recorded in the school logs and published in the parish magazine, reminds us of the strong religious element in the education then provided, and the emphasis on learning by rote. In otherwise glowing reports the only weakness noted was that the girls lacked "accuracy in the Catechism repetition" but they "knew the explanation better than the text". But later in 1915 a detailed secular work programme is laid out, covering the main academic subjects, as well as needlework, laundry and cooking classes for the girls. As well as Diocesan inspections, attendance officers and government inspectors came frequently. The vicar and other village notables, especially those helping war charities, visited often as well. Terry Bird For more details see the web-site of Wateringbury Local History Society. (<https://www.sites.google.com/site/wateringburylocalhistory/>).

VILLAGE "MONSTER BASH THE TRASH"

Organised by the Parish Council and Wateringbury Sports and Recreation Association, the litter pick over the whole village will take place on the weekend 11th & 12th April 2015. Volunteers are asked to congregate at the Sports Pavilion (Wateringbury Playing Fields) by 10.00 a.m.

They will then be kitted out with a high vis bib, gloves, litter picker and green rubbish sack. Please note children taking part must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Prior to the weekend of the 11th & 12th April "Anti Litter" posters will appear around the village which have been designed by children at Wateringbury Primary School.

Wateringbury Sports and Recreation Association have kindly donated three £25.00 Waterstones book tokens which will be awarded for the best poster in the 4 - 6 year 7 - 9 year and 10 - 11 year age groups.

The Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling will present the prizes at the School Assembly on Tuesday 31st March.

If you would like to volunteer, even if it is for only one hour, please contact:- Mike Witts 01622 812027 or John Ibbes 01622 813101.

Refreshments will be available **after** you have done your litter pick.

WATERINGBURY FOOTPATH GROUP

Our February walk attracted 14 walkers and 2 well behaved dogs.

We went via the Millpond to Old Road then along Old Road to "Duke without a Head", passing Wisteria Villa on passed the golf course to Canon Lane; where here we had a diversion because of the condition of the right of way

near Little Canon farm was, in places unpassable, so into Cattering Wood and through the orchards to return to the village hall.

Next walk; 1st March meet at the Village Hall at 2pm for a local stroll, all welcome including dogs on lead

April 5th walk meet at Village Hall 2:30 for a river walk to Teston return via Tutsham Farm. Kevin Reynolds

WATERINGBURY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

A strong and effective partnership between school and home with regular sharing of information is vital if children's learning is to flourish. With this in mind we have continued with our programme of Curriculum Focus events during February. Our Reading Curriculum afternoon and evening events proved very popular with more than 80 parents joining us for one of the two sessions. These were followed by a very well-attended e-Safety Curriculum evening to coincide with Safer Internet Day on 10 February. The open evening for parents focussed on managing risk within the online world and an overview of e-Safety in the curriculum.

Children from Red and Tangerine classes shared their obvious enjoyment of reading and learning with the rest of the school and their parents when they staged outstanding assemblies in February based on an in-depth look at the texts *Kensuke's Kingdom* and *The Firework Maker's Daughter*. Yellow and Blue classes will have similar opportunities to showcase their learning in front of the school and parents at the next assemblies in March.

The school will celebrate World Book Day with a fairy tale-themed dressing up day on 6 March and the children will demonstrate their wide-ranging musical talents at our annual Musical Evening on 31 March.

We were able to demonstrate the changes and improvements made over the last two years during an Ofsted inspection on 4 and 5 February. At the time of going to press, we were awaiting the publication of the inspectors' report. Term 4 will end on 1 April. Chasey Crawford Usher Headteacher www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

I write this at the start of the half term holidays and was reminded yesterday that we are half way through the school year. I'm not quite sure where the time has gone but we have a lot to get on with over the coming months.

We are holding our curry and quiz night on 27th February and have only a few spaces left, we have our Mothers and Father's Day shop and the golf day on 12th June which if you haven't expressed an interest yet but want to attend please let us know. We have some great prizes including the star prize of a Fourball voucher for the Wimereux Golf Club including ferry travel over to France. The course details can be viewed at www.golf-Wimereux.com.

As always, details can be found on our website on www.fowps.org.uk.

Craig Lightheart – FOWPS Chairman

EAST FARLEIGH FARMERS' MARKET

The next East Farleigh Farmers' Market will be held on Sunday 1st March, again at the new time of 10am to 1pm. Please come along and see what we have on offer, especially those of you who have not yet visited – we think you will be surprised by the quality and variety of products available right on your doorstep and with very low food miles! If you would like to know more, please ring Sue Morris on 01622 726164.

Stall fees from the February market will be used to pay our membership of Kent Farmers' Market Association which is of great help to local markets, giving advice, providing support and publicity and arranging affordable market insurance. Our charitable fundraising will, of course, be the main aim throughout the coming year.

W.I.

At our last meeting, members enjoyed a demonstration of Simple Indian Cookery given by Sue Hollings.

Next month's meeting on 12th March will take the form of a Social Afternoon – a chance to enjoy a chat with friends and our Flower Cup and Hickman Cup Competitions.

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our Wine and Buffet party will take place on Wednesday 20th May, the venue has yet to be finalised, but the Committee is sure it will be our usual enjoyable evening. We will give full details at our next meeting, and collect names.

Our outing to Strawberry Hill is proving very popular, and the coach is filling fairly quickly.

PWCS SINGS HAYDN
Sponsored by Music Reprieval Trust

Guest star *Sophie Westwood* on recorder

Sponsored by Ycat30
SATURDAY 21ST MARCH 2015 7.30pm
St Andrew's Church Paddock Wood

Tickets £12 [£2 under 19] from
Box Office 01892 822448
Online: www.paddockwood.ticketsource.co.uk
Email: spring15@paddockwood-choral.org
Choir members or door

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL & CLUBS

(Charity No. 1144343)

Well finally Spring is sprung, I think we may be doing some bird watching in the not too distant future as it looks like we have a nest building team in our outside play area. It is a couple of years since we watched our last eggs hatch and they may decide they have made a mistake when the children return after the half term break! It is lovely to see and hear the wildlife returning to our environs with the beautiful woodpecker and the lively rabbits. The children never fail to enjoy counting how many rabbits are on the field today?

If you wish to come along and join our fun then please
Ring: 01622 813120 email: nettlesteadandwateringbury@yahoo.com
or visit: www.nettlesteadandwateringbury.co.uk

TESTON AND WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP

Well what are you doing this month. The answer to that is lot's! We have the popular Discovery bus coming to Teston on 9th March where all the children will be able to play and learn in such an engaging environment. Our mother's day experience is on Thursday 15th March, where we invite mums, grandmas, etc. to join their children for an afternoon of craft, and this year we will be making flower hedgehogs with googly eyes!

Recently during our show and tell time we have been talking about uniforms and what people wear as part of their jobs. To follow on from this we have arranged to revisit our friends at Maidstone fire station on 19th March. There our local fireman will take us on a tour of the fire station and if we're good we could climb into Dennis the fire engine and pretend we are all fireman Sam.

And finally we will end this term at Teston Church for an Easter story with Jim Brown on Tuesday 31st March. Thank you Jim for always taking the time to open up the church for our Nursery Group visits. It is always a wonderful experience that the children enjoy very much.

We are busy organising our Easter Fun day on Friday 10th April, 10.00am – 12.00 The Easter egg hunt on the field is always a popular event with the children. All are welcome at Teston Village Hall, Church Street. ME18 5AH.

MAIDSTONE MENCAP APPLE PIE QUIZ SATURDAY 7 MARCH

Where: Cobtree Hall, Mote Park, School Lane off Willington Street entrance,

Time: Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start
Details: Teams 6-8 £6.00 each, includes slice of apple pie and cream

Contact Rita for Tickets: 07790 643218



EASTER PROJECT

SATURDAY 4 APRIL

9.30am-12.30pm



Calling all Primary school aged children in Wateringbury - join us in celebrating the Easter Story. A morning filled with fun, songs and craft activities. £2 per child in our own Village Church. Parent and/or older sibling helpers always welcome. Booking is essential because of numbers, see www.wateringburychurch.org.uk for form

or contact Debbie on 01622 814793.

CHURCH SPRING CLEAN 21 MARCH 9.30-NOON

The Annual Spring Clean of the church and tidy of the church yard takes place on Saturday 21 March. Volunteers are needed and any assistance will be much appreciated. Just pop along for as long as you can during the morning bringing with you the tools needed for the job you would like to do.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY 6 MARCH

This year our local opportunity to join in a world wide circle of prayer will be at 10.30am in West Peckham Church. The service has been created by the women of The Bahamas and the theme asks the question Do you know what I have done for you?

BENEFICE MOTHERS' UNION

A speaker from Traidcraft, Moyna Bridges, will attend the Mothers' Union meeting to be held in Wateringbury Church on Thursday 5 March at 1.00pm to talk about her visit to Peru where she met producers. She will answer questions about Fairtrade. Everyone welcome.

UNWANTED COMPUTERS NEEDED 4 AFRICA

If you have a computer (XP / Vista / Windows-7/8), a Mac, monitors, printers, cables, installation disks for re-loading Windows operating systems on older computers, or even power leads you no longer need please donate them via the Rochester Diocesan Partnership. Used computers and hardware can be useful resources for church links in Africa, or to be made available for schools through 'Computers4Africa'. The internal disks can be securely wiped before a valid operating system is re-loaded. If you can help please contact Stephen Barbor - sm.barbor@gmail.com

TESTON CHILDREN'S CHURCH JUMBLE SALE

Saturday 7 March at 2.30pm in Teston Village Hall. Admission 30p

A Christian View on Tax Avoidance

Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint is an ex- HSBC head who has recently stepped down from a leading financial services body. This is amid claims that he was in charge of the HSBC when it enabled tax avoidance. During my articles in the Rostrum I am very unlikely to become involved in politics, particularly party politics. But this is a different issue and is a matter of Ethics which should engage us all. When this issue emerged a few weeks ago it was natural that fingers should point at Lord Green, who also happens to be an Anglican Priest and has been since 1988! He has written books on the ethics of business, he was appointed as a trade minister in the government and has been appointed by the Church of England to chair a report on leadership training for senior clergy which has proved unpopular with some church members. This clearly causes the church a degree of embarrassment but it's opposition to tax evasion, or aggressive tax management strategies, remains firm. And so it should!

As a priest in the Church of England I firmly believe that our faith, and any normal respect for humanity, requires us to work with and for the poorest in our society, the less able and those who have needs. It grieves me to think that thousands of British bank customers have deposited billions of pounds in Swiss bank accounts in order to avoid tax. This is an avoidance of our responsibility towards the "Common Good".

The Christian perspective is quite simple, everything we have is fundamentally God given. Every Sunday, upon receipt of our offertory collection in church, I use the following prayer: "All things come from thee and of thine own do we give thee". Or to put it another way, God created everything and so everything is fundamentally God's. So, however much of the worlds resources we appropriate for ourselves, or however much we label as "ours", God's ownership is primary. At best our ownership is simply temporary stewardship. Therefore, all that we have in our private Swiss bank accounts needs to be justified because all that we do have we actually have on loan. The big question is what we do with this money. Or, let's put it another way, for whom is this money good news?

The Revd Jim Brown

Lunches for Lent Wednesdays: 4, 11, 18 March

between 12.30 and 2pm at the Church

A warm welcome awaits you so why not pop in for a chat over soup and bread, or cheese, tomato and bread? Cheese sandwiches will be available for children and tea, coffee, squash and small cakes will also be on the menu.

Everyone welcome.

Voluntary donations invited for charities.

On 11 March this will be for Christian Aid's Super Soup Lunch Appeal

COFFEE BREAK - Alternate Wednesdays - 10.30-12.30 4 and 18 March

We have a really pleasant morning so do come along, it would be good to see you. We meet on alternate Wednesdays in the church for tea, coffee homemade cake and fellowship. Many who go along have rekindled their interest in all sorts of crafts (we do knitting, sewing, crochet, pergamano, etc). Some knit or sew and chat - others just go along for a natter. In the Autumn we knitted hats which were donated to Maidstone Christian Care to give to the homeless. The tiny knitted blankets and tiny teddies which we made were donated to Pembury Hospital for the Special Care Unit. Some will be used to wrap around stillborn babies. In January Jean from Hadlow came along and collected small teddies and brightly coloured blankets made from knitted squares. These she was taking personally to a small charity Mayenjane she supports in Swaziland for the orphan children there to enjoy. Everyone is most welcome. Pauline and Gillian

WATCH CLUB

The Club meets in the village hall between 5-7pm and invites young people aged 10 and over to go along for a variety of fun activities. Our next meetings will be on **Sundays 8 and 29 March**. For more details phone Lisa on 07950 852899.

CAROL SINGING FOR DEMELZA CHILDREN'S HOSPICE. The charity and local organiser Bob Bowie, thank everyone for helping to raise **£199.85**.

IN OUR JOYS - FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Baptism - We welcomed into the family of the Church on

15 February Abigail Elizabeth Settle

BENEFICE SERVICES

Visit our website for full details www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

<p>Sunday .1 March</p> <p>8am Communion - East Malling</p> <p>9.45am Family Eucharist – East Malling</p> <p>9.45am Family Service – Teston</p> <p>10am Matins – Wateringbury</p>	<p>Sunday .8 March</p> <p>9.45am Communion - East Malling</p> <p>10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury</p> <p>6.30pm Evening Praise - Teston</p>
<p>Mothering Sunday 15 March</p> <p>8am PB Communion – Wateringbury</p> <p>9.45am Family Service – East Malling</p> <p>9.45am Mothering Sunday - Teston</p> <p>10 am Family.Service – Wateringbury</p>	<p>Sunday .22 March</p> <p>9.45am Communion – East Malling</p> <p>10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury</p> <p>6.30pm .Holy Communion - Teston</p>
<p>Palm Sunday 29 March</p> <p>9.45am Communion - East Malling 9.45am Palm Sunday - Teston</p> <p>9.30 am Parade from Cross Roads then 10am Communion - Wateringbury</p> <p>6pm Faure Requiem sung by Benefice Choir - East Malling</p>	
<p>Every Monday – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – Toddler Praise</p>	
<p>Pilsdon Community - 27 Water Lane, West Malling - Rev Pam Rink invites you to the Barn Chapel to join members of the community for a Communion Service every Wednesday at noon and 6pm on Sundays</p>	
<p>For Baptisms, Weddings and other arrangements with the vicar please attend the Parish Office at the Vicarage on Wednesdays 6.30-7.15pm</p>	

Special Services in Wateringbury

Mothering Sunday 15 March do join us as we give thanks for our Mothers and their special role in our lives.

Tuesday 17 March - Evensong with the choir - 7.30pm

Palm Sunday 29 March our annual parade will leave from the village hall car park at 9.30am to arrive at church in time for a 10am Communion Service.

Benefice Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday 29 March - The Benefice choir will sing **Faure Requiem** at 6pm in East Malling Church

Monday 30 March - 8pm - **Stations of the Cross** - East Malling

Tuesday 31 March - 8pm - **Meditation In Art** - Wateringbury

Wednesday 1 April - 8pm - **Agape Meal** - Teston

Maundy Thursday 2 April 8pm - Communion, washing of feet and vigil until midnight - East Malling

Good Friday 3 April 10am - At the Foot of the Cross - Teston

2pm - Solemn Liturgy - East Malling

2pm - Prayers and Readings - Wateringbury

Saturday 4 April - Children's Easter Project - Wateringbury - 9.30am

EASTER SUNDAY 5 April - 10am Easter Communion

FEBRUARY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Allotments the fencing along the boundary with the public footpath will be inspected and if necessary a quote for repairs will be obtained.

Bash the Trash 11 and 12 April following an article in Rostrum 4 families had volunteered to help, this was very encouraging, however to ensure all parts of the village are given a "Spring Clean" more volunteers would be needed. Please get together with your neighbours and tidy your patch. T & M Council are providing protective gloves, pick up tongs, high viz jackets, bags, etc. Teak oil is available to refurbish seats around the village. Please contact 01622 812027

Crime report The following crimes were reported in January 1 attempted break-in to a property in Phoenix Drive, 1 assault following a New Year party, 1 theft of a motor vehicle and 1 domestic incident.

Drayhorse Meadow Councillors discussed the insurance cover for the stables, etc which had been taken out by the tenant.

Pear Orchard following a request for a reduction in rent for the former Love Lane Allotments land which the Wateringbury Pear Orchards Ltd lease from the council it was agreed that a peppercorn rental will be paid in future and that the council will assist with the cost of planting general trees on the land.

Posters to remind dog owners to pick up after their pets which had been purchased by the council were shown to the meeting and will be put up at key sites in the hope of encouraging all to keep the village free from the hazards of dog mess.

Speedwatch it was agreed that in future the Parish Clerk will photocopy any documents and forms needed by the volunteers.

Sports and Recreation Association plans for the **Village Fete on 7 June** were progressing well. Any village organisation wishing to have a stall at the fete who have not already booked a space should contact 01622 812027 without delay.

Public Discussion Concerns were raised about the buffer zone at the top of Canon Lane and development area F1 of Kings Hill. Borough Councillor Simon Jessel agreed to contact the appropriate department to obtain details of what was proposed.

Next Meeting of the Parish Council is on **Tuesday 3 March at 7.30pm** in the village hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting.

BLACKTHORN COURSES

There are several lovely workshops happening down the road at Blackthorn, St Andrews Road, Barming on Saturdays

Needle Felting; 10am-3.30pm £50pp.

'Hoppy Easter Bunny' – Saturday 21 March – create your own fun bunny for Easter.

'Lady Baa Baa' – Saturday 25 April – make curly sheep with attitude.

'Magnificent Mermaid' – Saturday 30 May – based on our own fuller figures, create your own sea temptress.

'Beautiful Brooches' – Saturday 27th June – needle felt mini animals, landscapes and flowers to create whimsical brooches.

Singing for Wellbeing – Saturday 9 May – 9.30am-3.30pm £10pp – no experience needed, all songs taught by ear.

Baking for Easter – to be confirmed but bookings can be taken now

And brunch is available now at our cafe on Saturday mornings so whether you fancy a fluffy omelette or beans on toast, we can rustle up something tasty while you read your paper! Further details from 01622 725585