



The Abingtons and Hildersham News



www.theabingtons.org.uk

February 2021



Photo by David Farrant

Snowdrops are usually superb in February

Letter from the Editor

On Christmas Eve these daffodils were in full flower in my neighbour's garden, reminding us of springtime delights to come, such as the snowdrops on the cover. At the same time, we had torrential rain, the river burst its banks and nearby fields were flooded as the excellent photo on page 7 shows. The surge in Covid-19 infections led inevitably to another lockdown in January and February, with orders to stay at home and the need for home schooling. We must wash hands, wear masks, and observe social distance. These actions are all designed to keep everyone safe and thank goodness they are now complemented by a programme of vaccinations (see page 5).



Love Abington has reverted to lockdown mode with resumption of prescription collections, the valued listening service, continuing support from Street Co-ordinators and new emphasis on the foodbank (page 6). Contacts for help in Hildersham are on page 15. The County Council offers help with transport to get vaccinations and has financial help available too (pages 8, 9). Thoughtful gifts delivered to many residents in the Abingtons and Hildersham brought comfort over the Christmas period (pages 6, 14).

The churches have, with regret, decided to suspend services in church but continue with a range of virtual services (pages 4, 5, 14, 20). A new Parish Nurse is being recruited and Claire Gillett has sent us a farewell message (page 16). Hildersham records a heartfelt tribute to John Myer (page 13) and expresses appreciation for an American benefactor to the church (page 14).

The Parish Councils remind dog walkers that they must remove dog poo from public places. This includes farm fields which have evidence of inconsiderate behaviour.

Residents of the Abingtons are asked to consider a new route to improving broadband speeds (page 11).

The PCs remind us that the e-bike can still be borrowed for a week at a time and that several people have already enjoyed this opportunity (pages 10, 11).

The Recreation Ground Committee is seeking advice on an imaginative cycling development plan for the Abingtons (page 17).

Despite lockdown restrictions there is much scope for positive thinking.

Valerie Silvey

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Articles for the March 2021 edition of *The Abingtons and Hildersham News* should be sent to the editor no later than Monday 15 February 2021 at news@theabingtons.org.uk. Photos welcome.

From the Seven Churches

When we see people in public these days, whether in the shops, perhaps at the doctors, or on television, invariably we see a kaleidoscope of masks. I've seen all sorts! Plain white or blue; multi-coloured home-made masks; even union jacks. Mostly people recognise the reasons for using them. Yet wearing a face mask during the pandemic has nevertheless touched on a raw nerve. Many of us feel uncomfortable about having to mask our faces. How do we communicate well if our faces are hidden? How do we read someone else's expression; how do we pick up on cues?

Maybe, however, there are some insights to gain. The prevalence of masks might encourage us to pay more attention to our whole body in communication. How do you smile with your eyes?! How do you communicate interest or sympathy with your body? As the Christian faith is incarnational, we remember it's our whole body, our whole self, we bring not only before each other but also before God: in kneeling or lifting hands, in speech or in silence, with our hearts or minds.

Our masks may also remind us of the way we present ourselves to the world. We may talk about 'putting on a brave face'; 'saving face'; or 'losing face'. In the Christian faith, however, we can't 'put on a face' before God. The gospels teach us that in following Jesus, we learn more about the truth of who Jesus is, but also who we are. Turning towards God calls for deep honesty. But if we gradually get used to this, we can also approach one another with deeper honesty, understanding and joy.

During this pandemic but perhaps at any time in our lives, these truths may sometimes recede into the background and sometimes appear in sharp focus. Perhaps this is partly because for now, as the apostle Paul says, we "*see in a mirror, dimly*". Yet, as Paul adds, "*we will see face to face*". As we support and love one another in this difficult time, we may also seek to put aside our home-made, self-serving masks and attend to the presence of each other and to God with openness and joy.

Revd Iain McColl

Granta Vale Ministry Team

Rector **Revd Iain McColl** 890 693: mccoll.iain@gmail.com

Revd Kathy Bishop 892 288: revkathy@hotmail.co.uk

Pioneer Minister in training **Jeanine Kennedy**

893 838: jeaninekenedygv@gmail.com

Licensed Lay Ministers **Steven Wheeler** 290 396: **Alistair Collen** 894 230

Keith Day 891 527: **Rosemary Mead** 891 718

Youth worker Sam Graham 07552 658 811 sgraham@cambridgeyfc.uk

Revd Dr Carrie Pemberton Ford 891 765 Carrieford@cantab.net

Parish Nurse Vacancy, see below

Parish Administrator **Caroline Walshe** 891 443: 7churches.seven@gmail.com

Parish Nurse Vacancy – Part time

We are looking to employ a **Registered Nurse** to work with our Ministry team in partnership both with the local NHS Medical Practice covering the area and with voluntary community groups. For an application pack and full job description please contact Mrs Caroline Walshe Email: 7churches.seven@gmail.com Tel: 01223 891 443 www.grantavale.org.uk

Closing date for applications 31 January 2021, Interviews mid February

News from the Pews

In view of the new lockdown the ministry team felt it was the right thing to do to suspend all services inside our churches for the time being and to continue with our online services. The team will review this in mid-February, with the hope that we may resume services inside our churches in early Spring. This view was arrived at with regret and sadness, but it was felt that it reflects not only our responsibility within our churches but also our responsibility towards our local community and wider society. Our churches do however remain open daily for private prayer and contemplation. Also, you are warmly invited to join our Zoom services every Sunday morning at 10am. For details do contact our church administrator, Cazzy, on 01223 891443. For all details on our seven churches go to grantavale.org.uk. If you don't have access to a computer there is an excellent freephone telephone service of prayers, music and reflection as well as full worship services. This line is open 24 hours a day, the freephone number is 0800 804 8044 and it is called Daily Hope. We are conscious that members of our community want to stay spiritually 'in touch'.

The following tribute was forwarded by Anton King

'Susan Walker, who had lived in Bourn Bridge Road for 45 years, died at her home at the end of October 2020. The cremation was held at Cambridge Crematorium on 12 January 2021. She had no living relatives, so the funeral was attended by only two people and there was no music or Celebrant.

For the past ten years Martin French of Linton Cabs had supported Susan with transport and friendship and he was also present at the crematorium.

Susan was a very private person who loved animals and valued Martin's support.'

Our thoughts and prayers are with Susan and we give thanks for the care that Martin gave her.

Sadly, we have also lost two other long-time Abington residents, our former village policeman Mr Malcolm Mullens of Little Abington and Mrs Sonia Tunnicliffe of Great Abington. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Anne Hall

GRANTA Medical Practices

COVID-19 Vaccinations – Update February 2021

At the time of writing, we are about to embark on the mammoth task of vaccinating our 44,000 patients with the COVID-19 vaccinations. Please be assured that everyone will be vaccinated. However, please remember that we have to vaccinate in accordance with Public Health England's priority list. Details of the priority list can be found on the website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/> or on our website.

Due to the extreme demand for the vaccine around the country we may get deliveries at short notice, which means we may have to contact you at short notice.

Please note that you will NEVER be asked for payment for a COVID-19 vaccination and any texts, phone calls, or letters requesting payment or bank details should be ignored.

Please continue to keep yourself and our community safe by adhering to national restrictions, social distancing, wearing of face masks and hand hygiene.

We would like to thank you all for your patience and understanding whilst you wait for your vaccine during this unprecedented time.

Sandra East, Granta Communications & Patient Liaison
T. 01223 627743 E. capccg.contact.gmp@nhs.net
W. www.grantamedicalpractices.co.uk

Love Abington Update

Prescriptions

Prescriptions will now be available for collection at the Institute on **Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, between 3.30 to 4.30pm**. Please enter at the rear of the building and leave through the front door. Kindly remember to wear a mask. You will need permission from the recipient to collect a prescription on their behalf, which does not have to be in writing. When collecting for someone else, you will be asked for their address. If you have any queries, please call: 07908 029078.

Telephone listening service

We live in such beautiful villages with a wonderful community spirit. Nevertheless, this third lock-down during the gloomy winter months is having a profound effect on our physical, mental and emotional resilience. We have never lived through such a prolonged time of restrictions, uncertainty, and social distance from one another, not even in the Second World War. We have all suffered loss of loved ones, separation from family and friends, loss of job and income or disrupted education for our children. We are all mourning to some degree the life we had and trying to find hope in a future we know will be different, even with the promise of a vaccine. Last March Love Abington set up a telephone listening service which has helped and continues to offer a listening ear to many in our communities. Sometimes we do not want to keep bothering our family or close friends. If you are feeling lonely, anxious, overwhelmed by the demands of home-schooling and working from home, or frightened of what the future holds, there is someone on the end of a telephone line, waiting to hear from you. Please consider ringing 07761 440102. All calls are treated in the strictest confidence. Rosemary Mead will organise a member of the telephone listening team to ring you and arrange a suitable time to contact you on a weekly basis. (There is an old adage 'A problem shared is a problem halved'). Finding someone who will listen can relieve the weight of anxiety even if there is no immediate answer. It is important for us to name our fears but not dwell inside them. If practical problems arise, then our marvellous team of street coordinators will be able to help you with those situations and the telephone listener can put you in touch with them.

Street Coordinators

Please contact your Street Coordinator if you would like assistance with shopping, collecting prescriptions or anything you need help with. If you need your Street Coordinator's contact details, please call Julie: 07761 440102

Food Bank

In these uncertain times, circumstances in many households will be changing and we are keen to support you. If it is challenging for you to get enough food, please get in touch and we can arrange delivery. Please contact: David 01223 892364 or Julie 07761 440102.

Thank you for your kind food and cash donations to the Foodbank. Thanks also to Mak for collecting on our behalf. Please keep the donations coming, both food items (in the basket outside the shop) and cash (in the collection box at the counter).

Every blessing and warmest wishes,
Julie, Jeanine and the Love Abington Team

Thanks for the Christmas gifts

Tony Baker was surprised and delighted to have several parcels and cards delivered by hand before Christmas, some of them from Love Abington. He would like to record his thanks and to register the appreciation which he – and no doubt others – feel for the kindness and community support which prompted this.

Abington in the floods – 24 December 2020



Photo by Peter Brunning

Viewed near Millennium Bridge, the Recreation Ground under water

Abington Naturewatch

Naturewatch has a small group known as Abington RiverCare, a member of the national RiverCare organisation <http://www.rivercare.org.uk/>. The group has two main interests: looking after the 'home' stretch of the River Granta and surveying its flora and fauna. Each year, we run a few sampling sessions to check what is living in our river. Group action has stopped for the time being, but we would welcome more volunteers. For more information please contact:- David Farrant on 892 871 or Peter Brunning via nw@brunning.org.uk.

Bourn Bridge Road Protected Verges



Protected Roadside Verges, (PRVs) represent the largest area of unimproved grassland in the county. This important habitat supports a variety of plants and animals including rare flowers. The PRVs are maintained by the Parish Council with a careful cutting regime. In 2020 Naturewatch recorded 32 species. During lockdown people started walking along the northern side of the verges in Bourn Bridge Road and a bare earth path appeared that is slowly spreading over the verge. The traffic makes it difficult but to help preserve this important verge can we please ask

people to walk on the road if possible. If not, please keep in single file only, up against the hedge. It is very important to preserve this unique habitat for the future.

David Farrant, Naturewatch.

County and District Council

District and County Councillors' Report – January 2021

Happy New Year

Happy new year from your local councillors, Henry and John. With a prolonged episode of lockdown and social restrictions looking to carry on well into 2021, if either of us can be of assistance at all, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Henrybatchelor89@gmail.com and johndbatchelor23@gmail.com

Local Authority Covid Support

At time of writing, we are about to enter the New Year in 'Tier 4', which has its own set of restrictions as laid out by government, which can be seen here - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

This will of course have some impact on people and local business. There is a small support grant for business that is forced to close due to Covid, available from the District Council - <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/businessgrant>

There is also financial support for 'wet pubs' from the District Council, this is to support pubs, and other businesses, whose income is more than 50% from drinks alone - <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/financial-support-for-south-cambridgeshire-s-pubs-now-available/>

Also available from SCDC is a 'Covid Co-Ordinator' who can assist with most things Covid related, including advice and directing to these various grants. Her name is Vicky Hoover – Vicky.hoover@scamb.gov.uk.

There is also support available from the County Council, via their 'Hub' which can be contacted at - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/covid-19-coordination-hub-your-community-needs-you>.

Local Directory

South Cambs. have set up a local business directory to help promote local business during this time of difficulty, which looks set to continue. Businesses can register themselves on the website and be seen publicly - <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/local-business-directory>

Local Plan

The joint Local Plan, being drawn up between South Cambs. and the City councils, is still moving forward. The latest update is that the findings from the consultation last year have now been collated and published. The councils will take this information on board whilst formulating their preferred options, which will likely be published next autumn. If you'd like to see any of the documents, including the proposed locations of developments, you can see all the information here - <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/document-library/>

Resurfacing

As previously reported, the County Council are resurfacing some roads in our area, this is due to occur in the first few months of the year.

Vaccine Transport Volunteers

The County Council are looking for volunteers to help transport elderly people, who are not able to drive, to their Covid vaccination appointments. If you can assist, please register here - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/appeal-for-volunteers-to-transport-people-to-vaccination-appointments>

Uttlesford and West Suffolk Local Plans

Some of you may remember that last year Uttlesford District Council (directly to the south of us, North Essex) submitted plans to a government inspector to allocate 5,000 houses near Great Chesterford as part of their Local Plan. The inspector told them to go away and start again, which they are now doing and are asking for public engagement in this process. Uttlesford still need to allocate these houses somewhere and there is still a risk of them trying to do so on/near to the South Cambridgeshire border, which will directly affect our infrastructure etc etc.

West Suffolk are also going through the same process and need to allocate more housing somewhere in their area, with the likeliest locations being Haverhill and Newmarket.

John and Henry will keep you as up to date as possible from the local authority angle but do keep your ears to the ground!

A1307 Update This is a repeat of last month's report, which told us that the A1307 upgrades, managed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), continue with the next steps being installation of average speed cameras between Haverhill and Linton, a new roundabout at the end of Bartlow Road in Linton and remodelling of the Dean Road junction. The signalised pedestrian crossing at Hildersham is attempting to move ahead but there are difficulties securing the land required. The GCP are trying all possibilities, including compulsory purchase, which will increase the project time as this is not a quick process.

Sunnica Solar Farm Consultation

Not strictly in our area, or District for that matter, but there are proposals for an enormous solar farm based in East Cambridgeshire, across 4 sites. The company is currently consulting on these proposals and anybody can comment here – <https://sunnica.co.uk/proposals/>

Henry and John Batchelor

Reminder

Disruption from Works in Linton Road and Meadow Walk, Abington

CB Groundworks will be completing a sewer connection for the new development on Linton Road, Great Abington. Work is planned to start in Meadow Walk at the side of number 11 in the week commencing 18 January 2021 and is estimated to take between 8 – 10 weeks to complete because of the number of chambers that are required and the depth of excavation that is needed in a tight side road.

Traffic will be managed with 2-way and 3-way traffic lights. There will be Advance warning signs and letter drops to all affected residents.

Contact for further information.

Cambridgeshire County Council Streetworks inspector: Ben Ely

That daily exercise hour...

With the latest lockdown lots of us are walking more. If you are walking with your dog, please remember to keep it on the lead. And while we are on the subject of dogs, when this magazine hits your doormat, there should be a new dog-poo bin on the High Street to make picking up after your dog all the easier. Please do always pick up waste, not forgetting to take the bag home or put it in a designated dog-poo bin.

Footpath to Chalky Road

There is a new No Access sign on the footpath to Chalky Road. This is to prevent people attempting to drive up it - satnavs seem to have been sending delivery drivers up there recently. The parish council has informed the Highways Agency who should, we hope, soon be installing more permanent signage.

The Continuing Situation

While Covid-19 and the government's response to it continues to play snakes and ladders with our lives, our futures and our children's futures, it's been great to see how, as individuals, we have risen to the challenge of looking out for each other and tried to mitigate the worst of the impact where we can. Keep up the good work, everybody, and keep an eye out for neighbours who may be struggling. A kind word or a small bit of practical support can go a long way. A big thanks, as ever, to our wonderful village shop, The Three Tuns, Love Abington and all those who have given their valuable time to help those in need.

E-bikes in the Abingtons

Book your free week with the GAPC-owned e-bike to see if an e-bike will fit with your lifestyle either for commuting or for exploring the area. Loans run from Saturday morning to Saturday morning and the e-bike will be sanitised for Covid-19 safety between loans. This scheme lasts only until end August 2021 so don't miss out! For more info and to book your week with the bike please email ebike@theabingtons.org.uk.

Parish Council Under Covid

Parish Council life continues to operate remotely via Zoom meetings which will be advertised three days in advance on the Parish Council noticeboard and via the village website. Anyone wishing to put questions to the Parish Council should pass them to the Clerk at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting. Anyone wishing to observe the meeting should contact the Clerk at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting and they will be provided with a link to observe via the internet.

Planning

Please attend (virtually) a planning meeting if you would like to make a comment that we can incorporate into our Parish Council responses. It is also a good idea to make your comment on the South Cambs. website (link below) as this gives it more weight in addition to the PC response. You can also report planning infringements to the planning enforcement team via this site. For more information on the applications below, use the reference given below at :- <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/planning/view-or-comment-on-a-planning-application/>

Parish Council recommendations

20/04859/HFUL – 34 South Road - Proposed garage, garden equipment store and home office/ gym. Resubmission of 20/02099/HFUL. Recommended approval

20/05315/HFUL – 10 Chalky Road - Single storey rear extension and internal alterations. Recommended approval

20/05065/S73 – 34 South Road – (S/1848/FL) to remove the limitation of the accommodation of the staff accommodation to be retained. Recommended refusal

District Council decisions

20/04104/FUL - 19 South Road - Erection of one 2 storey dwelling house Land Adj. 19 South Road. Resubmission of 20/033 62/FUL. Amendment - Reduction in gross internal floor area and clarification of ridge height compared to the existing dwelling. PC recommended refusal. District Council approved.

20/04402/HFUL, 97 High Street - Single storey rear extension. PC recommended approval. District Council approved.

20/04441/HFUL, 42a North Road - Erection of detached garage. PC recommended approval. District Council approved.

Great Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Village Institute or via Zoom during Covid restrictions

Bernie Talbot (Chairman) tel: 892 647

Planning Committees: These are arranged as required when applications are received. See notice board for dates or contact the Parish Clerk.

Next Parish Council meeting: Monday 15 March 2021 at 7.15pm

There will be opportunities at the start and close of the meeting for members of the public to speak to the council about matters of concern. Notices, agendas and minutes are posted on the Parish Council notice board located at the entrance to Magna Close or available from the parish clerk.

Paula Harper (Clerk): harper802@btinternet.com (892 000)

Would you like better broadband?

Great and Little Abington Parish councils would like to know if you, as a private home or a local business would like improved broadband services. (please note this does not include the former LSA; Rod Willcox has already engaged with the scheme for these residents)

Rural premises with broadband speeds of less than 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) can apply for vouchers worth up to £3,500 for each SME, and up to £1,500 per residential premise to support the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections.

- Group schemes are when two or more residents and/or SMEs get together to combine their vouchers towards the shared cost of installation. Single connections are not eligible for additional funding.
- Gigabit-capable broadband connections offer the fastest and most reliable speeds available. This means that the connection can handle speeds of 1,000 Mbps, but users only need to sign up to speeds they can afford. As demand increases, users can choose the option to pay for more speed as required.
- Vouchers don't give residents actual money to spend – payment goes straight to the broadband supplier towards covering the installation costs

If you are interested then please email clerk@littleabington.clara.co.uk with your name, postal address and confirmation that you are interested by February 21st.

The Parish councils can then see if there is enough demand and start the next phase of the plan.

Spaldwick <https://www.spaldwick.com/broadband> has successfully taken this approach to improve the service to the whole village

Little Abington Parish Council

Around the village

e-bikes: The e-bikes team has now been lending out the e-bike for five months and it is only now when it is particularly cold and wet that bookings are slowing down. A handful of people have borrowed the bike twice making a total to 14 households in the whole village. The bike is available till the summer and through lockdown so if you are interested please email the team on ebike@theabingtons.org.uk. Gill Smith has joined our small team and is helping with the Saturday handover. If anyone else is interested in joining us, please email the address above.

Love Abington: We were delighted to contribute £100 towards Christmas hampers and baking boxes for residents in Great and Little Abington.

Police priorities: The Acting Commissioner is seeking views about crime and how it is being tackled in the county. If you have a view please fill in a short questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DNTBBTX.

There was no meeting in December

SCDC planning decisions.

20/0363/HFUL 9 West Field. Agreed

20/04042/PRI01A 39 West Field. Agreed

20/03409/FUL Granta Park, Portway. Agreed

20/01429/FUL 27 Cambridge Rd. Agreed

Little Abington Parish Council Meetings

Held in Abington Institute or via Zoom during lockdown

Next Meeting: Monday 22 February 2021, Parish Council at 7.30pm

Sheila Bolden (Chairman) 07754 659 929 Email: shelen@btinternet.com

Genevieve Dalton (Clerk) 07703 486562 Email: clerk@littleabington.clara.co.uk

Next meetings (via Zoom)

Monday 22 February

Monday 22 March

Details to be confirmed regarding start times and venue on the Abingtons website and the parish council noticeboard.

The meeting agendas and papers are published on the Abingtons website:

www.theabingtons.org.uk

Community Oil Order January 2021

Having consulted five oil suppliers Rod Willcox settled on Goffs who supplied 52,000 litres at 39ppl plus Vat making it 40.95ppl. Next order in May.

John Myer 1942 - 2020

The Remembrance Service in Hildersham on the 8 November was made especially poignant when I announced to the congregation that John had died that morning. The shock and sadness felt by those attending was palpable and made more so because, although most of us knew that John had been ill for so long, we were also used to his fighting off whatever was thrown at him and expected that situation to go on for ever. Sadly, John's body could take no more but, what a legacy he has left to so many.

When I first met John, I remember being struck by the 'basso profundo' voice and the way in which, by the gentlest but searching questions he managed to say little about himself but discover a great deal about me. This technique was used so many times especially during his illnesses when John would deftly deflect questions regarding himself and transform them into solicitous interest in the well-being of others. John had a real interest in people, he wanted to know about them and what made them tick - what they thought and why they thought it. John possessed a dry sense of humour which, combined with the ability to maintain a 'straight face' left me on more than one occasion being 'wound up' only to see the twinkle in the eye and the wide smile break out leaving me, and a good many others to realise we had taken the bait yet again.

John had an outstandingly successful professional life in education for which he had a passion; I can imagine the support and inspiration he must have given so many students over so many years and the fact that he was working until his death speaks volumes.

At home in Hildersham, John quietly and without any fuss contributed to so many aspects of village life, be that by adopting a specific role such as Parish Councillor or Trustee of the Church Trusts, or by so many wise words of advice and quiet unobtrusive attendance at all kinds of village events – imagine a Hildersham Lecture without John's welcome and ability to relieve us of our entry fee. John was a man of integrity and commitment and, although unfailingly courteous, was resolute in his views and standards which he would articulate with a clarity that left little scope for misunderstanding.

John was an accomplished, lifelong singer. He had a comprehensive knowledge of much of the traditional church music and was adamant that music used in worship should be of the highest standard. As a committed member of the Granta Vale Churches Choir, John was the anchor man of the bass section but had clear views regarding some of my attempts to introduce items which he regarded as "happy-clappy". In such cases I was left in little doubt as to the verdict when an acerbic '*sotto voce*' comment would cause a wave of laughter along the alto line bringing proceedings to a grinding halt while John stood displaying the face of an innocent.

John, we miss you so much but, what fun it was to know you!

Keith Day

Hildersham Focus

Children's Church Council

As mentioned in the January issue, in the lead up to Christmas, Hildersham residents all received mince pies and a parcel label. The invitation was for residents to leave a short message on the label and then visit the church to tie it onto the Christmas Tree. By Christmas Day, the tree was decorated with many messages of peace and hopefulness. We know that people enjoyed reading the messages and the opportunity to soak up the comforting and uplifting atmosphere of our very special church.

One lovely story emerged; a former villager who lived here as a child found that the tranquillity of the church stirred memories that encouraged her to stand by the font and sing out loud the first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City', reliving her personal memory of the annual Christmas Carol Service from several decades ago.

The CCC hope to have a Zoom meeting in February to discuss their continued practical involvement in church and village life.

Gary Blankenship

In November, Hildersham Church were saddened to hear of the death, in Nashville Tennessee, of Gary Blankenship. Gary was a student at Downing College in the 1950s after which he enjoyed an illustrious career as a world-renowned airport architect. It was a chance visit to Hildersham Church, whilst at Downing, that Gary fell in love with the church and thereafter, throughout his life, referred to it as his 'spiritual home'. Gary worshipped at Hildersham when he was in the UK, and was a generous, devoted and committed benefactor of our church. His munificence has been crucial in helping us give our church the care it so deserves.

Gary Blankenship is remembered with great affection by his friends at Holy Trinity Hildersham, so much so that for the Christmas Tree Festival held in 2012 a tree was decorated in his honour with stars and stripes and an accompanying message of appreciation for his long and generous association with the church. Gary visited the church regularly when he was in the UK, was part of the worshipping community and is much missed.



Church Opening

We know that many have found a few moments solace at Holy Trinity over the last months; do please continue to visit. The church remains open during daylight hours. Please do follow the government guidelines to keep everyone safe at this time.

Hildersham Parish Council

Report on the Hildersham Parish Council meeting held on 12 January 2021.

Please remember that any Hildersham residents needing to self-isolate can contact the Hildersham volunteers who will deliver food, prescriptions and posting mail. If any Hildersham resident needs assistance getting to their appointment for their Covid-19 vaccine, please contact Billie Chapman. The volunteer coordinators are: Mark Logan (891897) or Billie Chapman (07834 210582).

The District Council can also offer practical support to people and businesses. Vicky Hoover, the District Council's 'Covid Co-Ordinator' can assist with most things Covid related, including advice and directing people to various grants: Vicky.hoover@scamb.gov.uk There are small support grants for businesses that are forced to close due to Covid, available from the District Council - <https://www.scamb.gov.uk/businessgrant> .

The precept level for Hildersham will remain unchanged at £13,000 for 2021-2022. It was agreed that a rolling programme of tree work would be undertaken over the year to safeguard the trees on the Recreation Ground. Plans were discussed to create a triangular copse on the boundary opposite the river, using free trees being offered by numerous groups including the Woodland Trust. The area would be fenced until the trees were established.

The paths should be swept through the village in the next few weeks to clear the leaves and debris. A local landowner has been contacted about repairing the two broken gates near Meadowlands and the field where the donkeys graze. Since the meeting, Councillors have become aware that the bus shelter lights are not working and hope to get them fixed soon.

The Council has been unable to hold a public meeting to register Parish Councillors as the Trustees to the two Trusts that will take responsibility for the Recreation Ground land and the allotment land, North and South Holding. Once it is safe to hold public meetings once more this will be completed.

A meeting of the Local Liaison Forum will be held on 26 January about improvements to the A1307. Local Councillors plan to make their views heard about the need for a safe pedestrian crossing near Hildersham with the greenway that seems to be essential to justify the cost of the project.

If you notice a fault with the highways, such as pot holes, you can report them using the following link: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults>

The next meeting of Hildersham Parish Council will be on 9 March and is likely to be another remote meeting. Parishioners are very welcome to join us. We use 'zoom.uk' and the meeting ID and password are on the agenda, on the noticeboard and on the Parish Council website : <https://hildershamparishcouncil.org.uk>. You are welcome to raise matters by emailing or contacting the Clerk with details of your query/concern before the meeting.

Paula Harper (Clerk): harper802@btinternet.com (892 000)

“Time to say Goodbye”

Well, the time has come to say goodbye. I say this with a heavy heart as I have been working as the Parish Nurse here for four years and supported the planning of the service almost nine years ago while at St Mary’s Ely. After ten years as a Parish Nurse, I have come to the end of that pioneering ministry as well as 43 years as a registered nurse.

I have developed many deep friendships and have found a real sense of “family” in the villages; I will miss you all but have many fond memories. Thank you for the generosity you have shown me, not only in your kind gift (with which I am overwhelmed) but also by sharing your lives with me and trusting me with them. There have been highs and lows, but I think the most enjoyable things have been meeting at the Community Hubs and being welcomed into so many of your homes, sharing your joys and your suffering. I feel very privileged; you have made every day worthwhile, thank you.

I am retiring in order to spend more time with my husband Andy. During September Andy had an emergency admission to Addenbrookes hospital, which has left us acutely aware of how short this life can be. We plan to travel more in our caravan (when allowed) and to walk our dogs in God’s amazing creation, while we are fit enough to do so!

I am thrilled that the Parish Nursing Service for the Granta Vale Benefice, will continue and am sure that the right person will come forward to continue and develop the role. This project would not have been possible without the financial and practical backing given by all who have contributed in any way whether that be Local Authorities, Parish Councils, PCCs, Charitable Trust plus of course all the generous individual donors – I am so grateful to you all.

I have been unfailingly supported in my work here by so many people including everyone at Granta Medical Practice, the Ministry Team, Hildersham PCC who have employed me and of course the Parish Nurse Management Group whose members have always been there for me. I have come to know some extraordinary people in the villages and in recent times have had the privilege of working with the volunteer initiatives that have been such an amazing comfort to so many during the COVID lockdowns. I am thrilled that these continue and epitomize what compassionate communities you all live in.

And last but far from least, many of you know that I heard from God, that I should train to be a Parish Nurse and how he called me to work in these villages I thank him constantly for that calling and know when you believe in Him you find peace, joy, freedom and truth that change your lives forever. I will always have the villages in my heart and will continue to pray for you all. God bless, ...

Claire Gillett, Parish Nurse.

PTFA

Dear Parents/Carers and Community Members,

Thank you so much for your continued support of Great Abington Primary School PTFA. Unfortunately, we are going to have to cancel our planned non-uniform day and month long read-a-thon for February. Our view is that most parents have enough on their plate with trying to home school and work at the same time. We will re-schedule it later in the year when we are once again in happier times.

You can still support the school through our online, lockdown-friendly lottery at www.yourschoolottery.co.uk. Your School Lottery tickets cost £1 a week, are safely purchased online and enter you into two raffles; the local school's (roughly £15-£20 depending on the number of tickets purchased in total) and the national school lottery (worth £25,000).

If you would like to make a direct donation to the school, please use www.goldengiving.com and search for Great Abington PTFA. All donations are greatly appreciated.

Cory Rivers

For the children and adults of Abington - Cycling into the future

The Abington Recreation Ground Committee is looking for input into a cycling development plan for the village. If you are interested in cycling or want to develop your cycling skills we would like to hear from you.

Please email PumpTrack.Feedback@greatabington.school if you want to learn more or to leave any feedback. You can see the proposed pump track development plan at [The Abingtons | Pump Track Proposal](#). There will also be a questionnaire to give us an idea of the interest levels.

As part of the plan we would like to be able to help provide training, and support usage groups and clubs for:

1. Cycling for pleasure on road and cycle lanes
2. Commuter cycling
3. Off road Mountain bike cycling
4. BMX and pump track cycling
5. Racing and competitive cycling
6. Cycling in later life
7. Assisted cycling (electric bikes)
8. Scooters and wheelchair
9. Others

With thanks from The Abington Recreation Ground Committee, Alan Cooke

Partridges under the Covers

Virtual February meetings will take place on 3rd, 10th at 8pm. Prior pre-reading/video material will be issued shortly before as usual. For details of the subjects see the Abington website <http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/clubs/partridge-group/> To be included contact starlings36@gmail.com

A Partridge

Reading Group

9 February	<i>Tuscan Rose</i> Belinda Alexandra	Lisa Pechey
9 March	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i> Delia Owens	Rachel Haining
13 April	<i>Machines Like Me</i> Ian McEwan	Liz Obstfeld

Please join us on Zoom at 5pm to discuss *Tuscan Rose* or email your comments to the group beforehand.

Valerie Hefford

Village News on the website To see the *News* before a printed copy is available and to see the photographs in colour, go to www.theabingtons.org.uk/news and follow the link to the pdf for the month you want

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – February 2021

		Venue – via Zoom	Time	Page
Wed	3	Partridge Group	8.00pm	17
Tue	9	Reading Group	8.00pm	17
Wed	10	Partridge Group	8.00pm	17
Mon	22	Little Abington Parish Council	7.30pm	13

Contacts for classes on page 19.

Institute bookings: – contact preferably by email: institute@theabingtons.org.uk or phone 01223 790 711

Contacts for Café – Gaynor Farrant 07817 517 871 or gaynorfarrant198@btinternet.com and Gill Smith 892 759 or richardandgill.smith@live.co.uk

Wheelie bin dates for February 2021 (Abingtons and Hildersham)

Mon 1	Mon 8	Mon 15	Mon 22
Black	Green/Blue	Black	Blue

Abington & Hildersham WI

2021 has brought little change in our daily lives due to the continued lockdown restrictions, but I hope that, by the time you read this, many of you will have been vaccinated against the Coronavirus and be feeling more confident and hopeful for the future.

New Year is normally the time for lively discussion of the new NFWI Resolutions and voting for the one which we feel could really make a difference. This year there were five Resolutions put forward, all important and worthwhile, but as we have had no monthly meetings votes were cast by email and telephone. Sadly, there was not a great response, but the majority voted for Resolution 2: **Now's the time to Act! Protect your nature space to create wildlife-friendly communities.** UK wildlife is in decline: 60% lost in the last 40 years; a £250m drop in funding for nature conservation in the last 10 years; poor land management. However, there are several simple things that WI members can do to help local wildlife and protect biodiversity and the environment. You can find some of these here: <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions>

Through the SOS for Honeybees campaign, there are also pollinator-friendly wildlife resources available on My WI. It will be several months before we know the final outcome of the national vote, but in the meantime, during lockdown in our own gardens and village surroundings, we can act now to protect our nature space and create wildlife-friendly communities.

The WI Committee is busy re-drawing a programme for 2021 ready for when it safe to reconvene our meetings and activities - watch this space!

Marilyn Broadhurst

Contacts for village organisations on page 19 – If I have not listed the persons currently involved please let me know so the list can be updated. Ed.

Church Services for February 2021

DATE	<i>Gt. Abington</i> 	<i>Lt. Abington</i> 	<i>Hildersham</i> 	Readings <i>Which you may care to read at home.</i>
7 th February	CHURCH SERVICES SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE			Proverbs 8.1,22-31 John 1.1-14
14 th February	<p>As a consequence of the Covid 19 pandemic all normal services in our churches are currently suspended although the churches remain open for individual private prayer. We do however invite you to join together with us in your own homes between 10.am and 10.30 am on Sundays for a "Time of Prayer" and on Thursday at 9.00 pm for Compline when, although not in Church we can all be together in spirit. If desired you can join these services online – see newsletter for details.</p> <p>If you would like more information or a newsletter please contact Caroline Walshe – Church Administrator 7churches.seven@gmail.com 01223 891443</p>			2 Kings 2.1-12 Mark 9. 2-9
17 th February Ash Wednesday				Joel 2.1-2, 12-17 John 8.1-11
21 st February Lent I				Genesis 9.8-17 Mark 1.9-15
28 th February				Genesis 17.1-7,15-16 Mark 8.31-end

Church Flower Rota

	<i>Great Abington</i>	<i>Little Abington</i>	<i>Hildersham</i>
7 th February	Anne Hall and	Charlotte Adams and	Helen Humphrys
14 th February	Patsy Randall	Fiona Snell	Kirsten Newble
21 st February	Lent – no flowers	Helen Rogers (clean only)	Lent – no flowers
28 th February	Lent – no flowers	Helen Rogers (clean only)	Lent – no flowers

Churchwardens

<i>Little Abington</i>	Graham Ross	41 Church Lane, Little Abington	891564
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Assistant Church Wardens

<i>Great Abington</i>	Anne Hall	12 Magna Close, Great Abington	892275
	Patsy Randall	77 High Street, Great Abington	07765 345 714
<i>Little Abington</i>	Mary Miles	36 Church Lane, Little Abington	891083
	Marilyn Broadhurst	34 West Field, Little Abington	893214

Parish Nurse

We are currently recruiting a new Nurse, if you need help now please make contact with the following:	For Health Issues: Kelly Austin at Granta Medical, Linton Site	0300 234 5555
	For Spiritual help: Revd Ian MacColl or any of the Ministry Team via Parish Administrator	890693 891443