

# The Loop

April 2018

£1.00



*Biddenham Upper students were guests of honour in the Speaker's House. Why? See p5.*



## Bulky Waste Collections

There will be bulky waste collections in Biddenham and Great Denham over the weekend of 12th/13th May.



## Save the date!

The 2018 Biddenham Show will be held on Sunday 9th September. Don't miss it!

## Gold Lane Planning Application

Hundreds of people who objected to the Gold Lane Planning Application will now be receiving a letter from the Borough listing the further (and formerly missing) planning documents that the applicant has now submitted.

The Borough letter essentially reconfirms that your objection has been registered. You do not need to do anything. Your objection will still hold.

Jon Gambold



*What's going on here? See page 14.*

## Church flowers

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Church Flower Fund by buying the home-made marmalade, chutney or jellies. The amount raised each year usually covers the funds for one of the major festivals. Flowers, as you know, are never cheap, despite our supplementing with garden greenery et al.



If you missed buying earlier this year or your stocks are low, there are still some jars available. They may be on sale a little longer at the Gardeners Association meetings, the Women's Group or the First Friday lunches. Failing that, please contact Sue Squire on 01234 342373.

Debbi Clifton

'The Loop' is published by the Parish Church of St James as a service to the communities of Biddenham and Great Denham  
The editor welcomes contributions from residents and friends via email to [loopeditor@gmail.com](mailto:loopeditor@gmail.com)



Join us for our  
**Easter Day**  
**All Age Service**  
 9.00am  
 1 April  
 St James's Church

## Charity Craft Fair at the Three Tuns

Easter Monday, 2nd April 11.00am to 3.30pm  
 in aid of St John's Hospice, Moggerhanger.  
 All welcome.  
 £10 per pitch if you have crafts to sell or  
 demonstrate.  
 To book a pitch contact Jane Wall on 07871  
 644082 or email [janelinwall@gmail.com](mailto:janelinwall@gmail.com).

## The Parish Church of St James, serving Biddenham & Great Denham

Vicar	Rev Eric Lomax <a href="mailto:ericjohnlomax64@aol.com">ericjohnlomax64@aol.com</a>	Tel: 852241
Readers	Christopher Dawe Paul Fricker	Tel 363890 Tel 342843
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Pioneer Ministers	Suzette Maguire David Maguire	<a href="mailto:manorsuzette@btinternet.com">manorsuzette@btinternet.com</a> <a href="mailto:hedgesplathog29@hotmail.com">hedgesplathog29@hotmail.com</a>
	<a href="http://www.stjamesbiddenham.com">www.stjamesbiddenham.com</a>	

## Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends

As it is the Easter season, I am going to write about an artist who has a reputation for having had not a religious bone in his body.

Pablo Picasso is known for his vivid avant-garde paintings that seem to portray a kind of defined dualism between outer aesthetics and the inner self.

Many of his pictures are erotic, showing his countless lovers, and his well-documented lifestyle shows him to have been egotistical and narcissistic. Being a Spaniard, Picasso had been deeply influenced by Catholicism, but his reaction to traditional morality made Picasso, for God, a tough nut to crack.

In the 1930s, driven by the rise of Nazism, the soulful surrealists like Dali, Matisse, and Picasso became increasingly pessimistic. For those who, like Picasso, had sought the creative culture of Paris certainly the rise of national socialism undermined the freedom that they had previously enjoyed. There was an unpleasant taste in the air, and Picasso poured that raw emotion into his artwork.

One image that had a particular impact on Picasso was a painting of the crucifixion by the 16th century, Renaissance artist, Matthias Grunewald. Grunewald had produced his work for an altar piece at the monastery of St. Anthony at Isenheim. What impressed Picasso was how Grunewald had ignored other idealised classical impressions of the cross and painted the crucifixion as it was. There was no mythologised nimbus around Christ's head, no cherubs or angels, rather there was the agonising truth of the suffering, distorted Christ on the cross without hope or promise; 'My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?'

There was something in this expression of the suffering Christ that penetrated the narcissistic ego of Picasso and inspired him to produce his own image of the crucifixion, one of around 50 that he produced in his lifetime. The image was, in many ways, typical Picasso. It possessed the same vivid colours and simplistic lines of many of his other works, but at the centre is an utterly monochrome, tortured, crucified Christ. This dark, colourless element was, at that moment, the beating heart of Picasso's world. It was his own inner conflict and suffering. Religiously, Picasso may have been a tough nut to crack, but there was something about the suffering God that still managed to reach into him.

That, to me, is the power of the cross. Through the suffering Christ, God reaches beyond our ego and our ultimate selfishness, and penetrates our impenetrable hearts. We see, in the cross, a God who has entered into solidarity with us, and through the cross understands fully what it is to be human. St Paul speaks of the cross as being a foolish hypothesis in terms of human wisdom, but to us who encounter Christ on the hill of Calvary, it is the wisdom of God and the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16)

God bless, Eric



## Don't forget the Foodbank



Please continue to bring in-date non-perishable food. The container is at the back of the church.

You can find the latest list of items needed by Bedford food bank at [https:// bedford.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/](https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/)



## Song, dance & poetry. All for BOLD.

Did you miss it? If so, you missed a real treat. The local choir *Heart and Music* provided a wonderful, fun performance of song, some dancing and a little poetry – oh, and some twirling of umbrellas – on 17th March for around 70 people.

Biddenham Village Hall was very full as the choir of 12, with their Musical Director, Malcolm Crane, needed space to perform and also room for two keyboards. The repertoire included a wide range of popular and joyous songs, from 'Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy' to 'Rainy Days and Mondays' and 'Bye Bye Blackbird'. And then there was 'Umbrella Music', a dance routine complete with twirling of some very colourful umbrellas and music composed by Malcolm.

Why was all this happening?

Well, you may have come across the local charity BOLD (*Bedfordshire Opportunities for Learning Disabilities*) which is raising £3m to build a new care and support centre for those with learning disabilities, autism or challenging behaviour. This will be on the site of what was the Angler's Rest pub, near the Fairfield Park Sainsbury's supermarket. (Incidentally, do call in to the café in the former pub for a wide range of drinks, snacks and meals.)

*Heart and Music* kindly donate their lively performances to such charities, so the organisers of the event were able to present BOLD with a surplus of £600. £3m may sound a big target but, as they say, "every little helps"! Thank you so much to all those who attended the evening and who generously made donations to BOLD.

If you are interested in the work of BOLD or can support the project, do please contact Paul Sutherland, the Capital Appeal Manager, on 01234 352899 or by email on paul@bo4ld.org.uk. The BOLD website is www.bo4ld.org.uk .

Peter Leverkus

## Prayer of the month

### Christ the Dayspring

Blessed and glorious are you, O Christ;  
You have come to my heart, Dayspring from on high.  
Fountain of eternal love, how can I forget you?  
You graciously remember me, and give yourself to me.

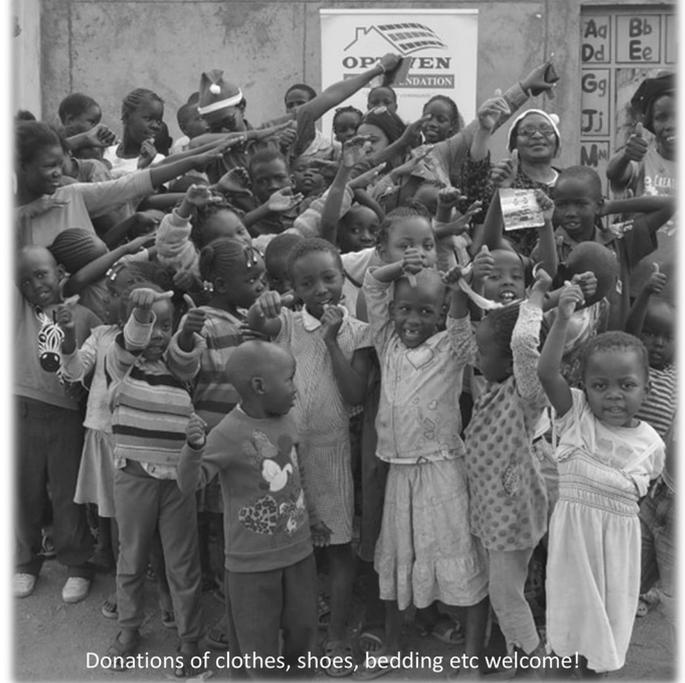
You have dealt so lovingly with me your servant,  
And have shown me such favour and friendship -  
More than I could hope for, and more than I deserve.  
How can I repay such graciousness, most kind Jesus?

Grant that your grace may be with me, and work with me,  
and stay with me to the end  
Grant that I may always want and desire whatever is most  
acceptable and pleasing to you.

*from Paths of the Heart*

## Benefit Lunch

To raise awareness of the  
**Soweto Anti-Aids Children's Home**  
Kenya



Donations of clothes, shoes, bedding etc welcome!

**12 May 2018**

**Bedford Athletic Rugby Club, Wentworth Drive**

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# This month in the garden



There is still snow on the grass as I write and a bitter northerly wind. This is not what we should expect near the end of March but we have the prospect of a return to normal temperatures quite soon and I sincerely hope that, as you read this, things will be back to normal. They won't be truly normal though because everything in the garden is bound to be behind what it would normally be. We can speed some things up by sowing them under glass and transplanting into open ground later on but you need to be careful about that as some crops will not transplant properly. This particularly applies to root vegetable like carrots and parsnips; they have to be sown directly into the place where they will grow. Whatever you do things will grow eventually and it's surprising how nature catches itself up.

Crops that can successfully be started off under glass in seed trays or pots are brassicas (all the things in the cabbage family), lettuce and peas. A good trick with peas is to fill a length of plastic guttering with compost, sow the seeds in this and then slide the growing plants out of the guttering into a little trench where you want them to grow. Remember that many types of peas will need staking; best with hazel pea sticks. Courgette, cucumber and runner beans can all be started in multipurpose compost in pots in the greenhouse but only in the last week or so of April.

Annual flower seeds can also be started in seed trays and planted out later. If you sowed sweet peas in October or January these will be ready for planting out as early as

possible in April (normally in the latter part of March). Sweet peas need support. They can be grown up permanent structures like trellis or tree stumps, or even other plants, or on supports put up especially for them. This can be either a pyramid of bamboos, perhaps six to eight plants with one to each bamboo about nine inches apart in a circle, or in a line with strong supports for wire at either end. In this case the plants can be trained up vertical string or wide mesh netting strung between the supports.

April is the time to be getting dahlias on the move again. If you have overwintered dahlias in pots in a frost free place they will probably have started shooting by now. Bring them into the light but don't put them outside, where they will be exposed to the possibility of frost until late May. They can be grown in the open ground or in large containers. Dry tubers, whether just bought or coming out of store, should be put in compost in pots and watered. As plants start growing they will probably produce quite a few shoots but these need to be restricted, at the most, to three and just one will make a strong plant. Cut the shoots off at ground level and use them as cuttings if you want to increase the number of plants. Cut the shoots at an angle with a sharp knife and remove the lower leaves to give bare stem for three or four centimetres. Dust the cut end in hormone rooting powder and stick five or six cuttings into damp multi-purpose compost in a plastic pot, using a pencil or stick as a dibber to make a hole in the compost. Cover the pot with a plastic bag but take this off and dry it fairly frequently to stop the plants from rotting. Check the compost for dampness but don't keep the soil wet.

Perennial flower plants will be coming in to growth and now is the time to put in stakes or other supports for plants that won't stand up on their own. You can get excellent metal supports but they are often expensive and there are lots of DIY methods involving sticks and twine or bamboos. If you have access to hazel bushes, twiggy green sticks set up round the edge of a plant, bent in towards the middle and entwined at a level below the maximum height of the plant make strong and unobtrusive supports.

You will probably have pruned roses by now but it's not quite too late. Plants will benefit from a sprinkling of rose fertiliser and mulching with well-rotted farm manure or compost. I also suggest a sprinkling of all flower beds with chicken pellets. I use chicken pellets in the vegetable garden too. Garden compost is good anywhere; dug in or used as a mulch.

Jeremy Arthern



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### Would you like to make a difference?

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Please call Jackie on 01234 868820 for more information.



**Water**

Hurrah, at last the water in the pond has reached a more respectable level for the time of the year. The ducks and moorhens are gliding around contentedly!



**Frog foray**

The annual Frog Foray, a chance to explore the pond and its inhabitants at night, is taking place on Friday 6th April from 9.00pm. Children, please bring a responsible adult and a torch.

**Work mornings**

The very next day, Saturday 7th April from 10.00am at the pond, it's our Spring work morning. We'll be tidying up the site and any help you can give us would be very much appreciated.

And, well in advance, a date for your diary, our Autumn work morning will be held on Saturday 10th November.

**Gillian Quince**

After 11 years of sterling service Gillian has retired from our Management Committee. We thank her very much for all her hard work and for her contributions to our discussions and the progress made over those years. And we are very happy that Gillian and husband Peter will continue to be volunteers at our various events and with our various activities.

The Pond Team  
 The Friends of the Biddenham Village Pond  
[www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com](http://www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com)  
[www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond](http://www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond)

**Biddenham History Society**

The Biddenham History Society will meet on Monday 16th April at 8.00pm in the Church Barn. To mark the centenary of some women being given the vote in 1918, Bob Ricketts will talk about the Women's Suffrage Movement in Bedfordshire.

Programme cards for the other meetings of the Society this year can be obtained from Kathy Fricker and the meetings are also listed on the village website.

Kathy Fricker

**Biddenham students win Speaker's award**

Out of over 200 applications nationally the Biddenham Student Forum has won the prestigious Speaker's School Action Award.

The application was written by Year 13 student Anila Aswad, who identified exam stress as leading to increased levels of anxiety in young people. She was part of a 20 strong delegation of students that delivered a presentation on the need for improved mental health support services in schools to local MPs Alistair Burt and Mohammad Yasin in July 2017.

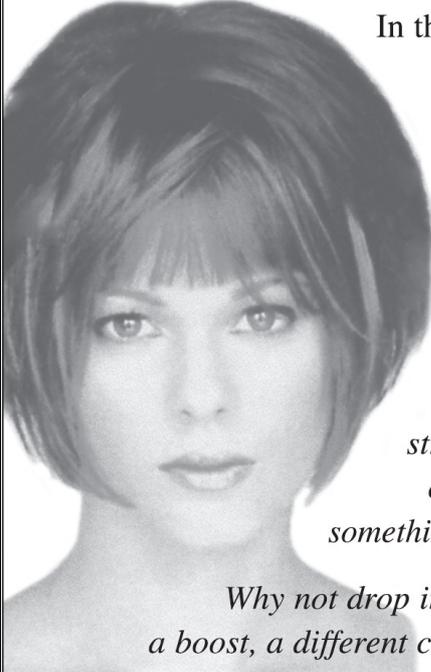
As a result, the School Leadership Team worked with both staff and students to develop a support framework. A year on from the students' presentation in the Houses of Parliament the school now has student and staff wellbeing ambassadors, wellbeing weeks and special assemblies. There are also specific support groups for exam anxiety and regular visits from organisations like CAMHS, CHUMS and Open Door.

The award was presented in the 'Speaker's House' in the House of Commons on Wednesday 14th March by the Speaker of the House, the Rt Hon John Bercow MP, with Alistair Burt MP in attendance.

Anila Aswad said, "It is impossible to put into words how proud I am that we managed to change the face of wellbeing support in our school. What began as a personal battle is now a whole-school issue and there is a wide range of support services available for students regardless of the severity of their problems. There is still room for improvement, but every day is another day that students feel safer, healthier and happier as a result of the strategies that are now in place."

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# Café B...



*Tuesday 17th April and 15th  
May*

*Biddenham Village Hall  
10.30 am - 12.00 noon*

*Selection of teas, coffees,  
hot chocolate and juice  
Home baked cakes  
Book Swap*

## Disturb us Lord

Disturb us Lord, when  
We are too pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little;  
When we arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us Lord, when  
With the abundance of things we possess  
We have lost our thirst  
For the waters of life,  
Having fallen in love with life,  
We have ceased to dream of eternity  
And in our efforts to build a new earth  
We have allowed our vision  
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us Lord to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show your mastery;  
Where losing sight of land,  
We shall find the stars.

We ask you to push back  
The horizon of our hopes;  
And to push into the future  
In strength, courage, hope and love.

Sir Francis Drake

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**Tuesday 17 April**

4.30pm - 6.00pm  
St James's Church Barn, Biddenham



For children of all ages  
(accompanied by an adult)



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**Everybody Welcome!**

St James's Church, Biddenham  
All Saints Church, Kempston



# Biddenham Cricket Club



This article is written just a few hours after the England Men's test team was bowled out for just 58 (it could have been a lot less!) at Auckland against New Zealand.

We hope that this news, plus the persistently cold weather, does not dissuade our many junior members from 2017 re-joining in 2018. This is the time of year we do to a certain extent "hold our breath" to see how many youngsters may have found alternative activities to cricket during the long winter break.

One thing is certain however, that the housing development locally over the past 30 years enables organisations such as Biddenham Cricket Club to thrive to the extent they could not possibly have done when I moved to the village from London in late 1987.

The initial building of Deep Spinney and the fortunate planning gain of the playing field and pavilion have enabled the cricket club to evolve from a club with just one team to the current position where we are able to involve around 150 individuals, both young and not so young, each year.

The May report will include more details of the senior sides. The popular Monday evening junior training sessions will commence, weather permitting, on 16th April with the first junior matches scheduled for Sunday 29th April. Parents of all junior members from 2017 have been contacted by email to invite them to re-join for 2018.

If anyone has not received an invitation to re-join please contact me as soon as possible.

The club will be running 5 junior teams in 2018, U9's, two U11 teams, U13's and U15's. All teams have fixtures in the Bedfordshire Youth League. Details of all the club's home games up to the end of May are included below.

The junior training and significant number of matches

to be played before the end of July require detailed preparation and planning. We are very lucky to have a committed group of volunteers under the supervision of Chris Spurgeon. This year our coaches, assistants and team managers will include Will Lowerson, Julian Krishna, Jagtar Singh, Glenn Taylor, Francis Galbraith, Nic Bissett, Nick Ulvert, Ross Kilroy and Matt Salisbury. With the numbers of juniors we have, all help is much appreciated.

If anyone feels that they would like to become involved in helping with the junior section of the club, please contact me or Chris Spurgeon. A separate DBS certificate from the England and Wales Cricket Board will be required to be obtained by anyone wishing to become involved. Thankfully this is now a much-improved online process administered by Maija Bissett, the club's Welfare Officer.

The club is rightly proud of its ECB Clubmark status held since 2003. This is re-assessed annually and includes a review of all our policies relating to the care of junior (under 16) members including the procedures we have for recruiting volunteers.

New members both young, and not so young, are always welcome. Please contact Glenn Taylor or Richard Fone for more information. Details of subscriptions for 2018 will be on the front page of the club website.

Club news, fixtures and results appear on the website at: <http://biddenham.play-cricket.com/home>

The 100 club provides the club with useful income and also raises its profile within the village amongst the residents for an annual fee of £12. If you would like to join the cricket club as a member, you will also gain automatic entry into the 100 club draw, which is held each month.

Contact numbers:

Chairman	Glenn Taylor	07778 479479
Cricket Secretary	Richard Fone	07818 678697
Junior Co-ordinator	Chris Spurgeon	07707 771606
Club Welfare Officer	Maija Bissett	58947
100 Club	Judith O'Quinn	363489

Richard Fone

## BIDDENHAM CC HOME MATCHES SCHEDULED FOR 2018

DATE	DAY	START	OPPONENTS	TEAM
29-Apr	Sun	10:00	Pavenham and Felmersham	U9's
29-Apr	Sun	10:00	Pavenham and Felmersham	U11 Dev
06-May	Sun	10:00	Bedford Lions	U11 County
12-May	Sat	13:30	Printers	Sat League
13-May	Sun	10:00	Pilgrims Oakley	U11 County
13-May	Sun	13:30	Luton Town and Indians II	Sun League
15-May	Tue	18:00	Pilgrims Oakley	U13's
16-May	Wed	18:30	Wilden	Midw'k Lg
17-May	Thur	18:00	Elstow	U15's
19-May	Sat	13:30	Westcroft II	Sat League
20-May	Sun	10:00	Olney Town	U9's
20-May	Sun	10:00	Harrold (A)	U11 Dev
20-May	Sun	13:30	Dunstable Town II	Sun League
26-May	Sat	13:30	North Crawley II	Sat League
27-May	Sun	10:00	Bedford Tigers	U11 County
27-May	Sun	13:30	Blunham I	Sun League
29-May	Tue	18:00	Pavenham and Felmersham	U13's
30-May	Wed	18:30	GNG	Midw'k Cup
31-May	Thur	18:00	Bedford Harriers	U15's

# Spring Supper & Quiz

Saturday 28 April  
St James's Church Barn  
7.30pm

£10 per head  
(Bring your own drinks)

Contact:  
Sue Squire 342373  
Anne Church 214805

Proceeds towards  
St James's Church

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Tuns-Biddenham**



## Biddenham Women's Group

### Tibbs Dementia Foundation

In February, Sarah Russel, CEO of the Tibbs Dementia Foundation, a local charity which is now five years old, informed our group of the range of activities and services that were available to people living with dementia, their carers and their families.

We were given an insight into various categories of dementia, signs and symptoms to be aware of and all the positive things that can be done to support people living with the symptoms.

Often family and friends pick up on deficits, noticing that there is a struggle to remember recent events, forget names of people or objects, repeat what has already been said or lose the thread of what they are saying. Changes may be difficult to cope with and sufferers may become disturbed or anxious about things, find conversations difficult to follow or struggle with reading and writing, calculation or orientation.

Don't worry if you forget a name, have an occasional memory lapse, can't find a word, especially as you grow older – as long as you can hold a conversation and still make decisions.

Sadly, as yet, there are no cures for dementia but scientists feel that a breakthrough is not too far away. The death of neurons in the brain causes loss of cognitive ability, which interferes with normal living processes. If symptoms persist for more than six months a GP may rule out any other things, such as depression, or refer the patient to a memory clinic where a specialist may need to take brain scans.

Giving a diagnosis of dementia can be rather complex. It may be Alzheimer's Disease, where the hippocampus is affected, Vascular Dementia, affecting memory and mood, Lewry Body Dementia, affecting movement and posture, Frontotemporal Dementia, affecting language or a combination of other conditions, syndromes or diseases that can cause or lead to dementia.

Help people with dementia by:  
Speaking slowly and clearly  
Smile and be friendly  
Say who you are  
Give them time to respond  
Offer help  
Ask how you can help.

The Tibbs Dementia Foundation offers opportunities for walking football, indoor bowls, swimming, golf (in the summer), rock climbing, singing and dancing, Music for Memory, sailing, yoga and running half marathons and – in complete contrast – board games. A group of people with dementia, called Clear Voices, get together to talk about it and a Here and Now project runs in conjunction with the Philharmonia. Volunteers, friends and families can also go with them on trips out. Those with dementia are given many opportunities to try new things and take risks – with support.

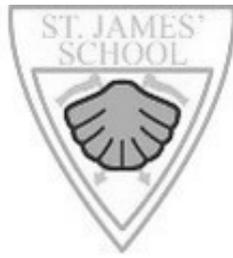
To reduce the risk of dementia it is to your advantage to have a good social life, be independent, sleep well, stay positive, take care of yourself and stay active in as many ways as you can.

You can support the foundation by becoming a volunteer, helping to fundraise and by spreading the word. For more information go to [www.tibbsdementia.co.uk](http://www.tibbsdementia.co.uk)

We are a non-profit making group and have a named charity each year which we support. This year we are fundraising for the Tibbs Dementia Foundation.

Val Fitzhugh

# St James CE VA Primary School



Now that it looks like Spring might (finally) be here, sport at St James' is really beginning to pick up again. We have signed up to a national initiative called The Daily Mile. Everyone in school meets outside during the afternoon to run, walk, hop, skip for a mile every day. Through this, we hope to not only develop better fitness levels for all children, but also enhance academic achievement. Research suggests that those schools which have been running the mile for a sustained period of time are now seeing great academic results as well as improved health and well-being. Most importantly, of course, is that we have fun! More can be found at <https://thedailymile.co.uk/>.



We've also got a lot of football and rugby still going on. Our oldest girls in Year 5 have recently qualified for the County Finals in the Girls' 5-a-side Football Tournament in May. For a small school like ours, this is a really great achievement, and we're really proud of them! As I write, we're enjoying a Sports Relief special week of all sorts of challenges from skipping to hula hooping to aerobics, and on Friday we will be coming to school in various sports kits to help raise money for charity.

The Arts are also important to us: Year 4 children have been learning to play the ukulele and have recently taken part in a special Play Day performance in Bedford, and our Year 2 and 3 singers have been part of a mass choir performing at the Corn Exchange. Our children perform with such confidence and gusto, we're always so very proud of them.

Over the Easter holidays, our new classrooms will be built, taking us forward as a Primary School. We will be having various pre-meetings with our contractors to ensure that any disruption to our neighbours is kept to an absolute minimum, and we will be regularly monitoring to ensure agreements are kept. Please do let us know if there are any problems, though!

The works should be finished within approximately six weeks. In advance, we are incredibly grateful for your patience and understanding during this time, an important milestone in the life of the school, as always, we are proud to be your village school and always appreciate your support and friendship.

With all good wishes for a blessed Easter!

Maria & all at St James'

# St Joseph's & St Gregory's Catholic Primary School



As a school we have been very busy raising money for our chosen charity CAFOD, which stands for the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development. CAFOD's mission is to stand beside people living in poverty, whatever their religion, country or culture, as well as helping people in their own communities and campaigning for global justice.



In this period of Lent, using the 'Give it Up Challenge', each class has been working hard to raise money and fill their class collection box.

For some children that money is coming in from chores or challenges they are achieving at home.

Other groups are running lunchtime clubs such as Origami, Gym, Film and Breadmaking, with a nominal charge for attending each week.

We have also had a weekly Soup Kitchen, which has not only been great in gathering a little community together each week, but has also been a successful fundraising activity.

The other bonus this year is that for every £1 raised by school there is a government scheme to match every donation, doubling the amount of good and support CAFOD can provide.

Thank you to all of the students and staff for their hard work and great ideas, and to all their teachers for their support in helping to put the ideas into action.

Miss L Sumpter  
Headteacher



## Great Denham Parish Council

The next Parish Council Meeting is on 9th April, at 7.30pm in the Mercia Suite, Great Denham Community Hall.

For more details visit the website:  
[www.greatdenham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/](http://www.greatdenham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/)

**Nick Sleep**  
Proprietor

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## A family affair - and more

How often do you find such a talented family?

On Saturday 3rd March over 70 people heard an extraordinarily impressive performance of classic but relaxing jazz pieces, played and sung by jazz groups from Bedford school and leading lights from the British jazz scene. Nikki Iles, Pete Churchill and their daughter Imogen were ably supported by students from Bedford School and two of their teachers. This jazz concert was generously performed by the musicians in aid of *The Friends of St James* and was held in the church.

Nikki is in the front rank of British jazz musicians. In 2017 she won the British Jazz Award for Piano and has recorded and participated in many CDs. Apart from performing and composing, she invests a large amount of time in tutoring young musicians, such as her work inspiring young musicians at Bedford School. Nikki's husband, Pete, has an equally impressive profile. As a singer, pianist and conductor he too has released several jazz albums. Currently he is Professor of Jazz Composition at the Royal Academy of Music and, like Nikki, is deeply involved in jazz education. His mellifluous, relaxed tones made him a real crooner!

The cream on top was their daughter, Imogen, who has a remarkably dramatic, elegant and mature voice for a young teenager. Whether singing solo or in perfect harmony – yes, perfect – with her father, she was a joy to hear.

The programme ranged from the familiar 'Let's call the whole thing off' and 'Moonlight in Vermont' to 'I only have eyes for you' and 'Autumn leaves', which allowed all the musicians to shine, whether as a solo break or together with the other members of their band. The Prep School Band and the Upper School Band (both comprising brass and woodwind instruments) each expressively performed lively and professional pieces with many solo parts. Then there were the percussionist and the bass guitar player, who were each extraordinarily competent on the piano too. In fact, the final piano piece, 'Autumn Leaves' was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the evening.

This report should not end without mentioning the catering during the interval. Apart from the drinks, the Barkas family produced a perfectly presented range of canapés, all handmade, for guests to enjoy. Another example of family teamwork!

*The Friends of St James* and guests were extremely fortunate to be able to hear such high quality music, here in our village church and performed by a local school and family living in Bedford. How can we beat that?

Peter Leverkus



Pete, Imogen and Nikki

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# Biddenham Women's Group

## Death in the Garden

Myth, magic, murder or medicine?

Michael Brown, a garden historian and horticulturalist alarmed and entertained us with illustrations, information and stories about poisonous plants, some of which may be growing in your garden and some of which grow very locally!

Over the centuries poisonous plants have been used to remove garden pests, unwanted rivals or partners, as cosmetics, aphrodisiacs or for their medicinal properties. Their magical attributes have been recorded in medieval books and manuscripts and much folklore has grown out of the use of such plants. Indeed, they are a crime writer's resource.

### **Mandrake** (*Mandragora officinalis*)

This is a member of the nightshade family and was highly sought after as an anaesthetic. It produced symptoms of hallucinations and madness. Every part of this plant is deadly. Legend has it that when the root is dug up, it screams and does no favours to those who hear it.

Fans of Agatha Christie and Shakespeare will be aware of its use in literature but I can assure readers of *The Loop* that they are quite safe, as I have never recorded it as a wild plant around these parts.

### **White Bryony** (*Brionica dioica*)

Now this plant, on the other hand, grows freely over the hedgerows around Biddenham. It is a tall rambling plant with coiled tendrils, small white flowers with 5 petals and leaves with 5 lobes. Its root resembles that of the mandrake and was sold as such by unscrupulous herbalists years ago. It was given to lame horses and used as a purging agent.

### **Deadly Nightshade** (*Atropa belladonna*)

Most of us (of a certain age) grew up knowing this tall plant with its purple bells and black berries and were warned of its toxicity. Its berries, however, are very sweet and just eight of them can be deadly so it is still very important to educate children that any part of this plant is very poisonous. Fortunately, there is an antidote.

Medicinally it has been used to treat the symptoms of Parkinson's disease, colic, motion sickness, asthma, whooping cough, hay fever and as a pain killer.

### **Monkshood** (*Aconitum nappelus*)

This tall, bright bluey-mauve plant is grown in herbaceous borders and is related to delphiniums. The flowers look like helmets or the hoods worn by monks, hence its name.

It has been used on arrowheads (as well as those colourful frogs) and by a wife who murdered her adulterous husband by preparing him a 'special curry'.

### **Henbane** (*Hyocyamus niger*)

Known as 'witches flying ointment' as it was rubbed onto their broomsticks, which caused them to pass out and hallucinate i.e. fly!

This is a plant which is very dramatic with its huge yellow flowers, lurid purple veins and rank odour. It has large, deeply indented leaves and small oval seeds which are every bit as poisonous as the rest. Give this plant a wide berth if you find it growing in the physic gardens of stately homes, the smell can literally cause you to faint. Fortunately, I have never seen this plant growing wild in the environs. Dr Crippen though was not averse to its properties!

Some plants that you may have growing in your garden which Michael mentioned were:

Helleborus, Morning Glory (*Ipomoea violacea*), Opium Poppy (*Papaver somniferum*), Rue (*Ruta graveolens*), Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*), Thorn Apple (*Datura stramonium*), Rhododendron, Daphne, Laburnum, Castor Oil Plant, Foxglove, Chinese Lanterns, Hydrangea,

Colchicum, Nicotiana and Yew. All these plants are toxic but many can be used medicinally. We even learnt that Basil can be intoxicating so, go easy when making your salads.

Michael has written a book entitled 'Death in the Garden' which is published this month and contains many fascinating facts about poisonous plants. It can be ordered online at [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk) or by telephone 01226 734438 at £13.59 plus £4 postage.

Michael had no knowledge of our local flora but mentioned Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), an extremely poisonous plant that can paralyse the respiratory system and cause suffocation. This tall umbel grew on the land which has recently been developed along the Bromham Road. The temptation with hemlock and with Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is that it has thick stems and children may unwittingly try to make whistles from them, and then suffer the dire consequences. Beware the giant hogweed on the triangle of land adjacent to the Village Pond! Luckily, when it is chopped down and dried off it becomes inert.



*Giant Hogweed*

Wormwoods and Mugworts (the *Artemesias*) grow along the lanes and field margins here and have a very colourful history and were considered 'universal herbs for protection and prophecy'. A little bit under the pillow at night will ensure lucid dreams, and keep the moths away.

*Artemesia absinthium* was distilled into Absinthe, which was 140% proof, and was eventually banned across Europe. The modern 'concoction' no longer contains the wild wormwood.

A large patch of Cuckoo Pint (*Arum maculatum*), which many know as Lords and Ladies, due to the upright red berries, grows near the church and under the hedgerows and may cause burning if picked. The root, if cooked thoroughly, can be very nutritious, will thicken soups and stews (if you are on a survival course) and was used by maids to starch their collars and cuffs.



*Cuckoo Pint*

Mention was made of Pitcher Plants and Venus Fly Traps, which obtain their nutrition from the demise of unwary insects, but no mention was made of poisonous fungi.

Perhaps that's another chapter?

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 10th April at 2.00pm in the Church Barn, when David Pibworth, an actor and script writer, will be talking to the group about The History of British Variety.

Do come along if you are interested. We welcome all residents and visitors and are currently discussing a possible name change for the group to make it more inclusive. Our AGM will be just before David's talk.

Val Fitzhugh

# Biddenham Parish Council



This month's Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 14th March 2018 in the upstairs meeting room of the Pavilion. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Peter Chase (Chairman), Jon Gambold, Alan Jacobs, Krzys Osuch, Terry Platt, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Clerk Alison Southern, Borough Councillor Roger Rigby and around eight members of the public were also present. Councillor Chris Gee sent his apologies.

A number of points were raised by members of the public.

Bus shelters around the village seem to be a recurring theme. This month, the one on Main Road was noted to be needing attention. We will get it fixed.

One small victory is that the untidy shrubbery behind the war memorial has finally been removed. I had hoped it would be gone by the time of last November's Remembrance Day service, but was beginning to wonder whether it'd get done by *this* November! We're now going to put some grass seed down to try to restore the bare earth uncovered. Furthermore, an application to tidy the protected trees in the area has been approved, which will further improve the memorial's surroundings.

We are still pressing for action regarding flooding in parts of Main Road and Gold Lane. Anglian Water are involved in the former, assessing the "Biddenham Drain". I have visions of this being some massive underground sewer, but it's probably just a small pipe, certainly it works that way at the moment.

The kerbstones at the bottom of Biddenham Turn are in a state, thanks to buses not being able to pull out onto Bromham Road without swinging wide to make it through the island in the middle of the road. Our clerk has written to the Borough to ask what they think might be done.

You may have noticed some extra white lines at the edges of the road both where Gold Lane meets Main Road

and half way up its length. We requested these in an attempt to make people slow down, the theory being the lines make the road look narrower. Do please let us know whether you think they're working or not.

Turning to Planning matters, we noted that the application to demolish Biddenham House has been refused. We are not aware of an appeal, but imagine there may well be a revised application proposed at some point. I must record a massive **thank you** to everyone who objected to this application – the Borough could be in no doubt what the vast majority of us felt.

Likewise, fully 585 objections were lodged against the outline planning application for 250 houses west of Gold Lane by the closing date of 9th March. This is an amazing total; and one which the Borough planners and politicians can surely not ignore. The total represents something like a quarter of the adult population of Biddenham which, given one has to proactively bother to give a view, is a very significant total. Once again, a huge **thank you** from all of us on the Parish Council to all those who made their voices heard.

Finally, the number of objections to policies 19 and 23 of the Local Plan have risen to massive totals, 578 and 492 respectively at the last count. By the time you read this, the consultation period will have ended, and we can be pretty sure there will have been more objections to policy 19 than to the housing application relating to the same land. **We are so grateful to everyone** – the final totals will undoubtedly mean the Borough Council hears our views loud and clear on these unnecessary erosions of our green spaces.

## Date of the next meeting

Our next meeting is the Annual General Meeting of the Parish, and will be on Wednesday 11th April 2018. It will be held at **St James's Primary School** on Main Road at 7.00pm. Tom Perry (chair of governors) and Maria Soulsby (headteacher) are inviting us all in to see the school, and hear about the progress in building new classrooms as they take on teaching pupils aged 10 and 11. There will be other speakers from around the village, updating us on their activities over the last year. All in all, it will be a great opportunity to come together and hear what we're all up to. Please come along!

Peter Chase  
Chairman



## Soup Lunch for Christian Aid

Everyone welcome

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May 12.30 – 2.00

Biddenham Village Hall

Please support this event as there will be no door to door collection in the village

Raffle and Bring and Buy

No tickets, donations welcome

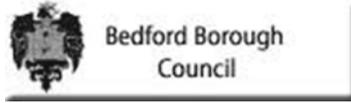


## Celebrating Mothering Sunday

A record number of St. James's congregation enjoyed a splendid continental breakfast after morning worship. The smell of baking as one entered the barn was responsible for giving everybody a good appetite, and we all tucked in to croissants, toast and pain au chocolat accompanied by fruit juice and freshly made coffee....delicieux!

Sue Squire and her team did a wonderful catering job and, as you can see from the photo, there were many happy participants. More than any previous year

Peta Martin



## Village Agent News

### Living with Dementia?

Here is some information that may help you.

The Tibbs Dementia Foundation is a local charity dedicated to providing a range of support services & activities for people living with *all* stages of dementia (or significant cognitive impairment) *and* their family carers & supporters. Carers in Bedfordshire also offer Dementia Befriending two-hour visits, to give a regular break to those looking after people with Dementia. This is just one of a range of services offered to Carers by this organisation.

### Carers Grants

Unpaid carers can apply for both two types of grant to access a break, activity, service or training that will improve their health or wellbeing. These are:

- Full Carers Grant: There is no maximum amount you can apply for but a panel is unlikely to award more than £300.
- Fast Track Grant: The maximum amount you can apply for is £120. Carers can apply for two Fast Track grants per year.

### The Mobility Hub

This has now opened in Bedford bus station for the hire of electric scooters & wheelchairs. If you are a regular user, you can become a member for an annual fee & get a discount.

### Power of Attorney refunds

Almost two million people in England and Wales could be entitled to a partial refund of their Power of Attorney fees, after the Office of the Public Guardian overcharged them for applications. Those who made an application for Lasting Power of Attorney between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2017 were charged too much in fees and could now be owed up to £108 each.

### The Silverline Helpline

Everyone can feel lonely from time to time, but for many older people, loneliness is an ongoing issue. The Silverline provides a wonderful service where a volunteer phones once a week for a friendly chat. They also offer a letter writing service, where regular correspondence is exchanged between a volunteer and an older person.

### Want to save money on your water bill?

Anglian Water can provide and install water-saving 'bits and bobs' which can cut your annual bill by as much as £40.

### Free Home Security

Make sure you don't let any unwanted bogus callers into your home by getting a free door chain fitted by the Bobby Van Scheme. He can come and fit home security devices including door chains, door viewers and window locks. He can also fit smoke alarms and replace old ones. This service is offered to people over 65, and although it is free, donations are gratefully received.

For information about anything listed here, or if you need help filling in any benefits forms, then please call your Village Agent in confidence on:

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# MJP

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# Biddenham Gardeners Association

## Good in Bed

We were intrigued by the title of our March talk. However, we soon found out that Annie Godfrey, the owner of Daisy Roots, an independently run nursery in Hertfordshire, really knew which plants were “good doers”. Annie specialises in growing perennials and grasses and in 2017 won Gold Medals at RHS Chelsea and Hampton Court Flower Shows. Her keen interest in plants, her enthusiasm and knowledge made for an excellent evening and there were many comments from members who clearly enjoyed her presentation and learnt a lot.

Annie said that she would talk us through plants which she found had a long season of interest and worked well in small spaces. She presented these in chronological order from very early Spring through to late Autumn. Starting with *Bergenia Ruby* and *Cornus Alba Siberica*, the red barked dog wood, showing their colours in winter through to salvias and hardy chrysanthemums to brighten the garden in late October. Annie recommended over forty different types of perennial plant and in each case gave three or four named varieties of those she considered to be the best “doers”. She gave instruction on their care, cultivation and propagation and an indication as to the length of their flowering season. It was interesting to note that most of the plants highlighted by Annie required a well-drained soil and many were drought tolerant, good for us here in the east of the country. A useful tip if one gardens on wet, cold, clay soil is to keep the plant in its pot and bury this in the ground so that the roots can penetrate through the bottom of the pot but the main root ball is shielded from the cold. Annie gave as an example *Gaura “Summer Breeze”* which apparently grows well if this

method is used.

Annie finished her presentation by showing us a photo of her own garden which is just 100 feet by 30 feet and was a joy to behold; no lawn, just a sea of vibrant perennial plants and grasses growing in a most naturalistic way alongside a wide, winding gravel path. This garden is open to the public under the National Garden Scheme for one evening and one Sunday afternoon in August. Daisy Roots Nursery is open on Fridays and Saturdays between March and October. Annie has a first class web site and plants can be ordered on line. This was an excellent, well planned talk by a very knowledgeable expert and it was a pleasure to welcome her to our Gardeners Association.

Our next meeting will be on 17th April when Deric Newman will talk about Civic Trees.

Linda Truscott

New members and visitors are always welcome. For more information contact **Linda Truscott** on 01234 270747 [www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk](http://www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk)

## Bridge in Biddenham

Are you interested in joining a Duplicate Bridge group for intermediate players?

A club has started at the Church Barn on Friday afternoons from 1.30pm to 4.00pm.

If you would like to join or for more information please contact Bernard Henry on 07866 456769 or email him on [bahenry0309@gmail.com](mailto:bahenry0309@gmail.com).

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\*Based on a lawn size of 40m<sup>2</sup>



## Churchyard rejuvenated

Who says the church of England is dying?

On Friday and Saturday 9th and 10th March a group of 15 mainly young people, not all of them regular churchgoers, worked together with Matt of Heritage Drives, who gave his time free, to renovate the paths around the church.

All this was the brain child of Michael Fox who asked, cajoled and convinced the world and his wife to take part. It was good fun, a community building exercise, we ate lunch together and quite a number of us finished up at the pub together. The result? A beautiful churchyard made even more beautiful.

Edwin Martin



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**The Friends of St James**  
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Membership      Peter Leverkus      Tel: 353662  
Treasurer        Paul Fricker        Tel: 342843

## Mobile Library

As we go to print Bedford Borough  
Council have not yet published the  
timetable for April-June. It will be  
available at [www.bedford.gov.uk](http://www.bedford.gov.uk).



*Remember your library card!*

## Hall Booking Details

### Village Hall

From the Village Hall website you can check availability  
on the diary, look at the facilities and download a booking  
form.

[www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk)

### Church Barn

Contact the Booking Officer, Jan Burns on 344019 or  
[janburns@gmx.com](mailto:janburns@gmx.com) if you would like to hire the barn.  
Smaller than the Village Hall, it is ideal for a small party  
or meeting.

### Pavilion

The hall is available for children's parties, anniversary  
lunches, christening receptions, meetings etc. We can also  
hire the small upstairs meeting room which has tea and  
coffee making facilities.

Booking enquiries to [biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk)  
or contact the Clerk, Alison Southern on 01234 406099  
(ansaphone available)

### Great Denham Community Hall

[www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk](http://www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk)

## Regular Events in Biddenham

### Monday

10.00am	Cha Char Chimps	Village Hall
10.00am	Yoga	Pavilion
2.30pm	Cardiac Rehab exercise	Pavilion
6.30pm	Pilates	Pavilion
7.15pm	Guides (term-time)	Village Hall
7.45pm	Martial Arts	Pavilion

### Tuesday

10.00am	Art	Church Barn
10.00am	Personal Fitness	Pavilion
4.00pm	Ballet (term-time)	Village Hall
7.00pm	Personal Fitness/Circuits	Pavilion
8.00pm	Country Dancing (2nd & 4th in month)	Village Hall

### Wednesday

9.00am	Baby Sensory	Village Hall
9.45am	Hopping Bunnies (music for toddlers)	Pavilion
10.00am	Tai Chi	Church Barn
1.15-5.15pm	Baby College (term-time)	Village Hall
2.00pm	Table Tennis	Pavilion
2.30pm	Art	Church Barn
6.30pm	Aerobics	Pavilion
6.30pm	Handbell Ringing Practice	Church Barn
6.45pm	Ballroom Dancing (term-time)	Village Hall

### Thursday

9.45am	Hopping Bunnies (music for toddlers)	Pavilion
9.30-11.30am	Under 5's (term-time)	Village Hall
2.00pm	U3A Handbells	Church Barn
2.00pm	Love to Dance	Pavilion
7.00pm	Fit-Steps	Pavilion
7.30pm	Whist	Village Hall

### Friday

9.30am	Pilates	Village Hall
9.30am	Jo Jingles (Children's musical group)	Pavilion
11.00am	Mother & Baby Yoga (except 1st Friday)	Village Hall
3.30-7.45pm	Ballet classes (term-time)	Village Hall
7.00pm	Martial Arts	Pavilion
7.00pm	Choir Practice	Church Barn
8.00pm	Tango	Village Hall

### Saturday

9.30am	Pregnancy Yoga	Village Hall
9.30am	Zumba	Pavilion
10.45am	Zumbini	Pavilion

### Sunday

9.00 -10.00am	Explorers	Church Barn
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Contact for Village Hall events: [www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk)  
Contacts for Pavilion events, email [clerk@biddenham-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@biddenham-pc.org.uk).  
Contact for Church Barn events, [janburns@gmx.com](mailto:janburns@gmx.com)

## 100 CLUB

### February draw

1. Stephen Newton	87
2. D McCall	60
3. Mark Brightwell	235

Drawn by Joan Hutchinson



## Welcome Packs for

### New Biddenham Residents

Contact Richard Church      Tel: 214805

## April 2018

Sun 1 Apr

### Easter Day

All Age Service with Communion, St James's, 9.00am, see p2

No evening service

Mon 2 Apr

Craft Fair, Three Tuns, 11.00am-3.30pm, see p2

Fri 6 Apr

First Friday, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.30pm, see p15

Fri 6 Apr

Frog Foray, Biddenham Village Pond, 9.00pm, see p5

Sat 7 Apr

Pond Work Morning, 10.00am, see p5

Sun 8 Apr

### The Second Sunday of Easter

Parish Communion, St James's, 9.00am,

Evening Prayer at All Saints, 6.00pm

Mon 9 Apr

Great Denham Parish Council Meeting, Mercia Suite, GD Community Hall, 7.30pm

Tue 10 Apr

Biddenham Women's Group, Church Barn, 2.00pm, see p11

Wed 11 Apr

Biddenham Parish Council, St James' School, 7.00pm, see p12

Sun 15 Apr

### The Third Sunday of Easter

Parish Communion, St James's, 9.00am,

Evening Prayer at St James's, 6.00pm

Mom 16 Apr

Junior cricket starts, Pavilion field, from 6.00pm, see p7

Mon 16 Apr

Biddenham History Society, Church Barn, 8.00pm, see p5

Tue 17 Apr

Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.30-12noon, see p6

Tue 17 Apr

Messy Church, Church Barn, 4.30pm-6.00pm, see p6

Tue 17 Apr

Biddenham gardeners Association, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.30pm, see p14

Sun 22 Apr

### The Fourth Sunday of Easter

Parish Communion, St James's, 9.00am,

No evening service

Sat 28 Apr

Spring Supper & Quiz, Church Barn, 7.30pm, see p8

Sun 29 Apr

### The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Parish Communion, St James's, 9.00am,

No evening service

## May 2018

Fri 4 May

First Friday, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.30pm, see p15

Sun 6 May

### The Sixth Sunday of Easter

All Age Service St James's, 9.00am,

Holy Communion, St James's, 6.00pm

Sat 12 May

Benefit lunch for Soweto Anti-Aids Children's Home, Bedford Athletic Rugby club, 12.00pm, see p3

Sun 13 May

Christian Aid, Soup Lunch, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.30pm, see p12

Tue 15 May

Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.30-12noon, see p6

# What's on

For cricket fixtures see page 7

For regular events listings see page 15

## The Loop

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**Thursday 19th April please.**



*The views expressed in 'The Loop' by various community groups do not necessarily represent the views of St James's Church or the Parochial Church Council.*