



# The Loop

May 2022

£1.00

## Welcoming Ukrainians to our parish

An organisation and fund to support Ukrainian refugees settling locally has been set up through St James's Church in Biddenham and Great Denham. The plan is to urgently build an initial emergency fund, to enable a quick response to assist the Ukrainians who are arriving here.

We will be seeing Ukrainian children in our schools, local clubs and neighbourhoods and this will be an opportunity for you to make them feel welcome and to offer equipment, clothes or toys. The journeys through Ukraine to reach here are terrifying with the risk of violent assault and murder. The loss of their homes and jobs and potentially their fathers and husbands is traumatising. Ukrainians settling here are starting life with virtually nothing, so any financial donations are greatly appreciated.

Funds raised will be held in a restricted account and will be used only to help meet the many needs of those refugees arriving in Biddenham, Great Denham, St Mary's and wider Bedford for however long our support is required.

Please consider giving to this fund. There are a number of ways you can make a donation:

By bank transfer – sending your donation to the following account:

Name: Biddenham PCC

Sort Code: 60-02-13 (NatWest Bank)

Account No: 5131 7710

In the reference field please enter "Ukraine" followed by your postcode and house number. Gift Aid will be claimed where possible, adding 25% to the value of your donation.

By cheque, payable to "Biddenham PCC".

Please include a note of your name and address to allow Gift Aid to be claimed and add "for Ukraine".

Place your donation in a yellow Gift Aid envelope (available in St James's Church). Please mark the envelope "Ukraine".

Donations can be sent to the St James's Church PCC Treasurer at 32a Church End, Biddenham, MK40 4AR. Alternatively, donations can be handed to a churchwarden or simply placed in the weekly collection in St James's Church. Also you can call 01234 353662 or 07973 264647.

Thank you for your invaluable support in welcoming refugee Ukrainians to our neighbourhood.

**St James's Church Ukrainian Support**



## 20 years a groundsman

On 30th March at the Three Tuns David Watson was presented with an inscribed decanter marking his retirement from the Biddenham Cricket Club Committee on which he had served for over 30 years as Treasurer, Club Captain, Club Chairman and, finally, for 20 years as Ground Manager. The club also voted at the recent AGM to appoint David as an Honorary Vice-President joining Ray Rowland and Micky Litchfield as the only members to have achieved this.

*L to R Richard Ebbs, Peter Marks, David Watson, Richard Fone, Glenn Taylor*

## Changes at The Loop

Jacqui Piper has stepped down as proof reader and church liaison for The Loop. I am extremely grateful to her for her support over the last few years.

Janet Field has joined the team as proof reader and reporter. You will already have enjoyed some of her articles, there are more in the pipeline and if you have any ideas for topics you feel ought to be covered in The Loop please email her on [loopreporter@gmail.com](mailto:loopreporter@gmail.com).

Laurie Hurn has agreed to take on the role of church liaison.

Thanks to Janet and Laurie and to Clare Sugars and Rosemary and Richard Harris who continue to fill extremely valuable roles. Contact details for all of us are on the back page.

Thank you all.

Jean Gambold  
Editor

**'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)



ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIDDENHAM

# MUSIC FOR MAY

A concert by the Ouse Valley Singers  
with soloist Philippa Jones

Saturday 21st May  
Biddenham Pavilion, Deep Spinney  
7.30pm

Tickets £10 (light refreshments included)  
For tickets, contact:  
Anne 214805 or Sue 342373  
All proceeds to St James's Church



## Don't forget the Foodbank IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES THE NEED IS URGENT

You can find the latest list of items needed by Bedford food bank and details of how to make a financial donation at <https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>



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

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<a href="http://www.stjamesbiddenham.com">www.stjamesbiddenham.com</a>		

## Letter from the Vicar

Dear All

As I write this, Liz and I are trying to get some kind of post Easter break at a cheap hotel in London. The weather has been beautiful and, as we sat outside an Italian cafe in Kensington Gardens this afternoon, we realised that we could have actually been any place in the world. A short walk further on and we sat in a traditional London pub, Liz with half a lager and lime and me with a pint of ale.



It has been an exhausting few weeks, what with the Easter services and lots of pastoral issues which I hope I have been able to help in some way. Myself and others have tried in recent weeks to sit alongside local Ukrainian friends and others who have come to join us to escape the tide of evil that has swept across their country. The stories they have brought have had a profound impact on myself and others in our church.

Given the nature of this evil it has been hard rationalising the central message of Easter, that Jesus rose from the dead. Sure enough we find the sheer horror of the crucifixion embedded in the experience of those around us. The people we have encountered from Ukraine know only too well what evil looks like. There must be so many people in those situations who cry out, just like Jesus did, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" But on this season of hope, how do we find that hope? Surely the story of the Resurrection of Jesus was not just about something that happened two thousand years ago, and surely it should not just be about some future promise of heaven either. If the cross is about peoples' experience of suffering and death now, should the Easter story of resurrection not also be about the present as well?

As part of my training in Durham, I spent two weeks with a vicar on a very run-down housing estate in Gateshead. It reminded me very much of Toxteth in Liverpool where I had spent some time as a youth worker with the Church Army. I was born just a few miles away on the other side of the River Mersey, so both these places in Liverpool and Gateshead seemed like familiar territory to me. The minister I spent time with in Gateshead, who spent most of his time dealing with issues of poverty, prejudice, domestic violence, unemployment and poverty, talked a great deal, despite this, of the resurrection. Just the sheer volume of encounters he had with people engaged in acts of kindness, he frequently described as signs of hope. Despite clear evidence of the cross in that community, the light of Christ's resurrection shone through the fractures. I remember him saying to me once, "wherever I walk in this community, I encounter the empty tomb, evidence of the risen Christ".

Over the last few months I have encountered so much hope in the people around our church. I think of the Ukrainian residents of our community who have done so much to support their friends and relatives who are suffering on the other side of Europe. I think of people of St James's who are pouring love into this fractured situation, and those who have offered money, resources, time and even their homes to welcome those who have been displaced by this war. Of course, there are profound acts of love we see that equally have nothing at all to do with Ukraine; all signs of hope. And evidence of the resurrection. I am grateful that we in Biddenham and Kempston can say, with all conviction, that in our community, the Lord is risen. He is risen indeed.,

Alleluia.

Eric



# Archers Rest Café Bistro opens in Great Denham



A new café bistro opened in April at the site of the former Pavilion on Queen Eleanor Drive in Great Denham under a new name, Archers Rest. We caught up with Operations Director, Amy Plumb to find out more.

## What inspired you to open a new café in Great Denham?

It's in a lovely environment and we're familiar with running park cafes and catering for events. We think it's a fantastic space. We're used to taking on a shell and creating it as our own, designing it, and fitting out the kitchen. So, we saw it as a great opportunity.

## Was there a reason for the new name, Archers Rest?

The name was chosen by the local parish council and there's quite a lot of history behind it. The remains of a tribal leader were discovered along with arrowheads and a dagger by archaeologists prior to the building of the houses in Great Denham. So that inspired the name.

## What sort of food are you serving?

Initially we're doing a soft opening. So, we're doing teas, coffee, cakes, and light lunch bites such as toasties and pizzas. We've installed a stone-baked pizza oven and we offer two different sizes – a smaller size which can be for an individual adult or children and a bigger sharing size of which we've got eight different varieties. They're all made with fresh ingredients imported from Italy.



We also have gluten free and vegan options and a children's menu.

## What are the opening times?

The initial opening hours are 10.00am to 6.00pm and we'll be reviewing these weekly. On weekends we open earlier from 8.00am to 4.00pm on Saturdays and 9.00am to 4.00pm on Sundays.

Once we get our restaurant license, we'll be looking to open later on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

## What will the new restaurant license mean for the cafe?

It means we'll also be able to serve alcohol with food. We're going to introduce small plates and sharing platters, so you won't necessarily have to buy a main meal alongside your drink.

And we're hoping to do an evening menu so that we can open a bit later in the summer. We have a lovely terrace outside which we will certainly make use of. As we are also event caterers, we'd like to introduce Paella Evenings and events like that. So, lots of exciting things in the pipeline.

## Are dogs welcome?

Absolutely - we are dog friendly. As long as dogs are kept on a lead and relatively well behaved, they're more than welcome.

Janet Field

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## ST JAMES'S CHURCH BIDDENHAM

# SPRING TEAS

Plant Sale

Cream Teas

Tea Towel Display

**Sunday 8th May**  
**2.30pm - 5.30pm**  
**St James's Churchyard/Barn**

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# Bedford River Festival is back

The biennial Bedford River Festival is returning on Saturday 23rd to Sunday 24th July 2022.

This two-day event is free of charge and promises fun for the whole family including live entertainment and local performances across eight stages, a water sports arena, raft and dragon boat races, and a fun fair.

The Festival will also feature a Sports Village, heritage reenactments in the Heritage Village, an Art Village, and various food concessions as well as a Continental Market. Events will be held across multiple locations including The Embankment, Russell Park, and St Mary's Gardens.

This year the Bedford Festival of Motoring will also be showcasing 100 unique vehicles on the High Street.

For full details of the weekend programme and a map of the event locations, visit the River Festival website: [riverfestival.bedford.gov.uk/visitors.htm](http://riverfestival.bedford.gov.uk/visitors.htm)

Janet Field



## Biddenham Conservation Volunteers

BCV (Biddenham Conservation Volunteers) have enjoyed some warmer weather recently as our tasks continue. We have spread ballast on a footpath (off Main Road) that gets very muddy in the winter, crown lifted some of the Cowslip Meadow trees to let more light in and try to reduce the blanket of ivy on the ground and improved the footpath access at the far end of Cowslip Meadow to help walkers avoid a bit of a slippery slope in the winter.

We thank all our team and look forward to more joining us during the summer when we have a more limited programme to avoid disturbing breeding birds and animals.

We hope to work on, amongst other things: a dead hedge at the pond; paint Redgates where the red is looking a bit tatty; keep footpaths open and walkable; and carry out some research in Cowslip Meadow on trees and flowers in order to help with the management plan. We have also cleared a patch of scrub near the north end of Cowslip Meadow to help walkers get on to drier, more level ground.

If you would like to know what is going on or join our group please email for a copy of our programme or to register:

[chrishj49@gmail.com](mailto:chrishj49@gmail.com) or [gillycowan@btinternet.com](mailto:gillycowan@btinternet.com).

Details will also be in the village notice boards.

Chris Jones

## Biddenham Cricket 100 Club



**Support your Village Cricket Club and Win £££s by JOINING or RENEWING membership!**

Memberships run from 1st May – members from 2021 will be contacted and invited to re-enter.

The cricket club has around 80 junior cricketers and always need new equipment to help them develop - by supporting the 100 Club you can help us raise money for this *and*, with a bit of luck, you could **win a cash prize** in one of the monthly draws! The more entries we have the more you win so don't delay – join today!

### How does it work?

1 unit or 'number' costs £12 a year – of this, 50% goes to the Cricket Club and 50% into the Prize Fund. A draw for first, second and third prize is made retrospectively on the first Friday of each month (eg May Draw on Friday 3rd June).

### How do I take part?

If you would like to join and be entered in the May Draw (the first of the 2022 season) you can either pay directly into the 100 Club account at Natwest (please email [bcc100club@gmail.com](mailto:bcc100club@gmail.com) for the details) or send a cheque made payable to '**BIDDENHAM CRICKET CLUB DRAW**' by **Friday 27th May** to '100 Club', 6 Day's Lane, Biddenham, MK40 4AD. **You may purchase as many units as you wish** and you will receive confirmation of your unit number(s) in due course.

If you would like further information before committing yourself, contact James Gardner on 07928 478563 or email [bcc100club@gmail.com](mailto:bcc100club@gmail.com)



*The footpath repair team and the results of their labours - before and after.*  
Photos Gilly Cowan





# Biddenham History Society

## Waste and recycling

We were very grateful to Peter Applewhite for agreeing to come to give the presentation to the History Society on 25th April that he prepared two years ago. It was exciting to be able to meet in person again, but the meeting was too late in the month for me to be able to write about it and meet **The Loop** publication deadline for the May issue. I shall write about Peter's presentation 'Biddenham: Two things you may have wondered about and the search for answers' and hopefully that report will be in the June issue of **The Loop**.

I did enjoy reading the Fox family's article in the April issue of **The Loop** and learning about their commendable efforts to reduce plastic use in their household. They offered many useful tips for not only reducing the use of plastic but also waste in general. This set me to thinking about waste and its disposal over the centuries.

When we started the Biddenham History Society in April 2014, we had an evening when Biddenham residents brought along objects they possessed that reflected Biddenham's history. Before the days of refuse collection and recycling, a lot of rubbish was just tipped into people's gardens. Mary McKeown brought along a box which contained objects which she had found in her garden, originally the garden of Parsonage Cottage. In her box were rusty bits of chain, cutlery, nails and door latches, pieces of glass and pottery as well as an old clock and an ink bottle.



2015 finds

As a Society, we went on to do two square metre pit digs in two separate gardens, which revealed what happened to people's waste. In August 2015, a professional archaeologist, Matt Edgeworth, helped us to do a square metre pit dig in the garden of Debbi and Hugh Clifton's house in Church End. Most of the artefacts that we found were from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. These included 41 fragments of pottery, 20 fragments of brick or tile, 18 pieces of glass, 18 iron objects such as nails, 9 bits of domestic animal bone, 2 bits of lead, 1 clay pipe stem, along with a few bits of silver paper, plastic, slate and coal. Most of the fragments of pottery were 19th/20th century, but there was one fragment with orange brown glaze from 17th/18th century. We even found a silk stocking, slightly laddered, that probably came from the 1940s/1950s. There was one coin: a 20th century farthing.

The following summer, in August 2016, Matt Edgeworth helped us to do a square metre pit dig in Mary and Pat McKeown's garden in Church End. We dug two test pits, and the finds followed on



from the box of objects that Mary had brought to the meeting in April 2014. There were many shards of pottery, pieces of glass and iron, including part of an old door hinge. The star find was a clay pipe which we managed to piece together from the bowl and stem. There were no coins.



The archaeology was fun and interesting, but we learnt how many materials do not degrade in the earth over time. Effective measures to control our waste and to recycle where possible will certainly make our village more environmentally friendly now and in the future.

Kathy Fricker

**Nick Sleep**  
Proprietor

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# Biddenham Parish Council



There is a requirement for an Annual Parish meeting to be held which is open to all electors of the parish. Electors have the right not only to attend but also to speak on any matter of local interest. This year the meeting was held on Tuesday 19th April. Interestingly the Annual Parish meeting is a legacy from the Middle Ages, when local councils did not exist and all local decision making was carried out by meetings of the whole community.

The Annual Parish meeting also provides an opportunity for the Parish Council to report back to parishioners on what it has been doing over the previous year, and listen to feedback and concerns raised by residents. This is my report for the Annual Parish meeting.

## Chair's Statement 2021/2022

This is my first report as Chair of Biddenham Parish Council, taking over from Peter Chase last year after he completed a 6-year stint in the role. I have to repeat here what I have said before - he was a real asset to the parish and continues to be so in his role as Vice-Chair.

I'm pleased to say that I believe we remain an active and productive council, making the most of the limited powers we have. I am encouraged that members of the public are prepared to give up their time and feel comfortable attending our meetings to share their concerns and issues, some of which we can deal with directly and some where we can only seek to influence the actions of others. I am fully aware that attending parish council meetings doesn't make any list of the top ten things to do locally so thank you to those who attend.

Let's reflect on the past year.

**Gold Lane development and planning:** One of the most apparent changes this year in the village has been the commencement of building works at the Dandara development on Gold Lane. Starting with less positive news, our suggested improved road layout for the development access point was rejected on the grounds of the extra cost related to the redesign and resubmission to planning. In fact, the access point has been a concern even during development with construction vehicles regularly missing the Deep Spinney entrance and having to turn around on Gold Lane. Lobbying both the borough council and the developer for better signage has proved successful and we hope this has improved the situation.

Looking more positively, the borough council and developer accepted the suggested historical names for the new streets that will form part of the first phase of the development. The suggested names came from a detailed proposal from a local resident which set out some history to the site and, based on this, proposed themed names for the streets (see page 16).

We were also recently sent the preliminary report on the archaeological excavations at the site, which revealed rich archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic to the late Anglo-Saxon periods; we hope to have an interpretation board erected in the future detailing these finds.

This hasn't been the only planning item we've looked at this year. We have also reviewed and acted as a consultee on approximately 89 separate planning applications.

**Highways:** Our placement of temporary Speed Indication Devices (SID) and our fixed SID, in place just east of Windmill Hill on Bromham Road, highlighted that almost half of all traffic is speeding and there were some disturbing top speeds recorded. This has meant your parish council's view of average speed cameras (ASC) has had to change. We don't like the unnecessary introduction of such things, but it cannot be denied - we have a problem and ASCs are the only long term effective solution. We have requested to be on the borough council's list of schemes.

However, I suspect it may be many years before the borough council implement such a scheme locally - perhaps I'll be proved wrong.

After some pressure the borough council also agreed to move the 30mph signs at the Bromham Road/Deep Spinney roundabout. These signs are practically invisible to drivers going towards town, and end up with some being unclear what the limit is. Moving of the signage has been agreed and is now on an (apparently long) list of work for BBC Highways.

Following a village-wide survey, which showed strong support for a 20mph limit, and after discussions with the borough council, they have agreed to introduce a 20mph speed limit throughout the Deep Spinney area. They estimate this should receive funding in this financial year.

A resident of the village, who is a professional in the field of traffic management, has suggested the installation of three refuges at various points along Bromham Road i.e., places in the middle of the road where you can stand as you cross from one side to the other. This should have the effect of calming traffic and also provide safer places where people naturally want to cross the road. The parish council supported this idea and funded a feasibility study. We have received a first draft and have requested clarification of a number of points. We expect the likely outcome to be that the report will confirm the refuges will be doable and contribute to road safety - the next hurdle is finding the money for the work.

**Grants:** The parish council is keen to support local voluntary groups and seeks to do so by providing parish council grants.

These benefit parishioners by ensuring that voluntary organisations and services are able to keep functioning and can also provide assistance to those that are newly formed. This year we granted: £450 to The Friends of Biddenham Village Pond for a shed in which to store their equipment, and £530 to the group for a new mower; £157 to the Biddenham Conservation Volunteers group for insurance; £500 to Beds Police Partnership Trust to support the 'Bobby Van' who provide ring doorbells for the above 65s for exclusive use in Biddenham; and £1,500 for a defibrillator at the Kingsfield Sports Facility.

Other items of spend have included a new memorial bench at Kings Corner, a noticeboard for St Mary's, the replacement of all the windows in the Main Road bus shelter, a deep clean of the war memorial, a new Christmas tree and pit for St Mary's, and the erection of the Ukrainian flag at the village flagpole.

**New trees for Biddenham:** One particularly satisfying project for me has been the planting of 40 new trees around Biddenham as part of the 'Trees For Streets' initiative; we have received a positive response to these and I plan to ask the parish council to consider more in the coming year if the scheme is repeated.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** As we look to the coming year, we are aware we need to think big about the use of the CIL payments we will receive in relation to the Gold Lane development. CIL is an important tool to help deliver infrastructure to support development in an area. We remain, as ever, open to ideas from the public and are exploring ways in which we can involve you in the process.

...Which leads me to remind you all that every parish council meeting starts with a public open session. This is an opportunity for members of the public to raise issues of concern or suggestions. Everyone and anyone is welcome - just turn up!

Finally, I'd like to pass on my gratitude to David Brough, our Clerk, who has been a great help to me during my first year, to all of my fellow councillors who have given up their time voluntarily and our two Borough Councillors, Jon and Roger who have supported and helped us.

Stewart Briggs  
Chair





We would like to thank Biddenham Parish Council once more for their on-going support for our activities. This year they have purchased a new lawnmower for us. It is already in use and, being much lighter, it is easier to use than our old one. We are also pleased to be able to say that all slots have been filled on the mowing rota, and that regular mowing has re-started. We thank all those who volunteer to mow down at the pond. Their hard work makes such a difference to people's enjoyment of the pond.

#### Annual Frog Foray

With torches at the ready, Chris held his annual frog foray on Friday 18th March and three people joined him. The frogs once again stayed away, but this was not unexpected given the worldwide decline in frog numbers. However, the newts were in evidence, both great crested and common, and there were plenty of water boatmen and a species of water beetle *Acilius sucatatus* (the lesser diving beetle) not seen in the pond before.

#### Pond clearance



*Spring work party  
Photo: Peter Applewhite*

Saturday 19th March was a lovely day and eight volunteers gathered at the pond to sort and move the piles of wood and plant matter that had collected in the "triangle" over autumn and winter. Some of the wood will be used to make a dead hedge at the western side of the pond (where the fire happened in 2020) to make a natural barrier. Other pieces have been piled against the wall to make a home for insects and small animals, and the vegetation has been moved to the compost bins.

The water level remains at a good level with ducks and moorhens very much in evidence and even a heron has been spotted. Since this is the breeding season, please can we remind you to keep your dogs on a lead and not to allow them to enter the pond where they will disturb the birds.

#### AGM/Summer Tea – 12th June

Our AGM/Summer Tea will be held on Sunday 12th June in the Church Barn starting at 3.30pm and everyone is welcome - you don't need to be a "Friend of the Pond" to come and enjoy the tea and scones on offer. We make no charge for the refreshments, but we are grateful to receive any donations. Why not take a walk from the pond via Coffin Path to the Church Barn for a cup of tea and then back along Church End?

#### Pond dipping – 25th June

Chris is planning to hold a pond dip on Saturday 25th June at 2.30pm, so please come along and see for yourself the life that is supported by our pond. Children of all ages are very welcome, but they **must** be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for their safety. Please do not bring dogs with you as they disturb the wildlife.

If you are interested in joining our WhatsApp Pond Workforce Group and volunteering for occasional projects down at the pond (which supplement our Spring and Autumn work mornings) please send your mobile number to Cathy at [ceckett@gmail.com](mailto:ceckett@gmail.com).

The pond can be found behind the Manor Hospital and the footpath that will take you to it is at the junction of Main Road and Gold Lane, where there is a signpost with a kingfisher. Alternatively, it can be reached from the footpath behind St James Church along the ancient coffin path that takes you across the fields and back to the village.



Enjoy your Spring walks at the pond.

**The Pond Team**

#### Contact Details

Chris Jones

Cathy Eckett-Brown

Jane Knight

Sophie Applewhite-Rees

Jonathan Field

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## Come for lunch and stay for tea.....

It's official - the Biddenham Show is back!

The annual show, which has been cancelled for the past two years due to Covid-19 restrictions, will be returning on Sunday 11th September 2022 at St James' VA Primary School on Main Road from 12 noon to 4.00pm.

The popular tea and cakes stall will be held in the adjacent Village Hall, and this year will also see the return of the beer tent.

Whilst the full programme of events is still being finalised, it promises to be a bumper year of activities for the whole family with stalls, entertainment, food and drink, as well as gardening, cooking and children's competitions. And don't forget to bring along your dog for the Fun Dog Show.

For ongoing updates to the programme, please refer to the Biddenham Show website: <http://biddenham.org.uk/village-show/>

For those new to the village, the Biddenham Show has been held annually since the early 1900's when it started life as the Biddenham and Bromham Flower Show.

It has expanded since then to incorporate a wide range of family entertainment thanks to the tireless efforts of the

Biddenham Show Committee volunteers.

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Janet Field

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# A cricketing tale....

... and a tragedy that affected a cricketer, one John Thomas Brown Dumelow Platts, for the rest of his career.

The name of W. G. Grace still resonates today, but not that of John Platts. Why then this article? Well, researching our family history revealed we are related to John's wife Lydia (nee Tipper) through my maternal grandmother, also a Tipper by birth, and that is how we discovered and were moved by John's story.

Born in 1848 in Chellaston, Derbyshire, young John worked in the local gypsum mines. In his spare time he pretended to play cricket, bowling stones at imaginary batsmen. By 1868 he was a professional cricketer, playing for a number of clubs. After Derbyshire County Cricket Club was established, John played in its first match in the 1871 season and for the next 13 years. His batting improved and he was top scorer for Derbyshire in the 1876 season.

As well as being a professional cricketer John had the Rose and Crown Inn in Chellaston, where he lived with wife Lydia (they married in 1878), and their three children.



*The Derbyshire CCC team which played Yorkshire CCC in Sheffield in 1877 – John Platts is front row, second from the right. By kind permission of the Derbyshire County Cricket Club Archive*

Progressing up the order during his career, John played his penultimate game in the 1884 season as an opener. After retiring from playing, he began umpiring and took 69 first class games up to 1896. He was later diagnosed with tuberculosis and died in 1898 aged 49.

It was in June 1870 that tragedy struck during John's playing career. That year Lord Coventry helped raise a subscription for him to join the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). John was a right arm medium/slow bowler, but able also to deliver with a very fast pace to his straight arm action. John though played only one game for the MCC.

By the 1860s, Lord's was established as the most prestigious venue in the country, but had a reputation for poor and, at times, dangerous wickets. Not everyone disliked a bad surface; particularly amateurs, whose livelihoods did not depend on performances, believed a bad surface provided a test of courage and virility. In the 1870 season the MCC purchased a heavy roller which improved things, but small pebbles still regularly rose to the surface.

That June, George Summers, playing for Nottinghamshire, faced his first delivery bowled by John Platts making his first class debut. The ball hit a loose pebble, rose up and struck Summers between cheek and temple. He fell to the ground. W. G. Grace, then a 22 year old medical student, gave assistance.

Summers, groggy but conscious, was deemed unfit to carry on, left the pitch, was given a brandy and sat in the sun to watch the rest of the match. Afterwards he declined to stay in London to rest and seek medical help and returned to Nottingham by train with the team.

His condition worsened on the journey, not helped by the often violent shaking of the carriage experienced on

parts of the line at that time. Back at his father's house, still not well, three days later Summers collapsed and died, two days short of his 26th birthday.

W. G. Grace later commented "... *the bowler was not in the least to blame for the catastrophe, but he was terribly cut up, and I shall never forget his mental distraction.*" The incident took a heavy toll on John. He never bowled fast again, found it hard to set foot on the Lord's pitch and could never play there with any pleasure.

Oh, and there might just be a coincidental link through my paternal grandfather.

In 1901 Mary Lydia, John and Lydia's daughter, sadly died aged only 18 in Burton upon Trent. After her mother's death in 1885, she had been for some years with her Aunt Alice, John's sister. Their house was in a street close to the street where my paternal grandfather lived and worked. Did their paths cross? Did Mary Lydia and Aunt Alice buy their groceries from his shop? None of them knowing then of course that years later his second son, my father, would meet and marry Mary Lydia's fourth cousin's daughter. It is a small world!

Peter Applewhite

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# This month in the garden

One of the things that I enjoy in my garden is seeing the old favourites that come up every year, the plants that I have forgotten about until they appear at their appointed time. I sat by my pond a couple of weeks ago and spotted fritillaries and epimediums. Also, just peeping through the grass were the shoots of the erythroniums all planted many years ago, but still doing their thing and bringing such joy. Like most people I have many plants which have been given to me by friends and family members. The friend who gave me the white foxglove plants last autumn will be pleased to know that they are doing well and will zing out like beacons of light in their shady corners later on in the year.



Many years ago my father gave me a Kaffir Lily which, sitting in my conservatory, grew bigger and bigger until it had outgrown the pot into which it had been transplanted. We were having a plant sale for the BGA and so three of us heaved it out of its pot and split it into eight pieces. I kept one back and the other seven pieces went to the plant sale. Here is a photo of the piece I retained, three years on now and I hope that the other seven pieces are doing as well in various parts

of Biddenham.

I have missed my garden for the last week as I have been in Europe (a holiday booked at the end of 2019). When I departed my tulips, carefully planted in their pots in late November, were in tight bud. I thought I might miss them if there was a warm spell but fortunately it was cold here whilst I was away and they had hardly moved on. When you are a keen gardener there is never a good time to go on holiday. I was pleased, on my return, to see that the buds were showing on the wisteria and the acers were starting to produce their different coloured leaves. In Austria the flower beds in the parks and gardens were vibrant with brightly coloured pansies. The beautifully shaped pear trees in the squares were awash with blossom - really uplifting.

I had already decided that this month I would write about potagers and then they were featured on Gardeners' World a couple of weeks ago. A potager is historically a French style of gardening, dating back to the Middle Ages, where flowers, herbs, vegetables, fruits and ornamentals are grown together to create a very pleasing outside space. These plants, grown together, provide for better biodiversity. Mixing vegetables and herbs with flowers can contribute to better garden yields. Flowers increase nectar production attracting more beneficial insects that in turn protect edible plants. Companion planting is at the heart of a potager as a means of pest control. It is the practice of growing different plants together for mutual benefit. For example, nasturtium will attract aphids and lure them away from beans and brassicas - well that's the theory! I always plant calendula in with my tomatoes and I have never had a white fly problem. Marigolds attract ladybirds, parasitic wasps, hoverflies and other beneficial insects that protect plants from aphids. Carrots are very prone to carrot root fly and the smell of leeks, shallots, and mint all help to confuse this fly who finds its host through scent. I noted that Monty Don was scattering his carrot seed very thinly so that he did not need to thin out the carrots as they were growing and thus provide the scented attraction for the fly. It is worth researching companion planting as a way to use less pesticides in our gardens.

Like most people with greenhouses, I guess, mine is currently overflowing; filled with trays of seedlings, pelargoniums, sempervivums etc that can't brave the

outside yet. As the weather gets warmer on sunny days open the windows and doors to moderate the interior temperature, it is easy to scorch seedlings.



At this time of the year my auriculas are usually a great delight - not so this year. I didn't split them up last August. This is the time when you tease their roots (the carrots) apart and repot in fresh gritty compost. Last year I just left them in their pots and they were clearly not pleased. However, I

have some photos taken last year so these are the ones you will see accompanying this article on the BGA website.

Doing well in the plant house at the moment and waiting to go out at the end of May are the ammi majus. I grow this every year as I just love the frothy white umbrella flowers looking so like delicate lace - very good in flower arrangements as well.

I also have large amounts of cow parsley in my garden; I never dig it out I just let it run riot through the borders. It provides such a good foil for other plants. So together with the fennel and astrantia there are lots of umbellifers in my garden. I realised this week that this is a very good thing. I was reading an article about swifts returning to this country in early May. Along with swallows and house martins they rely on insects to feed themselves and their young, but with shrinking insect populations their numbers are in decline. I learnt that swifts need to feed on up to 10,000 insects every day. So these "aerial hunters" need all the help they can get. The umbellifers attract the hoverflies and other insects into our gardens; so grow more umbellifers. The Wildlife Trust and RHS have joined forces this month to launch a campaign "Wild about High Fliers" which is aiming to raise awareness of the difficulties facing swifts, swallows and house martins. The website [wildaboutgardens.org.uk](http://wildaboutgardens.org.uk) gives information and advice on how we can help.



At this time of the year taking a hoe through vegetable patches and flower beds on a regular basis, especially on a dry, sunny day is a good thing to do. Any weeds hoed up will soon perish. My grandfather maintained that if you hoe the soil before you can see the weeds you will never have any. No, I don't do it either! My garden is a mass of weeds and I just live with it, the beds are tightly packed with plants so the weeds hardly show. I have to say, though, I do try to be more vigilant in my small vegetable patch. Get supports in place around perennials before they grow too tall. Do this as early as you can so the supports are disguised by the growing foliage. Keep earthing up potatoes and resist the temptation to plant things out too soon. Garden Centres are bursting with spring plants and annuals and it is very tempting to plant out before things are properly hardened off.

Happy gardening and don't forget to enjoy the ever-changing views and take time to sit and appreciate your efforts. If you fancy a trip out to a lovely garden I would recommend Coton Manor in Northamptonshire. At this time of the year there is the added bonus of their beautiful bluebell woods.

Linda Truscott

More photographs to accompany this article are available on the Biddenham Gardeners Association website [www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk](http://www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk)



# Plant a tree for the Jubilee

If you walk around Biddenham or Great Denham, you will notice lots of new trees have recently been planted. Many form part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

## What is the Queen's Green Canopy?

Chris Jones, founder of the Biddenham Conservation Group, explains: "It's a nationwide tree planting initiative to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. People across the UK are being encouraged to plant trees and register them on the Queen's Green Canopy map: <https://queensgreencanopy.org>. The aim is to create a network of trees and woodlands across the UK creating a legacy for the future."



*Helen Nellis planting a tree*

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis, is a big supporter: "I am very proud to be supporting the Queens Green Canopy, the UK wide tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. It has been a pleasure to visit youth organisations, schools, villages, businesses and local communities and watch firsthand younger and older people join together outdoors planting trees together. It is wonderful to think that, in years to come, future generations will enjoy sitting under the trees that were planted in this special jubilee year and that they may reflect upon the time in which the trees were planted. There are many social, economic and environmental benefits to be gained from planting trees and that is why the Queens Green Canopy is such an important project, not only to celebrate Her Majesty's long unswerving service to the country and commonwealth, but also to show our faith in the future. The planting season restarts in October 2022, and I would encourage you all to 'plant a tree for the Jubilee'."

## Why did the Biddenham Conservation Group decide to get involved?

Chris Jones explains: "I thought it would be a nice communal activity to get people together and plant a few trees which can be enjoyed by the local community. The Biddenham Conservation Group started planting trees in Cowslip Meadow back in November, so this tied in nicely with the Queen's Green Canopy. All the trees we have planted are now registered under the scheme."

## What type of trees have been planted in Cowslip Meadow?

"We've planted an elm, a sweet chestnut, some spindles and some hawthorns. The hawthorns and the spindles will provide food and cover for birds and hopefully the sweet chestnut will eventually provide food and cover as will the elm."

"The elm is interesting because it's been grown from one of Bedford's majestic elms."

## What's been happening in Great Denham?

Craig Lymm, who maintains Great Denham Country Park as an employee of Bedford Borough Council, says: "With the volunteers, we've planted service trees, goat willow and wild apple trees. I've looked at some of the tree belt areas to see if there's a way we can replant some of them. Some of the trees haven't survived and there are gaps in places."

"In all, we've planted about 100 trees and another local

volunteer group has put in 200 trees. These now form part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

"We also aim to improve the biodiversity of the park. A country park is a combination of five or six different habitats. The more habitats you create, the more you will increase wildlife who make it home."

## Why did you set up the Great Denham Country Park Nature Group on Facebook?

"I enjoy nature and conservation, so I use Facebook as an educational platform. I use photos as they have more impact and help to explain different aspects of the park."

"People can also post their own photos and ask for help with identifying flowers and trees."

"I also organise nature walks around Great Denham Country Park."

## What about the "Trees for Streets" initiative?

In addition to the work of the local tree planting volunteer groups, David Brough, Biddenham Parish Clerk, has also been busy coordinating Bedford Borough Council's tree planting campaign in the area.

"40 trees were planted across Deep Spinney, Bromham Road (East), Bromham Road (towards the bridge), Elgar Close and the roundabout at St Mary's," he says.

Whilst these trees have not been registered as part of the Queen's Green Canopy, he adds: "Street trees offer huge benefits for our own mental and physical wellbeing. They also capture carbon, absorb pollution, create shading and cooling, and just make where we live much nicer."

Janet Field



*Great Denham*



*Lavenham Drive*



*Café B...* 

*Tuesday 17th May  
Biddenham Village Hall  
10.15 am - 11.45am*

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

*Next café 21st June*

# Biddenham Cricket Club



The Club's Annual General Meeting was held at the Three Tuns on Sunday 30th March with members attending in person and also via Zoom. Reports were received on the 2021 season reflecting the success of the Junior section in terms of numbers and participation and also the Senior Sunday League side that performed well in the Bedfordshire County League Division 1.

After 10 years with the Sunday League team Will Lowerson has stepped down as captain. Will joined Biddenham CC almost 20 years ago as a 10 year old and his leadership of the Sunday team has resulted in the club rising from Division 5 to become an established team in the first division. Will's approach has always been unselfish, putting the team first; he would certainly have scored more runs had he not taken on the responsibilities of leading the team at a young age. A football injury meant Will took up wicket-keeping and he made a success of this as well. Ross Cunningham, another member of Biddenham juniors in the past, has taken on the captaincy for 2022.

Other changes announced at the AGM were that Joe Derilo has stepped down as Club Safeguarding Officer and will be replaced by Katie Ulvert. Thanks were recorded to David Watson for his work to achieve a consistently high standard both of pitches, and the ground in general that provides an excellent centre point for the village in the summer for all to enjoy. David is retiring from his role as Ground Manager and also from the committee (see front page).

The club continues to be grateful for the support it receives from the Biddenham Parish Council, where the co-operation and organisation at the Pavilion by Deborah Slade and the "cleaning team" enabled the club to play a significant number of home matches in 2021 in spite of Covid restrictions being in place for the majority of the season. We also appreciate the co-operation of David Brough, Parish Clerk, in enabling any day-to-day issues to be resolved quickly and efficiently.

The meeting moved on to elect the club's committee - the full list of club officers for 2022 is as follows:

Chairman	Glenn Taylor
Vice Chairman	Dr TJ Gill
Youth Chairman	Chris Spurgeon

Secretary	Richard Ebbs
Club Captain	Gary Linton-Walls
Saturday Captain	Currently Vacant
Sunday League Captain	Ross Cunningham
Club Welfare Officer	Katie Ulvert
Cricket Secretary and Treasurer	Richard Fone
Parish Council Liaison	Glenn Taylor and Chris Spurgeon
Membership Secretary	Will Lowerson

The club will run 6 junior teams in 2022, U9, U11, two U13 teams and two U15 teams. All teams have fixtures in the Bedfordshire Youth League. Details of all the club's home games up to the end of May are listed below

As always, 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. 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. This is now a much improved online process and details can be provided on how to access this.

The club will need to achieve full re-accreditation for ECB Clubmark by the end of June this year. This process includes a review of all our policies relating to the safeguarding of junior (under 16) members including the procedures we have for recruiting volunteers.

Richard Fone

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
Youth Chairman	Chris Spurgeon	07707 771606
Club Captain	Gary Linton-Walls	07891 493342
Cricket Secretary	Richard Fone	07818 678697
Club Welfare Officer	Katie Ulvert	07739 286783
100 Club	James Gardner	07928 478563

## BIDDENHAM CRICKET CLUB - HOME FIXTURES 2022

Date	Day	Start Time	Biddenham Team	Opposition
28-Apr-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15 B	Under 15
01-May-22	Sunday	13:00	Sunday League XI	Lutonian CC - 2nd XI
03-May-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13 B	Olney Town CC - Under 13 Development
05-May-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15 B	Clifton CC, Beds - Under 15
08-May-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 11	Elstow CC - Under 11
08-May-22	Sunday	13:00	Sunday League XI	New Bradwell CC - Sunday 1st XI
10-May-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13 B	North Crawley CC - Under 13
12-May-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15	Clifton CC, Beds - Under 15
15-May-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 9	Olney Town CC - Under 9
17-May-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13	Kempston Hammers CC - Under 13
19-May-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15 B	Ickwell CC - Under 15
26-May-22	Thursday	18:00	Under 15	Potton Town CC - Under 15
29-May-22	Sunday	10:00	Under 9	Kempston Hammers CC - Under 9
31-May-22	Tuesday	18:00	Under 13	Queens Park Youth Cricket, Beds - Under 13





## Happy birthday Dr Burt

Jimmy Burt of Church End will celebrate his hundredth birthday on 21st May. We send our congratulations and wish him a very happy birthday.

Photo by [Sofiya Levchenko](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## The Three Tuns

An application has been made for alterations to the inside of the pub. It is planned to close on 6th May for approximately six weeks.

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### Energy-Saving Tips From Our Village Agent

Our Village Agent, Teresa Moon, is here to help older people in Bedford Borough villages to access the services and support they might need. Her services are free and she can visit you at home. Just call Freephone 0800 039 1234.

#### Cooking

- Don't overfill the kettle – just boil enough water for your needs.
- Use the right sized pan for your hob, keep the heat down, and use lids if possible.
- Slow cookers are energy efficient because the heating element uses a very low current and relies on trapped heat to cook food.
- Make toast in the toaster, not under the grill.

#### Washing Machines and Dishwashers

- Use time saver settings on washing machines and dishwashers, for normal loads.
- 80-90% of the energy used by your washing machine goes on heating the water, so wash clothes at lower temperatures if possible.
- Avoid using a tumble dryer wherever possible. If you want to get your towels soft, dry them normally and put them in the tumble dryer for just 10 min with dryer balls, or else brush up the pile with a clean nail brush when dry.

#### Fridges and Freezers

- Defrost fridges and freezers regularly to improve their efficiency.
- Don't put hot food in the fridge – let it cool down first.
- Position fridges or freezers as far from cookers and heaters as you can.

#### Heating

- Pull your curtains at dusk to shut out the night and keep in the heat; and open your curtains during the day to let the sun in. Make sure you don't drape your curtains over radiators – let radiator heat circulate into the room.
- Don't put your wet laundry on your radiators. Use a clothes airer and leave your radiators to do the job they were intended to do.
- Close off any spare rooms and don't heat places you're not going to use.
- Set your central heating to go off a little before you go to bed.

#### Are you struggling with debt? Help is at hand.

St Andrews Church Bedford run a highly recommended Money Advice Service in Bedford. To contact them, just call 07599 618602.

**You can contact our Village Agent on Freephone 0800 039 1234**

(This is an answerphone service, so please be ready to leave your name, address & telephone number, & we will aim to call you back within 48 hours.)



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# Bedford National Trust Association

The next meeting will be our AGM held at the Addison Centre in Kempston at 2.30pm on 21st June. There will be the AGM, refreshments and a speaker for 30 minutes.

Mike Muncaster will talk on "Gone for a Burton". He has come as our speaker in the past and we always enjoy his talks.

There is no admission charge for the AGM.

Everyone is welcome. There is plenty of parking.

For further information ring Robin Salter on 01234 261897.

[e-voice.org.uk/bedfordnt/](http://e-voice.org.uk/bedfordnt/)

## Local baker may close - use it or lose it!

Do you know Pledgers Bakery at 76 High Street, Kempston MK42 7AR? Well, I suggest you support it while you can, as there is a risk that it will close due to increased competition from supermarkets and online shopping.

If you like quality bread and want to support a small, local business, why not start buying your bread, sandwiches, cakes etc there? I see that they won an award recently due to keeping going through the Covid pandemic; see [Kempston baker honoured in national 'Bread Heroes' awards - Bedford Independent](#).

The shop is near McKenzies Butchers and there is free street parking outside. Use it or lose it!

Peter Leverkus



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## Community Wellbeing Champions



Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity have a wide range of projects and services that benefit local communities across Bedfordshire. Our team of Community Wellbeing Champions (CWCs) help people to connect with their local community, improve wellbeing, and empower people to make decisions to support their health. They also help people to access practical advice and support with social issues such as debt, housing, finance and carer support.

Shani, a CWC who works with clients with wellbeing challenges, said:

"Working as a social prescriber is so rewarding and fulfilling. I genuinely feel I am able to support improvements in all aspects of people's lives. It is amazing to see people progress and grow into happier and healthier people. With a gentle hand hold through referrals and encouragement people are able to change what they want to change and achieve their goals."

Below, read about two people who our CWCs have helped change their lives for the better. *Please note: names have been changed for confidentiality purposes.*

### Liam

Liam came to our CWC team with severe chronic pain, anxiety and depression. Although one of our CWCs worked with him for a relatively short amount of time, the impact that the sessions had was clear. Right from the initial appointment, having a CWC helped Liam to release a lot of emotional pain and suffering. Having a new person to talk to who listened and cared was very valuable to him.

"... know that from the broken people who you support in this way like myself, your listening and advice is worth a great deal."

Liam found he was able to see his past with a new perspective, by his CWC encouraging him that he had already achieved so much getting this far.

After going on the courses recommended to him, Liam found that baking allowed him to make his days more meaningful. He is looking into other things he can do from home, to find new ways to spend his time.

"I can see more positives in my life than what I could before you all helped me with what you do. So thank you all very much!"

### Alexis

Alexis came to our Social Prescribing team with a range of physical health issues which were impacting her mental health in a very negative way. During her time with one of the team, she made great progress with just a small action list every few weeks. Alexis built her support network, came to terms with inner conflict and improved her outlook on life by miles.

Alexis found the support and guidance she received since being referred by her G.P. to be priceless. It was what she had been in need of for a while, and was very thankful for the help she received.

"I have now gained in confidence, and have a realisation of what I can achieve. Many thanks."

**Do you need support and advice to deal with your problems?**

**Do you want to improve your quality of life and overall wellbeing?**

**Do you sometimes feel isolated and lonely?**

Our team of Community Wellbeing Champions can support adults living in Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough through their one-to-one service. If you or somebody you know could benefit from this service, find out more and make an enquiry by visiting [www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk](http://www.yourwellbeingbedfordshire.org.uk).



## Peter's Picturehouse

We are delighted to say that The Intern, our April film, was well received by a great audience, who also appreciated the coffee, wine and ice creams on sale! It's good to see new faces joining our regulars at Peter's Picturehouse and we do have room for more to join us too. Reviews of our next film say the music and choreography are superb, so don't miss this chance to see West Side Story (certificate 12A) on our big screen in the Village Hall.

Yes, on Tuesday 3rd May, we are excited to be showing the 2021 film, which was directed by Stephen Spielberg. We think you might know the story already, but this is the classic tale of rivalries and young love in 1957 New York City. Rachel Zegler plays Maria and won a Golden Globe award for Best Actress and Ariana DeBose won both a Golden Globe and an Oscar for Best Actress in a Supporting Role. And to add to the memories of the 1960s film, Rita Moreno who played Anita in the original (and turned 90 the day after the film was released in 2021!) is playing Valentina in this version of the film.

As always, doors of Biddenham Village Hall open at 7.00pm for the film showing to start at 7.30pm and tickets are available on the door at £5. We look forward to welcoming you on the first Tuesday of each month. We have booked some fantastic films (see below) to show over the summer. Make a note in your diaries now so that you don't miss them!

Tuesday 3rd May West Side Story  
Tuesday 7th June Belfast  
Tuesday 5th July The Duke

Rose Houghton

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



### Jubilee Meadow

To commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee we would like to establish a wildflower meadow in the fields between our two school sites. We also hope to support local ecosystems and enhance the biodiversity of our school grounds through the process. In order to do this we need to source a considerable amount of wild flower seed. We will be holding a non-uniform day in June to help raise funds but are looking for seed donations from anyone who can help please. If you have any spare wildflower seeds or know of anywhere we can get access to affordable seeds we would really appreciate your help.

Once sown the meadow will be named 'Jubilee Meadow' and we will welcome visits from anyone who helped with the meadow to see it in full bloom.

EJoyner@sjsg.beds.olicatschools.org



### Peter's Picturehouse

#### In May

**Date:** Tuesday 3rd May 2022

**Time:** Doors open 7:00pm, Film starts 7:30pm

**Location:** Biddenham Village Hall

Tickets available on the door, price: £5

Certificate: 12A

For further information contact  
Marihelen  
07710288933  
marihelen@btinternet.com

West Side Story © 20th Century Studios. All rights reserved

**Coming soon...**

**Tuesday 7th June Belfast (12A)**

**Tuesday 5th July The Duke (12A)**



## Auction Sales & Valuations

Valuation, collection and auction service of individual items through to complete property and commercial clearances.

Call for a free no obligation quote or email [info@peacockauction.co.uk](mailto:info@peacockauction.co.uk)

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Bedford, MK42 0PE

**01234 266366**

# A stitch in time saves .....

For stitch read 'street', and think saving history.

The oldest roads in Biddenham have not always been known by the names they bear today: Gold Lane has previously been known as Gool, Goo, and Go Lane; Main Road as Main Street, Village Street, and Town Street; Duck End Lane as Duck End, Duck Lane, Bridge End and Bridge Lane; and Biddenham Turn as New Road and Grove Lane.

As the village grew during the 20th and into the 21st century, new roads had to be created and named: Elger Close, Darlow Drive and Ison Close remember individuals with associations with the village; Vicars Close was built on land formerly owned by the Reverend Norman; and roads built on the land formerly Deep Spinney were named after rectors and vicars of Biddenham through the ages, such as Gardener Place (Daniel Gardener (1627 – 1629) and Nevern Gardens (M Richard Nevern 1258 – 1293).

The river Great Ouse was once part of the boundary between Anglo-Saxon and Danelaw territory agreed by the Saxon King Alfred and the Danish King Guthrum, and roads such as Saxon Way, Danegeld Avenue, King Alfred Way and Anglia Way in the development at Great Denham, once part of the parish of Biddenham but now a separate parish in its own right, recall the Danish incursion into East Anglia and Bedfordshire.

Most recently on the land north of Bromham Road, in the development at the Bedford end road names such as King George Avenue, Argyll Heath and Seaforth Gardens commemorate the visit of King George V on 22nd October 1914 to inspect on the fields the Scottish troops billeted in Bedford and surrounding area during the early days of the Great War. At the Biddenham end, our village church is remembered in St James Way, and other road names reflect the natural world of the area, including Dragonfly Crescent, Watercress Rise and Heron Court.

But something big has been missed. For many centuries, indeed for the longest period in its existence as a settlement, Biddenham was a self-contained rural farming community where villagers both lived and worked. But

today there are no farms left in the village and very little and steadily diminishing agricultural land. And nowhere has that longstanding agricultural and farming heritage been remembered and celebrated.

The development off Gold Lane is the last substantial opportunity to do that. So it is truly something to celebrate that all those concerned with the naming of the roads in that development have agreed that most substantial part of the village's heritage should be remembered in that way.

In the first phase of the development, currently being built, will be these names:

- Boteler Reach and Dovecote Drive: Sir William Boteler created a carp pond to supply fish for the Manor table, which is now our village pond, and later his wife Elizabeth built by it a dovecote for meat and eggs, and fertiliser for the fields. Sadly, the dovecote was unexpectedly demolished early one morning in 1966, and the village has long sought a way to remember it;
- Lavender Lane, Manning Mews and Whitworth Walk: commemorating farmers at what were then working farms in the village over the years, including Church Farm, Clay Farm, Green Farm, Grove Farm and Honeyhill Farm;
- The Smithy and Wheelwright Way: remembering two essential trades that supported the village's farmers;
- within The Smithy will be Summerlin House and Davison House, remembering long serving village blacksmiths Frederick Summerlin, blacksmithing for some 43 years, and his successor William Davison, for some 45 years; and
- within Wheelwright Way will be Hebbes House, remembering Alfred Hebbes, the village wheelwright in Duck End Lane for 50 years.

And in the second phase of the development there will be a further opportunity, another stitch in time to save, to celebrate and remember more of the village's farming and agricultural heritage, that substantial and significant part of Biddenham's history.

Peter Applewhite

## The 31st St Philip & St James Charity Golf Day

FRIDAY 27th May 2022

PAVENHAM PARK  
GOLF CLUB



## Want a tee-rific day out while helping others? Look no further...

What could be better than playing a round of golf at the county's number one golf course followed by a delicious two-course meal? Knowing that you're supporting two **amazing local causes** at the same time, of course! Over the past 31 years, the **St Philip & St James Charity Golf Day** has raised the amazing sum of **£103,000** for local charities, and it's all down to the generosity of supporters and donors like you. In 2021, despite all the challenges, we shared an amazing **£18,000** between CHUMS and Living It Up, and this year, with your help, we'd like to raise even more for this year's worthy recipients:



Youth Inspired is a small, independent learning provider offering both alternative education and social care activities for people aged 16-25 with SEN (Special Educational Needs). The programme offers activities that build confidence and self-esteem to help learners develop and feel more included in society. [youthinspired.org.uk](http://youthinspired.org.uk)



Kids in Action provides support and social opportunities for children and young adults with special needs and disabilities in a safe, non-judgemental environment. All the activities on offer are designed to help alleviate the feelings of isolation and loneliness experienced by many of these brave young individuals. [kidsinaction.org.uk](http://kidsinaction.org.uk)

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

**Playing golf and enjoying a two-course meal** – £50 per person • **Sponsoring a trophy or a hole** – starting from just £50 • **Donating a prize** for the raffle or auction

### IN RETURN, YOU'LL RECEIVE

**Advertising for your service or company** in our promo material • **Your company details** on our **Main Sponsor Board** • **Your company details** in our **programme** given to every golf team

Should you wish to sponsor us by bank transfer, our charity's account details are:

**Bank** NatWest **Account name** St. Philip & St James Golf Society **Account number** 63141876 **Sort code** 60-02-13



# Biddenham Gardeners Association

## Virgins, Weeders and Queens; a history of women in the garden

We were so pleased to be joined by Dr Twigs Way for our April meeting. Twigs has visited us in Biddenham on many occasions and she is always greeted with great enthusiasm. Twigs is a well known researcher, writer, speaker and consultant in garden history and designed landscapes. Many of us have enrolled for Twigs' courses at the Rothsay Education Centre or visited Wrest Park or Cambridge Botanic Gardens where Twigs has been involved with research projects.

Twigs began her talk by stating that history is littered with male garden designers, but we have failed to recognise that there were also many women who gardened. They were not professional garden designers as this was not a career that was open to them. However, since Medieval and Tudor times the growing of herbs and foodstuffs were the good housewives' domain as women were in charge of cooking and medicines within the household. A Book of Hours c1550 depicted women working hard in a walled garden plot. Women gardeners were employed (on lower rates of pay than men) to undertake the small, fiddly tasks in the garden. In large gardens they were employed as "weeders". In private gardens the maids would be taught to weed by their mistresses. The first book on gardening written specifically for women, "The Country Housewives Garden" by William Lawson, was published in 1618.

There was royal interest and influence in gardens and gardening. Many symbolic gardens were created for Queen Elizabeth 1 as she progressed around England; one of the most notable being at Kenilworth Castle. In the seventeenth century Queen Mary, a keen plant collector, created a garden at Hampton Court and installed glass houses for her collections. During the eighteenth century Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha founded the first Botanic Garden collection at Kew. The orangery housed her plant collection from around the world and was at the centre of this nine acre site. Queen Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was an amateur botanist who took lessons from Joseph Banks and helped to expand and develop Kew Gardens.

Elizabeth Blackwell wrote "A Curious Herbal" in the mid eighteenth century. She was the first woman to produce a herbal and it was aimed at housewives and written in English rather than Latin. The book included many exotic plants and became an important source of introduced plants of the period. In the nineteenth century working class women did the weeding whilst the middle and upper classes avoided physical work in the garden - in part due to the restrictions of their clothes and corsetry - a little light watering or deadheading was all that could be managed. The end of the nineteenth century saw a rise in lady gardeners and in the early Edwardian period twenty horticultural colleges for ladies were created. With the formation of the Women's Land Army there were somewhere in the region of 23,000 women working in horticulture and the uniform for those women working the land changed to make it more comfortable for them.

At the time of the 1911 Census Gertrude Jekyll was able to describe herself as a Garden Designer. She designed over 400 gardens but came to garden design later in life having been an artist first. The same applied to many other women gardeners and designers, for example Vita Sackville-West and Margery Fish who had pursued careers as writers before they took up gardening. Twigs concluded her talk by mentioning Jinny Blom, a well-known garden designer of today, whose planting schemes often include wild flowers that the "weeders" of centuries ago were being paid to pull up.

Many thanks to Twigs for her entertaining and

enlightening talk.

Please join us next month on Tuesday 17th May when Steffie Shields will elaborate on "Have Garden - Will Travel." Details can be found on our website. The meeting will be open to all members, new members and visitors.

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)

## Host a street party for the Platinum Jubilee



This year the UK will mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a four-day bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June 2022.

To help residents celebrate the occasion, Bedford Borough Council has waived the usual administrative fee for street party road closures.

Street parties are a great way for communities to get together with their families and neighbours.

In the July edition of The Loop we will be publishing Platinum Jubilee highlights, so send your best street party photos if you would like to be featured to: [loopreporter@gmail.com](mailto:loopreporter@gmail.com).

Anyone planning a street party is asked to submit an application to request a street closure via email to: [road.closures@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:road.closures@bedford.gov.uk) by 22nd May 2022.

For tips and ideas on how to organise your street party visit: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

Janet Field

## R J GASCOYNE THE PLUMBING, HEATING AND GAS COMPANY

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trustworthy and professional  
engineer.



## First Friday Lunch



Soup, sandwich or baked potato,  
pudding and a drink,  
on the first Friday of every month  
in Biddenham Village Hall  
from 12.15pm

**£8.00**

New layout - tables of 6

Draw for 2 free lunch tickets every month  
*Book swap*

Booking essential:  
email [firstfridaylunch@outlook.com](mailto:firstfridaylunch@outlook.com)  
or text/leave a message on **07412 559584**

6th May, 3rd June, 1st July

## No Fear Duplicate Bridge

Biddenham Village Hall Fridays at 2.30pm (intermediate),  
Sundays at 6.00pm.

Contact Bernard Henry 07866 456759 or  
[bahenry@gmail.com](mailto:bahenry@gmail.com)

## 100 CLUB March draw

The winners were:

1st	John Watson	44
2nd	Sarah Davis	53
3rd	Paul Maddaford	82



Drawn by Fran Moxon

## CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK

Need local help? Ring **01234 815393** or email  
[help@biddenham.org.uk](mailto:help@biddenham.org.uk).



**The Friends of St James**  
- the charity which helps conserve  
the church, churchyard and barn  
for future generations

Membership  
Treasurer

Peter Leverkus  
Paul Fricker

Tel: 353662  
Tel: 342843

## Quilting & Sewing Group



Biddenham Village Hall  
10.30 a.m.

Last Friday of each month

*Pop in and see what goes on*



## Hall Booking Details

### Biddenham Village Hall

From the Village Hall website you can check availability on  
the diary, look at the facilities and fill in a booking form.  
Contact details for regular events are also there.

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

### Church Barn

The Church Barn is available for parties, small events and  
classes, with a capacity for up to 50 people. Comprising a  
main hall, full kitchen use, two toilets, ramp access, baby  
changing and disabled facilities. To check availability  
contact our Booking Officers via email on  
[stjamesbarnbiddenham@gmail.com](mailto:stjamesbarnbiddenham@gmail.com) (preferred contact) or

Jane 07831 172320

Rebecca 07769 944727

### 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.

You can check availability and book on the website  
[www.biddenhampavilion.co.uk](http://www.biddenhampavilion.co.uk). Contact details for regular  
events are also there.

### Great Denham Community Hall

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

**Welcome Packs for  
New Biddenham Residents**  
Contact Richard Church Tel: 214805



## Regular Events in Biddenham Halls

### For contact details see the Hall websites

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

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

[www.stjamesbiddenham.com](http://www.stjamesbiddenham.com)

<b>Monday</b>		
Cha Char Chimps	10.00am	Village Hall
Yoga	10.00-11.30am	Pavilion
Gentle Yoga	2.00-3.00pm	Pavilion
Storm Martial Arts	7.00-8.00pm	Pavilion
Guides	7.15pm Termttime	Village Hall
<b>Tuesday</b>		
Over 50s fitness	10.00-11.00am	Pavilion
Caf� B	10.15am-12noon (3 <sup>rd</sup> in month)	Village Hall
Calm Baby Massage	10.30am	Church Barn
Peter's Picturehouse	7.00 for 7.30pm (1 <sup>st</sup> in month)	Village Hall
HIT Fitness	7.00-7.30pm	Pavilion
Biddenham Gardeners Association	7.30pm (3 <sup>rd</sup> in month)	Village Hall
Country Dancing	8.00pm (2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> in month)	Village Hall
Zumba	8.00-9.00pm	Pavilion
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Coffee morning for Ukrainian Community	9.00am	Church Barn
Kensington Ballet	10.00-11.00am	Pavilion
Baby College	10.00am, 11.00am & noon Termttime	Village Hall
Handbell Ringer Practice	2.30pm	Church Barn
Table Tennis	2.00-4.00pm	Pavilion
HIT Fitness	6.30-7.30pm	Pavilion
Adult Yoga	7.00-8.00pm	Village Hall
<b>Thursday</b>		
Under 5's	9.30-11.30am (Termttime)	Village Hall
Line dancing	9.30-11.30am	Pavilion
Oasis	9.30am (1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> in month)	Church Barn
Mum & Baby Movers	1.00pm	Village Hall
U3A Handbell Ringer Practice	2.00pm	Church Barn
Fetch Puppy Club	7.30-8.30pm	Pavilion
<b>Friday</b>		
Pilates	8.30am & 9.30am	Village Hall
Jo Jingles	9.30am-12.30pm	Pavilion
First Friday Lunch	12.30pm (1 <sup>st</sup> of the month)	Village Hall
Quilting & sewing	10.30am-2.30pm (last of the month)	Village Hall
Brushstrokes Art Group	2.15-4.15pm	Pavilion
No Fear Bridge (intermediates)	2.30pm	Village Hall
Choir Practice	7.00pm	Church Barn
Storm Martial Arts	7.00-8.00pm	Pavilion
<b>Saturday</b>		
Pregnancy Yoga	9.15am	Village Hall
Oakley Football	9.00am-12.30pm	Pavilion Field
Socatots	9.45-11.15am	Pavilion
Lucy Hunt School of Dance	2.00-3.30pm	Pavilion
<b>Sunday</b>		
St James's Explorers	10.00am	Church Barn
No Fear Bridge	6.00-9.00pm	Village Hall
Revive	7.00pm (3 <sup>rd</sup> in month)	Church Barn

For details of events at Great Denham Community Hall please visit  
[www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk](http://www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk)

## May

- Sun 1 May** All Age Worship at All Saints, 10.00am  
 All Age Worship at St James's, 10.00am  
 Holy Communion at All Saints, 11.15am
- Tue 3 May** Peter's Picture House, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.00pm, see p15
- Fri 6 May** First Friday lunch, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.15pm, see p18
- Sun 8 May** Said Holy Communion at All Saints, 9.00am  
 Holy Communion at St James's, 10.00am  
 Evening Prayer at St James's, 6.00pm
- Sun 8 May** Spring Teas, St James's churchyard and Church Barn, 2.30-5.30pm, see p3
- Sun 15 May** Holy Communion at All Saints, 10.00am  
 Morning Worship at St James's, 10.00am  
 Revive: Coffee/Bible/Fellowship, Church Barn, 7.00pm
- Tue 17 May** Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.15-11.45am, see p11
- Tue 17 May** Biddenham Parish Council, Pavilion, 7.30pm, see p6
- Tue 17 May** Biddenham Gardeners Association, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.30pm, see p17
- Sat 21 May** Music for May, Biddenham Pavilion, 7.30pm, see p2
- Sun 22 May** Said Holy Communion at All Saints, 9.00am  
 Holy Communion at St James's, 10.00am  
 Explorers, Church Barn, 10.00am
- Fri 27 May** St Philip & St James Charity Golf Day, see p16
- Fri 27 May** Quilting & Sewing Group, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.30am, see p18
- Sun 29 May** Service of Wholeness & Healing at St James's, 10.00am  
 Choral Evensong at St James's, 6.00pm

## June

- Fri 3 Jun** First Friday lunch, Biddenham Village Hall, 12.15pm, see p18
- Tue 7 Jun** Peter's Picture House, Biddenham Village Hall, 7.00pm, see p15
- Sun 12 Jun** Friends of Biddenham Pond AGM, Church Barn, 3.30pm, see p7
- Tue 21 Jun** Café B, Biddenham Village Hall, 10.15-11.45am, see p11
- Tue 21 Jun** Bedford National Trust Association AGM, Addison Centre, Kempston, 2.30pm, see p14
- Sat 25 Jun** Pond dipping, 2.30pm, see p7

Biddenham Cricket Club fixtures are on page 12

For regular events at the Church Barn, Pavilion and Biddenham Village Hall see page 19

### Zoom Church Services every Monday & Wednesday

Every Monday at 9.00am Morning Prayer via Zoom.  
 Every Wednesday at 6.00pm Virtch, online Zoom service.  
 To access Zoom church services enter meeting ID 998 074 6039.

## The Loop

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All **June 2022** articles, preferably by e-mail in Word format, to [loopeditor@gmail.com](mailto:loopeditor@gmail.com)  
 or to 22 Day's Lane and adverts to [loopadverts@gmail.com](mailto:loopadverts@gmail.com)  
 by **Wednesday 18th May** 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.*