

MONKTON NEWS

JANUARY

2021



POST BOX TOPPER BY LYNN – JOURNEY TO A BETTER NEW YEAR

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25 TO END	ADVERTISING SECTION. And seasonal extra pages of pictures .

A BIG THANK TO ALL OUR FAMILIES WHO HELPED TO
MAKE MONKTON CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS SO
FANTASTIC RIGHT THROUGH THE VILLAGE.

THANK YOU TOO, FOR ALL THE ADVENT WINDOWS,
POSTBOX TOPPERS, SANTA BUSH AND CRAFTED
FESTIVE DECORATIONS WE ENJOYED.
FOR MORE PICTURES OF LIGHTS AND DECORATIONS
SEE MONKTON, KENT, FACEBOOK

A HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER NEW YEAR TO ALL

WHO DOES WHAT IN MONKTON NEWS?

editor	Denyse Cole	Tel: 01843 821657 denysecole@btinternet.com
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To advertise in Monkton News, contact the editor

Distribution: Kay and Harry Horne. Tel 01843 823849.





'KayHorne' <shudy@talk21.com>

Articles and letters for Monkton News should be sent to the editor as above or 112 Monkton Street, BY THE 19TH OF EACH MONTH.

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. MARY MAGDALENE, MONKTON

We are part of the benefice of the Wantsum Group which comprises the Church of England parishes of Minster, Monkton, St. Nicholas with Serre and Chislet. This benefice also belongs to the SEAMARSH group of parishes

TO ARRANGE BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS OR FUNERALS AT ST. MARY MAGDALENE PLEASE CONTACT THE VICAR

VICAR		Rev. Dr/ Richard Braddy	821250 Richard Braddy <arichard.braddy@gmail.com>	Minster and the benefice
ASSISTANT CURATE		Rev. Vicky Coneys	Vicky Coneys <vickysconeys@hotmail.com>	
ASSISTANT CURATE		Rev. Michael Darkins	Michael Darkins <revd.michaeldarkins@gmail.com>	
Group administrator		Matthew Hergest	823347 mjhergest@hotmail.com	For the benefice
RET CLERGY		Rev. Canon Peter Gausden	peter.gausden374@btinternet.com 825374	
METHOIST MINISTER		Rev. Wes Hampton	. . <wesley.hampton@methodist.org.uk>	Monkton and Thanet

USEFUL NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

POLICE NON-EMERGENCY 101	MINSTER DOCTORS' SURGERY 821333. Out of hours call 111
CRIME STOPPERS 0800 555 111	SOCIAL SERVICES 860000
COMMUNITY WARDEN – KARL AYLETT 07811 271 299 Karl.aylett@kent.gov.uk	MONKTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL 821394
PCSO Adrian Butterworth. To contact email 56550@kent.pnn.police.uk PCSO Debbie Forsyth 60457@Kent.pnn.police.uk or call 101	MINSTER LIBRARY 03000 413131
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELP 07926 842 183 www.domesticabuseservices.org	SOUTHERN WATER to report a leak 0800820999 Supply or sewage problems 0330 303 0368 Billing 0333 200 3015
CHILDLINE 0800 1111 Free and confidential.	Parish clerk – Sara Archer 821989 clerk@monktonparish.co.uk https://www.hugofox.com/community/monkton-parish-council-18134/home/ . WEBSITE
THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL – for all department information https://www.thanet.gov.uk PHONE 577000	RSPCA 0300 1234 999
Recycling and fly tipping 577115	LOCAL RETAILERS offering deliveries. Attwells, Touchwood chemists. Brills DIY, Birchington. And others on enquiry. .
Planning 577591	NEAREST POST OFFICE Minster 821291
Dog warden and noise control 577580	MONKTON VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS 821439
QEQM HOSPITAL 225544 Outpatients appointments line 01227 868686	MINOR INJURY UNITS Kent and Canterbury Hospital 24 hrs 01227 864244 Estuary View , Whitstable CT5 3SE 8-8 daily 01227 284301

WHAT'S ON AT THE VILLAGE HALL IN JANUARY 2021

DAY	TIME	EVENT	CONTACT
MONDAYS	9.30-10.30 7.30 pm	Exercise dance with Maggie & co Canine behaviour and obedience training classes	Chris Paris Brown MBIPBT 01227 365381
TUESDAYS	2nd Tuesday 3.15pm-5.15pm 7.30pm except third Tuesday. Monkton WI third Tuesday, 7-30 pm	Messy Church Adults Table Tennis Club	Eileen Brackstone 825390 Gilly Brown Penny 821539
WEDNESDAYS	10-12 2-4 pm (school holidays only) 6.00pm	Social morning for retired villagers Family fun afternoon Line dancing all grades beginners upwards	Due to Covid 19, not meeting at present. Theo Loyla
THURSDAYS			
FRIDAYS	4.00pm – 7 PM	La Dance Academy	Laura 07772173424
SATURDAYS	9.00am TO 3 pm	La Dance Academy	Laura 07772173424
SUNDAYS			

Activities will continue in the hall **when permitted following prescribed Covid 19 rules**. This means numbers in groups are restricted. Please contact your organiser for latest news. No party bookings allowed at current time.

Contact Pete Mitchell, 821439 for availability and bookings

COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS AND REGULATIONS, JANUARY 2021

For latest formation please refer to local media or news.

COVID 19 VILLAGE HELP HUB
TO VILLAGERS WHO NEED TO SHIELD OR SELF ISOLATE DUE TO COVID 19

if you live in Monkton and need to shield or self-isolate you can call the number below if you need emergency help with: -prescriptions, shopping, mail posting.

We have local volunteers who are willing to assist you.

Contact Del or Pete on **01843 821439**;

Please only use this number for essential shopping when it cannot be obtained through one of the many home delivery services from local grocery outlets.

Please ring at convenient hours as this service is not available for late night calls

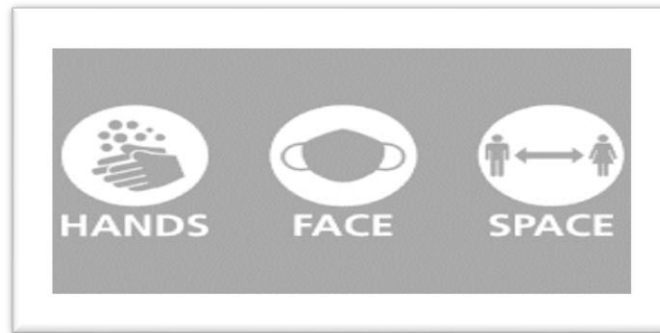
AS THE PANDEMIC GOES ON A HUGE THANK YOU TO EVERY ONE WHO CONTINUES TO VOLUNTEER IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM MINSTER SURGERY
MINSTER SURGERY is a hub for administering the Covid-19 vaccination programme. Vaccinations have already begun according to the government's and health authorities' rules for lists of priorities of patients

The vaccination in use was developed by Pfizer.

Mr. Ken Self of the Patient Liaison Group has advised that patients will be contacted INDIVIDUALLY by text or letter inviting them to attend for a vaccination. if you know of anyone over 80 who has not been vaccinated please contact the surgery.

PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PHONE THE SURGERY FOR A VACCINE APPOINTMENT.



- WASH HANDS FREQUENTLY FOR 20 SECONDS
- WEAR FACE COVERING WHERE REQUIRED
 - KEEP YOUR DISTANCE
- HELP YOURSELF AND OTHERS

NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM VILLAGERS

- Peter and Margaret Gausden wish to thank friends for their cards received at Christmas and wish everyone a better and Happy New Year
- Mrs. Pat Neate would like to wish all friends and neighbours in the village a Happy New Year, and that Christmas was an enjoyable time for all.
- Carol of Seamark Close wishes all neighbours and friends a happy and healthy New Year

Pensioners Christmas Dinner.

We would like to thank everyone who shopped, prepped, cooked and delivered the Christmas dinner and made this event happen.

Thank you
Rachel and Heather



and many thanks to Rachel and Heather for arranging a successful Christmas event in such difficult times.

monkton parish council

PARISH CLERK: Sara Archer, 204 Monkton St, Monkton, Ramsgate, Kent
CT12 4JN

Tel:01843 821989 E: clerk@monktonparish.co.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 30th November 2020 at 7:00pm via zoom.

Present **Parish Councillors** Gilly Brown [GB], Davina Ransom [DR], Chris Ransom [CR], Claire Beavis [CB], Steve Bennett [SB]

In Attendance Sara Archer – Clerk, District Cllrs Reece Pugh & Trevor Roper, KCC Cllr Liz Hurst, PCSO Butterworth plus 8 members of the public.

34/20-21 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

District Cllr David Hart

35/20-21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

41/20-21 (a)

KCC Cllr Hurst was invited to submit her report, as she was required to leave early in order to attend another meeting. KCC had been allocated funding of £4.5 million to assist those in need and the homeless with food vouchers during the festive period. Contact could be made via Kent Together which is a helpline open 24/7. Knock and Check Scheme had been introduced which encouraged neighbours to safely check on each other. Supplied videophones to enable vulnerable people to be able to make visual contact with their families, Carers, GP Surgeries etc...known as the Cara Scheme. Over 90,000 minutes of calls have been used in recent weeks.

KCC Plan Bee – to inspire and engage Kent residents in the plight of pollinators.

Thanet are entering Tier 3, residents were encouraged to be vigilant and protect each other as much as possible.

Cllr Hurst wished everyone a Happy Christmas.

36/20-21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public were given the opportunity to raise any concerns/comments that would not be addressed during the main business of the agenda.

- Mr Ian Smith was invited to speak and outlined his question to the Parish Council.

Mr Smith explained he had conducted a survey of the village which had received 44 responses from 30 homes, all of which had stated they were opposed to the Coles Yard planning application as it currently stands. Of these responses, 18 preferred no development at all and 26 would prefer a less dense development of 10 retirement homes and 10 smaller, one level properties to be allocated nearest to Seamark Close.

Mr Smith asked the Parish Council if they would honour their statement that they would take into account the collective view of the village and change their stance from supporting the development to objecting.

No other questions were raised.

37/20-21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the previous Virtual Parish Council meeting held on 28th September 2020 as a true record. These were proposed by Cllr C Ransom and Seconded by Cllr Beavis and duly signed by the Chair.

38/20-21 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Woodland Project led by Cllr Davina Ransom is now in progress and she was thanked for her vision and drive in seeing the project through.

Cllr Brown advised that the Parish Council would like to acknowledge everything Mr & Mrs Mitchell (Del and Pete) have done throughout the pandemic both in their central role in coordinating the village helpline, and for their work behind the scenes with the VE Day celebrations and other socially distanced village events that have taken place during the year. A suitable gift would be purchased and presented to them on behalf of the Village.

Thanks were extended to Terry Marsh for organising the village Christmas Tree again this year and also to Gilly O'Neill for arranging the annual village advent windows trail, both bringing some much needed festive cheer to the village.

Concern had been raised regarding the poor internet connection in certain parts of the village. The Parish Council were making enquiries to assist with the issue.

Cllr Brown was pleased to report that the complaint which had been made under the Code of Conduct to TDC Standards Committee regarding the Parish Council meeting in July had been dismissed. A supportive and helpful letter from TDC's Monitoring Officer had been received regarding the case.

In view of the many recent emails received regarding planning, Cllr Brown confirmed that the Parish Council would be publicising a simple guide on how the planning process works, the basis on which objections can be made, and the role of a Parish Council in the process etc... to address any misunderstanding surrounding the planning system. It is accepted that planning is an emotive subject, however, it is important that villagers and the Parish Council work together as much as possible.

Cllr Brown ended her report wishing everyone a peaceful, happy Christmas, and the very sincere hope that 2021 will see a world of greater normality return.

39/20-21

FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Members resolved to approve the Schedule of Payments which had been previously circulated as below. **This was proposed by Cllr G Brown and seconded by Cllr D Ransom.**

Ladywell Accountancy - PAYE Reporting	£75.00
HMRC - PAYE	£56.20
S. Archer - Clerks Salary & Expenses	
Sunstone -CCTV Maintenance Contract	£1,528.81
AU Roofing - Refurbishment of toilets Pavilion	£846.00
D. Ransom - Repayment for tree planting	£20.48
H. Gunton - Plants for memorial	£20.00
Newsletter donation	£500.00
RBL - Poppy Wreath	£17.00
S. Archer - Clerks Salary & Expenses	
S. Archer - Clerks Salary & Expenses	
HMRC - PAYE	£94.60

Receipts

Bank Interest	£0.07
Bank Interest	£0.08
TDC Precept	£7,976.00
MFC - Repayment for toilets	£705.00
Bank Interest	£0.14

b) The banking reconciliations for September - November were approved. **This was proposed by Cllr D Ransom and seconded by Cllr**

Brown.

c) The annual winter maintenance contract with FGS was noted and approved accordingly.

This was proposed by Cllr Brown and seconded by Cllr Bennett

40/20-21

PLANNING

All applications and decisions available online via the TDC website.

F/TH/20/1254 – Plot 6b, Land West of Invicta Way, Monkton

Erection of 9No Commercial units (use Class B2) *Permission Granted*

L/TH/20/1378 & FH/TH/20/1377 – 76 Monkton Street, Monkton

Retrospective application for Listed Building Consent for the replacement of window to front elevation

Application pending, no objections raised.

Coles Yard - OL/TH/20/0335 - 116 Monkton Street

In order to address the earlier comments from Mr Smith during item 36/20-21 Cllr Brown summarised the position of the Coles Yard planning application.

The Parish Council have recently been in receipt of a number of emails from Mr Smith which had been circulated and discussed accordingly.

Mr Smith feels strongly that the Parish Council have acting improperly for the reasons detailed below:

- 1 Allowing Mr Jonathan Cole to speak at last meeting
- 2 Supporting the 20 retirement flats
- 3 Asking Cllr Reece Pugh to call the application in
- 4 Changing our position regarding the application

Mr Smith has also produced a leaflet and questionnaire regarding this application, which has been circulated to both Seamark Close residents and subsequently the entire village.

In response to Mr Smith's concerns, Cllr Brown clarified the following points:

1 All Parish Council meetings have provision for people to speak. The PC are also permitted to invite someone to speak on a particular agenda item if they choose. Therefore, the suggestion that the Parish Council have acted improperly in allowing Mr Cole to speak at last meeting is incorrect.

2 The Community Consultation by the Cole's Architects demonstrated huge - 84% - support for the concept of retirement flats. In addition, in the development stage of the latest Local Plan, TDC undertook a housing need survey. Results of this showed retirement flats and starter homes were seen by villagers as top of the list in terms of housing need in Monkton. For these reasons the Parish Council were keen to support the flats in this development.

The comments on the planning application made to TDC by the Parish Council, supported both the principal of the flats, but also the objections from residents of Seamark Close regarding the potential overlooking that was felt could result and offered the suggestion that perhaps the retirement block could be single storey. Following this, it is noted that the plans have been modified to mitigate overlooking, and potentially reduce roof height, however, Mr Cole advised the last Parish Council meeting, that reducing the block to single storey - and thus the number of retirement flats to 10 - was not an option as 20 is the minimum required for care and management support services. On the basis of the considerable support for retirement flats, the amendments made to the plans to mitigate overlooking, plus the fact that the block itself appears to satisfy regulations in terms of height and proximity, the Parish Council agreed objections to the building had been satisfied as far as they reasonably could be.

3 The calling in of a planning application is standard practice with larger scale developments and is the means by which the Developers, Parish Councils and other speakers can directly address the Planning Committee. Nearly every large development in Monkton has been called in in recent years. There is nothing improper in doing this and to suggest otherwise is wrong.

4 Monkton Parish Council have supported development on this site from the onset and this position has not changed. In commenting on this application to TDC, the Parish Council fully and accurately represented all the issues villagers raised during the consultation period which closed at the end April. This included *all* of the concerns expressed by Seamark Close residents about proximity, height, overlooking etc at that time.

To suggest the Parish Council have changed their position is again, incorrect.

Cllrs are concerned by the many inaccuracies and misleading statements in the leaflet produced by Mr Smith which guides objection to be based on invalid and non-planning grounds.

Specifically:

- Monkton Parish Council have not – as stated - changed its position in supporting the application;
- it is understood that the proposed garden sizes, building heights and proximity to existing buildings are all well within planning policy guidelines; this being the case, it is considered issues of overlooking are obviated. The leaflet indicates otherwise.
- the proposed road scheme and parking arrangements have been agreed by KCC Highways; the scheme meets criteria; so the grounds suggested in the leaflet are unfortunately no longer valid
- Heyhill (the 49 houses development) was turned down on the basis of the development being outside village confines, contrary to planning policy and not, as the leaflet says, due to pressure on local services, and other references to infrastructure inadequacies

- unfortunately, as a survey it is of limited value, in that of the 3 options put forward in relation to the planning app, only one actually exists.

Option1 – **agree** to the scheme is ONLY valid option.

Option 2 – **no development** is not valid, as site has development consent

Option 3 - **single story flats and bungalows behind Seamark** ... this option is not offered in the plans or by the developer, which therefore makes it invalid.

It is appreciated a lot of effort has gone into the leaflet campaign. The Parish Council always try to support planning objections. However, the inaccuracies expressed by Mr Smith leave the Parish Council unable to support his Questionnaire and it's results on this occasion. The significant opposition from Seamark Close residents has been acknowledged, and these concerns have been raised with TDC appropriately.

The Parish Council are only able to support objections based on official planning grounds –not on personal feelings or what residents may or may not prefer to see.

The Parish Council are a Consultee Body in the planning process and have no powers; they can not make decisions about any aspect of an application and can only offer suggestions.

The role of the Parish Council is to convey a collective local view and identify any relevant local issues.

To conclude, given the Coles Yard site has development consent, it is the view of the Parish Council that the Coles are trying to offer housing to suit village need, and also to mitigate as far as possible the impact of their development on Seamark Close residents in particular. The development has wide support in the village and the Parish Council regrets that it is unable to lend support to Mr Smith's campaign.

41/20-21

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

a) County Councillor – Received following item 35/20-21.

b) District Councillor – Cllr Pugh confirmed he had requested a site visit to Seamark Close by the Planning Officer at TDC which had subsequently been carried out, however, details of the visit were unclear and Cllr Pugh would continue to follow this up.

Details regarding an eco-roof bus shelter had been shared with a neighbouring Parish Council. It is an initiative that Highham Parish Council had taken advantage of and others were encouraged to introduce a similar scheme where possible.

The feasibility study for Ramsgate Port has extended the deadline for comments until 18th December, residents were encouraged to submit comments.

The responsibility for housing stock has been returned to TDC from 1st October, returning staff and management of leased council housing to the District Council.

Cllr Davina Ransom was congratulated for the tree planting project in the village and offered assistance if required. TDC have now introduced an Isle of Thanet Trees and Woods Initiative which could be contacted via Cllr Pugh.

Cllr Roper advised that the budget for the forthcoming year was now balanced.

Training for TDC Officers had been carried out regarding the changes in the planning processes.

Opposition towards the proposal for Operation Brock at Manston Airport was expressed by TDC. Potentially from 1st Jan a maximum of 4000 trucks could be parked at any one time. Concern regarding the impact on the traffic on the Thanet Way was raised along with the possible increase in transmission of covid-19.

c) Cllr D Ransom reported that the trees were successfully planted. Claire Skinner was thanked for the tree bark which had been generously donated from Wickes Four Oak trees had also been donated and name tags were being organised. **Action GB**

It was suggested that Electric vehicle charging points were given consideration for a future project.

Information from the KALC AGM included an increase in membership fees, a Rural Agenda meeting between various rural stakeholders was being organised. A fire hydrant initiative and the Community Awards Scheme was also to be considered. Swale Council put forward a proposal to Government that fast food outlets print the registration number of each vehicle on the packaging to aid the prosecution of litterers.

PCSO Adrian Butterworth was welcomed and introduced to the meeting. He confirmed the crime rate was low in Monkton, however, a distraction burglary had taken place in Seamark Close, residents were reminded to be vigilant. Hare coursing and lamping remained a problem and should be reported using 999, offenders should not be approached

42/20-21 RECREATION GROUND

a) Cllr Bennett confirmed he had approached the engineer regarding the repairs to the swings and was awaiting his report. The handyman for Minster Parish Council would be contacted regarding the woodwork repairs. **Action SB**

b) It was discussed and agreed to contact Play dale for an initial survey and quote for new equipment in the play area. A site visit was suggested for January.

c) The planting of the sapling trees at the Recreation Ground was approved. This was proposed by Cllr Brown and Seconded by Cllr D Ransom.

43/20-21 HIGHWAYS

a) Cllr Beavis confirmed the damaged street light and road sign at Collards Close had been repaired. The fly tipping had been cleared and a request had been made for the road sweeper to attend and sweep the leaves at the closed end of Monkton Street.

The damage to footpath EE42 has been reported to the Public Rights of Way Officer.

b) Cllr Brown advised that the drains had been investigated by CCTV, the results of the examination would be confirmed by KCC in due course.

c) Due to technical issues, Cllr Brown was unable to attend the Highways Seminar, however, the presentation had been circulated to all Councils direct by KCC.

44/20-21 POLICIES

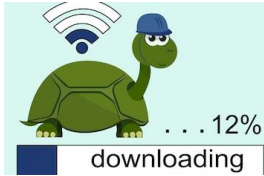
The Training Policy / Media & Comms Policy / Health & Safety Policy / FOI Policy/ Complaints Policy had been circulated prior to the meeting. All were reviewed and subsequently approved by the Parish Council. This was proposed by Cllr Brown and seconded by Cllr Bennett.

The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 8:25pm.

DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2021

January 25th / March 29th / May 24th / July 26th / September 27th / November 22nd

Virtual or in Village Hall to be confirmed.



IS THIS YOU? then read this.

Ultrafast Full Fibre Broadband for Monkton Village

Do you struggle with poor broadband reliability/speeds or do you just feel that your current internet connection is not fast enough for your family's needs?

The good news is that a resident (James Prince) from the outskirts of the village (nr Gore Street) who struggles with poor broadband is working with Openreach to bring the village in to the 21st century with Ultrafast, Gigabit (**1000Mbps**) capable, Full Fibre broadband in the form of a Community Fibre Partnership.

An initial project, "**Phase 1**", is already in progress to bring Ultrafast Full Fibre to the western end of the village, which includes postcodes **CT12 4LL, CT12 4LH, CT12 4JN, CT12 4JR, CT12 4JW, CT12 4JP, and CT7 0AX**. James will be dropping letters through your doors with further details regarding this.

Since proceeding with the above, James has become aware that the eastern side of Monkton also has very poor connectivity, and as a result he is working with us on "**Phase 2**" which will cover the remainder of Monkton village – While just over half of the village already has good fast coverage, it makes sense to ensure everyone in the village can access and enjoy the new future proofed infrastructure.

While these projects are not free and the final cost of "phase 2" is unknown at this stage ("phase 1" has an achievable final target set of £58k), with enough interest from the village all costs should easily be covered by the Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme, with up to **£7000** in funding available for those in the village with speeds less than 30Mbps.

All addresses in the village have been submitted to Openreach and we're currently awaiting news of the initial plan and costs.

To show your interest, to ask questions, and for full details and up to date information regarding this project, we encourage you and your neighbours to join the following Facebook group:-

"Full Fibre Ultrafast Broadband for Monkton Village, Kent"

While we hope there is plenty of interest from the residents, if there isn't the required interest it is likely that Openreach will 'naturally' build the new infrastructure as part of a nationwide full fibre roll out plan within the next 10 years. A Community Fibre Project simply ensures that the infrastructure is built quickly to those areas that demand it.



NATURE NOTES WITH DR. CLIVE

NUTTMAN . . . this month he reviews the success story of a magnificent bird of prey you can see circling the sky above Monkton



© 2009 Photo by Elaine Tisak
http://www.flickr.com/photos/etisak/3151111/



Return of the Buzzard

In the mid-1970s, while living near Folkestone, I saw a large bird of prey circling over the North Downs; the large size, broad wings and longish, rounded tail marked it out as a buzzard. But surely not here in southern England? I had to ask myself this question as our resident Common Buzzard was – at that time – restricted to the north and south-west of England, with much larger populations in Scotland and Wales and, hence, would have been a real rarity in Kent. The bird that I saw was, in fact, a Rough-legged Buzzard, a bird I had seen at nearby Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve and a species that turns up regularly in autumn and winter, especially along the east coast. Fast forward nearly 50 years and the Common Buzzard is our most abundant bird of prey and an almost daily sighting; there are several individuals that haunt the Monkton area, soaring overhead, scanning the landscape from trees for prey, and frequently seen on the ground in ploughed fields where they search for earthworms. What has led to this ‘explosion’ in numbers of this impressive predator?

In reality, it’s just a matter of the Common Buzzard having returned to all those parts of the country that it previously inhabited, thanks to changed behaviours on the part of humans that caused an original decline. Two hundred years ago, these birds were common throughout the UK but their numbers declined drastically through persecution, diseases that affected their prey, and the impact of chemicals in the environment

Although largely blameless because their food comprises mainly small mammals and carrion, buzzards – and many other birds of prey – were targeted and killed by landowners anxious to protect young game birds raised for shooting. In common with our own current experience, a virus had a severe impact on buzzards during the 1950s when the myxoma virus spread to the UK, wiping out 99% of rabbits (a key part of the buzzard's diet) with the very unpleasant myxomatosis disease. At around the same time, the use of certain pesticides on farmland had huge impacts on the reproductive success of buzzards; in addition to causing a thinning of the shells of their eggs and, thus, failed breeding attempts, otherwise healthy-looking birds died due to accumulated chemical poisons ingested from their prey.

Thankfully, increased legal protection for all birds during the 20th century started a revival for the buzzard, with further help from a surprising source. Winston Churchill played a chance part in the recovery of the buzzard when he was involved in making the intentional release of the myxoma virus illegal. The application of harmful agricultural chemicals also declined, underpinned by EU legislation that banned their usage in the 1980s.

The damage of two centuries of human actions was slowly repaired as buzzards spread from their northern and western strongholds, with Kent being one of the final areas to be re-colonised from the 1990s onwards. Keep an eye out for these majestic birds; they need some woodland – a rare commodity in Thanet – for nesting habitat but wander over large distances in their search for food. Monkton Nature Reserve and the Willett's Hill area are good places to see them.



***THE PASTORAL LETTER FOR JANUARY...our
Vicar, Richard writes about all things new....***

2021 – New Year.. new hope... new joy...

For me the days of January always seem brighter than the previous months. I'm not sure whether or not that is because the hours of daylight are lengthening (albeit slowly!). When I reflect on this, I wonder if it is because it's the start of a new year, new start of term, new beginnings?? The key word here is 'new'. When we think of something new we may picture something clean and fresh or maybe starting again.

Following 2020 we may be keen to move onto something new and different – wanting to put behind us the difficulties and anxieties of the Covid pandemic as soon as we can. And as we know, this is difficult and not as straightforward as we may like. 2020 provided lots of challenges and losses in so many different ways and we need to be mindful of this as we enter a new year.

But what I am encouraged by as we move into the new year is a new hope. A new hope for ourselves individually and for our communities. We have just celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ. As we know from the nativity narratives, this birth attracted many visitors – shepherds praising God with joy for what they had seen and Magi bringing gifts for the new king. From the start, Jesus was bringing new hope and new joy to many – and as we read in Luke's gospel 'Mary treasured these things in her heart' (Luke 2:19).

Throughout Jesus' life and then through his death and resurrection, Jesus brings a new hope and new life for all. This hope is eternal and casts an unquenchable light into the darkest of places. This is always 'new' for us because through Jesus we can turn afresh to God day by day and accept his loving care.

I wonder what this new hope is going to look like for you in 2021? Whatever it is, hold onto it dearly, treasure it in your heart and let the light of life burn brightly in all you do.

With peace and blessings for all 2021 may hold
Richard
Revd Richard Braddy (Vicar Wantsum Benefice)



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MAGDALENE, MONKTON. photo: Kent Life.



**We are open for prayer and worship
– join us online or in church!**

Services of said Holy Communion in the Wantsum Benefice:

Sunday 27 December

9.30 Monkton

10.30 Minster

Sunday 3 January

9.30 Chislet

10.30 St Nicholas

Sunday 10 January

9.30 Monkton

10.30 Minster

Sunday 17 January

9.30 Chislet

10.30 St Nicholas

Sunday 24 January

9.30 Monkton

10.30 Minster

Sunday 31 January

9.30 Chislet

10.30 St Nicholas

**Midweek Service of said Holy Communion (BCP) held at Minster Wednesday
10.30am:**

6 January

20 January

3 February

Churches open for prayer and reflection

Minster: Sunday 2-4pm; Tuesday & Thursday 10am-12pm

St Nicholas: Sunday, Tuesday 2-4pm & Thursday 10am-12pm

Monkton: Sunday 2-4pm

Church Online

Church online - informal worship on our YouTube Channel (Wantsum Benefice) – *every Sunday*

Daily Newsletter – with reading & reflection and links to other events –

To receive this email: info@wantsumchurches.org

Monday-Friday Morning Prayer 9.00am & Evening Prayer 5.00pm on Facebook Live
Facebook: St Mary's Church, Minster-in-Thanelt or St Nicholas at Wade Church

www.wantsumchurches.org

If you wish to talk to someone, need support or would welcome prayer please contact:

Revd Richard Braddy 01843 821250

info@wantsumchurches.org

COMING TO CHURCH COMPLYING WITH COVID-19 REGULATIONS

- **please wear a face covering inside the church**
- **use the hand sanitising station**
- **sit socially distanced from each other unless in the same household.**

THANK YOU

2021

Messy Church News

We hope you all had a very joyful Christmas. It certainly was a very strange year but it's now behind us and thanks to some amazing scientists we have a good chance of getting things back to some normality this year.

When a new year starts, we think about new year's resolutions, that honestly are rarely kept. During last year having a garden, watching wildlife and being able to walk down the beach or through the fields has really kept me sane so my new year's resolution for 2021 will be to find one thing each day that has made me smile, made me happy or thankful, or all three. This is because if last year has taught me anything it's that we do have so much to be thankful for.

God Bless you all, Messy Eileen.

ALL WOUND UP... memories of childhood gifts



During one of the many “must have a clear out” sessions during lockdown I came across one of the county magazines where you can find adverts for auctioneers, and noticed the object in the picture above.

Now, I was so surprised because my great aunts, in Chatham, had one of these automaton rabbits in a cabbage. The toy, as it was then, was brought out with great ceremony on visits, if my sister and I were deemed to have been good. We were not allowed to touch the rabbit, but when it was wound up it woke up, pushed up its ears, turned its head around and chomped with its jaws, before sinking down again in to the cabbage.

We probably thought this was amazing as we viewed our great aunts’ house with awe. They had lived there most of their lives and it was filled with old fashioned dark heavy furniture.

One Christmas during early childhood, I found my very own clockwork bear in the Christmas stocking on my bed. It had dark grey fur, and when wound up, would move forward stiffly, pause, wag its head, walk a little bit further and then stop with a whirring noise. I treasured that little bear for years I expect the mechanism eventually wore out

Now back to the rabbit. These days the automaton is a valuable antique. I looked up the auction price, and similar objects were well over £1,000, dating from the late 19th century. No wonder we had a do not touch policy as kids, as the rabbit was old then.

The original maker, Rouillet-Decamps was one of the most famous French automata makers. The company was founded in 1865 by Jean Rouillet and took the name Rouillet-Decamps in 1889,

The rabbit in a cabbage is one of Rouillet-Decamps signature automata.

PS. I have no idea what became of the aunts’ rabbit in a cabbage. Oh, I forgot to tell you, it played a tune whilst it was chomping.

DJC

COOKING IDEA FOR JANUARY – DOG BISCUITS

Family pets deserve a treat as well as us. So, try this easy bake for your favourite DOG. Most easy dog treat recipes make use of popular flavours for canines. These could be meaty, fish or cheesy, so with this recipe you can choose a taste your dog likes best.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 CUPS OF WHITE OR WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR
- 1 EGG
- 1/2 CUP MILK
- 2 TABLESPOONS FAVOURITE FLAVOUR SUCH AS STOCK CUBE, CHEESE, JUICE FROM TINNED FISH

WHAT TO DO

Sieve the flour in to a mixing bowl, then add the beaten egg and milk. and flavouring. Mix well in to a dough. Form in to a ball shape for rolling out. If the dough is too stiff to roll add some more flavouring liquid.

Roll out to about 1 cm thick and use cutters to make biscuit shapes. OR with your hands roll pieces of dough to a sausage shape and flatten with your fingers to make a bone shape. Bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes. Allow to cool and crisp up before offering one to your dog.



STELLA ENJOYING THE BISCUITS (RIGHT), THOUGH THIS BATCH COULD HAVE BEEN A BIT THINNER.

Monkton's extraordinary houses ... the settlement and farms at HOO. a hamlet of ancient origin.



If you take a close look at the section of map above you will see the name Hoo, between Monkton and Minster. The hamlet does not have a name sign, and many newer villagers may not realise the small community of houses has a name

The place name Hoo is most likely derived from an old English word, meaning people who lived on the spur of a hill. If you look closely at the map you can see that a spur of light-coloured land sticks out in to the darker areas, which are Monkton and Minster levels. Hoo Farmhouse is significant as it may be on the site of one of the oldest farmsteads in Thanet which ranged round the island well above the ancient island sea level.

According to the island's agricultural history by RKI Quested, Hoo farmhouse may date from the 15th century, and possibly on the site of an earlier dwelling. Although the oldest part of the house is not visible to passers-by, the Georgian front wing was one of many very smart extensions added to Thanet farmhouses during the Napoleonic wars in the early 19th century. Another example of this wing building can be seen at Cleve, still within Monkton parish, as you take the road to Acol from Minster. Hoo Corner Farmhouse, a tall flinted building with a range on the corner of Sheriff's Court Lane, is of much later date, 1885, and its original land was in use during the 20th century as a small holding. In addition to the farmhouses there are several groups of terraced cottages – one on the rise as you approach the Minster sign, known as Hoo Cottages. Some of the cottages in the vicinity of the farms probably date from the 19th century or earlier.



FOLLOWING YONDER STAR

JANUARY 6TH, is the time of EPIPHANY in many Christian cultures, and in some the date is more prominent than Christmas. The word Epiphany means a time of great realisation or sudden great revelation.

Many Christmas carols make mention of the three kings, who follow a star and come to pay homage to the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. In the Bible, they are not called kings, and their number is not specified—instead they are “wise men from the East.” At many courts in the east, including ancient Babylon and Persia, learned astrologers often served as priestly advisers, practiced in the art of magic. In the centuries since, the three magi have been interpreted as kings.

According to the gospel of Matthew, a bright star led the magi from the east until it stopped “over the place where the child was,” and “upon entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother” Later telling of the story identified the magi by name and identified their lands of origin: Melchior hailed from Persia, Gaspar (also called "Caspar" or "Jaspar") from India, and Balthazar from Arabia. Their gifts had special symbolic meanings as well: gold signified Jesus' status as "King of the Jews;" frankincense represented the infant's divinity and identity as the Son of God; and myrrh touched upon Jesus' mortality.

Researches by learned language scholars, historians and astronomers in recent years have identified historical events both in astronomy, and recorded history ,which evidence that the visit of the wisemen from the east most likely occurred between 6 and 4 years BC or 3 and 2 years' BC It is possible to pinpoint the death of King Herod in those times, which gives a marker for a possible time line

The brilliant star in the east has been identified as one of a number of significant astronomical events, which would have dazzled in the night sky of long ago.



The Wise Men Followed the Star

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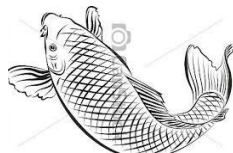
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THIS IMAGE CAUGHT THE MOON, AND THE FESTIVE TREE.



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