



Concerns Raised Over Wares Farm Development

Plans for the major expansion of the Wares Farm industrial site in Redwall Lane was the main agenda item at a recent meeting of the parish council's planning committee. Berry Gardens Ltd, the current occupant of the majority of the existing site owned by Alan Firmin Ltd, is seeking to build a large new packing and storage facility together with offices to facilitate the rapid expansion of its business. This would be situated on agricultural land on the south side of the road opposite the existing site with their current premises leased out as small industrial units. Berry Gardens is a large supplier of soft fruit to major supermarkets with the Redwall Lane site packing for Clockhouse Farm in Coxheath, although around 85% of the fruit currently packed at this site is imported. Although the site is situated just over the Hunton boundary in Linton, it was discussed due to the potential significant impact on the village.

A number of residents attended the meeting, concerned largely that a substantial increase in traffic would have a serious negative impact on Hunton's very narrow roads, particularly Redwall Lane, George Street and East Street, making them extremely hazardous for all road users as well as causing further damage to the roads, verges and private property. They were also concerned by the potential for an increase in lost or misdirected HGVs travelling through the village, which would further exacerbate the situation.

The planning application projects that the development would result in an additional 762 one way car movements, 244 one way van/LGV movements and 92 one way HGV movements per day with up to 30% of car and van movements expected to access the site from the Hunton end of Redwall Lane. Although the application states that all HGVs will route through Linton crossroads, councillors and residents alike felt that it was naïve to assume that they would always take that route as Hunton already has issues with HGVs travelling through its narrow lanes in contravention of the 7.5

(Continued on page 2)

Dog Owners Please Be Aware

We have been warned that dog thieves have been active in and around Maidstone and the Southeast. Dogs have been taken from gardens, from outside shops and even from a house. Please take precautions to keep your four-legged friends safe.

Please keep an eye out for this vehicle involved in an attempted dog theft in Yalding. Silver Mitsubishi L200 with partial registration GJ60...eyewitnesses report two white males in their mid 20s with black slicked hair attempting to lure a cocker spaniel from a garden. If you see the vehicle please call 101 with details. If they are attempting to lure a dog into their truck please call 999.

Suspicious activity

We have had reports of a young male rider on a "small motorbike with large tyres" "touring" parts of the village. He has a helmet camera and has driven into at least one private drive and "looked around". We have also had reports of a male in a white transit van purporting to have garden furniture left over from an exhibition that he wanted to sell. His actions were suspicious and the company he said he worked for does not seem to exist. He too was seen in a private drive.

If you have seen anything similar, or can provide any more information on either vehicle and/or driver please let us know (Huntonwatch@gmail.com) so we can pass the information to the police who are looking into both reports.

Huntonwatch

Your Local Contacts:		Village Hall Booking:	www.huntonvillagehall.co.uk
School: Secretary/Head Teacher	820360	Maidstone Police	690690 or 101
Under 5's Pre-School:	820309	Neighbourhood Watch: huntonwatch@gmail.com	820403,820429, 820731
Pre-School Supervisor:	07972067110	'Potholes' Hotline (KCC)	03000 418181
Pond and Tree Warden: Mike Summersgill	820429	Community Warden: Adam McKinley	07811 271021
Rector: Revd. Peter Callway	747570*	PCSO - Megan Day	101 (or via Huntonwatch)
Hon Associate Rector: Revd. David Jones	741474*	Helen Grant MP helen.grant.mp@parliament.uk	0207 219 7107
Associate Rector: Revd Eileen Doyle	204241**	Hunton Bell Ringers, Michael Webb	745716
Churchwarden: Alison Ellman-Brown	820288	*not available on Fridays; **not available on Mondays or Tuesdays	
Village Club: Philip Nichols	820804		
Contact details for other village clubs and organisations are available at www.hunton.org.uk/contacts			

Diary Dates		Parish Council Contacts	
Thurs 2 nd March	Village Lunch Village Club 12.30-2pm	Parish Council Chairman – Gary Thomas	820691
Sat 4 th March	Church & Churchyard Clean Up 9am-12pm	Clerk to the Parish Council – Sharon Goodwin	681238
	Litter Pick Village Hall 10am-12pm	Cllr Jonny Goddard	820096
Tues 7 th March	Hunton WI Village Club 7.15pm	Cllr David Heaton	820678
Fri 17 th March	Needles & Natter Village Club 8pm	Cllr Roger Lee	820210
Sat 25 th March	Karaoke Village Club 8pm	Cllr Tony Stanbridge	820721
Sat 8 th April	Quiz Night Village Club 8.15pm	Cllr Annette Trought	820448
Sat 15 th April	Pop-Up Shop & Café Village Club 9.30am-12pm	Cllr Helen Ward	820810
Check out www.hunton.org.uk/diary for the latest events.			
If you would like to add an event, email diary@hunton.org.uk			

Pastoral Letter

Well, what a tumultuous start to 2017 we have seen in the political world. President Donald Trump is just a few weeks into his term of office as I write this, and whatever your political views, there is much controversy surrounding his style of leadership. I follow him on Twitter (@realDonaldTrump and now @POTUS President Of The United States) and it is fascinating to get notification of his latest pronouncement even before it hits the news headlines on the BBC or other sources. The modern world of social media has transformed the way we learn about the world around us, and has created the concepts of “fake news” and “alternative facts”. When sources for news are not checked or verified anybody with a blog or a Twitter account or a Facebook page can publish something that is not real, and before you know it, it has a life of its own and is being understood as the truth.

The Oxford Dictionary word of 2016 was announced as “post-truth” – an adjective defined as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”. They comment that the concept of post-truth has been in existence for the past decade, but there has seen a spike in frequency this past year in the context of the EU referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the United States.

What is truth? Bible accounts tell us that an accused Jesus stood before Pilate on trumped up (no pun intended) charges of insurrection. Pilate interrogated him in response to words Jesus just had uttered. “For this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth” (John 18:37b).

When Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” he primarily means two things. First, in a negative sense, he means that his followers are not the truth. So, whenever Christians make truth claims, we need to speak them with a sense of humility. We are not the truth. We don’t hold the truth. Second, and in a positive sense, Jesus means that the truth is like him – nonviolent love. If we truly follow Jesus, we don’t find ourselves primarily attempting to defeat our opponents, but attempting to reconcile with them.

Paul wrote that we can possess all the truth about the mysteries and knowledge of the world, but if we don’t have love we are like a clanging cymbal (1 Corinthians 13). Unlike our post-truth world that emphasizes emotions, biblical love is not an emotion. It’s an action. Love is a verb. It seeks the best for ourselves and for others, including those we call our enemies.

Be blessed during this season of Lent and take time to ponder on the truth of God’s love for the whole world.

Peter Callway, Rector

(Continued from page 1)

tonne weight limits and should Linton Hill be blocked for any reason, it is inevitable that Hunton Hill would be used as an alternative.

The council agreed that the roads through the village are totally unsuitable for an increase in traffic of this kind and that the negative impact of increased vehicle movements would also be experienced on the wider road network, particularly through the Linton crossroads, the Loose Road and Maidstone town centre, all of which are already heavily congested. Although the application includes suggested improvements to the operation of the Linton crossroads, it is understood that KCC Highways currently have no plans to improve the junction.

Councillors were also concerned at the loss of a large area of open countryside and that the development would not integrate into the local landscape, and felt that as 85% of the fruit would be imported with HGVs travelling to and from the site via the M2 and M20, it made much more sense to site the development significantly closer to the motorway network. Overall it was agreed that the proposed development would inflict significant harm on the immediate area, the surrounding villages and Maidstone town and that the parish council would write to the Maidstone Borough Council planning department expressing their objections.

Parish Council Precept

Councillors agreed that the parish precept for 2017/18 should remain the same as last year at £25,000, which is equivalent to an annual charge of £79.19 for a Band D property.

Pop-Up Shop and Cafe Returns

The Pop-Up Shop and Café will be popping up on three occasions this year. The first one will be on Easter Saturday 15th April from 9.30am-12pm at the village club with further dates being 22nd July and 23rd September. If you would like to contribute produce to the shop, then please contact Annette on 01622 820448, annette@trought.com.

The parish council will be holding a “surgery” in conjunction with the pop-up shop and café and residents are invited to come along for an informal chat with their parish councillors should they have any issues they wish to discuss or if they would just like to put faces to names. More information in next month’s Herald.

Handyperson Needed

The village hall committee is looking for a handyperson who can help to keep the hall looking more presentable around and about on a regular basis. We need someone to do odd-jobs clearing vegetation, leaves from gutters, overhanging branches, changing light bulbs, minor damage repair inside (not cleaning; we have someone doing that weekly), checking external bins aren’t ‘abused’, attending monthly/bi-annual utility inspections, etc. We’re looking for someone in the village or from nearby, who has daytime availability and can use step-ladders (inside) safely; our treasurer would be delighted to have someone take those roles from him, on an ad-hoc hourly paid basis. Contact Kathy on 01622 820092 or Mike on 01622 820429 in the first instance, if you feel up to helping out!

Cricket Club In Training

Hunton Wanderers Cricket Club has started their pre-season winter nets training and, as always, they are open to new players. All abilities welcome. They are being held at Maidstone Boys Grammar School on Barton Road from 5-6pm on Sundays running for 10 weeks from 29th January. If you are interested, or require further information, then please contact Thomas Matthewson on 07495 303799. The club currently runs two teams on a Saturday and one on a Sunday with a T20 league in the summer. They would be very pleased to see some new faces popping along!

Could You Be the Village Club's Next Chairman?

Avid readers of the Hunton Herald will be aware that Hunton Village Club is looking for a new Chairman / Chairperson. Phil Nichols, who has held the position for several years and served on the committee for several more, would like to step down. He is very happy to continue with much of the voluntary work he currently undertakes at the club and offer support to the next chairman if needed. When asked what the job entails he felt that perhaps the easiest way to respond was by way of preparing a job description. He stressed that there is already a management committee in place, save for a secretary, and that the role is not particularly time consuming, no more than five hours per month and with better delegation even less. Set out below is the job description he prepared. If you would be interested in helping out the club in this role please get in touch with Phil on 01622 820804 or e-mail pk.nichols@btinternet.com

Hunton Village Club Chairman – Job Description

This role is a part time, voluntary position, involving approximately five hours of time per month.

Hunton Village Club is a small, members social club comprising of approximately 180 members. The club owns its own premises, which are also used by the local community for various functions. There are no employees, with the day-to-day operations being carried out by volunteers.

The chairman is to ensure the club operates in a sustainable manner to the benefit of its members and as a communal facility to Hunton village. Responsible for:

- The operations of the club in accordance with legal requirements and the club rules.

- The Management Committee comprising of club officers (secretary and treasurer), committee members and two trustees

- Chairing monthly meetings of the Management Committee.

- Delegation of tasks to the Management Committee.

- Receiving reports from time to time from the club's officers and committee members.

- Financial administration to avoid annual losses.

- Health and safety of volunteers, members and visitors.

- Ensuring the building and facilities are maintained in a good state of repair and are fit for purpose.

- Adequate property, public and third party liability insurance being in place at all times.

- Chairing the Annual General Meeting and providing a report to the members at same.

This position requires an individual with leadership qualities, a basic knowledge of small business operation, being a strong communicator, imaginative and innovative.

Community Orchard

The first tidy up of 2017 will be on Sunday 12th March 1-4pm. We will be tidying up the site and repairing any damage to the gates and fence. It is hoped that we will be able to host some more wildlife surveys at the orchard this year. Please come along at 1pm to help out - all welcome.

Spot on WI

The speakers at our February meeting, David and Sue Heaton, are well known to many members and so are their wonderful pork products! They set up "Spot on Produce" in response to their concerns of what we are all eating, aiming to produce high quality, local, rare breed pork. After purchasing 10 acres of agricultural land in Hunton in 2010, they chose Gloucester Old Spot pigs as they are quite docile and do not dig too much! There are only 184 breeders of Gloucester Old Spot pigs in the country with a total of 416 sows. Their boar (Gerry) is one of only 20 of his breed line, so Hunton is making a contribution to the preservation of this rare breed. Although David had a background in agriculture, Sue had never met a pig until she attended a pig course in Sussex! Photos and videos of the farm showed very happy pigs and cute piglets enjoying wallowing in mud, playing in straw and dozing in the sun. Gerry, a real character at 350kg still likes having his tummy tickled. David gave an amusing and quite explicit account of their limited success with artificial insemination - Gerry is now more reliable! Spot On Produce has branched out into producing lamb as well, with a flock of around 40 pedigree Southdown sheep, with 24 ewes due to lamb in about 6 weeks' time.

Our March WI meeting will be on the subject of buttons by Alison Ellman-Brown, postponed from January. Doors open at the Village Club at 7.15pm on 7th March, coffee and cake will be served and new members are welcome.

Salad and Supper

Over 30 members gathered at the village club on 17th February for a Gardening Club supper and a talk by Andrew Howe, the Technical and Quality Manager at Laurence J Betts Limited. Laurence Betts farms salad crops in Kent including the fields around Hunton church and the village hall; in total they produce 22 million heads of lettuce and 1400 tons of baby leaf salads per year. Andrew explained their process from preparation of the ground through planting and irrigation to harvest. Their large customers include Tesco and McDonalds but also 40% is sold as their own brand. In the winter they import from Spain and Italy to maintain continuity of supply. Members thanked Andrew for a fascinating insight into the workings of a local agricultural producer as well as those that helped Lesley Lee supply another excellent supper. Members were reminded that contributions to the plant and produce stall for the village fete on 17th June would be most welcome. Further information on the club can be provided by e-mailing lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

The Great British Spring Clean

Now that spring is approaching thoughts turn again to litter picking. KCC is organising another countywide event over the weekend of 3/4/5 March as part of the national Great British Spring Clean campaign. The Hunton litter pickers will be clearing up around the village on Saturday 4th March, meeting at the village hall at 10am to collect rubbish sacks and pickers. It usually takes around two hours to complete but the more volunteers, the quicker the job is done. If you would like to help out with the village spring clean please contact Di Martin on 01622 820115 or email di.martin1@btinternet.com.

At St Mary's Church in March

Flowers

No flowers in Lent

Services

Sunday 5th March – Lent 1

11.00am Family Service – Rev David Jones

Sunday 12th March – Lent 2

9.30am Holy Communion 1662 – Rev Peter Callway

Sunday 19th March – Lent 3

11.00am Morning Prayer – Miss Chris Bostock

Sunday 26th March – Mothering Sunday

11.00am Family Service – Rev Eileen Doyle

Hunton Village Club Opening Hours

Wed-Fri 8-11pm

Sun 12-2.30pm & 8-10.30pm

Good Friday Services in the Benefice

Good Friday is on 14th April in 2017, and the ministry team has agreed that we will offer a variety of services for that day. Please do choose any or all that appeal, and make this part of your Easter Worship.

At West Farleigh at 10am is a service of dramatic readings, the Passion account brought to life through the eyes of a variety of perspectives. At Coxheath at 11am is an All Age service which will involve visual elements and an accessible telling of the story, and at Linton at 2pm there is a reflective service, where there will be time to contemplate the message and meaning of Easter.

A Wintery Walk

A collection of dogs and 23 humans braved the snow showers on Saturday 11th February and were led by Phil Nichols on a walk to Yalding and back along stretches of the Beult. They were rewarded with an excellent lunch of soup, quiche, pates, ham, salad, cheeses and cakes at the village club. A further 14 less hardy souls joined them in raising money for repairs to the club roof, work on which has just started. This was the fifth Saturday village walk and lunch that has been run and it is hoped that several more will be organised in 2017. You can find out about these events by being a club member (pop into the club and get an application form) or keeping an eye on the Hunton Facebook page.



What's On at Your Village Club

Karaoke – Saturday 25th March 8pm

Now with over 7,500 songs from all genres to choose from! There's no pressure on anyone to sing, so come and entertain or be entertained by your friends and neighbours. Free entry.

Quiz Night – Saturday 8th April 8.15pm

Quizmaster Phil presents another brain teasing evening for your enjoyment. Entrance is free, just come along with your ready-made team or join one at the club. Teams are usually 4-6 people. The quiz will start promptly at 8.15pm. Club opens at 8pm. All welcome!

Last Light Lunch

The final lunch in the current series will be on Thursday 2nd March at the village club – homemade soup, bread, cheese and biscuits, homemade cakes and tea or coffee all for a donation of £5. The club opens at 12pm with lunch available from around 12.30pm. There will be further lunches later in the year.

Church and Churchyard Working Parties

Saturday 4th March & Saturday 8th April: 9am-12pm

Thanks to volunteers who cut the grass and helped at working parties during 2016, St Mary's churchyard was kept looking neat whilst the brass was polished and the spiders were evicted from inside the church so it was clean for various weddings, services and other events held there during the year.

In 2017 it is hoped that regular mowing and a few working parties will again maintain the impression that our village cares for this ancient monument. The mowing takes about two hours using the church lawnmower and volunteers cover a two-week period during which they will tackle the job once. With enough volunteers it might be possible for each person to do just one session a year rather than two at the moment. Sue Heaton compiles the rota and will be delighted to hear from anyone willing to join the team. Susan.heaton1@virgin.net. The first two working parties will take place on Saturday 4th March and Saturday 8th April when there will be jobs to tackle both inside and outside the church. If you are not involved in litter picking on 4th March and can spare a little time then please help in the church or churchyard. These are very friendly events where anyone can join in for a short time or for the whole session, select the task they fancy doing, bring their own kit or simply gloves and use equipment provided by the church or other volunteers. Sessions run from 9am to 12 noon and include a coffee / tea break when homemade biscuits or cakes are provided. So that enough mugs and nibbles can be taken to the church please contact Lesley if you think you may be able to attend. Lesley.a.lee@btinternet.com

March	5 th	12 th	19 th	26 th
Coxheath	11.00 HC	11.00 MP	11.00 HC	11.00 FS
E. Farleigh	09.30 MP	08.00 HC; 11.00 FS	09.30 HC	08.00 HC; 11:00 FS
Linton	09.30 HC	09.30 HC	08.00 HC	09.30 FS
W. Farleigh	08.00 HC 1662	11.00 MP Mod	09.30 MP Trad	09.30 FS

HC Holy Communion, MP Morning Prayer, FS Family Service

All items for the next edition of the Herald to the Editor by 15th March, please