

# THE WATERSHED MAGAZINE



**APRIL 2021**

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## RODMARTON AND TARLTON (Chapel of Ease)

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841462

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Simon Biddulph

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## THAMESHEAD BENEFICE

For those with access to the internet the following links will take you to our website pages:

The calendar: <http://thamesheadchurches.org.uk/calendar/>

An outline of all our Sunday services:

<http://www.thamesheadchurches.org.uk/services/>

## REFLECTIONS FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

Happy Easter!

Easter is of course the heart of our faith story, it is the complete revelation of God's eternal plan for re-new-all. Easter is about both the hope of and the fulfilment of the promise. As you know I am not keen on February, a dreary cold end of winter time when what I want is warmth in the sun and new life from the soil but by April we have that don't we. Already our garden is full of flowering primroses, daffodils and hellebores and so many plants are budding up ready to go for growth, the songbirds are establishing territory in glorious song while upgrading their nest sites. Hope for the warm days of growth ahead is all around us.

All of this was true last year too, indeed April was amazing wasn't it. But! There was definitely a 'but' last year. That is a powerful little word isn't it, able to move us from one emotion to another with just three letters. Last year we were in the grip of the first pandemic lockdown as coronavirus spread and our hospitals filled. Last year fear and grief were common even as the birds nested and the sun shone. This year coronavirus is still with us but human skill and ingenuity has improved clinical care and provided vaccines that will protect the majority of our population in an amazingly short period of time. Many of us will already have received at least one dose or will do so soon (mine is booked). This spring there is a new hope blossoming in our communities as well as in our gardens and fields.

It seems to me that it is therefore a good time to take time to reflect on the last year. Many of us still need to grieve for those we have lost and for the events we have missed but I suspect we fall broadly into two groups. Those who wish everything could be reset as it was and those who believe this is an opportunity to embed some permanent changes in our communities. The pandemic has shaken up our world and some things need to be replaced where they belong, some need to be moved to a more (or less) prominent position and some might be boxed up out of sight in the attic. That is true for us as individuals and as communities. For example I totally loved the way so many volunteers have been available to support and help everyone in our villages and we need to continue to build up that community life. There are so many examples in scripture of God instructing his people to behave unselfishly, to support the widow, the orphan, the foreigner and not take advantage of them. Jesus of course said love God with all you are and love your neighbour as yourself. If we can do those three lots of loving our world will be transformed.

Transformation is at the heart of the Easter story. In church we have been thinking about holiness quite a lot, and God's call to us to 'be holy because I am holy' but what does holiness look like? If we can answer that question it will help but of course only God is holy so holy looks like God. A circular position, except that Jesus is God, he is born of Mary, he shares her genetic code but he is also God unchanged from before creation. Therefore when we look at Jesus we see holiness and can know what God is like. Jesus is the most powerful and influential person ever to walk the earth, yet his life shares more in common with the ordinary than the extraordinary. He was not locked away in a castle, he didn't need massive bodyguards or bullet proof cars and private jets. He loved to meet anyone and everyone and he knew how to love them all from the diseased and poverty stricken to the ruling elite. Holiness looks like that and we all know we are not it, we all have our moments however good we are and that is why Jesus allows himself to be crucified, to be killed as a holy gift for us. Perhaps the most powerful expression of holiness is in the giving of self, confidently and completely for others and nothing reveals that like Jesus death. He knows what we need in the long term and he does it. Short term pain, long term gain (for us). Jesus death is all about us and is the ultimate expression of love fulfilled in renewed life and love with God. The name Jesus means God rescues or God saves. I don't know what image that brings to mind for you, I remember my mum stuck halfway up the cliff at Tintagel, not able to go forward or back for fear of the drop and needing to be led to safety. We all need rescuing and that is what Jesus comes to do, to save us from ourselves and lead us into a new life, new growth, new hope and new love with God and with each other.

May your Easter be full of this love, may you be renewed by Jesus love today, may your life be refilled by the Holy Spirit who brings life to all God's people.

Trevor Kemp - Rector

## **COVER PICTURES**

Thank you to all the children at Sapperton School who sent in some lovely Easter pictures. The front cover was drawn by Eliza in Year 6 and the back cover was drawn by Libby also Year 6.

## **GET YOUR WATERSHED BY EMAIL**

If you would like to receive a copy of the parish magazine by email I am very happy to add you to my list of those who do. This would not replace your delivered copy but you would get it earlier and with some colour! Just let me know by email at [watershedmag@gmail.com](mailto:watershedmag@gmail.com)  
Bob Merrill

## **“REAL” CHURCH SERVICES ALONGSIDE VIRTUAL WORSHIP**

Worship is about how we can meet with God and each other and grow together in those shared relationships. For some months coronavirus prevented our meeting together in a building. We are now meeting to worship together in at least one of our buildings every week while maintaining all our virtual worship services and activities as detailed on our website.

Our priority is to keep everyone as safe as we can and so we are keeping the recommendations to close for 72 hours between uses to ensure the coronavirus virus is not viable if present. We are also keeping strictly to the 2m social distancing guidelines which will significantly reduce the number of people or family bubbles each building can hold at any one time. If you are able to do so, we are asking you to let us know in advance if you intend to join us for worship to help us plan and manage each service as safely as we can and avoid having to turn anyone away which we really don't want to do. Please contact a local church warden if you can using the details in the front of the magazine.

At present all our face to face services are 'said' services until restrictions on singing are relaxed.

If you can't or choose not to join us for worship in one of our church buildings please do continue to join us for worship online.

09:30 every Sunday Family Worship via Zoom – private secure link for safeguarding please contact us for access.

10:00 every Sunday livestream worship service on YouTube (click on the link on our website:- [thamesheadchurches.org.uk](http://thamesheadchurches.org.uk) )

21:00 weeknights – end your day with night prayer (approx. 15min)

### **TIME OUT**

The Time Out Bible discussion group for mothers of school age children in the benefice is not meeting for the foreseeable future. Julie is looking at the possibility of setting up a virtual meeting.

For more details please contact Julie on 770123 or email [julieallen47@btinternet.com](mailto:julieallen47@btinternet.com) or [juliepaulmorton@onetel.com](mailto:juliepaulmorton@onetel.com)

Rodmarton PCC is hugely grateful to all those from Rodmarton, Tarlton, Hazelton and Culkerton and further afield who give regularly by standing order to the work of the church in those places. If anyone else would like to help out by starting a standing order the PCC would be extremely grateful. Please contact Simon Biddulph 21 Rodmarton GL7 6PE, [simon.biddulph1@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.biddulph1@btinternet.com).

## PSALMS UPDATE



Thank you so much for your continued partnership with PSALMS. This update is to share some of the latest news that has emerged from conversations PSALMS have been involved with for the last three years. We are passionate about our continued mission to grow and support ministry reaching the 95% of children and young people who don't connect with existing forms of Church. In partnership with you we are excited to see this vision continue to take shape and grow in the local community.

As part of this we are excited to tell you that PSALMS is merging to become part of a new organisation that will be formed called OneLife. This will create a greater scope for building upon the fantastic work that is already going on as well as providing capacity for new ministry. It's a privilege for PSALMS to fully live out one of the key values we've had from 16 years of history of 'giving away ministry'.

We are in the process of working through transition issues but in the next few months we will make the switch to become OneLife. It's important to reiterate that our core values and DNA will very much remain and the way in which we operate will be largely consistent with current practice. We will keep you updated with the changes during this transition but in the meantime please don't hesitate to get in touch.

### Pastoral Visiting & Befriending Team

### Sharing God's love through:



Ask yourself: *"Do I know anyone who would benefit from a visit?"*

Speak to the rector, or any of his leadership team, and we will endeavour to set up an initial contact visit to see how we can help and support.

Keep your eyes, ears and hearts open for people who would potentially find this service useful.

For more information please contact:-  
Rev. Trevor Kemp tel: 01285 770550  
[rector@thamesheadchurches.org.uk](mailto:rector@thamesheadchurches.org.uk)



# NEWS FROM COATES

## COATES PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council continue to meet virtually during the Coronavirus pandemic to support the needs of the community.

Minutes for the recent meeting 1 March 2021 can be found on the Coates Parish website.

<http://www.coatesparish.org.uk/parish-council/council-meetings-and-minutes/>

The Parish Council continue to focus on the following:

- Filling the current Parish Councillor vacancy
- Planning applications
- The future of Victory Green
- The future of the Cricket field
- Street names in the village
- Parish Council support for residents, especially the vulnerable, during the continuing Covid-19 pandemic
- Supporting village issues
- Litter Pick

The Parish Council has responded to a concern raised by a parishioner regarding litter in verges on the Trewsbury Road. Volunteers have collected litter with the support of Cotswold District Council.

### **Bathurst Estate**

A representative from the Bathurst Estate joined the meeting to update the Parish Council on planned changes to public access to Cirencester Park (Bathurst Estate). Representatives from the Bathurst Estate will present an agenda item to share plans for the Tunnel House at the next Parish Council meeting in May.

### **Victory Green**

A working party has been looking at ways to best collect thoughts and suggestions from all villagers on the future of Victory Green. All households within the Parish should have received a flyer identifying the location of Victory Green. This has proved more challenging than expected where letterboxes have not been obvious.

Please continue to send you thoughts and suggestions regarding the

use of Victory Green by email to [clerk@coatesparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@coatesparish.org.uk) or via letter to the Village Hall post box (top of the steps) by 9 April 2021.

### Councillor vacancy

There is currently one Parish Councillor vacancy. The main role of a councillor is to participate in the collective decision making process of the council, to help identify and support the needs of the community. We invite members of the Parish to express an interest in becoming a Councillor. Anyone who would like to find out more is welcome to talk to a current Councillor about the role. Alternatively, email [clerk@coatesparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@coatesparish.org.uk) to liaise contact with a Councillor.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Monday 10 May 2021 and will take place via Zoom (a video conference service). The agenda will be available nearer the time of the meeting.

The public are always welcome to attend all parish council meetings and can talk directly to councillors about any matters of interest or concern. To attend the meeting on 10 May 2021 please email the Parish Clerk, [clerk@coatesparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@coatesparish.org.uk) to request the Zoom passcode to enter the meeting.

Isn't it lovely now Spring has arrived! We are feeling much more hopeful that some form of 'normal' will soon return following the Government's announcement on how the latest lockdown will ease. The Village Club Committee held their AGM meeting on 11 March, and we are starting to put plans in place to re-start some of our village events and to re-open the club.



Weather permitting, and lockdown being eased as per the Government timeline, we look forward to welcoming you all back to the club, as well as holding our village events such as the Boules Festival, Halloween and, of course, our wonderful Produce Show which is planned for 4 September...so start planning those jams and growing your fruit and veg! We will be putting a few Produce Show schedules in the village noticeboards over the coming days.

As ever, The Village Club Committee and the Trustees of the Village Hall will continue to monitor any changes to the Government's proposed timelines and will keep members updated via email.

In the meantime, if you have any questions please contact [coatessocialclub@gmail.com](mailto:coatessocialclub@gmail.com) and we will do our best to help.



## COVID-19 SUPPORT IN COATES

If you are a Coates resident and self-isolating, and require assistance (ie picking up shopping, a friendly phone call, posting mail or require urgent supplies) please contact Councillor Andrew Hobson on 07887 597425 or email [clerk@coatesparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@coatesparish.org.uk) and we will arrange for someone to phone you back.

Coates Coronavirus Support Group has been set up on Facebook. Anybody who wants to join the new group should contact Andrew via email ([a.hobson28@gmail.com](mailto:a.hobson28@gmail.com)) or Facebook Messenger.

You can also stay up to date via the Coates Village Email Network. If you want to be part of the email distribution please let Tara Davidson know via email to [coatesvillage@gmail.com](mailto:coatesvillage@gmail.com)

Regular printed notices about our response to Covid-19 will be displayed on the Coates Parish Council noticeboard. The above initiatives are supported by Coates Parish Council and other community groups in Coates.

Information for volunteers on how to help others safely can be found on the GOV.UK website [here](#).

### Sapperton Coronavirus Support: social distancing



#### Do you need help?

The church and the Parish Council are working together to help provide practical, pastoral and spiritual support to everyone in our community who needs some assistance in these difficult times.

**A. Practical Help:** do you need someone to pick up prescriptions or shopping?

Contact *Sarah Osborn-Smith* on 07836 512538 who will try to get a volunteer to you.

**B. Pastoral/Social Support:** Would you like to chat to someone – skype, facetime or telephone – to hear a friendly voice? Social isolation should not mean loneliness. Contact *Aileen Shaw* on 07807 199602 who will try to fix up someone to call you.

**C. Spiritual Needs:** there are no services at this time, but the church buildings are open and our clergy can offer prayer support, pastoral and confidential chats as needed. Contact *Rev. Trevor Kemp* on 01285 770550.

We are all part of our community: if you can help others then please also call the contact persons above to be registered as a volunteer helper

## **NEWS FROM SAPPERTON AND FRAMPTON MANSELL**

### **THOUGHTS FROM FRAMPTON MANSELL**

We have heard a lot about hands during the past year - with advice on how and for how long to wash them. Some say, 'The time it takes to say the Lord's prayer'! We have been advised not to touch - especially one another.

One of the most moving things I have seen on TV recently was a daughter who was finally able to go into a care home and hold her mother's hand. It reminded me of the last hours of my mother's life when I was able to hold her hand - the final connection.

As we approach Easter, my thoughts turn to the role that hands played in that final story. The hands of him who had reached out to bless and heal, touching the untouchable, were cruelly pierced by huge nails on the cross. Harsh hands had pushed and shoved him, whipped and crucified him while Pilate washed his hands, trying somehow to disassociate himself from the whole affair. Hands of soldiers threw dice for Jesus's linen robe and held the spear that pierced his side.

Then gentle, loving hands took down the racked body from the cross, laying him in the cool garden tomb, wrapping him in cloths; later carrying spices to minister to him still further.

Wondrously, divine 'hands' rolled the stone away and the hands of the risen saviour stretched out to show his followers that he was alive again. Those hands prepared a meal for them at the Sea of Galilee and blessed them as he ascended to heaven.

Traditionally, people have put their hands together as they prayed or, possibly, 'raised up holy hands' in worship.

How shall we respond this Easter?

Forget-me-not

### **KEMBLE AND DISTRICT RBL WOMEN'S SECTION**

We will resume meetings very soon. Just checking on the availability and if there are any restrictions in local village halls. Watch this space!

Further details about the group contact  
Pat Ayres secretary 770385



## SERVICES IN THE PARISH OF SAPPERTON WITH FRAMPTON MANSELL

Note all events are subject to Covid restrictions.

Mothering Sunday 14 March

Open church (see notice board and WhatsApp group for details)

Palm Sunday 28 March

10am Palm Sunday walk from Frampton Mansell churchyard to Sapperton churchyard followed by a short service at 11am by the cross in St Kenelm's churchyard.

Good Friday 2 April

12 noon Meditation at the foot of the cross in St Kenelm's churchyard.

2pm at the village hall Frampton Mansell. A socially distanced gathering to carry a cross down the hill to the churchyard followed by a short service of meditation

Easter Day 4 April

11am St Luke's Frampton Mansell in the churchyard. A Service of Resurrection with communion (if possible)

11.30am Songs for Easter in the churchyard with the village choir and any socially distanced singers who wish to join us.

St Luke's is open for private prayer every Wednesday from 2pm to 4pm.

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Call Simon on 07821 903758

or email: [enquiries@sejohnsonheatandplumb.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sejohnsonheatandplumb.co.uk)

## **NEWS FROM RODMARTON, TARLTON, CULKERTON AND HAZLETON**

### **HOLY WEEK AND EASTER DAY SERVICES AT ST OSMUND'S AND ST PETER'S**

We hope to hold the following services, subject to Covid-19 restrictions, all in traditional BCP language. Please could you very kindly let me know ahead of time if you intend to come, as numbers are limited, and for confirmation of details. 01285 770401.

#### **Palm Sunday**

Walk from St Osmund's, Tarlton, 9.50 am for those who wish, joining others at Rodmarton Village Hall 10.45 am, for a prayer and a short procession to St Peter's for a service at 11am.

#### **Easter Saturday**

6.30 pm in St Osmund's Churchyard. If bad weather is forecast, this will be at St Peter's.

#### **Easter Day**

St Peter's 11am. It is hoped that Rev David Austin may be able to take this service with Holy Communion. If not, it will be said Matins.

We wish you all a happy Easter.

#### **Churches open for private prayer:**

St Osmund's Tarlton: Saturdays, 10am – 4pm

St Peter's Rodmarton: Sundays, 11am – 4pm.



*Jesus the Good Shepherd, Mausoleo di Galla Placidia, Ravenna*

#### **Churches open for private prayer:**

St Osmund's Tarlton: Saturdays, 10am – 4pm

St Peter's Rodmarton: Sundays, 11am – 4pm.



Entry schedule

Saturday 21 August

**Entries to hall 11am - 12noon**

Produce Show from 3pm  
onwards with stalls, bar,  
refreshments, games, raffle and  
BBQ

### **Section 1 - Flowers**

1. One single stemmed rose
2. Vase of 6 dahlias
3. Vase of garden flowers – 6 of one variety
4. A sunflower head
5. A flowering pot plant, max pot size 10” diameter

### **Section 2- Fruit/Vegetables**

1. 3 carrots
2. 5 tomatoes with stalks
3. 4 potatoes of one variety
4. 6 runner beans
5. Longest runner bean
6. Largest marrow
7. A plate of 5 different vegetables, one of each.
8. 3 apples of the same variety
9. Soft fruit - single variety displayed on a plate

### **Section 3 – Domestic**

1. A jar of homemade jam
2. A jar of homemade chutney
3. A Victoria Sponge with jam (no cream)
4. 4 fruit scones
5. 6 biscuits
6. A ginger cake (men-only recipe as per schedule)
7. 1 bottle of homemade liqueur
8. 1 bottle of homemade beer

### **Section 4 – Flower arranging**

1. An arrangement in a vase
2. An arrangement for a table centre

### **Section 5 – Handicrafts**

Any item of handicraft using any method e.g. knitting, card making, patchwork, tapestry, cross stitch

## **Section 6 – Art**

Any piece of artwork, a pen, pencil or pastel drawing or a painting in any medium.

## **Section 7 – Photography**

A photograph of 'Something Local' max 7"x5"

## **Section 8 – Children: Reception to School Year 11**

### **8 a) Reception to School Year 2**

1. Make and decorate 5 cookies.
2. A plant grown from seed – max 8" pot
3. Paint a picture of an animal - max A4 size.

### **8 b) School Years 3-6**

1. A handmade greetings card
2. 5 homemade brownies
3. A photograph of 'Something Small' - max 7"x5".

### **8 c) School Years 7-11**

1. A photograph of 'Something Big' - max 7"x5".
2. 5 homemade cupcakes decorated.
3. A poem about my holiday.

## **Section 3.6 Men-only Recipe**

### **Ginger Cake**

**200g self-raising Flour**

**1 tsp mixed spice**

**50g soft brown sugar**

**50g golden syrup**

**1 egg beaten with added milk to make ¼ pint (125ml)**

**2 tsp ground ginger**

**50g margarine**

**50g black treacle**

**pinch salt**

### **Method:**

1. Preheat oven to 170 deg fan, Gas 4
2. Grease and line a 18cm (7") square tin
3. Mix flour, salt, ginger and mixed spice in a mixing bowl
4. Melt the margarine, sugar, treacle and syrup gently over a low heat.
5. Add to flour and gradually mix in the egg and milk. Beat well.
6. Pour into tin (will be like a thick batter)
7. Bake for approximately 40 to 45 minutes until firm.
8. Cool slightly and turn out of tin and leave until cold

## **ENTRIES**

Entries are free and can be made in writing to Tara, 24 May Tree Close, Coates *or by email to tara@tarajaniceramics.com* stating your name and section numbers you wish to enter.

**Please submit your entries by 8pm Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

## **RULES**

1. All exhibits with the exception of flower arranging **must have been made or grown by the exhibitor.**
2. All exhibits are to be put in place between 11am and 12 noon.
3. No exhibitor is allowed more than one entry in any section.
4. Exhibitor's names must not be visible on the exhibits.
5. In section 8, children's ages and school year must be displayed on all exhibits.
6. If children compete in adult sections 1-7, then ages must not appear on exhibits. (*Points from these entries will not count towards the Family Cup.*)
7. No exhibits to be removed before 4.30pm
8. The judge's decision is final.

## **TROPHIES**

Family Cup	most points in show by one family (parents and children). Please refer to rule 6.
Flower Cup	most points in section 1
Fruit/Veg Cup	most points in section 2
Domestic Cup	most points in section 3
Art/Craft Cup	most points in section 4 - 7
Reception – year 2	most points in section 8a
Years 3-6	most points in section 8b
Years 7-11	most points in section 8c



## **RODMARTON AND TARLTON COVID19 SUPPORT**

If you live in Rodmarton or Tarlton and need some practical help with shopping or would like a chat if you are self-isolating at home or are unwell please contact one of the following people who are organising volunteers to help:

### **RODMARTON**

Wendy Taylor 841263 [wendy.taylor846@btinternet.com](mailto:wendy.taylor846@btinternet.com)

Simon Biddulph 07730 897312 [simon.biddulph1@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.biddulph1@btinternet.com)

### **TARLTON**

Jane and Richard Marlowe 770401

Bryher and Mark Grimes 770289

If you live in Tarlton and would like to join the village WhatsApp group, please text Bryher Grimes on 07785 542185 with your name and mobile telephone number and she will add you to the group. Please note that this group is for residents of Tarlton only.

## **RODMARTON & TARLTON FIESTA: REVISED DATE SATURDAY 3 JULY**

We will have a good party whilst raising much needed funds for the church. More details to follow once we can meet and confirm plans. If you would like to be involved, or for further information, please contact me at [janemarlowe1@gmail.com](mailto:janemarlowe1@gmail.com) or 01285 770401.

Thank you.

## **KEMBLE & EWEN WOMENS' INSTITUTE**

The next meeting whether it be a zoom or outside in the garden at the Tavern socially distancing and adhering to the government rules, will take place on Thursday April 15 at 3pm. We have recently welcomed two new members.

If you would like to know more what we have planned for this year please contact me.

Further details about the group contact Pat Ayres secretary 770385





And we're back! Although, technically, our pupils and staff are on their Easter holidays at the moment but it has been fantastic to have our classrooms full once again with every pupil returning to school on 8th March.

Just as we did before, we have grouped the children into whole class bubbles which will have consistent staffing as much as possible and minimal contact with other groups within the school. We have also maintained our staggered start and finish times for the three class bubbles and, once again, pupils are joining their classes on the school field rather than in the playground. We have kept all our previous Covid procedures in place, and introduced some new ones, to keep staff and pupils as safe as possible. And, once again, our focus in the weeks before the Easter holidays was on the children's well-being, easing them back into school and nurturing them to ensure they adjust back to being in school again.

The children were delighted to have a special cricket coaching session, with a coach from the Gloucestershire Cricket Board, on their first day back, and this was followed by Science Week in the second week where each class followed the CREST scheme which is designed to inspire young people to think and behave like scientists and engineers.

The children were set investigations to complete across the week including making slime, testing jelly and tea bag designs, and making and flying kites and rockets, gaining an award for every challenge they completed.

All classes are taking part in Forest School each week and, on the last day of term before breaking up for Easter, pupils enjoyed an Easter Treasure Hunt with clues around the school field and lots of chocolate eggs for all!

When they return to school later this month, Acorn class will be looking at life "Under the Sea", while Sapling class will be moving on from dinosaurs to study the period from the Stone Age to the Iron Age with their topic of "Meet the Flintstones", and Oak class will be learning all about "The Rotten Romans".

We will also be welcoming a youth support worker from Psalms who will be working to develop RE with the children as well as running wellbeing sessions with Oak and Sapling classes and encouraging all pupils to take part in Active RE, learning about religion through sport and games.

Happy Easter everyone!

Nutty <https://www.rodmartonschool.co.uk/>

01285 841284

## **NOTES FROM CULKERTON**

### **GARDENING TIPS FOR APRIL**

Gardeners prefer Easter to fall in April as most of the wintry weather is behind us and we can really enjoy warmer Spring days, with a real sense of renewal. Dormancy is broken with more familiar garden plants waking up with expanding buds, unfurling fronds and spectacular tree blossom. Those impatient, twitchy planting hands can now get busy, starting with potatoes!

This year I have a small patch of new land to cultivate, which needed a thorough dig through to remove large amounts of hedge bindweed, and this is where my potatoes will be planted. By planting this crop, the residual bindweed roots will be disturbed and removed several times during the growing season, hence becoming less and less. The seed potato tubers have been chitting, producing plump growing buds ready to plant, and protected from night frost with sheets of newspaper and bubble wrap. The first early variety to be planted is 'Foremost', a good tried and tested type developed in 1954 as 'Suttons Foremost', the name I remember. The second earlies chosen are 'Charlotte' a good salad type and 'Kestrel' a useful all-rounder for cooking. For the main crop there are 'Pink Gypsy', 'Sunset' and 'Pink Fir Apple', these will be planted at wider spacing of 40cm apart along rows, with the rows being 80cm apart.

In future years of cultivation more humus will be added to the new ground and a 'No Dig' approach will be used. Green manures and compost made on site will increase the humus content of the soil and related microorganisms for plant health, also water availability.

This month is termed the 'hungry gap' as there is not so much fresh produced left in the garden following winter harvests, leeks and cabbages have finished. There should be good, long season pickings of kale; and unless the weather is very hot, also purple sprouting Broccoli. Hot dry weather will quickly take the plants into flowering mode, and your vegetable shoots will become a glorious haze of pale yellow!

There are now several varieties of perennial kale available, these are generally propagated through cuttings, I grow 'Taunton Dene', other types you may come across are Daubenton, an old French variety, and its variegated form 'Panache', there is also a purple leaved 'tree' kale. These are all very hardy, grow to different heights and seem more resistant to pests and diseases, although pigeons find them very tasty so protection may be needed.

## **NOTES FROM CULKERTON (cont)**

My top tip for this month is have seeds ready to sow either directly in the soil, or with some protection and warmth. The garden test for direct sowing is raking a fine tilth forming a seed bed, suitable for carrots, radish, beetroot, lettuce, turnips, autumn and winter cabbages and kales. If the ground is still too wet to form a fine tilth or the mud sticks to your wellies, just wait a couple more weeks. With some inside heat, sow tomatoes, aubergine, peppers, cucumbers, courgettes and squashes/pumpkins, handle gently when potting on seedlings into single 9cm pots, grow indoors on a sunny windowsill until the danger of frost has passed in May.

Accompanying the spring blossom growing below are multitudes of little treasures, carpeting the ground; early spring snowdrops, aconites and crocus are succeeded by anemone, muscaria, cyclamen, viola and pulmonaria. All grow well under light shade and look particularly attractive in spring sunshine.

Sally Oates

### **TWENTY YEARS ON...**

Twenty years ago, we were in the grip of a Foot & Mouth epidemic. It began at a dodgy pig farm in Northumberland on February 21st and rampaged throughout March and April, mainly in four regional hot spots (Cumbria, The Borders, northern Devon and Herefordshire). We were fortunate here, in that it didn't get any closer than Dursley and an abattoir near Melksham, although the 3000+ free-ranging sheep in the Forest of Dean had to be rounded up and culled.

One major problem was that livestock were being moved about the country by a few commercial dealers, who were literally playing the markets – buying cattle and sheep at one market, holding them awhile before selling them on at another market where prices were higher. So, the disease spread largely through the livestock market system, with local contiguous spread occurring when infected animals arrived at their new holdings. The hearts of many true farmers were broken. The nation rose in support of them. Over two million animals were slaughtered.

Nearly all the countryside got closed, even beaches. Footpaths were taped off. Lanes filled up with displaced walkers. A couple of lads were fined for crossing a park in Swindon that had never seen a grazing animal but was nonetheless 'closed'. The impact on the rural hospitality and leisure industries was acute, far more so than on agriculture. To add to the misery, the weather was dire.

## **NOTES FROM CULKERTON (cont)**

We learnt our lesson, the term 'biosecurity' came to the fore and the practices which enabled the disease to flourish were curtailed. There is an obvious subliminal message regarding the current Covid pandemic here.

With the demise of the CAP here, farming has the opportunity to become more sustainable, and to deliver a lot more. Much depends on the government's forthcoming Environmental Land Management Scheme, which promises great things. Already, many farmers are heading that way, including some with large holdings. The work being done by the Nature Friendly Farming Network is massively impressive, and they're producing quality food.

Now, the Covid lockdowns stimulated a tidal wave of people seeking access to the great outdoors and good old-fashioned fresh air. This tidal wave is, I am sure, unstoppable: a vast number of people, hitherto urban-based, have discovered the value of open places. Nature helped them through an unprecedentedly difficult time, and they have fallen in love. This spring, with its greening, and its healing blossom and bird song, will wow them further. We may well be entering an era of radical social change.

Matthew Oates



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## CIRENCESTER EATING DISORDER SUPPORT GROUP

Fingers crossed the meetings will resume on Wednesday 7 April in Coates village hall. This will follow the Governments guidelines for vulnerable support groups being able to meet safely with social distancing. Further details can be obtained from Pat on 770385.



## ADVERTISING IN THE WATERSHED

If you wish to advertise in our parish magazine please contact Bob Merrill at Glebe House, Coates, GL7 6NU. Mobile 07866 972389 or by e-mail to the Watershed magazine at [watershedmag@gmail.com](mailto:watershedmag@gmail.com). Adverts at a third of a page cost £15 for a single issue or £60 for 6 months. Adverts at half a page cost £23 for a single issue or £90 for 6 months. The magazine is published 10 times every year; July/August and December/January are joint editions.

## CLOSING DATE FOR THE MAY MAGAZINE

Contributions should be sent to Bob Merrill at Glebe House, Coates, GL7 6NU. Telephone 07866 972389 or by e-mail to the Watershed magazine at [watershedmag@gmail.com](mailto:watershedmag@gmail.com). Articles should be in Arial font at 11 point with **formatting kept as simple as possible**. The editor reserves the right to edit any articles. **Articles should be submitted by 12 April at the latest for inclusion in the next month's issue.**

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Watershed Editor	Bob Merrill	07866 972389
Watershed Treasurer	Janet Loines	841578

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Coates Parish Council Chair	Richard Harrison	771449
Coates Parish Council Clerk	Caroline Coates	770757
Coates Gardening Club	Margaret Reynolds	771354
Coates Social Club secretary	Tara Davidson	07948 966957
Coates Tree Warden	Simon Large	07714 220558
Coates Village Hall	Lynn Vaughan	770876
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Sapperton and FM PC Clerk	Barbara (Babs) Maloney	760276
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