parish magazine



Bishop's Tachbrook









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Thoughts

Rev Elaine Scrivens

I was recently asked by a parishioner, "how long have you been at St Chad's?" and I was surprised when I realised Jim and I arrived in the village 5 years ago this month. The time has flown by and we feel very much at home here. As I write this, it is the 14th anniversary of my Ordination—time does fly!

When I was licenced as Priest – in – Charge here in Bishop's Tachbrook, Bishop Christopher, the Bishop of Coventry, said: "Elaine, receive the Cure of Souls which is both yours and mine".

Having the Cure of Souls is something which I greatly value and I hope take very seriously for not only is the priest given the care of the church, and its congregation but also the care of the whole community. Those who come to church, those who have never set foot in the church or maybe only came for little Jonny's christening; for people of faith and those who have no faith; if I have fulfilled this duty over the last five years in this place and as a curate and chaplain in the North East then I will be very happy. To be honest, everything else is a bonus. If you think I haven't then please do let me know.

As I say it is a great privilege to have

the "Cure of Souls" of a parish. I once read a book that said that a parish priest is a "manager of the boundaries" particularly at times of importance in a people's lives. So, at a christening the priest manages the boundary between new life and a new life in Jesus Christ within the family of the Church or if the person being christened is older or between their old life and their new life, again as a member of the world wide church family. At a wedding, the priest is seen as managing the boundary between being single and becoming lifelong partners, and of course, at a funeral, managing the boundary between our earthly life and life eternal.

Gosh, put like that it sounds really daunting but of course, I don't do anything in my own power but with the help of God. When I was ordained Deacon on Advent Sunday in the year 2000 the Bishop asked, "Will you strive to make the love of Christ known through word and example, and have a particular care for those in need?" and my reply was, "With the help of God, I will."

As I look forward to the next 5 years, I do so with excitement and some trepidation.

Continued on page 5

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Thoughts

Rev Elaine Scrivens

Our parish is going to grow. Hundreds of new houses are being built and that is a challenge for us all. How do we make the people welcome? How do we include them in the life of the Parish of St Chad's, Bishop's Tachbrook?

The Parochial Church Council and I, along with other parish organisations would like to put together a "Welcome Pack". What should we put in it? If you have recently moved to Bishop's Tachbrook, what would you have found useful? Please do let me know. My email address is: elaine.scrivens@gmail.com

Have a wonderful summer, holidays, even school holidays, are there for us to recharge our batteries for the work ahead. Even God realised the importance of a little rest and relaxation. After creating the world and all that is in it, he knew the need for a day off.

There is a great verse from one of my favourite hymns that sums up my hopes and prayers for everyone over this summer period – that you will find time to stop and recharge your batteries.

'Drop thy still dews of quietness, Till all our strivings cease. Take from our souls the strain and stress And let our ordered lives confess The beauty of thy peace.'

May God give you His peace however and wherever you spend the summer this year.

Elaine

Postscript

On Tuesday 14 July, Rod Smith, our church warden discovered a beer cask in the church yard that had apparently been taken from the Leopard. On top of it were two ornaments that we assume have been taken off a grave. If you would like to claim them please contact Flaine on 426922.



Worship at St Chad's

Sunday

10am Holy Communion (Sunday Club is held on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month)

First Sunday of the month

8am Holy Communion (BCP)10am Family Service

Wednesday

11:15am Holy Communion (BCP)

Are these times convenient for you? Would you like a mid-week communion service in the evening or an early morning service? Please let me know, the church is here to serve you and if you find that you cannot come to church on a Sunday but that a Tuesday evening would be great, then I am happy to provide what you need. Elaine

Bishops Tachbrook Cycle of Prayer Praying for our Community

As summer draws near we see flowers with their promise in the garden and families are making plans for their holidays. We look forward to seeing again familiar faces we have not seen since last year, to renew that relationship with love. Those holiday breaks are a time for refreshment of mind and spirit. But as we renew old friendships, let us also be open to new possibilities, of new opportunities where God wants us to be on our Christian journey. There are possibilities, of new opportunities where God wants us to be on our Christian journey. There are always wonderful things to come in God's plan for us. In August we pray for those living in



Mallory Road Millway Drive Miranda Drive Oakley Wood Road

Church Officers

Vicar: Rev Elaine Scrivens Tel: 426922

Church Wardens: Linda Stevens Tel: 334812 Rod Smith Tel: 612242

Treasurer: Vera Leeke Tel: 882675

Magazine Editor: Catherine Keen Tel: 886980 catherine.keen@btinternet.com

Advertising Editor: Pam Davies btachbrookmagad@live.co.uk

Joys & Sorrows

Do you have any major life events to share? We'd love to hear of births, engagements, anniversaries and significant birthdays. Call Julie on 01926 420826 or email Julie m thomas@hotmail.com

The Christian Family

Births

Jessica Naomi Bevan born on 15/06/15 weighing 8lbs 4.5oz, a little sister for Isabelle.

Congratulations Jenny & Adrian Bevan.

Felix Jack Pilkington born on 29/05/15 weighing 9lbs 1.5oz.

Congratulations Kathryn & Myles Pilkington

Baptisms

Carys Mary Colegate
Lucy Grace Goddard
Jude David Harvey Newey
Daisy Sienna Spinker
We welcome them into the Christian Family.

Marriages

Mark Newton & Keeley Martin
Yann Schnee & Amy Mason
We offer our congratulations and best wishes for the future.

Funerals

Graham Lewis Brian Mitten Betty Statham Allan Manix-Gowlett

We pray for their souls and offer our sympathy to their families and friends.



BT Pre-school

Jade Lowe

This Term we have been learning about 'New Life and In the Garden'

We have had some visitors in the Pre-school: We have had some 6 hour old Lambs come to say hello.

They were all fluffy and made a funny noise.



We had a box delivered into the Pre-School which had three cups inside. When we had a closer look there were funny looking caterpillars inside.







We are waiting to see if they change into Butterflies. We are so excited because they have changed into their chrysalis. The grown ups have moved them into a net to let the magic happen.

Out in the Pre-School garden we have got some Tadpoles we have been feeding them to see if they will grow into Frogs.



We are also starting to grow our own things.

The grown ups took pictures of us and stuck them onto plastic cups. We had to put cotton wool in the bottom of the cup and got to put some cress seeds on the top. The grownups said when the cress has grown it will make us look like we have got some funny hair. Take a look at our pictures...





Soon we will be growing some flowers, vegetables and much more so watch this space.

Bishop's Tachbrook Junior Youth Club

Monday 6.30-8pm in the School Hall During Term Time Only £1.50 per session and yearly membership of £2 payable in September.

For more information contact Kate Underhill on 335144 kateandgrace@talktalknet or come along on a Monday. We desperately need more adult volunteers to come and help at our club, if you can spare a couple of hours on an odd Monday then please let me know.



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Louis Edwards

BT Sports

The season of summer tennis, golf, athletics and various other sports isin full swing. Football teams are abroad and newspapers stir the tension of football fans by hinting at what player a club maybe buying during the summer transfer window. Leamington brakes didn't get off to the greatest start in their new season by being beaten 2-1 to a late goal against Stafford Rangers. Stafford took the lead to begin with but before the end of the first half Leamington fought back to draw level at 1-1. Each side had their chances in the second half but failed to make the most of them until Stafford had a late break to steal the game late into extra time which came as huge blow for the Leamington players.

As I write The Tour de France has started and British rider Chris Froome is dominating. Hopefully, when you read this article, he will have received the Yellow Jersey in Paris.

Formula One has been criticised this season for being boring. In my opinion it was until the cars hit British tarmac at Silverstone. This was full of drama crashes and a few shocks along the way. Both Mercedes didn't get off to the best of start which allowed the Williams car of Felipe Massa to overtake and after a poor restart the other Williams of Valteri Bottas to take second. The safety car came out

because of an incident between both Lotus cars, of Roman Grosiean and Pastor Maldonado, and the McLaren of Jenson Button. It was not all bad news for McLaren as Fernando Alonso got his first points of the season finishing tenth. The rain played a huge factor on strategy and this cost the Williams drivers the chance of a onetwo after both made their pit-stop for wet tyres too late while Hamilton got his perfect to go on and win the race. It seemed like that lap was the perfect lap to make a pit-stop as Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel went from fifth to finish third at the end of the race behind the Mercedes of Nico Rosberg. England cricketers took the lead of the ashes series by smashing Australia in the first test in Cardiff. Manchester United made a huge transfer double signing of Bastian Schweinsteiger from Bayern Munich and Morgan Schneiderlin from Southampton for a reported combined total of £39.4 million. The lionesses had their most successful world cup in Vancouver finishing third while the USA went on to thrash Japan in the final 5-2.

Rugby League Cricket – The Ashes Start of the football season Athletic World Championship Formula One

Sports to look out for in August:



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Bishops Tachbrook Leamington spa

Anne Kirby

History Group

Several members admitted they were not keen to hear about *Central Hospital, Hatton* at our July meeting. In the event it was a much enjoyed and interesting presentation by Mrs Margaret Hunt, former administrator, who had many photos and stories about the establishment and development of this hospital and its staff.

Initially she regaled us with the horror of how "mad" patients were generally treated in private madhouses up to the 19th century and the opening of "Hatton" in 1846. "Treatment" of disturbed patients usually meant subjection to physical abuse until physical exhaustion prevailed. Parliament imposed legislation in 1845 that required all local authorities to provide asylums for the poor. In response the Warwick County Lunatic Asylum was opened in Hatton in 1852 for 324 patients on a 42 acre site purchased from the Earl of Warwick. It was an imposing Victorian Gothic building, built on a hill so that inmates could see the surrounding countryside and activities, but be protected and secured by a 10 ft haha and a high brick wall. The nearby canal provided an easy way to transport necessary supplies, such as coal, which was transferred in wheelbarrows by patients to the

hospital.

The enterprise was headed by forward-looking Dr John Connolly, who rejected the use of restraints to control patients. Mrs Hunt vehemently rejected the description of "mad house" for the complex; this was an opportunity for inmates with mental difficulties to be sheltered and cared for, in the light of currently available, but limited understanding and knowledge, and to be entertained and encouraged to be active – a principle that was extended with great enthusiasm by Dr Miller, a successor of Dr Connolly, whose motto was OCCUPATION -OCCUPATION -OCCUPATION. Farms were bought and worked by able-bodied inmates to provide fresh vegetables and fruit; livestock included sheep, pigs, beef and dairy cows; a bakery provided bread and cakes.

Facilities were extended by the provision of a church, a house for the Superintendent and a nurses' residence, a fire brigade, a coffin maker and a forge. A large hall with stage was available for plays and pantomimes, staged by patients or visiting performers, Hospital staff formed a choir and a brass band



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History Group

Anne Kirby

(one visitor at our meeting was delighted to hear his grandfather's name mentioned as a member of the staff who played in the brass band and who was gifted with the ability to create violins).

Over the years craft and sewing rooms, carpentry workshops, printing and picture framing facilities and a factory providing pressings for the motor industry were developed: it was a self-contained village and almost self-sufficient. Many local people worked at the hospital – in a nursing, administration, craft or technical capacity. Everyone was treated kindly and where appropriate was allowed a lot of freedom within the hospital grounds, which included sports pitches for football, cricket and tennis. There were frequent parties and garden events for visitors and every patient was given a card, cake and present on his/her birthday.

Following WWII the hospital was overcrowded, catering for 1,600 patients – 5 times its original capacity. In 1960 Nuffield House was built to provide rehabilitation units – a halfway house between wards and a suburban home, supervised but not controlled by staff. Revised thinking about treatments led to the sale of the farms and closure of the hospital

in 1995; a new purpose-built hospital – St Michael's - was built in Warwick and most of the hospital buildings were demolished for a new housing development at Hatton Park.

Margaret Hunt's role had included overseeing the provision of "sheltered" accommodation units throughout the area, all of which, she told us sadly, had now been closed. She also fought for the preservation of the hospital cemetery and provision of a memorial to honour all the patients who had died.

Margaret's love and enthusiasm for the work achieved at Hatton and her respect for the patients and staff shone through her talk and we all left with a warm and revised view of the forbidding territory beyond that high wall at Hatton.

Report by Anne Kirby (01926 336749) breakfast42@tiscali.co.uk

August 11th - OUTING TO BLENHEIM PALACE AND GARDENS

September 8th - 7.30pm in St Chad's Church:

'King Alfred the Great' - Stephen Baldwin will ask "more than cakes and Danes?"

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WI Anne Allen

Our July meeting was exceptionally well attended for a hot evening. The speaker, Kevin Barfield, had come to tell us about the "Life and Works of George Formby." Using recordings, Kevin explained how the name George Formby was first used by his father, who took George from the then king and Formby from railway carriages whilst sitting in a station and played a recording of Formby senior. It was in 1921 when George gave his first performance just 6 weeks after his father had died it appears he was not very good!! Throughout his career he made 22 films becoming a top box office attraction and sold 150,000 copies of the Window Cleaner in the first month. This recording was originally banned by the BBC but Beryl Formby wrote to the director general, saying that if it was suitable to be performed in front of the royal family it should be good enough for the BBC. In 1960 George's wife died Christmas Eve, was buried Christmas Day and he opened in panto on Boxing Day. He was also engaged 6 weeks later to a younger lady but on the day they were to buy the ring he had a fatal heart attack. The evening finished with Kevin playing 3 favourites.

The Pimms and croquet evening was a success with Bunny winning the cup for least hits around the course. We

are hoping to hold a second evening in August. Various events and outings were discussed these include a Christmas visit to Chatsworth, getting your car ready for the winter, a Santa Supper and Promise Auction, and next years darts tournament.

We are all at the ready for Tachfest, I hope by the time you read this you will have enjoyed our refreshments. Also posh frocks are being pressed for Afternoon Tea at Mallory Court to celebrate 100 years since the formation of the WI No I've not been a member that long just seems like it. On August 27th we are having a coffee morning to help one of our ladies knit poppies for brooches to be sold at a coffee morning to raise funds for the British Legion .

I have delivered a further 10lbs of used bras to Bravissimo for their charity. They donate £1 per 1lb of bras the charity this year is Mind. I contacted Marie Curie re the used stamps but they no longer want them but I am in correspondence with another cancer charity so do keep collecting them.

Our next speaker is Chris Edwards who will tell us about the work of the RSPB in September the talk is Viva Cuba and October is annual meeting time again. Do come along and meet us we would love to meet you.

Anne Allen 424135

Bishops Tachbrook Sports and Social Club Summer Entertainment August September

1st August – Quiz Night

Pit your wits against The Judge. Prizes for every team and an ever increasing cash pot

8th August - Harry Rag Band

A regular club favourite, playing all the hits from the 50's, 60's and 70's. It's always a busy night

15th August - Karaoke

Think you can sing? Come down and show us!

22nd August - Rena & The Renegades

After a great reception last time, Rena and her Renegades are back to play guitar hits from the 60's through to modern day

29th August - Insomnia

They've played Tachfest, and the club. Always popular and playing great music. A great way to spend Bank Holiday Saturday

5th September - Quiz Night

Pit your wits against The Judge. Prizes for every team and an ever increasing cash pot

12th September-Southern Cross

Following on from their extremely impressive debut set at Tachfest this year, Southern Cross are back for a full performance.

26th September - Race Night

After a great reception last time, Rena and her Renegades are back to play guitar hits from the 60's through to modern day

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Date	Organisation	Event	Venue	Time	Contact
August					
6 th Thurs	WI	RSPB	B.T. School	7.45pm	01926
					424135
11 th Tues	History	Visit to Blenheim		All day	01926
	Group				336749
20 th Mon	Croft Medical	Patients Group	Sydenham	6.30pm	01926
	Centre		Surgery		336749
Sept					
3rd Thurs	WI	Viva Cuba	B.T. School	7.45pm	01926
					424135
8 th Tues	History	King Alfred the	St Chads	7.30pm	01926
	Group	Great			336749
15th Thurs	Croft Medical	Patients Group	Sydenham	12.30pm	01926
	Centre		Surgery		336749

Weekly events							
Mondays	Rainbows	Sports and	6.00-	Jadechoc			
		Social Club	7.00pm	@aol.com			
Mondays	Youth Club	В. Т.	6.30-	Anoushka76@			
		School	8.00pm	hotmail.com			
Tuesdays	Pilates	Sports and Social Club	9.30-10.30am	07769222524			
Tuesdays	Over 50s	Sports and Social Club	2-4pm	01926 313020			
Tuesdays	Bingo	Sports and Social Club	8pm	01926 421621			
Wednesdays	Brownies	Sports and	6.00-	carolineloveday			
		Social Club	7.30pm	@sky.com			
Thursdays	Tachbrook			Elissa			
(term time	Tinies	Sports and	9.30-11am	07854427213			
only)	Playgroup For 0-5s	Social Club					
2nd Thurs of	Country	Sports and	8pm	01926 314286			
each month	Dancing	Social Club					
3rd Thurs of	Parish	BT School	7.30pm	01926 641220			
each month	Council						
	Meeting						
Sundays	Bingo	Sports and	8pm	01926 421621			
		Social Club					



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Keeping the Parish neat and tidy

Graham Leeke

It gets confusing sometimes, who does what, with WCC, WDC and the Parish Council all with separate responsibilities.

Basically the County looks after all the roads and footpaths plus the verges and signage outside the built up areas. So if you spot a pot-hole or a broken road sign or a blocked street drain, a useful number is the Warwickshire Direct Call-line 412515.

<u>The District</u> cuts the grass verges in the village and on Warwick Gates, and empties the waste bins.

The Parish Council cuts 3 areas of grass in the village including the village green and the one on St Chads Road; and also the Meadow which includes the BMX track and the play areas. This is because the Parish owns these green spaces. Our budget of £2300 allows for 16/18 cuts each season. Thanks to David C and Alan G for their care with these tasks.

By the time you read this the cycleway - that lifeline between Warwick Gates and the village - should have had a major cut back by WCC – not just the nettles but also the face of the hedge and the low hanging branches.

Likewise WDC have promised to have a team in the village early August, mostly working on the paved areas on the green but also removing low hanging branches on St Chads Road.

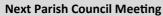
The same team has just done a number of the Warwick Gates perimeter paths which had got seriously overgrown. And WDC have promised to return in September to cleanse the islands on Othello Avenue and Cicero Approach.

WDC have a rapid response team to deal with fly-tipping and we've had to call it out 3 times in July for incidents on Oakley Wood and Mallory Roads. If you ever have any info on the culprits who mess up our country side like this, please contact the police right away.

Finally for flooding, broken mains or sewage overflows, ring 7-Trent on 0800 783 4444.

Oh, one more thing – rightly or wrongly both WCC and WDC (and your PC for that matter) have limited resources, so when you get the chance please express your appreciation to their operating staff.

Notice Board



This will be on Thursday 20th
August at 7.30
It will be held in Warwick Gates
Community Centre.

Parishioners who live in Warwick Gates particularly welcome

Parish Council Questions and comments

If you have any questions or comments to make to the Parish Council please send them to: Mrs. Corinne Hill, Parish Clerk, Gaydon Field's Farm Gaydon CV35 0HF

Tel: 01926 641220

Magazine deadline

Next deadline for magazine items is 14th August for the September issue. Please send to: btparishmagazine@hotmail.com

Country Dancing Club

2nd Thursday of every month 8pm at Sports and Social Club Contact Julie Jaggard 314286 All welcome!

Calendar of events

If you have any items you'd like included in the September calendar of events please email Marion Smith on marismi913@aol.com by Friday7th August with the following information about your event:

Date – Time – Organisation – Event – Venue - Contact name and number

Temporary Road Closure

Oakley Wood Road from Banbury Road to the junction with Harbury Lane will undergo repairs on the 12th and 13th August. The road will be temporarily closed to traffic. Have you picked up the Summer Newsletter printed by the Group, which is available at either Surgery?

It provides some useful information about vaccinations for holidays abroad, new projects initiated by Croft, and a volunteer car service to help older residents attend health-related appointments (there is a charge of 45p per mile).

A graph shows the number of patients who did not attend their appointments during the last 6 months. From January to March the total was a disappointing 441! Do **please** phone and cancel an appointment if you no longer need it.

The PPG AGM in June provided an opportunity to review the work undertaken by the Group and to feel encouraged that their advice, suggestions and support had been helpful and welcomed by the Surgery staff. Main discussions centred on the new system for ordering repeat prescriptions at the Sydenham surgery. This is not applicable to the village branch surgery because we are fortunate in having a pharmacy on site.

The next PPG meeting will be held on Thursday, 20th August, at 6.30pm at the Sydenham Surgery. All patients invited to attend.

Report by Anne Kirby (01926 336749)

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Playgroup for 0-4 years Thursday 9:30 - 11:00

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Bouncy Castle

Baby Area

Toys and activities



Crafts

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Bishops Tachbrook Sports and Social Club The Meadow ,Kingsley Road, Learnington Spa CV33 9RR



Nature Page

Linda Stevens

The bees were busy next to our front door from the end of May and well into June. The cotoneaster was in bloom and even though the flowers are small and tight the bees managed very well as evident from their legs displaying full pollen sacks. There were Honeybees and Buff-tailed and white-tailed Bumblebees. They didn't bother us, or our visitors, as they were far too busy.

A Red Kite has been spotted circling over the Longbridge roundabout. I wonder if has a nest nearby or is it just hunting away. We count more each time we pass through the Chilterns- not so white these days - as we drive towards London on the M40.

Baby birds began to appear in the garden from the end of May when I saw the first of the young sparrows fluttering about, open-beaked following its parent. We watched them being brought o the birdbath and enjoying a splashing time. On one June morning I saw a lone blackbird fledgling on the lawn. It stayed there for at least half an hour without moving. There was no sign of a parent and I began to worry that it might attract the attention of a Sparrow hawk or a cat so I crept up to it with some dried mealworms trying to imitate the comforting sounds of a parent bird. It did not move until I was right next to it and then it scuttled under a bush. I came away hoping it was in a safer place and the adult birds might appear. I didn't see what happened but as there were no tell tale feathers about I hope it was a happy ending.

Though not so common as they used to be we do have Starlings visit on occasions. I watched an adult carefully breaking off bits of fat on the bird table and popping them into the baby's beak. I saw a baby Starling on its own a few days later looking rather forlorn. Its tough growing up! Perhaps it was in the group of 20 or more adults and young which came a few days later to feast on the fat I had put out.

Barbara was fascinated watching an adult and a young Dove. It appeared that the adult was teaching the youngster to preen. First the adult lifted a wing and used its beak to sort out the feathers. Then the youngster did the same and so on through the preening process. I'm sure she is right that birds have to be shown what to do.



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Nature Page

Linda Stevens

The Greater Spotted Woodpecker is still visiting a garden in Holt Ave and sometimes a Jay. They also have Greenfinches visit their feeders and have a resident Blackbird family.

It's not all success in raising a family especially if you are a duck it seems! Judy has been watching duck wars around her pond. It started well when her usual male and his mate arrived. She knows him because he has a distinguishing white mark on his breast. Then another male and his mate arrived and drove the first two away. The second male also had a strange white mark on its breast but this was sickle-shaped. As if that wasn't enough another pair arrived and drove off the second pair! On the morning that Judy told me about the ducks, she had seen the two white marked males and 4 females on the lawn. No eggs had been laid, as they were all too busy squabbling over territory.

Its not been all birds and bees! I'm pleased to see the wild flowers growing on the road verges and in our churchyard. We try to keep a balance between tidy well kept areas and allowing wild plants a chance to grow and thrive in the churchyard and it can't be a haven for insects, especially those we can do without as they pollinate crops. I tried to think back to my childhood and the names of the wild flowers I knew then. I managed more than twenty with ease. It was later in life that I realised how many different types of buttercups and daisies there are! Have a go and make your own list. How many can you name? It would be a good challenge for children too. Which one is your favourite? According to the website Plantlife.org.uk England voted for the Bluebell as favourite but Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland chose the Primrose.

Wendy was sure she heard a cuckoo in May. Has anyone else heard one this year?



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Steve's nature page

Steve Harvey

On a quiet Sunday morning back in May a familiar squawking ripped through the air. Yes the young Starlings were airborne. There were three of them, soon to be joined by many more following their parents everywhere. Being introduced to the bird table and the nut feeder, making far too much noise to be safe. They stood right by the food waiting to be fed, so vulnerable and dependent, however within four days they were virtually independent. Having been shown food and where to get it they were off and on their own.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker arrives on the fat feeder and they quickly move aside. It's a male, given away by the red patch on the back of its neck, looking like a small letterbox. Stunning in black, white and red, it pecks vigorously, filling its beak and throwing bits everywhere. The Blackbirds and Sparrows have soon caught on to this and nip about grabbing the bits. The Woodpecker is only with us for a minute at a time before dashing off back to its young. Fingers crossed he'll bring them back to the garden soon.

This year I'm seeing more Thrushes, we even had one in the garden. Maybe they are increasing; never thought I'd think of them as a rarity. Thrushes are well known for repeating phrases in their song unlike the Blackbird who's a bit of a virtuoso. Having said that, there's a fab Blackbird with our conifer as the epicentre of his empire. He sits high on the top amongst other selected vantage points and regularly sings "Donkey Derby" twice every so often. So hope he lives a long life then we will always know its him.

A few weeks back I was working on a large old house when I noticed a Robin with food in its beak looking at me, flying away then coming back. Got to be a nest somewhere. There were no bushes or even a twig. Then down to my right I noticed three little Robin chicks sitting very still, looking at me hoping not to be noticed. The nest had very little protection from weather or predators. They were tucked in a corner by an old drainpipe against bare brick. I moved on quickly to let the parent back in. the quicker she feeds them up and gets them out the better.

The tadpoles in the little pond are doing well, I'm feeding them some fish food to fast forward their development.

So many Warblers in the field behind and Linnets, no sign of the Grasshopper Warbler so far this year. It was lovely the last two summers hearing its strange song both day and night. Such a disappointment - I had hoped to sell tickets! Ha!





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Our food is our environment

About half of the habitable land on Earth is used for crop and livestock production, with the current total land area under agriculture estimated to be more than 4.6 billion hectares. In 2008, an estimated 24% of the global land area was judged to be degraded. 40% of the world's agricultural land is undergoing serious degradation and loss of biodiversity.

To protect the environment we need to ensure that all food production, distribution and consumption use our natural resources efficiently. This is a huge challenge, as currently many food production systems are environmentally unsustainable.

Technological advances in the past century significantly increased world food production, primarily through increased irrigation, fertilizer use and cropland expansion. Global crop yields grew by approximately 115% between 1967 and 2007, largely as a result of this 'Green Revolution'. Over the same time period, the amount of land devoted to farming only increased by 8%. But, at the same time, the overall environmental costs of agriculture have increased significantly.

Productive land is being lost because of problems associated with soil loss as a result of: erosion, compaction due to heavy machinery use, loss of soil fertility, salinisation and other forms of land degradation (Archers' fans you will be aware of this!).

Genetic, species, habitat and ecosystem diversity are being harmed. Agricultural intensification in Europe is a major cause of a near 50% decline in farmland birds in this region in the past three decades.

In many regions, the rate of water extraction for irrigation exceeds the rates at which water resources are replenished. Water contamination by chemical pollutants and livestock waste (slurry) is a serious concern.

So how does this impact us in Bishop's Tachbrook?

To start with it is important to point out that 40% of UK food is imported. That's a concern going forward, in terms of our food security as was witnessed in both last century's World Wars. We also need to feed a growing population but lack influence over the systems used to produce imported food.



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Our food is our environment

Keith Wellsted

Secondly good quality agricultural land is essential for cultivating crops and for grazing livestock, yet there is growing demand to use it for other purposes. The Grove Farm Planning Application proposes building houses on Grade 2 agricultural land! Other land in the area is being used for biofuels and solar farms.

Finally we all make choices about what food we buy, where we buy it and how we use it. We may choose to support 'organic' and 'conservation agriculture'. We may use community farms or local markets to shorten the journey of food products from 'farm to fork' and decrease 'food miles'. We may aim to avoid food loss and waste.

Ultimately, the challenge is to implement strategies that both reduce the risk of catastrophic failures and build resilience across the whole food system. One small way we can do this is to grow something ourselves. Be it sprouting seeds on a windowsill, having tumbling tomatoes

in a hanging basket, growing potatoes in sacks or being a fully blown allotment holder anything you grow yourself is a positive move.

If you don't grow your own already and would do your own bit for the environment please contact Susan Watt or I on:

suzwatt@gmail.com or 07711 498047

keithwellsted@btconnect.com or 0771 8196577

Ist Bishop's Tachbrook Rainbows

Is your daughter aged 5,
does she like having fun, playing games,
making things and
being part of a group?
Then Rainbows could be for you.
Rainbows are part of the
Girl Guiding group.

If your daughter is interested email Jade at jadechoc@aol.com



Are you interested in being a Brownie?

Bishop's Tachbrook Brownies meet on a Wednesday at 6 - 7.30pm. We have fun, make, work on badges, go on outings, sing, play games and meet new friends. If your daughter is in Reception or Year 1 and would like to be a Brownie when she is 7, please contact Caroline Loveday on 429082 or 07796 034371 or carolineloveday@sky.com to find out more and register your interest in Brownies. Even if your daughter is a Rainbow, you still need to put her name on the Brownie waiting list.



Warwickshire Young Voices

We rehearse Thursday Evenings during term time at Harbury Village Hall from 6.30-7.30pm. We take all children age 7-16 and offer a free trial session (normal subs £30 per term), We already have children from Bishop's Tachbrook who attend regularly and we would welcome more. Please go to www.warwickshireyoungvoices.org for more information.



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