

PARISH MAGAZINE

St Chad's



Issue 10 December 2021 www.bishopstachbrook.com

Your magazine featuring news and views from Bishop's Tachbrook Parish.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A GREAT 2022 TO ALL

What's in this month's magazine

Start here Precis of what you'll find in the magazine are shown on this page. Click on the title (underlined) to go to the article.



Parish Council News

Your up to date guide to actions being taken on your behalf by the Parish Council



History Group

Catch up with the interesting areas the History Group have been following



A Dickensian Christmas

Marvellous piece from Peter Lister



A foody Christmas

Thoughts on the importance of food at Christmas



Nature Page

Cauliflower Cheese eating foxes



WI

Wreathes, knitting and wild parties!



Community Cafe

It's coming back!



Recipes

Turkey leftover pie excellent for Boxing day.



Bishop's Tachbrook Primary School

Castles in the air



Heathcote Primary School

Remembrance, Diwali and starry nights—catch the Heathcote news



Poetry please

Christmas themed poetry to add good cheer.



Adverts

Many of our loyal advertisers will be going through a hard time at present, please use them in preference to those who don't advertise with us. Click on the link to see who can provide you with a service:

A foody Christmas message

By Revd. Jonathan Smith

'I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger'.

You'll probably agree Christmas wouldn't be the same without those extra delicious food treats we enjoy. At this point I'll make my confession of a cheeky pre-Christmas stockpile myself. No, not mince pies or pigs-in-blankets but a large bag of *Heygates* bread flour. This isn't because I'm panicking about food supply, as it appears that we can have increasing hope the nations staples aren't about to run out. I'm not even a bake-off wannabe, I just simply look forward to having some time off at home baking some bread and well, ok, I may have a go at perfecting a crusty farmhouse that Mr Hollywood would be proud of.

For the bread-makers out there, you'll know there's no better thing than to tap the freshly baked loaf out of its tin, prove tap the bottom for the satisfying hollow thud and then cut in and simply take in those heavenly wafts. There's something so enticing and delectable about freshly baked bread, which I guess is why supermarkets pump the smell around the store to make us buy more!

Bread was always important to the early Christians. Baking and breaking of bread then became the centre of worship in keeping with Jesus'

instructions at the Last Supper. There are many references in the bible to the provision of bread signifying God's love for us. Bread was a gift from God, remember when Moses fed his people in the desert with the bread like 'manna' which fell from Heaven. The temple in Jerusalem housed 12 loaves of bread called the '*presence*' reminding us of the twelve tribes. And Jesus famously turns a small boy's humble lunch box into a feast for thousands. Bread is so evocative of provision and sustenance and no wonder Jesus said, '***I am the bread of life***'. He then followed this with the analogy of taking the bread saying, '***eat this, this is my body broken for you***'.

As we pray over the bread at communion, we remember Jesus' sacrifice for us. At Christmas we particularly remember Jesus' birth, but it always goes hand in hand with his death. The death that gave us life and the fullness of life nourished by His Spirit in His infinite grace and love. (special note - Jesus promised that we would always have his Spirit with us. (Ephesians 5 vs 18).)

This Christmas and New Year I hope you get some freshly baked delights. Perhaps the bakery smells in the supermarket may remind us of the wonderful gift of life. The 'bread' of Christ's sacrifice for us and the Spirit

who helps us to receive and know this promise of God's love. Maybe you might like to seek some joy and peace this festive season with us at St Chads and reconnect with the true meaning of life, and may the overflowing gifts of God's goodness be yours this

Christmas and always.

On behalf of all at St Chads Church may I wish everyone a very peaceful, hopeful and happy New Year.



CONTACT DETAILS

For Marriages, Baptisms and Funerals
and general enquiries please :

e-mail stchadsbt@gmail.com

Phone: **07999127260**

Our Church Warden: Rod Smith can be
reached on 612242

THANKS

St Chads P.C.C. would like to thank all who have helped maintain our churchyard during the year, especially Phil and George for mowing the grass so regularly, as weather has allowed. We wish you all a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

CYCLE OF PRAYER

Praying for our Community

In December we are praying for those
living in:

Touchstone Road
Trinculo Grove
Vicarage Rise
Wychwood Close

If there is something or someone you
would like us to pray for please let a
member of the congregation know.

A Christmas Worship



We invite you to St Chads.

Sunday 28th Nov 10am: Advent Sunday for all ages.

Sunday 5th Dec 10am: Communion.

Sunday 12th December 10am: Communion.

Sunday 12th Dec 6pm: Carols & Brass on the Church Green.

Friday 17th Dec 6pm: Carols outside The Leopard.

Sunday 19th Dec 10am: Communion & Crib within service.

Sunday 19th Dec 6pm: Carols by Candlelight.

Friday 24th Dec 4pm: Crib Service

Friday 24th Dec 11.30pm: Midnight Mass.

Sat 25th 10am: A short Christmas Day service for all age worship.

Sunday 26th Dec 8am: Communion Service.



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St Chad's Community Cafe

The Community Cafe will reopen on

Thursday 6th January

from 10.15 – 11.45am

Come for coffee/ tea, cake and a chat.

only £2 for a drink and a cake.

Please bring a mask to wear when moving about, the exact change, if possible, or a card to use the card reader.

We are looking forward to reopening, but this of course will depend on Covid rules and regulations at the time.



Parish Council News

By Matt Greene

First, thanks to Bishop's Tachbrook Events Group for a wonderful fireworks display - we really appreciate the time you put into that.

The wind, rain and snow of the last week of November finally brought down the leaves signalling the imminent arrival of winter. The inclement weather has led to an increase in the number of falling trees and branches on our roads and has resulted in a number of accidents. Please do take care during the months ahead, even the most advanced vehicles are no match for nature and sometimes this means we need to amend our plans to stay safe.

The District Council is aware that the leaves need clearing throughout the Parish. This work should take place shortly. District Cllr. Andrew Day has been engaging with Severn Trent to try and get the unacceptable regular overflow of raw sewage on Oakley Wood Road addressed. The Parish Council will be supporting him by bringing this 'lack of action' to the attention of the CEO of Severn Trent.

The prospect of a more normal Christmas is upon us, with a real chance to spend time with friends and family and to unwind after a tough two years. Hopefully the emergence of the new variant of COVID won't throw us off course; however, the Parish

Council strongly encourages all of our residents to test (LFTs when asymptomatic and PCRs when you have any symptoms) themselves regularly and to follow guidance around isolation as much as possible.

The lights are now up on Village Green/churchyard, thank you to Cllr. Keith Wellsted and District Cllr. David Norris for sorting this. I have been informed that Fr. Christmas may be bringing his sleigh through Bishop's Tachbrook again as we get towards Christmas - please see online for further details.

County Highways are carrying out a safety audit on Othello Avenue between Bollingbroke Drive and Launce Grove to establish if it would be possible to install a drop kerb. Unfortunately we have been informed that there is no safe location for a drop kerb by the Church on Church Hill. Highways are also looking at whether it is possible for a drop kerb on Farm Walk; however, installing one at the bottom of The Lees is not possible as the land is owned by Oakley Meadows and not the County Council.

Remedial work has taken place on the Warwick Gates perimeter path. District Cllr. Norris has requested that the District Council regularly inspect this path to ensure that repairs are

carried out promptly. In other District Council news, we have been informed that the recycling centres are now operating an improved on-line service which should allow for on the day appointments where available.

At the November Parish Council Meeting, Councillors expressed concern that the Parish Council has no representation on the Board for the design/construction of the school. Cllr. Deely sits on the board for the Country Park but not on the board for the School. We are addressing this issue with County and District Councillors and hope it will be resolved. County Cllr. Jan Matecki has arranged for a County Council officer to attend the 9th December Parish Council meeting to answer questions. Please come along if you have any questions or just want an update on the progress of the school and the plans for the community facilities.

The Country Park planning application should be available for consultation shortly. Cllrs. Sean Deely and Craig Brewster will post on Facebook and the Parish Council website when the Council receives notification. This should allow residents plenty of time to comment.

With the commencement of the Mallory Road raised table consultation (details available online) Cllr. Leigh Carter is on to his next project; Heathcote Primary School safety concerns on Harbury Lane. He is liaising with County Cllr. Jan Matecki

for officer time and financial support. We hope to be able to update you shortly. Thoughts have also been passed to Cllr, Matecki on adopting 20MPH on the roads in parts of the parish. We await a response.

I was invited by Matt Western (our MP) to a virtual meeting with three other chairs of neighbouring parish councils to discuss the proposed merger of Warwick District Council and Stratford District Council. At the meeting I articulated the position of our Parish Council as agreed in October. I had previously discussed this position with the Leader of WDC (Cllr. Day). I hope that all involved can find a solution that delivers the best answer to residents in terms of both financial sustainability and local representative democracy.

Cllr. Martin Drew has been looking at a number of options for addressing climate change; rewilding of our verges and parish land, a repair cafe, advertising goods which can be recycled. Please do contact him or the clerk if you are interested, have ideas or wish to assist.

Councillors agreed that the rent on the allotments should increase annually in line with the consumer prices index to the nearest 50p. The annual rent will be £20 from January and the Parish Council believes this is very reasonable. Bloor Developments have just contacted the clerk to confirm that they will support us in trying to move forward the transfer of the allotment

land on Oakley Meadows. We know many residents are interested in renting one of these plots and please note that updates will be provided via this magazine.

A post has been knocked over on the Meadow and another one is wobbly. The Parish Council is arranging for replacement posts to be fitted to keep our meadow secure.

Thanks to the Play Area Working Party we are informed of any issues in the play area speedily. This area is inspected weekly and our inspector will be addressing the unfortunate latest anti-social behaviour situation of graffiti on the picnic table. If you know who did this please do tell us because it is the residents of this parish who will have to pay for the graffiti to be removed.

Lastly the District Council has transferred the historical incorrect precept payments owed to this parish. This has taken a number of years to resolve and we thank District Cllr. David Norris for pursuing this when it was spotted by councillors and District Cllr. Andrew Day for making sure we received the funds. This funding will be used for the new car park and driveway on the Meadow.

Again, the final Parish Council meeting of the year will be held on 9 December with the earlier start time of 7pm. The update on the school and residents session will be at the start of the meeting, please do come along!

The Parish Council thanks residents for their support and wishes them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please stay safe.



History Group

Ian E Morley

During the period of Covid restrictions members of the History Group have been sustained by regular e-mail contributions from Peter Lister, whose hard work has been much appreciated. Since the reopening of the St. Chad's Centre there have been four speakers.

Our first speaker (10th August) Roy Smart gave an extremely entertaining and very informative talk about the life of David Beatty, perhaps best known for his command of Britain's Battlecruiser Fleet during World War I. In the title of his' talk Roy Smart described Beatty as 'the last naval hero'. The phrase was intended to indicate his quite remarkable celebrity status akin to that of a 'matinee idol'. This was based on;

- a combination of good looks and a charismatic personality;
- a long-standing association with some of the Great and the Good, including Winston Churchill (then First Lord of the Admiralty) and members of the Royal Family;
- a very distinguished service record, with a leadership role in the major naval enterprises of World War I, including the internment of the German Fleet at Scapa Flow;
- a 'Downton Abbey' lifestyle in Leicestershire, funded by his

- wife's fortune, at Brooksby Hall (near Melton Mowbray) and Dingley Hall (near Market Harborough);
- a reputation as a ladies' man, including a mistress, with whom he had an enduring affair;
- his participation in controversy about his role and that of Admiral Jellicoe (his Commander in Chief) at the Battle of Jutland.

Roy Smart discussed each of these elements precisely and concisely, and provided some stunning audio-visual displays to emphasise his points. He made it clear that Beatty remains a controversial figure. Some thought he had 'the Nelson touch'; others pointed to failures of leadership. Some admired his 'matinee-idol image', others thought him a 'bit of a bounder'. All very entertaining.

On 14th September the History Group welcomed back Dr. Gillian White who began her career at the Warwickshire Museum and received her doctorate from the University of Warwick. Her thesis was about the 'nature and purpose of the original furnishings and decoration of Hardwick Hall' and she is very well known for her talks on Bess of Hardwick. However, in a wider sense her thesis explored some of the ways in which people create contexts and at the same time contexts create

people. In her talk, entitled 'Queen Victoria: A Life in Portraits', Dr White used a dozen or so portraits to illustrate how portraits of Queen Victoria are never neutral but construct images of her in ways that are intimately connected with systems of power and authority, and with personal and political purposes.

Different people will construct their memories of the talk around different themes. I found it particularly interesting to learn how Victoria was raised by her mother under a strict regime designed to isolate her from undesirable influences (as defined by her mother). The regime became known as the Kensington System and left Victoria lonely and 'rather melancholy' (to use her own description). Not surprisingly she took refuge playing with her spaniel, Dash, who appears in many of her portraits. When visited by the Archbishop of Canterbury to tell her that she was now Queen, she took care to see him alone. When she made Buckingham Palace her home she made sure that her mother lodged in a remote apartment, and later, after her marriage to Albert, insisted that she live outside the Palace (in Belgrave Square). Some of her portraits were chosen to reflect these aspects of the development of her self, and the ways in which she saw them, after (perhaps) taking advice from her Governess, and others in her inner circle.

The next talk was by Peter Coulis, joint author of *The Leamington and Warwick*

Tramway who gave a delightful illustrated talk on that subject (12th October), enriched by contemporary accounts, and enlivened by the memories of some of the audience! A horse-drawn service left each terminus every 13 minutes, and ran between Leamington Station and Lord Leycester Hospital, via the Parade, Emscote Road, Smith Street and Jury Street (a distance of just over 3 miles). The stables were located at Coten End. The system was opened to passengers in 1881, electrified in 1905, and closed in 1930, in its 49th year. Some of the stock was sold to other Tramways, such as that between Llandudno and Colwyn Bay, but has since perished. One tram survives at the National Tramway Museum, at Crich in Derbyshire, although it is much in need of restoration. There was a Golden Age of Tramways, and the Warwick and Leamington Tramway was part of it. It cost £14,800 to build which equates to more than £1.5 million in today's money. And as we know from HS2 the real cost would be very much more!

The final talk of the year was given by David Howe (9th November) under the title 'Birmingham to Leamington - A tour of the railway line in words'. There were two aspects to it: (1) anecdotes about the speaker's experiences as a member of various consumer groups (Friends of Leamington Station; Solihull and Leamington Rail Users Association); and (2) snippets of information about each of the stations on the line.

The Leamington and Warwick Tramway



Allan Jennings & Peter Coulls

Published by Sydni Books, 2019

Under (1) we learned that Mr. Howe was responsible for setting up the 'lending library' in the waiting room on Platform 3 of Leamington Station. Many of us have been grateful for the service. Under (2) we learned, for example, that some landowners had the power to close the line for one day a year, at their whim, and have used that power in the past. Another

snippet was that Michael Portillo, on one of his Great Railway Journeys, alighted at Leamington Spa without looking at the station gardens declared 'outstanding' by The Royal Horticultural Society with Heart of England in Bloom.

Many thanks to all our speakers, and to Val Cousins who has organised our Christmas lunch at the Leopard (7th



It has been a really busy half term, and we have lots of exciting news to share with you...

Bringing history to life:

As part of their 'Castles' work, the Year 1 and 2 children visited Kenilworth Castle where they explored the grounds, learned about heraldry to design their own shields, danced in the basement



of the Great Hall, prepared a meal in the kitchens and stormed the castle walls that they had sketched earlier in the day.

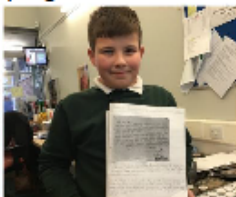
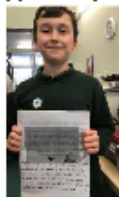


Back at school, they were honoured to receive Lord and Lady Tachbrook as special guests. The children learned and performed a medieval dance, found out lots of information about medieval armoury and shared a feast of celebration. It was fabulous to see how much they had learned about Castles.



While learning about the Vikings, Year 6 discovered that the Viking Raiders pillaged from the Anglo Saxons. To discover what emotions would have been experienced by both parties, the Year 6 children took the opportunity to pillage the Year 5 classroom while they were out having some Golden Time. They watched the reactions of the Year 5 children virtually when they returned to find shock, anger,

disbelief, confusion and sadness among other emotions. They were able to use this experience to help them to recount the raid on Lindisfarne from a Viking perspective.



Team Tachbrook in action:

Children from across the school have had the opportunity to represent Bishop's Tachbrook CE Primary in a range of sporting events this half term. The hockey team played, and won, their first ever hockey tournament. The Year 5/6 football team played a friendly game and showed fabulous teamwork skills as they won the game 3-1. Children from Year 6 took part in a rowing competition with all of the children pushing themselves to the limit for the team (with some wobbly legs as a result). Some of our younger children showed excellent resilience



as they were pushed out of their comfort zones in a range of activities as part of a well-being festival. We have been extremely proud of the way all of the children have represented the school this half term.

News from Heathcote Primary School

Merry Christmas from everyone at Heathcote Primary School and we hope you have a lovely festive season. This is always a lovely part of the term in schools as classes prepare for Christmas performances, make decorations, write stories linked to the festive culture and children look eagerly out of the windows hoping the snow will come.



During November the children have been increasing their knowledge of remembrance and our annual poppy trail through our grounds helped people remember why it is important we don't forget the sacrifices made by people during wars and conflicts. Year 5's poetry was particularly poignant as they studied On Flanders Fields. They have also been exploring what life was like in the trenches during WW1. They have to use their imagination for this which is difficult when you are just 10 years old but by looking at photos from archives and watching re-enactment videos they have begun to build an understanding.

Children have also been exploring the festival of Diwali and developing their understanding of the story of Rama and Sita and how light is an important part of this festival. They have explored Rangoli patterns particularly in maths and looked at symmetrical detail and made clay divas. Year One particularly enjoyed the story of Rama and Sita and were able to recall it in great detail.

Our Reception children continue to impress us with their excellent learning. Butterflies and Hedgehogs are loving their new topic, Starry Night, and have been busy exploring space themed role play areas. The astronaut hanging from the ceiling caused quite a stir! He certainly gives me a shock whenever I walk the school in the evening. They have also been learning about Diwali, the festival of light, and were treated to a very special visitor, who told us why Sikh's celebrate the occasion, before being allowed to have a go at playing traditional Sikh instruments. Bonfire night lent itself to the teaching of past events and resulted in their very first piece of exciting writing being completed. The children thought of some brilliant adjectives to describe a firework picture and

applied their phonic knowledge to try and write some of the words independently. In addition, they have learnt about Remembrance Day and the significance a poppy holds in showing respect to fallen soldiers. When recalling the learning the children said:

“Sikh’s have fireworks to celebrate Diwali because it is the festival of light.”

“Number 4 is one more than 3 and $2+2=4$.”

“Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon. It was a long time ago so is history.”

“A shape with 5 sides is called a pentagon.”

“There are 8 planets in our solar system”

“We live on planet Earth”

“A poppy shows respect to soldiers”

“I know four is one more than three”



It is so lovely to see how well the reception children have settled into Heathcote life and are able to show our one word school rule of respect with ease. They are loving singing their Nativity songs too.

It's not about the presents but about your presence. Therein lies the holiday spirit.

Mrs Humphriss – Executive Head Teacher.

WI

By Anne Allen

We had an extremely informal and social evening in November. It was wonderful to welcome 8 visitors to the meeting we hope they enjoyed themselves and will return.

After the briefest of brief business, the evening was all about making rag wreaths. Everyone was asked to bring ready cut fabric and we supplied the hoops. The instructions I was given were "keep tying and as much as possible". Within a very short space of time we had the start of the wreaths. As I'm sure you can imagine the noise volume went up throughout the evening as the effects that different fabrics had was discussed. I think everyone was pleased with their results and it had been something everyone could take part in.

A number of us will be attending the Group Carols in early December. This was cancelled last year and is part of Whitnash WI's 100th birthday celebrations. Looking forward the Federation have organised zooms on



Cyber Safety, Making Sense of Coercive Control, The Titanic—Honour and Glory, There are actual events these include a visit to Worcester Christmas Market, Handmade Christmas Workshop, Christmas Flowers, Serious Science Lectures including The Biology of Alzheimer's Disease, Climate Change is it too late and last but not least An Audience with Anton Du Beke next March. A very varied and interesting selection of events.

December is usually our world famous Christmas Party.



education and the arts where she is an advocate for music in early childhood. She will also talk about her work with the Royal Opera House, the Royal Albert Hall and the BBC. Sounds fascinating so do please come along and find out for yourself.

Our knitting group has also welcomed new members. We now meet in the Leopard on the second Tuesday of the month 7-9:00pm. We can help you to learn to knit , crochet or even how to natter. You don't have to be a WI member to come along.

Unfortunately this year it's a scaled back party. It was felt that 50-60 people were too many for the buffet table to cope with. I understand that no one eats for the previous week but the thought of everyone trying to serve themselves at the same time was a step too far, so to try and keep ourselves safe we are saying "no" to guests. Members are also being asked to bring their own supper and drinks. If you had thought about coming along please give me a ring. We are also looking forward to enjoying a meal at the Leopard in January and a gin distillery visit in the spring.

Our February speaker is Nicola Burke . Her career covers many areas of

With Christmas coming please remember to keep your used postage stamps which I recycle for ACWW a WI supported charity.

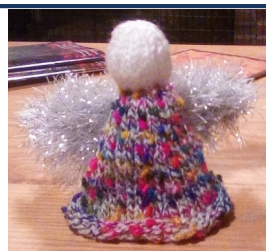
As you can see the WI is still very active . We are here for the education of women of all ages and abilities so whether it's friendship, well being, science, craft or learning to drink gin there is something here for you! If you don't like what we've organised tell us what you would like to do and we can look into it. Please get in touch with me

Anne Allen 424135

Attention all knitters

To all you knitters out there, if you have been creating angels could I please have them by 10th December at the latest to get them ready for distribution.

Many thanks Anne Allen 07929356701



Poetry please

The trouble with snowmen

Roger McGough

The trouble with snowmen,
Said my father one year
They are no sooner made
than they just disappear.

I'll build you a snowman
And I'll build it to last
Add sand and cement
And then have it cast.

And so every winter,'
He went on to explain
'You shall have a snowman
Be it sunshine or rain.'

And that snowman still stands
Though my father is gone
Out there in the garden
Like an unmarked gravestone.

Staring up at the house
Gross and misshapen
As if waiting for something
Bad to happen.

For as the years pass
And I grow older
When summers seem short
And winters colder.

The snowmen I envy
As I watch children play
Are the ones that are made
And then fade away

Poetry Please

Mistletoe by Walter de la Mare

Sitting under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
One last candle burning low,
All the sleepy dancers gone,
Just one candle burning on,
Shadows lurking everywhere:
Some one came, and kissed
me there.

Tired I was; my head would go
Nodding under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
No footsteps came, no voice,
but only,
Just as I sat there, sleepy,
lonely,
Stooped in the still and
shadowy air

Christmas Haiku

Gathered home with songs

Gathered family rejoice

Happy stars smiling

Nature Page

By Steve Harvey

Just before I sat down to scribble this I was outside the cottage in the dark listening to a Fox barking across the field and two Tawny Owls chatting at the front of the cottage. It can get noisy in the country.

When the clocks go back at the end of October the nights seem to draw in so fast. It must be a plus for Owls, Foxes and night-time creatures but the others have less of a day to find food.



Early in the morning before the first light crept across the sky I ventured out of the back door as a loud croaking squawk came from my right. It got louder as I approached. Two

Heron flew past calling as they went. About an hour later a Cormorant flew a little higher, heading silently in the same direction. I'm guessing to the lakes at Ashorne. The Herons are as close as I'll ever get to seeing Pterodactyls with their large wings, long beaks and raucous calls echoing in the dim light.

Small birds dash around as the first light builds, so many of them here as the feeders barely stay full until midday. I've noticed recently mouse droppings on the bird table. Now that's a bit of a climb for a little Mouse. It would have to climb the large Magnolia tree, select the right branch to gain access. This was happening after dark so there would be no food on the table, just the smell of it. That must have been frustrating after such a climb.

On Sunday evening I was out near the bird table and there was the Mouse. I saw it leave the branch and hop onto the table with no food in sight. I stopped. The beautiful little Wood Mouse stopped; all big eyes and big ears. We looked at each other and I made a decision. That was a lot of effort for no reward. Just the one Mouse with a sense of adventure pushed on by hunger. I was going to help it achieve its goal. I moved slowly away to get a little pinch of sunflower

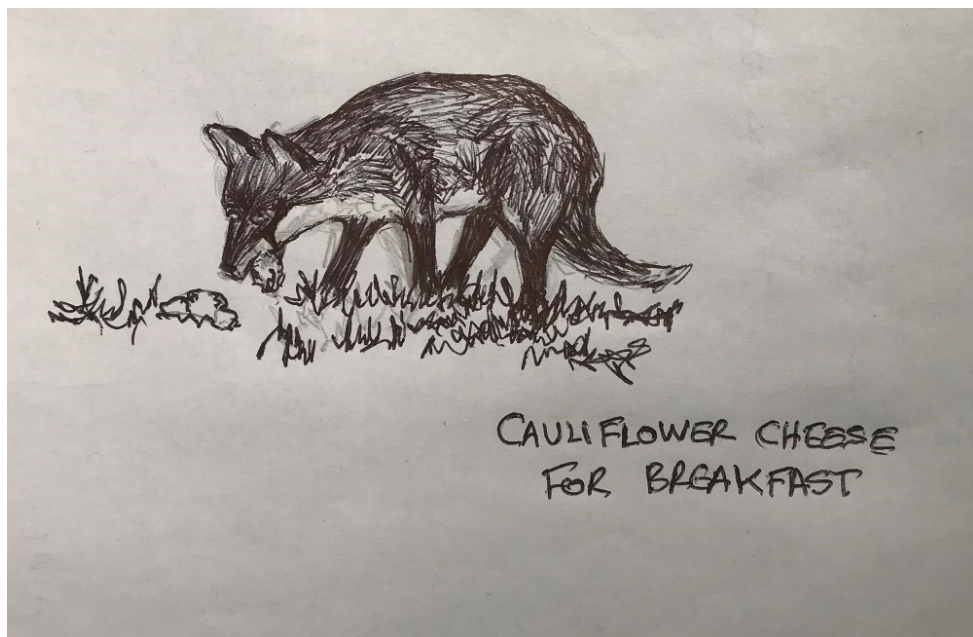
hearts. I put them on the corner of the table and left the scene. Within a couple of minutes the Mouse had arrived back and must have been delighted to find the seed. Now each night a pinch of seed is left just for that Mouse. With two sabre toothed tigers in the cottage no sensible Mouse would dare to enter so it's no problem to me and we're all just trying to get by aren't we?

I've seen a couple of Muntjacs walking around here recently and on the road in the dark the other night a Fallow Deer crossed looking eerie but magnificent in my headlights.



The morning after I just happened to look out of the cottage window as a Fox was finishing off some Cauliflower Cheese I'd put out the night before.

Its busy here and all are welcome.



Christmas leftover pie

Ingredients for the quick rough puff pastry

400g/14oz plain flour, plus extra for dusting

pinch of salt

65g/2¼oz chilled butter

160g/5¾oz frozen butter

Ingredients for the filling

45g/1½oz butter

2 large leeks, washed and roughly sliced

1 orange, juice and finely grated zest only

50ml/2fl oz medium sherry

3 tbsp plain flour

500ml/18fl oz chicken stock (or 250ml/9fl oz leftover gravy and 250ml/9fl oz stock)

1 heaped tsp wholegrain mustard

600g/1lb 5oz leftover turkey meat, cut into bite-sized pieces

250g/9oz cooked ham, cut into bite-sized pieces

2 tbsp roughly chopped tarragon

200ml/7fl oz single cream

1 free-range egg, beaten for egg wash

salt and white pepper



Method

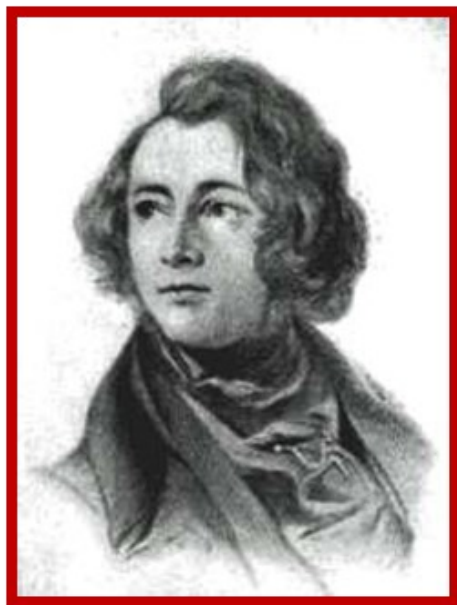
1. For the pastry, mix the flour and salt together in a bowl. Rub in the chilled butter using your fingertips. Gradually add enough cold water to form a dough (about 150-180ml/5-6fl oz).
2. Lightly dust the work surface with flour and roll the dough into a rectangle. Grate 60g/2¼oz of the frozen butter over the bottom two thirds of the dough. Fold down the top third and fold up the top third as if folding a letter. Turn by 90 degrees and roll out again. Repeat, adding the remaining frozen butter and fold as before. Rest in the fridge for 30 minutes before using.
3. For the filling, melt the butter in a large frying pan over a medium heat and add the leeks to the pan with the orange juice, zest and sherry. Cover and cook gently for 6 minutes, stirring occasionally until the leeks are just tender. Remove the lid and increase the heat, reduce the volume of liquid until you are left with a few spoonfuls of buttery liquid. Sprinkle the flour over the leeks and stir to mix evenly. Gradually stir in the stock and simmer for 5 minutes until the sauce has thickened slightly. Add the mustard, turkey and ham and stir. Finally add the tarragon and cream. Season to taste with a little white pepper and salt.
4. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6.
5. Pour the pie filling and sauce into a 1.2-1.5 litre/2-2½ pint pie dish and allow to cool. If you have a pie funnel, put it in the middle of the filling.
6. Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured work surface to about 5mm thick. Cut a 2cm¾in strip of pastry. Brush the rim of the pie dish with egg wash, then place the pastry strip onto the rim and brush it with more egg wash.
7. To make the pie lid, cut the remaining pastry a little larger than the dish and lift it into place (use the rolling pin to help you). Make a steam hole to expose the funnel (if using). Press the edges to seal then trim away any excess. Re-roll any trimmings and use them to make decorations. Brush the pastry with egg wash, arrange any decorations on top of the pie and brush these with egg too.
8. Bake for 35-40 minutes until the pastry is risen and golden-brown. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

A Dickensian Christmas Cracker

Peter Lister

The way that we traditionally celebrate Christmas has in so many ways been shaped by Charles Dickens. Whilst *A Christmas Carol* (published in 1843) remains as an ever-popular story for the Christmas season, it was an earlier work, *Pickwick Papers* (published in 1836), that captured the minds and imaginations of so many of his age and beyond. Much of what we think of as the true spirit of the season can be traced back to these two novels of Dickens.

When it was published, *Pickwick Papers* took England by storm. The Pickwick Club, consisting of Mr. Pickwick and his drinking companions, presented an image of good cheer that the English found irresistible. Especially beloved were the Christmas scenes at its heart, which celebrated benevolence, gaiety, plenty, and friendship. In the story, Christmas was primarily an occasion for a wedding, for large gatherings, for nostalgia and merriment. Its religious core, the birth of Jesus Christ, was absent. What was left was a multitude of activities and people designed to produce good feelings. The story captured the crowd spirit, the group mood to which everyone contributed his own special note. At the heart of this mass festivity was Mr. Pickwick, who shone out as an emblem of generosity and good cheer.



Mr. Pickwick and his companions were portrayed as relatively well off and so could easily indulge in the food and drink associated with proper Christmas cheer. However, as *A Christmas Carol* shows, there were so many in Victorian society who had to struggle to make ends meet, the Cratchit family being but a typical example. Whilst Scrooge's eventual benevolence provided the great goose that they could never have afforded, the story centres on the true Christmas spirit of a family celebrating together and making the most of what little they had. Dickens himself had experienced poverty as a child. Barely into his teens he had to leave school to work in a shoe blacking factory

when his father was incarcerated in the Marshalsea Debtors' Prison in London.

In the story from 'The Cratchit's Christmas Dinner', Scrooge and the Ghost of Christmas Present walk (invisibly) through the streets witnessing the frantic preparations for last minute buying of various foods for various feasts, the carrying of prepared and stuffed geese to the bakers' shops to be cooked in their

ovens (a common practice, as the poorer sorts often did not have ovens), and the crowds summoned to churches to celebrate that Christmas morning. (The celebration of the birth of Jesus was at least a part of the story in *A Christmas Carol*). Then Scrooge and his companion arrived at the Cratchit house to observe how their Christmas was truly celebrated. We pick up the story in Dickens' own words.

"On the threshold of the door the Spirit smiled, and stopped to bless Bob Cratchit's dwelling with the sprinklings of his torch. Think of that! Bob had but fifteen "bob" a week himself; he pocketed on Saturdays but fifteen copies of his Christian name; and yet the Ghost of Christmas Present blessed his four-roomed house!



Then up rose Mrs. Cratchit, Cratchit's wife, dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons, which are cheap and make a goodly show for sixpence; and she laid the cloth, assisted by Belinda Cratchit, second of her daughters, also brave in ribbons; while Master Peter Cratchit plunged a fork into the saucepan of potatoes, and getting the corners of his monstrous shirt-collar (Bob's private property, conferred upon his son and heir in honour of the day) into his mouth, rejoiced to find himself so gallantly attired, and yearned to show his linen in the fashionable parks. And now two smaller Cratchits, boy and girl, came tearing in, screaming that outside the baker's they had smelt the goose, and known it for their own, and, basking in luxurious thoughts of sage and onion, these young Cratchits danced about the table, and exalted Master Peter Cratchit to the skies, while he (not proud, although his collar nearly choked him)

blew the fire, until the slow potatoes, bubbling up, knocked loudly at the saucepan lid to be let out and peeled.

"What has ever got your precious father, then?" said Mrs. Cratchit. "And your brother, Tiny Tim? And Martha warn't as late last Christmas Day by half an hour!" "Here's Martha, mother!" said a girl, appearing as she spoke. "Here's Martha, mother!" cried the two young Cratchits. "Hurrah! There's such a goose, Martha!" "Why, bless your heart alive, my dear, how late you are!" said Mrs. Cratchit, kissing her a dozen times, and taking off her shawl and bonnet for her with officious zeal.

"We'd a deal of work to finish up last night," replied the girl, "and had to clear away this morning, mother!" "Well, never mind so long as you are come," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Sit ye down before the fire, my dear, and have a warm, Lord bless ye!"

"No, no! There's father coming!" cried the two young Cratchits, who were everywhere at once. "Hide, Martha, hide!" So Martha hid herself, and in came little Bob, the father, with at least three feet of comforter, exclusive of the fringe, hanging down before him, and his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed, to look seasonable; and Tiny Tim upon his shoulder. Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame!

"Why, where's our Martha?" cried Bob Cratchit, looking around. "Not coming," said Mrs. Cratchit. "Not coming?" said Bob, with a sudden declension in his high spirits; for he had been Tim's blood horse all the way from the church, and had come home rampant. "Not coming upon Christmas Day?" Martha didn't like to see him disappointed, if it were only in joke; so she came out prematurely from behind the closet door, and ran into his arms, while the two young Cratchits hustled Tiny Tim, and bore him off into the wash-house, that he might hear the pudding singing in the copper.

"And how did little Tim behave?" asked Mrs. Cratchit, when she had rallied Bob on his credulity, and Bob had hugged his daughter to his heart's content. "As good as gold," said Bob, "and better. Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself so much, and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in

the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember, upon Christmas Day, who made lame beggars walk, and blind men see."

Bob's voice was tremulous when he told them this, and trembled more when he said that Tiny Tim was growing strong and hearty. His active little crutch was heard upon the floor, and back came Tiny Tim before another word was spoken, escorted by his brother and sister to his stool beside the fire; and while Bob, turning up his cuffs, as if, poor fellow, they were capable of being made more shabby, compounded some hot mixture in a jug with gin and lemons, and stirred it round and round, and put it on the hob to simmer, Master Peter and the two ubiquitous young Cratchits went to fetch the goose, with which they soon returned in high procession.

Such a bustle ensued that you might have thought a goose the rarest of all birds, a feathered phenomenon, to which a black swan was a matter of course, and in truth it was something very like it in that house. Mrs. Cratchit made the gravy (ready beforehand in a little saucepan) hissing hot; Master Peter mashed the potatoes with incredible vigour; Miss Belinda sweetened up the apple-sauce; Martha dusted the hot plates; Bob took Tiny Tim beside him in a tiny corner at the table; the two young Cratchits set chairs for everybody, not forgetting themselves, and, mounting guard upon their posts, crammed spoons into their mouths, lest they should shriek for goose before their turn came to be helped. At last the dishes were set on, and grace was said. It was succeeded by a breathless pause, as Mrs. Cratchit, looking slowly all along the carving knife, prepared to plunge it into the breast; but when she did, and when the long expected gush of stuffing issued forth, one murmur of delight arose all round the board, and even Tiny Tim, excited by the two young Cratchits, beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried, "Hurrah!"

There never was such a goose. Bob said he didn't believe there ever was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family; indeed, as Mrs. Cratchit said with great delight (surveying one small atom of a bone upon the dish), they hadn't ate it all at last! Yet every one had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular were steeped in sage and onion to the



eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone, too nervous to bear witnesses, to take the pudding up, and bring it in.

Suppose it should not be done enough? Suppose it should break in turning out? Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the backyard and stolen it, while they were merry with the goose, a supposition at which the two young Cratchits became livid! All sorts of horrors were supposed.

Hallo! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like a washing-day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating house and a pastry-cook's next door to each other, with a laundress's next door to that! That was the pudding! In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered, flushed, but smiling proudly, with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quartern of ignited brandy, and bedight with Christmas holly stuck into the top.

Oh, a wonderful pudding! Bob Cratchit said, and calmly, too, that he regarded it as the greatest success achieved by Mrs. Cratchit since their marriage. Mrs. Cratchit said that, now the weight was off her mind, she would confess she had her doubts about the quantity of flour. Everybody had something to say about it, but nobody thought or said it was at all a small pudding for a large family. It would have been flat heresy to do so. Any Cratchit would have blushed to hint at such a thing.

At last the dinner was all done, the cloth was cleared, the hearth swept, and the fire made up. The compound in the jug being tasted, and considered perfect, tipples and oranges were put upon the table, and a shovelful of chestnuts on the fire. Then all the Cratchit family drew round the hearth in what Bob Cratchit called a circle, meaning half a one; and at Bob Cratchit's elbow stood the family display of glass, two tumblers and a custard-cup without a handle. These held the hot stuff from the jug, however, as well as golden goblets would have done; and Bob served it out with beaming looks, while the chestnuts on the fire sputtered and cracked noisily. Then Bob proposed: "A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears. God bless us!" Which all the family re-echoed. "God bless us every one!" said Tiny Tim, the last of all."

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December

4th December – Room 17 & ATs Disco.

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7.30pm till Late

11th December – Rena and the Renegades.

Rena and the Renegades are a 4 piece band rocking through the ages, be prepared for a fab night of music to 'Rock your socks off' 9pm start.

18th December – Bottle Bingo.

Come and win some Christmas Cheer to brighten up your festive celebrations Eyes down at 8pm (over 18s Only)

24th December – Christmas Eve Music Videos.

Relax and enjoy some of the classic music videos of the festive season before the chaos of Christmas Day 8pm till Late.

31st December – New Year's Eve with Rob Alton.

Rob is here to entertain us into 2022 with a versatile mixture of songs old and new to get everyone up dancing 8pm till Late.

January 2022

8th January – Kurling Night.

Have you ever played Kurling NO? Then come and have a go with our new indoor Kurling game fun for the whole family. 7.30pm Start

15th January – The Replays.

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22nd January – Piggy Racing.

Come and choose a Winner, Family Fun with "Oinks" of Joy, Kids races from 6pm till 8pm (win some sweets)

Adults races from 8pm till 10pm (Win some cash)

29th January – Robert Perry Music.

New to the Club Robert is a Singer and Guitarist performing a variety of songs old and new including T Rex, Robbie Williams, Elvis, Oasis, Queen, Prince and many more 9pm Start

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St Chad's Centre Schedule

Monday	Activity	Contact
10.00-12.00	Tai Chi – All Classes are for beginners but are suitable for anyone. Classes have a maximum of 10 Students to ensure social distancing and are COVID Compliant. First class is free, so no reason not to find if Tai Chi is right for "you"	Peter Fletcher 07487 685679
12.30-14.30	Tachbrook Tinies- We are a friendly playgroup for children aged 0-4 years and their carers. Hot drinks and snacks, toys, craft activities and singing. All welcome. Term time only.	Contact on Facebook
16.30-17.45	Martial Arts Class. Children/Beginners up to age 11	Andy Shaw – andy@linkcube.co.uk
17.45-19.00	Martial Arts Class. Over 12 years and adults	Andy Shaw – andy@linkcube.co.uk
19.30-21.30	New Class Salsa @ St Chads Learn and practice Salsa Cross Body / Cuban / Rueda Every Monday, New and experienced dancers welcome. New Dancers Come early. Rueda	Enquiries – stchadssalsa@outlook.com

Tuesday	Activity	Contact
9.15-12.30	<p>ADVENTURE BABIES</p> <p>Take your little ones on a Sensory Story-telling Adventure every Tuesday at St Chad's Centre, as we bring brilliant books to life with puppets, props, bubbles and sensory activities.</p> <p>Mini Adventurers (0-18 months) 9.15am - 10.00am</p> <p>Diddy Adventurers (0-12 months) 10.30am - 11.15am</p> <p>Mini Adventurers (0-18 months) 11.45am - 12.30am</p> <p>Booking essential please visit www.adventurebabies.co.uk/ warwickshireandcoventry to secure your place or contact lindsey@adventurebabies.co.uk</p>	<p>lindsey@adventurebabies.co.uk</p> <p>or visit:</p> <p>www.adventurebabies.co.uk/warwickshireandcoventry</p>
16.45-18.30	<p>ATOMIC DANCE</p> <p>Acrobatic Arts 1</p> <p>4.30pm-5.15pm - Ages 5+</p> <p>Learn the foundations of dance technique and acro movement. In this beginner class, students will develop skills such as forwards and backward rolls, cartwheels and bridges in a fun, friendly environment.</p> <p>£18 per month.</p> <p>Acrobatic Arts 2</p> <p>5.20pm-6.20pm - Ages 7+</p> <p>A more challenging acro class for children who have previous acro or dance experience. Learn how to safely execute skills such as handstands, backbends and walkovers alongside improving dance technique.</p> <p>£21.50 per month</p>	<p>Contact Ellie Rowe 07392 348155 or ellie@atomicdance.co.uk</p>
19.00-20.00	<p>YOGA with Amanda</p> <p>Supporting Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>Yoga classes with Amanda</p> <p>Specialising in yoga for beginners. Sedentary workers, and mums.</p> <p>£5.00 per person</p> <p>Classes are limited to 11 people</p> <p>Please bring your own mat / block</p> <p>I ask that attendees wear masks when not on their mat.</p>	<p>www.lifewithaman.com</p>

Wednesday	Activity	Contact
10.00-11.00	Tai Chi - All Classes are for beginners but are suitable for anyone. Classes have a maximum of 10 Students to ensure social distancing and are COVID Compliant. First class is free, so no reason not to find if Tai Chi is right for "you"	Peter Fletcher 07487 685679
18.00-19.00	YOGA CLASS with Amanda Supporting Health & Wellbeing Specialising in yoga for beginners. Sedentary workers, and mums. £5.00 per person Classes are limited to 11 people Please bring your own mat / block I ask that attendees wear masks when not on their mat.	www.lifewithamandaj.com
19.30-21.00	The Big Sing DO YOU LOVE SINGING? We need YOUR voice! Warwick's BIG Sing would love to welcome you. We meet weekly at St Chad's Centre on Wednesdays from 7.30-9pm . Come and get singing with us! Open to everyone - just give singing a try!	Sign up for a FREE session in www.big-sing.com/join-us They can't wait to meet you !

Thursday	Activity	Contact
13.20-14.00	<p>Glo-Babies</p> <p>Glo-Babies will be at St Chad's Centre Bishops Tachbrook from Thursday 30th September 1.20-2pm.</p> <p>Glo-Babies offer weekly musical sessions for 0-3 year olds in low level lighting with illuminated props and instruments.</p> <p>Term time only</p>	<p>For further information visit the website at www.glo-babies.co.uk and to book a space follow the link at Bookwhen.com/glo-babies</p>
16.00-17.45	<p>ATOMIC DANCE Little Stars Ballet and Musical Theatre (combined class)</p> <p>4pm-4.45pm A 45 minute class exploring IDTA ballet and Musical Theatre for dancers aged 2-5. Dancers skip, gallop and twirl through the foundation's good dance technique alongside developing imagination and confidence</p> <p>£14.50 per month</p> <p>Junior Combo</p> <p>4.45pm-5.45pm A class exploring a combination of dance styles for students aged 5+ that want to do it all! Ballet, Jazz, Street, Lyrical, Acro-gymnastics and Musical Theatre to name a few... Students will get to try a variety of styles whilst improving their dance technique, strength and flexibility.</p> <p>£21.50 per month</p>	<p>Contact Ellie Rowe 07392 348155 or ellie@atomicdance.co.uk</p>

Friday	Activity	Contact
10.00-11.00	Tai Chi - All Classes are for beginners but are suitable for anyone. Classes have a maximum of 10 Students to ensure social distancing and are COVID Compliant. First class is free, so no reason not to find if Tai Chi is right for "you"	Peter Fletcher 07487 685679
Saturday	Activity	Contact
9.30 -	<p>New Activity</p> <p>Baby College Mid Warwickshire's Monthly Dad & Me Club (+Grandad's, Uncle's and Big Brother's!)</p> <p>Infants 0-9 Months @ 11.30am</p> <p>Toddlers 9-18 months @ 10.30am</p> <p>Juniors 18 months – 3 years @ 9.30am</p> <p>Next date Saturday 11th December</p>	<p>To book visit www.babycollege.co.uk/mid-warwickshire</p> <p>Or email charly@babycollege.co.uk</p>

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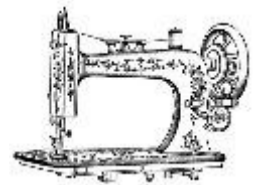
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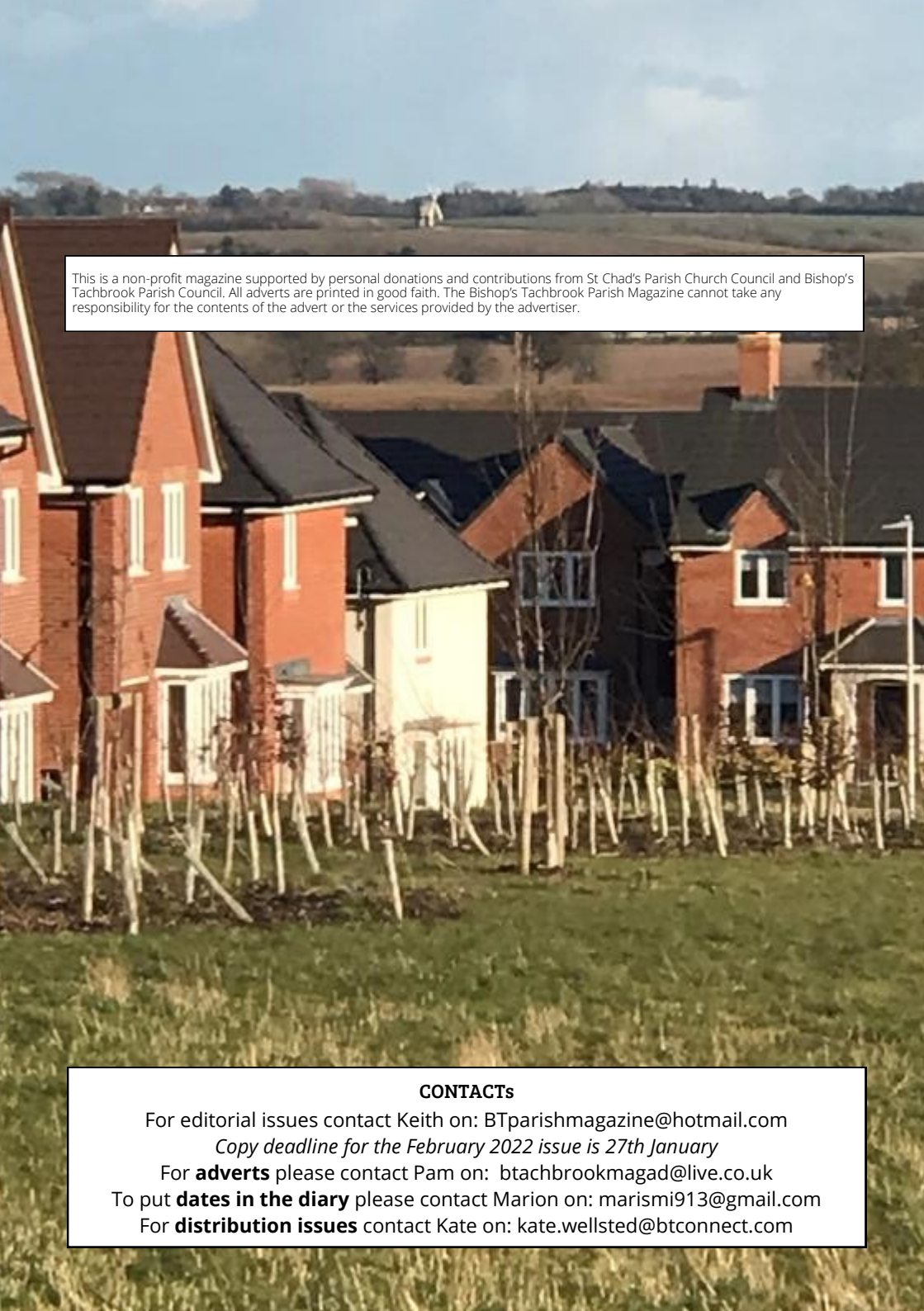
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