

The Essington **Connection**

www.stjohnsessington.co.uk



April 2020

50p

Dear Readers,

This is without doubt the most difficult issue of the Connection Magazine that I have produced during my seven and a half years as Editor.

The current distressing situation with the Coronavirus has, of necessity, meant the cancellation or at least the postponement of so many events and regular meetings in the village, not to mention the suspension of all Church services. It has given me no pleasure at all to have to print all this sad news.

However, as you will read further on, times like these do tend to bring out the best in people and it is so heartening to hear of schemes to give practical help to those who are struggling in self-isolation, and to keep in regular touch with those who are feeling especially lonely and vulnerable, now that they are unable to leave their homes and make their usual social contact.

I must give my sincere thanks to the printing and production team, and the distributors, who have agreed to "keep on keeping on" and have enabled this Magazine to appear at all. I am so very grateful to them. I understand that the Magazine will also be published on the Church's website.

Do let me know of any particular acts of kindness and caring that you learn of during these difficult times. I will happily pass on thanks in future issues.

Finally, I can only send my very best wishes to everyone, and my hope that you keep safe.

Kate Rissbrook.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH DIARY APRIL 2020

As we go to print this month all regular Church services have been suspended. The Church will be open during the day Monday to Friday generally from 10 am to 4 pm for private prayer.

Please check the Notice Board in Church or go online to check our web site on <http://stjohnsessington.co.uk> for updated information regarding events.

ST. JOHN'S REGISTERS

Baptisms

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 15.3.20 | Lyra Faith Jackson, daughter of David & Faith Jackson |
| 15.3.20 | Finn Henry James Wilson, son of Billy Wilson & Amelia Orme |

Burial of Ashes in Churchyard

- | | |
|--------|----------------------|
| 2.3.20 | Margaret Rose Massey |
|--------|----------------------|

Funeral in Church & Burial at the new Essington Cemetery

- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| 17.3.20 | Geoffrey Southern |
|---------|-------------------|

Parish Letter

Dear Fellow Pandemic Endurers,

Charles Dickens' famous novel, "A Tale of Two Cities" begins like this, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, ... in short, the period was so far like the present period ...".

So nothing new now then!

It is heart-warming to see that, in the midst of our worst emergency for generations, there is a spirit that will not be crushed. Many people, nationally and locally, are already organising to support those whom the coronavirus is affecting. The government and local authorities will have their role but, at the level of individual help, it's down to us. We have heard of local people organising to help the vulnerable and this is wonderful. That's how this can become the "best of times".

Public worship at all C of E churches has been suspended but the church building will be open during the day for private prayer. Be assured that, though we won't be holding public worship, we will continue to pray for the whole of the parish every day. We will pray for God's spirit to be with every one of us to help us through.

At the time of writing this, plans are being made to broadcast services nationally and we will also have a go from St Johns. Details will be circulated.

But the real church is the people not the building. We offer help to all those who, for whatever reason, are feeling isolated, vulnerable or lonely. There is following this letter a list of names and telephone numbers. There is also the normal list of church

continued.....

contacts. All of these people have agreed to be a point of contact for whoever and whatever the need. The person you phone may not be the one to fetch your prescription or bring in some shopping, but they will get on to someone who will and for your security let you know the name of the person who will call. Any of these people will gladly have a chat on the phone if you need to hear a friendly voice. There is already a list of people who will receive regular calls to make sure they are OK. You can be added to that list, just phone one of the numbers and ask.

And it isn't just phone calls. We can arrange to take you to a pre-arranged doctor's, dentist or hospital appointment if your usual lift isn't available. If you are able-bodied (and under 70) and have the time, please phone to offer your help and become part of the solution.

Here is an excerpt from a long letter sent out on 17th March by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York:

"We, the Church of Jesus Christ, with our sisters and brothers from other Christian churches, must be in the forefront of providing practical care and support for the most poor and the most vulnerable and we offer our services to all those who are beginning to think through how best to provide for those in need."

They finish their letter, "This is a defining moment for the Church of England. Are we truly a church for all, or just the church for ourselves? We urge you sisters and brothers to become a different sort of church in these coming months: hopeful and rooted in the offering of prayer and praise and overflowing in service to the world.

Please, therefore, join us in this great challenge; and pray for our government and nation, for each other, and especially those who work in our health and emergency services."

We at St John's echo this. Anyone in the community who would like to join in, please do phone one of the numbers and get your name on the list of helpers. This is one of life's great challenges. Let's rise to it!

continued.....

In June 2003 the English rugby team narrowly defeated New Zealand (the first time in 30 years) in the run-up to the World Cup. With two forwards off the field for 10 minutes during the second half, the remaining 6 English forwards held on against the full New Zealand pack. One of the heroic six was asked after the match what the captain, Martin Johnson, had said to inspire them. It was simply, "Shut up and push."

Keep pushing!

The Church of St John's in Essington

In addition to the names in the St John's Ministry Team, here are a couple of other numbers you can ring as a first point of contact;

Rev Rosemary Biddle	01922 419032
Sue Davenport	01922 495516
Sue Hinks-Caldwell	01922 516450

ST. JOHN'S MINISTRY TEAM

Wardens:	John Peterken	Children,	Mrs Janette Thomas
	Tel. 01902 723157	Youth &	Tel. 07828 213595
	Phil Thomas	Families:	E-mail:
	Tel. 01902 739745		janettethomas129@live.co.uk

Readers: Mrs Delphine Hipkiss
Tel. 01902 828064

Mrs Mary White
Tel. 01922 478853

CHURCH OFFICERS

Secretary: Mrs Hilary Southern
Tel. 01922 445265

Verger: Mrs Joy Burrows
Tel. 01922 407698

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH SOCIAL EVENTS

It is with regret, and in line with guidance given to all Parishes from the Church of England, we are postponing our forthcoming Social Activities.

The Concert by the Ashmore Park Choir scheduled for April has been cancelled, but will hopefully be re-arranged for the end of the year.

Our popular Barn Dance, planned for 16th October, will remain in our diary until further notice, as will our Christmas Fair and Christmas Tree Festival on 28th November.

We cannot predict what will happen regarding our Summer Festival on 4th July, but let us pray that by that time the current situation will have changed and we shall be able to celebrate together.

I had also planned to announce in this month's Magazine two additional events which we had organised, a Quiz Night on 5th June and an Evening of Music & Entertainment on 12th September. Again, who knows what the situation will be at that time, however we assure you that as soon as the restrictions are lifted we shall continue to plan our events so that once again the Church and the Community can enjoy fellowship and fun together.

Kath Grantham
(on behalf of St. John's Social Committee)

Remember, St. John's Church can be found on:

Twitter: @StEssington, @StTots

Facebook: St Johns Church Essington

Website: stjohnessington.co.uk

'Dear Friends,



What difficult days we have in front of us. Messy Tots has been paused for the time being, we have no idea when it will start back up, but the silver lining is that when it does, we will be in our lovely new building, clean and bright and ready for action!

Schools have now been directed to close, but I am hoping to be called in to support staff in the classroom to ensure essential workers can continue to go to work, knowing their children are being looked after. I have volunteered to care for those children whose parents are essential to keeping the system going.

I am prayerfully hoping that I remain fit and well and am able to continue joyfully supporting those who need me in the weeks ahead. Silver linings aren't always obvious, sometimes you have to dig deep for them, but I found mine in my calendar of cancelled services and commitments. I can nurture new friendships, help the people I have come to meet through Messy Tots, put my heart and soul into our school visits.

Relish the peace and settle yourselves, do not be afraid, when we ask things of God, He will provide, sometimes in very abstract ways, in the hands of people we don't expect.

Stay well and out of harm's way,
Every blessing,

**Janette
CYFAM**

Essington Guild of Friends

There will be no meeting on 6th April due to Coronavirus concerns.

**Roy Davis
Secretary.**



Due to the current situation with Coronavirus, and Government guidelines, we need to POSTPONE the 2020 ESSINGTON SHOW .

This is very unfortunate, especially for all those who have booked stalls, and our hard-working committee who have put so many things in place.

We are so sorry about this, but we are sure you will understand the reasons.

Hopefully we can look to reschedule this later, perhaps around the August Bank Holiday period. However, we will keep everyone informed and we hope that we can still put on a great show this year.

WATCH THIS SPACE!!

(I'm leaving these details in the Magazine for future reference, although of course there will be no Office Hours until further notice. Ed.)

Arrangements for weddings and baptisms at St. John's Church can be made during Office Hours at the Church on the first and third Saturdays of the month between 10.00 am and 11.30 am, to book dates or ask questions.

For enquiries regarding placing an entry in the Memorial Book in Church, please contact
Mrs Mavis Glennon, Tel. 01543 467675.

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Louise Tipler, Acting Clerk to the Council,
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NEWS FROM ESSINGTON WOOD

All Services and Events are suspended for the time being in the light of the Coronavirus situation.

A few years before Caedmon's death, a man named Bede was born in 673 AD. He lived near Monkwearmouth, near Sunderland. While still a young boy, both his parents died, and he was sent to the monastery of Wearmouth, in the present day county of Tyne and Wear. He proved to be a very clever boy and became a great scholar. He lived in the Jarrow area all his life, and devoted his work to teaching and writing. He transposed St. John's gospel into English. It needed a very clever person to do that, and it was sad that his parents never lived to see his wonderful achievements. Bede died in 735 AD at the age of 62.

J.M.L.

As many of you will know, a long standing member of our congregation, Walter McCourt, died in November. Wally was a real gentleman and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

And a bit of history.....

Essington Wood is the name given to the area between Bursnips Road and Broad Lane. There was a worshipping community in this area long before the first chapel was founded. It is thought possible that John Wesley himself may have visited or inspired the first groups of early Wesleyans, as it is known that he frequently visited Hilton Hall.

Early in the 19th century, house meetings were held at "The Croft" in Bursnips Road. Then in 1834 the first Essington Wood Chapel was founded - most likely on or very close to the present site, since the Plot is labelled "Chapel Piece" on the Tithe Map of 1839.

The land was owned by a Mr. Bradley, and since the Chapel was not on a Connexional Deed, it seems likely that the land remained in his possession during the early life of the Chapel and was transferred to the Trustees at a later date.

J.C.

Friends of Essington



Social Events - due to the recent news/developments, we have decided to cancel all future **Quizzes** until further notice.

2021 Friends of Essington Calendar

We have already started to receive pictures from local residents for next year's calendar. Keep up the good work and send your pictures of the local area to the following email address: foessington@gmail.com. Any pictures submitted will be assumed to be copyright free. We aim to place photos into a seasonal selection process at the end of the year.

Environmental Activities

- **(5th) Annual British Spring Clean**

In the light of the recent news/developments, we have decided to postpone the April Spring Clean. New date to be confirmed.

- **Spring Flowers**

We hope you are all enjoying the fantastic display of daffodils and bulbs around the village which we hope bring some much needed joy and colour to the village.

Fly Tipping

Fly tipping is a constant problem within the village and surrounding roads; please keep up the good work of reporting issues as they occur. Please use websites such as Love Clean Streets lovecleanstreets.com and Fix My Street fixmystreet.com. The Staffordshire County Council website has an effective reporting system and there is also a MyStaffs mobile app that can be used to report issues.

Become a Member?

We are always looking for new members and would welcome anyone who would like to spend a few hours a month helping to maintain and improve our village environment. If you are interested, contact us by email foessington@gmail.com, on twitter [@FoEssington](https://twitter.com/FoEssington) or via our website friendsofessington.com.

ESSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The following are EXTRACTS from DRAFT Minutes of the Full Essington Parish Council Meeting held on 16th March 2020, provided by the Council Offices. Anyone wishing to see a FULL copy of the DRAFT Minutes can do so by accessing the website: www.essingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk. If you wish to view the FULL APPROVED Minutes, these can be requested from the Clerk to the Parish Council at Essington Community Centre.

The Chairman, Cllr Steel, opened the meeting, welcoming all in attendance. He mentioned that, due to an influx of messages regarding the increase in Precept, he would like to call a public meeting as soon as possible. However, with current COVID19 guidelines continually changing, this may not be possible.

Public Participation

A member of the public spoke regarding, yet again, the disgraceful state of the roads within the Parish, potholes ever increasing and becoming more of a hazard, defending the Parish Council who are not responsible.

1. Apologies - Cllrs Pole, Mattison and Bradburn.

2. Declaration of Interest of Members - Cllr Fisher declared a pecuniary interest in item 13 and a non-pecuniary interest in item 14. Cllr Kelly also declared a pecuniary interest in item 13.

3. Crime Report - None.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 10th February 2020 - proposed by Cllr Curtis, seconded by Cllr Porter, all in favour that the Minutes are a true record.

5. Matters Arising from the Last Meeting

Cllr Fisher mentioned the letter from concerned resident follow-up. This will be actioned based on new correspondence.

6. County Councillors Report - None.

7. District Councillors Report

Cllr Fisher proposed to Council his idea to launch a Street Buddy Scheme to support elderly and vulnerable residents during the

COVID19 outbreak. All Councillors were in favour. Cllr Steel proposed that £250.00 be ratified to spend on Food Bank, seconded by Cllr Moore. All in favour. Cllr Steel proposed £50.00 expenditure for Street Buddy leaflets, seconded by Cllr Kelly. All in favour. Cllr Steel proposed £50.00 expenditure for leaflets explaining Precept increase, seconded by Cllr Kelly. All in favour.

8. Co-Option

David Lester was asked by the Chairman to join the Council at the table. He introduced himself and Councillors welcomed him.

9. Finance

a. Summary of this Month's Payments to be passed - Proposed by Cllr Curtis, seconded by Cllr Haddon, all in favour.

b. Bank Reconciliation - All in favour.

c. Tearooms Income & Expenditure

d. Ratify - Tearooms Redundancy Payment Amount - £11,000.00 (payment for non-contracted employee agreed) proposed by Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Steel, all in favour.

e. Terms & Conditions for Tearooms Licensing - After a lengthy discussion, it was resolved that an initial deposit of £1,500.00 would be required upon agreement of terms of any Licence agreement. Rent will need to be expressed within any proposal (not less than £1,500.00 per month) payable on the 1st of each month throughout the agreed Licence period.

f. Costs for Above - Further discussions to take place.

g. Ratify - NLW Increase of 6.2% to £8.72 per hour - All in favour.

h. Ratify - LGA NJC National Salary Award - Not been agreed.

i. Ratify Staff Pension Increase - No increase.

j. Ratify - Donation to Essington to Bloom - £450.00 proposed by Cllr Dodd, seconded by Cllr Curtis. All in favour.

10. Admin./Clerk Arrangements for 2020/21 - The Chairman proposed 2 x part-time Admin. Assistants, 17.5 hours per week, and a Qualified part-time Clerk, 5 hours per week. Seconded by Cllr Fisher and all in favour.

11. Essington Show Update - Plans for the Essington Show are going well. However, there is uncertainty surrounding all gatherings which are facing possible cancellation during the COVID19 outbreak.

12. Planning - Bovis Application - Bovis Homes have applied to reduce the size of some of the dwellings on the site in Hobnock Road. Parish Council Representatives to meet with Planning Officer. To be put on the next Management Meeting Agenda.

13. Brownshore Pre-School Update - Cllrs Fisher and Kelly left the room at 20.55 hours. The Chairman said that the proposed Lease had been received back from the Solicitor and the Council should be in receipt of it from the client soon.

14. Community Centre FRA Update - Cllr Dodd informed the Council of quotations for the FRA. £14,000.00, as per the quotation, was proposed by Cllr Dodd, seconded by Cllr Curtis. Cllr Fisher abstained due to having a non-pecuniary interest. All in favour.

15. Tearooms - Arrangements for Interim Period - No arrangements to open the Tearooms during interim period.

16. Date of the Next Meeting - Monday 20th April 2020.

Following the printing of the letter in last month's Magazine, regarding the state of Bognop Road, I did receive responses from Will Simkin at Essington Farm and from the Friends of Essington, and I am grateful for their comments.

I do hope that readers will not consider it inappropriate and insensitive to be going on about road conditions, when we are in the middle of a medical crisis, but I thought readers would like to be kept informed. We will emerge from this difficult time and life will get back to normal,

potholes, blocked drains and all!! This is Will's letter:

“A constructive letter of response and support regarding Bognop Road Essington

As both a resident and business owner of Bognop Road I read with interest the letter in last month's parish magazine. My family lives and works in the road and it is used by our staff and customers. I therefore sympathise with the writer and share his/her frustrations with many of the issues raised including the road being used as a rat run, the lack of maintenance and the frequent flooding.

The main issue, however, is the number of blocked road drains. Water running down the road has nowhere to go and ultimately causes flooding in two main places between Windmill Farm and Willenhall Rugby club. In the past the council would carry out routine cleaning out of the drains. This no longer takes place and floods and potholes are inevitable.

I feel obliged to correct the assertion that the farm owners have been warned about the mud on the road and that the warning has been ignored. As the farmer in question, I am unaware of any warning. We are mindful of our place in the community and try to keep the road as well as we can. We sweep the road if excessive mud is deposited, and regularly pick the litter. When possible, we access the field internally and avoid tractors using the road as much as we can. We are currently investigating the feasibility of creating a permanent track to keep tractor access to this field off the road.

Water runoff from this field is an issue, particularly after one of the wettest winters on record. The field is higher than the road and consequently, when saturated, inevitably water runs onto the road. This problem is then compounded by the blocked road drains. The field drainage system relies on the road drainage system. Blocked road drains result in blocked field drains which then in turn result in water-logged fields and water on the road.

continued.....

Water also bubbles up in places along the road indicating that the road drainage system is blocked and creating more potholes.

In short, a cleanout of the road drains could solve a lot of problems. Surely an easy to do, relatively cheap way of improving the road and making it safer?

**Will Simkin
Essington Farm."**

And from the Friends of Essington, I received:

"Regarding the letter about Bognop Road in the last edition of the Connection, we very much agree with the letter and in fact, in August 2017, the Friends of Essington sent a letter to various agencies entitled "Is this the worst road in Staffordshire?" and we also put it on our website. We, in the meantime, have done our best to improve various areas.

The Friends of Essington continuously report to the County Council and South Staffs Council pot holes, fly tipping, general litter etc. and also use the Fix my Street and Love Clean Streets websites. We also litter pick the areas when we can and we have managed (with permission) to block off the unofficial lay-by at the top of Windmill Hill and have planted it with wild flowers, general perennials and bulbs, having first of all removed a skip load of rubbish from the lay-by and the woods. We are attempting to do the same at the top of Old Hampton Lane. There is a bench towards the bottom of Windmill Hill which we repaired, cut back the hedgerow and we have planted the area several times. It looks especially good at this time of year with the bulbs we have planted.

At the bottom of Bognop Road we are in the process of, with the help of the District Council, dealing with unofficial fly posting regarding businesses etc. and, on the corner adjacent to the Topblock site, we have managed over a few years to clear this area and allow the gorse and broom to grow, screening the fence behind, also recently planting this area with bulbs."

Street Buddies

By the time you read this article, we hope to have delivered a leaflet to every household in the Essington Ward.

Street Buddies is an initiative run and organised by Essington Parish Council. By using Councillors in the first instance, and the Essington Parish Council name, we feel that this will give the scheme legitimacy. Apparently there have already been scams, and unfortunately criminals preying on the elderly and the vulnerable in different areas of the country.

The leaflets will explain in more detail how we envisage the scheme will operate and also how we intend to recruit adequate volunteers.

Chris Steel
on behalf of Essington Parish Council.

District & Parish Councillors

Warren Fisher & Christopher Steel

w.fisher@sstaffs.gov.uk Telephone No. 07908 853484
c.steel@sstaffs.gov.uk Telephone No. 07984 641361

Staffordshire County Councillors

Kath Perry Telephone No. 01922 412369

Bernard Williams Telephone No. 01922 410259,
e-mail bernard.williams@staffordshire.gov.uk

• TAKE • TIME •



ake time to think -
It is the source of power.

Take time to play -
It is the secret of perpetual youth

Take time to pray -
It is the greatest power on earth

Take time to love & be loved -
It is a God-given privilege.

ake time to be friendly -
It is the road to happiness.

Take time to laugh -
It is the music of the soul.

Take time to give -
It is too short a day to be selfish.

Take time to work -
It is the price of success.



I am grateful to Audrey Cox for sending me this poem. It seems quite apt for the current circumstances..... We may all, unexpectedly, have time to do those things we normally "don't have time for....."

Ed.



Essington Royal British Legion

Along with every other organisation, reflecting the current Covid-19 emergency, we're deferring the VE Day celebrations to VJ Day.

Tickets already bought will remain valid, but watch out for more details after Easter.



Thanks for your understanding.



Essington Wood Wives Club

Unfortunately, because of the current situation, the Club will not be meeting for the foreseeable future.

We will be letting everyone know when we are able to resume meetings.

VILLAGE INFORMATION

Doctors Libberton, Ram & Gulati

Essington Community Centre,
Essington Medical Centre,
Hobnock Road, WV11 2RF.
Tel: 01922 470130
Open: Mon. - Fri. 8 a.m. - 6.30 p.m.
Tuesday 8 a.m. - **7.30 p.m.**

Pharmacy

Hawthorne Chemist,
Essington Community Centre.
Tel: 01922 491249
Open times: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs
& Fri 8.30 am - 6.30 pm,
Sat 9 am - 1 pm

Essington Post Office

69 Hill Street, Essington.
Telephone: 01922 475379
Open Times:
Mon - Fri 6.30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 6.30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Registration of Births & Deaths

Register Office:
Cannock Chase Council Offices
Beecroft Road, Cannock,
WS11 1BG.
Tel: 0300 111 8001
Visits by appointment only.
Mon. to Fri. 9 a.m. — 5 p.m.

Playgroup

For details, ring: 01922 403255

Police contact number

Tel: 03001234455

Essington Medical Centre - Patient Participation Group

We are looking for new members.
If you are a patient and would like
to be involved, please contact the
surgery.

DEADLINE DATE FOR THE MAY 2020 MAGAZINE THURSDAY 23rd APRIL 2020

Material received after this date may be held over to the next month. Also, some material may have to be held over if there is not enough space available to print it. All letters, notices of thanks, articles, poems etc. must be accompanied by the full name and address of the sender. *Material received by the Editor without this information will not be published.*

Material for publication in the next issue, please forward to :

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WV11 2BB Tel. 01902 732886
E-mail: stjohns_mag1@btinternet.com

All Advertising matters to:

Mr S. Bate, 86 Hill St, Essington. Tel. 01922 477002
E-mail: stanbate@btinternet.com

If you would like to receive this monthly Magazine:

(£5 for 12 issues, delivered free of charge)
Contact Mrs Bea Hammond, Tel. 01922 478753
E-mail: beatrice@bhammond.co.uk

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