



# Betchworth Annual Parish Meeting

28<sup>th</sup> March 2022

# Agenda

1. Chairman's Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Surrey Police Report – Inspector Karen Coyne (Borough Commander)
4. Presentation by Guest Speaker – Karen Wilson, 'Tobin Tubes and Tit-Bits' – The Early Years of Betchworth Village Memorial Hall
5. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 2021
6. Chairman and Parish Councillors' Report 2021/22
7. Betchworth Parish Council Accounts 2021/22 (draft)
8. Presentation including reports from Village Organisations
9. Address by Surrey County Councillor – Cllr Helyn Clack (Chair of Surrey County Council)
10. Any other business (*please inform the Chairman before the start*)

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# Surrey Police Report

Inspector Karen Coyne Borough Commander





# Policing in Betchworth

Borough Commander  
Inspector Karen Coyne

# Policing Betchworth

PCSO Dave Sadler – [david.sadler@surrey.police.uk](mailto:david.sadler@surrey.police.uk)

PC Sue Gargini – [sue.gargini@surrey.police.uk](mailto:sue.gargini@surrey.police.uk)

PC Elliott Hartley – [elliott.hartley@surrey.police.uk](mailto:elliott.hartley@surrey.police.uk)

Sgt Dan Henderson – [dan.henderson@surrey.police.uk](mailto:dan.henderson@surrey.police.uk)

General (non urgent) enquiries –  
[MoleValley@surrey.police.uk](mailto:MoleValley@surrey.police.uk)



# Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

Area	Total ASB March 2020 - 21	Total ASB March 2021 - 22	Change
Mole Valley	1968	1145	-823 (-42%)
Mole Valley Rural East	338	148	-190 (-56%)
Betchworth	27	5	-22 (-81%)

In 2021-22 0.8% of all Mole Valley crimes occurred in Betchworth.

There were 3 burglaries in 2021-22.

The highest crime type was assault of which there were 6.

The 2021-22 ASB reports were:

1 complaint of rowdy and nuisance behaviour


4 reports of nuisance vehicles

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Mole Valley	1968	1145	-823 (-42%)
Mole Valley Rural East	338	148	-190 (-56%)
Betchworth	27	5	-22 (-81%)

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Guest  
Speaker

Karen Wilson  
'Tobin Tubes and Tit-Bits'  
The Early Years of Betchworth Village  
Memorial Hall

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# Minutes and Chairman Report

Approval and signing of 2020 Minutes  
Chairman and Councillors' Report



# Footpaths Report

- Betchworth has many miles of footpaths ranging from woodland and farmland to the North Downs Way. This is fantastic community resource which is used extensively by many parishioners.
- The Parish Council wants to improve access to our footpaths for as many parishioners as possible by replacing stiles with kissing gates. We have taken delivery of 12 kissing gates and have agreed a plan with the Betchworth Estate. The estate is going to install 4 of the gates but we will have to install the other 8. We will be getting help from volunteers provided by Mole Valley Ramblers and Reigate Ramblers. We will also need additional volunteers from Betchworth if we are to complete the installations by the start of summer.
- The Parish Council encourages walkers to respect both the countryside and the needs of the landowners. We support the Countryside Code which promotes a balance between everyone who is living in, working in or enjoying leisure pursuits in the countryside.
- The Parish Council want to help alleviate the huge problems caused to the Estate through the transmission from dog faeces of the Neospora parasite to cattle. This parasite often causes abortions and where the pregnancy continues the calf is already infected at birth. A number of cattle have had to be culled as a result. To encourage dog walkers to clear up we arranged through Mole Valley District Council to locate three new Dog Poo bins at the footpath exits from the Chimney Pots. These have been very well used and clearly the presence of the bins has encouraged dog walkers to clear up. We will look to add more bins where appropriate.
- We have a WhatsApp group of more than 20 “Footpath Champions”, who regularly walk our extensive network of footpaths reporting on broken stiles etc. Anyone who would like to join that group please contact Ed Winter ([edw.betchworthpc@gmail.com](mailto:edw.betchworthpc@gmail.com)) or the Cheryl Sexton, Parish Clerk ([Clerk@Betchworth-PC.gov.uk](mailto:Clerk@Betchworth-PC.gov.uk)).

# Highways Report

- Early last year we formed the group & set up liaison with senior highway engineers at SCC to promote road safety , highlight outstanding road repairs & raise areas of improvement for consideration.
- Liaison meetings have reviewed concerns in Betchworth & the following results have been forthcoming on the most significant issues :-
- Remedy of flooding at junction of Station Road /A25 & we continue to press for drainage renewal to alleviate flooding elsewhere on Station Road.
- Representations made on the state of Betchworth Bridge. Recent repairs undertaken & monitoring of improved signage for single road width over bridge. Separate pedestrian bridge is desirable but unlikely to proceed on cost grounds.
- Embankment retaining boards along The Street had not been addressed for some time by Clarion Housing . A site meeting took place at which the specification for re-instatement was reviewed & work followed promptly .
- We are in discussion with SCC on gateway signs on Pebblehill & the A25 to welcome drivers to the Parish.

/contd.

# Highways Report / contd.

- Speed monitoring was carried out on Snowerhill Road & Old Reigate Road resulting in approval to reduce the latter to a 30mph limit throughout. Cost awaited for implementation . Wellhouse Lane will be monitored in the near future particularly in view of the new housing development.
- In the absence of any police speed monitoring on rural roads enforcement on road safety grounds is important. We are endeavouring to reform a Speedwatch Group to assist in that direction. Volunteers would be welcome & please provide your details to our Clerk Cheryl. A short Police training course is required on use of equipment. Participation should not be too onerous if there are enough volunteers to carry out this worthwhile duty.
- Lastly we reported the dangerous wall structure at Firs Development in The Street which resulted in MVDC Structural Engineer supporting our safety concerns & required the wall to be demolished. District Councillor Simon Budd also succeeded in obtaining a wider footpath in conjunction with the Developer. We remain concerned at the impact that removal of mature trees has had on the street scene & have supported parishioners who have made representations to MVDC Planners in relation to replanting to adequate standards.

# Betchworth Parish Council Accounts 2021/22 (Draft)

DRAFT as at 22 March

BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2021/22

2020/21		2021/22
<b>INCOME</b>		
£		£
13621	Precept	13621.00
2843	Council Tax Support Grant & Concurrent Grant	2899.00
20.96	Bank Interest	5.41
31205	Burials	6140.00
210	Allotments	210.00
0	Miscellaneous	0.00
10261.5	Other Grants	61344.12
58161.46	SUBTOTAL	84219.53
156.83	VAT	2388.43
<u>58318.29</u>		<u>86607.96</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
£		£
13135.17	General Administration inc subscriptions	16712.61
248.32	S137	1289.00
4653.20	Burial Ground	5545.55
3945.6	Parks & Open Spaces	4276.17
200.00	Communication	0.00
	Capital Works:	
2450	Burialground Soil Disposal	
1644.50	Fingerpost and footpath	241.50
818.39	Maps in bus stops	0.00
1209.99	Birdbox Project - COVID	0.00
	Rewilding - COVID	460.00
	Donation to church - COVID	1740.00
	Kissing Gates - COVID	4488.00
	Kissing Gates - CIL	408.00
	Re-Betchworth Grants	798.06
	Noticeboards	5213.00
28305.17	SUBTOTAL	13348.56
	Subtotal of Exp	27823.33
1167.99	VAT	2713.92
<u>29473.16</u>		<u>43885.81</u>
28845.13	Excess of Income over Expenditure	42722.15

# Organisational Reports

- The Betchworth Operatic & Dramatic Society
- Betchworth Parish Magazine
- Betchworth Village Hall
- Barley Mow Residents Association
- Betchworth Burial Ground
- Brockham Green Horticultural Society
- Betchworth & Buckland Society
- Betchworth United Charities
- Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society
- The Hamilton Room
- Re-Betchworth
- The Arts Society, Betchworth
- The Poland Trust
- The Goulburn Green Tennis Tournament
- Pebblecombe WI
- St Michaels Bellringers
- JJ Franks
- The Betchworth & Buckland Childrens Nursery
- Betchworth Archives
- FABB
- The North Downs Primary School
- St Michaels Church

# Betchworth Operatic & Dramatic Society

- Due to various lockdowns and continued uncertainty, 2021 was another very quiet year for BODS, but we were not entirely silent.
- With in person gatherings still restricted, Zoom came into its own again in March when another of our very talented members, Victoria Hodges, ran a further set of online workshops. This time it was called Breathe In and Sing Out and as it suggests focused on improving our singing techniques by thinking about breath. With aspects of mindfulness and yoga it was very interesting and lots of fun. The end-product this time was a recording of an original arrangement of Bette Midler's The Rose. Once again recorded individually and cut together to form a fully harmonised wonderful rendition.
- Our first face to face gathering was a Covid secure 'bring your own' garden party. Bods do not stay silent for long and so it included a sing-a-long of classic old time music hall songs led by our very own MD, Ian Stone. Much fun was had picnicking, although we had to have immense faith in the weather forecasters who assured us the persistent rain would stop at 6pm! Thankfully, it did, and our stoic membership wrapped up warm and the event went ahead.
- November saw us return finally to our much beloved stage in Betchworth Village Memorial Hall when we performed our All-Time Music Hall compiled by Julie Weston and Ian Stone. Deliberately planned to be covid-disruption proof it was a blend of individual numbers with a few chorus pieces to top and tail, including a live version of our version of The Rose. We all managed to avoid illness, we had a full cast for two performances and a hugely appreciative audience who joined in with great gusto. BODS were back!
- Following the success of the November show we are now deep into rehearsals for our May production, *The Government Inspector*, to be performed here in the hall. Delayed from its original date of May 2020 it will run from Weds 11<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022. So far all is going well

# Betchworth Parish Magazine

- There has been a Parish Magazine in Betchworth since 1892! Beautifully bound copies of all these magazines can be viewed in the Hamilton Room. Parishioners and their helpers have always run the collating of articles, editing and publishing the magazine on a voluntary basis. Printing has always been done by an outside firm.
- The magazine's aim is to give information to and about the whole village. As well as Church matters we report on village activities such as the Parish Council, WI, North Downs Primary School and the Betchworth and Buckland Society. It also embraces any local, non- political news, events and activities that it is felt might be of interest to the readers. The magazine is delivered to every house in the village by an invaluable team of 32 people headed by Susie Redburn. We are always delighted to receive articles, including photos if relevant, which would be of interest to parishioners for possible inclusion in the magazine. If anyone has any good ideas for what might be included which would be of interest, please let us know. Several copies have now been complemented by colour photographs.
- Articles for the magazine now arrive exclusively by email to [betchworthmag@hotmail.com](mailto:betchworthmag@hotmail.com). We also will publish appropriate small ads from parishioners at a nominal cost for a limited number of issues, proceeds going to church funds. There is still a waiting list for commercial advertisers, which is always a good thing.
- Our editors, Ros Rokison, Sian Winter and Tim Warren have the task of collating, editing and sometimes retyping all the various articles, putting everything into the correct format and font. The articles are then numbered in the correct appropriate order before sending them to the Desk Top Publishers. Their job is to put them all into the magazine template. This is a lengthy process as articles have to fit exactly into the correct number of pages and we try where possible not split articles over the page. This work is done by Ros Rokison, Alison Higgins, and John Scotcher. The magazine continues to be very professional in its construction and production.
- If anyone is interested in joining the team we would be delighted to hear from you. We would be particularly interested to hear from anyone who would like to join the team of desktop publishers. The more people involved in the production of the magazine the easier it is for everyone involved. Training will be given if anyone is interested in joining us. In fact if we had a few more volunteers, our hard working team might even be able to take the odd holiday now and then.

# Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall

- As with many other community buildings, this last year has presented many challenges to our normal way of working. Like many other village buildings, income for the hall from hirers dried up due to the level of Covid transmissions and subsequent restrictions imposed by the government.
- This meant that our cleaning regime at the hall had to be stepped up significantly, when the hall was being used and I want to say particular thanks to Jean and Trevor Hurman who diligently sanitised the hall after every hiring. This cleaning protocol was intense and significantly disrupted their daily lives until Covid restrictions were relaxed further later in the year when we were able to reduce the necessity to clean the hall daily.
- Fortunately matters improved after the government reduced the rules in July 2021 and we were able to begin the process of encouraging regular hirers back to the hall via a discounted hire rate for an initial period. This has helped to restore hirers' confidence to return and to book the hall and we can now report that bookings are back to pre-Covid levels.
- Our finances are now back on track, however, the loss of income over the two year Covid period has been significant, but the hall committee is determined to move on from this and is now focussed on a range of initiatives to ensure the hall continues to be a valuable asset for the village.
- For more than 20 years, the bookings of the hall have been managed brilliantly by Jean Hurman and Jean has now decided to step down from this role, although she will remain on the committee. Much of the success of the hall over the last 20 years has been down to Jean's efforts at fitting in all the bookings, which really has been a labour of love. I know we all realise how difficult it is to get volunteers these days and unfortunately, we have spectacularly failed to get anyone to fill Jean's shoes.

# Betchworth Village War Memorial Hall / Contd.

- This has forced us to look at alternatives and we are in the middle of a three-month trial with the online booking service operated by Hallmaster who handle the bookings for over 900 hall and community buildings throughout the UK. Whilst it is early days, the reaction to the trial from our regular hirers has been positive and we hopefully expect to be moving to this system permanently.
- Having survived the rigours of dealing with BT Openworld, hirers are now able to access the internet at the hall allowing us to offer greater connectivity for Zoom meetings as well as accessing valuable content for parties, presentations and quiz nights etc. We will also be reviewing our sound set-up which is now around 20 years old and which to sound purists out there is vintage!
- More recently, we have commissioned a report to identify where we can best make savings on our electricity and gas costs and to make the building more energy- efficient. With energy prices going through the roof, the committee believe it is right to see where savings can be made through better insulation and to ensure that the building is fit for purpose for future generations in the village to enjoy. Our hall is not a modern building and no surprises for guessing that better insulation of the roof, floor and walls are the areas to prioritise. The next stage is to meet with insulation installers to get the full financial picture of making these changes. All of this though will be expensive, so we will only be looking at those areas that can pay back in the relative short term. Needless to say, we will be on the lookout for any opportunities to access grant money to mitigate these costs.
- So, all in all, I'd say 2021 was a year which imposed some significant financial challenges to the hall finances, but we are determined to move forward and continue to improve the hall and future-proof it for the village of Betchworth. It's a great village and it deserves a great village hall.

# Barley Mow Court Residents Association

- It has now been 8 years since the entrance to the lorry yard that was shared with the Barleymow Court entrance was closed. We still maintain a good relationship with the Moores but are still waiting for them to plant shrubs to mask the old entrance.
- Even though the Moores sign was removed from the old entrance a few years ago we still get the occasional commercial vehicle driving into the road. The postcode was changed to RH3 7HB which also covers the Arkle Manor and the cottages adjacent to the pub so hopefully in time all commercial vehicles for Moores should stop coming into our road.
- There is a fallen tree on the public footpath that runs from behind us up to the A25. It has been reported to the council.
- Otherwise it has been a very quiet year for us.



# Betchworth Burial Ground

- Our peaceful Burial Ground always looks attractive but is even better at this time of year when the grass has been cut for the first time and the spring flowers start to appear. I am happy to report that 2021 has been a relatively quiet year for the Burial Ground now the re-grassing of the graves has been largely completed. There were 6 burials and just 3 interments of ashes this year, which is back to the usual annual level, following the abnormal numbers reached in 2020. It is not clear whether this is a consequence of the increased charges for non-residents or just a natural return to normal now that Covid is a less worrying disease.
- Burial charges have been routinely increased again this year and the Council is aware that the rates for Betchworth and Brockham residents remain well below the going rate locally. It is planned that these will be gradually brought into line over the next 2 or 3 years.
- The main change in the Burial Ground this year was the completion of the re-grassing project and no other significant changes have taken place. However, I must tell you that in October I relinquished the job of Burial Ground Caretaker, and this role is now undertaken by our new Clerk, who is rapidly becoming expert in Burial procedures.

# Brockham Green Horticultural Society

- All thoughts of a Covid-free life disappeared in 2021. Added to the disappointment was the lack of consistent, warm and sunny summer days. Gardens and allotments were struck by insects and mice. Some crops flourished and others sadly were not plentiful.
- Despite another rainy day, the May Plant Sale went ahead on Brockham Green. In addition to the excellent range of plants on display, it was an enjoyable outdoor social event which raised in excess of £500.
- Our Annual Horticultural Show was held in Brockham Village Hall In September. Once again there was a wonderful section of vegetables, cakes and crafts to be viewed. It was noted that there was an increase in novice entrants. The children's entries increased particularly supported by Northdowns School and Brockham Brownies.
- September saw the start up of the Northdowns Allotment Club on Fridays after school. Fifteen children joined the group and we have a waiting list. We welcomed their enthusiasm for planting, growing and harvesting. I am pleased to say that in April the club will resume for your Spring/Summer programme.
- Our November 2021 AGM focused on future plans which we have begun to put into action. We have organised two talks soon. In March, Paul Ritchie will speak on "Where the Wild Things Are". The second talk is in April - by Claire Bryant which will focus on arranging Spring flowers. Another project we are now involved in is with the Poland Trust. We met up with representatives of this group to discuss ways we can be part of the Poland Meadows landscaping. There were a range of exciting plans to consider when the houses are completed. We are also hoping to apply to the Woodland Trust for free trees which become available in November and can be distributed in the three villages that our society covers.
- Our Plant Sale is on Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> from 10-12 on Brockham Green with all our usual offerings and more!
- Hopefully Spring is here to stay!

# Betchworth & Buckland Society

- The Betchworth & Buckland Society was formed over 60 years ago, in order to protect the natural and built environment in the two villages, provide financial support & advice for projects that enhance village life, encourage interest in local history, culture and character and promote social events, bringing together residents and to raise funds. The Society's objectives also include monitoring actual or proposed changes around the locality and giving members a voice.
- Membership currently stands at approximately 100 households and costs £10 per household per annum.
- In 2021, we held two events. The first, a virtual Wine Tasting in March run by Vineking in Reigate, which was received very favourably by all attendees and the second a photography competition which was thrown open to all residents of our two villages. With the impact of Covid 19, events in the second half of the year were unfortunately cancelled.
- However, at the start of 2022, a reinvigorated new Committee has been established with a membership of eleven.
- The year has got off to a good start, with a very successful Quiz Night held in late January. This was jointly organised with Re Betchworth and was extremely well supported, attracting over 100 enthusiastic attendees who enjoyed the intellectual challenge, together with a 'street food' meal and the opportunity to get back to normal.

CONTD/

# Betchworth & Buckland Society / Contd.

- Our annual Photographic Competition is currently running, which is open to all residents of our villages, but this year with two separate categories - Adults & Children under 14. The Theme this year is 'New Beginnings' & the photographs should be village oriented, capturing what people feel is special about our villages coming into Spring.
- As part of the refreshing of our Society, the Committee arranged a short survey of the members on the future of the Society. They generally confirmed that the aims of the Society remain relevant & there was continued interest in the types of events & activities provided (e.g. Annual Quiz Night, Summer BBQ, Christmas Dinner, Wine Tasting etc.). Useful feedback and ideas were also given on enhancing what the Society can offer the Community.
- The Society has its AGM on Monday 16 May, where we will be having an informative talk by Joosje Hamilton & Martin Clipperton entitled 'The Betchworth Estate & Farm' followed by complimentary cheese & wine.
- Looking further ahead, and by popular demand, we will be repeating our annual BBQ on the afternoon of 10 July and are looking forward to our wine tasting event in the autumn.
- On a broader front, the Society continued to contribute to the ongoing improvements to the local country side having financed the purchase of two kissing gates in Buckland and two in Betchworth in 2020/21. We are looking for similar opportunities for that kind of improvement in the next year.
- This is also an opportunity to thank the Committee for their continued efforts and our members for their loyalty in sticking with us through this pandemic as, without them, our work could not continue.

# Betchworth United Charities


- Betchworth United Charities receives income from The Henry Smith Charity and makes grants to local people living in the old ecclesiastical Parish of Betchworth which now includes the Parish of Brockham. The incumbents of both Betchworth and Brockham are Trustees as well as representatives of the Parish Councils and five other co-opted members. Grants are made to individual people and to local organisations because of need, hardship or distress. BUC has made a number of individual grants over the last year and also to North Downs Primary School Sensory Garden, Broome Park and Old Wall Care Homes and to St Michael's Betchworth to help put a disability hand rail to the Ringing Chamber and to Christ Church Brockham.
- The Trustees usually meet three times a year and are regulated by The Charity Commission. Applications for grants maybe made to The Clerk to the Trustees, Betchworth United Charities 15 Nutwood Avenue, Brockham , Betchworth RH3 7LT

# Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society

- In April, after the Leith Hill festival was cancelled for the second year we returned to Zoom rehearsals for the summer term; not much fun but better than nothing and our excellent conductor Jamie Sperling and accompanist Anna Tetsuya kept us going! The last two rehearsals we managed to have in my garden; quite tricky to hear each other but good to sing together again.
- We returned to BVH in September 2021, live, with social distancing and masks but the Covid situation gradually improved and in December we held our usual carol concert in St. Michael's, Betchworth with a good turn out from family and friends. We raised £500 for our chosen charity, Renewed Hope, a charity for the homeless.
- In January we started rehearsing for the Leith Hill Music Festival. We are singing Bob Chilcott's 'A Little Jazz Mass', songs from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess and John Rutter's 'Feel the Spirit' with the choirs of Beare Green and Newdigate, Holmbury St. Mary, Bookham, Horsley and Mickleham. The concert is on Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup> and promises to be an uplifting occasion.
- For the summer we are planning a concert with Bookham Choral Society in St. Paul's Church Dorking.
- Our Wednesday evening rehearsals at Betchworth Village Hall are very enjoyable. We don't audition and always welcome new singers so please come and join us.

# Hamilton Room

- Since the re-opening of the Hamilton Room in May 2021 in line with Government Guidelines and in view of having to impose our own Guidelines for Hall Users, as recommended, I am very pleased to report that over the following months most of the regular hall users felt able to return to hire this facility. We therefore welcomed back groups including beaders, singers and the WI. This year 2022 has seen an increase in one off hires for a variety of parties. Unfortunately well being groups have not returned – possibly as they find continuing via zoom to be more convenient and we hope that community and church groups will be able to re-commence their meetings.
- The Hall is particularly useful when there are church functions and concerts or community events eg apple tree pruning on the orchard adjacent to Goulburn Green and the ever popular Drop in Teas on held on the last Wednesday of the month is finally returning to provide a convivial get together with tea and cake.
- The archives team continue to meet once a week in the Meg Ryan Room and Hall to keep village records up to date and provide very interesting exhibitions on local history.
- The Hamilton Room continues to provide a local, comfortable and affordable facility for the community and beyond which can be hired for a few hours or on a regular basis of weekly etc. The Hall is run by a group of volunteers and thanks must go to the Hamilton Estate for providing this facility for general use and for housing village archives.



Our Vision for the village is for an engaged community where everyone strives to live each day in ways that respect and care for the natural environment, and enhances the health and well being of the people, animals and plants that live here.

# Achievements

- Steering group of 7
- Website
- Wildflower strip
- Bird boxes
- Hedgehog houses
- Apple tree pruning workshop
- Zoom talks; Heat pumps, Soil association
- Village quiz with B&B society
- Composting offers

# Plans

- Replanting on village green and planting of 70 trees for the Jubilee
- Building and extending community involvement
- Continue to involve expert input
- Rewilding
- Forest school project
- Community apple juicing event
- Mapping and measuring habitat types
- Inroads into recycling and waste reduction
- Encourage number of ponds and storing and reusing of rain water

# The Arts Society, Betchworth

- The Arts Society Betchworth meets monthly for lectures at Betchworth Village Memorial Hall on a Monday afternoon at 2.30 o'clock
  - During the Coronavirus pandemic lectures were held via Zoom, but from April 2022 lectures will be held in the Memorial Hall as previously.
- Our lectures cover a wide range of subjects – recent topics have included: -
  - Garden Design in Oxfordshire
  - Treasures of the fan museum
  - Caravaggio
- Membership of our society costs just £40 for a year for which you can attend 10 excellent lectures plus the opportunity of going on day trips to a diverse range of destinations.
- We also hold 'special interest days' where we have lectures throughout the day plus lunch. Our last Special Interest Event was on Chinese Imperial Costume
- In recent years we have organised short visits to the UK and Europe – in 2019 a group of members went on a five day visit to Vienna
- More information (including information on how to join our society) can be found on our website: -  
[The Arts Society Betchworth](https://www.theartsocietybetchworth.co.uk/)

# The Poland Trust

- The Poland Trusts development at Poland Meadow ( which is in Betchworth Parish ) is progressing well. We started work in May 2021 and whilst we have had some delays due to shortage of materials we hope to have the first residents in the 1 bed flats moved in during June.
- The development comprises 17 affordable homes 12 of which will be managed as Almshouses with a weekly maintenance contribution equivalent to 60% of open market rents. The other 5 are self build homes, with the first structures due to commence erection during March and where the Trust has sold plots to raise funds for the construction of the 12 Almshouses. The self build homes are subject to a covenant that they can never be sold for more than 75% of their open market value.
- The Almshouses are a mix of sizes with 4 x 1 bed flats ( in the smaller building ) and 2 x 1 bed bungalows , 5 x 2 bed houses and 1 x 3 bed house ( in the larger building ). All the Almshouse residents will be nominated by MVDC ( who have grant aided the development ) from their housing register and the Almshouses will be managed by The Poland Trust.

Contd/

# The Poland Trust /Contd

- All 17 homes can in perpetuity only ever be occupied by people who satisfy a local connection test with equal preference being given to those with a connection to Betchworth and Brockham and if necessary then Buckland and Leigh. The local connection criteria that potential residents must satisfy are either:-
  1. They have lived in the village for last 5 years.
  2. They have worked at least 16 hours a week in the village for the last 5 years
  3. They were bought up in the village for at least 10 years
  4. They have family living in the village and there are compelling reasons on grounds of hardship why they should live in the village.
- The 12 Almshouses will be completed by the end of June and the 5 self builds by the end of this year.
- At Poland House in Kiln Lane we have had 2 new residents during the last 12 months. Also The Poland Trust has made several payments to local residents in need or hardship during that period. If anyone does know of someone needing help please get in touch with The Trust.

# Betchworth Tennis Tournament 2021

- 2020 No tournament due to Covid
- 2021 Knock Out Round. A big welcome to some new tennis players.  
Played in boiling heat. Close matches, exciting rallies and the occasional swim to cool off.  
NO ploughmans Lunch Each group organised their own lunches , with lots of iced water, beer, and Pimms.
- BBQ Terrible forecast but no rain in the Hardy's garden.  
Delicious food and drink and the odd bop made a very successful evening.
- Finals Another terrible forecast.  
Tennis and tea cancelled.  
No winners of the Goulburn Cup this year  
Good decision as at 2.30 the rain clouds burst.  
£1000 was sent to The Kings College Hospital Charity.
- Fingers crossed for 2022 Tennis Tournament.

# Pebblecoombe WI

- Pebblecoombe WI, like many organisations was hit badly by the lock-down introduced in January 2021, closing the Hamilton Room and later introducing limited interaction indoors. Having closed down in March 2020, we were unable to hold meetings, even via the internet, as few of our Members are comfortable on line. However, as the summer days unfolded, we did manage to arrange a garden picnic to introduce a new member, who had been extremely patient, having contacted us in April 2020. By September the Hamilton Room reopened and we were again face to face enjoying an evening hearing of the exploits of a Nanny.
- Have you ever heard of the WASBIES ? We learnt of the activities of the Women's Auxiliary Services in Burma from a local speaker, whose Aunt provided home comforts in the way of tea, cakes and the few necessities (razor blades and bootlaces), served from a mobile canteen, to the members of the 14<sup>th</sup> & 36<sup>th</sup> Divisions of the Allied Forces in front-line of Burma in 1944 & 45. It made our lock-down seem easy.
- November saw the Committee re-elected and a chance to make Christmas Cards and in December we surprised ourselves with limited musical ability to sing Carols, and prepare for the festivities.
- Our hope for 2022 is that we will again be able to hold monthly meetings, with interesting speakers, and providing a friendly meeting place for anyone able to come to Pebblecoombe WI, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday each month at 7.45pm in the Hamilton Room.

# St Michaels Bellringers

- We were delighted to be able to recommence ringing at St Michael's in May when Covid distancing regulations were relaxed. Ventilation of the belfry was limited and doors and windows were duly kept open and the ringers all undertook to wear masks and to take a lateral flow test shortly before entering the tower. We have missed the attendance of a few of our regular helpers but have happily been able to continue ringing on this basis for the rest of the year and have even managed to add a learner to the band.
- We look forward in 2022 to ringing for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to holding an outing once again.



# JJ Franks

- 2021 was a busy year at our Betchworth site with us trying to complete the works at the Common Field. We managed to get the infilling completed and seeded the resultant landform. The grass has taken well and will be managed/ topped during the summer.
- The Tunnel was infilled at great cost using concrete to a specification agreed and overseen by Surrey County Council.
- The fence around the Common field area that we worked will stay in place for a couple of years while we continue to manage the grass and land prior to it being handed back to the Betchworth Estate. At that time, we will also reinstate the original route of the Bridleway/footpath.
- On the land, we refer to as the Telex field we are currently completing the infilling. We aim to have finished this summer with the soils being replaced by the autumn. Again, the area will then be seeded to a grass lay and managed. We are pleased to report that we completed the works in the Common Field ahead of the original permitted timetable and the same will be the case for the remainder of the site.
- We will then retract back into our depot access from the Reigate Road and continue with our waste management business.
- During 2022 we will be drilling boreholes into the land both in the western side of the Common field and on the Telex land, as required by the Environment Agency, for ongoing monitoring purposes. As we have never picked up any issues with the site boreholes, we are hopeful that in the next 3 – 4 years we will be able to relinquish the Waste Management Licence and remove the boreholes – which are not an attractive addition to the landscape.
- As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions and we will be happy to provide answers and explanations.

# The Betchworth & Childrens Nursery

- Thanks to a dedicated staff supported by a management committee and supportive parents, the nursery has managed to flourish despite the pandemic.
- Afternoon sessions are full and morning sessions have some availability.
- The Nursery has good links with the parish churches with welcome visits from Revd Anna and regular visits to the church at festival times for stories and singing. Hopefully they will be able to visit at Easter time.
- The entrance is now on to the footpath behind the school. They have a lovely outdoor play area and easy access to walks around Betchworth.

# Betchworth Archives

- We returned to work in the Archives at the end of May 2021, after a Covid-19 enforced absence of fourteen months. We immediately started sorting and cataloguing the vast amount of correspondence and information which we had received from the Betchworth Quarry Action Group prior to the pandemic. Alongside this we have continued to catalogue other photographs and documents. Jane Lilley from Newdigate is continuing to translate the Court Rolls of the Manor of East Betchworth from Latin, which we have on digital photographs.
- Email enquiries came in during lockdown some of which we were able to respond to immediately and others once we had access to the Archives.
- Tony Hines from Brockham is a regular visitor who comes to discuss matters historical, share his own research, and, flatteringly, ask for advice! We were unable to continue our churchyard survey last year, recording the graves and memorials with written descriptions and photographs, but hope to re-start this summer, with Tony taking the photographs.
- Thanks to the Parish Council's very generous funding of a new laptop, we will be able start the long term project of scanning photographs and documents for digital storage. We are planning to set up our own website and these will then go onto the website.
- Plans are in place for an exhibition next Spring, after a two year gap, and we are continuing our research for that.
- We work in the Archives, in the Hamilton Room, every Tuesday and visitors are welcome, but do email first in case we are elsewhere

# FABB (Family activities for Betchworth & Buckland)

As with most other societies , the last two years have been very difficult in terms of running events. However , with an increasing number of new families joining our villages, the community role for FABB as a village 'hub' and network of mums remains important given the children currently attend more than ten different school outside the vilages.

## **Christmas Party December 2021**

However, we did manage to go ahead with our annual Christmas Party in December at The Village Hall, which was open this year for the first time, meaning we could cater for more than the 30 children limited by The Reading Room.

For the first time ever, we managed to sell out of 50 tickets and had a waiting list without even advertising due to the success of both the ' Community WhatsApp Group' and the Mums WhatsApp Group ( essentially a 'database' of new families arriving in the village).

Although numbers were much reduced on the day due to worries about family Christmas celebrations and outbreaks of covid , 20 children enjoyed pizza and a 'Gameshow Disco' hosted by Mr Marvel Entertainment

## **2022 Plans**

As usual , we are planning to join forces with **The B&B Society** to offer some children's entertainment before the annual BBQ on 10th July. This year we are hoping to offer some magic tuition , followed by some tabletop magic at the BBQ

/contd

# FABB (Family activities for Betchworth & Buckland) /contd

## **Summer Holidays**

Given the number of new families in the village, the summer holidays will present an opportunity to schedule some smaller gatherings : a picnic, treasure hunt, some bushcraft skills, some crafts and maybe some ball skills.

## **Thanks**

Our ongoing thanks go to The Betchworth Parish Council for their kind donation towards funding these events and keeping costs accessible for even larger families and to meet the costs of liability insurance for each event.

Finally, I would like to thank the growing number of mums on our committee and local helpers for their hard work in keeping FABB going for another year.

## **Chairman Role**

As I have been doing this role for seven years and both my children are now in senior school, I have decided to step down. I fully intended to remain on the unofficial FABB committee , but efforts to find someone to take up the leadership of the group have not yet been successful.

# The North Downs Primary School

- This year has once again been challenging for us North Downs School as, like everyone, we have faced significant difficulties over the past months with a high percentage of pupils and a large number of staff impacted by absence due to COVID. However, it is wonderful that after two long years, we are edging towards life without restrictions, although we are mindful that this elicits different responses in those around us. We continue to take each day as it comes, as the numbers of cases in school rise and fall, continuing to base our decisions on what we can and cannot do in order to keep everyone as safe possible.
- During 2020 and 2021, work was undertaken to replace all of the windows and doors at the Betchworth site, whilst very much maintaining the character of the building. In part, I am sure, to how lovely our building looked, we were approached by ITV asking if North Downs could be used to feature as the village school in the remake of 'The Larkins'. Filming took place on Good Friday 2021 and we were all thrilled by how lovely the school looked when the programme aired. There is further maintenance work which still needs to be undertaken, to repoint the chimneys, and this will occur during the school summer holidays this year.

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# The North Downs Primary School / Contd.

- In June 2021 a National Leader of Education visited the Betchworth site, for the purposes of undertaking a monitoring visit on behalf of Surrey. The experience was a very positive one. Our visitor was particularly keen to hear what strategies we had put into place as a school, to unite the three sites, create a strong sense of collaboration and unity and develop links with the wider community. This was identified this as an area of expertise for our school. Some smaller schools are amalgamating in order to secure their long-term sustainability and we were asked if we would be willing to share our experiences and successes, in order to potentially support some of these schools.
- As part of that visit we obviously made clear the huge role that BERT, Buckland United Trust, the Poland Trust and our Parish Councils have played in the supporting the school. Together, our overriding aim continues to be to provide the best possible support and provision for everyone in our school community. We look forward, over the coming months, to working with the Parish Council to update our School Travel Plan with the aim of exploring what traffic calming options would be viable in order to reduce the speed on The Street, ensuring that both pedestrians and drivers are protected on this stretch of road. Hopefully we will be reporting back on this at next year's AGM!

# St Michaels Church


- Along with everyone, 2021 was another difficult year. However, there is no point in boring you with the challenges of Covid so let's start with the positives:
- Rev Anna has developed online church services which continue to be available.
- A phone in service was established to provide services to those unable to cope with Zoom
- Our more relaxed service "Connect at 4" returned and proves to be popular for those seeking an alternative to our other more traditional services.
- The foodbank collections continued throughout, and a baking rota was started to make a more personal contribution to the people that Anna visits personally.
- A book swap scheme was established in the church.
- And we established The Pillars of St Michael's, a friend's group to support the fabric of the church.
- I should also like to record two significant changes in 2021
  - Services now happily alternate between St Michael's, Betchworth and St Mary's, Buckland, to reflect our current limited clergy resource.
  - Our verger Graham Williams has retired after decades of magnificent service which has left a huge gap in the church and in the smooth running of so many church activities. I should like to record here our grateful thanks for all his patience and diligence for so many years.

# St Michaels Church / Contd.

- Now I come to the Challenges for the year ahead.
- The Rev Anna is under tremendous time pressure as we have gone from a full-time to a part time priest. This change is simply because in these hard-pressed times we were unable to provide the money to pay for a full-time cleric.
- We have been fortunate for the last few years to have the services of the supposedly retired Rev David Eaton, but he is no longer able to do so much.
- Our choir is elderly and is diminishing as people age and are sadly no longer with us. If you like to sing, please do come along.
- Church attendance has dropped during Covid and there are fewer people volunteering to take on active roles, so the burden lands on a smaller number of people who can take up the slack.
- Our roof and guttering systems are in disrepair and urgently need attention to the tune of some £90,000

So, what about the future?

- Like everyone we are hoping to be shot of Covid and its restrictions, and to welcome back all those who have been cautiously staying away for so long. Like all churches and other organisations, we need your enthusiastic support. Your village church will only be there for those important lifetime events if you sustain and support it regularly. We have plans to create level access to the church, and we intend to use the church for more events, but first we must urgently repair the fabric. Perhaps this is wishful thinking, but wouldn't it be lovely to have a full church other than for another memorial service. Here's hoping you will visit St Michael's at Easter, or perhaps join us to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup>.
- I shall be there; will you?

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# Address by Surrey County Councillor

- Councillor Helyn Clack (Chair of Surrey County Council)





Any Other  
Business