

# The Nightingale Times Summer 2020 Edition



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## Message from the Chair - Councillor Gaye Chesterton-Kay

It seems such a long time since our last Newsletter and so much has happened in the interim. The Coronavirus pandemic has changed everyone's lives dramatically both in our area, across the UK and globally, and is still having an ongoing impact, particularly for those who have to continue isolating. The one bright light has been the wonderful weather that we've been experiencing since the lock-down started which has meant that gardens have become a sanctuary and daily walks a pleasure.

The Parish Council Office, although closed to the public, has been kept busy with Sharon and Karen working from home and several Councillors working as volunteers helping the elderly and vulnerable with shopping, prescriptions, local food banks, check-up calls etc. It has been a real pleasure to see so many people helping one another to get through this awful time and many people have said to me that in a lot of ways it has brought the community closer together.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank all of our local shops who have proved to be such a lifeline during these unprecedented times. The staff have gone out of their way to be helpful and made sure that as many essential items as possible were available, whilst putting themselves at risk.

One very good piece of news is that the re-design and renovation of the Hatches Farm Sports Ground car park is well on its way to completion. Once finished, the car park will allow for 25 to 30 extra parking spaces, paths from the lower tennis courts to the upper courts and the addition of a petanque pitch. The new design requires the removal of four of the existing apple trees however replacement trees have already been purchased and will be planted in early Autumn along with seeding of all the newly banked edges. The new car park will then be available to Wellow School parents when dropping off and collecting their children.

The Parish Office will remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future but, as usual, the Office staff and Councillors are available to answer any queries or questions that you may have.

Test Valley Community Helpline  
**0330 400 4116**

Test Valley  
Borough Council

We can help with:



Prescription collection



Running errands



Access to shopping

unity  
PUTTING UNITY IN  
THE COMMUNITY

Open 9am to 5pm,  
seven days a week  
including bank holidays

✉ [UnityC-19@unityonline.org.uk](mailto:UnityC-19@unityonline.org.uk)

## Wellow Community Support Group

The Wellow Community Support group was set up and run by Cllr Christopher Craig and Wellow Parish Council admin assistant, Karen Miles to help residents in the village who were in isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We would like to thank the amazing 40 volunteers from the community for their continued dedication and support. Up until the end of May they had completed over 100 tasks such as prescription collections, essential food shopping, posting letters and disposing of glass jars at the bottle bank.

We are still carrying out tasks so if you need anything or know of someone in need, you can contact Christopher directly on 07788113544 or email [cllrcraig@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrcraig@wellowparish.org.uk).

## Wellow Youth Football Club

As part of the ongoing works at Hatches Farm Sports Ground, the Wellow Youth Football Club building has now been completed renovated. The walls have been re-clad, asbestos removed and a new roof and guttering fitted. Hopefully it won't be too long before our young footballers can start playing again and enjoy the new building.



## Wellow Community Library

Although some of our projects have had to be put on hold during the pandemic, others have moved forward. The Wellow Community Library is now ready to launch as soon as we are able, with over 850 adult fiction books already on the shelves.

Thank you to all of you who donated books, the response to our request was fantastic – we now have over 1,600 high quality books which will gradually be fed into the Library to keep it current and interesting. Thanks also to Cllrs Nick Adams-King and Gordon Bailey for agreeing a TVBC Councillor Grant of £500 towards the Library shelving and to the Wellow Village Hall Committee for allowing us to use part of the Embley Rooms free of charge to house the Library. We will be suggesting a voluntary donation of 20p per book borrowed (maximum of 4 books per visit) with all proceeds going to the Wellow First Responders. Obviously we don't know yet when we can officially open the Library or what the opening times will be but hopefully, it won't be too long now.



## Footpaths and Wellow Ways

Winter has been a quiet time with the Parish's footpaths as last year's vegetation growth died back. However, footpaths 17 and 18 were given a good spring clean in January with encroaching branches being cut back. A fallen tree was removed from the path linking Whinwhistle Road and Crawley Hill which was subsequently closed by the County Council due to a dangerous tree. This has now been removed and the path reopened.

The summer growth has begun again. A group of Councillors spent a couple of hours recently cutting back the grass on footpath 5 and all our other paths are being monitored to ascertain which need attention. Please feel free to report any paths that you feel are overgrown to the Parish office.

Footpath 22, Foxes Lane to Scallows Lane has been temporarily closed by Hampshire County Council due to the condition of the boardwalk. Repair/replacement works are scheduled for later this summer.

Some of you may be pleased to know we are bringing back our 'Wellow Ways' Footpath event, which gives anyone taking part the chance to enjoy our lovely village footpaths (some used more than others) and a gentle tidy up wherever necessary, armed only with secateurs.

This event will start at the Village Hall and finish there with light refreshments on offer.

Hopefully this will be held on a Sunday afternoon, late Summer to early Autumn. Details to follow so do keep an eye on our Parish Council website & Notice boards!





## Wellow Common

Since the autumn newsletter there has been a lot of activity on the Common. Two areas of gorse and birch close to the Plantation Road car park have been cut back and the heath land restored. The work was severely hampered by the seemingly never-ending rain but Nightingale Groundcare battled on and got the job done. The unusually wet winter led to the cattle grid at the entrance to Monkey Jump completely silting up. Emergency clearance was undertaken by a small group of Councillors to prevent animal escapes followed by a full commercial clean. A further large area of gorse at Monkey Jump was cleared during February but yet again the rain interrupted progress.

We are now well and truly in the bird nesting season. Like the rest of the New Forest, Wellow Common is a great place for all sorts of birds many of which nest on the ground in the open heathland and mires. Those that do include the curlew, redshank, snipe and lapwing all of which are becoming rare in the south of England. Other species that ground nest are the woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler. The main danger is that these ground nesting birds can easily be frightened away from their nests in spring/summer, leaving eggs or young vulnerable to the cold, or to predators such as crows. Obviously, the disturbance could be quite 'natural' like a passing fox but people straying from the main tracks, with or without dogs, are an additional risk. You can help by keeping both yourself and your dog on the main walkways and avoiding the open heathland between now and the end of July.

The New Forest National Park has introduced a Professional Dog Walkers' Charter which builds on the Dog Walking Code. All professional dog walkers that walk in the New Forest National Park are encouraged to abide by the best practice standards set out in this Charter. The Kennel Club fully support this initiative. Dog owners that choose businesses that have signed up to the Charter will know that their dogs will be cared for by a business following industry best practice in care and welfare, and that every effort is made to respect the special qualities of the National Park.

If you use or are thinking about using the services of a professional dog walker why not employ one that has signed up to the Professional Dog Walkers' Charter. It may be that in these difficult times you are self-isolating and need a dog walker, a list of those businesses which have signed up to the Charter can be found on the New Forest National Park website.



## Wellow Foodbank Collection

As we are all well aware, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of our lives - one of these being the increase in demand put on Foodbanks. The Trussell Trust group faced a staggering 81% increase compared to the same time period last year. Requests were soon made for extra donations nationwide, including the Romsey branch which supports people from local villages such as Wellow as well as Romsey & North Baddesley.

Seeing the urgent need for help, members of Wellow Parish Council led by Cllr Christopher Craig, helped by Cllr Sue Jones and a volunteer resident Hilary Norris, set up a weekly collection scheme to deliver donated food and household items directly to the Romsey Foodbank. The Chair, Cllr Gaye Chesterton-Kay also kindly gave £50 from her Chair's allowance.

Once the word had spread just how important these donations were, the volume soon increased, doubling in one week, so needing two packed cars to make the delivery.

The generosity of people in Wellow and Landford has been truly amazing and greatly appreciated. Several local businesses have also been involved and their input and support has been invaluable. The true meaning of Community has certainly shown itself in this worthwhile cause. Moving forward the collection has become monthly instead of weekly but the need still very much remains and all donations are most welcome. We can either arrange a collection or items can be dropped off at the helpers' addresses.

Contact Cllr Sue Jones, 01794 322079  
cllrsjones@wellowparish.org.uk

## Wellow - Your Village

### River Blackwater - Wildlife Corridor

The River Blackwater, which rises in the NFNP (SSSi) and flows through Wellow in to the River Test (SSSi) is of huge importance to wildlife in our village.

Here, in our village, on the river we have otters. We also have 6 types of bats including the rare Barbastelle bats which come over from Mottisfont Abbey, indeed parts of Wellow are in the Mottisfont Bat SAC protection zone. In the UK, Barbastelle bats seem to prefer wooded river valleys and the Blackwater is an ideal habitat. The Barbastelle bat is a medium sized bat, easily identified as its fur is almost black with pale or golden brown tips to the hairs and its ears are very broad with the inner edges joined together across the forehead.

There are parliaments of owls close to the river and both the bats and owls are very sensitive to any light pollution. The River Blackwater in Wellow is considered to be one of the south of England's most important spawning rivers for sea trout. Also along the River Blackwater Corridor, we have kingfishers, sparrow hawks, kites, buzzards, many types of deer, voles, badgers - indeed, a multitude of wildlife! Wellow, alongside the New Forest, is a wildlife haven. The NFNP is one of Europe's most sensitive ecological areas, a wetland of international importance and Wellow residents are fortunate to live in this hugely important landscape.

### Dog Fouling

During recent months the Parish Office has received a lot of complaints about the amount of dog fouling on Wellow Common. This has been an ongoing issue over a long period of time and although bins are provided, and notices displayed, some dog walkers consider it acceptable to allow their dogs to foul and not pick up or bag up the faeces and then hang it on a tree or bush! It has been estimated that a single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million faecal coliform bacteria which are known to cause cramps, diarrhoea, intestinal illness and serious kidney disease in humans. Roundworms, hookworms and whipworms are also commonly known gastrointestinal parasites that shed eggs in dog faeces. Whilst we are aware that many of the offenders are not Wellow residents and that many commercial dog walkers use the Common, we felt it important to, once again, highlight the importance of picking up after your dogs. Wellow Common is a beautiful place to visit and enjoy. Let's keep it that way for everyone!



### Wellow ECO-school green flag award

The Eco-Schools Green Flag is an internationally recognised award for excellence in environmental action and learning. You can work up to Green Flag level by achieving Bronze and Silver awards which are self-accredited stepping stones along the way. In November 2019 Wellow School started their exciting journey to become an ECO-school. They will join nearly 19,000 other schools in the UK. Eco-Schools empower pupils, raises environmental awareness and improves the school environment which in turn creates financial savings for the school. It engages with the wider local community and links to the curriculum which can help deliver Ofsted requirements. When a child gets actively involved with Eco-Schools, they enhance their development further. Eco-Schools have the power to transform the pupils into forward thinking, challenge solving, decision making adults of the future. Pupils from each year group volunteered to be on our very own ECO committee and were voted for by their peers. Fifteen children form Wellow's ECO committee and they have called themselves The Green Gang. They meet on weekly basis with our ECO co-ordinator (who is a grandmother to three of our pupils). To date they have done an environmental review of the school looking at areas such as water, waste, litter, energy and diversity. They looked at what we are doing well and where we can make improvements. They have now created an action plan and are looking at three areas where the school can improve. The Green Gang chose:

1. Healthy Living
2. Energy
3. Litter and Waste

To create improvements to the school, the children are going to carry out a school litter pick. They have written to IKEA to ask for re-usable cups and more recycling bins. They have created switch off power signs for every classroom and have made clear signs for the recycling bins. All of this work is done by the Green Gang and they have been sharing their findings along the way. They are sharing their action Plan at an assembly next term. We hope to apply for Green Flag status in the summer and to do so we will need to:

Demonstrate our actions over the three topics and show how we have monitored and evaluated these projects. To find out more go to - <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/> To be involved or to offer any help please contact Wendy at [wsarecycling@gmail.com](mailto:wsarecycling@gmail.com)



## Music Academy Award

Congratulations to Joe Arthey who was the recipient of the Music Academy Award, donated by Wellow Parish Council, at the Mountbatten School Certificate Presentation Evening last November.

This trophy was purchased by the Parish Council using prize money won in the 2018 Village of the Year Competition and is presented annually. We thought it would be a good idea to pass on our success to the Mountbatten Music Academy to hopefully inspire students to both enjoy and succeed in the field of Music. Joe was certainly a worthy recipient and we send our best wishes to him for continuing success.



## Sporting News

Having had a dreadful end to the football season, the start of the cricket and tennis seasons, The Parish Council would like to wish all of our sports clubs the very best for the coming months and year and would urge our parishioners to support where ever possible, any sporting activity that does take place through these difficult times. We can only but hope 2021 will be a better year for everybody. Stay Safe and keep well.....

## Contact your Councillors

**Gaye Chesterton-Kay (Chair to the Council)**, 01794 323737, [cllrgchesterton@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrgchesterton@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Ed Chesterton-Kay**, 01794 323737, [cllrechesterton@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrechesterton@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Alan Clark**, 01794 323024, [cllraclark@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllraclark@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Christopher Craig**, 07788 113544, [cllrccraig@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrccraig@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Mike Jones (Vice Chair)**, 01794 322079, [cllrmjones@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrmjones@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Sue Jones**, 01794 322079, [cllrsjones@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrsjones@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Richard Light**, 07968 623 040, [cllrrlight@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrrlight@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Rich Millard**, 01794 323635, [cllrrmillard@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrrmillard@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Charles Payne**, 07504 573 803, [cllrcpayne@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrcpayne@wellowparish.org.uk)

**Philip Stehr**, 01794 323275, [cllrpstehr@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:cllrpstehr@wellowparish.org.uk)

## Upcoming Meetings

All Parish Council meetings are currently held virtually via Zoom. If you would like to join or participate in any of the meetings please contact the Parish Clerk at [clerk@wellowparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@wellowparish.org.uk)

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July, Parish Council Meeting, 7.15 PM

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September, Parish Council, 7.15 PM

The Parish Council is sorry, but due to Covid-19 this Edition of the Nightingale Times is only available electronically (online at our website, or sent to residents by email).