

FOCUS

May 2009



THE FOUR VILLAGES MAGAZINE

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Focus - The Four Village Magazine Magazine Committee

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Copy for publication to the Editors or one of the following by the **10th of the month:**

Kevin Cabbage - 'Larums', Eaton Bray Road, Northall

Val Barrow - 3 Chestnut Close, Dagnall

Focus accepts no responsibility as to the accuracy or content of any advertising or articles published in 'this' magazine neither do they reflect the opinion of members of the Committee.

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Focus would like to remind contributors that the deadline for articles is the 10th of the preceding month

Police Contact Numbers...making neighbourhoods safer together

Bedfordshire Police (Eaton Bray)

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P.C. Viv Dady Mobile 07908520148

Typetalk: 18001 01582 437418

Email: SNT.Leighton-Rural@Bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

Thames Valley Police (Edlesborough, Dagnall & Northall)

0845 8505505

Village Hall Bookings

To book your local village hall for an event please contact the following:

Northall: Lorna Cabbage, Tel: 220361

Eaton Bray: Norman Lee, Tel: 222831

Dagnall: Elizabeth Coates, Tel: 01442 842550

Edlesborough Memorial Hall: Beverly Sage, Tel: 01525 229509

Shetland Pony



Looking for a sharer at least one day a week in Eaton Bray. Please phone Lucy on 01525 222139 or 07977 711350

Best Kept Village

Edlesborough is entering the Best Kept Village competition. Judging will be in June. Please make sure your garden is tidy.

Village Diaries May 2009



Weekly

- Mon-Fri (term time) Eaton Bray Pre-school, Eaton Bray Lower School, 01525 220468
- Mon-Fri (term time) Dagnall Under 5's, Dagnall Village Hall, 9.30-12 noon, Mrs Ann Tobin 07816 358342
- Mon-Fri (term time) Edlesborough Under 5's Pre-School, Edlesborough Memorial Hall, Sue 01525 222199
- Mon-Thu (term time) Totternhoe Pre-school, mornings, Totternhoe Memorial Hall, Kay 07956 526635
- Mondays Pilates, 10.45am, St.Giles Church Hall, Totternhoe, Lisa: 01582 412426
- Mondays (term time) Mums & Tots Group, 1-2.30pm, Grace Community Church
- Mondays (term time) 2nd Eaton Bray Rainbows, girls 5-7 years, Edlesborough Memorial Hall, 4.45 - 5.45pm, Lyn 01525 222518
- Mondays (term time) 2nd Eaton Bray Brownies, girls 7- 10 years, Edlesborough Memorial Hall, 6 - 7.30pm, Sarah 01525 229194
- Tuesdays Yoga, Northall Village Hall, 1.30-3pm, Doreen 01525 377542
- Tuesdays Line Dancing, 1.30-3p.m., Eaton Bray Village Hall, Lyn Stubbs 220731
- Tuesdays Baby's First Cafe (Support for Breastfeeding mums), 10.15 - 11.45 am, Pitstone Memorial Hall
- Tuesdays Pilates, 10am-12noon, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Nicky Roussou 07861 161680
- Tuesdays Totternhoe Baby & Toddler Group, 9.30-11.30am, Totternhoe Village Hall, 07986 730922
- Tuesdays Northall Toddler Group, 10am - 12 noon, Northall Village Hall, Ellie 01525 222144
- Tuesdays Tap & Ballet Classes, John Latus School of Dance, 4-8pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, 01582 620576
- Tuesdays Fortnightly Coffee Morning, Bring & Buy, Table Top Sale, 10-12noon, Salvation Army Hall, Booth Place, Eaton Bray
- Weds (term time) Cheeky Monkeys Under 5's Playtime, 1:00pm - 2:45pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Contact Louise on 07784 165259
- Wednesdays Chi Kung & Wu Chi classes, Coffee Tavern 11am - noon
- Wednesdays Pilates, 7.15pm, Northall Village Hall, Lisa: 01582 412426
- Wednesdays Egyptian Dance Class, 7-8.30pm at Eaton Bray Village Hall. Contact: Soraya 01525 853360
- Thurs (term time) Baby & Toddlers Group, Dagnall Village Hall, 12:45 - 2:45pm (12:15 if bringing lunch) Contact Michelle Tel 01442 842 676
- Thursdays Yoga, Northall Village Hall, 11.30am-1pm 01525 377542
- Thursdays Keep fit, 2-4pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Mrs Johnson 220304
- Thursdays Kfa Body Moves 40+, Fitness through movement, exercise & dance. 8-9pm, Edlesborough School, Pat 01582 668735
- Thursdays Baby & Toddler Group, Salvation Army Hall, Booth Place, Eaton Bray, 9.30-11.30am

- Thursdays Keep Fit Edlesborough School, 8pm Tel: 01582 668735
 Thursdays Jazzercise, 9.30-10.30am, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Angela Veryard, 01525 715208
 Thursdays Karate, 7-9pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Brian Bates 07958 348086
 Fridays Tap & Ballet Classes, John Latus School of Dance, 4-8pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, 01582 620576
 Saturdays Jazzercise, 9.30-10.30am, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Angela Veryard, 01525 715208
 Saturdays Drama Class for Children, 10.35am-12.35pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Claire Casey, 07792 508591

Monthly

- 1st Monday Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, The Coffee Tavern
 1st Monday Eaton Bray W.I. Meeting, 7.30pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Contact Sheila Beal on 01525 221185
 1st & 3rd Tuesday Dunstable & District Orbit Club meet at Dunstable Rugby Club at 8pm. For details contact 01525 222441 or 01582 755147
 1st Sunday Grace Baptist Church Service, 3pm, all welcome, David Coleman 01582 664990
 2nd Tuesday Toddlers' Church, St Mary's, Eaton Bray, 2.00pm
 2nd Tuesday Dunstable & District Local History Society meeting, 7.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Dunstable (opposite Wilkinson)
 2nd Tuesday Edlesborough W.I. Meeting, 7.30 pm, Edlesborough Memorial Hall
 2nd Wednesday 8.15pm Healing Service in St Mary's Church
 2nd Thursday CAMEO Coffee, tea & chat, 10am-12noon, Edlesborough Methodist Church
 3rd Thursday Edlesborough Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm, Memorial Hall
 3rd Sunday Lunch club 11.30 to 2.00pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, Chris Hewitt 222288

Other Regular Events

- 8th Leukaemia Research Coffee Morning, 2 Dunstable Road, Dagnall, 10.30 am.
 13th, 27th Bingo, Dagnall Village Hall 8pm.
 19th Dagnall Over 60's Village Hall 2pm Salvation Army Visit

One Off/Annual/Irregular Events

- 2nd Dagnall Church Coffee Morning. 10.30am – 12.30pm
 7-9th Leighton Buzzard Drama Group present 'Out of Focus'. Ticket office: 01582 818801
 9th Friends of Dagnall School Children's Fashion Show, 3.30pm, Dagnall Village Hall, £2, Tickets: 07792 612628
 12th Dagnall Village Hall AGM 7.45pm. All Welcome
 16th Edlesbray Players present 'Colour Me Happy', 7.30pm, Eaton Bray Village Hall, £7.50, Box office: 01525 222283
 17th Cheddington Bowls Club Open Afternoon, 2-5pm, Recreation Ground, High Street, Cheddington
 23rd, 24th & 25th St. Mary's Church, Pitstone, 29th Spring Festival of Art & Flowers, 23rd: 2-6pm, 24th: 11am-5pm, 25th: 11am-6pm

“I Can Remember When This Was All Fields”

Back in the heady days of the early noughties, before spiv bankers brought the economy to its knees and the housing market to a standstill, the Government decided that the nation needed to build more houses. Not just a few but hundreds of thousands. One of the places it chose to site these was southern Bedfordshire – and in 2005 Luton, Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton – Linslade were formally designated as a “Growth Area”. Around these towns the green belt would be rolled back to make room for an additional 41,700. The job of deciding exactly where these houses should be built was given to a new “Joint Committee” made up of councillors from Luton, South Bedfordshire and Bedfordshire County Council’s. The committee assembled a team of professional planners and work on the new plan commenced.

In June 2007 it was able to publish its first document for consultation – the “Core Strategy: Issues and Options” which explored various locations for the new houses. No less than 10 “options” were proposed, and, much to the surprise of many, some of the areas suggested for major new development were green belt villages outside the designated “growth area” – including Eaton Bray.

Soon afterwards the collapse of Northern Rock heralded the end of cheap and plentiful credit and the housing market collapsed. House building ground to a halt.

But the joint committee’s work continued – albeit slowly. By the time this article appears in Focus it will have published its “Core Strategy : Preferred Options” document for consultation. This refines the ten options to one. It sidesteps the issue of precisely where new housing will be built – delegating this to a later document called the “Site Allocations DPD” – but it does identify general areas for growth.

Most new development is to be located in or adjacent to the four towns, but the expansion of villages is also proposed. The key wording is in Policy CS1: “A limited scale of development will be allocated or supported in rural areas. This will be in and/or on the edge of the rural settlements that are currently excluded from the Green Belt. Small scale reviews of the Green Belt boundary on the edge of these rural settlements may be required to enable such development to proceed. ...

Eaton Bray is such a “rural settlement” and the Policy opens up the prospect of pressure for the release of land on the edge of the village, currently in the Green Belt, for new housing development. What “limited” means is not made clear.

Views will vary about whether this would be a good or a bad thing, but the matter deserves to be the subject of local scrutiny and debate. The future of your village depends on it. The opportunity exists now to have your say, one way or the other, so don’t miss it!

George Crutcher. MRTPI

[This is the second of an occasional series on of articles on Town Planning issues. George Crutcher is a locally based Planning Consultant. He can be contacted on 07792 070992.]

Eaton Bray Cricket Club

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The Church Mouse



This was the first meeting of the PCC without Malcolm Grant and the meeting was chaired by one of our Churchwardens Chris Banks.

Following the retirement of our other Churchwarden, Deirdrea Ellins, we were pleased to welcome Peter Bennett as her replacement. Peter was elected at an extraordinary meeting of the parishioners held recently in church. Peter has now been inducted by the bishop and can assume his role officially.

We hope to be placing our order for the new pulpit shortly; we are just waiting for an updated quotation.

We are still trying to recruit a new Organist and Choirmaster but we are currently covering all services with a rota of temporary organists.

The annual accounts for 2008/9 were presented and accepted by the PCC ready for our Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting on 21st April.

The main topic for the evening was a discussion on what we need to put into the Parish Profile a document that is produced to send to potential candidates to replace Malcolm Grant. This has to provide details about St Mary's and the parish, the type of activities we are involved in and also to explain our aspirations for the new incumbent.

Beer Festival



Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June in the Village Hall

Well here we go again, winding up to our hardest weekend of the year. We are going to have to stand beside somewhere between 15 and 20 barrels of real ale, perry and cider and pretend that we like it! I say that

because each year our friends from CAMRA keep bringing new brews.

Now, as you know, if you try out 15 pints of ale and then try to remember which one you liked best, you might be getting into some difficulty. I remember a couple of folk who tried it last year and had to start again, as they had forgotten or were incapable of remembering, I am not sure what the difference is but they seemed happy enough trying to remember!

So, having confirmed that we will have some great beer, perry and cider, what else can you count on? Well as usual we shall be serving food, on the BBQ, Hines' fabulous burgers and sausages and also baked potatoes with various fillings. On top of that we will be supplying lager, red/ white wine and soft drinks to those who prefer other tipples.

On Friday evening we have Jerome Chance and Saturday we have a children's magician (David Andrew) in the afternoon and Bob Thompson playing some great music in the evening.

All in all it should be a great weekend. Please do come along with family and friends and enjoy a great time.

Thank you all who came along to our Quiz on the 18th, I will report later but I am sure it was a great success!! (We have sold 156 tickets with 10 days to go).

See you all on the BBQ at the Beer Festival. Any queries call Ross on 221411.



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Eaton Bray With Edlesborough Mothers Union

Our March meeting was based on The Family Tree. Eileen Bennett instilled upon us, just how important it is to remember our ancestry, to record past events and treasure old photographs, for your future generations.

Obviously the best way is to look on the internet, but you can research old Church records and Churchyards. It's a very time consuming task but very rewarding.

We were able to record our Grandparents and Grandchildren dating back to the 19th century, but it would be great to delve back more. It was a very thoughtful proven afternoon, enjoyed by all the members, ending with tea and The Grace.

Our thanks go to Celia and June for their efforts with the teas.

Our invitation to the Lady Day service at St Barnabas in Leighton Buzzard (Lady Day is the day when Christ was conceived) was attended by 9 of our members, where we proudly paraded our banners along with other Churches in our area. We were very surprised to see that our old friend David Radwell was there to play the organ, just the day before he moved home, that was so nice.

Our thanks go to Leighton Buzzard for a very pleasant afternoon.

June Thorne

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- Plan your route to avoid congestion or getting lost.



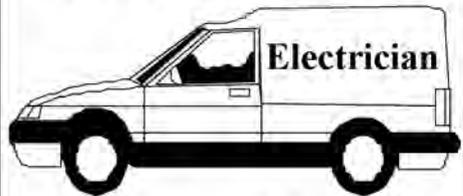
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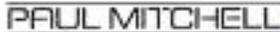
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Eaton Bray with Edlesborough Parish News

Churchwardens: Chris Banks (221556) and Peter Bennett (221284)

One of the things we do in our church services is to say we are sorry for the wrong things we have done. Saying ‘Sorry’, as we do when we say the Confession, is generally a positive thing - it helps us to recognise our shortcomings and spurs us on to try to do better. However, I can remember wondering, when I was younger, why it was that week after week I would have to say ‘Sorry’ when, whilst not necessarily leading a totally blameless life, I was doing what I felt was the best I could to ‘love my neighbour’.

But as I’ve grown older I’ve come to realise that Jesus’ understanding of what was meant by my ‘neighbour’ was rather more demanding than I had realised. He once told a parable, recorded in Matthew 25, vv 31-45, that well and truly shocked those who heard it and is just as telling today. Some people know the story as ‘The parable of the sheep and the goats’, others as ‘The final judgement’.

In the parable Jesus identifies two sets of people. To one set of people he said “I was hungry and you fed me, thirsty and you gave me a drink; I was a stranger and you received me in your homes, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me, in prison and you visited me.” The other set of people, Jesus said, did none of those things.

The parable reports confusion in both groups – ‘When did we see you hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, in prison?’, they said. Obviously neither group could recall having seen Jesus in distress, but Jesus’ startling retort was “I tell you, whenever you did this (or didn’t do this) for the least important person, you did it for me”. Jesus’ turns upside down the idea of ‘neighbour’ – not just the person who lives next door but any person, anywhere, and especially those who are the most vulnerable and most in need.

On that sort of scale I now recognise that there definitely are times when I have, in the words of one of our Confessions, seen the ill-treatment of others and have not gone to their aid; when, through the actions of governments and big business, I have condoned evil and dishonesty and failed to strive for justice. And there is no excuse, because in today’s world our TV sets can keep us informed of the ways people are suffering around the world so that we in the rich nations can live the comfortable lifestyles to which we have become accustomed. Last month I wrote about the hope of life after death, but many of the world’s poorest peoples get little chance to experience life before death.

Well, this month there is no excuse for turning our back on such people, for the week from 10-16 May is Christian Aid Week This is our opportunity to help people around the world to keep hope alive, through helping with the house to house collections or simply by being generous in our giving.

Here’s what as little as a fiver can achieve through projects run by Christian Aid

- £5 can provide a loan to allow a street child to start a small income-generation project such as shoe shining.
- £5 could buy six yards of material, from which a three-piece woman’s outfit can be made
- £10 can provide an orphan or destitute girl with enough material to complete a 12-month tailoring training course.
- £40 can pay the monthly salary of a tailoring instructor or of an outreach worker who works with boys on the streets.

Please don’t ignore the cries of the world’s neediest people.

A prayer for Christian Aid Week

Father God, remind me again of your love for the poor, for the marginalised and the oppressed. I want to follow your example and make a difference with my time and my prayers, through collecting and donating, so that a glimpse of heaven is seen on earth, as hope replaces despair and peace overcomes violence. Amen

Gordon, Reader at St Mary's Eaton Bray

Services at St Mary's Church

SUNDAYS : **8.00am** – The Eucharist
 10.00am – PARISH SUNG EUCHARIST (with Sunday School)

On Third Sunday of each month:

10.00am – WORSHIP FOR EVERYONE a shorter, less formal service (Those who wish to attend a Communion Service on that Sunday are reminded that there is a Family Communion at 10.30am at All Saints', Dagnall, where they are assured of a warm welcome.)

WEEK-DAYS :

Tuesday: **2.00pm** (2nd Tuesday) – Toddlers' Church

Wednesday: **9.30am** – Eucharist

EVERYONE WELCOME AT THESE SERVICES

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Enquiries for these should be made in the first instance to:-

BAPTISMS – Mrs Eileen Bennett (221284)

WEDDINGS & PROCLAMATION OF BANNES – Mrs Jenny Hewett (220295)

FUNERALS – Mr Peter Bennett (221284)

or leave a message at the Parish Office (222254)

Dagnall Village Hall Committee AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Dagnall Village Hall Management Committee will take place on **Tuesday 12 May 2009 at 7.45pm.**

All residents of Dagnall aged 18 and over are welcome to attend and eligible to vote.

The following officers of the committee will be elected:

Chairperson Secretary

Treasurer Bookings Officer

Anyone wishing to stand for election to one of the offices may obtain a nomination form from the secretary (telephone 842129).

Village organisations currently represented on the committee are Dagnall Church, Dagnall School, Dagnall Under Fives, Dagnall Over 60's and Dagnall Gardeners' Society. These organisations are invited to appoint a person to the committee as their representative. Any village clubs or societies not currently represented on the committee are welcome to attend the meeting in order to seek the opportunity to appoint a person to the committee as their representative.

Please do make the effort to attend the AGM – it's your village hall and you have an opportunity to influence how it is managed.

Dunstable

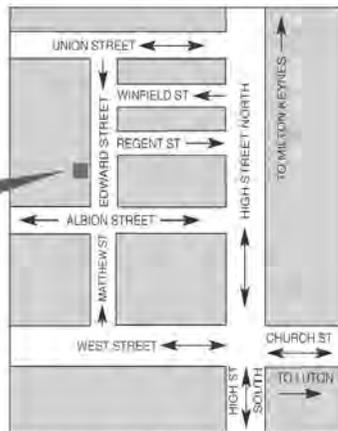
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Dagnall News

Over 60's

The organ concert by Jean Martyn in the Village Hall on March 28th was again a huge success, thoroughly enjoyed by the packed audience. Grateful thanks are expressed to the people and businesses who donated prizes to the raffle. The Over 60s funds will benefit by over £350.

For our April meeting, on the 21st, we welcome Mrs Paula Bonarius for an interesting talk on the A. K. Wildlife Hospital.

On May 19th we have a visit from the Salvation Army.

Dagnall Church

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 2nd May, Coffee morning at All Saints Church. Dagnall. 10.30am to 12.30pm. in aid of the Church Project for 2009, The Paul Strickland Scanner Appeal, Mount Vernon Hospital.

Saturday 18th July, Ploughmans Lunches 11.30am to 2.00pm also in aid of the Church Project.

Please support both of these events, which will feature the Cake stall and Bring & Buy stall.

Dagnall School

Outer Space

Once upon a time up in space there lived a lion called Zee and he lived on a planet called Zum Zee. Zee had a green head and a yellow spotty body. There were loads of Aliens on planet Zum Zee.

There was a rocket that was broken down so they couldn't go anywhere. Zee found that when he pressed a button it turned into a black and white new rocket.

Zee was excited to go back home.

By Harry in Year 1 at Dagnall School

Dagnall Village Hall

The Annual General Meeting of the Dagnall Village Hall Management Committee will take place on Tuesday 12 May 2009 at 7.45pm. See separate notice.

All Saints, Dagnall - Services in May 2009

Sun. 3rd May	9.00 pm	Eucharist
	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.00 pm	Evening Service
Sun. 10th May	10.30 am	Morning Service
	6.00 pm	Eucharist
Sun. 17th May	10.30 am	Family Communion
	6.00 pm	Evening Service with Holy Communion
Sun. 24th May	10.30 am	Family Service
Sun. 31st May	10.30 am	Informal Worship
	6.00 pm	Sung Eucharist

Sunday School meets each Sunday at 10.30 am.



The EDaN Project

Beautifying The EDaN Villages Update



- **Planters.** Weather permitting you should now have noticed more planters around our villages. At the time of writing they were scheduled to go out over the Easter weekend. The plants have all been ordered and again hopefully by the time you read this they will all have been planted.
- **External Lighting of Edlesborough Church.** This is an exciting project, you may have noticed some test lighting having been done. So continue to watch this space.
- **Daffodil Planting.** You can not have failed to notice the beautiful display of daffodils around our villages. We hope you enjoyed them.
- **Further projects & fundraising.** We have been very lucky to have received grants from various funding sources and we are very appreciative of the support we receive from the Parish Council plus local businesses. We have lots of other exciting projects in the pipeline to help improve our villages visually so we continue to look at various sources of income. We are currently looking at the feasibility of having a large fundraising event in November on the Village Green in Edlesborough. In the past all the villages have hosted firework evenings but this has become difficult in present times due to health and safety regulations. So instead we are considering having a **'FireWalk Night'!!** This would be run by an outside company specialising in helping good causes raise money by Fire Walking. Ever fancied walking over hot embers whilst friends watch on in amazement? This could be your chance. Hopefully we will have more details shortly and if feasible we will publish more details in next month's focus. Sponsorship forms and entry details will be available at the July Carnival.
- **More help needed.** As you will have seen and read lots of exciting things are happening in our villages. If you would like to be part of a proactive group which cares about its surroundings and is willing to take ownership of local issues, please consider joining us. We meet once a month to discuss various projects and how to take them forward. We look forward to hearing from you. Please contact Christine Yates 220739 (chris@brooklyns.org.uk).



EDaN Action Group

Buses & Transportation

Travel Survey

Did you complete your Travel Survey in the March copy of Focus? Have you placed it in one of collecting boxes located in the Post office/Densons/Janes in Edlesborough, the Swan Public House in Northall or the Village Hall, Farm Shop or School in Dagnall? If not, it's not too late – we would like you to complete the survey even if you don't presently travel on the buses.

We are also particularly interested in the teenagers of the 3 villagers completing the survey as well. Please feel free to photocopy the survey if more copies are required. If you need any more info on the above or another copy of the survey please email kathybovington@hotmail.com

EDaN Action Group Buses & Transportation Dial A Ride voucher scheme

Further to our article last month, we have been made aware of a concessionary travel scheme for those unable to use buses. This is an alternative to a bus permit, and you are eligible for tokens to the value of £60 if you cannot use buses because of frailty or disability.

You may also use Taxi firms who accept the tokens, and display the token sign in their vehicles.

You will be asked for proof of identity, eligibility and residency and your permission to contact your doctor if necessary. A passport photo is required with the application.

To apply for an application form

Tel 01296 330088 or write to:

Aylesbury Vale Dial A Ride Ltd

52a Edison Road

Aylesbury

Bucks

HP19 8TE

Or email: enquiries@dialaride.org.uk



EdaN Youth Project Team

...are delighted to announce the winner of our 'design a cover' competition.

Congratulations to Eve Greenow who wins the prize of £10 in vouchers.

Look out for Eve's design on the cover of our forthcoming publication

'EdaN Youth – What's On And Where'

We are also in urgent need of more group members to take on tasks for the project team. If you are interested in seeing improved and expanded facilities for your children in the EDaN area please contact us now! No previous experience necessary.

Liz Coates 01442 842550 lizcoates@btinternet.com

Vicky Lee 01442 843361 vickylee35@hotmail.com



Thank you!



I would like to say a HUGE thank you to all my Scouting friends for the extremely generous gifts and kind words received on my 'retirement' as Beaver leader at the end of spring term. I am extremely grateful and apologise if I haven't thanked everyone in person.

I have had so much fun over the last 10 years and have been fortunate to get to know many families and faces in our villages. It has been a pleasure to see the young people move through the sections and grow up and I really will miss the energy and noise generated at the weekly meetings (although I will stay involved with the group and our committee).

I leave our thriving Beaver Colony in the capable hands of my new friends, Sandi and Sue, and hope that you will support them as much as you all supported me.

Good luck and thank you!

Erikax

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Some comments from our recent Ofsted report (Jan 09):

Children are consistently offered a stimulating range of activities and opportunities which enable them to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

Staff have a good understanding of creating a safe and welcoming environment . . .

Staff support children well and encourage them to be active in their learning and to think critically.

We are a committee run playgroup operating five mornings a week 9:30 – 12:00 for children aged 2½ to school age.

If you would like to find out if your child would be happy here, please phone our Playgroup Leader, Ann Tobin on 07816 358 342.

Single in the 21st Century!

Well, if you had told me 10 years ago that the way to meet a potential partner would be to attend organised single events in the form of Speed dating or dinner parties I'd have laughed- couldn't imagine meeting 10 + suitors in one night with the view to going on a date- but the reality in today's society is that

- 1) Even young ones don't 'meet' partners in clubs (apparently it's not cool!) There are no slow dances and the majority meet a partner via online dating! - you can put in your specifications, like choosing a new car! Although you don't really know if they are who they say they are!
- 2) There seems to be very few places that specific age ranges can meet similar single age groups.
- 3) We don't have the time! Want everything today and don't want to leave it to fate- but how many tall dark handsome men, or pretty blondes actually resemble their picture on dating websites? Not many! So, what do I do? I organise both dinner parties and speed dating events in Milton Keynes for age groups from 18 _ 80! Having met 100's since January this year I can tell you that decent like-minded people like you and me attend- not only do they have a great night out, but many go on to have dates, and hopefully lasting relationships. So, for now Speed dating is the way forward, in another decade, who knows - cyber partners!

For any enquiries re Lisa's events please visit www.whenthemusicstops.com or call 07958 258311

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Highlights of the Minutes of the Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting Held in The Coffee Tavern on Monday 6th April 2009 at 7:30pm

New Parish Councillor

Eaton Bray Parish Council is pleased to have co-opted Mr. Alan Garofall onto the Parish Council.

Police Representative

The Parish Council were informed that the police have been in the village with S.I.D. (S.I.D. is a hi-tec mobile Speed Indication Device, which keeps a sharp-eyed watch on drivers' speeds and when they are detected travelling too fast it flashes up the speed on a roadside display monitor. The aim is to draw drivers' attention to their speed and let them know they are over the limit, encouraging them to slow down).

Homewatch Areas In Eaton Bray

If you are interested in becoming a Homewatch Co-ordinator, please contact the Parish Clerk for more details.

Conservation Area/P3 Report

The Parish Council was informed that within the Conservation Area, new whips have been planted in the newly cleared area. In addition, the Working Group is in the process of putting together a working plan for the next stages in the Conservation Area improvements for 2009-2010. The Parish Council wished to thank Cllr Brand for organising with Bedfordshire County Council the removal of rubble built up since the conservation area improvements had begun.

Housing Needs Within The Parish

The Parish Council was informed that the Clerk has received a total of six replies to questionnaires from a total of 1,088 properties within the parish. ALL of which had received the questionnaire in the December/January 2009 FOCUS Magazine with a reminder for this information being included in the February 2009 FOCUS. It was recommended that the Parish Council look into the current housing within the parish: the percentage privately owned and the percentage of rented/housing association properties. It was also recommended that the Parish Council check how much control they would have with regards to the style of housing developed, i.e. bungalows/small houses.

Budget 2009/2010

The budget was confirmed and agreed at the Parish Council Meeting.

Skate & Ride Report

The Clerk wished to thank all those who kindly helped her in delivering letters to ALL parish residents. The Parish Council also wished to thank the Clerk for all her hard work in organising the letters, from printing to their delivery. The Parish Council looked at the proposed design/position of the Skate & Ride Area, taking into account its position in relation to distance from properties and current facilities. It was agreed, in principle, to the recommended position of the Skate & Ride. The area recommended is the furthest position from residents housing, however once an agreed final design of the area is put to the Parish Council the exact position will then be agreed.

Recycling Area In School Lane

After a number of enquiries with School Lane residents, the overall majority from those able to be contacted agreed to the retention of the recycling bins. The Parish

Council have agreed to the placing of a new sign informing ALL parish residents the recycling times for using this facility is from 9:00am to 7:00pm ONLY.

School Lane Playground Equipment

The Parish Council is currently in the process of obtaining quotes for the replacement of the damaged playground equipment in School Lane Recreation Ground.

Future Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting Dates

Annual Parish Meeting, Tues 5th May 2009, 7:30pm at The Coffee Tavern

Annual Meeting of Eaton Bray Parish Council: Wed 6th May 2009, 7:30pm at The Coffee Tavern

Eaton Bray Parish Council Meeting: Mon 1st June 2009 7:30pm at The Coffee Tavern

Contact Details For Eaton Bray Parish Clerk

Clerk contact times: Tuesday/Thursday/Friday
09:30-13:30hrs [messages can be left on answer phone]

Parish Office: 20 Good Intent, Edlesborough,
LU6 2RD, Tel 01525 222601

Email: clerk@ebpc.co.uk

Parish Council Website: www.ebpc.co.uk

**Eaton Bray
Parish Council Meetings
7:30pm The Coffee Tavern
Next Meetings:
Annual Parish Meeting:
Tues 5th May 09
Annual Meeting of Parish
Council: Wed 6th May 09**



Edlesborough W.I.

At our last meeting Phrena, our President, thanked Maureen Shipway for holding the recent coffee morning at her home, when just under £170 was raised towards W.I. funds. It was agreed it had been a really enjoyable morning.

Once again we welcomed Anna and Roger Skipper to our meeting. In a few weeks time a number of members will be visiting their beautiful garden which is open to the public on certain days, in aid of charity. Roger told us they raised over £3000 last year, which was donated to various good causes. From reports by various visitors to the garden, Anna's home-made cakes are as popular as the lovely flowers!

On this occasion Roger, with Anna's assistance, took us on a photographic tour of a number of large gardens open to the public. His talk was entitled "Gardens Worth Visiting", and he reckoned they could each be visited in a day's trip from here. Roger covered such places as: Anglesey Abbey, Capel Manor (also a horticultural college), Merrimants and Kew Gardens, to name a few. His photos covered anything from snowdrops to cacti, and we saw some absolutely beautiful plants and garden scenes. It goes to prove what a variety of flowers and trees can be grown in this country. As well as showing us his lovely photos, Roger gave a number of gardening hints - always welcome from such an expert. Thank you Anna and Roger, and "see you again soon". A number of us visited Aston Clinton the following week to attend the Beacon Group Meeting. We were entertained by 'Eliza', a professional actress who is also an expert in beading. Her talk, 'To Bead or not to Bead', included snippets of her theatrical life as well as details of her love of beading work. Eliza had a number of examples of this, worked on canvas; and how clever she is. As well as showing us her beautiful beading, she kept us all laughing throughout her talk. She is a talented lady, and certainly very entertaining.

Val Harris



An evening of Ancient and Modern
Egyptian Dance - performed by
Wing of Isis and Eaton Bray
Egyptian Dance Class

Saturday
13th June 2009

7.30pm
at

Eaton Bray Village Hall,
Church Lane, Eaton Bray

Light refreshments

Egyptian Bazaar

Raffle

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Edlesborough Under 5's

Monday - Friday 9.25 am - 12.00 noon

Tuesday & Thursday 12.45 pm - 3.15 pm

"The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are actively involved in their learning, play independently and are assisted by staff to develop their confidence." "Group times at all sessions were very positive experiences for all the children and enjoyed by all present." "Children of all ages have the opportunity to develop their skills in all areas, supported by a dedicated staff team." "Children are encouraged to make choices and decisions throughout the day, supported by a staff team that know them well."

These are just a few of the comments made in our fifth OFSTED Report (March 2008 - available via our website). The report reflects the high quality of learning on offer to all children at Edlesborough Under 5's and highlighted the quality of teaching by the staff. We are currently operating a waiting list for 2½ to 4½ year olds. If you would like to pop in for a look around, please phone Tracey on 07854 939226 between 9am - 12 noon, to arrange an appointment. A warm welcome awaits you.

**For registration details or to place your child on the waiting list,
please phone Sue Pickering: Tel - 01525 222199.**

"We are an Equal Opportunities Employer" www.edlesboroughunder5s.org.uk



Edlesbray Players present

Colour me Happy

16th May

Eaton Bray Village Hall

Start 7.30pm - doors open 7.00pm

Ploughman's supper

Box Office open from 15th April

01525 222283

Tickets £7.50

In aid of Eaton Bray Village Hall



Friends of Dagnall School
&



Kids on the Catwalk present

CHILDREN'S FASHION SHOW

Starring the children from Dagnall School and friends



**SATURDAY 9TH MAY 2009 – 3.30 P.M. AT
DAGNALL VILLAGE HALL**

An exciting range of new fashions for children aged 3
to 13 years will be modelled and available to
purchase after the show

ADMISSION

£2 per ticket (under 16's are free)

£2 entrance fee for models (including refreshments)

TICKETS & MODELS

If you would like your child to take part or would like to
attend please contact:

Sandra Janes (Edlesborough) 0779 2612628

Debbie Pearce (Edlesborough) 07983 330297

Mandy Taylor (Dagnall) 07797 177284

6th Eaton Bray Village Hall Beer and Cider Festival

Friday 5th and Saturday 6th June 2009

16 Real Ales + 2 ciders and 2 perrys
Soft drinks, bottled lager and Wine
available



Hot food and BBQ available
Lunchtime and evenings



Live entertainment:
Friday night - Jerome Chance
Saturday afternoon -
David Andrew's Family Magic Show
Saturday evening - Bob Thomson

Fri - 6 till 11, Saturday 12 till 11

Entrance £3 by raffle ticket

Free to CAMRA members with card



'Play Tennis' Day Saturday 20th June

at

Eaton Bray Lawn Tennis Club



***Come along and have FUN,
new membership joining deals***

'Play Tennis' day is a FREE tennis taster session for adults and children. There will be lots of fun tennis related games and activities, competitions, free giveaways, tennis equipment and clothes for sale by racketsportsdirect.com, BBQ and much more.

Join the fun

at

Eaton Bray Lawn Tennis Club on School Lane
12 Noon to 3pm

Contact Bernadette Hillman on 07958 714891 or e-mail
'bernadettehillman@hotmail.com' with any questions

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Theatre
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1:00pm to 2:45pm
(During term time)
Eaton Bray Village Hall

Cheeky monkeys

under fives play time

£1.50 per adult / £1.00 per child / 50p under 1yr

creative play singing
stories baby corner
craft juice & biscuit
tea or coffee and more!

Come along,
make new friends
and join in
the fun!



Eaton Bray Lower School

Summer Fayre

Saturday 13th June
12.00 – 2.30pm

Kick start your summer by coming along to our Summer Fayre.
There's lots to keep all the family entertained including:

- Summer stalls
- Games and prizes
- Photo opportunity with a Star Wars character
- Candy floss
- plus loads more....

Everyone's welcome, we're looking forward to seeing you!



St Mary's Village Carnival 2009

www.stmarysvillagecarnival.com

The theme of this year's Carnival on Saturday July 4th is 'Books' which gives us all fantastic scope for dressing up and getting into the spirit of things. From 'Three Men in a Boat', through 'Ballet Shoes', 'Oliver Twist' and the 'Chronicles of Narnia', there's any number of themes to pick up on. Why not join in the Carnival Procession – it's not just for the younger element! Some of the most successful floats in recent years have come from local businesses such as Janes or The Bell PH. Alternatively, why not get your neighbours involved and enter a float in the procession manned by people in your road? Lack of a vehicle is no barrier – a 'walking float' is the green alternative.

If you'd prefer to watch the Procession rather than be in it, don't forget our competition for the best dressed houses in Eaton Bray and Edlesborough, plus the best dressed business, with cups for the winners generously provided by Edlesborough Autos.

Can you help with Carnival in any other way? Our Carnival is an event for everyone in the village and everyone can contribute to its success. We're in need of:

- Offers of help for the day before and Carnival day itself – manning a stand, setting up the stalls, clearing up, you name it, we can use your help! Whether you can spare just half an hour or the whole day, we'll be very glad of your help.
- Donations of supplies – we need plants for the plant stall, bottles of wine, cakes for the cake stall, old crockery for the plate-smashing – can you help?
- Offers of transport to get equipment to and from Edlesborough Green or to take part in the Procession
- Donations of prizes for the draw
- Donations of items for the silent auction

For any of the above please ring Gordon Gray on 220136, or leave a message on our website – www.stmarysvillagecarnival.com.

We look forward to seeing you – in the procession or on the Green – on 4th July!



Eaton Bray With Edlesborough Mothers Union

At the April meeting, Audrey Reynolds gave an overview of her work with Hospice at Home – with no names or personal information given, of course. This led to other members contributing to a discussion in general terms of the benefits of such voluntary care and assistance in the community and specifically the benefits of a 'friendly visit' to both parties. A special birthday had to be celebrated as Peggy Bearton is now 80 years young and proved it to everyone by wearing an appropriately worded T-shirt, short skirt and seamed tights! As she has obviously had very shapely legs all her life – everyone else was just envious.

**Dunstable & District
Local History Society**
Tuesday 12th May, 7.45pm
History of the River Lea

Our local river,
described by Richard Thomas
Methodist Church Hall, Dunstable
Visitors always welcome

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FOR SALE

Wooden single bed - £20
Dressing table with 3 large draws
and 2 small - £15
Cockatiel with large cage - £15
Contact 07939116262

Eaton Bray Methodist Church

A reminder that our Sunday School Anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday May 10th at 10.30 am with a Family Service led by Ann Pape with our young people.

The following Saturday, May 16th our "Ten o' clock club" are holding a Coffee Morning from 10.00am until 12.00 noon in our School-room. There will be Cakes, Bric-a-Brac and Fancy Goods on sale and the proceeds are to be shared between Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and the Baby Scanner for the Luton & Dunstable Hospital, the groups current project.

Please join us for our CREAM TEAS on Saturday June 6th at Chestnut Lodge, Leighton Road, Great Billington. We can promise lots of fun for all the family, in beautiful surroundings, lots of stalls and scrumptious cream teas and plenty of car parking. All funds raised are for GAZA.



Eaton Bray Methodist Church

CREAM TEAS

To raise funds for GAZA

Homemade cakes
Games & Crockery Smash
Bric-a-brac & Plant Stall
Plenty of Car parking



At Chestnut Lodge, Leighton rd
Great Billington
On A4146 at south end of village

Saturday June 6th 2009
TEAS served 2 to 5pm

Can you think as far ahead as 14th June 2009?

**It will be light. It will be warm.
We will all be enjoying our gardens.
Time then for:**



**OPEN GARDENS
2009**



To stage this successful event for a fourth year we will need some new gardens as well as revisiting favourites from previous years.

Can you help?

If you might be prepared to open your garden either as a newcomer or an old hand please contact Kay Griffiths 01525 222849. You will be contributing to a growing community event and raising money for charity.

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The Heat Is On – Will the Government’s Aspirations of Zero Carbon Living become a Reality?

Did you realise that by 2016, the Government will expect that all new homes that are built will be zero carbon? In order for a house to be classed as being zero carbon, it will have to generate as much power as it uses over the course of a year. For most of us, the idea of having a home that generates enough power to meet its own requirements would appear as likely as the 50 pence litre of petrol. However, the zero carbon home is not a figment of imagination but became a step closer to mass reality with the first four-bedroom house being unveiled in Kent.

The question that begs to be asked is how can we really achieve this?

There is no doubt that meeting this objective will be expensive. In most cases, traditional building materials and construction techniques will not cut the metaphorical mustard and will have to be markedly improved. Where we site a house and how it is orientated will have to be considered. For example, there will be an expectation that new build properties will be orientated in such a way as to maximise space heating from the winter sun and shade from cold northerly winds. Following traditional street patterns may have to be jeopardised in favour of space heating orientation. Don’t be surprised to find that those icy drafts synonymous with older properties will be consigned to history and instead, we can look forward to air tight rooms and entrance lobbies designed to reduce mass migration of heat. All very well but what do we do with the excessively flatulent dog in an airtight room?

The fun doesn’t stop there. We can look forward to motion detection lighting, which means it will only come on when areas within the home are actively populated and intelligent software to prioritise the use of appliances and stagger their use.

Ways of physically generating renewable energy include the use of ground or air source heat pumps for hot water and space heating together with the use of biomass as a fuel. For the generation of electrical power, it is likely that in future, our roofscape will be populated by micro generating wind turbines and banks of gleaming photovoltaic cells adorned to roof planes. This will certainly have an impact upon the appearance of sensitive landscapes and conservation areas.

Our local environment will determine what our buildings will look like. Zero Carbon will mean that road miles will be reduced in favour of using locally sourced materials. Moreover, we can look forward to harvesting our rainwater and recycling it through the use of reed bed technology for example.

There is no doubt that the technology is there but in these times of economic belt tightening, can all those involved in the delivery of homes stomach the additional burden of meeting the zero carbon challenge?

Does the idea of living in a draft proof room do it for you? We look forward to your comments.

For more information on home improvement matters, please visit:-
www.doineedplanningpermission.co.uk

Horse Riding Lessons

Horse riding lessons for adults and children. One to one tuition with use of in door and out door schools, on lovely horse and pony. On the edge of Eaton Bray, near Whipsnade Zoo. Please call Lucy for further details on 07974114412

Getting back into the swing of it

This winter felt like it would never end, however playing with my children making igloos and snowmen was better than going to work! With the improvement in the weather and the later nights came my thinking that I should get out there, catch up with old friends and get back into the swing of tennis. Edlesborough Tennis Club prides itself on providing a great facility for the community to play tennis and gives local children a fantastic way to learn about the game and make new friends. This year we continue to offer very competitive membership at the same time:

- Giving an opportunity to members to win Wimbledon tickets from the annual draw
- Entering a record 11 Junior and Adult teams into the County leagues
- Providing high quality coaching to all ages
- Scheduling social events, including an annual quiz night and Mentmore golf day
- Developing the Club via our online website www.ectennis.org and court booking system
- Offering evening Club nights for Juniors and Seniors, including advanced coaching support to both age groups
- Regularly staying in touch with the members via our comprehensive email database
- Growing our relations with Edlesborough school through a 4 school interschool tournament

Finally I wanted to give special congratulations to the Under 13 boys' team this winter who won their league only conceding 2 points. Well done.

If you would like to learn more about the Club, become a member or find out about the various Coaching lessons, please visit our website.

Regards.

Alistair Bennett, Club Development Officer.



Dunstable & District Orbit Club

Working for the Community

Dunstable & District Orbit Club have been busy in the last few months as we helped Round Table with their Christmas float in Dunstable in December, had an open evening at the Rugby Club in January, a coffee morning at the Methodist Church in Dunstable in February and raised £94 for charity. We have just held our annual quiz night on 4th April at Eaton Bray Village Hall for Cancer Backup and raised over £800 for Macmillan Cancer.

The club meet every 1st and 3rd Tuesday at the Rugby Club in Houghton Regis at 8pm and welcomes new faces who would like to meet new people, raise money for charity, socialise and also have fun.

For more information contact Jill on 01525 222441 or Steve on 01582 755147.

Jill Richards, Publicity Officer



Edlesborough Book Group Review



The Secret River by Kate Grenville

Edlesborough Book Group recently read Kate Grenville's novel, *The Secret River*, which was shortlisted for the 2006 Man Booker Prize. Most members thought this a good read with a super sense of place brought about by Grenville's attention to detail and historical research. The novel is set in the late eighteenth century and her protagonist is William Thornhill, an uneducated and ignorant Thames waterman. Convicted of theft, Thornhill is transported to New South Wales where he works hard and becomes a freeman. His successful trading business takes him to the eerie wildness and backwater of the Hawksbury river where he glimpses a piece of fertile, and seemingly untouched, land. But his confused perceptions and actions to lay claim to this particular spot bring the family into conflict with the mysterious "blacks" who are never far away. From the very first page, Grenville engineers a sense of foreboding and an implicit threat of violence. There is little direct dialogue; rather the story is narrated through Thornhill's consciousness and indirect speech, so readers share his intimate secrets of the horrors that lie out in the wilderness; secrets even kept from his loyal wife, Sal. Ultimately Thornhill, the white settler, is forced to make a terrible decision to ensure his proprietorial dreams.

This book is dedicated to "the Aboriginal people of Australia: past, present and future" and was written after Kate Grenville had participated in Australia's 2000 Walk for Reconciliation. It is based her ancestor, Solomon Wiseman, who was strong, shrewd and ruthless and driven by a passion to see his family prosper. With the story grounded in truth, we debated many of its themes which unfortunately seemed to raise concerns which remain relevant today.

Edlesborough Under 5's

The children have been busy making Mother's day cards and presents and learning about Easter. The Easter workshop was well attended with the children making flower bouquets, chocolate egg nests, Easter decorations and other activities. Over the Easter holidays, part of the outside area has been improved by the addition of 2 spongy tarmac areas. Thank you to everyone involved in preparing the outside area for this.

Our annual **Easter Egg Hunt** was a extremely popular with 100 children and their families walking around the village searching for clues, ending at the hall for their prize, refreshments and other activities. The winners of the various hall activities are:

Colouring competition (judged by Sam Kennell from 'Buds of May' florist):

Age under 5 winner is: Grace Hoard, Age 4

Age 5-7 winner is: Oscar Hopkins, Age 6

Age 8+ winner is: Eshe Taylor, Age 8

You can view the winner posters in the shop window.

The **name of the chick** was Clementine so the winner was Oscar Hopkins.

The **cake** weighed 2.3kg and the Winner was Mr. Talbot

The number of **sweets in the jar** was 102. The winner was Jade Ginger.

The **Quiz & Thai Curry night** was a huge success so watch this space for the next one. The Quiz and Easter Egg Hunt have raised funds which, with a Community Chest Grant from Aylesbury Vale District Council, have paid for the outside area tarmac. We will also be purchasing some additional ride-on toys. Thank you to everyone who helped and donated items to the events.



Letters to the Editors



Dear Editor

I am writing in response to a letter that appeared in last month's Focus regarding the proposed Skateboard Park intended for Eaton Bray.

I am somewhat dismayed that in today's democratic society, that concerns raised by some residents who are not in support of the project, were met with such an unnecessarily aggressive tone by certain individuals who are in favour.

It is exactly this type of provocative and patronising response as articulated in the published letter, that it would seem validates, and re-affirms that, the decision of the opposing residents to remain anonymous was obviously the right one!

There are some people in society, who prefer to live quietly and without drawing public attention to themselves, for example; by choosing not to walk the streets of Eaton Bray wearing a cowboy hat !

But, from time-to-time, feel they have a right to voice their opinion, be it anonymously or otherwise, without being in receipt of such hostile retribution and intimidating behaviour.

Quite what the author of last month's letter is proposing should he meet these poor people 'face-to-face' is extremely disconcerting and frankly, worrying. Perhaps it is not the 'undesirables' that it is suggested that the skate park may attract that we should be fearful of, but the 'bullies' living amongst us.

Perhaps, with respect, if the Parish Council had raised greater awareness for the initial public consultation regarding the project, then those opposing residents may not have felt it to be necessary to raise awareness themselves.

However, for, or against, the project, we obviously all feel very passionately about the village in which we live, which is a good thing!

Let's hope that moving on from this, we can ensure that we choose to respect and value each other's viewpoint and contribution on projects that will impact our community.

That should be the end of this childish behaviour!

Yours sincerely

A Resident of Eaton Bray, (choosing to remain anonymous, but within my right to voice my point of view)!

Dear Editor

I respond to the letter sent by the cowboy hatted person who lives in the Nurseries close to Eaton Bray Park on the subject of the proposed skate park.

He presumes that persons unknown delivered a letter (including to my own home) objecting to the venture under the cover of darkness as they did not want to be known. What an assumption on his behalf, to use his own phrase.

I also live in the Nurseries and have lived in Eaton Bray for 30 years so know the village well. I do not feel that the proposal to build a skate park is good use of £27,000 from the council and a further £33,000 raised through sponsorships, a lot of money for such a small group of individuals who would reap the benefits.

I have spoken to one member of EBPC and my understanding is they received a presentation from a group of young persons to request funds to build the skate park. In itself this a commendable achievement for these individuals, however my issue is the amount of money involved for such a small group of people. £60,000 is a lot of money. Perhaps other groups in the village will follow the

example of these young people and look for significant funding for their own ventures.

When I look at the proposed position for this site, it is close to the school and the young children's play area. The play area is regularly vandalised and along with the school, is strewn with litter (generally beer cans and take away food wrappings). If money is available why not build a base for the current swings and climbing frames because when it rains the kids cannot use the play area as it turns into a mud bath.

Despite the opinion of the Parish Council, skate parks and youth meeting points are areas subject to vandalism, graffiti and anti social behaviour. This will affect a large proportion of our community, certainly more than it is expected to benefit. We keep going back to the skate park at Hemel Hempstead. I appreciate that this is much larger than the one planned for our park, but it does attract a large amount of youths, some not always for the skating and BMX facilities. However, it is located well away from people's homes and therefore the effects of the anti social behaviour are minimised. We will have no such luxury as our park is just too small and surrounded by residential streets. The people living close to the park will, in my opinion, have increased noise to deal with and no doubt they will have a say about this in time to come.

I fully agree that the young people of our village do need support. I raised my own children in this village and as one of a group of parents we arranged activities and youth groups. The one disadvantage of living in a village is that facilities are scarce for all groups of people, particularly those that cannot travel into the local towns – therefore we have to be creative! Take the Cheeky Monkey's group for example. A few parents of young children have committed themselves to resurrecting the under 5's playtime at the Village Hall, so all local parents with young children can reap the benefits. And how much did they ask the Parish Council for to achieve this - £200!

So come on EBPC and parents of our young people, use the £60,000 to better effect so many more of them can benefit, not just such a small group of skateboarders and BMX riders.

Ken Coates

The Steam Railway Comes to Eaton Bray

Anybody who wanders into the church hall in Eaton Bray on the first Sunday afternoon of the month will be in for a treat, for that is where the members of the Bedfordshire branch of the 16mm Narrow Gauge Railway Modellers hold their monthly get together and demonstrate their locomotives and rolling stock.

The models, which are steam powered - some using coal or a fuel - are 1/19th of the size of the real thing. Some members have purchased the engines, carriages & wagons ready made, some are built from bits - but a few are scratch built & represent thousands of hours of painstaking work. All represent a wonderful spectacle as they chuff their way along the 32mm gauge track.

Most members have a general interest in narrow gauge railways & their models are based on a "feel" for the prototype. In some cases members focus their interest on a particular narrow gauge railway - such as the famous Ffestiniog Railway in North Wales - and set out to model all aspects of their chosen line. But above all the pleasure comes from running a working, live, steam engine.

So why not call in and on a Sunday afternoon and enjoy the spectacle.

You may even want to become a member!

The next meetings are: May 3rd, May 31st, July 5th & September 6th.





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Table Corner

Following my last article in Focus (April 2009 edition), entitled “Are we what we eat”, I was challenged to provide an easy (yet delicious!) French recipe. Personally I think that a gratin dauphinois is one of the most fragrant French potato dishes, which can be served in an incredible variety of ways. For example, you could serve it with a salad for a light meal or as a side dish with smoked fish or grilled meats. So here is my recipe:

Serves: 6

Preparation time: 20 mins

Cooking time: 1 hr 30 mins

Ingredients

- 45g butter plus some extra for greasing
- 900g waxy potatoes (e.g. Charlotte or Maris Peer), peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground pepper
- 600ml double cream
- 1 garlic clove, cut in half
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- 250g gruyere cheese, grated

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Butter an ovenproof gratin dish.
2. Rinse the potato slices in cold water, drain, and pat dry with kitchen paper or clean tea towels.
3. Arrange half the potatoes in layers in the prepared ovenproof dish. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Bring the cream to the boil in a saucepan with the garlic and nutmeg.
5. Pour half the cream over the potatoes.
6. Sprinkle with half the cheese.
7. Repeat steps 3, 5 and 6.
8. Dot the top with a few knobs of butter.
9. Cover with aluminium foil and place in the oven for about 1–1½ hours (until the potatoes are tender).
10. During the last 10 minutes of cooking, remove the foil and increase the heat to 210°C to allow the cheese to become golden.
11. Serve hot, straight from the oven.

If you want to save some pennies, you can omit the gruyere. It will still taste delicious.

Let me know how it goes!

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Edlesborough Parish Council (including Edlesborough, Dagnall and Northall) News

2009 Return dates of the Village Freighter

Edlesborough	Tues 19th May	12noon-3.30pm in the Memorial Hall Car Park
Dagnall	Tues 19th May	7.30am–11am in Dagnall Village Hall Car Park
Northall	Wed 22nd July	7.30am – 11am in Northall Village Hall Car Park

Dates of second visit:

Edlesborough	Tues 24th November	7.30am – 11am
Dagnall	Thurs 19th November	7.30am – 11am
Northall	Wed 25th November	12noon – 3.30pm

Cemetery Access

Work has commenced on the new Cemetery Access and a turning area has already been constructed off the bridleway. It is hoped that by the time this Focus issue is received the remaining works will have been completed and Hearses will be able to have a better access to the Cemetery without having to travel across the Churchyard.

Play Around the Parishes

Following two very successful visits to Edlesborough, Dagnall and Northall AVDC will be returning again this year during the Summer school holiday, dates yet to be advised.

Streetlighting

All streetlights are now operating and parishioners are asked to notify the Clerk of any faults. The lights at Church End, Edlesborough should be operating as soon as EDF Energy have connected the relevant cables and a new light fitting is to be put on the pole at the junction of Studham Lane and Dunstable Road, Dagnall.

Anti Social Behaviour

Edlesborough are still experiencing problems with anti social behaviour and the Police will be carrying out further patrols of the area.

Development at rear of The Swan, Northall

Following numerous complaints by the Parish Council the Developers have now improved the road and verge surfaces, but further work still requires to be carried out.

Traffic Calming

A recent speed check was carried out in Dagnall resulting in 1 in 5 cars/lorries exceeding the speed limit.

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Lin Sargeant – Clerk to Edlesborough Parish Council – Tel: 01525 220859, E-mail: parish.council.clerk@edlesborough.gov.uk, Website: www.edlesborough.gov.uk

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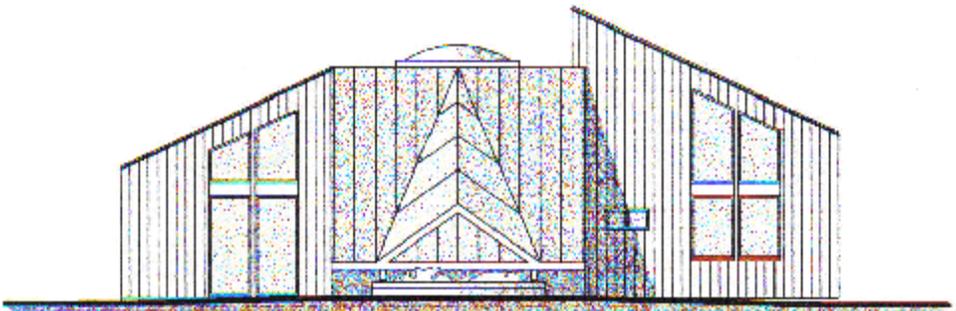
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Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity

Charity No.1119499

Florence Nightingale Hospice offers care to those facing the challenge of cancer and other life-limiting illnesses. Through the inpatient unit, day hospice and specialist care at home, we can often improve quality of life and help people get the best from their time remaining — whether that be days, months or years.

To support this very special service for local people, the charity raises £450,000 every year from voluntary donations — fundraising events, legacies, collecting boxes, charity shops and the Hospice Lottery. Costs are kept to a minimum through the invaluable help of our volunteer service.

[wwwfnhospice.org.uk](http://www.fnhospice.org.uk)

Could You Give Something Back and be a Volunteer?

2 hours a week can make a real difference to peoples' lives

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If you would like to volunteer but are not sure which area you would prefer, please call Sue Jenkins, Volunteer Services Manager for a chat on 01296 332600.

Letter to the Editors



Dear Editors

My name is Dave King and I live in the Nurseries.

I am organising and participating, along with 12 colleagues, in a charity walk on behalf of Help for Heroes at the beginning of May. You may have seen me walking around the village and surrounding areas with my brown leather hat, orange rucksack and Help for Heroes t-shirt undertaking training. In fact next Sunday 12th April there will be half a dozen or more of us undertaking a training walk of approx 18.5 miles, starting from the Nurseries and taking in Ivinghoe Beacon, the Downs Visitors Centre and Totternhoe Knolls.

SO WHAT ARE WE DOING IN MAY?

We're taking part in the The Big Yomp starting 1st May 2009 to raise money for Help for Heroes and we'd really appreciate your support. The Big Yomp is an 80 mile walk in the Peak District averaging 16 miles a day for 5 days emulating the march from Ajax Bay to Port Stanley during the Falkland's Conflict.

We are not a group of ex-squaddies or para's who are looking to prove they can still do it. We are Mechanics, Safety Managers, Sales Managers, Engineers, Managing Directors all sorts of people who just want to feel they are doing something to help our brave forces personnel who put their lives on the line every day, not only in Iraq or Afghanistan but in the many peace keeping actions around the world.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

"What is H4H all about? It's about the blokes, our men and women. It's about Derri, a rugby player who has lost both his legs, it's about Carl whose jaw is wired up so he has been drinking through a straw. It's about Richard who was handed a mobile phone as he lay on the stretcher so he could say goodbye to his wife. It is about Ben, it's about Steven and Andy and Mark, it's about them all. They are just blokes but they are our blokes; they are our heroes. We want to help our heroes."

You can help us reach our target of raising £20k by donating online at www.thebigyomp.org.uk or www.justgiving.com/thebigyomp or by contacting me directly on 07983231780.

Dagnall Weather Station (AONB)

March saw the outgoing winter fighting the incoming spring with some bright sunny days and frosty nights. On the 18th of March at 15.30hr it was 16.6°C and by 04.00hr the next day it had dropped to -0.3°C. In 12.5 hours the temperature changed by 16.9°C.

I have had some comments about the number of “rain days” that I list. The equipment is so sensitive that it records levels as low as 0.2 mm because it also measures the moisture when frost melts and in dense fog or mist. So from now on I will show two figures *T*= **total rain days and moisture recorded** and *R*= **Actual rain** days above 0.2mm. See the chart and plot below.

The Dagnall weather station is now live on the web with 15 mins updates from approx 0800-2200 hours each day. <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/dagnallweather>.

If anyone has a question, comment or wishes to contact me please email me: davidgkillick@tiscali.co.uk

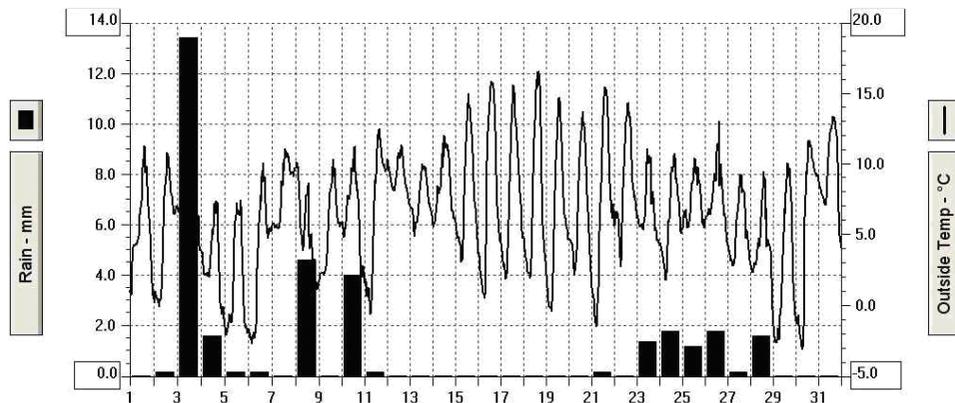


Weather Conditions for March 2009

Elevation: 450 ft – Latitude: 51° 50' 13" North - Longitude: 0° 33' 34" West

	High	Date/Time	Low	Date/Time
Temperature:	16.6°C	18 March 15.30	- 3.1°C	30 March 06.30
Mean Temperature	6.5°C			
Dewpoint:	8.7°C	12 March 14.30	- 4.6°C	30 March 06.30
Humidity:	96%	11 & 13 March	42%	18 March 15.30
Barometer:	1035.9 hPa	17 March 21.00	980.5 hPa	4 March 04.30
Wind Speed	46 mph S	3 March 04.00	Months avg.	6.4 mph
Wind Chill:	16.5 °C	18 March 15.00	- 4.1°C	6 March 6.30
Dominant Wind:	WNW			
Rainfall * <i>T</i> = total rain days and moisture . <i>R</i> = Actual rain				
*Rain Days: 15 (T), 9 (R)		Wettest Day 3 March	13.4 mm	0.53 ins
Monthly Rain:	Total	March	32.60 mm	1.28 ins
Yearly Rain:	Total	3 Months	160.80 mm	6.33 ins

Temperature and Rain for March 2009



Cheeky Monkeys Under Five's Playtime

We have enjoyed making cards, pasta necklaces and fairy cakes for Mothers' day, and have held an Easter raffle to help raise some much needed extra funds. We are looking forward to lots more activities, and now that the summer is nearly here we hope to open up the hall doors and bring the outdoor toys into the sun!

Our thanks this month go to Garden Scene Eaton Bray for providing us with our cress and mustard seeds which, by the time this goes to print, the children will have sown. We would also like to thank those who have "stepped" in to help whilst Louise rests her broken ankle!

If you have not visited us yet, we are a friendly mother and toddler group, which meets each Wednesday during term time at 1pm in Eaton Bray village hall. No booking is required, just turn up! The hall is very spacious and bright with lovely views over the hills. It's a great place to let your child loose with painting, playdough and chalk, just the things that you may not want to do in your own home! You can even let us clear the mess up at the end! We charge £1.50 per adult, £1 per child over one and 50p per child under one. Tea and coffee is served at 1.45pm, when the children sit down for a drink and a biscuit. There is always singing to end the afternoon.

Dates for your diary: On May 20th there will be biscuits to decorate, and on June 17th come along and make a card and stone paperweight for Fathers' day. Don't forget we will be closed on 27th May due to half term, reopening on 3rd June.

Cheeky Monkeys is run by three volunteer parents, Sarah, 07904 348113, Louise, 07784 165259 and Sue, 01525 222387. For enquiries please contact anyone of us. We look forward to welcoming you.

Totternhoe Mums and Tots Group

This is great fun for a Tuesday morning. Masses of toys to play with, from baby toys to doll's houses to toy cars to race around on, Totternhoe Toddler group has been a great part of our community. Having recently taken it on, I have been impressed by the huge amount of toys in various store cupboards, and the St. Giles church hall is an ideal place for lots of over-exuberant little ones who need to expend some energy.

We currently run on Tuesday mornings, from 9.30 to 11.30, and have facility to make teas and coffees for the mums.

As a mother of Luke, who is my handsome chap about to hit his first birthday, I have found it to be a place of support and friendship for me during the first year of motherhood. Of course, watching Luke with the other babies his age has also been fun, and it is clear to see his growing abilities as he plays in the same place, with the same children, each week. I am so grateful to have a local group in which he can meet and play with little ones his own age, developing friendships and connections which could last for many years.

Eaton Bray Village Hall 100 Club Winners March 2009

24	P & J Hale	£100
151	John Rollo	£25
75	Conrad Jepson	£25
56	Michelle Reddington	£25
4	Katrina Hurley	£25

Drawn on 20th March 2009 at Eaton Bray Lower School. Please direct any correspondence to Ross Bagni, 71 Bower Lane, Eaton Bray, Bedfordshire, LU6 1RB, Telephone: 01525 221411.

Salvation Sound...May 2009

“March winds and April showers, bring forth May flowers.”

“Cast not a clout ‘till May be out.”

“There are twelve months in all the year, as I hear many men say, But thy merriest month in all the year, is the merry month of May”.

“Let no man boast himself that he has got through the perils of winter ‘till at least the 7th of May.”

“Green are the thoughts of youth and gardeners fingers;

Green is the happy memory that lingers;

Green is the weed grown seas unfathomed deep,

Green is the tropic jungles sweltered heat;

but greenest of all, though Englishmen Complain,

Is England’s Springtime, grown from England’s rain”.

“Among the many buds proclaiming May, decking the fields in holiday array, Striving who shall surpass in braverie, Marke the faire flowering of the hawthorn tree, who finely clothed in a robe of white, fills full the wanton eye with May’s delight.”

To me May is not only a spring month - it is the herald of summer. That long awaited time when hedgerows are a living green as new life flows into our countryside. The woods hive carpets of anemones and wood sorrel, and the bluebells reflect the skies. Bird song abounds, the buzz of bees and other insects can be heard. Nature is a timeless inspiration to artists, poets and composers. The artist can create a visual interpretation of his surroundings. The poet conjures a picture in rhyme. The composer notates his feelings in the sounds carried on the air.

Just think what a wonderful God we have who can create all of these things. Paul Gerhardt lived in the 17th century and wrote more than 100 hymns; one of them, “Holy Spirit, Scource of Gladness” contains these lines -

“Let that love which knows no measure

Now in quickening showers descend,

Bringing us the richest treasures

Man can wish or God can send”.

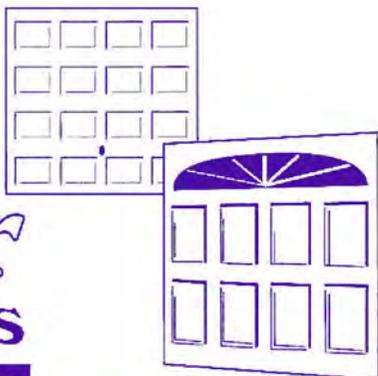
A flower is a thing of loveliness. It contains sweet nectar, it gives forth a pleasing aroma; but its beauty and lifetime is very brief; the beauties of nature inspire and fill us with wonder, our world is full of things that bring us joy and pleasure, but true fulfillment only comes when Christ we love and treasure. Psalm: 103: 15-16-17. says, :
“As for us, our life is like grass, We grow and flourish like a wild flower; then the wind blows on it, and it is gone - no-one sees it again. But for those who honour the Lord, his love lasts forever.”

Dostoyevsky wrote a book entitled “The Brothers Karamazov”, it contained this passage. “Love all God’s creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God’s light. Love the animals, love the plants, everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things.”



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