



Website [www.ststephensra.org](http://www.ststephensra.org)  
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Dear Residents

Although there are still thousands of cases of Covid 19, life does seem to be becoming more normal and we are planning various events for the spring and summer with fingers firmly crossed. The most notable of these is the **Big Jubilee Picnic** that will take place on June 5<sup>th</sup> from 12.30 on the playing field next to the church. This is a joint venture with St Michael's Road Area Residents' Association, the WI, the League of Friends, the church and other local groups. There will be music, face painting, stalls, entertainment for all age groups, teas and all sorts of traditional games and fun. St Michael's Road and Area RA will provide toasts so make sure you bring a glass or cup! There will be exhibitions and a chance to meet neighbours and friends and to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee together.

We have also planned **two tabletop sales**. These are mini-indoor boot fairs or garage sales that allow members to sell all the unwanted items that gather in our homes and pass them on to someone who will use or value them. Please let me know if you would like a table.

The **Gardening Interest Group** have planned several events to which everyone is welcome, and the WI are continuing their wonderful **Reduce, Re-use, Recycle** events so this year will be a welcome change from the restrictions that have become almost a way of life.

Mary has agreed to organise our next **Arts and Crafts Fair** on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is much earlier than usual but we don't want to be caught unprepared by further Covid problems so you can do your Christmas shopping a little earlier in 2022....

This is the time of year to collect **subscriptions**. Even if you pay electronically, it would be very helpful if you could complete the membership form and deliver it to your street rep so that they have a list of members in their cluster. I would really appreciate it if you could pay before the end of May.

Here, I must thank the committee who do so much that is unseen by most of our members. Alan is a treasured treasurer, Chris Molony the most reliable secretary, Maria keeps me, and therefore you, informed about NW and Jennifer attends meetings and keeps us up to date with other groups. Alison has taken on the Garden Interest Groups and Chris, Lindy, Simon, Felicity, Sue and Ron all contribute to the smooth running of our Association.

Finally, thank you to our street reps who keep us together and to you all. We have a thriving and successful RA because of our members who respond to requests for help, advice or support and who are unfailingly positive and kind and who make it a pleasure for me to be part of our Association.

With best wishes, as always, Pauline

## Making the most of our gardens

Whether you have thrown yourself into gardening during lock down, or still look out of your window and despair, your neighbours have a few events that may help.

### **Planting a pot with drought resistant plants**      Saturday 30 April

118 St Stephens Road Drop in anytime between 10am - 12pm

- Plants and gravel provided
- Bring your own 10-12cm pot

### **Plant swap**      Sunday 29 May

19 Moorfield Drop in anytime between 10am - 12pm

- Share any spare seedlings or make a small donation and take away a few choice specimens
- Find some new plants to try
- Talk to your neighbours about their tips and tricks

### **Open Gardens**      2 – 4pm

An opportunity to see how others respond to our various gardening challenges, the triumphs and disasters – but always a work in progress. The dates are **July 2<sup>nd</sup> and July 16<sup>th</sup>**.

Please, please **contact us** if you will open your garden for members to enjoy.

### **Visit to RHS Wisley Gardens**

There will be a coach trip to RHS Wisley on Sunday 26th June. Entry will be free since SSRA is an affiliated RHS member but a charge of £25.00 per head will be made to cover the cost of the coach and a guided tour of the gardens. Please e-mail [ststephensra@gmail.com](mailto:ststephensra@gmail.com) if you are interested in taking part in the visit .

### **Gardening Interest Group**

There are a couple of people who organise these gardening events, but we would love to have a few more volunteers. It's not onerous, we meet a couple of times a year to plan the programme and share a few tasks out to make sure it happens. You don't have to have green fingers – just an interest in trying to grow things.

## Neighbourhood Watch

Canterbury & District Neighbourhood Watch Association (C&DNHWA) provides support and advice to local schemes across much of East Kent. As your NHW contact, Maria Thomas receives information from the Police and passes it on to Pauline Walters to relay to RA members via email. Occasionally we will be notified of a particular scam or criminal activity which is particularly relevant to our area and in those cases, Pauline will send out an urgent email to alert everyone to this.

Sadly, no one is immune from crime and no guarantee can be given that can prevent crime from happening, but it continues to be the case that areas covered by NHW schemes tend to be safer and more mutually inclusive. Members who receive warnings and advice issued by statutory agencies

which support NHW are better informed and hopefully better able to protect themselves from fraud, scams and criminal activity.

In addition to the information received from the Police, the Canterbury and District NHW publish a regular newsletter, extracts of which Pauline also includes in her emails to RA members as appropriate. The full Newsletter can be viewed on their website [www.canterbury-and-district-nhw.org](http://www.canterbury-and-district-nhw.org)

You could also join the Facebook group: “Canterbury and District Neighbourhood Watch Association” which provides updates of police activities, news of events and a wide array of information.

### **Cuckooing - an emerging risk in Canterbury**

The Police recently presented on an issue that they have seen more of in the district. ‘Cuckooing’ is where Drug dealers (especially those involved in ‘County Lines’) target homes of vulnerable adults, which can include students.

The police are disrupting the practice and making it difficult for dealers but do need help from the community. Residents Associations are therefore being asked to be vigilant.

Signs to look out for at properties:

- Increased frequency of ‘comings and goings’
- Increased volume of litter outside property
- Increase in anti-social behaviour
- Evidence of drug use / lots of late-night parties
- Students who register at university, pay fees; but don’t turn up on campus or attend lectures

Please report any concerns to the Kent Police Online or dial 101.

**Maria Thomas, Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator**

## **The Big Jubilee Lunch**

To coincide with the Platinum Jubilee, The Big Jubilee Lunch will be taking place on **Sunday 5 June**. Every year since the idea began in 2009, The Big Lunch has encouraged communities to celebrate their connections and get to know each other better. Following the success of the first Big Jubilee Lunch, to celebrate Her Majesty’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012, The Big Lunch will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community again in 2022.

Here in St Stephen’s, we will be celebrating with a picnic for everyone on the field next to the church. The event will begin at 12.30 and there will be *stalls, entertainment for children, face painting, music, light refreshments and exhibitions in the church hall and in the church.*

Apart from your picnic, you may want to bring seating and perhaps a pop-up gazebo [the weather is somewhat unpredictable in early June!] and the League of Friends and the Garden Interest Group **would be very pleased to receive donations of cakes or plants for their stalls.**

Everyone is also invited to see the exhibitions-in the church, of paintings and photographs of St Stephen's and in the church hall about our local history. We would love to receive items for either or both of these.

Any offers of help with the celebration either with the organisation or perhaps in setting up a stall or a traditional fair entertainment, please contact Pauline Walters at [paulinewalters25@gmail.com](mailto:paulinewalters25@gmail.com), Richard Norman at [richardnorman1943@gmail.com](mailto:richardnorman1943@gmail.com) or Felicity Tasker at [felicity-tasker@hotmail.com](mailto:felicity-tasker@hotmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you there.

### TableTop Sales/ Mini Garage Sales/ Indoor Boot Fair

Too many toys? books? jigsaws? bric-a-brac? pictures? plants? unwanted gifts?  
ornaments?

Need a clear out?

These TableTop sales are just for you, on April 30<sup>th</sup> and /June 18<sup>th</sup> from 11 am until  
3pm in the church hall.

Tables cost £5

Contact - [paulinewalters25@gamil.com](mailto:paulinewalters25@gamil.com) for more details

### **St Stephen's Village – memories of times gone by**

In the period just after World War 2, St Stephen's was just like a village. Most of the children in the area went to the old school [opposite the Olde Beverlie] so they all grew up knowing each other before going on to secondary school. The pub, the village hall and the church were the centre of the area. Most of the old men also knew each other as they had been members of the local Home Guard unit. The local allotment holders held their annual show in the hall-it really felt like being part of a village. The rector was the reverend A R Barnes and he christened, married and even buried most of his flock!

There were not many cars about so people walked a lot more than they do now. There were grocery shops, one in Hales Drive owned by Charlie Piddock, who had been a sergeant in the Home Guard and the other on St Stephen's corner where the newsagent is now. The one on the end was the grocery, nearest to the road. Of course, there were no supermarkets.

I was a teenager and the generation before me had all returned from the war safely, except one. His name was Arthur Pinnock and he had lived in Cotton Mill Cottages, a row of terraced houses which ran along the riverside at Broad Oak Road. His friends wanted to do something to remember him, so they got together and formed St Stephen's Memorial Sports Club. Mr Cashmore, a local businessman,

became Chairman and the club was well organised and became a great success. The club joined the Canterbury and District Football League and was soon winning matches and eventually formed three teams of St Stephen's Memorial [the first team] St Stephen's Reserves and Beverley Rangers. Although I was very keen, I only managed a few games for the Beverley Rangers. One team played on St Stephen's Rec [next to the church] every Saturday during the season. There was no football played on Sundays as it was considered a special day. The club held a summer fete on the Rec. to raise funds. As junior members, we looked after the coconut shy. To us, it was a really enjoyable day and most of our friends and parents managed to take a coconut home!

The first team won the division of the Canterbury and District League. To celebrate we had a great party in the village hall where the trophy was to be presented. We invited Graveney Village, the team who had finished bottom of the League. One of the lads made a wooden spoon which was ceremoniously presented to them. It was the first time in my life that I can remember such a great night.

I don't know how long the club existed as things were quickly changing. We youngsters were going away for our two years of National Service and many new houses and new schools were being built but I believe that the club can be very proud of the memorial they created for Arthur. Sadly, St Stephen's Village has long gone and only remembered by a few of us- **from a Golden Oldie**

### **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

The ladies of the local Women's Institute have held three successful '**Swap Shops**' in St Stephen's Church Hall. Instead of having our houses full of things we don't need or use anymore, locals are encouraged to bring them to a 'Swap Shop' where items are put out (*think of a set-up similar to a Boot or Jumble Sale, but more organised!*) and anyone can come, browse and take any of the items for FREE – yes, FREE! Some people feel they would like to give a monetary donation, and in these cases, all monies go to The Pilgrims Hospice. Likewise, all items left at the end of the morning are donated to The Pilgrims Hospice charity shop.

These three 'Shops', have not only helped to declutter homes, but have also added to people's lives – for everybody. A gentleman picked up some drums which had been a lifelong ambition to play but he could never justify paying out for some; a local amateur artist was able to pick up some always-needed equipment; future Christmas / Birthday presents were sourced and books, ornaments, toys and clothing were obtained by a wide variety of locals including students, refugees, grandparents for future-visiting-grandchildren and also people who had simply not yet come across the item before and were delighted to have an opportunity to give it new life. ALL persons who popped by, whether they took away anything or not, left having been made to feel part of a community. No matter how big or little, if you're not using it, then please feel free to bring along donations or come along and have a nose and/or a natter!

The next 'Swap Shop' is **Saturday 7th May 10am-12pm, St Stephens Church Hall**. For any queries regarding this 'Swap' or our fabulous local W.I., please contact Fliss : [info@ststephenswicanterbury.co.uk](mailto:info@ststephenswicanterbury.co.uk)

## Old Park / New Plans

*'They paved paradise and put up a parking lot.'* Joni Mitchell (1970)

This is the repeated refrain of a song that was a hit over fifty years ago, 'Big Yellow Taxi'. For many it still sums up what seems to be happening today to much of this not quite so 'green and pleasant land', and particularly to this county, the shrinking garden of England. Are we about to lose another paradise? Paradise might not be a term you associate with one of Canterbury's best kept secrets, the 250 acres of mixed heath and woodland, known as Old Park and Chequers Wood but many have discovered its neglected beauty during lock down.

This large area, which I will call Old Park for short, lies at the back of the former Howe Barracks. It stretches all the way to Fordwich. Until recently much of it was used as a training area by the soldiers garrisoned in Canterbury. The army spared it the pesticides and herbicides so prevalent in post-war farming so that flowers, trees, insects and animals flourish there as they did pre-war. The woodland is more ancient and diverse than the commercial plantations typical of the Blean. This has led to a greater variety of plant and animal life in Old Park, including much rarer species like Nightingales and Turtle Doves. It also acts as a sponge to soak up rainfall and help relieve the load on our drains and rivers that can lead to flooding.

Old Park has the potential to be an even greater wildlife sanctuary and amenity for the district with the support of a newly formed friends' group. They want to improve access and appropriate use of the area while at the same discouraging fly tipping, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. It could also become a link in a green chain of other similar areas in East Kent connected by wild-life corridors that allow not only humans but other creatures and plants to travel, intermingle and thrive.

It is unlikely that Old Park will be built upon entirely or all at once but already there are proposals to build a new road across it and the housing planned to replace the council offices will also extend into it. Few would deny that the Council face difficult decisions in meeting district housing needs. But whilst we may have to build more places in which to live, we also have to keep this a place still worth living in and a place that can face the challenges of existing and predicted weather patterns. Therefore, please consider joining the 'Friends of Old Park and Chequers' Wood'. There is a Face Book Group and an on-line petition at Change.Org. If we act now, we might even be spared the necessity of echoing another line from Joni's timeless classic:

*'You don't know what you've got 'till it's gone.'*

Friends of Old Park and Chequers Wood

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/943956842848718/>

Protect Old Park and Chequer's Wood from development petition at Change.Org

Chris McDonnell

## St Stephen's Residents' Association Membership Form

Name.....

Address.....

Email address.....

Phone number.....

**Paying by cash or cheque:** Please complete this form with your subscription, which is £5 per household and place in an envelope. Deliver to your street representative.

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### Payment by electronic transfer [BACS]

Our account details:

Bank Account Number: 01666767

Sort Code: 30-91-60

Account Name: St Stephen's Residents' Association

Please include the first line of your address in the reference are. If necessary [more than 18 characters including spaces] please use the following abbreviations:

St Stephen's Road	SSR
St Stephen's Hill	SSH
St Stephen's Court	SSCo
St Stephen's Close	SSCl
St Stephen's Green	SSG

**Don't forget your house number!**

**If you are a new member, please complete the membership form and give it to your street rep.**