

The Newsletter of Dodleston Parish Council

LocalLife

Edition 40 Summer / July 2021



in this issue...

- Celebrating 150 years of Dodleston CE Primary School
- Observing and encouraging wildlife
- Another great season for our cricket team

Welcome all...



Roger Taylor - Editor

Such sweet sorrow. We bid a fond goodbye to Mrs Joanne Robertson after her sixteen years at Dodleston School. She rose from a part-timer to become the Senior Teacher. Sad to lose her but happy for her – in her promotion to a headship in Runcom. We haven't lost her entirely – she is coming back as a Parent Governor. Turn to the centre pages for photographs from the last sixteen years – who from those times can you identify?

Happy Birthday to the School Building – 150 years old on July 24th. Read the fascinating article about the history of education in Dodleston from our esteemed historian, Bernard Dennis.

Congratulations our cricket team – recently promoted, they currently top their new league. Have you tried **Lynsey the foot doctor?** Very good.

Read these articles and so much more in your latest issue of Local Life.

Solar Power Charity Helps Village Hall

Dodleston Village Foundation were successful in winning a £750 grant to install LED lighting in the hall, reducing running costs and our Carbon footprint. The grant was given by the Chester Community Energy Benefit fund, which, in 2021, also funded the Neuro Therapy centre in Saltney, Tarporley Community Centre, and the Cheshire Halton & Warrington Race Equality Centre.

Chester Community Energy raises funds to finance renewable energy projects by offering shares to the public. Interest is given on the investment from the generated income, as well as providing £5,000 to their 2021 Benefit fund awards.



Whodunnit? - Dog Poo on the DVF Field

Thankfully not the next socially distanced outdoor amateur dramatic production but a real question. A question that many Dodleston residents or visitors may ask when finding an abandoned pile of dog poop while they are otherwise enjoying the open space next to the church.

Of course, this is an issue that affects all areas where dogs are walked or exercised including the fields and footways around Dodleston and the sports field. In all cases the owner's devoted companion, after digesting a nice bowl of food, will need help in clearing up what comes naturally. Finding a stick and flicking it into a hedge maybe an option elsewhere but not on the DVF field.

The DVF field has a children's play area and a separate fenced section for pre-school age children and is often used for outdoor activities by the school in Dodleston. So, the DVF committee have for many years requested that all dogs be kept on a lead when using the field and put up signs to make this clear. But at a time when pet ownership has been increasing, the number of dogs seen off the lead has been also more frequent. This may be partly to blame for the increase in abandoned dog poo because most dog owners are responsible and will be prepared to clear up after their dog.

In some cases, dogs off their lead are closely accompanying their owner passing through along one of

the paths. Not a problem probably but it is a poor example to others and does not account for the many people that, for one reason or another, may be anxious with dogs around. Dogs that are exercised off the lead, allowed to stretch their legs or chase a ball are not what the DVF field is for. While off the lead it is more likely the opportunity for a poo will happen and this might be while the owner is distracted – so best intentions count for nothing.

Aside from the obvious trauma and clean-up hassle of stepping in, or otherwise coming into contact with, dog poo there are some rare but serious medical consequences to be avoided – especially where small children are more likely to be at play. Toxocariasis is caused by the roundworm parasites that are commonly found in cats, dogs and foxes and this can cause a range of severe symptoms where the larvae infect human organs. This a problem that can persist after the more obvious fresh evidence has broken down.

Dogs on leads walking through the DVF field are very welcome and if a poop happens then just pick it up and put it in the next available bin. No drama!

If in doubt or to report this or other antisocial behaviour affecting the DVF field, please contact us at

DVFcommittee@gmail.com

Local News

Warblering in West Cheshire!

In the summertime, our area is inundated with little fair-weather visitors from the south (including Africa), known collectively as warblers. These are a group of insect-eating songsters that typically have a warbling song (as the name suggests!).

Arguably the most common warbler we get is the chiffchaff.



A bird predominantly of woodland, who sings his name just in case anyone forgets it, and whose relentless two-note song surely cannot be mistaken for anything else. If not heard but only seen, the species is remarkably like its cousin, the willow warbler, but the chiffchaff typically has dark legs and a light eye stripe. In my experience in our area, willow warblers are far rarer, and they are often frequenting more open habitats than chiffchaffs, like scrubland, carr habitat and woodland edges.

The second most common warbler around us is the blackcap which can often be heard singing from woodland and copses. The male has a black head, but the female's head is brown. Given the male blackcap's marvellous song, it has been given the name the 'northern nightingale'.



These birds typically visit us in the summer before going to warmer climes in southern and eastern Europe for the winter, but in recent years more and more have decided to have Christmas here too!

Then there are the whitethroats. The common whitethroat and the lesser whitethroat. We get both particularly along hedgerows and within scrubland in our area. I have heard up to three singing male lesser whitethroats amongst the hawthorns between Dodleston and Lower Kinnerton this year

and last, but typically the common whitethroat is, well, the commoner of the two. Common whitethroat is a bird mainly of scrubland and will also be heard rambling from hedgerows. They can be seen sometimes performing a flight display over such vegetation, but lesser whitethroats are far more secretive than their big cousins and will typically be heard and not seen. In my experience there is often a short window to hear lesser whitethroats singing (in May), before they pipe down for the rest of their time here!

A garden warbler is another of the warbler cohort that we get in our area and is the quintessential 'little brown jobby' that you'll hear folk (especially twitchers) talking about. The bird is plain with no distinguishing features, but it more than makes up for this with its fantastic song, reminiscent of the blackcap, but often even more drawn out and often described as 'mellower' (I.O.W. even nicer to the ear).

Another two warblers to mention which you may come across are sedge and reed warblers, with the former more likely than the latter. Again,

like the chiffchaff and willow warbler there is a degree of habitat niche segregation between the two species with sedge warblers not as picky as the reed warblers who will typically be found exclusively in reedbeds. The sedge warbler can be found in scrub habitat and within

marginal vegetation along ditches and field margins. If the two are seen, the sedge warbler has a standout creamy stripe above the eye, that the reed warbler lacks. In terms of song, have a listen online, particularly of the sedge warbler, which any aspiring DJ honing his scratching skills would be chuffed with.

And finally, I thought I'd mention one last warbler to listen out for: the Cetti's warbler. These birds tend to stick around all year but can be heard most often in the summer months.



I heard one the other day whilst at the petrol station on Wrexham Road near the Posthouse Roundabout. It was singing from the hedgerow opposite which is pretty atypical for the species as it is mainly found in, and around, reedbeds. If you hear the Cetti's warbler's song, you

can't help but think of some astronaut in a sci-fi film firing his space gun repeatedly at some obscene looking alien. But that may just be me!

So, the summer is a great time to have a wander in our area, and look (or more often than not, listen) out for a warbler!

Until next time,
Dr Colin Bonnington

Speed watch scheme

Our brilliant volunteers have been covering the main focus points regularly and also responded to some residents' requests where the speeding traffic has become a serious issue.

Speed watches have taken place in Dodleston, Balderton, Lower Kinnerton and Gorstella.

So far, Cheshire Police has sent out 103 letters to drivers who have been caught by our speed gun – an amazing effort!

If you are interested in becoming a Speed Watch volunteer, email Cllr Welna Bowden at welnabowdendpc@gmail.com for more information. The scheme relies on volunteers to make our Parish a safer place to live – help us to make it a success

Litter Picking Equipment

Litter picking equipment is available to borrow to our Parish residents. After years of taking part in the Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean, the Parish Council has bought our own litter picking equipment – previously we loaned equipment from Cheshire West and Chester Council subject to availability. Pickers and strong rubbish bags can be booked and collected by emailing Cllr Welna Bowden at welnabowdendpc@gmail.com

Dodleston Cricket Club - mid season report

After a year off for the pandemic we were allowed at last to play cricket again and the cricket season is now well underway. With half our fixtures now played we are sitting at the top of our league (league 4) in the Chester and district midweek competition.

Our season started in early May and we got off to a winning start with a comprehensive win over Outlaws winning with 3 overs to spare. The next week however the wet weather kicked in to kill off our fixture against Castle Square who we have played many times over recent years. It was particularly sad that we didn't manage to play this game as Castle Square had lost one of their longstanding club members to Covid this February and we were planning to remember him with a one-minute silence for both teams before the game. The following week we were back on winning form with a really good home win against Bromborough, new opponents for us. The next week we were defeated yet again by the weather with our match that was to be played at Northop Hall cancelled - their pitch was so wet that they hadn't managed to play a single home game by the middle of May. The next fixture was a local derby against Kinnerton, who had been strengthened somewhat with the addition of several new recruits from Christleton CC, nevertheless we prevailed and won a really good game by 25 runs. Next up were Buckley and again we had a good win winning with a couple of overs spare. Our first loss came last week when we were very soundly beaten by Oak Tree Outlaws who matched our score in only 11 overs



- a pretty chastening result. Nevertheless, it's been a great start to the season, and we are chuffed to bits to be at the top of the league at our halfway point.

We still have plenty of games left in the season so please come along to the home matches and support your village team, and we have nets sessions on Tuesday evenings from 6.30pm so if you would like to come and have a go please come along - we have plenty of kit so all you need to do is come and have a go.

Community Woodland News



The community has been enjoying the delights of the woodland and orchard all through lockdown and the wonderful spectacle of the juvenile fruit trees blossoming

this spring was a delight, and they are growing strong and looking very healthy going into the summer.

A donation by the community woodland to a project in Ethiopia means that the benefits of our local project have been felt much further afield in communities with greater needs and less resources. A great project we are proud to be a part of.



A new addition to the woodland area is the wildflower patch. As part of the construction of the "hare roundabout" at rough hill, we loaned the turf stripper and some manual labour to prepare a large strip ready for sowing with a mix of perennial and annual wildflower seeds. We made good use of the spare turf by creating our "grass snake" and two "grass benches" for the fun and use by the whole community.



In May, we got together for a community data once again where we planted 20 Rowan whips, weeded around many of the trees and removed guards from around the more established trees which were looking very strong. We also carried out final preparations for the wildflower patch, sowed the seeds and trod them in. We are really thrilled to have achieved this through 2021 so far. Let us all enjoy watching it thrive!



Did you know that the Women's Institute (WI) all started in 1897 when the WI was founded in Canada? This may come as a surprise to many of you as it seems such a British institution!

It was not until 1915 during the First World War it was formed in Britain. It had two clear aims: to revitalise rural communities and to encourage women to become more involved in producing food during the First World War. Since then the organisation's aims have broadened and it is now the largest women's voluntary organisation in the UK with a membership of over 200,000 women.

In the century since the First World War, W.I. groups were formed in North Wales and in Sussex - so much has changed for women in our society.



For example, Adelaide Hoodless, an early WI member, didn't have an easy journey. She was derided in the press and from the platform as one of those despised "new women". "Let her stay at home and take care of her family" a lot of people said.

In the last century Women have been granted the vote, British women have climbed Everest for the first time and the country has elected its first female Prime Minister.

In the modern world, the opportunities for women to give something of value to society are greater than ever, because, through their own efforts, they now play a much greater part in all areas of public life.

Society is changing but what the WI offers remains the same - women reaching women enjoying each other's company, wanting to learn new skills and improve and make a difference to their own families, communities and the world they live in.



Whilst the WI has its stereotypes - Jam & Jerusalem, Calendar Girls, Tea and Cakes - it is so much more than that. For example, the WI campaigns such as establishing the Fairtrade movement, the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign and more recently, saving the bees campaign and care not custody.



We want to keep Dodleston & District WI relevant and appealing to women in our community and to provide a place where friendships can thrive and somewhere, we can learn new skills and gain new experiences. It hasn't been easy during the pandemic when, like everybody else, we resorted to Zoom but we are slowly

resuming outdoor sessions and hope to return to business as usual from September.

Some photos of our recent willow weave hare making evening as part of the Dodleston Hare trail. Look out for our creations around the village very soon.

We welcome any women in our community who would like to join us, simply contact us at dodlestonwi@yahoo.co.uk and we will add you to our mailing list so that you receive all the latest updates and invites to our upcoming events.

Chapel Stores, Dodleston

Gosh, halfway through another year already.

Father's Day is over for another year and only a few weeks till the schools break up.

We would like to say Thank You once again for your support during the last 16 months of pandemic, hopefully not too much longer with restrictions etc.

We realise that many of you will be going back to the supermarkets for convenience, but can you please bear in mind that just spending a small percentage of your weekly budget at local and independent stores will boost the economy greatly. That is not just us, it applies to local butchers, Chester Market etc... Even though Debenhams was a chain, the loss of our version of it as Browns of Chester has saddened a lot of people, and John Lewis too.

Gauging by the amount of returns we process through the Post Office, Online shopping isn't the answer to a lot of needs.

We ourselves use local suppliers for a lot of our products, for example we have been using local fruit & Veg suppliers whose businesses have been suffering as they usually supply pubs & restaurants, which have obviously been closed for quite a while.

We have been remarkably busy with Cheshire Farm Ice Cream, keeping everybody topped up with their favourite flavours while the Ice Cream farm has been closed.

And of course, selling beer whilst the pubs have been closed. (not local brews, but that has not seemed to matter!)

Our local Honey supplies have just been topped up for hay fever season, and we hope to get some Dodleston Honey soon, as Miles is now busy with the Beehives.

In the small amount of downtime that Lloyd has, he has made a wooden trough for outside of the shop. We have planted the seeds from our Hare Trail pack and a sunflower donated by Christine & Alan Roberts. The Sunflower is getting rather big now; luckily the trough is quite heavy, and it should not topple over.

We have the Fuchsia baskets in again, we were not able to get them last year. I think they always bring a welcome burst of colour outside of the shop. They are of course for sale and would look even better hanging outside your homes.

Friendly service with a smile behind the mask.

Best Wishes from Samantha, Lloyd, Jan, Kelly, Julie, Paul & Lucy xxxxxx

Our hours are 7am till 7.30pm Monday to Saturday & now 8am till 6pm on Sundays.



Please give them your support!

Chapel Stores aka the Village Shop is striving to encourage people to continue using the shop as its value was realised by the community during the pandemic and needs your continuing support to thrive.

Obviously, they realise that people will go back to supermarkets for convenience, although the shop is quite competitive price wise.

Just spending a small percentage of your weekly budget at local and independent stores will boost the economy greatly.

Just imagine if Dodleston hadn't had a shop in the pandemic, the effort Lloyd put in going to the wholesalers and sourcing the essentials was immense, take loo rolls for example, they were never without it.

Apart from being a Post Office, bank, newsagent and off licence, the store stocks an incredible array of convenience foods. This includes fresh vegetables, delicious Thai takeaway dishes, milk, fruit juices etc. For a relatively small store, it is packed with virtually all the essentials, and more, that are readily available on your doorstep.

With very friendly staff, you always receive a smile and courteous service.

The store needs your continued support as the village would be a very sad place without this essential community element. It's been there for something like seventy years and together we can ensure its future for generations to come.

Where else would you find such caring and personal service?

The loss of an Icon

We moved into the parish in the late 80's and in those days, I spent all of my working week on farmland around Dodleston.

At that time and all through the 90's by the second week of April you would hear the arrival and the booming repeated song of the male cuckoo back from its wintering grounds in Africa. I could sit in bed early morning on a spring weekend and listen to it calling across the fields and our children grew up expecting to hear it.

When we moved down the road to Lower Kinnerton and on my walks down Moor Lane the sight of the male cuckoo became common place particularly early mornings before pairing up had occurred. I used to hear it calling close by and then watch it fly across the meadows towards Moor End farmhouse and the trees surrounding it. They were easy to spot with pointed wings and a long tail which in flight you can pick out easily.

The habitat on the meadows is ideal with the many large deep drainage ditches covered in bank side vegetation and in particular the Phragmites or Common Reed. This is the habitat of another summer visitor the Reed Warbler which you can hear and see in those ditches today. This warbler is a favourite victim of the female cuckoo who carefully scans her territory and watches for nest building activity, and I have no doubt therefore why our cuckoos were here.

Amazingly when the young cuckoos return, they will always seek the same foster parents' species as they themselves had.



The food of the Reed Warbler is flies, moths, larvae and caterpillars which the young cuckoo requires for its voracious appetite. I have seen these ditches with lots and lots of caterpillars on the vegetation.

These water courses are protected by the cross-compliance rules and a green cover must be maintained for one metre from the top of the bank and manure must not be applied within 6-10 metres and manufactured nitrogen within 2 metres of this strip.

It was about fifteen years ago when the cuckoos did not return to the meadows and have been absent ever since. Over the last twenty-five years England has lost 68% of its cuckoos.



From research carried out with tracking tags it appears the choice of migration route plays a huge part in survival. Cuckoos migrate either southwest via



Spain and Morocco known as the Western route or Southeast via Italy and the Balkans known as the eastern route with both routes converging in the Congo.

The western route has a far higher mortality rate even before reaching the Sahara, with weather in the Bay of Biscay and stop over feeding areas in Spain being affected by drought and or habitat loss and wildfires.

It suggests that our cuckoos chose the western route which makes sense starting from the North West, the east Anglian birds take the eastern route. Work is carrying on with tracking research to try and understand their conservation needs. Let's hope that one day the sound that signifies summer is not far off will return and the call of the cuckoo sounds out in Dodleston again.

Andrew Hawkins



St Mary's Church, Dodleston

Dear Dodleston and Lower Kinnerton and this is for everyone!

Thank you for all you did this last year and a half. Thank you for all you are doing. I know a number of our church congregation members have been so very grateful for all that has been done to help them. I hope they won't mind if I use this wider forum than our weekly church diary to express what I heard of their thanks and mine too for all that was done.

It is times at like that when villages somehow find the strength to pull together. We do all still need to support each other, perhaps by using local businesses like our lovely shop (Thanks to Lloyd and Sam) (lovely lunch at a certain Village hostelry this week!) remembering that people will be exhausted and support them by praying for them. For instance, our Village Church of England School and the staff and pupils and parents and carers will find a huge lift in that. Pupils made cards to encourage the NHS and also some of our older residents. So, a personal thank you to all those who did these.

As a Church we were able to step in and help when a ceiling issue meant that school was short of teaching space. The seemingly tireless efforts of the staff in cleaning the church was brilliant as, at that time, we could just squeeze a service in on a Sunday.

So, you see, it was important to be able to join together to help each other. Important to have a church outside with which to bless the whole village on my hour walk in early days; Important to have a building to offer shelter to school; Important to be able to keep connected by the cards the children made; Vital to be able to use our walls for poppies, advent candles etc.

Then we had a blessing from a village group in trying to sort out the churchyard when our community payback team weren't able to come because of restrictions on travel. Thank you for that on those hot days last summer.

We don't have much to thank Covid for but... we know how strong our Community is.

The church is not the building, important though that is; it is the loving hearts of people who kept worship and everyday things going. I wonder if we were to send a friendly invitation to you all, of faith or none that this village will find ways to creatively support St Mary's as a building and as a community - facing Christian fellowship. Dodleston needs St Mary's and St Mary's needs Dodleston I firmly believe that this year has shown us that so clearly. To help us do that we would like to offer a few questions to help us think through what we can do. We need you; how can we meet some of your needs?

St Mary's Rector Rev'd Hazel Clarke | hazelclarke@jcscomputers.co.uk

Celebrating 150 years Dodleston C of E Primary School

Education in England, and Wales, was very much a hit and miss affair as it wasn't obligatory to attend school until the Education Act was introduced in 1870 making primary education compulsory.

It is thought there was some form of school in Dodleston from around 1760, maybe earlier. A school was built in Pulford in 1818 by Richard 2nd Marquis of Westminster but realistically out of reach for children to walk to from Dodleston. Also, Corner Cottage, sometimes referred to as the Dame School at the junction of Church Road and Kinnerton Road, may well have been used as a school up until the early 1830s.

Both Higher and Lower Kinnerton were in the Parish of Dodleston and a compromise was reached to establish a school in Lower Kinnerton in about 1830. The building used is opposite the entrance to Moor End Farm, now a private residence (see photograph).

In anticipation of the Education Act 1870, plans for the new school in Dodleston were drawn up by the highly regarded Cheshire architect John Douglas. It was he who also re-modelled St Mary's Church in the village during 1869 / 70 plus designing some houses in Kinnerton Road.

John Douglas was commissioned to design both the school and the Masters House (the Old School House, now a private residence) adjoining the school.

Construction of the school and Masters House had the financial backing of the 1st Duke of Westminster, Hugh Lupus and records show both he and the Duchess took an active interest in the development of the education of the local children.

The first proper school log book, still extant, is dated May 8th 1871 with entries written by George Morton as he took charge of the school from this date.

At the time, the school was still located at Lower Kinnerton and on

May 19th the average attendance for the week was recorded as 46.1 children.

Between July 10 – 15th the log book entries state "The weather has been very unsettled this week and has on some days caused a very low attendance, the average for the week being 34. Some have also been absent on fine days, amongst the hay"

There are two reasons for the low attendance 1) many children didn't have shoes to cope with the poor weather and 2) being a farming community, their 'labour' was needed for the essential task of gathering in the hay and crops from the fields.

Friday July 21st 1871 was the last entry in the log book for the 'old school' and children were told to assemble at the new school in Dodleston on Monday (24th July) at 9 am.

24th July 1871, quote "Assembled in the new school at 9 am. Prayers were read by the Rev'd A.C.Gordon, Rector – the Rev'd J.M.Unwin also being present. Admitted 9 children"

On 28th July the attendance is shown as being 50.3 and "better than for a long time"

To celebrate the opening, a "Treat" was organised on 16th August by the 1st Duke of Westminster. The attendance was 57.8.

The new school had to comply with the Elementary Education Act of 1870 and as such, was regularly visited by an education inspector in order to receive its grant. In August 1871, the Duke of Westminster issued parents with a set of rules: school fees, a few pennies per week, were implemented and each child must attend school a minimum of 250 times per academic year.

The Duke kept a close watch on the attendance particularly as, in a farming community, children were needed to help out with harvest. This was in contravention of the Agricultural Children Act 1873 which theoretically made it illegal for children under the age of eight to do paid work on farms. This however was impossible to police.

It is clear from the school log book that school attendance was low during the summer months and from April 1884, the Attendance Officer began making monthly visits. Fees, which were paid



quarterly were eventually abolished in 1891 and from then, attendance numbers improved: in February 1892 there were 77 children and by May 1901, the number registered was 99 with 100 children recorded by the beginning of the autumn term! The Rector would check the attendance records on a monthly basis and sign the log book as being true and correct. This in turn was audited by the Attendance Officer.

When you take a close look at the front elevation of the school, four dates become apparent: 1871 being the first 'block', designed originally to hold 100 children. Can you imagine 100 children in this small building? Open fires and not the best quality ventilation! 1902, the school was extended, a great relief I should think: 1985 a further extension and then, with playground space rapidly running out, another extension in 2001.

From very early days, the school has provided, without any major disturbance, essential education and welfare to countless children from the parish. The children have celebrated, in their own way with the support of dedicated staff, all the significant events of the last 150 years and long may it continue for many more years after 24 July 2021.

**Bernard Dennis MBE
Chairman Dodleston Local
History Group
Mob: 07966 436073**



It's great being back in school and although Covid restrictions are still very much in place, the building rings of children's voices as they enjoy being back together playing and learning. **This is the term when we look forward to welcoming our new Reception children and their families as they visit us, and we begin to get to know each other in readiness for September. It is also the time of year when we prepare our year 6 children for the next step in their educational journey in secondary school. Although this is an anxious time for them it is an exciting time too; they have usually outgrown us by this time - which is as it should be.**

This year we are also saying goodbye to a few members of staff who are also moving on to new adventures. Firstly, Mrs. Joanne Robertson, who has brought energy and laughter to school for the last 16 years. Mrs. Robertson has been a driving force for improvement and will be a fabulous Headteacher in her new school. She has a passion for education, any kind of sport and dressing up and we're just hoping that she will still have time to be in the Dodleston Panto. She has given outstanding teaching and learning experiences to so many children at Dodleston school over the years and has the love and respect of many families within the school community and the village.



Mr. Ashley Jones has been with us for the last 3 years and has now been offered an exciting opportunity to teach abroad. He is off to Bahrain to teach with his wife (who is also a teacher) and their little girl. This is an incredible life opportunity for them and I'm sure they will enjoy their new adventure. Mr. Jones is also passionate about sports, particularly swimming – he used to swim for Wales. He has also supported us with our technical skills, bringing us firmly into the world of technology. He and his daughter (who is currently in our Reception class) will be greatly missed.



Mrs. Jayne Page, our wonderful bursar is leaving after working in education for 28 years, 13 of those years here in Dodleston. Mrs. Page deals with all sorts of behind the scenes workings of school such as Premises, Health and Safety and, most importantly, the budget. She is brilliant at

balancing a budget and not allowing me to spend too much money! Mrs. Page is moving to a role that will be less hours leaving her to spend more time with her family. This is great news for her new employers however she is a great support to us all and the staff and our school families will miss her terribly.

We are a great team here at Dodleston. We look out for each other, notice when someone isn't themselves and we all 'muck in' when there is an unexpected job to get done. Mrs. Robertson and Mrs. Page have been a solid foundation for this team for so many years it's difficult to imagine school without them. Mr. Jones has been a welcome addition to our team and has immersed himself in life at Dodleston CE Primary School. September is going to be a new beginning for us all. We wish Mrs. Robertson, Mr. Jones and Mrs. Page all the very best for the future and fun and happiness in their new adventures. Here in school we will be welcoming new members of staff into our team – watch this space!

Dodleston CE Primary School opened on 24th July 1871 making this July its' 150th birthday – a cause for celebration indeed! Although we are not able to celebrate this special birthday as we would like it does give cause to stop and reflect. How many children, families, staff have spent time in this building? How have things changed over the years? What happened to the lives of some of the people who have been educated or worked here? What stories could this building tell if it could speak? Education is certainly very different to what it was in 1871!

This building has a long history of educating local children, of safeguarding local children, of working alongside local families and of supporting children and families through difficult times. The story of this unique village school continues, and it is such a privilege to be part of it. Mrs. Robertson, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Page and this year's year 6 pupils are part of this history, they are all woven into the fabric of what makes this school what it is – special.

Julie Boyes - Headteacher

Dodleston Primary School

1871 - 2021



**Our unique village school.
Celebrating 150 years.**



We're back!

Oh no you're not... Oh yes we are!?

Having cancelled our Murder Mystery Evening 3 times over the last 20 months or so, we are again planning for a show on Saturday 11 September 2021 (see advert). The evening may be a different experience to our other events since we don't yet know exactly what Covid restrictions will apply. Currently we can't all rehearse in the hall together, but we are keeping our fingers crossed this will change at the next review of Covid restrictions at the end of July and are learning our lines in anticipation! If you would like to reserve your place for this event, please email us at our email below.

We are also planning to start rehearsals for our 2022 Panto Jack & the Beanstalk. The Production of this pantomime will be flexible enough to cater for potential Covid conditions. Cast numbers may be restricted but we hope things will be much clearer by September. The first meeting for all those aged 7 and over who want to be involved in any way, will be Sunday 19th September 2021 at 7pm in the village hall. If you are interested in attending the meeting, please book a place using our email below.

The Panto performance dates are 17-19 February 2022.

We look forward to see you all again soon!

Karen & Sue
Dodleston Youth Players
Email: dodlestonyouthplayers@gmail.com

Helping struggling families...

We support West Cheshire Foodbank

"We are really desperate for more donations." said the Food Bank Manager I asked to see when we did our last drop-off at the warehouse. "We have had to dip into our reserves to buy food for local people in a financial crisis".

It was a vastly different situation that greeted us when we did our last two food drop-offs. Where previously there were plenty of rows of crates stacked high with contributions during the early part of the year, the warehouse was now barely 30% full. The first time we thought it was perhaps because food parcels have recently been delivered, but after speaking to Food Bank manager a different picture arose.

Since the country opened up more, together with the arrival of Summer, the Food Bank has dropped off many people's shopping lists with devastating results. Contributions are down more than 50% but the need has increased tenfold since the Furlough scheme has ended.

The Parish has donated more than 400kg of food since we started 'Helping Struggling Families' which regularly gets taken to West Cheshire Food Bank when we fill four big green crates to make a car boot full. During the winter months, we often did a Food Bank run every 2 or 3 weeks – since opening up the Food Bank run has dropped to every 5 or 6 weeks – which aligns with the 50% drop that the West Cheshire Food Bank is experiencing.

For those wishing to donate locally, the Red Box outside the

MURDER IS SERVED

a murder mystery by Jo West

Agatha Christie meets Fawlty Towers as audience members find themselves guests at cantankerous Clarissa's surprise party. Someone is about to die, but who will it be? With excitement, intrigue and foul play - trickery is most definitely afoot.

Join us for this fun evening

Date: Saturday 11th September 2021

Time: 7 for 7.30pm start

Cost: £10 (to include food)

Dress: For a Birthday Party

Cash bar

To reserve your place, contact:
dodlestonyouthplayers@gmail.com



designed by paul villa 2012

front door at 12 Egerton Walk is open 24/7. Simply walk up and drop your donation off into the red box and we will add it to the crates which will then be taken to the Food Bank.

If you would like to visit the Food Bank when we make a drop off, you are welcome to contact Cllr Welna Bowden at welnabowdendpc@gmail.com for the next drop-off date.

Current most needed items:

- Tinned Tomatoes • UHT Milk • UHT Juice • Tinned Desserts
- Instant Coffee • Cup A Soup • Tinned Potatoes
- Treats (I.e Small Bars Of Chocolates/Bags Of Sweets)

Food bank regular shopping list

- Tinned Meat / Fish • Tinned Vegetables • Tinned Potatoes
- Tinned Tomatoes • Cuppa Soups • Pot Noodles
- Instant Pasta • Pasta Sauce • Instant Mashed Potato
- Tinned / Instant Custard • Tinned Fruit • Biscuits • UHT Milk
- UHT Fruit Juice • Instant Coffee

The food bank have plenty of: •Pasta • Beans

The Food Bank also takes hygiene items like shampoo, shower gel, soap, sanitary items and toothpastes. Furry friends also are not forgotten – dog and cat food are welcome.

PLEASE NOTE: Only non-perishable goods can be accepted. Thank you to everyone who is contributing. With your help we are making a difference.

Dodleston Naturewatch and the Hare Trail



The hare leaped into place at its Rough Hill roundabout home at the end of March and began immediately inspiring its passers by to find out what its purpose is. The installation went by without a hiccup by Forest City Projects

with the help of the Ringway team, Meadow Foods, and community members. The sowing of the seeds in the surrounding soil was delayed due to high winds and after it was sown, we awaited the rain for over 3 weeks to start seeing the shoots appear. We are pleased to say that the meadow is now blooming, with more yet to flower.

The project has brought a fresh interest in local nature through the community with the Facebook group "Dodleston Naturewatch". Members have been sharing their observations from butterflies on the



Parish Field to woodpeckers in their gardens and it has been a great forum to find out about curious looking creatures from others in the know.

The community's wildlife camera has also been out capturing the creatures of the night, with a surprising and very encouraging good number of hedgehogs scurrying about. Although the children of the Pre-school did not quite achieve their expectations of spotting lions and unicorns, they were very pleased



to spot sparrows, male and female blackbirds, a wood pigeon, a squirrel, somebody's cat and a hedgehog!

Congratulations to Liz Shanklin who won one of Meadow Food's hampers for being the early bird

who captured the first hare on camera in the Parish bounding across the fields! Don't forget to keep logging your observations on the "iNaturalist" as part of the citizen science data collection for wildlife in our under-recorded area.



Alongside the wildlife, the village have been showing their support and developing the "hare trail" with crafted, sculpted and even "scare-crowed" hares proudly displayed in their gardens! Congratulations to Meriol Powell for best creative hare (which was the 'harecrow') and Erin Preston for best built cardboard hare.



The hare trail doesn't stop there! Russell Kirk (the artist who sculpted the hare on the roundabout) has been working with Dodleston Primary School to create some hare dreamcatchers for the pupils to hang at school or in their gardens/windows. Russell has also worked with the 1st Dodleston Brownies and Guides and the Dodleston WI in willow-weaving workshops to sculpt large hares that will be placed up around the village – so keep your eyes peeled!



A huge thanks to the whole community who have developed the identity within the village of one that takes care of our wildlife and shares our exciting experiences of nature. I have even seen that Dodleston has become (unofficially) "the home of the hares".

Brownies and Guides are BACK TOGETHER!

After a long 14 months, we have finally been able to resume face to face meetings. It has been great to all be together again with a number of Brownies moving up to Guides and a whopping 8 new recruits for Brownies!

Our meetings have been taking place on the Parish Field this term (come rain or shine!) and we have already managed to pack in plenty of fun activities and projects. Brownies, Lauren and Ellen, were inspired by TV show Blue Peter and prepared a presentation for the Pack to ask if we would be able to work towards the Green Badge as a group. Over the following weeks, Brownies completed various eco-challenges both at Brownies and at home including planting pollinator friendly seeds, learning how to sort the recycling, switching 'screen time' for outdoor activities and kept a tally chart of how many times they turned off lights and devices that were not being used. We have now completed all of the challenges and sent off for our badges.



Meanwhile, Guides have been cooking up a range of treats and experimenting with new recipes on the campfires including pizza pockets; blueberry muffins baked in an orange skin; chocolate chip cookies and stick breads. They also enjoyed a sports evening where they were challenged to invent a brand-new sport or game in their groups. The results demonstrated great imagination and creativity - we had a lot of fun having a go!



Brownies and Guides enjoyed a fantastic evening of willow weaving with Russell Kirk (creator of the giant hare at rough hill roundabout), constructing one of the giant hares for Dodleston's 'hare trail' - you will soon be able to see their handy work displayed around the village.



In between working on these fantastic projects, we have enjoyed s'mores, scavenger hunts, games and generally just thoroughly enjoying being back together in our units.



Dodleston Baby & Toddler Group

Dodleston Baby and Toddler Play Group meets every Thursday morning during term time in the village hall, 10-11.30. Free play, arts and crafts, music and singing, snacks and refreshments. Come and meet other parents and grandparents for a chat and a cuppa! **Only £3 per session (plus £1 for additional children)**. Follow us on our Facebook page.

For more information contact Helen on 07951 880702 or just turn up! We are following the government and pre-school alliance Covid guidelines.



2021 Charity Concert

Save the date!

British Heart Foundation charity concert is back this year! Save the date in your diaries - Saturday 20th November at 7.30pm in the village hall.

The hall is booked, the master of ceremonies is raring to go, and the musicians are lined up! Tickets will be on sale nearer the time. We will, of course, be following current government guidelines.

All proceeds to the BHF.



Directory of Local Activities in the Parish

You have joined a thriving community where dozens of people give their time voluntarily to provide active opportunities for all.

The Village Hall is used for meetings, pre-school education, lectures and classes, and other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation. Although the hall is in use throughout most of the week, it is available for hire for private functions, including children's parties, wedding receptions, funeral teas, and village social functions.

Contact: Diane Swift - 07733463620

Dodleston Youth Players

Friendly group of adults and youngsters whose main production is the annual pantomime in February. Great team spirit and lots of laughs. Come join us. Contact us via email dodlestonyouthplayers@gmail.com

Dodleston & District Women's Institute

Dodleston & District WI are a group of around 40 ladies, we meet on a monthly basis normally in the village hall on the 2nd Thursday in the month. We have a variety of speakers through which we hope to inspire, educate, and pass on skills and knowledge. We also give women in our community a voice on issues that matter to them and in doing so we have a lot of fun, foster community spirit and make friends. If you would like to join us, then please get in touch by contacting us at dodlestonwi@yahoo.co.uk or join our Facebook page for more information.

Dodleston Local History Group

Founded in 1984, the History Group has recorded the origins of the Parish. It also holds regular lectures in the village hall. Contact: Bernard Dennis MBE Chairman. Tel: 07966 436073 Email: bernarddennis531@gmail.com

Dodleston Leisure Group

We meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons in the Village Hall. Diary of events will be published on the notice board inside the main door. Contact: Jim Howard Secretary 01244 661468

Toddlers & Babies

Dodleston Toddlers and babies playgroup meets every Thursday morning 10 until 11.30 during term time, in the village hall. Free play, craft activities, sing along and refreshments! £3 per session.

Brownies & Guides

Brownies (aged 7 to 10) meet Mondays 6 pm - 7:30 pm
Guides (aged 10 to 14) meet Mondays 7:15 pm - 8:45 pm, at the village hall. We have a very active and diverse program very much led by the girls themselves. Brownies highlight: "Pack holiday" where we go away for a weekend of fun indoor and outdoor activities. Guides highlights: campfires, making "S'mores", learning camp skills, and games on the Parish field. Adult volunteers also wanted so please get in touch to find out more about Guiding!

Mel Hughes (Guide Leader and Assistant Brownie Leader (Snowy Owl)). Tel: 07970802213.
Beth Daniels (Brownie Leader (Brown Owl) and Assistant Guide Leader)). Tel: 07860614041.
Dodlestonguides@gmail.com

Dodleston Home Watch
Keeping local residents informed and updated with Cheshire Police Alerts. Also, reports and circulates any suspicious incidents and anti-social behaviour.
Contact: Bernard Dennis MBE. Tel 07966 436073
Email: bernarddennis531@gmail.com

Dodleston Chapel Stores

Not just a Village shop & Post Office, so very much more, come and find out and say hello to Lloyd & Sam

Dodleston Pre-School

Highly qualified staff facilitate learning through play with child individuality at the forefront of practice. Large play spaces, free flow to outdoors, continuous provision and child-initiated play. Dodlestonpreschool@gmail.com

Fitness & PT

Qualified Internationally in Group Fitness, Personal Training and Yoga, 20 years' experience. Providing 1 to 1 Personal Training and online Zoom sessions.
Contact: Vicki Rahill - 07963500607.

Dodleston Sports Field

Is owned and operated by Dodleston Parish Council. This facility has cricket and football pitches, a pavilion, perimeter walking / jogging track of about 1km and an outdoor gym for all ages. All members and groups within our community are free to use the facilities, details of which can be found at www.dodlestonparishcouncil.co.uk

Cricket

Dodleston CC - play in the midweek league and weekend friendless, won our division last season. Matches on Wednesday evenings and nets Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm.
Email Jtbparker@me.com or phone 01244 661526

Dodleston Village Foundation

The Dodleston Village Foundation was established in 1979 to provide and maintain a Village Hall and Recreational Field for the inhabitants of Dodleston, Lower Kinnerton and Marlston-cum-Lache and believes its objectives to be consistent with current Charity Commission guidance on providing for the public benefit, and these objectives are pursued in the activities of the charity. Dodleston Village Foundation is a registered charity (510057).

The Recreational Field is a significant asset to the character of the village. It presents a wide variety of play equipment catering for a range of ages, along with picnic tables and benches, a basketball court, a small football pitch and an activity course, and is well used by both villagers and those living outside the parish.

St Mary's Church

Our inspirational vicar, Hazel Clarke, leads services each Sunday at 11am. There are coffee mornings at 10.30am the first Wednesday of the month and a craft group the second Monday at 10am (both suspended during lockdown). You'll be made very welcome!

Bell Ringing

Join our team for an exercise of body and mind in a 400-year-old tradition. For ages 10 - 75 with reasonable health and hearing.
Contact: Liz 07762 630364

Dodleston & District Parish Council Officers

email: katepcdodleston@gmail.com

Tel: 07872927050

Clerk to the Parish Council: **Kate Lloyd**

Chairman: Cllr Mike Maughan

Tel: 01244 661776

email: mike.maughan@dodlestonparishcouncil.co.uk



Vice Chairman: Cllr Paul Buchanan

Tel: 07710 900833

email: paul.buchanan@dodlestonparishcouncil.co.uk



Cllr Mike Dix

Tel: 01244 661030

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Cllr Chris Ward

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Cllr Mark Williams

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Cllr Rachel Jones

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Cllr Welna Bowden

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Cllr Carl Willis

Tel: 07540 282186

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www.dodlestonparishcouncil.co.uk

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