

# PARISH MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2023

50p



Warbleton

Dallington



Bodle Street  
Green

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Please contact Marc Lloyd  
Social Clubs etc. see page 27

## ***From The Rectory***

The recently sacked Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, caused controversy, amongst other things, by Tweeting (are we meant to call it X-ing, now?) that: "The British people are compassionate. We will always support those who are genuinely homeless. But we cannot allow our streets to be taken over by rows of tents occupied by people, many of them from abroad, living on the streets as a lifestyle choice."



The Matt cartoon in The Daily Telegraph quipped that the message in Suella Braverman's Christmas Card might say that "being born in a stable is a lifestyle choice". I think Christians would agree!

Luke's gospel tells us that the Emperor Augustus had issued a decree that a census should be taken. So Joseph and his betrothed, Mary, had gone from their town of Nazareth in Galilee to register in Bethlehem, the town which great King David of old had been from, because Joseph was of the house and line of David. While they were there, Mary gave birth to Jesus and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. But the circumstances of Jesus' birth were more than the result of

historical accidents. The Bible sees them as the fulfilment of God's plan and of the prophecies that the long-promised Rescuer-King would be born in Bethlehem, the city of his ancestor King David.

In a sense, the Son of God could have remained in heaven without blame. But for him to be born in a stable was a lifestyle choice. He came to our broken world and shared our mess that he might be our Saviour. The Bible says that Jesus did not consider equality with God something to cling on to but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being found in human likeness. He did not leave the glory of heaven for a splendid earthly palace. As the Carol says, a stable-place sufficed for the Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ. The Bread of Life was placed in an animal's feeding trough. Eventually he would die on the cross in our place that our sins might be forgiven.

As another hymn addressed to the Lord Jesus puts it:

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,  
All for love's sake becamest poor;  
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,  
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.  
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,  
All for love's sake becomes poor.

Indeed, John's Gospel tells us that Jesus The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. Literally he pitched his tent, or tabernacled amongst us. In Old Testament times, when God's people were travelling through the desert to the promised land, they worshiped God in a tent, The Tabernacle. And during his earthly ministry, Jesus was an embodied Tabernacle, a kind of mobile walking talking Temple. Jesus was the place to go to meet with God, where the glory of God was revealed. Jesus' own body would be the place of sacrifice by which sinners like me and you could come into the presence of a holy God.

Soon Jesus and his family would be refugees as they fled from the murderous King Herod to the safety of Egypt. Later, speaking of himself, Jesus would say: "'Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'" Jesus was made homeless and chose to dwell in the tent of human flesh that we might come home to God.

The Rev'd Marc Lloyd

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## Warbleton Parish Church Diary

### Sanctuary Guild for December

2nd Mrs Ramsay Smith & Mrs Gray; 9th Mrs Bowern, with Christmas Decorating and continuing maintenance of the special floral arrangements and decorations from the 15th.

### Good Book Club

We will be meeting on Tuesday 5 December, and Tuesday 19 December at White Birch Farm (If convenient with Barbara) at 7pm, all very welcome, where we will unpack St John's Gospel and enjoy refreshments and each others company. The last meeting of the year will be a special Christmas occasion.

### Warble Singers

We continue to sing in the Church Rooms on Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm. New members are always welcome. Contact Gail Welford for more details. ([gwelford51@gmail.com](mailto:gwelford51@gmail.com)) This year, leading up to Christmas we will be singing in several places:

*Sunday 3rd December: the Christingle family service at 11am.*

*Sunday 10th December we join Bourne to Sing at Saltmarsh Farmhouse Christmas Fayre from 2pm to 4pm*  
[www.saltmarshfarmhouse.co.uk](http://www.saltmarshfarmhouse.co.uk)

*Wednesday 20th December: Carols on the Green at 7pm, then afterwards in the Horse and Groom*

### Little Warblers Toddlers' Group

Little Warblers is a group for under 5's and their Carers, run on Tuesday mornings (9.15-10.45am) during term time. Our term ends with a Christmas Special on the 12th December and we will restart in the New Year on 2nd January 2024. For further details contact [sue\\_holden@ymail.com](mailto:sue_holden@ymail.com);

### Warble Art

We continue to meet on Wednesdays in the Warbleton Church Rooms from 10.00 am to 12 noon. Please contact Gail Welford on 01435 812514 or [gwelford51@gmail.com](mailto:gwelford51@gmail.com). For further information about where the singers will be carolling please turn to page 7.

### The Club With No Name

A club for 10 to 15 year olds meets every Tuesday evening from 7.15 until 9.00 pm, during term time in the Church Rooms. Contact Tony Welford on 01435 812514 or email [tonywelford@btinternet.com](mailto:tonywelford@btinternet.com) for details. The meetings of the club are temporarily on hold because of many other commitments the young people have at this time of year.

### Warbleton Weeders

Meet (weather permitting) once a month on a Thursday morning at 9.30am for a couple of hours. If you could spare some time occasionally it would be appreciated. We need some help clearing ivy from some of the walls and gravestones. Please contact Judith on [judithmhemsley@btinternet.com](mailto:judithmhemsley@btinternet.com)

### *Christmas at Warbleton*

*We warmly invite you and all the family to join us at Christmas  
for the following services and events:*

**Sunday 3rd December at 11.00 am.** Christingle Family Service for all ages with members of the Warble singers. The perfect Service with which to commence the Christmas season. Ideal for the whole family and invite your friends. All are welcome

**Sunday 17th December - Carols by Candlelight.** A traditional carol service with the Warbleton Brass Band followed by mince pies and mulled wine. The band will begin at 6.15 pm with the Service commencing at 6.30 pm.

**Wednesday 20th December at 7.00 pm.** Carols on the Green outside Osborne House with the Warble-Singers Community Choir and Warbleton Brass Band.

**Sunday 24th December - Christmas Eve Crib Service** starting at 4.00 pm. As usual Freddie the donkey will be in the church. This is a must for all families in the area.

**Monday 25th December at 11.00 am- Christmas Day Family Communion Service.** An All Age service of Celebration.

*A list of all the December Sunday services at Warbleton can be found on page 14 as usual. Those wishing to go to midnight Holy Communion on Christmas eve will note that the service will be at Dallington.*



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## **Mission Support for December**

### **St. Matthew's School, Cyangugu, Rwanda**

St. Matthew's School was founded in 1998 by the Diocese of Cyangugu to provide English speaking education for orphans of the genocide living in that area, at primary level. The quality of the education provided has meant that over the years more and more parents have wanted their children to attend and so the school has continued to grow. In 2010 the secondary school was started and in 2019 St. Matthew's was asked to establish a second campus at Nyamasheke nearby. The pupils now number 1,502 supported by a team of dedicated people, teachers and administrative staff plus non-teaching staff.

The Vision of the School. "To equip students with a distinctive and responsive education, to be transformed with a heart for Christ".

Benson Muramira, the headteacher has sent us a report of the schools recent activities and needs. Academically, he says, both schools follow the national curriculum and are ahead in national exams, receiving certificates of merit in their districts. Sports play an important part in the activities along with study trips and two chaplains attend to the spiritual needs of the pupils.

Many of the children come from less privileged families. These can be helped with their school fees and a school feeding programme is in place. All children get breakfast and lunch at school which in some cases is much needed but dramatically increased food prices are affecting the school's ability to fund this.

Another problem is the big increase in pupil numbers this academic year. Government officials, writes the Headteacher, have told the school to provide four more classrooms at Rusizi campus and three more at Nyamasheke in order to accommodate the children according to government requirements, a serious financial challenge.

The report concludes with heartfelt thanks to the schools founders and supporters, in particular Bishop Kenneth Barham, the leadership of the Diocese of Cyangugu and all friends of the schools including Warbleton church. "St. Matthew's staff pledges its continuous efforts towards nurturing highly knowledgeable future Rwandan leaders". We will support the ongoing work of these two schools this month with our giving and with our prayers.

*Helen Bown*

As usual the flower arrangers at both Warbleton and Dallington are to be congratulated on the beautiful arrangements of poppies on Remembrance Sunday 12th November. They were much admired by those visiting the churches during that time.

We now look forward to the wonderful Christmas decorations.





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Sat 16th Dec	11-1pm Waitrose 3-5pm COOP Heathfield

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## Churchwardens in the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Century Wealden Parishes

by Paula Nicholson

Whilst there are records of the vicars and rectors of our Sussex parishes, the churchwardens who did so much to keep things ticking over merited little press coverage. Last month, I drew upon the comprehensive work of Elizabeth Doff in her PhD thesis - *Social conditions in the Cuckmere Valley 1660-1780: the influence of church and dissent*.<sup>1</sup> In that, she outlined the important role of churchwardens in this area of the High Weald.

Churchwardens ranged from quite humble and upright souls doing their best to administer relief to the poor and ensure the fabric of the church was in good order, to others who may well have taken advantage of the position to acquire not only upward social mobility but a goodly income. In 1674, John Turner, the outgoing churchwarden of Warbleton was involved in a spat with the new one, when accused of not handing over the parish accounts. Turner was so miffed that he refused to attend church but that backfired when he was reported for non-attendance. The conflict between them lasted for fifteen years, including Turner being accused of drunkenness and blasphemy at the Archdeanery Court of Lewes. Interestingly, one of Turner's accusers seemed to have ascended the social mobility ladder throughout these years, becoming the Reeve<sup>2</sup> and rent collector for the Manor of Warbleton and amassing enough money to buy Pilley Farm in 1693. Ms Doff surmises that the ex-churchwarden and reeve Samuel Store had "exploited his position." However, he does appear to have been a successful businessman as well.

Whatever, it was a pretty onerous task being a churchwarden. Whilst it was usual to hold the post for only two years, the responsibility was too much for some. The job description was pretty demanding, nor was it likely to endear you to many of your neighbours. Firstly, the administration of relief to the poor meant that you were as popular as a clerk in the present Department of Work & Pensions. Secondly, the responsibility of collecting taxes and tithes to pay for the poor and the upkeep of the church likened you to a HMRC tax collector. On top of that, you had the responsibility of grassing to the church on the misdemeanours and immoral behaviour of your neighbours; a bit like being a rural STASI official. That might have explained why, fifteen men held the post in eight years in early 17<sup>th</sup> century Berwick.

Turning away from the social security tasks, the churchwardens were responsible for the upkeep of the church, its bells and its assets. That included "various artifacts, vestments, vessels and linens" (for the communion table), the chest holding the parish documents and also displaying the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer." To pay for the upkeep of the church, the wardens had to get donations from the parishioners. That wasn't too easy in some parishes and failure opened up the risk of punishment. In 1708, two churchwardens in Heathfield were threatened with ex-communication as they hadn't managed to get the bells repaired for a long time.

The church would check up from time to time to ensure that the church was in good condition and the churchwardens had things under control. In 1686, John Lake, the Bishop of Chichester commissioned a survey of the Wealden churches. Only West Dean was "omnia bene," or all OK. At Warbleton, the seats were not judged to be in good order. Some parishes got around the problem of rotting pews by charging for them – a family would have its own pew. Quarrels would occur if one sat in the wrong pew, but a way around that was to label them. Or you could build your own pew<sup>3</sup> as in the unusual raised one in the north aisle of Warbleton church erected in 1722 by the owners of Stone House. By the time of the next survey was commissioned by Bishop Bowers in 1724 all was found to be in good repair. Maybe the wealth generated by the local iron industry had something to do with that.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century the majority of churchwardens were gentlemen, tradesmen and landowners. With their social standing it is likely that they had an easier job than the earlier post holders, but it is more likely they contributed a lot of the funds themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oro.open.ac.uk/63740/1/27775849.pdf> Social conditions in the Cuckmere Valley 1660-1780: the influence of church and dissent – Elizabeth Doff 1987

<sup>2</sup> Reeve – official who supervises the lands of the owner.

<sup>3</sup> "Look out for our church" – Vernon Percy



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## St. Giles Church, Dallington

Sunday. 3rd.	11.00am	Service of The Word
Sunday 10th.	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 17th.	6.30pm	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Followed by coffee, mulled wine and mince pies
Sunday 24th.	11.30 pm	Midnight Holy Communion



## **Dallington Winter Solstice Celebration On Friday 22 December at Dallington Sugar Loaf Recreation Ground.**

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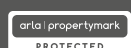
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# SERVICES IN December 2023

## Warbleton Parish Church

Sunday 3rd	11.00am	All-Age Christingle Family Service with members of WarbleSingers
Sunday 10th	11.00am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday 17th	11.00am	Morning Worship
Sunday 17th	6:30pm	Carols by Candlelight with Warbleton Brass Band starting at 6.15
Sunday 24th	11.00am 4.00pm	Morning Worship Crib Service for children and families with Freddie the Donkey
Monday 25th	11.00am	Christmas Day All-Age Service with Holy Communion
Sunday 31st	11.00am	Morning worship

## 2024

Sunday 7th	11.00am	All age Family Service
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## St John's, Bodle Street Green

Sunday 3rd	9.30 am	1st Sunday of Advent. Morning worship with Holy Communion
Sunday 10th	9.30 am	All age Family Christingle Service. Children will be invited to collect Christingles from the alter
Sunday 17th	9.30 am	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday 24th	6.00 pm	Christmas Eve Carol Service followed by coffee, mulled wine and mince pies in the Village Hall
Monday 25th	9.30am	Christmas Day Family Service with Holy Communion
Sunday 31st	9.30am	Moring Prayer

## St Giles Dallington

Sunday 3rd.	11.00am	Service of The Word
Sunday 10th.	6.30pm	Evensong
Sunday 17th.	6.30pm	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Followed by coffee, mulled wine and mince pies
Sunday 24th	6.30pm	Midnight Holy Communion
Sunday 1st January	11.00 am	Service of the Word

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# Three Villages Calendar for December 2023

Saturday 2nd	Library Café, Dallington Village Hall	10.00 to 12.00 noon
Thursday 7th	Prayer First. Benefice prayer meeting.	7.45 for 8.00 pm
Thursday 7th	Coffee & Company at Osborne House	10.00 to 12.00 noon
Friday 8th & Saturday 9th	Pantomime "Pantostein" at Bodle Street Green village Hall	each evening at 7.00pm for 7.30pm with Saturday matinee at 2.00pm
Tuesday 12h	Tuesday Group Christmas Celebration	2.00 pm
Thursday 14th	Coffee & Company at Osborne House	10.00 to 12.00 noon
Thursday 14th	Dallington village Christmas Lunch in the Old School Hall	12.00 for 12.30pm
Monday 18th	Villages Lunch Club Bodle Street Village Hall	11.30 to 2.30 pm
Wednesday 20th	Carols on the Green (Rushlake Green)	7.00 pm
Thursday 21st	Coffee & Company at Osborne House	10.00 to 12.00 noon
Friday 22nd (to be confirmed)	Dallington Winter Solstice Beacon Sugar Loaf Recreation Ground	7.00 for 7.30 pm

## EDITOR'S NOTE: DECEMBER 2023 Magazine

The annual subscription of £5 for the next 12 issues of the magazine is due in January. Those distributing the magazine will provide details of how you should make the payment.

Should you wish to see the magazine in full glorious colour there is a link to it in the Warbleton Parish Church web site where there is also a link to the Calameo version.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the magazine during the last few months and to all those who work so hard to deliver a copy to every subscriber. I will always welcome content, comments and suggestions for improvement.

Finally I wish everyone a happy and peaceful Christmas and a good New Year.

Please send your magazine articles, notices and any other contributions  
by **7th December**

to **Simon Cowley, Tel: 01435 812040**

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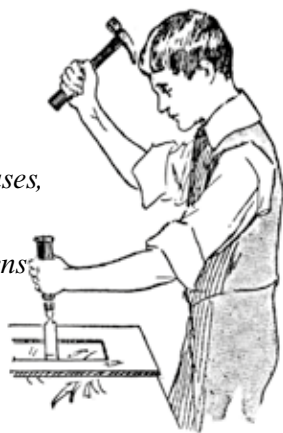
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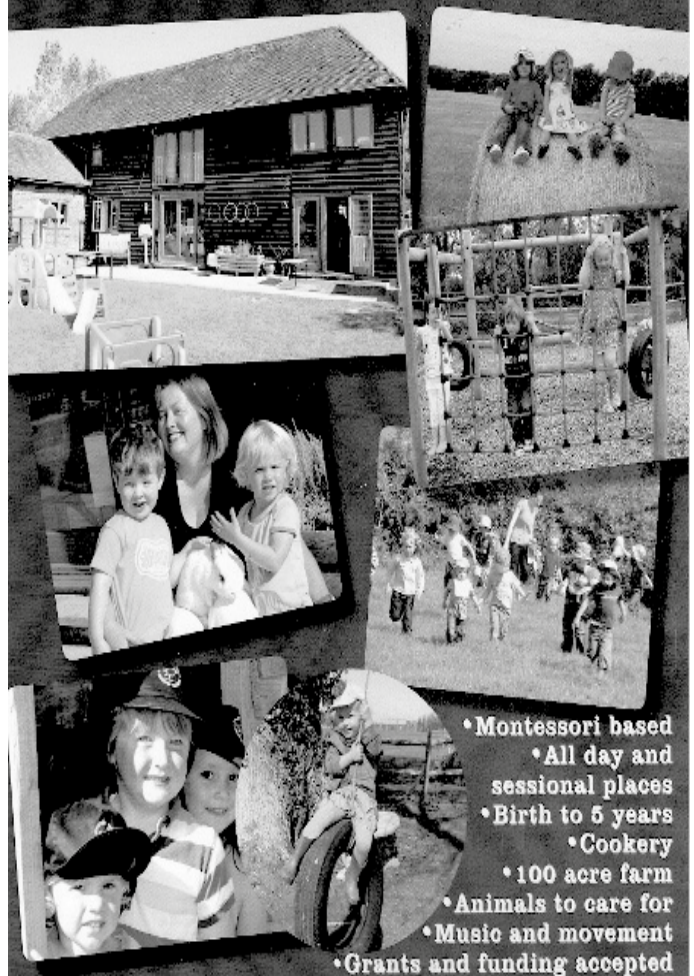
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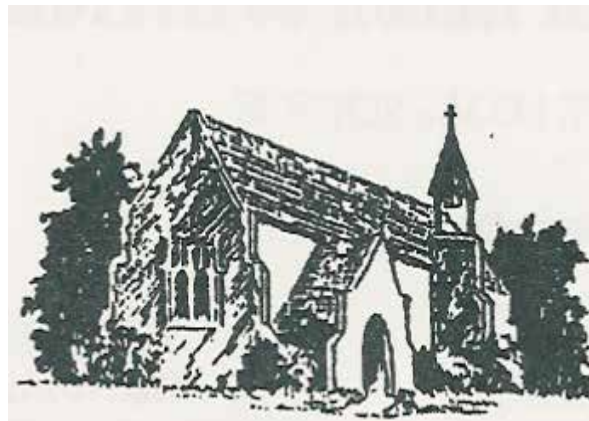
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# St John the Evangelist Bodle Street Green



## Julian of Norwich

Do you listen to “In Our Time” with Melvin Bragg on Radio 4? The topics can feel out of our time and obscure, like to finer points of Aristotle’s Ethics (which was last week’s subject), or they can be exciting and stimulating, as was the case when the subject was Julian of Norwich.

Julian of Norwich, a woman, was born in 1343, the same year as Geoffrey Chaucer. That is relevant because, like Chaucer, she didn’t write in scholarly Latin or aristocratic French, but in English, the first female writer of English whose writing has survived. Middle English, that is, so most of us have to read her work in a modern translation, and probably very few people did read it before it was transcribed and translated in 1901.

Her book is called “Revelations of Divine Love” and is a spiritual meditation on Christ and Christ’s Crucifixion. “A Book of Showings to the anchoress Julian of Norwich” is a less snappy, but more accurate title. Her revelations or “showings” happened on May 13<sup>th</sup> 1373 after a near-death experience when the priest who had come to give her the Last Rites held a crucifix before her face and she imagined blood streaming from it. She recorded this life-changing event and sixteen subsequent revelations in a Short Text, which she then enlarged and expanded over many years of study and thought to produce her final book, the Long Text, remarkably and lovingly preserved by a group of nuns. The manuscript and nuns escaped to France at the English Reformation. The manuscript returned to England again at the onset of the French Revolution.

The fourteenth century was a turbulent time. The Black Death arrived in England in 1348, killing up to one third of the population. The Peasants Revolt in 1381. The Hundred years War with France. Julian was able to concentrate on her inner life by becoming an anchoress in a cell attached to St Julian’s Church, Norwich. (She may well have taken her name from this church’s dedication.) The church and cell were damaged by bombs in the Second World War, but were restored, and can be, and are, visited today. Permission from the Bishop of Norwich was needed before Julian could take her anchoritic vows, and a special service was held. The service was the funeral service, because, as an anchoress, Julian was now dead to this world. She became an anchoress in 1390 and her actual death was in 1416.

What makes her Revelations special and loved by people today? Her optimism: Despite death and war she was able to say **“all shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.”** Words chosen to be written on the late Queen’s Jubilee window at St James’ Palace. Words needed more than ever today. Her vision: She was able to imagine the whole of creation in a nutshell. **“And in this he showed a little thing, the quantity of a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as me seemed, and it was as round as a ball. I looked thereon with the eye of my understanding, and thought: What may this be? And it was answered generally thus: It is all that is made. I marvelled how it might last, for me thought it might suddenly have fallen to nought for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: It lasteth and ever shall, for God loveth it; and so hath all thing being by the love of God.”**

In a patriarchal society Julian called Jesus mother. **“And thus is Jesu our very mother in kind of our first making, and he is our very mother in grace.”** The Trinity represents all genders. **“For the first I saw and understood that the high might of the Trinity is our father, and the deep wisdom of the Trinity is our mother, and the great love of the Trinity is our lord, and all these we have in kind and in our substantial making.”** Thoughts and visions like these, written five hundred years ago by a woman closeted in a single room beside a small church in Norwich, now inspire men and women throughout the Christian world.

Charles Harding



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Tuesday Group

Our Christmas meeting will be held on Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> December in Bodle Street Green Village Hall at 2.00 p.m. We will enjoy some festive entertainment followed by a Christmas Tea. Non-members are welcome to join us for the afternoon for a small contribution of £3 for the entertainment and tea/coffee and refreshments. Membership details are available from Sylvia Burlton on 01323 831856, or just call in at the meeting

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Parish Council Clerk, Warbleton	Jackie Cottrell	07522 900169 <a href="mailto:warbletonparishcouncil@gmail.com">warbletonparishcouncil@gmail.com</a>
Little Punnetts Town Pre-School	Toni Wheatley	01435 831515
The Rest, Three Cups	Roy & Barbara Lovett	01435 882241
Tiddlers and Toddlers	Julie Cattel-Killick	01435 830260
Village Hall, Bodle Street: Hon Sec	Mrs. Mary Williamson	01323 833343 <a href="http://www.bodlestreetgreenvillagehall.org.uk">www.bodlestreetgreenvillagehall.org.uk</a>
Bookings	Ros Billingshurst	01323 832062
Villages Luncheon Club	Mrs P Gentry	01323 833201
Warbleton Brass Band Musical Director	Mrs Sian Buss	01273 493469 <a href="mailto:secretary@warbletonbrassband.co.uk">secretary@warbletonbrassband.co.uk</a>
Warbleton Hort. & P'ltry Soc Chairman	Gill Snook	01435 868246 <a href="mailto:gs.snook@btinternet.com">gs.snook@btinternet.com</a>
Wealden Talking News		01435 864868
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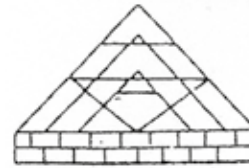
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