

# WHEATLAND NEWS

December 2023  
- January 2024



**“Follow the Star!”**

**News from the Diocese of Hereford and the  
17 Parishes around Stottesdon, Ditton Priors  
and Highley**

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# Editorial

November has been a difficult month for many people, and we hold in our prayers the families and friends of the four boys from Shrewsbury who tragically lost their lives in an accident.

As we build up to the Christmas period, we remember the families and those we love and pray for peace throughout the world.

We congratulate and pray for Bishop Richard as he takes on his new appointment as “Clerk of the Closet to His Majesty King Charles” - a role which will see him head up the Ecclesiastical Household, with oversight of the College of Chaplains and responsibility to introduce new diocesan bishops to the Sovereign. This is a role which has existed since 1432. The ‘closet’ is the ancient name for a Royal Chapel. The role carries an annual nominal salary of £7!



Bishop Richard said, “I was surprised and honoured to be offered this ceremonial role, which dates back to 1437. I am thankful to those who have gone before me and who have graciously shared their wisdom.” The Bishop has also received his writ of summons to the House of Lords, where he will join the other Lords Spiritual from the New Year. He sums up, “The day just has just become a lot busier and I will need to carefully balance my duties to serve the diocese as well as these national responsibilities. I am very grateful for the many people who continue to hold me in prayer.”

We rejoice in the arrival of Revd Joe and Revd Kina, and wish them good health and happiness for 2024.

**Important notice:** Subscriptions are now due for the hard copies of Wheatland News commencing February 2024. £18 for 11 copies. Your distributor will need to know, and will need to receive your subscription, by mid-January to ensure that we order the right number of copies from our printer!!

We wish all our readers a peaceful Christmas.

## Ed

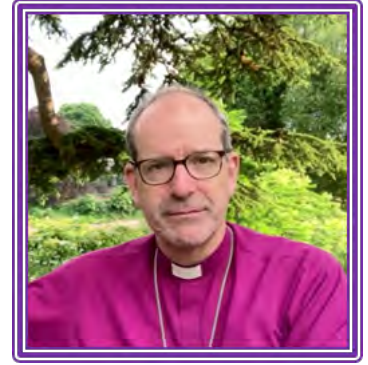
Please continue to send reports to your contact for your parishes listed below. The **deadline** for contributions for the **FEBRUARY 2024** edition of WN will be **noon on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024.** Please, please help us to help our printer and our distributors so that we get WN to you in good time each month.

Brown Clee and Ditton Priors	Jutta Langham, 01746-712551 - <a href="mailto:rll.langham@btinternet.com">rll.langham@btinternet.com</a>
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Chetton	Pam Downing - <a href="mailto:pamdowning61@gmail.com">pamdowning61@gmail.com</a>
Highley	Canev Clayton -
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Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington	Chris Tibbits - <a href="mailto:Chris@stottystores.co.uk">Chris@stottystores.co.uk</a>



## Diocese of Hereford

### Christmas Newsletter from the Bishop of Hereford



Dear Friends,

In court, juries will be suspicious if all the witnesses come up with the same story. Their role is to weigh up accounts to discern where the truth lies.

In most situations its remarkable how diverse people's perceptions of events can be. Such variation adds to the credibility of a story. This is especially true of the Christmas story in the Bible. The events are examined from a variety of angles. Diverse witnesses provided the source material for the Gospel writers to distil their accounts. We have an angle from Kings, Shepherds, and theologians keen to analyse things in the light of what God had already said through prophets hundreds of years previously. In the centre of the story is Mary, the young peasant girl in her teens, who finds herself inexplicably pregnant.

Her response is the exemplar of what it is to be a follower of Jesus. The angel tells her what is about to happen with only the sketchiest discussion of the personal implications. Her response is, "may it be unto me as you have said."

Confronted with the reality of God, her answer is, "yes, now what is the question?"

She is in a long line of heroes of faith who exemplify unconditional obedience. Isaiah, confronted with a vision of God said, "here am I send me." The disciples required just a word from Jesus to leave everything and follow him. St Paul was struck blind on the road to Damascus and meekly waited for what God was to tell him he must do.

We are coming to the end of our year of prayer in the diocese and moving to the year of faith. As we begin that journey together, Mary's, "yes, now what is the question?" is a good place to start. The Gospel was described by Rowan Williams as news not advice. The events of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection stand at the turning point of history inviting us to respond with our own unconditional, "vae!"

+ Richard

**The Archbishop of Canterbury** is making a surprise visit to Hereford on Saturday 9th December, to affirm the Diocese in prayers and sustain its work as it marks the end of the Year of Prayer. A series of special events is planned for the day, to take place in and around Hereford City Centre. Full details on the Diocese website.



#### **The Bishop's weekly video message**

Speaking from Church Stoke church, where he was meeting with the youth group, Bishop Richard describes the importance of supportive groups for young people. He also invites everyone to join in the 24/7 Prayer Space being held at the Cathedral from 3 – 12 December, as the climax to the Year of Prayer. Details on the Diocese website.

*Watch him on YouTube Hereford Diocese  
or on the Diocese website, where the transcript also appears.*



## Diocesan Safeguarding Team – updated contact information:

News from the Safeguarding team at Hereford: Mandy McPhee (known to the many who benefitted from her training and advice workshops) has moved to a new role. The new **Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor** is Carl Stevenson, who can be contacted on 07593-817717. Carl was formerly Mandy's assistant.

### Readings for December 2023 and January 2024

#### December 3<sup>rd</sup> – The First Sunday of Advent (Purple)

Isaiah 64.1-9; Psalm 25.1-9; Micah 4. 1-4, 6-7; Romans 13. 8-end; Matthew 21. 1-13

#### December 10<sup>th</sup> – The Second Sunday of Advent (Purple)

Isaiah 40.1-11; Psalm 50.1-6; 2 Kings 22.8-10; 23. 1-3; Romans 15. 4-13; Luke 21. 25-33

#### December 17<sup>th</sup> – The Third Sunday of Advent (Purple)

Isaiah 35; Psalm 80. 1-7; 1 Corinthians 4. 1-5; Matthew 11. 2-10

#### The Fourth Sunday of Advent – Christmas Eve (Purple)

Isiah 40. 1- 9; Philippians 4. 4 – 7; Psalm 145.17- end; John 1. 19 - 28

#### December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day (White/Gold)

Isaiah 52.7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1.1-4[5-12]; John 1.1-14

#### January 7<sup>th</sup> – The First Sunday after the Epiphany. The Baptism of Christ (White/Gold)

Psalm 72. 1-8; Zechariah 8. 1-8; Romans 12. 1-5; Luke 2. 41-end

#### January 14<sup>th</sup> – The Second Sunday of Epiphany (White/Green)

Psalm 107. 13-22; 2 Kings 4. 1-17; Romans 12.6-16a; John 2. 1-11

#### January 21<sup>st</sup> – The Third Sunday of Epiphany (White/Green)

Psalm 102. 15-22; 2 Kings 6. 14b-23; Romans 12. 16b – end; Matthew 8. 1-13

#### January 28<sup>th</sup> – The Fourth Sunday of Epiphany. Septuagesima (White/Green)

Psalm 9.10-20; Genesis 1.1-5; 1 Corinthians 9. 24-27; Matthew 20. 1-16

# Saint of the Month – Saint Stephen

by Revd Joe Simons



Stephen was appointed as one of a number of deacons or servants in the early Church. His task was primarily to assist with the orderly running of the church, although his giftings lay in other directions. He was prepared to speak with candour and honesty about what he believed to be the truth.

Have you ever thought about how far you would go to witness to what you believe in? As Christians are we willing to witness to what God has done in our lives? Are we willing to be misunderstood or criticized? Are we willing to have our lives put in danger for our faith?

St Stephen was not ashamed to share his faith with others. When opposition arose, Stephen was seized and taken before the religious authorities the Sanhedrin. In response to their questions about whether he was guilty of blasphemy, Stephen preached an eloquent Gospel sermon. Words that ultimately led to him being stoned to death. Stephen was not intimidated, for he was full of the Holy Spirit he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God to welcome him home.

You wonder what kind of a world it must have been where godly people like Stephen can be murdered by religious bigots. Maybe there are some lessons to learn for us in our own times.

This event had a profound effect on one bystander, Saul or as we know him Paul, he never forgot the event, and no doubt Stephen's message, prayers, and glorious death were used to prepare Saul for his own meeting with the Lord.

It is said that God never wastes the blood of His saints. Saul would one day see the same glory that Stephen saw and would behold the Son of God and hear Him speak!

JS

## Wheatland Diary

Fri	1	Dec	Final Flicks in the Sticks for this season "A Christmas Carol" – Chetton Village Hall, 7pm – see page 16
Fri	1	Dec	Christmas Craft Afternoon – at the Fighting Cocks, Stottesdon – 3:30 – 7:00pm – see page 32
Sat	2	Dec	Coffee Morning / Christmas Fair – 10:30 – 12:30 at the Pavilion, Ditton Priors - see page 11
Sat	2	Dec	Nearly New Clothes Sale – Cleeton St Mary & Silvington Village Hall, 10:30 – 1:00pm – see page 32
Mon	4	Dec	Christmas Celebration Dinner, Church House, Chetton - see page 15 for details of tickets and arrangements.
Thurs	7	Dec	Learn to make Christmas table decorations! Ditton Priors – see page 10
Sat	9	Dec	Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 – 12:00 – see page 30
Sat	9	Dec	Christmas Concert – Brown Clee Community Choir, Ditton Priors Village Hall - see page 12
Thurs	14	Dec	Carols by Candlelight – concert by Stottesdon School. See pages 29 & 32
Fri	15	Dec	Live music from Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels, 9:00pm at The Pheasant, Neenton – see page 15
Fri	22	Dec	Live music 9:00pm at The Pheasant, Neenton – see page 15
Fri	22	Dec	Brown Clee Young Farmers' Carols on the Street – 7:30pm opposite Howard Arms, Ditton Priors. See Nov WN
Mon	1	Jan	Live music from Call of the Kraken, 5:00pm at The Pheasant, Neenton – see page 15
Sat	6	Jan	Ditton Priors Church Coffee Morning – 10:30 – 12:30 – see page 12
Sat	27	Jan	Winter Supper – Burns' Night – Middleton Scriven. Details to be announced. See page 30

## Brown Clee Parishes

Priest-in-Charge: ↵

Revd Joe Simons ¶

The Vicarage, Ditton Priors, Shropshire WV16 6SQ ¶

01746-599217 ••• 07872-464276 ↵

[browncleebenefice@outlook.com](mailto:browncleebenefice@outlook.com) ¶



**St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and  
Holy Trinity, Wheathill & Loughton** ¶

CHURCHWARDENS ¶

Carole Smith: 01746-712474 ••••• Mark Smith: 01746-712394 ¶

**St Michael & All Angels, Aston Botterell** ¶

CHURCHWARDEN ¶

Anne Preece: 01746-787237 ¶

**St Giles, Chetton** ¶

CHURCHWARDEN ¶

Sheila Millington: 01746-789443 ¶

**SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North** ¶

CHURCHWARDENS ¶

Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676 ¶

Jane Bufton: 01746-787298 ¶

**All Saints, Neenton** ¶

CHURCHWARDEN ¶

Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093 ¶

## Message for Advent and Christmas

In our world where there is so much that seems hopeless, we can often struggle to see how the end game will play out. But the message from the Old Testament prophets especially Isaiah tells a different story - dry land shall blossom, eyes will be opened, the blind will see, deaf ears unstopped, the lame leap, tongues shall sing, wildernesses stream with water and so on. It is a message of hope and endurance, recognising change is coming and that which is holding us captive we will be released from, free to live in a new way.

It is very easy for us to get caught up in the softness of the message of the Christ child born in humble circumstances and create an image that focusses on forgiveness and salvation but that does not herald a different way of living. A life centred around Christ that puts the Holy Way at the heart of our being. John the Baptist preached a message of repentance or change washed clean by the waters of the Jordan and Jesus as the fulfilment of that change.

John chose to decrease in importance as Christ increased, he chose to be nothing so that Jesus could be everything.

Love lies at the heart of the Christian faith a willingness to serve to the Glory of the one we are serving and through our service to be bathed in the life-giving light of Christ.

So as we move on into this advent season let us look at the world around us our families, friends, those we can relate to and those that are more challenging, are we on the Holy Way?

Maybe we are feeling weak and feeble and fearful, are we ready to be reborn in Christ this Christmas?

It is OK to be ordinary, it is OK to know that we are weak, feeble and frightened as ordinary people but we can take comfort through the good news of Jesus Christ, that we can do extraordinary things, so much more than we can imagine. If we prepare the way for Christ at this Christmas and allow Christ to enter into our hearts, we will be on the Holy Way a source of real joy and celebration.

Happy Christmas and a peaceful and hope-filled New Year.

Revd Joe Simons



# Follow The Star

Join the Song



We would love you to join us at Brown Clee Benefice  
Advent & Carol Services throughout December

**Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup> – Advent Sunday**

9.45am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors

11.30am – Carols – Aston Botterell

4.00pm – Christingle – Ditton Priors

**Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday in Advent**

9.45am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors

11.30am – Carols – Cleobury North

4.00pm – Carols – Chetton

**Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup>**

6.00pm – Carols – Loughton

**Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday in Advent**

9.45am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors

4.00pm – Carols with Refreshments – Neenton

**Wednesday December 20<sup>th</sup>**

6.30pm – Carols with Refreshments – Ditton Priors

**Sunday December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve**

4.00pm – Crib Service – Ditton Priors

7.00pm – Carols – Wheathill

11.00pm – Midnight Mass – Ditton Priors

**Monday December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day**

10.00am – Holy Communion & Carols – Chetton

 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND



# News for all of the Brown Clee Churches

## Benefice Memorial Service



On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November a Benefice Memorial Service was held at St. John the Baptist Church in Ditton Priors. Prayers were said and candles lit to remember loved ones. It was a very moving service accompanied by beautiful music from the choir. A member of the congregation wrote afterwards:

*"I just wanted to express my gratitude to you for sending the email to let us know about the memorial service at Ditton. After much consideration we attended, and were really glad that we did. It was a lovely service and it was nice to meet the new Vicar. The service has helped me put things back into perspective again."*

## Follow the Star



During December we would like to distribute the Follow the Star booklets at Christmas Services and Events.

For each day from Christmas Eve to the Eve of Epiphany (5<sup>th</sup> January) it offers a short reading from the Bible, a reflection challenging you to see the Christmas story afresh, an

invitation to wonder what this Christmas means in your own life, and a prayer to help you treasure this story in your heart.

The booklets are £1 each and we will ask for a donation in the churches - so that you can take your copy home.

## New Pew Sheet

This November we have introduced a weekly pew sheet. Here you will find details of services, prayers for the week and Benefice events. These will be available at all church services, with the opportunity to add your name and email address to our mailing list.

Alternatively, please contact the Benefice Office at [browncleebenefice@outlook.com](mailto:browncleebenefice@outlook.com) or 01746 599217 if you would like to be added to our distribution list. Thank you so much.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## Brown Clee Church Services in January

See page 8 for the Christmas Service programme

<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January – Baptism of Christ</b>		
10:15	GpHC	Aston Botterell
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January – Epiphany 2</b>		
09:45	HC	Ditton Priors
11:30	HC	Chetton
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January – Epiphany 3</b>		
09:45	HC	Ditton Priors
11:30	HC	Neenton
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January – Epiphany 4 - Presentation of Christ</b>		
08:30	BCP HC	Ditton Priors
09:45	HC	Chetton
11:30	HC	Cleobury North
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February – Second before Lent</b>		
09:45	HC	Ditton Priors
11:00	Coffee Morning	Middle House Farm, Aston Botterell

GpHC – Group Holy Communion

HC – Holy Communion

BCP HC – Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion

## Loving our church buildings

### Loughton Chapel, Wheathill

Following our news last month about the completion of works at Loughton and the issues identified with the roof, we believe now is a good time for us to have an open discussion with the community about this beautiful and important church, to explore what it means to those who love it and pull together a vision for its future.

We already have a group which is forming but do please let Revd Joe know either by email or phone if you would like to take part in this discussion.

### St John's Church, Ditton Priors

We have pulled together a team to look at bringing a water supply into our church, along with a new toilet facility. Suffice to say that it will not be straightforward, and we will need to raise funds to turn these plans into reality, we greatly welcome the support of The Friends of St John's in this venture.

The benefits will be enormous for a variety of reasons including, of course the obvious one. If you feel able and would like to contribute to this project, please do contact either Revd Joe or one of the churchwardens.

### Church of SS Peter and Paul, Cleobury North

We have completed an initial survey with the architect and contractors, and we will now be identifying the repairs required to the church. Many thanks to all who attended and gave generously at the Christmas Fair, your support is vital in helping us to get the church reopened as soon as possible. Further updates will follow in due course.

## Ditton Priors News

*Marjorie Jones writes:*

As I write we are preparing for the events at the end of November and early December.

### Christmas Lights & Carols - Thursday 30th November at 6.30pm.

The lights have been provided by the Parish Council. We have four trees lit in the Churchyard, heralding the Advent of baby Jesus, and brightening up the centre of the Village. They seem to be asking us "are you ready yet". Carols, mince pies, mulled wine - All welcome.

✝ **Christingle Service** - Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 4pm in Church. A happy occasion for adults and children alike. Hear about the first Christingle and the Children's Society, who support so many children and their families. The children help to make their own Christingle and the collection taken will be sent to the Children's Society to support the valuable work they undertake.

✝ **Carol Service** - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 6.30pm in Church. Don't miss our carols - come and sing some of your favourites, ably supported by the Group Choir.

✝ **Crib Service** - Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December, 4pm in Church. Hear our very informal story telling of the birth of Jesus, with the children placing the figures in our lovely Crib. Children of any age very welcome at this special time.

### ✝ **Group Services**

- Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December 10am at Ditton Priors Church
- Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January 10.15am at Aston Botterell

## St John the Baptist 100 Club results for November

£20 – Richard May, £10 – Kate Casswell, and £5 each to: Eloise May, Sue & Phil Robinson, and Jackie Houghton



## Remembrance Service - 12<sup>th</sup> November

The service was well attended and a collection of **£170** has been forwarded to the RBL Poppy Appeal.



## First Saturday of the Month Coffee Mornings

**Coffee Morning /Christmas Fair - Saturday 2nd December**, 10.30 -12.30pm at the Pavilion Ditton Priors  
Raffle of the famous Christmas Hamper, craft stalls, Severn Hospice Christmas cards and more. £3. for coffee mince pie/cake. Please come and support our last fundraiser of 2023.

**Next coffee morning in church** will be on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024 - 10.30am to 12.30 pm. There is no charge for this. It is open to everyone and a real community event.

## Cleaning rota for December and January

### For Sundays in December

- 3<sup>rd</sup> December Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths
- 10<sup>th</sup> December Mr & Mrs John Ballard
- 17<sup>th</sup> December Mr & Mrs Tony Brown
- 24<sup>th</sup> December Mrs Jutta Langham & Mr Steve Allen
- 31<sup>st</sup> December Mrs Carole Hancox & Mrs Maureen Lloyd

### For Sundays in January

- 7<sup>th</sup> January Mr & Mrs Graham Russell
- 14<sup>th</sup> January Mrs Shirley Wall & Mrs Anita Casswell
- 21<sup>st</sup> January Mrs Jennifer Lowe & Mrs Debbie Jones
- 28<sup>th</sup> January Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths
- 4<sup>th</sup> February Mr & Mrs John Ballard

***We wish you all a Very Happy and Blessed Christmas  
and all Good Wishes for the New Year.***

## Wheathill & Loughton News

*Marjorie Jones writes*

### Remembrance Service 19<sup>th</sup> November

Fifteen people came to pay their respects and a collection of **£47.50** has been sent to the RBL Poppy Appeal.



## Church services during December

- ✝ Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December – 6:00pm – Carol Service at Loughton
- ✝ Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December – 7:00pm – service at Wheathill.

## Restoration work at Loughton Chapel

See the good news in 'Loving our Church Buildings' on page 11.

*We wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a blessed New Year.*

As in previous years, there will be no services in January, February or March 2024. But we look forward to resuming in the better weather in April 2024 with Holy Communion at Loughton Chapel.

## Cleobury North News



Services continue to be held in Cleobury North Village Hall, and Remembrance was a particularly special occasion.



## Christmas Fayre

Thank you to everyone who supported this event, to name a few, Dot Cartwright for suggesting we hold it to 'kick start' the fund-raising Appeal for the Church Repair Fund, to the people who prepared the hall, to those who donated delicious refreshments and prizes, to the stall holders for the variety of items to browse and to the band of people who cleared the hall at the end.

It was great to hear the season's carols from the Juke Box Choir who were dressed appropriately in their Christmas sweaters and head gear. The variety of stalls, tombola and raffle were well received and the chatter from the tables in the small hall indicated lots of friends meeting up over a cuppa and delicious cakes or mince pies. The fruit punch was warmly received too! We hope to give a final total of funds raised in the next edition of Wheatland News.

**Merry Christmas to all.**



## Cleobury North & District Village Hall

**CNVH remains open and available for hire.** For enquiries about booking and using the hall, please call 01746-787093 and leave a message or send a TEXT MESSAGE to 07483-879763 (or both!).

## Aston Botterell News

Anne Preece writes

### Church services

- ✝ Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December – Carols at 11:30am
- ✝ Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January – Group Service at 10:15am
- ✝ Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February – Coffee Morning Service at Middle House Farm at 11:00am.

## Lottery winners

Many thanks to everyone who supports our lottery. You have kept our little church open for another year.

£20 – The Hughes Grandchildren – no 66
£10 – Audrey Colebatch – no 35
£5 – John Preece – no 194
£5 – Joanne Muff – no 127

## Neenton News

Bobbie Jarvis writes:

### Melvyn Bryan

We were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Melvyn Bryan on 26<sup>th</sup> November. Melvyn and his wife Diane have been long-time residents of Neenton, and he will be much missed by many friends and family.

### Services at All Saints' Church, Neenton

- ✝ Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December - Carol Service – 4pm – followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the Pheasant.
- ✝ Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January – Holy Communion – 11:30am.



**If anyone has an hour to spare** on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December to help decorate the church then you will be very welcome from 10am. We look forward to seeing you.

Although this year we did not have service for **Remembrance**, Neenton's war memorial east window is a constant reminder of the three men who were lost in WWI, and the church is dressed in memory of them and of so many others whose lives have been lost in conflict down the centuries.

### Our grateful thanks to visiting clergy

We record our thanks to Revd Kina Robertshaw for joining us at the Group service at the end of October. We wish her a speedy recovery following her recent illness. Thanks also to Revd David Poyner for his uplifting service in November.

### All Saints' Tote – November and December

- 1<sup>st</sup> prize – Barbara Moreton      2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Toni Cartwright
- 1<sup>st</sup> prize – Suzanne Millington      2<sup>nd</sup> prize – Lara Munday

<b>YOUR TOTE SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW OVERDUE!!</b> £12 for the year's entry, from Sue Hale or Dot Cartwright, please!
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### Hallowe'en and Fireworks!!

On a damp and dreary Thursday evening in November, Neenton came alive with a spectacular firework display, roaring barrel fires and great hospitality at the Pheasant with a BBQ and bar open from 5pm. Some of the children dressed up in Hallowe'en style. Thanks to Ian, Mark Lloyd and their helpers who set up the display and also to the staff at the Pheasant. The Apple Bobbing was well received and made one little girl very happy when she managed to 'bag' an apple!



	<p><b>Opening times for Christmas Day</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 12:00 noon – 2:00pm for drinks</li> </ul> <p><b>Normal opening times</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 Wednesday / Thursday – 12 noon – 3pm, 6pm – 11pm</li> <li>🌀 Friday / Saturday – 12 noon – 11pm</li> <li>🌀 Sunday lunch 12 noon – 4.30pm</li> </ul> <p>Please call 01746-787955 or email <a href="mailto:info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk">info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk</a> to discuss times and your requirements or book direct on the website.</p>	<p><b>Musical Dates for your Diary:</b></p> <p><b>Friday 15th December – 9pm</b> – live music from Dirty Rockin’ Scoundrels</p> <p><b>Friday 22nd December – 9pm</b> – to be confirmed</p> <p><b>Monday 1st January – 5pm</b> - live music — Call of the Kraken</p>
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**A very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our Readers**

## Chetton News

*Pam Downing writes:*

### Services at St Giles’ Church

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✝ <b>Sunday 10th December at 4:00pm – Carol Service</b></li> <li>✝ <b>Monday 25th December – Christmas Day – 10:00am</b></li> <li>✝ <b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January – 11:30am Holy Communion</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Flowers and Cleaning</b></p>
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The Group Service led by Revd Joe on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> November was lovely. We started the ball rolling with the “Follow the Star, Join the Song” booklets described on page 10, which were very well received, with some copies being taken home by members of the congregation.

### Dates for your diary

**There is still time to book** your seats for our Christmas feast at Church House. This is on **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December**, 7pm for 7.30. This is a three-course meal followed by Carols around the piano. Bring wine if required!! Contact Lisa or Sheila.

- We have our **Carol service** on **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**, 4pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. We look forward to seeing you. We would be grateful for any **help** with decorating the Church please.

**Thank you** to everyone who helped at our **Autumn Fair** recently and also to the many stall holders who braved the wet and windy weather. It was a great success, and it was a pleasure to see so many there.

## Fallen oak tree blocks Chetton Lane during Storm Babet!!

Paul Verney writes –

A huge thank you goes out to Mark Archer and neighbouring farmer Mark Lloyd who set to with chain saws and a JCB loader and quickly had the fallen oak tree cleared and the lane opened in Chetton. Goodness knows how long it would have taken the council to complete the job especially as I am sure they were busy at that difficult time.

### Chetton 100 Club

- £15.00 Gill Evans no 20
- £10.00 Pam Downing no 36

### Chetton Village Hall

#### Flicks in the Sticks.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the hall this year. We have had a successful Autumn Flicks season, with our new equipment and projectionists, Paul and Sarah, great films and above average attendance.

The final film of the season, showing on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December, will be the 1984 production of 'A Christmas Carol', featuring Frank Finlay and filmed in Shrewsbury. Doors open for refreshments at 7pm, film commencing at 7.30. Film £4.00, refreshments from £1.00. We resume in the New Year with a film yet to be decided, on Friday 2nd February.

#### Chetton Active Friends

We had a visit to Chetton Active Friends from Barchester Healthcare, who run the Wheatlands Care Home. They recently supported Chetton Active Friends with a grant and brought along two residents to join us for the afternoon. We meet from 2pm on Monday.

**Village Hall enquiries** – The hall is available for hire at modest rates. Enquiries to Sue on 789239.

<b>Exercise and Dance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Pam's Pilates on Mondays and Tuesdays 9:30am, and also on Tuesdays 11:00am for older adults.</li><li>▪ Chetton Fitness-4-All. The class will run on Mondays from 2pm.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Zumba – Tuesdays - 2:30 pm</li><li>▪ Ballroom Dancing, Tuesday evenings, 7:00pm. Telephone Angie on 01746 789430 for details.</li></ul>
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Cleobury North



Loughton

# Harvest Thanksgiving in Brown Clee Churches



Chetton







**Aston  
Botterell**



**Neenton**



**Ditton  
Priors**



# Ditton Priors Local History Group

## What Lies Beneath?

*Robin Greenwell writes:*

What a fantastic turnout to the latest Ditton Priors Local History Group event on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November! And what an absolutely fascinating presentation from local detectorist David Rann !



'What Lies Beneath' provided a real insight into the world of metal detecting and the



amazing artefacts David

has discovered in and around Ditton Priors. Many of these were on display - including the Brown Clee Hoard (a collection of 8 'long cross' silver coins dating from 1327-1377), a mediaeval silver spoon and many many more fascinating finds!

The group would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event - it was a real pleasure to see everyone and we hope you all enjoyed the evening. And also of course ...a huge thank you to David Rann for his excellent and insightful presentation!

## Holly

We tend to ignore holly trees until December, when they brighten up our churchyards, as well as our churches and homes at Christmas time, with their shiny leaves and bright berries. For the rest of the year they are less conspicuous, with dark green leaves, dark brown bark and small white flowers in the spring. Holly is an interesting tree however. Before botanists brought tree seeds from other

countries to our shores, winter foliage was unusual, and all evergreen trees were viewed as special. Use of holly and yew branches for winter decoration is an old custom, probably a mix of a wish to make the place look festive, coupled with superstition. Holly was believed to be a fertility symbol and a charm against witches, goblins and the devil. It was thought unlucky to cut down a holly tree.

Holly has good natural defences with the leaves of a young holly extremely prickly. As the tree matures, the prickles reduce, particularly on higher branches, out of reach of most browsing animals. Holly trees are dioecious meaning that there are male and female trees with the decorative berries only found on the female of course. Holly berries are a vital food source for birds and small mammals such as wood mice and dormice. In some cases, mistle thrushes will vigorously defend a particularly choice holly tree from other birds so have a look in your local burial ground and see if you see a flurry of activity.

If you would like to start digitally recording wildlife in your local burial ground then why not use a churchyard holly tree to get going. Take a look on our website under Be Involved or click here: [caringforgodsacre.org.uk/add-your-records](http://caringforgodsacre.org.uk/add-your-records) to find out what to do. You will need to download the iNaturalist app onto a mobile phone, tablet or laptop. It's helpful to start recording with a familiar species and something that is easy to photograph. Maybe you have children or grandchildren in need of outdoor activities in the Christmas holidays? This could be a way to start exploring the wonderful wildlife to be found in churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries.

All the best, Harriet Carty,

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor



# Molecule of the Season – beta-Carotene



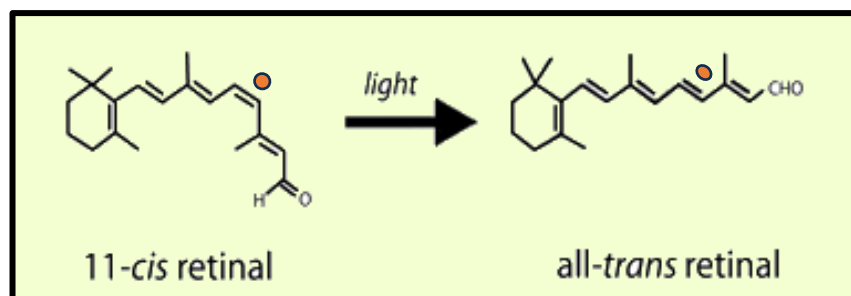
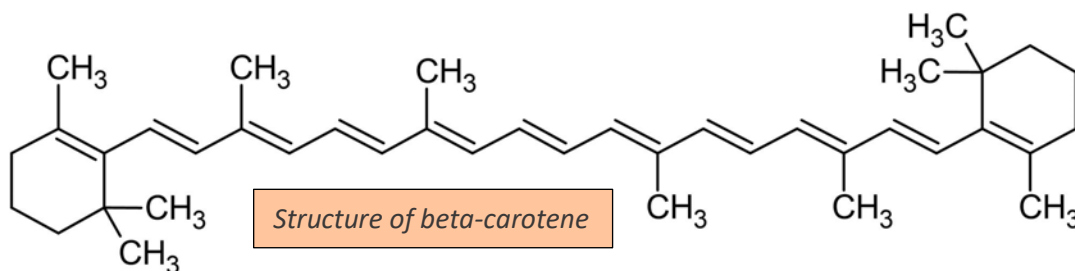
Not quite the molecules of Christmas dinner.

This article is about the chemistry of carrots. I will grant you carrots don't have quite the same seasonal resonance as sprouts, turkey and stuffing, but they are in the scientific news thanks to some recent research looking at how humans have selected for particular characteristics.

- Carrots are orange.
- Carrots are good for you.
- Carrots make you see in the dark. *To disguise the Allies' use of radar, during WWII the RAF started a rumour that carrots improved pilots' night vision.....*

Strictly speaking, only the first two of those statements are correct.

However, carrots are rich in an orange-coloured chemical called beta-carotene (*below*). In the body, this is converted to vitamin A, also called retinol. This helps to protect the body from toxic substances called free radicals, which arise in every cell as they use oxygen to produce energy.



Retinol also responds to light by changing shape (*left*). This property is used by cells in the eye to allow us to see objects. There are a number of foods that supply us with beta-carotene, but carrots are a simple way we can get it and cheaper than vitamin pills.

*For clarity - the terms 'cis' and 'trans' refer to the structure of molecules – in this case the direction in which the molecule is twisted to the right of the orange dot.*

A group of scientists led by Kevin Coe at North Carolina State University have looked at the genes of both wild and modern carrots. The genes are the instructions that direct cells to make particular proteins; in this study they primarily looked at the proteins that tell carrots how to make and store carotene. From this, they have been able to understand how farmers have, over a millennium, produced the carrots we now eat; the way genetic engineering has been for centuries without knowing it.

The ancestors of our current carrot grow wild in Asia. It seems likely that around the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century, these first found their way into the vegetable garden. The wild carrots are yellow and become woody and inedible once they flower. The story of domestication revolves around steps to change these traits. Once the carrot reached Western Europe, farmers began to look out for plants that were orange rather than yellow; they especially collected and used seeds from these examples. Without realising it, they were picking plants that had particularly marked activity in three genes that instructed the carrot cells to accumulate the orange-coloured carotene. They also looked for plants that had delayed flowering. In this case, they ended up picking examples where the genes that instructed the plants to produce flowers were only slowly acting. Thus we ended up with the vegetables that may accompany the sprouts on the Christmas table.

# The Severn Valley Group of Parishes



Severn Valley Benefice

Rector: Revd Kina Robertshaw

[Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com](mailto:Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com)

~

Revd David Poyner, Associate Minister

Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work); email

[D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

<p><b>St Mary, Highley</b> CHURCHWARDEN Canev Clayton</p>	<p><b>St Mary, Billingsley</b> CHURCHWARDEN Vacant</p>	<p><b>St Peter, Chelmarsh</b> CHURCHWARDEN Vacant</p>	<p><b>St Bartholomew, Glazeley</b> CHURCHWARDEN Laura Jones – 07714-432836, <a href="mailto:laura@laj.me.uk">laura@laj.me.uk</a></p>
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## Billingsley News

*The Revd David Poyner writes:*

To start, many thanks to Amanda and Dave for taking a short service on Remembrance Sunday, where they read out the names of the three Billingsley men who died whilst serving in the First World War. Whilst the main service takes place at Glazeley as Billingsley has just a plaque to Lt Gibbs (the only one of the three to die in action), I think it is good that we do remember the Billingsley men in their parish church.

We will have an open-air carol service at Lincoln Fields on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. All are welcome, meet underneath the street-light at Lincoln Fields. On Christmas Day there will be carols in church at 10am combined with a short celebration of Holy Communion for those who wish to take this. Again all are welcome, whether you take communion or not;



**“Come you with much faith, come you with little faith”.**

Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their subscription to the 100 Club. This really does make a big difference to us and has been used to pay for repairs to the church roof and guttering. It also helps us to put on community events such as the Jubilee party.

A reminder that we do have a collection of books in the church, free to anyone who would like one; we also accept books that you wish to donate. Do drop round to browse. *And much enjoyed by the WN Ed when she delivers to Billingsley Church!*

[Billingsley: St Mary - A Church Near You](#)  
[\(20+\) St Mary's Billingsley | Bridgnorth | Facebook](#)

David Poyner – Associate Minister  
Tel 01562-68638 or 0780-100-9693

email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

# Glazeley News

## Services at St Bartholomew's Church

- ✝ Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December - Holy Communion and Carols. The church will be decorated plus a 🌲
- ✝ Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January – Holy Communion

Our carol service will be at 10am on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December. As last year, we will interweave carols and Bible readings with a short service of Holy Communion for those who wish to take this. Rachael Davenhill is hoping to continue in the family tradition by playing the organ for us.

## Margaret Joan James – 10<sup>th</sup> March 1938 – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Margaret originated from Attingham, Shrewsbury and married Morris in 1956. Their reception was held in the Parish Rooms, Glazeley before it was demolished!!!! Sadly Morris died earlier this year in April. Their ashes are to be interred together in the churchyard in the near future. Margaret leaves Anthony, Jennifer, Stephen, Mandy and Hailey. Sadly Daughter Shani died at age 2 years. Margaret and Morris lived at Spring Cottages for many years where Margaret worked locally - she used to help clean the church and telephone box!! She worked at The Woodlands for Mrs Pitt and also The Old Inn, Chetton, The Down, The Punch Bowl and The Down School.

## Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday was damp but fortunately the rain was no more than light drizzle when we were at the War Memorial. Caspar and Roger Gabb, George Morley, Eileen Reynolds, Edwina and Jack D'Arcy, Laura Jones and Andrew Jones (on behalf of the parish council) all took part in the service. We hope we honoured the memory of all those who served our communities in the two World Wars including the crew of the plane that came down at Eudon Mill.

## Floored again!

The sharp-eyed may have noticed that the ceiling has been fixed but now we have a hole in the floor at the back of the church. Rest assured that your PCC has also noticed this. The problem seems to have been that when new flooring was put here about 20 years ago, the ventilation was not adequate and so damp has set in. The area has now dried out and our architect will be visiting us in the next few weeks to advise on a solution, so the problem does not recur. We hope to restore the floor to planks rather than the chipboard and carpet we currently have.

## Anita & George's Ladies' Lunch

I would like to say a big thank you to Anita, George & all their helpers for putting on the Ladies Lunch at their beautiful home. More than 30 ladies - and a few brave gentlemen - enjoyed the 2-course meal served with wine. Thank you also to all who donated prizes for the raffle. A total of over **£730** was raised for our lovely church.

## Our Churchyard

The churchyard is being inspected for interesting mosses and liverworts; we hope we can bring you news soon of what has been found! And we would like to thank everyone for helping keep our church & graveyard in such marvellous condition.



<b>Marion Corfield – Tel 01746-764585</b> <a href="mailto:Marion.corfield@talktalk.net">Marion.corfield@talktalk.net</a>
<b>David Poyner – Tel 01562-68638</b> Email <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a>
<a href="#">Glazeley &amp; Deuxhill: St Bartholomew</a> <a href="#">- A Church Near You</a>

# Chelmarsh News

Elizabeth Bebb writes:

## Christmas Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✝ Christmas Crib Service (Children's Service) – Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December 4pm</li><li>✝ Christmas Carol Service – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December 5pm</li><li>✝ Christmas Eve Midnight Service – Communion – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December 11pm.</li></ul>	<b>Church cleaning –</b> Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December at 2:00pm
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As many of you will be aware, Kina has recently been unwell, we wish her a very speedy recovery. We are grateful to her for building such a strong team, and we hope that this will allow her to take the time she needs to recover fully.

During November, we continued to benefit from the increased number of trained and trainee ministers, preachers and individuals supporting ministry within the benefice worship team. They delivered some interesting talks and sermons framing God's Word from differing angles.

## Fund raising

A **rummage sale** was held to swell church funds during November. Thanks go to Marie Ellis, Glenys and Barbara for all their help in organising and advertising. We were surprised and very pleased to raise over **£500** from this venture, so thank you to all those who donated, helped on the day and attended. The money will be utilised in supporting the church and connecting the people in and around the parish.

We are hoping to hold another event in aid of St Peter's Chelmarsh before Christmas (diaries permitting). Please keep an eye on the notice boards and social media for details.

**The St Peter's Chelmarsh 100 club subscription renews in December** for the following year. Please keep an eye out for the letter delivered to your door in December. Subs will be due by the latest 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. We are very grateful to all our supporters who continue to help us fund the church via the 100 club, which raises around £1000 per year. If you have any questions or would like a number, please contact Liz Bebb at Chelmarsh Church or on 07971465811 or by email on [Elizabeth.Bebb@hotmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.Bebb@hotmail.com).

## A Prayer from St Mary's, Highley



This week, in addition to praying for Kina and her family, I would like to suggest you consider praying for a named individual, Mohammed Ghalayini. Mo is a friend of one of our church members from Glazeley. He has lived in Manchester (where he is a civil servant) ever since University, and went over for a family reunion just before Hamas attacked Israel, only the third time he's been able to visit in 20 years. He is trapped in Khan Younis, and when he got to the Rafah crossing wasn't able to get into Egypt as his name was not on the list of British Palestinian nationals. This extract, from an interview with him done a couple of days ago by a reporter, shows the situation he is in. It will also be that of the 240 Israeli hostages held prisoner. Remember them

all in your prayers.

Reporter: Mohammed, I believe you, you just heard some explosions. Can you tell us what happened?

MOHAMMED GHALAYINI: Like, there's always Israeli aircraft circling above Gaza. There's, like, fighter jets circling. And just maybe 20 minutes ago, I think one of them dropped a bomb. We didn't, like, it's sad to say, but it's become so normalized that we don't even, like, look to check where the bombing is coming unless it's really close to you.

Reporter: Where are you right now? How are you keeping safe? MG: I'm very lucky to be in an apartment with 16 of my family members. About four or five to a room. We still, we are struggling, struggling to get water. Water is our biggest struggle. Power is also a big struggle. I guess, in terms of keeping safe, it's really, you know, hard to say we're doing anything ourselves to keep us safe because our safety is not in our hands. Our safety is at the will and whim of the Israeli Air Force, and so is the safety of 2.3 million other Palestinians in Gaza.

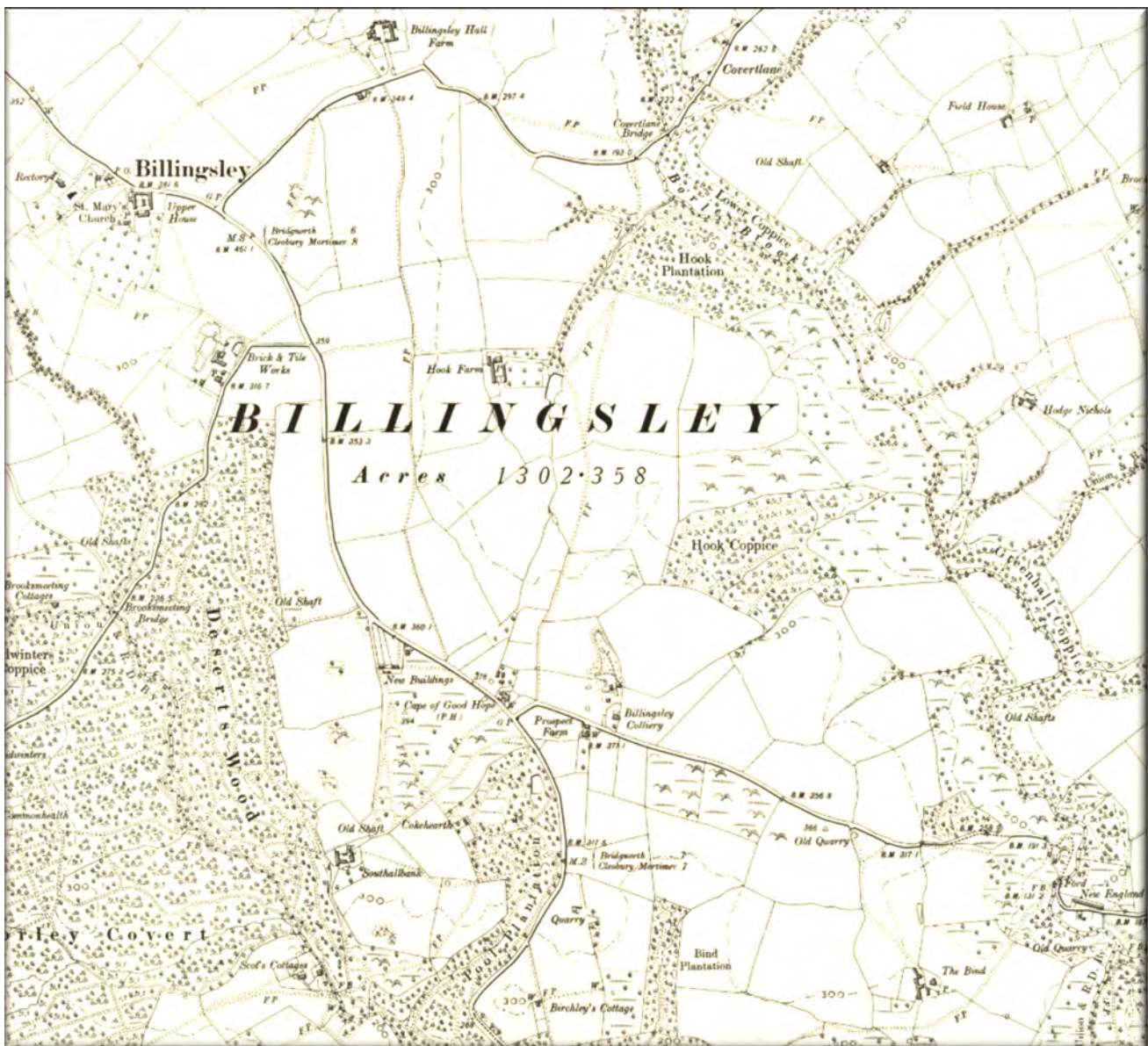
## Memories of Billingsley

Ann Key (Ann Broome) recalls:

I lived on Bynd Lane in one of the temporary bungalows and so did her grandparents and aunt she remembers the Cook family lived at Cheslyn.

Mr. Cook collected the rent from the tenants on Bynd Lane and his mother paid six and six rent per week. The Mullards lived at Mount Pleasant. Miss Hinton lived at Wyre House and took in lodgers; Mrs Shrimpton lived in the bungalow now known as "Ithaca" - she was an ex-nurse and administered to all the villagers' illnesses, taking them to the doctor or hospital if needed in her Austin A7 car. Miss Layton kept the shop: this was at the far end of the Pavilion and was in existence until 1977. You could buy everything you needed from the shop! The Pavilion, or parish room, was a long low building situated opposite Prospect House. Whist drives and dances were held here: it was an existence until the late 1950s, for Ann and Fred held their wedding reception in it. The Greens lived in New Buildings and Bryans at Bank Farm. Lincoln Fields housing estate was a cow pasture in Anne's courting days with a very convenient gateway for a goodnight kiss!!

Ann's enduring memories of Billingsley are of a very happy, close-knit community where everyone knew each other and all were willing to help in any way they could.



## Margaret Byford (nee Cook) continues the Memories of Billingsley

The Cook family originally lived in Scot's Cottages, just over the brook into the Stottesdon parish. These cottages no longer exist. The Cooks came up to Bind Lane around 1917. Jim Cook was born in Mount Pleasant and Margaret was born in Cheslyn, so she feels sure that these two houses were originally one dwelling. Cheslyn / Mount Pleasant was probably the colliery manager's house, and Wyre House would have been for the under-manager. Apart from Prospect House, the remaining houses on Bind Lane were temporary prefabricated buildings with corrugated iron roofs. They were temporary housing for the mine workers, although some people have suggested they were for refugees returning after the First World War. The last of these 'temporary' buildings disappeared within the past few years so they stood the test of time well.

ADDRESS.	SCHEDULE.		SURNAME AND OTHER NAMES.
	No.	Sub. No.	
1 Cheslyn	2	1	Cook, John W.
		2	Cook, Elsie M.
		3	Cook, William W.
		4	Cook, James H.

Originally all these houses and the land belonged to Lord Barnard. Margaret's father had the task of collecting the weekly rent from the tenants and sending it to Mr Eade at Uffington near Wellington. She remembers that the weekly rent for Cheslyn was 7/- and likewise for Wyre House.

The houses and land were finally sold off individually in the 1950s. The Mullards did not wish to purchase Mount Pleasant so the Cook family bought it along with Cheslyn.

The pit had closed by the time Margaret was born but she remembers it as being a wonderful playground for children you were free to wander anywhere and everywhere. The pit mound was especially good for sledging down!!

Billingsley children attended Deuxhill School. In the 1930s the school averaged 80 pupils ranging in age from 5 to 14 years. The infants were taught in the small room, and the larger room was divided into two by a wooden partition. This was for the older children. Mr Owen was the headmaster.

Revd Turner was a vicar at Billingsley in the early '30s, and a wooden cover for the font is dedicated to his memory. Margaret remembers that he had a thriving Sunday school. Her father was a churchwarden for many years and she played the organ during the Second World War.

Billingsley received evacuees from Wallasey. Most families took someone in: the Cook family took in one and the Broomes took in two.

Whist drives and dances were held in the pavilion at this time to raise money for the returning village boys. About seven young men from the village were involved in the war including the Fernihough brothers, Arthur Layton and Margaret's brothers. The pavilion was also the venue for many of the village wedding receptions. Her grandfather Cook owned an orchard and grew Longmore pears in it. The locals called it Cook's orchard, and it was the site of the original post office. Margaret's father sold the orchard, and a house has since been built on it which we now know as Longmore House. Margaret's grandparents on her mother's side (the Turley's) kept the Cape of Good Hope at around the turn of the century. She says that her grandmother did a lot of cooking and put on many suppers.

Margaret has many happy memories of Billingsley including the family walks, but the real treat was to attend the cricket matches at Chorley where the family would meet up with their other relatives. Of course Nipper Cook was her father's cousin - he was the well-known poacher! There are many tales of his exploits.....

In Margaret's time Mrs Shrimpton kept the post office followed by the Harrisons. Williams's were at Hall Farm, George Mellings at Church Farm, Bryans at Bank Farm, Fernihoughs at the Hook. Mrs Layton kept the shop and Margaret remembers Sid Fry (who used to be verger) as the gentleman that batted his eyes and got his words mixed up! Even now, when someone says "cremated" she thinks of Sid saying "cream-e-ated" and has to smile! Happy memories.

*There is a Longmore House in Billingsley. And the improved Longmore Pear is listed (no photograph) in the inventory of the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale.*



# Mapping Church Burial Grounds

Caroline John writes

Readers may recall that Caring for God's Acre advertised a series of autumn webinars on various topics. One of these topics was 'Mapping Church Burial Grounds', which took place on 31 October. This webinar, attended by about 100 people from all over the country, turned out to be even more interesting and important than I had imagined possible when I signed up to attend. The National Burial Grounds Survey will no doubt transform the lives of ecologists, local and family historians – and churchwardens too. Churchwardens most of all, maybe.

You can read more about it on the AGIntl website – [agintl.org](http://agintl.org) – from which the grey panel here is a screenshot. Do have a look, because it sets out a lot of important detail about the aims and the methodology of the survey.

What I heard was a description of an exciting, impressive, long-overdue and extremely ambitious seven-year programme to that will have the potential completely to transform the knowledge, the understanding, the history, the ecological management and the protection of our churchyards. The work so far has also increased the level of public interest and engagement, in particular with local schools.

The first two dioceses to be surveyed are Cumbria and Truro, with the teams then moving south and north respectively to meet somewhere around the middle. No date was given for Hereford, but as we are around the middle maybe we will be towards the end of the 7-year programme.

The technology being used is spectacular – a back-pack of high-resolution cameras which capture everything in the churchyard – vegetation, trees, memorial stones, inscriptions, everything – and their GPS reference, as the surveyor walks the area. I have to confess to have smiled at the video shown of said surveyor walking serenely between serried ranks of uniform stones on a flat piece of land – as per the picture bottom left, for which apologies – it is a screenshot from the webinar.

The survey will also include memorials inside the churches, and the registers themselves, so that memorials can be linked to the location and to the register entry.



## What Is The National Burial Grounds Survey?

The National Burial Grounds Survey (NBGS) is the first project of its kind anywhere in the world.

AG Intl Ltd has been commissioned by the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England to survey and map every churchyard in England. The project includes photographs of every headstone and memorial and the scanning and indexing of the parish records – baptisms, marriage and burials.

Already underway in the Dioceses of Carlisle and Truro we will progress systematically, diocese by diocese, across the country. As each diocese is completed it will be made available online via the Church of England's Church Heritage Record. Each church will have secure access to view and update their own churchyard map and records.

The audience reception was mixed, inevitably given the wide range of interests represented. Whilst the benefits were readily recognised and generally warmly welcomed, the historians were to a degree saddened by the inevitable degradation of the skills and pleasures of their approach. But that has already happened as records have moved online in the last 30 years. As a result, the hobbies have become accessible to millions of people and the original records are protected whilst the information itself is out there for all of us. No doubt the same will be true this time – but with other enormous benefits for the whole fabric of our environment.

# The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

Rector: *post vacant* so for the coming months please contact the churchwardens as below  
or in an emergency call the Rural Dean, Revd Jeannetta Stokes

Telephone: (01746) - 716698 or email: worfieldvicar@yahoo.co.uk

<b>St Mary, Stottesdon</b> CHURCHWARDEN Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007	<b>St Giles, Farlow</b> CHURCHWARDENS Nigel Savage-Bailey - 07989-308599	<b>Holy Trinity, Sidbury</b> CHURCHWARDEN Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149
<b>St Mary, Cleeton St Mary</b> CHURCHWARDEN Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583	<b>St John, Middleton Scriven</b> CHURCHWARDEN vacant – so call Revd Jeannetta Stokes (01746 716698)	<b>St Michael, Silvington</b> CHURCHWARDEN vacant – so call Revd Jeannetta Stokes (01746 716698)

## December Message

### Keeping the Show on the Road during the vacancy – part 3

Three months into the interregnum in our six parishes, there is a fair bit to report around the ‘vacancy process’ for recruiting our new rector!

Building on the excellent news that a new rector will be appointed – and, if all goes smoothly, they should be licensed here by Bishop Richard next July – our Steering Group members are hard at work on the ‘Parish Profile’ which will form the basis of the rector’s job spec and the recruitment adverts. Representatives from each PCC are being appointed so that all six churches can play a part in the candidate selection process in the coming months.

None of this is supposed to be ‘easy’ - so it’s great to report that the PCCs are finding new energies, a truly collaborative spirit and a very healthy ‘good humour’ - as volunteers grow new skills to ‘keep the show on the road’: organising clergy cover; choosing readings, music and hymns; dealing with on-going buildings issues, as at Cleeton and Farlow. Focuses one’s mind on just how much we depend on the myriad of tasks which we expect of our parish priest!

So as we continue to strive for a flourishing Christian presence in our parishes, two schools and in the wider communities we serve, let’s all take time-out to:

- **celebrate and support** the volunteers who work so hard to sustain the church here – the Churchwardens and members of the PCC’s; and to
- **thank the volunteers** (visiting clergy and local worship leaders) who are facilitating Sunday, Christmastide and our New Year worship.

*Clare and Chris Tibbits*

**If you are, or someone you know is, in need of prayer or a visit, or Communion at home or elsewhere, during the interregnum, please contact your churchwarden (details on page 25 above), who will endeavour to help you to arrange this.**

### Benefice website

We will be trying to keep this updated as necessary during the coming months, so if you need something added to it - or spot an error which needs correcting - please get in touch by email to [chris@stottystores.co.uk](mailto:chris@stottystores.co.uk)

# Stottesdon Benefice Group News

## Services in Stottesdon Benefice Churches -

## December and January

HC  
Holy Communion

MP  
Morning Prayer

IW  
Informal Worship

~

During the interregnum there will be some changes to the usual service pattern - these times are correct at the time of going to print, but it's always worth checking on our website (A church near you: Stottesdon benefice) or with your churchwarden.

-	-		-	-
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December</b>				
09:00	HC with Revd Neil Dunlop	Farlow		
10:30	HC with Revd Neil Dunlop	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December</b>				
09:00	HC with Revd Justin Bailey	Cleeton St Mary		
10:30	HC with Revd Justin Bailey	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December</b>				
10:30	MP with Revd Neil Dunlop	Stottesdon		
11:45	HC with Revd Neil Dunlop			
<b>Christmas Eve</b>				
6:30pm	Village Carols with Ann Constable	Middleton Scriven		
11:30pm	Midnight Communion with Revd John Daniels	Stottesdon		
<b>Christmas Day</b>				
9:00	MP with Nigel Savage-Bailey	Farlow		
10:00	Family Communion with Rev Justin Bailey	Silvington		
<b>Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December</b>				
10:30	Benefice HC with Revd Justin Bailey	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January</b>				
9:00	HC with Revd Justin Bailey	Farlow		
10:30	MP with Revd Justin Bailey	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January</b>				
9:00	HC with Revd John Daniels	Cleeton St Mary		
10:30	HC with Revd John Daniels	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January</b>				
10:30	IW with Revd Justin Bailey	Stottesdon		
11:45	HC with Revd Justin Bailey	Sidbury		
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January</b>				
9:00	HC with Revd Ian Gibbs	Silvington		
10:30	HC with Revd Ian Gibbs	Stottesdon		
<b>Sunday 4 February</b>				
9:00	HC with AD Fiona Gibson	Farlow		
10:30	HC with AD Fiona Gibson	Stottesdon		
-	-	-	-	-

## From the Registers

There were no new entries to report as this edition went to press.

## Stottesdon News

*Clare Tibbits writes:*

### Help keep bell ringing alive in Stottesdon.

For the best part of 500 years the bells at St Marys Church, Stottesdon, have rung out to mark not only the passing hours and services at the church but also the great events of the nation, such as the funeral of the late Queen and the coronation of King Charles III.

All four bells were recast in 1750 and in 2004 three of the four bells were further restored. However, the fourth bell, the treble bell, is now in such poor condition that it needs restoration as does part of the frame used to support what is now known as a Heritage peal.

Unlike many local churches the Stottesdon Heritage peal, under tower captain Derek Overton, has an enthusiastic band of ringers keeping the tradition of bell ringing alive. But in order to keep the bells ringing it needs £15,000 to restore and renovate the peal to a safe and usable condition.

Please help St Marys keep its bells ringing and you too can be part of keeping this great tradition alive by donating to the bell fund. All contributions would be most gratefully received.

**If you wish to donate to the Stottesdon bell restoration fund**, then for further details please contact Clive Jackson on 01746 718046 or Derek Overton on 01746 718571.

Cheques can be made payable to "Stottesdon PCC" and sent to Clive Jackson, Burns Farmhouse, Stottesdon, Shropshire DY14 8UQ.

Thank You

## Carols by Candlelight – Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December

A new format for this year: not a Carol Service but rather a fundraising Carol Concert organised by Stottesdon School PTA [FoSPS] and given by the School choir and others. Mulled wine and other refreshments will be on offer and hopefully will entice folk along – funds raised will be put towards the new toilet at St Mary's and for a modern musical keyboard for school use. See the flyer for more information – pre-booking will help with catering numbers, or if you can't it's just £5 on the night.

## Remembrance

With grateful thanks to those who cleaned and decorated St Mary's for Remembrance. There was a good turnout for this year's traditional salute to the fallen men of the parish.

With a tiny bit less timing precision than that to which we've become accustomed, Clare led our prayers, Chris read a poignant reflection and, as the clock chimed eleven, Rob recited the honoured names from the Roll - before a perfectly-executed salute.

We dedicated a newly-researched folder containing information about each of those named on the Roll – this has been created as part of our Heritage project – and it will be available for inspection by the Memorial Window from the New Year. This research turned-up an extra casualty – one Pte Thomas John Weale who died during the 1920/1 campaign in Ireland – whose name, not on that Window nor the Honour Board, was rightfully read alongside those of his comrades in arms.

**Stottesdon 100 club** - Congratulations to November winners – Diana Marsh, Janet Williams and Sarah Price.



*A genuine St Mary's sally, captured in 2019, before the Restoration!*

## Farlow News

*Janice Howells writes:*

- ✝ Carol Service – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December 6:30pm. Mulled Wine and Mince Pies! Anyone wishing to read at this service – please contact churchwarden Nigel.

### 100 Club winners –.

- **October:** £20 Molly Jones; £10 Simon Evans; £10 David Spruce; £5 Rachel & Bill Brown; £5 Louise & Andrew Killey.
- **November:** £20 Paul & Stephanie Evans; £10 Marion Jones; £10 John Turner; £5 Peter & Glynis Harman; £5 Mark Link.

A very enjoyable **Harvest Service** given by Nigel. Music supplied by Caroline Phillips. Followed by Harvest Auction: Vera's apple pies fetched a record-breaking **£11!** A total of **£353** was raised. Many thanks to all who donated to and bought at the auction!

**Hats Off to Festive Fayre!** Very successful Table-Top and Festive Christmas Market at Farlow Village Hall. **£115** raised for the church. Thanks to Janice for all the time spent knitting lovely pom-pom beanies and making crafts.

**£118 raised for Crisis at Christmas** with cake raffle. Many thanks to Rose Innes for the beautiful, decorated Christmas cake won by Kayleigh at the New Inn.

## Middleton Scriven News

*Ann Constable writes:*

### Christmas celebration

**Carol service - Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm, followed by wine and mince pies. This is a community event** – please choose your favourite Carol and / or Christmas reading or poem (replies to Ann by Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December). Donations of wine and mince pies very gratefully received. **Everyone is most welcome to join us.**

### Christmas coffee morning- Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> 10-12 in church.

Coffee/ teas and hot chocolate with mince pies and snowballs! Plus a Christmas raffle and a short Christmas Carol singalong. Bring and buy Homemade Christmas foods. Please note – there will be no coffee morning in January.

Look out for our **Winter Supper – Burns' Night on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup>**. More details to follow on our community WhatsApp and posters/ invitations.

**Thank you to everyone who has supported our church and community events this year.** We look forward to seeing you at events in 2024. Our community events planning group have been busy putting together a range of social events for us to come together, share friendship and have fun.

**"A Merry Christmas and a Happy and peaceful New Year to all." Ann.**

## Cleeton St Mary News

*Sue Dolphin writes:*

### St Mary's Churchyard

As a precaution, due to slipped tiles causing a hazard, parts of the churchyard near to the building are taped off as a 'no go zone' pending remedial work to the roof. **In the interests of personal safety, please do not attempt to enter the closed-off area.** Thank you for your understanding.

### New activities and events in the church

Look out for details of our new monthly Coffee Mornings, and Knit and Natter too!

### October 100 Club Results

- £20 – Wendy Dolphin no 114
- £10 - Linda Jones nos 9 and 12
- £5 to Heidi Robinson no 113

## Community Noticeboard

### Christmas Farmers Market on 16th December

is "under and around the crooked spire" at St Mary's Church, Cleobury Mortimer, on the THIRD SATURDAY each month from 09.30-12.30.

Features local producers of plants, meats, cheeses, vegetables, rapeseed oils, gins, cookies, crafts and more.

Free town centre car parking and very well worth a visit. Details: Clare 01299-272300

### Our Local Food Banks

both are always in need of donations of foodstuffs and other goods, and of money to sustain their services: and never more so than at Christmas!!

Find them on Facebook or call 07960 285520 for BRIDGNORTH or 07519 885943 for CLEOBURY MORTIMER

## Silvington News

*Editor Chris writes for Katie and Bill:*

- ✝ With our grateful thanks to Revd Justin Bailey, St Michael's is delighted to be hosting the traditional Christmas morning service at 10am on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December – and we look forward as usual to welcoming families from all around the Benefice as this is the daytime Christmas Communion for all.

## Sidbury

Regrettably, we have no news this month from Sidbury.

### Stottesdon & District Womens Institute

Meet at 7.30pm on the THIRD WEDNESDAY each month, at either Farlow or Chorley Village Hall.

A varied programme of entertaining talks, crafting and events is arranged – contact Helena 01746 718012 or Clare 01746 718007 for more details.

### Community and Mobile Library services

FREE membership, access to Books, DVDs, Computer workstations and more

HIGHLEY at The Severn Centre 01746 860000 Open 7 days a week from 9am

CLEOBURY at The Cleobury Country Centre 01299 272301 Open Mon-Sat

BROOKS MOBILE LIBRARY also serves many Wheatlands area villages direct – see Council website and social media for dates, times and local stops.

## Useful Community Contacts - updated August 2023

<b>Brown Clee Walkers</b>	Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662
<b>Burwarton &amp; District Garden Club</b>	Meets on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm. Contact 01584-823723 for details of topic and venue
<b>Burwarton &amp; District WI</b>	Contact the Secretary, Helen Groves, on 01746-712466
<b>Burwarton &amp; District Wives Group</b>	Meeting 8pm 1st Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231
<b>Buzzard community bus</b>	Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride – 01743-450270 Mon-Fri 09:30 – 15:00
<b>Chelmarsh Crown Green Bowling Club</b>	Welcomes old and new members. Contact Sue Jackman 01746-862850
<b>Chelmarsh Friends</b>	Meet every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Jenny Green 01746-862191
<b>Chelmarsh Indoor Short Mat Bowling</b>	Welcomes old and new members. The sessions are every Tuesday evening from 7.30-10.00pm. Further details Sue Jackman 01746-862850
<b>Chelmarsh Jubilee Club</b>	Parish Hall 01746-86525 Jean Davis
<b>Chelmarsh Parent &amp; Toddler Group</b>	Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323
<b>Chelmarsh Parish Hall</b>	Available for hire - booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk
<b>Chelmarsh Walking for Health</b>	Monday 10.00am except Bank Holidays. Parish Hall. Eleanor Haddon 01746-862884. 2 levels of walking available
<b>Chetton &amp; Gazeley WI</b>	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sam O'Sullivan 01746-868225
<b>Chetton Folk Dance Club</b>	Meets Chetton Village Hall, last Wednesday of month except August Tel. Janice Burton 01584-823802
<b>Chetton Village Hall</b>	Enquiries - Sue on 01746-789239
<b>Chorley Village Hall</b>	Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact <b>07726-763883</b> – NEW DEDICATED NUMBER DECEMBER 2022
<b>Cleeton &amp; Silvington V H</b>	Zumba - Thursdays 6.30pm 7.30pm all year Ula 01584-890200
<b>Cleobury North Village Hall</b>	Enquiries to 01746-787093 please
<b>Ditton Priors Art Group</b>	Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Contact Gloria Blair on 07794-225532
<b>Ditton Priors Book Club</b>	Jenny -01746-712665
<b>Ditton Priors History Group</b>	Please contact <a href="mailto:paul.wilson8992@gmail.com">paul.wilson8992@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ditton Priors Village Hall</b>	Bookings - <b>07766 392 105</b> - <a href="mailto:dittonpriorsshalls@gmail.com">dittonpriorsshalls@gmail.com</a>
<b>Domestic Abuse Hotline</b>	Telephone Number 08448-044999
<b>Fun &amp; Fitness for 50+</b>	Cleobury North Village Hall - low impact fitness programme working the whole body every Tuesday 10.00 – 11.15am. Contact 01584-823640
<b>Knowle Sports Club</b>	Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children's Football Field 01584-890644
<b>Little Explorers Pre-School, Ditton Priors</b>	Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact Wendy Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549
<b>Short Mat Bowling</b>	Every Monday & Thursday 2.30 – 4.30pm at Cleeton & Silvington Village Hall, October to end of April. Pam 01584-89261
<b>Short Mat Bowling – Ditton Priors</b>	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm except the second Wednesday in the month when it will be Thursday at 8.00 – 10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact Clive Jackson on 01746-718046
<b>Stoke St Milborough Dance</b>	Mike 01746-712774 - Betty 01746-77515
<b>Stottesdon &amp; District W.I.</b>	Meets in various venues on the 3rd Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746 718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007
<b>Stottesdon Gateway Nursery</b>	Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769
<b>Tae kwon-do</b>	Chelmarsh Parish Hall Tuesday evening. Suitable for children & Adults. Neil Morris Thursday 5.45pm. 07969-996055



**Brown Clee Community  
Choir**



## *A Christmas Concert*



Saturday 9th December 2023 at 7.30pm

at Ditton Priors Village Hall, Ditton Priors

One of Shropshire's best mixed voice choirs, Of One Accord, will be performing a variety of Christmas carols and songs, joined by Brown Clee Community Choir

Tickets £7 per adult (£3 for children, family £14) - includes tea/coffee and cake.

Tickets available from Ruth (712029, evenings),  
brownleechoir@gmail.com and the Post office.

Raffle

Supporting: Brown Clee Patient Group and  
Axis Counselling Supporting Survivors of Sexual Abuse



FRIENDS OF  
STOTTESDON COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
INVITE YOU TO

# CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

*At St Mary's Church*

**STOTTESDON**

THURSDAY 14TH DECEMBER  
6PM - 7PM

Featuring the school choir, solo performances & festive readings

Tickets £5 per adult, under 18s free.  
To include a glass of mulled wine & mince pie.  
Other refreshments available.

**How to buy a ticket:**  
Online via <https://buytickets.at/fosps/1066556>  
Or scan the QR Code

Pay cash at the door upon arrival

**Early booking recommended**

A welcoming community event for all the family to enjoy.

Please bring a torch & park sensibly within the village. Blue Badge parking at the church ONLY.

Raising money to buy a new professional keyboard for Stottesdon CofE Primary School performances. A donation will also be made towards the new church WC.

LUCKY 125 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

# PRELOVED CLOTHES SALE

10.30am - 1pm Saturday 2nd December  
Cleeton St Mary Village Hall DY14 0QY

Come and have a coffee and bag a bargain to raise money for Cleeton St Mary Church roof repairs. All donations of good quality, clean clothes would be very welcome.

Cake sale  
Tea & Coffee  
Raffle

All expenses in Cleeton 01929 658104