

# WHEATLAND NEWS

Christmas and  
New Year edition 2024-5



*Skies over Cleeton St Mary*

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

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# Editorial

As we are preparing the bumper copy of Wheatland News for the end of 2024 and beginning of 2025, we reflect on the past year and the contributions we have received from across the Wheatland News Area. Thank you all! We hope you enjoy this edition as you relax over Christmas!

We have seen an eventful year throughout the Wheatland area with many different aspects of the community represented through the pages. Looking back, we notice that communities are coming together and taking part in each other's events in the churches, schools and villages. We are in a climate of uncertainty with conflicts and weather, so therefore coming together is of great importance for all generations.

News about forthcoming events for people to enjoy is vital, not only to keep Wheatland News viable but to display the life and vitality that our communities create and offer. We look forward to receiving reports about events that have taken place and welcome information from clubs and societies that offer so much to local people. And remember the adage – a picture paints a thousand words!!!

We would like to thank all those who have contributed and supported the publication of the magazine over the last twelve months and look forward to another year of interesting reports and community events.

We wish all our readers, contributors, parish contacts and distributors and the staff at Badger Print a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Enjoy and keep safe.

Ed

## Our thanks ...

...to Sharon Taylor Oertel of Clee St Mary for this edition's front cover picture of Cleeton Lights; to Rich Burton for St Mary's Church Stottesdon in the starlit snow which is our back cover for this festive season; and to John and Moh for lending us their Christmas Tree for page 21.

### Wheatland News Local Coordinators

Please continue to send reports to your contact for your parishes listed below.

The **deadline** for getting your contributions for the **February 2025** edition of WN to the **EDITOR** will be **noon on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025**. Please, please help us to help our printer and our distributors so that we get WN to you in good time each month.

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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>



## Bishop Richard's weekly video message

Against a backdrop of softly falling snow, Bishop Richard reflects on the value and sanctity of human life through the lenses of remembrance and the theological, medical and social aspects of legislation that provides for assisted dying for the terminally ill.

You can read the transcript, and watch the video, on the Diocese website at <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/news/bishop-of-herefords-message/-bishop-richards-weekly-video-message--transcript-24102024.php>

The Bill receives its Second Reading on 29<sup>th</sup> November. If you wish to read more on the Parliamentary consideration of this question, then <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10123/provides-texts-of-the-Bill-and-briefing-notes-provided-by-the-Houses-of-Parliament-Libraries>.



## November letter from the Dean of Hereford

Dear Friends

I'm not going to wish you a merry Christmas yet even though this is probably my best opportunity to infest the whole diocese with my festive cheer. As I write, the thoughtful season of advent has not even begun so I don't want to sing gloria at you, or bellow ho-ho-ho. Expressions of seasonal enthusiasm have changed, and I wonder how many people today really understand the original language of Christmas anymore. "To us is born a saviour" What does that mean and why should it matter?

Advent is about looking at ourselves and at the world and realising just how much we need that saviour. Christians understand that Christmas would be pointless if we didn't - just a marketing ploy cooked up by sellers of toys and frozen party nibbles to get us all to spend as much money as possible. But what if you have never been told? If a fire engine screeched to a halt outside your house with sirens blaring and blue lights flashing, you might wonder what it was doing there if your house was not on fire. You might be mildly interested but you would hardly celebrate your salvation! In the same way this baby whose birth we celebrate on Christmas Day and who we hail as Saviour is presumably similarly underwhelming if you cannot see anything that we need saving from!

Sometimes it feels easier to believe in evil than in God. But if you do believe that evil exists- if you see it in all its brutality in our daily news, if it touches you in grief, loneliness, hatred, jealousy- then you perhaps may dimly begin to understand why we need our Saviour. If you look at the impact of individual and corporate greed or the priorities and conduct of those who run our society you may begin to understand why we need our Saviour. If you look at crime, war, corruption and oppression, then you may perceive our deep need of salvation

Perhaps we all vaguely sense the need for a Saviour because we can all see some of what is wrong. It is only a step from that yearning for things to be better to realising that science and virtue-signalling won't deliver and that our only hope of real and change is in God. Whether we recognize Him in the Christmas story repeated every year by those persistent folk in the churches and our tiny children with their tea towels on their heads is another question altogether.

Perhaps this year it might be time to look a bit deeper and see what all the fuss is about. Coming soon to a church near you.

**Rev'd Canon Sarah Brown**  
Dean of Hereford

# The United Benefice of Brown Clee



**Priest-in-Charge:**  
**Revd Joe Simons**

The Vicarage, Ditton Priors, Shropshire WV16 6SQ  
**01746-599217 07872-464276**  
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**St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill & Loughton**

CHURCHWARDENS

Carole Smith

Mark Smith: 01746-712394

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

CHURCHWARDENS

Anne Preece: 01746-787237

Ben Upton: 07870-160039

**St Giles, Chetton**

CHURCHWARDEN

Sheila Millington: 01746-789443

**SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North**

CHURCHWARDENS

Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676

Jane Bufton: 07716-877421

**All Saints, Neenton**

CHURCHWARDEN

Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093

## December reflection

### There is a lot in the bible about gardening

- The Garden of Eden – at the start of the Old Testament.
- The Garden of Gethsemane – where Jesus confronts his passion and the road to Calvary.
- The Garden in Revelation – where we encounter peace and tranquility and the tree of life.

### Things happen in gardens.

Jesus uses this in many of his parables. Jesus is recognized by Mary Magdalene as the gardener after he has risen - John 20.15, and he identifies himself as the true vine in John 15.5 and his Father the vine grower. He says:

*“I am the vine and you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”*

But Jesus also says earlier on in John 15.2:

*‘Every branch that bears fruit he (God) prunes, to make it bear much fruit.’*

I suspect that some of us may feel pruned, especially at this time of year.

It might imply that as Christians we need some pain and angst to develop. But a gardener understands his garden, when things are meant to bloom, when they need to be reinvigorated, when they need to be moved, repotted or watered.

Gardeners can and do make decisions which seem on occasions radical, a lot of wood is cut away and initially we look and feel as if all has been destroyed. But out of the gardener’s love for the garden and those in his garden he brings energy, power and new life.

This is the season where we welcome the word of God made visible on earth in Jesus Christ, the light and hope that he brings is now part of who we are as Christians.

So let us abide in him, the true vine, knowing that his plan is a plan of fullness for all.

Jesus is with us and we can trust in his abiding love, the love that came down at Christmas.

It would be lovely to see you at any of our churches across the benefice as we celebrate the light of his presence coming into our world.

*Revd Joe Simons*



**We look forward to welcoming you at our  
Brown Clee Benefice Advent & Christmas Services 2024**

**Sunday December 1st – Advent Sunday**

9.30am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors      4.00pm – Christingle – Ditton Priors

**Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup> – Second Sunday in Advent**

9.30am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors      11.30am – Carol Service – Cleobury North.  
4.00pm – Carols – Chetton. Followed by coffee/tea/ mulled wine & mince pies

**Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday in Advent**

9.30am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors  
4.00pm – Carol Service – Neenton. Followed by light refreshments

**Wednesday December 18<sup>th</sup>**

6.30pm – Carol Service – Ditton Priors

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

7.30pm - Brown Clee Young Farmers Carols in the Street - Ditton Priors  
Mulled wine, mince pies. All monies raised to go to their chosen charities Lingen Davies, Severn Hospice,  
Midlands Air Ambulance, Shropshire Rural Support

**Sunday December 22<sup>nd</sup> – Last Sunday in Advent**

9.30am – Holy Communion – Ditton Priors      2.00pm – Carol Service – Loughton  
5.00pm – Festival Carol Service with Lights – Aston Botterell. Light refreshments. Brass Band.  
Father Christmas! Please ring 07966 459806 to confirm your visit to see Father Christmas!

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

4.00pm – Crib Service – Ditton Priors      7.00pm – Carol Service – Wheathill  
11.15pm – Midnight Mass – Ditton Priors

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

10.00am – Group Holy Communion – Chetton

**Sunday December 29<sup>th</sup> – The First Sunday of Christmas**

10.00am – Group Holy Communion – Ditton Priors



# Readings

## For December

### Sunday 1st December – The First Sunday of Advent – Purple

Psalm 25. 1 – 9;  
Jeremiah 33. 14 – 16; 1 Thessalonians 3. 9 – end;  
Luke 21. 25 – 36

### Sunday 8th December – The Second Sunday of Advent – Purple

Psalm Cantic: Benedictus  
Malachi 3. 1 – 4; Philippians 1. 3 – 11; Luke 3. 1 – 6

### Sunday 15th December – The Third Sunday of Advent – Purple

Psalm Cantic Isaiah 12. 2 – end  
Zephaniah 3. 14 – end; Philippians 4. 4 – 7; Luke 3. 7 – 18

### Sunday 22nd December – The Fourth Sunday of Advent – Purple

Psalm Cantic Magnificat  
Micah 5. 2 – 5a; Hebrews 10. 5 – 10; Luke 1. 39 – 45 (46 – 55)

### Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Eve – Purple (As Christmas Day)

Psalm 96  
Isaiah 9. 2 – 7; Titus 2. 11 – 14; Luke 2. 1 – 14 (15 – 20)

### Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Day – Gold or White

Psalm 96  
Isaiah 9. 2 – 7; Titus 2. 11 – 14; Luke 2. 1 – 14 (15 – 20)

### Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December – The Sunday after Christmas Day – White

Psalm 148  
1 Samuel 2. 18 – 20, 26; Colossians 3. 12 – 17; Luke 2. 41 – end

## For January

### Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January – The First Sunday of Epiphany– White

Psalm 72 (1 -9), 10 - 15  
Isaiah 60. 1 – 6, ; Ephesians 3. 1 - 12; Matthew 2. 1 - 12

### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January – The Baptism of Christ – Gold or White

Psalm 29  
Isaiah 43. 1 – 7; Acts 8. 14 – 17; Luke 3. 15 – 17, 21 – 22

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January – The Second Sunday of Epiphany – White

Psalm 36. 5 – 10  
Isaiah 62. 1 – 5; 1 Corinthians 12. 1 – 11; John 2. 1 – 11

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January – The Third Sunday of Epiphany – White

Psalm 19  
Nehemiah 8. 1 – 3, 5 – 6, 8 – 10; 1 Corinthians 12. 12 – 31a; Luke 4. 14 – 21

### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)– Gold or White

Psalm 24. (1 -6), 7 – end  
Malachi 3. 1 – 5; Hebrews 2. 14 – end; Luke 2. 22 - 40



# Brown Clee Benefice News

## Our 2024 All Souls' Memorial Service

**On Sunday 3rd November we held a very special Service at St. John the Baptist Church, Ditton Priors. Families and friends came together in a wonderful act of remembrance.**

During a very beautiful and moving Service over 60 candles were lit in memory of those we love but see no longer.

In addition, this year a special Memorial tree was placed in the church beforehand and everyone was invited to write the name or names of those who have gone before us on to a paper leaf and also leave a message in our Books of Remembrance. To date we have over 70 leaves on our tree and many entries in our Commemorative Books. These will all be kept safely together in the future.

Following the Service refreshments were served. We would like to thank all those who felt able to attend. Please be assured that if you felt unable to join us this year, we will be holding the same Service in 2025 and details of this will of course be made available nearer the time.

The Memorial tree will remain in the church until the arrival of the Christmas tree.



## Services during January in Brown Clee Churches

### Sunday 5th January

- 10:00am Group Holy Communion – Cleobury North
- 11:00am Coffee & Prayers at Middle House Farm, Aston Botterell

### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January

- 9:30am Holy Communion – Ditton Priors
- 11:30am Holy Communion - Chetton

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January

- 9:30am Holy Communion – Ditton Priors
- 11:30am Holy Communion – Neenton

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January

- 10:00am Group Holy Communion – Chetton
- 11:30am Holy Communion – Chetton

### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February

- 9:30am Holy Communion – Ditton Priors
- 11:30am Coffee & Prayers at Middle House Farm, Aston Botterell

## From the Brown Clee Registers

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November:

Memorial Service for Mr. Graham Perrins at St. John the Baptist Church, Ditton Priors



# Latest news from Brown Clee Patient Participation Group

Tina Ranson writes:

**We are giving a big welcome to Dr Clare Bravey** who joins the Practice team on 26<sup>th</sup> November. Dr Bravey will be working at Stottesdon Surgery on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and at Ditton Priors on Friday afternoons. She hopes to increase her regular sessions during the course of 2025, and is very much looking forward to working alongside Dr Bassett, Dr Matthews and Dr Jones.

We are also really pleased to welcome two new members to our **Committee**, bringing it up to full strength. The full committee is now: Tina Ranson (Chair), Bill Lewis (Treasurer) Linda Jackson (Secretary), Mark Gregory, Yemmi Agbebi and Ade Robinson (giving representation to the patients who mainly use the Stottesdon Surgery). We have asked Caroline John to accept a role of Consultant to the committee, and we are all very relieved that she has agreed.



**The next open meeting will be on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 7:00pm in Ditton Priors Village Hall**, when we will be hearing more from Ade Robinson about his ideas for creating a peaceful space in the grounds of Ditton Priors Surgery, as well as adding colour and interest to the gardens at Stottesdon. We will also be asking you to consider if you are willing to help to develop a local support network for those who are bereaved and grieving. To contact us at any time: [brownclepppg@gmail.com](mailto:brownclepppg@gmail.com)

We are just hoping that this will be enough to persuade you to venture out at that time of year!

## Brown Clee Health and Well-being Community Society Ltd.

See the latest information about the Community Society, what it has been set up to do, and how to join, on page xxx.

## Ditton Priors News

Marjorie Jones writes:

**November has been a very busy month**, and it has simply flown by!

Starting with the Coffee Morning on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Craft Fair at Chetton, followed by All Saints on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> and the All-Souls Service at 4pm, remembering our loved ones who are no longer with us - deeply moving but reassuring. On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November there was a Memorial service for Graham Perkins, with the Remembrance Services following on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**Remembrance at Ditton Priors** at 3pm was well attended and donations of **£175** was sent to the RBL Poppy Appeal.

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November a few of us attended a short **Remembrance service at Ditton Priors Residential Home**, led by our Licensed Reader Dot Cartwright, and then onto Wheathill on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> November.

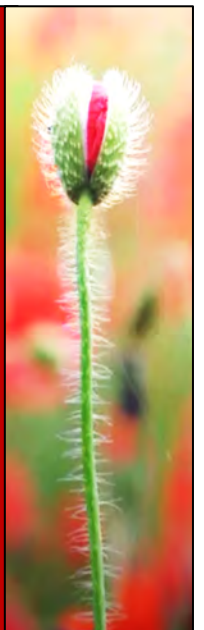
### **Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2024**

*As the current Poppy Appeal comes to a close, I am pleased to report that Ditton Priors District has collected **£2147.92** for this worthy charity.*

*I would like to express my sincere thanks to all collectors and local outlets who have participated in the appeal and their involvement is paramount to its success.*

*Also, on behalf of the Armed Forces Community I would like to thank everyone for their generosity.*

*Tony Brown*



## Open The Book

Our team was at Brown Clee School on Wed 13<sup>th</sup> November when we told and performed the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth and the birth of John the Baptist. A copy of the new 'Open The Book' story Bible was presented to the School Head Mr Danny Harley. Our next visit is on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December.

## School Harvest

On Mon 18<sup>th</sup> November Brown Clee School celebrated the Harvest in Church at 9.15am. The Church was full - about 150 children, parents and grandparents.

## Christmas Fair

Held on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November in the Pavilion at 10.30am. We look forward to a report in the February edition!

## Wheatland News Subscriptions for 2025

**Please order for next year and pay monies** to your distributor before Christmas please.

Many Thanks to all involved in the Magazine production and distribution - all voluntary and very time consuming. It is an excellent production and much appreciated by all. *Thank you for your kind words, Marjorie – much appreciated – Ed and Typist.*

## Events during the Festive Season

### Switching on the Christmas lights

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 6.30 pm in Church. Join us for Carols, Mulled Wine, etc. on this happy community gathering. All welcome.

### Christingle Service

- ✝ Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December (Advent Sunday) 4pm in Ditton Priors Church. We celebrate Jesus as the Light of the World and give thanks for the Children's Society, who do such valuable work with children and their families needing support. The children will help make the Christingle and a collection will be taken for the Children's Society. Always a happy and colourful occasion – all are welcome.

### Residential Homes

We shall be going into both our Residential Homes for a Christmas Service of Carols on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December.

### Carol Service

- ✝ Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December in Ditton Priors Church.

### Young Farmers Carols

- ✝ Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm, in and around Ditton Church.

### Crib Service

- ✝ 4pm on Christmas Eve in Ditton Church. Come and hear the age-old story of the first Christmas with the children placing the figures in the Crib together with Christmas songs. A quiet hour away from the hustle and bustle of the last day's preparations. Children of any age welcome at this special time.

### Midnight Holy Communion

- ✝ 11.15pm in Ditton Priors Church.

### Services after Christmas

- ✝ Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December - 10am Group Service at Ditton Priors
- ✝ Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January - 10am Group Service at Cleobury North
- ✝ Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – 9:30am Holy Communion at Ditton Priors

**First Saturday of the Month Coffee Mornings** - 10.30am - 12noon in Church. There is no charge for this popular community event, and everyone is welcome.

Next dates are Saturdays: 7<sup>th</sup> December- miss January and begin again on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025, 1<sup>st</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> April.

### St John the Baptist 100-Club Results - November

- £20 - Catherine Price
- £10 - Ettie McLachlan
- £5 each to: George Parker, Dot Cartwright, and Neil Colebatch

Cleaning Rota December - all dates are Sundays	Cleaning Rota January - all dates are Sundays
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 1<sup>st</sup> Dec Mrs Carole Hancox &amp; Mrs Maureen Lloyd</li> <li>■ 8<sup>th</sup> Dec Mr &amp; Mrs Graham Russell</li> <li>■ 15<sup>th</sup> Dec Mrs Shirley Wall &amp; Mrs Anita Casswell</li> <li>■ 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec Mrs Jennifer Lowe &amp; Mrs Debbie Jones</li> <li>■ 29<sup>th</sup> Dec Mr &amp; Mrs Dennis Griffiths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 5<sup>th</sup> Jan Mr &amp; Mrs John Ballard</li> <li>■ 12<sup>th</sup> Jan Mr &amp; Mrs Tony Brown</li> <li>■ 19<sup>th</sup> Jan Mrs Jutta Langham &amp; Mr Steve Allen</li> <li>■ 26<sup>th</sup> Jan Mrs Carole Hancox &amp; Mrs Maureen Lloyd</li> <li>■ 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb Mr &amp; Mrs Graham Russell</li> </ul>

*We wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas  
and every good wish for the New Year.*

### Burwarton & District Wives' Group

We are a Ladies Group of all ages that meet on the first Wednesday of each month from October through to July for talks or visits on various subjects. We are a non-profit making group who through the season have raffles or bring-and-buys, and donate the proceeds at the end of each season to a chosen charity. There is a small annual subscription to join. A warm welcome awaits you with a chance to meet new and old friends. If you would like any further information please feel free to contact Debbie Jones (01746 712421), Gill Severn (01746 712231) or Margaret Bill (01746 712030).



### Ditton Priors Local History Group

*Robin Greenwell writes:*

#### School Talk

The History Group was delighted to have been asked by Brown Clee Primary School to do a short talk to its youngest pupils on what Ditton was like 100s of years ago. On 27<sup>th</sup> November members of the committee took along photographs to show the children how things were in places like the local school and other parts of the village.

### Progress at The History Centre

As well as the obvious addition of solar panel to the roof of the building, behind the scenes, a huge amount of work is being done to improve the things inside the Centre. The first of the new display boards are now underway. Still in the design stage, but it's hoped the new year will see these being unveiled, along with new storage facilities for the archive.

## November's Event:

**What an interesting and entertaining talk we enjoyed in November by the Vice President of the Wenlock Olympian Society, Chris Cannon!**



Chris told us the incredible story of Much Wenlock's Dr William Penny Brookes, who was not only the inspiration behind the modern Olympic Games, but also the creator of so many initiatives that transformed the lives of ordinary working people.

**Chris also brought along the 2012 Olympic torch and the Games' mascot 'Wenlock'!**



The event was well attended, so a huge thank you to everyone who ventured out on a chilly November evening.



## Helping our friends across the pond!

The DPLHG Facebook page received this lovely post from Brad & Angie Rowley of Utah, USA following their visit to the DP History Centre in October:

"Big thanks to John Coles, and the Ditton Priors local history group. John and the group helped me find my ancestors through well-kept records in their possession. John gave up two days and

many hours of his time to help us! What a true Angel. I am so grateful to all who do the tedious work of typing and digitizing old hand-written records and sharing them with others! What a true blessing".

We were very pleased to help Brad & Angie and many thanks to our very own John Coles for his time and effort!



## A plug – but not an advert – for Caring for God's Acre!

*Caroline John writes:*

Is the Christmas break a good time to consider how best to manage your churchyard for the coming year?

Having with mixed feelings of regret and satisfaction left my own garden some 6 years ago, and missing it a lot despite the compensations of town life, I treasure more than ever the odd hour spent wandering in a churchyard as a most refreshing interlude. Over just the last few weeks I have tramped through acres of long wet grass in the enormous Shrewsbury cemetery in search of a particular old soldier, and picked my way through the tiny patch that is Preston Gubbals, chatting to the permanent residents, revelling in the rich variety of plants and flowers and seeds, the lichen on the gravestones, and the tributes to their occupants.

CfGA's hands-on help to manage the churchyard at St Mary's Church in Billingsley featured in WN earlier this year. The CfGA website contains a wealth of information about the choices to make and the "why, what and how" of implementing them. Much of the material is just as relevant to our own gardens as to the churchyards, too.

CfGA goes a step further, and will actually make virtual, or actual, visits to churches to advise, and more. It's not free of charge, but you may find it all very good value! <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk>

# Wheathill & Loughton News

Marjorie Jones writes:

## Carol Services

- ✝ Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December - 2pm at Loughton Chapel
- ✝ Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December - 7pm at Wheathill Church

## New year

There will be no Services in January and February, but we look forward to resuming in March in the better weather. See February magazine.

Happy Christmas and every good wish for the New Year!



**Remembrance Service at Wheathill** on 17<sup>th</sup> November. The Church was beautifully decorated by Joyce and Janet and the singing enhanced by members of the Group Choir. £56 was collected and donated to RBL Poppy Appeal.



# Aston Botterell News

Anne Preece writes:

On Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> we held a relaxed service at church. Thanks to Sally for her poem on Saint Francis, to Jo for her very caring prayers, to Bobbie who led the service, whilst I read the lesson.

It reminds me of when I drove a coach load of people to Callela in Spain where I took over the Xmas morning church service there. There were 14 coach loads of English people from different hotels in the Costa Brava (Hoverlands Holidays). I had the organist with me on my coach and I always remember him saying 'Anne if you start the singing off I can hear you'. lol I had all the children around the altar singing the carol 'Away in a Manger'.

It was a lovely atmosphere for Xmas, all the coach drivers joining in at the back of the church. Then we all dispersed to our hotels for the Xmas celebrations. 18 years I did away for Xmas - 16 in Spain and 2 in Austria – working!!!

- ✝ Last reminder for our Christmas Carol Service with a brass band, choir, and Father Xmas on Sunday December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5 pm. **See next page!**

## November 50 Club Results

£20 – Sam Jones no 16, £10 – Mike Vernon no 229, £5 each to – John Preece no 194, and George Howells no 170.

## ASTON BOTTERELL'S COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE

A warm welcome awaits everyone coming to this Service, approaching the illuminated Church along the special festive pathway. The entire Benefice is warmly invited to share Jesus's early Birthday and its true spirit of giving, with our inspiring leader Revd Joe.

The Service takes place on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>  
December at 5:00pm.



Clebury Mortimer Concert Brass will be providing music in Church to accompany the singing of carols, and will continue playing after the Service as everyone enjoys the mulled wine and light refreshments.



Santa will also be inside the Church during the Service, to ensure that the children enjoy themselves.

In readiness for this very special Service, Tim and his eager team are building a spectacular wonderland (pictured) and arranging the illumination, while Anne and friends have already started decorating the beautiful church interior.

Please do come to St Michael and All Angels Church in Aston Botterell to join in with the Carols and community spirit. For more details, and to give her an idea of numbers to expect (Santa needs to know .....), please call Anne on 07966-459806

## Clebury North & District Village Hall

*CNVH Management Committee writes:*

**Music in the Hall! A date for your diary**

**Coming on 22nd February 2025 - The Rotundas, an English folk band who play the traditional industrial and social songs of Birmingham and the Black Country.**

Tickets will be available from the Village Hall Committee at the end of January – details will be in the February WN. Reserve the date in your diaries, book your place for an interesting evening of entertainment from this talented foursome.



**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!).

**Regular coffee mornings are being held in the Hall,** in aid of CNVH funds – please contact Julia in Clebury North shop for information on dates and times.

## Cleobury North & Burwarton News

*Jane Bufton writes:*

**Thank you** to all who have supported the Church restoration project. We continue to work towards keeping our lovely church open.

**Volunteers are needed, please**, to give the church gates a facelift! Please contact Jane Bufton if you can help.

## Burwarton & District WI



We are forming an interesting programme for 2025 with speakers, social afternoons and outings and would welcome everyone to come and have an enjoyable time with us. We have meetings from October to March at 2.30pm and from April to September at 7.30pm.

Our first meeting of the year will be a social afternoon at Beech House, The Hedgerows, Ditton Priors on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Visitors pay £3. For more information please ring Helen Groves on 01746 712466 or e mail me on [groves.helen5@gmail.com](mailto:groves.helen5@gmail.com).

## Chetton News

### Church service in November

- ✝ Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 4:00pm – Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
- ✝ Christmas Day, 10:00am – Holy Communion.

### Flowers and Cleaning Volunteers.....

We would welcome anyone who would like to help decorate our Church for our Christmas services – please contact Sheila.

*Pam Downing writes:*

**The craft fair** at Chetton Village Hall was a great success: thank you to all of you who organised and helped on the day especially Jo and Lisa.

We look forward to seeing you at our **Carol Service** (see above), our Church is always beautifully decorated, and I am sure this year will be no exception.

Charles and Lisa are once again hosting our **Annual Christmas Meal on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December**. This will be £20.00 per person, beef casserole or veggie option, home-made puddings followed by cheese, biscuits and coffee .... And not to forget carol singing around the piano. Contact Sheila or Lisa if you would like to join us.

**Thank you** to all of you who have contributed to keeping our Church clean and tidy this year: we do appreciate your help. To Joe for mowing the Churchyard and also his skill in flattening the mole hills in recent months! To Mike for contributing so much, and to the choir who are so much a part of our benefice. Thank you also to the growing team of Bell Ringers: we are so privileged to be able to hear Chetton bells ringing out. To Charles and Lisa for their wonderful hospitality throughout the year, and lastly but importantly, Joe, Karen and Emma for everything you do.

**Have a peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year.**

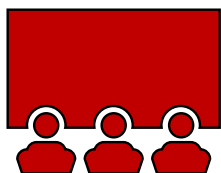
## Chetton Village Hall

### Chetton Active Friends – exercise and recreational sessions

<p>Village Hall Diary for 2024</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pam's Pilates on Mondays and Tuesdays 9:30am, and also on Tuesdays 11:00am.</li> <li>▪ Chetton Active Friends, Monday afternoons from 2pm.</li> <li>▪ Chetton and Glazeley WI meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm.</li> <li>▪ Bridgnorth Dog Club - Thursday evening, 6:00pm.</li> <li>▪ Zumba with Lisa Beards – Tuesdays - 2:30 pm</li> <li>▪ Ballroom and Sequence Dancing, Tuesday evenings, 7:00pm.</li> </ul>
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**Village Hall enquiries** – for activities or hire, please contact Sue Bayliss on 789239.

As we are coming towards the end of another year, we have received grants over the last 12 months from 'Awards for All', to assist us with the resurfacing of the car park and replace the fencing. We have also received grants to enable the continuation of Chetton Active Friends, from the Albert Hunt Trust, the Allen Lane Foundation, the Grimmit trust and the Hedley Foundation. Chetton Active Friends is fully subscribed: please contact 01746-789239 to be placed on the waiting list. Many thanks to the Grantors. Many thanks to everyone who has supported the hall over the last 12 months and send you all Christmas and New Year Greetings.



**Flicks in the Sticks** - the new season commences on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February when we are showing 'The Great Escape'. Doors open for refreshments at 7pm.

After showing Flicks for 30 years at £4.00, we are increasing the cost to £5.00 for the film. Tea and coffee remain at £1.00. Homemade cake £1.00.

## Wheatland Diary

Fri	6	Dec	Annual Christmas Dinner, Chetton – see page 15
Sat	7	Dec	Coffee morning, St John's Church, Ditton Priors, 10:30 – 12:00. All welcome - see page 11
Sat	7	Dec	Coffee Morning – Cleeton St Mary Church – 10:00 – 12noon – see page 28
Thur	12	Dec	Burwarton & District Garden Club - 2:30pm at Stoke St Milborough Village Hall – see page 24
Sat	14	Dec	Christmas Wreath-making – Ditton Priors Pavilion – 10:00am – see page 10
Sat	14	Dec	Christmas Coffee Morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 – noon – see page 28
Fri	20	Dec	Live music at the Pheasant – Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels – 9:00pm – see page 18
Sun	22	Dec	Illuminations, Santa, and Carol Service – Aston Botterell – see page 14
Wed	1	Jan	Live music at the Pheasant – Call of the Kraken – 5:00pm – see page 18
Tues	7	Jan	Brown Clee Patient Participation Group Open Meeting – DP Village Hall 7:00pm – see page 9
Tues	14	Jan	Burwarton & District WI, Beech House, The Hedgerows, Ditton Priors, 2.30pm – see page 15
Sat	18	Jan	Glazeley Church Breakfast at The Down – see page 19
Sat	25	Jan	Burns Night – Middleton Scriven Church – 7:00pm – see page 28
Sat	1	Feb	Coffee morning, St John's Church, Ditton Priors, 10:30 – 12:00. All welcome - see page 11
Sun	2	Feb	Candlemas – please ensure that you have removed wreaths from the churchyards! See page
Fri	7	Feb	Flicks in the Sticks – 'The Great Escape' - Chetton Village Hall – 7:00pm – see page 16
Sun	22	Feb	Cleobury North Village Hall – Rotunda – industrial and social folk music – see page 14



# Neenton News

*Bobbie Jarvis writes:*

## Services at All Saints' Church during November

- ✝ Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December – Carol Service – 4:00pm followed by mince pies and mulled wine in the comfort of the Pheasant. Come along, sing the favourite Christmas Carols and enjoy the warm atmosphere of All Saints Church as we remember the Christmas Story in readings and song.
- ✝ Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January – 11:30am – Holy Communion.

**Thank you** to all who have supported the upkeep of the church, and the volunteers who have helped to keep the weeds under control, especially Liz for the colourful pots at the entrance.

### Anne Evans

Our thoughts and prayers are with Anne's family at this sad time. Anne was a well known resident of Neenton. She had a wealth of knowledge about the area and worked all her life for Dr Smith, for many years the GP for Brown Clee who also lived in the village. Anne enjoyed meeting people and reminiscing about the life she had with Gerald. We shall miss her.

### Simon Aldridge

A valued friend of the Pheasant, Simon generously renovated our three tall bar stools and provided them with the lovely leather tops that make them so comfortable. He and his Alsation dog were frequent visitors. Our thoughts and prayers are with Simon's family at this sad time.

### Armistice Day Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024

In memory of the three young men from Neenton, a short service of remembrance was held to continue the tradition of honouring Frank Amies, Harry Yapp and John Leath, whose names are on the memorial which is the stained glass window in the church together with remembering all those who have given their lives in conflicts past and present.

In a moving and emotional service crosses were placed on the altar followed by The Last Post, two minutes silence and Reveille. During the week the great niece of Harry Yapp visited the church and placed a cross on the altar.

**We will remember them**





# The Pheasant's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

It seems a long time since the Pheasant lay derelict and sad, but thanks to the support and hard work from many different individuals and Groups such as the Plunkett Foundation and Co-ops UK, it was saved and nurtured into to a viable business as our very own Community Pub, owned by Neenton Community Society Limited, itself a Charitable Benefit Society.

Mark and Sarah became the managers summer 2014 and have built a reputation for great hospitality, excellent food and a successful training place for young people to learn the hospitality trade and hone their personality and expertise in dealing with people. Sarah's brother Andy who joined the Pheasant team later, plays a leading role running the Pheasant and developing the talents of the staff.

To celebrate 10 years of business, the team served a selection of different foods, and the drinks were sold at 2014 prices!

The evening was made especially enjoyable by Shades of Grey (formerly Bluze Band), a band who has been performing in the Pheasant since it reopened and certainly gets very active audience participation.

**A good evening was had by all on 15<sup>th</sup> November – thank you to Mark, Sarah and Andy and all the staff for a most enjoyable evening – look forward to the next one in 10 years' time !**



**Dates for your Diary – don't forget:**

**Friday 20th December – Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels – 9pm**

**Wednesday 1st January 2025 – Call of the Kraken – 5pm**

Please call 01746-787955 or email [info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk](mailto:info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk) to discuss times and your requirements or book direct on the website.

### Opening times



Wednesday / Thursday – 12 noon – 3pm, 6pm – 11pm

Friday / Saturday – 12 noon – 11pm

Sunday lunch 12 noon – 4.30pm

**All Saints' Tote – December 2024**

1st Prize.....2nd prize..... - see February 2025 edition!!!

## A peaceful Christmas and Happy New year to all



# The Severn Valley Group of Parishes

Rector: Revd Kina Robertshaw - [Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com](mailto:Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com)

~

Revd David Poyner, Associate Minister - email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk),  
Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work);

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

*The Revd David Poyner and Marion Corfield write:*

Our **act of remembrance** was led this year by the Rev Richard Law and co-ordinated by Laura, our churchwarden, helped by members of the PCC and other supporters. It took place at the war memorial with refreshments at the Old Rectory afterwards. George Morley laid the wreath. The service was attended by almost 30 people, with the majority staying to share thoughts over tea and biscuits afterwards. The Glazeley remembrance service is always special for me, even though this year my clerical duties took me to Chelmarsh; the name of my grandfather, Cyril Mullard, is read out in the list of those who served in the Great War. Over a century later, his memory and that of his comrades is kept alive.

**Christmas at Glazeley Church** will be celebrated on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December with carols, readings and a short celebration of Holy Communion, followed of course by refreshments. The Christmas tree has been ordered! After we have finished with it, it will again be donated to one of the local care homes. Please do join us on the 15<sup>th</sup> for an early celebration of Christmas where we blend traditional carols with ancient and modern words and reflections.

In January, we have our usual 10am communion on the 19<sup>th</sup> January. The next **breakfast at The Down** will be on Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup> 2025: see Marion/myself or the church webpage, [Events - Glazeley & Deuxhill: St Bartholomew - A Church Near You](https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10533/)

We finally have permission to mend the hole in the floor; we are now seeking grants to help meet the **£8500** that this will cost. Work in an historic building is expensive. However, it is worth it; 2025 marks 150 years since the current church was built; against all the odds we are still here and in the last couple of years, the congregation has doubled! I am particularly grateful to all who have made this possible; it is their work alongside the Holy Spirit that is making the difference.

If anyone cannot get to church and would like to see a vicar, either for communion or simply to talk, please contact me, [d.r.poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:d.r.poyner@aston.ac.uk) or 0780 100 9693.

**Thought for the week:** “Earlier this week, I thanked one of our volunteers who helps tidy the church. I was struck by her reply; she described helping as a “pleasure and a privilege”. The work of the church relies very heavily on unpaid volunteers. This week, in addition to the volunteer cleaners at Billingsley, I have welcomed a group from “Caring for God’s Acre” who cut the church hedge in the snow, today a volunteer will have been at the church to set up heaters and switch them on before a funeral. This article appears on Facebook thanks to a volunteer. Tomorrow, I will attend a breakfast at the Down Inn, organised and run entirely by volunteers from Glazeley and Chetton. This is the main way we can reach out to members of the wider community who do not normally attend church. A volunteer will walk to the church to open it today. At Chelmarsh, today volunteers are ensuring that a funeral runs smoothly; tomorrow, a larger group will be in church all day serving soup and scones as it reaches out to the village. Volunteers at Sidbury are planning their Christmas service. Oddly enough, at Billingsley and Glazeley congregations are growing; Chelmarsh and Sidbury are at least holding their own. Service is not only a pleasure and a privilege; it is mission.

Revd David Poyner – Tel 01562-68638

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

Glazeley & Deuxhill: St Bartholomew -  
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10533/>

Marion Corfield – Tel 01746-764585

[Marion.corfield@talktalk.net](mailto:Marion.corfield@talktalk.net)

# Billingsley News

*The Revd David Poyner writes:*

This month I have to start with the sad news that one of our most loyal supporters, John Kirwin, died peacefully at the start of November, aged 82. John moved to Billingsley many years ago with his wife Jean and they quickly became key members of the church. After Jean died in 2014, John continued to support us, as PCC secretary and Deanery Synod representative. A few years ago, when the regular congregation at the 8am communion was down to 2 people, it was the faithful witness of John, and Harry Scriven, that kept the church afloat. Now, we are around 7 people who regularly come to that service, in addition to a bigger congregation at the 6pm evening service in the summer (see note above on Glazeley for those who have made this possible, *non meo domine...*). John was also a stalwart of that evening service. A native Liverpoolian, with all the dry wit associated with place, a graduate chemical engineer and a keen football supporter, it was always a pleasure for me to talk to him. Rest in peace and rise in glory!

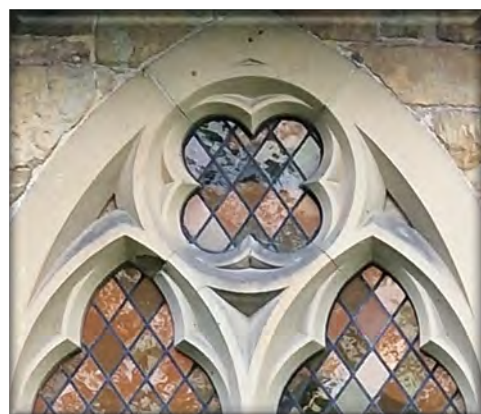
Many thanks to Amanda and Dave Prescott for conducting the short act of Remembrance to Billingsley's fallen on Remembrance Sunday. Three local men were called by name in the church they knew by Dave and Amanda, in a church otherwise empty of people but full with the whole company of Heaven. The video is on the Billingsley St Mary's Facebook site.

Our Christmas carol service this year will be back in church on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm, after a few years of wind and rain in the open at Lincoln Field. It seemed like a good idea at the time... There will be carols and readings, mince pies and mulled wine afterwards. And on Christmas morning at 10am there will be more carols with Holy Communion for those who wish to partake. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, you will be welcome to join us at one of these services or simply to come and sit in the church by yourself.

Looking to January, we resume the monthly 8am communions on the 26<sup>th</sup> January. Wrap up warm and enjoy an invigorating start to the Sunday morning!



**The "Caring for God's Acre" team** braved the snow to cut the hedge at Billingsley today. Should the temperature hit +30 in July, this picture may bring some relief to the readers of the WN.



Revd David Poyner – Associate Minister - Tel 01562-68638 Email <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a>
<a href="#">Billingsley: St Mary - A Church Near You</a> <a href="#">(20+) St Mary's Billingsley</a>   <a href="#">Bridgnorth</a>   <a href="#">Facebook</a>

Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria is often credited for making Christmas trees fashionable in Britain but the tradition of decorations and of bringing greenery into our houses and places of worship is far older than that. There are records of decorations for Saturnalia in ancient descriptions from the 5th century BC. Saturnalia fell in mid-December, around the time of the solstice, which is of course when Christmas falls. Decorating trees is also an ancient Celtic custom. A tree would be decorated at the winter solstice as a symbol of life and the Scandinavians did so to celebrate Yule, also a mid-winter festival.



Celtic tree dressing was not solely associated with the solstice, Piny the Elder describes a festival on the 6th day of the moon which involved sacred oak trees. Ash, apple, hazel alder, elder all have particular importance, with oak, ash and thorn the three primary 'magical' trees, employed by Puck, in Rudyard Kipling's Puck of Pooks Hill to transport the children back through time. Yew features in many traditions and beliefs, as a symbol of both death and life and yew boughs, along with holly were brought indoors to decorate homes and churches for Christmas, probably because of their evergreen foliage and red berries.

Decorating churches and homes for Christmas has been part of the church calendar for many centuries with almost all surviving church records from the late Middle Ages including entries for purchasing holly and ivy. The Christmas carol Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly dates from 16th century Wales. It was Prince Albert who popularised the use of spruce trees however, not a British tree species and imported from his native Coburg in Germany. Periodicals such as the

Illustrated London News began to describe the royal Christmas tree each year and the custom took off amongst the public. Wreaths hung on the door also became popular during Victorian times although, like decorations and the use of greenery, wreaths were not new, having been presented in Ancient Rome as a reward for military success and excellence. Advent wreaths may have originated amongst Lutherans in 16th century Germany.

Kissing boughs are an old tradition now lost, but which may have led to the custom of kissing beneath the mistletoe. Kissing boughs consisted of a hoop of pliable sticks, probably hazel or willow, made into a sphere on which decorative greenery could be fixed. These would be hung on walls or in doorways to welcome people into the building and could be quite large. Popular in Tudor times, they became more elaborate in Georgian times and included apples, oranges and coloured paper or baubles. Gentlemen could pluck a berry and then kiss a lady on the cheek until the berries ran out and the kissing stopped!

Most of our churchyards and cemeteries contain a ready supply of the greenery traditionally used for decoration; holly, ivy, yew and sometimes mistletoe too. A small contribution towards more sustainable ways could be to increase use of these natural 'decorations' and reduce the need for imported flowers or artificial baubles and lights. You will be following in the footsteps of many generations celebrating both Christmas and the solstice with the hope in a dark season that both bring.



All the best, Harriet Carty - Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor

# Chelmarsh News

*Elizabeth Bebb writes:*

We enter December as always with a feeling of anticipation. The excitement builds throughout the month as advent turns to full Christmas celebrations. Our Chelmarsh celebrations this year will contain the usual mix of Christmas carols (15<sup>th</sup>), children's crib service (21<sup>st</sup>) and midnight service on Christmas Eve (24<sup>th</sup>) accompanied hopefully by mince pies and perhaps sherry, we look forward to sharing this special time with you all.

**The Remembrance service** was well attended, with c. 30 people in the church, both local and from afar. Rob and Henry read out the names of those that fell in both wars and Maisie treated us to one of her wonderful poems. For all those interested we have a document in the church that gives details of the lives of the 'ones that never came home.' Visitors are also fascinated by the fact that our war memorials have photos, an unusual touch.

## Funerals:

During the last couple of months we have said goodbye to **Peter Hales**. Most remember him for his happy, smiling character and his willingness to help, plus the wonderful owls he and his wife Gill brought to the Fete for many years. He will be sadly missed and we remember his family especially Guy in our prayers.

We also celebrated the life of **John Davies**, a lifelong local. Originally a Chelmarsh farmer, he retired to Highley and put his growing skills to the test in his garden with many prize worthy vegetables and beautiful flowers donated to support Chelmarsh fundraisers. We extend our sympathies to his family and friends.

## Fabric update:

The loose louvres remain on our minds. We now have the required quotes and are on our way to gaining permission from the faculty and looking to apply for grants to help fund the tower work. The work is quite skilled and costly as we have to get scaffolding to ensure safe access. **Our fundraising to repair the tower will be starting soon, if anyone would like to help we would be grateful for your ideas and aid.**

The work to repair the bells is ongoing, we are trying to get the basic fixes made to the bells to ensure they can be rung again as soon as possible.

## Hundred Club

We drew the 100 club after the harvest festival in September. Winners were:

No. 54 - Colin Davies      £100  
No. 107 - Hannah Maiden      £50  
No. 85 - Ms Primrose Mates      £25  
No. 115 - Jess Maiden – Billy      £25

Additionally we had to draw the end of year 100 club numbers early due to administration issues. The draw was made after the church service on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, The winners are below:

No. 79 - Peter Williams      £100  
No. 83 - Mrs Allen      £50  
No. 31 - Sue Grantham      £25  
No. 43 - Liz Bebb      £25  
No. 39 - Jo Davies      £25  
No. 89 - David Davies      £25

**Thank you very much to all who took part in 2024 – we raised £935 for church funds.** We will be in touch regarding the 2025 100 Club in due course.

**We held a soup and scone event** at the end of November in the church, thank you to all those that attended.

**A few months ago we advertised for an organist and our prayers were answered.** A gentleman who was visiting his original home in Shropshire but who lives in Hong Kong came to play for a Sunday service. It was wonderful and we are very grateful to him for his support. **If you would like to try out our church organ or perhaps play at services more often please do get in touch, we would love to host you.**

**Church cleaning Rota: Thursday Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 2pm.**

*We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and much joy for the year to come.*

# Molecule of Christmas

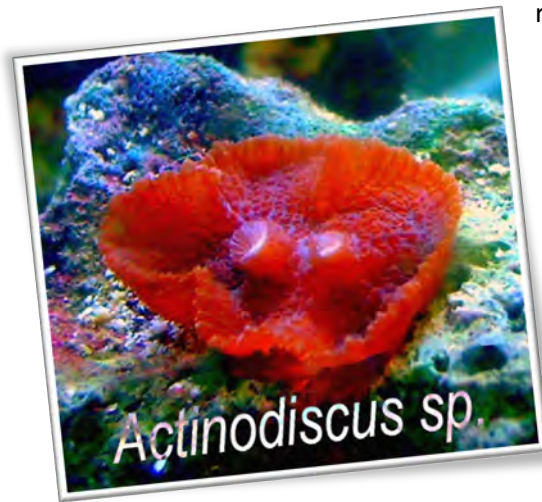
Prof D R Poyner writes



## Red Fluorescent Protein and Rudolph's nose

According to the song, it is red. This has long been a puzzle to both students of Father Christmas and reindeer biologists, as normally the reindeer nose is a rather unappealing brown. Some have suggested it has its origins in a severe reactive erythema (increased blood flow due to bruise) when Dasher and Dancer head-butted Rudolph in a fight as to who got the most Reindeer Rations back in December 1939, when the young Rudolph was first introduced into the stables. Scholars are confident of the date, as this is when the first mention of Rudolph occurs, in a book by Robert L. May.

However, whilst accepting the date, I have always been very sceptical of increased blood-flow theory; it is quite clear that the nose emits a strong red light which is well beyond what is possible for even the most severe bruise. Recent research has suggested another story, which begins in coral reefs....



Coral reefs are formed by small, sea-living, animals; they surround themselves with the coral so they are anchored to the sea bed.

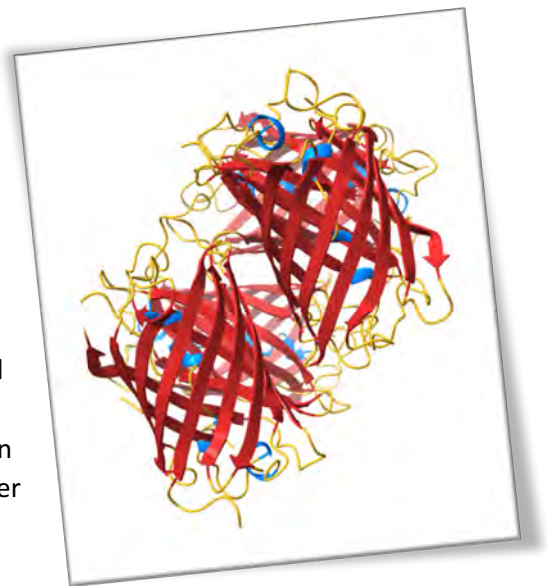
They are colourful creatures and, biochemically, they are very ingenious (picture left). They can produce fluorescent light.

They contain what are imaginatively called "fluorescent proteins".

The proteins are shaped like barrels; in their centre they hold a small molecule that emits a flash of fluorescent light (picture below right).

It is not clear what purpose this serves; theories range from using the light to attract food to protection from strong sunlight.

Whatever the reason, since the 1990s, these fluorescent proteins have been of great use to cell biologists and molecular pharmacologists such as myself. I have no interest in coral, but I am very interested in proteins that are typically made in nerve and muscle cells. I need to see what happens to these proteins; we know that they are made inside cells, they move to the outer surface of the cells so they can interact with chemicals that are produced by neighbouring cells and then they go back into the cell interior. The snag is that my proteins are colourless; I cannot follow their comings and goings because I cannot identify them. However, what I can now do (or at least my PhD student can do...) is to take the fluorescent proteins produced in corals and genetically attach them to my proteins. These are now visible under the microscope as they fluoresce and so I can follow their movements.



There are many different fluorescent proteins, some natural to coral, others modified by biotechnologists to have more desirable properties. One of the natural proteins is Red Fluorescent protein, produced by coral of the *Discoma* family. It seems to me that this must be what causes Rudolph's nose to glow so brightly. He may have inadvertently eaten some back in 1939, although I favour an accident involving a molecular biology kit and a time machine back in sorting office at Father Christmas's base in 1939 so Rudolph inadvertently ended up as transgenic reindeer, with the red fluorescent protein permanently attached to the molecules of his nose. Or perhaps it was just divine providence?

Picture 1 *Discoma*, a coral-forming animal which produces red fluorescent protein (By Kazvorpai -<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25167817>)

Picture 2 The structure of red fluorescent protein. This shows a pair of the barrel-shaped proteins.

# Burwarton & District Garden Club

## A Garden for All Seasons

When Diane Clement began her talk with the line “I am not a gardener, I love plants!” I knew we were in for an interesting talk. Diane has been an active member of the Alpine Garden Society (AGS) for over 25 years and was Director of the Seed Exchange for many years. She is a keen exhibitor and judge at National Shows.

Diane’s talks are fascinating, funny and informative and this time she talked to us about how to create a garden for all seasons. Diane began talking about her childhood, how she grew up in a terraced house in Lancashire, with no garden. When her family moved to a house with a garden, she was thrilled and her father became her inspiration. Diane explained that the gardening fashion of the time was to ‘do the garden’ in April which involved going to the garden centre and buying bedding plants. These were then pulled up in November and replaced with autumn bedding plants like pansies and primulas. This was not for Diane and she began growing wildflowers, herbs and fell in love with alpine plants.

To explain how to achieve a garden for all seasons Diane explained the layout of her garden, half of which does not get any sun at all for six months of the year. Despite this, there is a flower in her garden on every day of the year. This is achieved through the careful selection of plants to use in different situations including shade and sun, moist and dry. Diane gave us a detailed look at planting round her garden at all times of year and introduced us to some unusual varieties.

These were but a few of her suggestions.



In the ‘cold months’ that is December and January, Diane has a stunning witch hazel tree or *Hamamelis intermedia* 'Pallida' underplanted with Hellebores, Snowdrops, Cyclamen coum and Winter Aconites which grow in a shady border. In Spring Crocus, Daphne, Rhododendron, Sanguinaria and Anemone continue to provide colour and interest. Another area of the shady side of the garden, the woodland border, in Spring is full of colour from Clematis, Pulmonaria, Erythroniums, Trillium and *Lamium orvala*.

In the second part of her talk, Diane described the planting on the sunny side of her garden where in Spring *Iris reticulata* and *Narcissus cyclamineus* fill the border with colour. In May and June beautiful Hawthorns and *Rosa seagull* and *glacia* flower and add fragrance.

Diane acknowledged that not everyone has the space for her suggestions and ideas and so she described how we could plant a ‘pot for all seasons.’ Layering bulbs and plants with something to add colour each month is possible and does not need to be disassembled as it will perform year after year. The pot could contain Cyclamen, Snowdrops, Crocus, Daffodils, Hostas and *Saxifraga fortunei*, to produce a succession of interest. Diane’s talk was once again most enjoyable, so I would not be surprised if she were to appear on our programme again next year.

**Our next meeting of the gardening club is on Thursday 12th December** where the format is a little different. We begin with two members giving a short talk on their gardening projects which is followed by Christmas afternoon tea and a quiz to round off our programme for 2024. If you would like to join us our talks start at 2.30pm, but the hall is open from 2.00pm to allow members to get a cuppa and have a chat before we begin.

Annual membership is £12, but if you wish to come along to selected events which are advertised each month in this article, we charge £2.50 for a single visit. If you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Bev Harris, Secretary, [bevharris15@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bevharris15@yahoo.co.uk) or call 07933 724728 or 01584 841845

*Pictured – Helleborus ‘Pink Frost’*



# The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

<b>Rector:</b> <i>post vacant</i> so for the coming months please contact the churchwardens or volunteers as below		
St Mary, Stottesdon <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> <i>Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007</i>	St Giles, Farlow <i>CHURCHWARDENS - VACANT – please contact the key holder, Pam Phillips</i>	Holy Trinity, Sidbury <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> <i>Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149</i>
St Mary, Cleeton St Mary <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> <i>Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583</i>	St John, Middleton Scriven <i>CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Ann Constable</i>	St Michael, Silvington <i>CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Katie Hickman</i>
<b>In an emergency, please</b> call the Rural Dean, Revd Jeannetta Stokes, on 01746-716698		

## December message

### Keeping the Show on the Road during the vacancy – part 14

This month it's the Beavers Moon on the wane – over the frosted snowfields which are our early winter landscape - as we write this piece in late November.

As we continue to strive for a flourishing Christian presence in the parishes, in our two schools and in the wider communities we serve, please:

- **celebrate and support** the volunteers who work so hard to sustain the church here – the Churchwardens and members of the PCC's; and
- **thank** the volunteer, visiting clergy who are routinely and willingly facilitating our Sunday worship.

*Clare and Chris Tibbits*

## From the Stottesdon Benefice Registers

There are no entries to report this month.

**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 or volunteer (details above), who will endeavour to help you to arrange this.**

### **Benefice website – A Church Near You: Stottesdon**

We are trying to keep this updated during the vacancy, so if you need something added to it, please get in touch by email to [chris@stottystores.co.uk](mailto:chris@stottystores.co.uk) Thanks!

**The deadline for the February 2025 edition (Stottesdon Benefice Parishes) is to get copy to Chris by first thing on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025** – Thanks!**

# Stottesdon Benefice Group News

## Services for December and January in the Stottesdon Churches

DECEMBER	Celebrant	Stottesdon	Other parishes
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Neil Dunlop	10:30 Christingle	FARLOW: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	John Daniels	10:30 Holy Communion	CLEETON: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	David Poyner	Group Holy Communion -	SIDBURY: 11:45
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	David Poyner	-	SIDBURY: 16:00 Carol Service
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Justin Bailey	Group Holy Communion -	STOTTESDON: 1030
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	John Daniels	'Midnight' Holy Communion -	STOTTESDON: 1130pm
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	Family service -	SILVINGTON: 1030 Holy Communion
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	Group Holy Communion -	STOTTESDON: 1030
JANUARY	Celebrant	Stottesdon	Other parishes
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	10:30 - Morning Prayer Book of Common Prayer	FARLOW: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup>	John Daniels	10:30 - Holy Communion	CLEETON: 09:00 Holy Communion
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	10:30 - Informal Worship	SIDBURY: 11:45 Holy Communion with David Poyner
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Justin Bailey	10:30 - Holy Communion	SILVINGTON: 09:00 Holy Communion
FEBRUARY			
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Neil Dunlop	10:30 - Morning Prayer Book of Common Prayer	FARLOW: 09:00 Holy Communion

Please refer to the News articles for details of Parish CAROL SERVICES

During the continuing interregnum there will be some changes to the 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 your churchwarden.

# Stottesdon News

Clare Tibbits writes:

## 100 Club Winners for November:

Roger Cook, Leslie Tandy and Mick & Eunice Evans

## Traditional December services – to help us 'see in' Christmas and the New Year!

- ✝ Christingle - 10.30am on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December - families and children all very welcome!
- ✝ Carol Service - 7pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December – mince pies and mulled wine served afterwards!
- ✝ MIDNIGHT COMMUNION - 11.30pm on Christmas Eve – ringing-in Christmas Day.



## Seasonal Churchyard wreaths

Traditional 'Christmas wreaths' are welcome in 2024 as usual on family memorials - do please respect the precious Churchyard Environment by eliminating any use of plastics such as 'oasis' foam and especially note 'no artificial flowers' please.

Your wreaths should please be removed, for recycling, composting or disposal at home, no later than Candlemas - which is Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2025. Thank you!

## News from the Tower!

As some already know from hearing them earlier than usual, the Bellringers have advanced their Friday practice session: this now starts at 5pm. Sharp-eared listeners may also be the first to know when the Treble Bell (which has been away at Taylors' bell foundry, Loughborough for restoration) is re-hung and back in regular use. Fingers crossed it's soon!!



## National Gardens Scheme

Over many years the National Gardens Scheme has been the principal source of fundraising for nursing and hospice charities around the country; Stottesdon Open Gardens have regularly contributed to this great national effort.

### **Stottesdon Village Open Gardens for 2025 will be a celebration of Spring on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April 12-4pm.**

Further volunteers and helpers will be most welcome – please register your interest with Clare (01746 718007) or Wade (718753)

## Farlow News

Caroline Bilson writes:

- We will be having our **Carol Service** at St Giles Church, Farlow on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 at 4pm with Mulled Wine and Mince Pies. Everyone is welcome!

## November 100 Club Winners

- £20 to Joan Phillips (5)
- £10 each to Steve and Yvonne Jones (1) and to Sam and Redford (88)
- £5 each to Jackie and Chris Derricutt (77) and to Eric Evans (15)

## Cleeton St Mary News

*Sue Dolphin and Sue Burbidge write:*

✝ Carol service in church on the 18<sup>th</sup> December 7pm - all welcome!

**Knit and Natter** continues every Wednesday at 10am in church and the next in our series of successful **Coffee Mornings** will be on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 10 - 12 in Cleeton St Mary Church. Excellent homemade cakes and wonderful company available. Do please pop in and join us...

### October's 100 Club Winners:

- £20 to Roy Jordan No 17
- £10 each to Clair Caldicott No 112 and to Jen Harris No 78,
- £5 each to Elliot Muscut No 116 and to Linda Jones No 9

## Middleton Scriven News

*Ann Constable writes:*

✝ **Christmas Celebration Carol Service** - Tuesday 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 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 14<sup>th</sup> 10-12 in church with Christmas Bake sale. (Bring and buy Homemade Christmas foods). Come and join us for Coffee/ teas and mince pies. Plus, a Christmas raffle. Please note – there will be no coffee morning in January.

Look out for our first community event in the New Year – **Burns' Night on Saturday January 25<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. A huge thank you to everyone on the grass cutting rota, hosting coffee mornings or organising community events. We look forward to seeing you at events in 2025. Our community events planning group ("Fun Raisers") 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.**

## Sidbury News

*Andrew Sierakowski and Revd David Poyner write:*

### Services at Sidbury during December and January

- ✝ Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December – 11:45am – Group Holy Communion
- ✝ Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December – 4:00pm – Carol Service – with mince pies and mulled wine afterwards. Everyone is welcome!
- ✝ Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January – 11:45am – Holy Communion.

## Silvington News

We have no news to pass on from Silvington this month.


# Community Noticeboard



**Brown Cleef Medical Practice Patient Participation Group**  
Please see Committee Chair Tina Ranson's update from the PPG, including details of the January Open Meeting, on page 9.

## Brown Cleef Health and Well-being Community Society Ltd.

Andrew Sierkowski, a Founder Member of this new Community Society, brings important news below of the Society's activities – relevant to everyone!



**BROWN CLEEF HEALTH AND WELL-BEING COMMUNITY SOCIETY LIMITED**  
**Raising funds for community ownership of the Brown Cleef Medical Practice premises**  
**and supporting local health and well-being**

**WHO ARE WE?**

The Society is now a legal entity formed to raise funds to buy the Brown Cleef Medical Practice premises with the goal of keeping the Practice based in Brown Cleef.

Community ownership of the premises means any incoming GP Partners will not need to purchase the buildings. This makes it a more attractive proposition for new Partners to join the Practice to provide the services we need.

**WE NEED YOU!!!**

When applying for grants we need to show that we have the support of the community for this venture. The more members we have the more chance we have of securing grants.

Membership of the Society is by purchase of one £1 Ordinary non-withdrawable Share plus an annual subscription fee of £4 and is open to every adult patient of the Brown Cleef Medical Practice.

**PLEASE JOIN!**

Application forms are available at the two Surgeries or can be requested by email from [bchealthandwellbeing@btinternet.com](mailto:bchealthandwellbeing@btinternet.com)

Farmers' Market	On Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> 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.
Our Local Food Banks	Both are always in need of donations of foodstuffs and other goods, and of money to sustain their services – <b>and never more so than in the season of goodwill</b> . Find them on Facebook or call 07960 285520 for BRIDGNORTH or 07519 885943 for CLEOBURY MORTIMER.

# A Christmas Letter from Sarah Cawdell

*Revd Sarah writes from Archbishop Janani Luwum Theological College, Gulu, Ethiopia, November 1<sup>st</sup> 2024*

Dear Colleagues in the Gospel,

## **“Praise God. We are still alive!”**

Quite often the students start the day with this heartfelt thanks. Life is going on, and that is not to be taken for granted. Thank you for your encouragement. I know that you are experiencing the longer nights and greyer days. Today it is pleasantly warm, and the sun still rises and sets around 7.

I have spent two weeks dealing with a large harvest of tomatoes, and enjoyed sharing them with college, builders and colleagues every other day. One of the ordinand students, Stephen, who also does a lot of our building work, invited me to worship in the small church he and Amos, the plumber, planted two years ago. I have attached a photo.



Simon is very happy today to have sold the maize which he harvested in August. He has been waiting for the price to go up from 600 Shillings per kilo to 1000 shillings per kilo. The diocese feels that this is likely to be the top price as the next season maize is just coming onto the market.

This month we have enjoyed the visits of Cathie and John Rutter on their way to South Sudan to run a ‘Rooted in Jesus’ conference and Jonathan Thomas from Woking. As an extra bonus Robert de Berry and Tim Britton from Norfolk drove over from Soroti on Monday (4 hours each way) to see the college, share stories and pray with us. It was a delight to meet these long-term friends of Uganda – Robert first came to Uganda in 1961, before independence, so he has seen a great development of the country over the last 6 decades. Sometimes it is really helpful to step back and see the long view and their visit was very encouraging.

For Simon this month has been about weeding the garden (27 acres) and translating Book 3 of ‘Rooted in Jesus’. We were pleased to send Geoffrey Opiyo, the ‘Rooted in Jesus’ coordinator for the Diocese up to Kajo Keiji in South Sudan to work with Cathie and John Rutter and their team on the Rooted in Jesus conference for that Diocese.

Simon has also collaborated with an organisation called Texas and Ugandans on mission, formerly East African Mission. They have agreed to drill a bore hole on the Diocesan farm, which is the first step to establishing a poultry farm to provide manure for the coffee and cocoa, as well as a supply of chickens for the Gulu Market, and another income stream for the Diocese.

We are grateful to be in good health on the whole, apart from the odd ache and strain due to our bodies being a bit older than our minds allow for – not an unusual problem.

We have been very blessed by becoming guardians of the CMS car in the country, passed on from other mission partners. It is a covered pick up with a twin cab, so we can now transport the maize for grinding, and up to seven passengers. We are very grateful for a well-cared-for blessing. Please pray that we use it well.

The computer laboratory given by the Korean missionaries is now fully built and resting (going off) for two weeks before the painters and electricians add the finishing touches. We are amazed at the speed and quality of the work.





The fund-raising launch for the new classrooms for college is on November 9th when we hope visitors will come to see the site, and peruse the blueprints and Bill of Quantities, and even pledge some funds, or more items from the list such as nails, iron sheets and nails. It will be a new experience for me and be a bit different from baking cakes for a coffee morning!

Pray for us as we continue to the end of the semester, that exams, weddings and commissioning go well, and for a good harvest and continued wise development of Diocesan land.

**God bless you as you enter this season of Remembrance and prepare for Advent. Help us to pray for you by sending news. Love and blessings Simon and Sarah**

# Useful local contacts – updated June 2024

Please let us know if you have any corrections to this list, or you want to suggest additions – thank you

<b>Brown Clee Surgery PPG</b>	Brown Clee Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) - email <a href="mailto:BrownCleePPG@gmail.com">BrownCleePPG@gmail.com</a> , or call Chair Tina Ranson on 01584-878707.
<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 from October to June at 2:15pm at Stoke St Milborough VH. Contact secretary Ms Bev Harris on 01584-841845, <a href="mailto:bevharris15@yahoo.co.uk">bevharris15@yahoo.co.uk</a>
<b>Burwarton &amp; District WI</b>	Contact the Secretary, Helen Groves, on 01746-712466
<b>Burwarton &amp; District Wives Group</b>	Meeting 8pm first Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231
<b>Chelmarsh Bowling</b>	Outdoor bowling in summer (Tuesday evening & Wednesday afternoon), indoor during the winter (Tuesday evenings 7:00 – 9:00pm) at Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Further details from Stan Chapman, 01746-862424
<b>Chelmarsh Games Group</b>	Mainly Canasta and Scrabble! Thursdays at 2:00pm in the Parish Hall. Contact Sue Jakeman on 07531-008876.
<b>Chelmarsh Jubilee Club</b>	Meet at Chelmarsh Sports & Social Club – contact Shell Russon on 07903-162408 for more information
<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 - <a href="mailto:booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk">booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk</a>
<b>Chelmarsh Walking Group</b>	Contact Jen Everitt on 01746-862858 for more information.
<b>Chetton &amp; Glazeley WI</b>	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> 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 07726-763883 – NEW DEDICATED NUMBER DECEMBER 2022
<b>Cleobury North Village Hall</b>	Enquiries to 01746-787093 please
	National Centre for Domestic Violence <a href="https://www.ncdv.org.uk/contact/">https://www.ncdv.org.uk/contact/</a> Call 08448-044999. Website gives advice and other means of getting help.
<b>Daddy’s Hat Music &amp; Poetry</b>	Contact on 01746-787419 – leave a message and you <b>will</b> get a call-back!
<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 History Group</b>	Please contact <a href="mailto:paul.wilson8992@gmail.com">paul.wilson8992@gmail.com</a>
<b>Ditton Priors Village Hall</b>	Bookings - 07766 392 105 - <a href="mailto:dittonpriorsalls@gmail.com">dittonpriorsalls@gmail.com</a>
<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 Wende Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549
	Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride Transport Services <a href="https://www.shrewsbury-dialaride.co.uk">https://www.shrewsbury-dialaride.co.uk</a> – 01743-450270 Mon-Fri 09:30 – 15:00, Corvedale Buzzard – 01584-700907
<b>Short Mat Bowling – Ditton Priors</b>	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact Clive Jackson on 01746-718046
<b>Stottesdon &amp; District W.I.</b>	Meets in various venues on the third 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>	Eardington Village Hall Thursday, 5:15pm. Contact Neil Morris 07969-996055

