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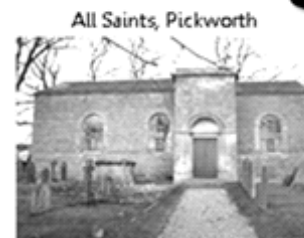


All Saints, Little Casterton



St Peter & St Paul, Great Casterton

Four Churches Together



All Saints, Pickworth



St Peter's Tickencote

**SEPTEMBER
2025**

Calendar for August

Day	Time	Activity	Place
1	2.00 pm	Book Club Meeting	Mary's house
3	10.00 am	Celtic Prayers	Church Hall
3	10.30 am	Coffee, Cake and Chat	Church Hall
4	9.00 am	Parish Breakfast	Garden Centre
4	7.00 pm	House Group	Harvard
5	10.00 am	Toddler Group	Church Hall
5	2.30 pm	Warm Spaces	Church Hall
5	6.00 pm	Wedding Rehearsal	Great Casterton
6	12.30 pm	Wedding of Zoe and James	Great Casterton
7	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Little Casterton
7	10.30 am	Holy Communion	Great Casterton
10	10.00 am	Celtic Prayers	Church Hall
12	10.00 am	Toddler Group	Church Hall
12	2.30 pm	Warm Spaces	Church Hall
13	10.10 am	Ride and Stride	All Churches
17	10.15 am	Celtic Prayers	Church Hall
17	11.00 am	Coffee, Cakes & Chat	Church Hall
18	7.00 pm	House Group	Harvard
19	10.00 am	Toddler Group	Church Hall
19	2.30 pm	Warm Spaces	Church Hall
20	10 -11.45	Coffee morning pre Talk	Church Hall
20	12.00 am	Saturday Live – Toilethorpe talk	Great Casterton
21	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Little Casterton
21	10.30 am	Holy Communion	Great Casterton
23	7.30 pm	Parson's Pints	The Crown
24	10.00 am	Celtic Prayers	Church Hall
24	10.30 am	Coffee, Cakes & Chat	Church Hall
24	2.00 pm	PCC Meeting (GC)	Church Hall
25	2.00 pm	Benefice Church Wardens meet	Church Hall
26	10.00 am	Toddler Group	Church Hall
26	2.30 pm	Warm Spaces	Church Hall
28	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Pickworth
28	10.30 am	Harvest Festival Praise	Great Casterton
28	12.00 noon	Harvest Festival Lunch	Church Hall
28	3.00 pm	Bishop John's Farewell Service	Cathedral
29	2.00 pm	Book Club Meeting	t.b.a.



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Four Churches Together

**We would love to receive contributions for the newsletter from all four
churches. These should be sent, in the first instance, to Mary Sproson -
masproson@btinternet.com by the 18th of the month**



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FOUR CHURCHES NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2025

By the time you receive this newsletter I expect most of you will have been on holiday and for many perhaps an overseas experience. A chill out on the beach, a city break or a cultural weekend. Whatever your fancy, it great to get away and experience new places, new traditions and people who are different to us in so many ways.

But with travel also comes pain and suffering. Long queues at airports, cancelled or delayed flights, lost baggage or disappointing accommodation. Even holidays in the UK are not exempt from frustration. In an earlier newsletter I recounted our experience on a narrowboat, running out of water and meeting Mr Angry as we reversed with speed unto his private mooring.

It goes to prove if we ever needed proof that none of us and especially people of faith, are exempt from stress when it comes to holidays or life in general. Holidays and increased levels of anxieties seem to go together. But when we arrive and settle in, it must be worth all the aggravation because we are all prepared to go through the hassle again in a few months' time.

Our generation are not unique to this phenomenon. The bible is packed full of folk perhaps not going on holiday but going on a long journey and suffering hardship. From Abraham himself right back in Genesis leaving Ur to travel to a new country called Canaan just because God told him.

The journeys of Paul, the author of many New Testament letters, moving throughout the Mediterranean countries experiencing shipwrecks, floggings and snake bites. It makes all our trials and frustrations insignificant in comparison.

The bible is full of God leading and encouraging people on journeys. Jesus himself journeyed from Bethlehem to Egypt as a young person then to Nazareth and eventually a walking pilgrimage of healing, teaching and ministry around Judea, Samaria and Galilee before finally arriving at Jerusalem where he experienced the most grief of all. Death on a cross.

Yes, it's great travelling to other places but it is also great to get home again for a spot of routine and a continuation of life where we left i.t

To get things ready for the next season of our lives, the plans we have made for the autumn and winter.

Home is a place of safety and security a place to relax and be at ease with the ones we love. But it is a temporary home. Jesus wants to bring us to our heavenly home to be with him and despite all the exciting journeys we plan to far off fields throughout our life, this is the journey and the destination that really matters.

Just like the holiday journeys detailed above the journey to our spiritual home also comes with the discomfort of illness, it comes with the pain of suffering and it comes with the loss of a loved one, along life's way. This loss has been particularly high this year as I have officiated at multiple funerals, many of whom were key members of our church community.

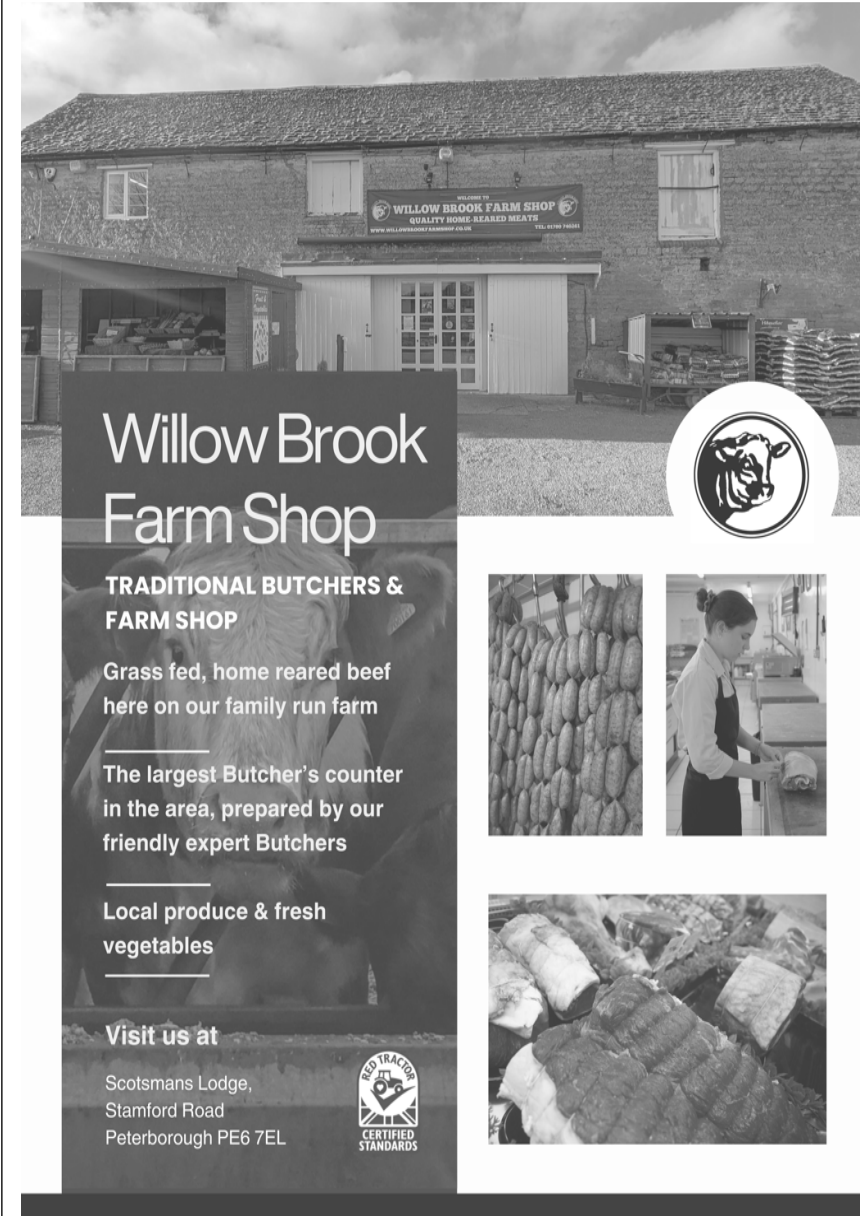
But despite all these hardships the journey is surely worthwhile. We have been blessed with life itself the sights and sound and smells of God's creation and the joy to journey with people whom we love and who love us.

And of course, God loves us to bits even though sometimes we don't love him back. So safe journey whenever you are on life's adventure.

*May the road rise up to greet you,
May the rain fall gently on your head
May the wind always be on your back.
And may God hold you in the palm
Of his hand,
As only he can.*

God Bless

Rev. Don



The advertisement for Willow Brook Farm Shop features a large background image of the shop's exterior, a two-story stone building with a sign that reads 'WILLOW BROOK FARM SHOP QUALITY HOME REARED MEATS'. A circular logo with a cow's head is positioned to the right of the main title. The text is arranged in a central column, with three smaller inset images on the right: one showing hanging sausages, one showing a butcher working, and one showing various farm produce. The bottom right corner includes the 'RED TRACTOR CERTIFIED STANDARDS' logo.

Willow Brook Farm Shop

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Meanwhile the rest of the children have remained remarkably healthy through what has been one of our coldest winters ever and yesterday put their youthful energy into a special games day organised by some of our older sons.



There is so much more I could share but I'm keeping this update considerably shorter than usual because, as per orders from my physiotherapist, I am trying not to sit in one position at my desk for too long.

For now I just want to reiterate my gratitude to you for your prayers over these past few weeks and for your continued interest in and support of the entire Montgomery Heights family.

Lesley

P.O. Box 75, Concession, Zimbabwe E-mail ljmzim@gmail.com

The Season Of Creation

As we enter the month of September, many churches will spend some time focusing on the wonders of creation, with Harvest Festivals or other types of service.

For some time now, the Church of England has named the period between 1 September and 4 October as Creationtide, or the Season of Creation, where we can give thanks to God for his gift to us in creation. It was good to witness an uplifting in the recent meeting of General Synod, where further liturgical resources were discussed. As well as giving thanks to God, this period of time provides us with an opportunity to recommit ourselves to care for all that God has made.

As a Diocese, we share in the commitment of the Church of England to become net carbon zero by 2030, an ambitious target, but one that is very important, and reminds us of the fifth Mark of Mission, 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'. Maybe this is a month when you might like to think afresh about you can do to help reach the target. I am so encouraged to hear of churches that are engaging with Eco Church and delight that we now have some 'gold churches' amongst us. What an example they are!

Amongst the resources for Creationtide on the Church of England website, I came across this beautiful passage:

*In every acorn there is the potential for a forest;
In every apple pip there is the potential for an orchard;
In every soul there is the potential for your kingdom
to be established; full of joy and peace and love.
Lord, may your kingdom come in us and in all your creation.*

May this be our prayer

+ Debbie

The Rt Revd Debbie Sellin Bishop of Peterborough

Diocese of Peterborough - Magazine Resource - September 2025

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diocese.org.uk www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk

FORTHCOMING SATURDAY LIVE EVENTS IN 2025

September 20th: 'Tolethorpe Behind the Scenes' - talk by Mike Harrison

October 18th: Ukulele 2020

FORTHCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS FOR 2025

September 13th - RHCPT Ride and Stride 10.00am - 6.00pm.

September 20th - Open Coffee Morning - in Church Hall 10.00-11.45 am before talk about Tolethorpe.

September 28th - Harvest Lunch - after church service.

October 31st - Barn Dance led by Don's Band with bar and supper.

November 22nd - Quiz

Please put the dates in your diary.



NEWS FROM MONTGOMERY HEIGHTS CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Dear friends,

As you know, life took a very unexpected turn for us in early June due to the sudden, incapacitating problem with my back and hip which meant my trip to England had to be postponed. How thankful I am that we listened to the Holy Spirit's prompting and didn't go along with the advice of the aggressive neurosurgeon, who was adamant that only spinal surgery would solve the problem.

Physiotherapy has sorted things out and here I am, 2 months later, completely pain free....and probably more physically fit than I have been for a very long time, due to the continued, daily exercise programme that I am now following! I am still taking things slowly and carefully and definitely not lifting anything even remotely heavy; quite determined not to have a relapse.

I am so grateful to the team here for picking up the extra load while I was out of action and also to all of you who prayed for me through that difficult time.

Although I am now fit to fly, it would be extremely difficult to fit in a block of time for me to be away this year due to various different things going on at Montgomery, so I won't be making it to England until 2026, hopefully sometime in April/May.

A few days before I was whisked off to hospital a tiny eight week old daughter came into our family. Tendai came from an extremely difficult situation but has settled very well and guzzles formula milk as though it's going out of fashion!

We'd appreciate your continued prayers for baby Kuda who has had a few more rough patches with respiratory issues through this cold season. We are hoping that as the weather warms up these problems will reduce and we are continuing to ask the Lord for complete healing of the hole in his heart.



Imagine camels galloping through the tent lines. This army had no common language or even a general, so orders were not understood or given. In their panic the nations started fighting each other. After that came a stampede of fleeing forces with the 300 exhausted men after them. Gideon had a problem; to understand it we must look at contemporary history. It says *"a disorder and a fright seized upon the other men while they were half asleep, for it was night-time, as God would have it. The greatest part were killed by their own soldiers, on account of the diversity of their languages; and when they were once put into disorder, they killed all that they met with as thinking them to be enemies also"*. Some of the Israelites who had not initially joined Gideon now came out of hiding and helped by killing some of the Midian generals, but criticised Gideon for not letting them be in at the start of the fighting. Others were reluctant to believe that Gideon was winning and refused to supply food and drink. They were thrashed with brambles for their lack of faith. When final victory was announced. News of victory was slow in spreading.

The tribe of Ephraim were the worst. They were *so displeased with the success of Gideon that they resolved to make war on him, accusing him because he did not tell them of his expedition against their enemies*. Gideon responded that it was *not his own authority but it was the command of God* and the victory was just as much theirs as it was the 300. They saw sense and peace returned. Gideon was appointed *judge and what he determined was esteemed valid by all*. Midian's tyranny was broken by the Israelites, no more was heard from them, and the land was quiet for 40 years. Sadly that was not quite the end of the story as, probably from local pressure, Gideon had collected the dead Midianites' gold earrings and had a Baal type statue made. All Israel came to admire it and worship there, so it became a snare to Gideon and his family. Again they forgot God.

What do we learn from this story? Gideon sincerely doubted but even then God was with him. Thomas doubted that Jesus had risen, yet was the first person Jesus spoke to in that room. Moses ran away and hid because he doubted. Then he, like Ezekiel, said he could not speak in public, but went on to be a great orator. Gideon tested God's call. Was that wrong? Do we have snares? What are they? God rewards faith and obedience. He is still patient. Why were the Ephraimites so upset when they had got what they wanted without fighting for it? Do we shun people who are blessed?

As a sequel to this story, there was a man who believed that everyone should have a copy of the Bible, or at least a New Testament. He advertised his idea and booked a large hall for those interested. Two men turned up. Undeterred, they determined to go ahead. They remembered Gideon conquering the armies of the whole of the then known world with 300 men. So they called themselves the Gideons. Initially they targeted businessmen by putting bibles in all hotel rooms. Now in 2025, the society distributes copies to hospitals, prisons, schools and more. A recent report shows that more than two copies are given away every second. That is a million every 4 days. Copies are in 95 languages. Well over 2 billion copies have been distributed already to people and even smuggled to places where established churches may not always be welcomed.

RIDE AND STRIDE FOR RHCPT **SATURDAY 13th SEPTEMBER**

10.00AM - 6.00PM

Do you fancy a walk or cycle ride to visit Rutland's Historic Churches?

Sponsorship forms are available at the back of Great Casterton Church.

Prizes are awarded for the most churches visited and the most unusual form of transport. 64 churches are available to visit.

Why not incorporate a lovely lunch on the way, or stop for a coffee? Light refreshments are often served to visitors in the churches.

'Sarge' (Geoff's hearing support dog) is planning to walk round Oakham and perhaps Uppingham if the weather is not too hot. He would love you to sponsor him to visit the churches there.

Thanks - Ann & Geoff



AUGUST SATURDAY LIVE
JENNY ADDEY

Jenny travelled from London today to sing a mixture of folk pop and musical theatre.

Jenny started with Somewhere over the Rainbow (Eva Cassidy), followed by Dreams originally by Fleetwood Mac, Jenny's favourite group, and later sang Songbird also Fleetwood Mac.

Joni Mitchell was another of Jenny's favourite singers and we heard River and Both Sides Now. From musical theatre we heard Take me to the World written by Stephen Sondheim, Meadowlark from Baker's Wife and Hallelujah from Shrek.

An amazing repertoire, some of which Jenny hadn't performed in public before, with a superb vocal range, entertained an audience of 14 people helping us to raise £76 for our church.

Jenny was presented with a voucher to thank her for her lovely singing and as appreciation for her time, being busy preparing for her wedding next month.

Ann Archer

ARE YOU SURE, GOD?

Following victories led by Deborah and Jael, some 200 years before David became king, the Israelites had had peace for forty years. They still had no leader and forgot God, returning to things that were not right in His sight. Unlike the neighbouring Midianites and Amorites, who had statues, rituals, altars, sacred poles and other idols, and seemed to be successful, the Israelites had no images to remind them of God's presence. The tribes raided Israel every harvest time, taking crops and stock without doing any of the work. They even settled on the fertile plains. The Israelites, with no king or leader, sought refuge in the hills, crying out to God. A preacher reminded them of what God had done for them in the past, but they would not listen and ignored God for seven fraught years. The preacher reminded them of their escape from slavery in Egypt, and God providing the fertile land they now occupied. God had done it then and could do it again, but they would not listen.

A small farmer hid in the local vineyard to thresh his wheat when a stranger appeared, saying "God is with you". It is received with ridicule by the farmer who says abruptly "Then prove it". He grumbles that the God of history has forgotten them, and things have gone wrong. But the farmer finally invites the stranger to eat with him. Instead of enjoying the meal prepared from scarce resources, the visitor zaps it in almost Harry Potter style. The farmer is ordered to go in his strength and save Israel - God will be with him. Almost convinced, he starts by destroying a local Baal statue and altar to the horror of his neighbours and calls on them to form an army to drive out the Midianites. Many come.

That farmer was Gideon. He was amazed at such a response but to test their commitment suggested that anyone who was fearful should go home. 2/3 of them went. But Gideon is still not convinced about God. He decides to do a test and puts out a sheepskin overnight asking God to let the dew fall on it and not on the ground around. The skin was sopping next morning and the ground dry. Gideon thinks this may be chance so asks God for the opposite to happen. It does; the skin is dry and the ground wet. He has tested God and has no excuse, now he must act. His first job is to inspect his volunteer army. As a test of observation and intelligence Gideon asks the remaining men to drink from the stream. Most bend down and lap; just 300 cup their hands to drink so they can still see what was going on around them. Just the 300 are chosen. God is giving a big challenge if they are to drive out the huge invading Midianite host on their own.

The Midianite forces were gathered from many different countries; one group. Why brings a huge contingent of camels with them. They all camped in a valley with hills on three sides. Gideon divided them into three groups, issuing each man with a trumpet and a pottery jar with an oil lamp in it. They were stationed on the surrounding hills. In the middle of the night, on God's instruction, Gideon gives a signal and his men broke their jars and the lights appeared. They then blew their trumpets loudly. The practice at that time was for a unit of at least 100 soldiers to be led by one man with a single light, so the Midianites assumed they were surrounded by a more than significant host.

PRAYER BOARD IN CHURCH

Did you know that every week the names that have been placed on our prayer board in church are prayed out loud on Wednesday mornings?

Please date each prayer that is placed on the board, to help the team keep up with how recently they were placed there.

Thank you

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Priest in Charge	Rev Don McGarrigle	01572 812804
Great Casterton Hall Bookings	Steve Cunningham	01572 510043
Benefice Safeguarding Officer	Carol Maynard	01780 755687.
Newsletter Distribution	Mary Sproson	01780 762933
Churchwardens:		
Great Casterton	Geoffrey Archer	07803 423010
	Peter Bryan	07507 299436
Little Casterton	Tony Dolby	01780 766897
Pickworth	Charles Gilman.	01780 411017
	Goldie Bardwell	01780 410272

FOR HIRE

Great Casterton Church Hall is available for hire for children's parties and/or other events. For more details contact Steve Cunningham

Email: stephenmichaelcunningham@gmail.com

Phone: 01572 510043 or Mobile: 07810 404748

Church Projects

Moving on from our heating project we are now fund-raising to renew the kitchen in the Church Hall, which is in dire need of being updated to meet current standards. You can help by coming along to and supporting our social events, where all monies raised will go towards church projects, or you can make a one off or regular donation by using our QR code. We are very grateful for any support you can give us.



COFFEE MORNINGS

Now that our schools are re-opening and we are once again in Autumn, our regular weekly coffee mornings will resume their 10.30 start time on Wednesdays, beginning September 3rd. These will be held in the hall on Main Street. Everyone welcome

CELTIC PRAYERS

Celtic Prayers will revert to a 10.00 start time each week - again on Wednesday mornings, commencing September 3rd. And these will be held in the hall.

HAVE YOU EVER VISITED? STAMFORD TOWN HALL?

Stamford Town Council is housed in the historic Town Hall building. But did you know they offer fascinating historical tours around the Town Hall's impressive collection of civic treasures, including the town's charters, ceremonial regalia, and rare historical documents, some dating back to the 15th century.

In 2023, the council appointed Victoria Newton as the Heritage and Culture Officer to enhance public engagement with Stamford's history. Which means that Victoria, along with a team of dedicated volunteers, has been instrumental in cataloguing and preserving the Town Hall's collections, leading a team of volunteers to the achievement of over 1,000 volunteer hours in 2024. Their work includes digitalising historical documents, restoring artefacts, and showcasing the Town Hall's fascinating history to visitors.

Victoria is current involved in achieving museum accreditation for Stamford Town Hall, which is a prestigious milestone signifying excellence in the care, management, and accessibility of collections. This will pave the way to once again providing a Museum for Stamford. A visit to see their rare items and hear about our local history is a must!

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

People born in September are said to be practical, loyal and organised.

Keanu Reeves, American actor famous for The Matrix Sept. 2nd 1964

Beyonce, American singer/songwriter, Sept. 4th 1981

Martin Freeman, English actor/screenwriter/producer, Sept. 8th 1971

Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, September 15th 1984

Michael Faraday, scientist and inventor of the Faraday cage, Sept. 22nd 1791

T.S. Elliot, poet, September 26th 1888

Lord Nelson, Admiral of the Fleet, Sept. 29th 1758

THE NIGHT SKY IN SEPTEMBER

Jupiter is at its largest and brightest in the September night sky. It will be easily visible throughout the night, rising just above the Eastern horizon straight after dark. A pair of powerful binoculars might enable you to see the Galilean moons of Jupiter, circling the planet. This month, the full moon will occur on September 10th, sitting halfway between the planets of Saturn and Jupiter. Mars will be getting brighter. And although we often refer to September 1st as the start of Autumn, the Autumnal equinox actually occurs on 23rd of the month.

MONTHLY LETTER CHALLENGE

Allow yourself 10 minutes to complete the whole challenge. You don't have to finish one list before beginning the next list. Work on all three lists at once if you can. Just finish within the time.

This month's challenge is:

To find 6 boys' names, 9 girls' names and 8 animals beginning with the letter F.

KNAPWEED - CENTAUREA NIGRA

Knapweed blooms from June to September and is a huge favourite of all kinds of insects including butterflies, bees and moths.



Knapweed has a variety of traditional uses, including medicinal and culinary. Historically it has been used to treat digestive issues, coughs, colds and asthma, as well as to soothe sore throats and skin conditions. Knapweed contains compounds with anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and astringent properties.

The plants, which are flopping over rather, in the verge outside the church wall are 'Common Knapweed, also known as 'black knapweed'. It is a thistle like plant of the aster family and can be found in all types of grasslands, from road verges to woodland rides, clifftops to lawns. Its Culinary uses include adding the petals to salads and mixed with pepper as an appetite stimulant.

The plant was also used for a kind of love divination. Young women would pull out the existing petals and then put the flower in their bodice. When as the yet unopened florets began to appear, this would mean the lover was near. John Clare had a poem about the practice:

*They pull the blossom threads
From out the knapweeds button heads
And put the husk wi many a smile
In their white bosoms for awhile
Who if they guess aright the swain
That loves sweet fancys try to gain
Tis said that ere its lain an hour
Twill blossom with a second flower
And from her white breasts handkerchief
Bloom as thy had never lost a leaf.*

"May" from John Clare's "The Shepherds Calendar"

Our knapweed will soon finish flowering, and it will be cut back and tidied away ----until next year.

Peter Bryan