

WHEATLAND NEWS

November 2022



Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire

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

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Editorial

As we are now getting used to the change in the hour from Sunday 30th October our thoughts are moving on to the activities during November and December. In this month's copy we have a message from Archdeacon Fiona of the meaning of All Souls and also the Remembrance services taking place – significant happenings in the church calendar.

We shall also be publishing a joint December/January copy of Wheatland News next month as we did last year. The deadline for inclusion in the copy will be Friday 25th November so make sure your services and events for those two months are with your co-ordinators to be included in that edition. There will be no Wheatland News in January 2023.

In the Billingsley News this month, on page 20 – Geocache is mentioned – not a word we come across on a daily basis unless our interest is very specifically involved with 'treasure hunting'. I had to look it up – and learned that geocaching is 'a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using a Global Positioning System-enabled device' (like a sat-nav or i-phone). Participants use a GPS-enabled device to hide and seek containers called "caches" at specific locations – though not buried, and not containing fragile or valuable objects. Never a dull moment!!

Don't miss the very good news on the last page about progress with the restoration of St Mary's Stottesdon, or the amazing article on pages 13 and 14 about rare lichens at another of our great churches. On page 11 Sarah Hurford shares lovely memories and invites us to visit her Just Giving page in aid of Loughton Church, celebrating the long service of her father Jim Hurford.

Finally - if it seems that things are sometimes in a strange order within WN – the reason is simple. We like to keep costs down for our colour pages by printing them on the same sheet of paper! Fitting everything in around that is a bit of a challenge, so we hope you can accept the flexibility, and use the Contents table to help you to find your way around each issue.

Ed

Important message to all contributors! Would you please be aware that the WN committee has agreed that, as last year, we should have **one single edition to cover both December 2022 and January 2023?** This will contain all services, readings and community news and events up to the first week in February 2023. We hope to make it a good read for the festive season, so please encourage everyone to send in their items. The deadline for sending contributions to your contact, below, for the December / January edition of WN is **Saturday 26th November.**

Brown Cleve and Ditton Priors	Jutta Langham, 01746-712551 - rl.langham@btinternet.com
Aston Botterell, Cleobury North & Burwarton, Wheathill & Loughton	Alison Greenan, 01746-787032 - greenan6qx@btinternet.com
Chetton	Pam Downing - pamdowning61@gmail.com
Highley	Revd Val Smith – revval14@gmail.com
Glazeley & Deuxhill	Marion Corfield - marion.corfield@talktalk.net Revd David Poyner - D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
Billingsley	Revd David Poyner - D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington	Chris Tibbits - Chris@stottystores.co.uk



Diocese of Hereford

November Parish Newsletter from the Archdeacon of Ludlow



Hello Everyone

All Souls' at the beginning of the month is a chance to remember with thankfulness those whom we have loved but see no more.

And, of course, there is also our national act of Remembrance, on Remembrance Sunday. As the daughter of a man who served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War and the Korean War, I never fail to be moved as the poppies fall down from the roof of the Royal Albert Hall during the Festival of Remembrance. That remembrance is all the more poignant in our own day as the reality of war and its human cost is once again apparent. There will be services at war memorials and in churches across the diocese as we remember those who died fighting to protect us and bring peace and justice to our world, and we pray for those serving in our Armed Forces today.

Memories, and remembering, are such central parts of our personalities and character, and in many ways make up part of who we are. Being remembered is very important to us, and the thought that we might be forgotten can be heart-breaking. I often read these verses from Isaiah to people who are feeling lost and abandoned for any reason, or who are grieving the passing of years which means that all those whom they knew and loved, and who held the memories of them as younger people, have died:

God says, "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands." (Isaiah 49:15-16a)

For Christians, of course, the most significant act of remembering is when we come together to remember in bread and wine the death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus' willing sacrifice of himself on the cross for the sake of others is, for Christian believers, the ultimate expression of the self-giving love at the heart of God, when Christ's hands were marked by the nails of the cross.

"Do this in remembrance of me."

So in this season of Remembrance, as we remember with candles, poppies, or bread and wine, may we all take time to pause, reflect, and be thankful.

Ven Fiona Gibson
Archdeacon of Ludlow

The Bishop's weekly video message

Fostering faith communities: 'a small church is not a failed large church – it is a different community, seeking to be faithful in its own context.'

This message, and all his earlier messages can be seen on [YouTube](#)



Messages from the Rural Dean



After what seems an awfully long time of listing new vacancies in Bridgnorth Deanery, it's really good to start going in the opposite direction! The more so, as the first new appointment is in the Wheatland News area. I am delighted to welcome the appointment of Revd Kina Robertshaw as Rector of Highley with Glazeley, Billingsley and Deuxhill, and Chelmarsh, informally known as the Severn Valley Group. Kina is moving here from Bromyard in Hereford Archdeaconry, and she will be taking up the post in April of next year; we look forward to welcoming her to the parishes and the deanery.

We are continuing to go through the necessary processes in the other vacant benefices and look forward to the day when more of them are filled!

Preb Mark Daborn

Read about Revd Robertshaw on her own website – Ed. <https://kinarobertshaw.com/about-kina/>

WN's congratulations to the Revd – now Preb Mark Daborn - on being appointed as a Prebendary within the Diocese of Hereford! – Prebendaries are appointed by the Bishop after consultation with the Dean of the Cathedral in recognition of their work in the Diocese. As part of the roles in the Greater Chapter of Hereford, they are each given their own stall in the quire, are invited to preach once a year.

Ed.

Readings for November

November 6th – Third Sunday before Advent (Red)

Job 19:23-27a; Psalm 17:1-9; 2: Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-end; Luke 20:27-38

November 13th – Remembrance Sunday (Red)

Malachi 4:1-2a; Psalm 98: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; Luke 21:5-19

November 20th – Christ the King (Red)

Jeremiah 23:1-6; Psalm 46; Colossians 1:11-20; Luke 23:33-43

November 27th – Advent Sunday (Purple)

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-end; Matthew 24:36-44

December 4th – The Second Sunday in Advent (Purple)

Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12

Saint of the Month - who are the Saints?

By Preb Mark Daborn

'For all the Saints, who from their labour rest,
Who thee, by grace, before the world confessed;
Thy name, O Jesu, be forever blest.
Alleluia!'

November 1st is celebrated as All Saints' Day, when we remember all those who have walked the path of faith before us. But who are 'the Saints'?

It is easy enough to pick out individuals, from Peter and Paul through to Pope John Paul II. Through the ages, men and women have been picked out as examples of Christian virtues to hold before us in our own struggles with living up to what is, after all, a pretty tough standard. So we commemorate those who have died for their faith, like Peter and Paul themselves; we commemorate founders, like St. Benedict, who wrote the first widespread rule for life in monasteries; we commemorate teachers of the faith like St. Augustine of Hippo; and we commemorate 'confessors' – those who exemplify a holy life – like our own king Edward the Confessor.

But actually, since the earliest saints come from New Testament times, we need to look at the original meaning of 'saint'. The word means the same as 'holy', and is to do with being chosen, set aside for a purpose, living, as it were, on a different level of existence. St Paul, in his letters, addresses the new Christian congregations of the towns he has visited as saints: 'To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints...'; 'To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus...'; 'To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi...' (although here he adds 'with the bishops and deacons', which is a little alarming as a distinction!).

For the early Christians, they themselves were the saints, small groups distinct from those they lived amongst, a tiny minority united in their faith. As time went on, and Christianity became first accepted, and then official, in the Roman Empire, the numbers grew too large, perhaps, for such an identification. And so, in due course, comes the setting aside of a few specific examples of faithful qualities as inspiration to all believers, and the list of 'the Saints', some well-known, some obscure, some, probably, largely mythical, whose festivals form a part of the annual calendar of the Church. November contains the festivals of several British saints, including Willibrord of York, Margaret of Scotland and Hilda, Abbess of Whitby – see last month's cover picture and Rural Dean's message!

But it's worth remembering that, in the beginning, 'the Saints' were the community of all Christian believers.

MD

The United Benefice of Brown Clee

Rector: vacant <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please contact your Churchwarden, as below. In emergency, contact Preb. Mark Daborn, Rural Dean, on 01746-718127</i></p>		
St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill & Loughton CHURCHWARDENS Carole Smith: 01746-712474 Mark Smith: 01746-712394	St Michael & All Angels, Aston Botterell CHURCHWARDEN Anne Preece: 01746-787237	
St Giles, Chetton CHURCHWARDEN Sheila Millington: 01746-789443	SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North CHURCHWARDENS Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676 Jane Bufton: 01746-787298	All Saints, Neenton CHURCHWARDEN Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093

Brown Clee Group News

Services in Brown Clee Churches during November

<p>November 6th – Third before Advent</p> <p>09:45 HC Ditton Priors 11:30 HC Aston Botterell</p> <p>November 13th – Remembrance</p> <p>10:00 Rem Cleobury North 15:00 Rem Ditton Priors</p> <p>November 20th – Christ the King</p> <p>09:45 HC Ditton Priors 11:30 HC Neenton 14:30 Rem Wheathill</p>	<p>November 27th – Advent Sunday</p> <p>08:30 HC Ditton Priors 09:45 HC Chetton 11:30 HC Cleobury North 16:00 XT Ditton Priors</p> <p>Thursday December 1st</p> <p>18:30 Lights Ditton Priors</p> <p>December 4th – Advent 2</p> <p>09:45 HC Ditton Priors 11:30 Carols Aston Botterell</p>	
<i>HC</i>	<i>Rem</i>	<i>XT</i>
<i>Holy Communion</i>	<i>Remembrance</i>	<i>Christingle</i>
<i>Lights – switching on the Christmas Lights</i>		<i>Carols – Carol Service</i>

Group Choir

The choir meets for practice on Thursday evenings at 7pm in Ditton Priors church. For more information please contact Mike Teague on 01746-789592.

Ditton Priors Firework Party

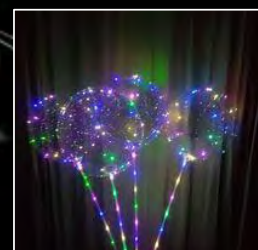
Saturday, 12th November 2022

Gates open 6.00pm

Fireworks 7.00pm (approx.)

Adult £4.00 / Child (under 16) £1.00

BBQ • Licensed Draught Beer Bar • Mulled Wine
Buz Beats Radio Roadshow • Coffee, Hot Chocolate & Baileys
The Sweet Stop • Cakes from The Willows • Starlight Balloons
Popcorn • Face Painting & Raffle (in aid of Little Explorers)



No unaccompanied children under 14
Absolutely no Sparklers or your own Fireworks

Pilates at Ditton Priors Village Hall

Pilates - Mondays at 12.30pm, £8.00 a session. Please bring own mat. Contact Nikki for more information on nikkis2010@hotmail.co.uk, 07939-054024, who says that her classes are: "Suitable for all ages and fitness abilities. Will help improve core strength, reduce back pain, increase flexibility and posture."

Ditton Priors News

Marjorie Jones writes:

Church Services

Remembrance - 13th November

- ✝ 10am service at Cleobury North church
- ✝ 3pm service at Ditton Priors church

Christingle

- ✝ Advent Sunday 27th November at 4pm. Please bring along the children to this colourful gathering. All collections taken will be donated to the children's society.

Switching on the Christmas Lights

Thursday 1st December at church 6.30 pm. Come along and sing the first carols of the season, followed by mulled wine and Christmassy snacks.

Harvest Supper 8th October

The supper was well attended and most enjoyable. Many thanks to all who prepared the hall, provided food, and helped with serving, clearing up etc. We were entertained by Penny and Alan who provided lively music on numerous instruments and were much appreciated by all. A profit of over **£700** was made for church funds.

Cleaning Rota for November:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ▪ Sunday 6th November | Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths |
| ▪ Sunday 13th November | Mr & Mrs John Ballard |
| ▪ Sunday 20th November | Mr & Mrs Tony Brown |
| ▪ Sunday 27th November | Mrs Jutta Langham & Mr Steve Allen |
| ▪ Sunday 4th December | Mrs Carole Hancox & Mrs Maureen Lloyd |

From the Register

18th October 2022 – Memorial service. Mary Dale died 14th August 2022 aged 91 years. May she rest in peace. Mary is well remembered at Ditton Priors as a teacher in the primary school here. She taught the first class (infants) and was also very involved in school sports.

The service was well attended, and mourners gathered at the pavilion afterwards to reminisce.

Mary's daughter, Sue Nicolaides, added:



“Do you remember this teacher from the old Ditton Priors School? She retired after many years teaching here in 1991. Mrs Mary Dale was her name, sadly she died a few weeks ago at the grand old age of 91. She loved this part of the world and its people so much that she wished to have a memorial service in Ditton church, and her ashes spread by the playing field.”

Pictured - Mary Dale with her class from Ditton Priors School

We apologise that Sue's piece was accidentally omitted from October WN. Ed.

Saturday Coffee Mornings

Next dates: Saturday 5th November, 3rd December and 7th January 2023.

Switching on the Christmas Lights : Thursday 1st December at church 6.30 pm. Come along and sing the first carols of the season, followed by mulled wine and Christmassy snacks.

Ludlow Male Voice Choir

On Friday 4th November in Ditton Priors Village Hall. To include a light supper. There will be a licensed bar available. Please arrive 7pm onwards for a prompt start to the concert at 7.30pm. Tickets available at £12 from Marjorie (712423) or church members.

Churchyards

We have recently had the roadside hedges cut and now have an ash tree in need of attention. We need help with the cost please and would appreciate your donations towards churchyard maintenance. Donations please to Carole Smith, Mark Smith or Marjorie Jones.

St John the Baptist 100 Club results for October 2022

- £20 Helen Groves
- £10 Amy Wall
- £ 5 each to Graham Till, Gwen Evans, Chris Lewis

Wheathill & Loughton News

Marjorie Jones writes

Church services

- ✝ **Remembrance Service** at Wheathill church on Sunday 20th November at 2.30pm, led by Revd. Justin Bailey.
- ✝ **Carol Service** on Saturday 17th December, 6pm at Loughton Church, led by the local ministry team.
- ✝ **Christmas Eve**: 7pm communion service at Wheathill church, to be led by Revd. John Daniels.

Loughton church celebrated harvest festival on 9th October, led by Alex Daborn and supported by the group Choir. This was followed by an excellent harvest Supper in Cleobury North village hall, which raised **£88** in donations. Many thanks to Jan Hadoke and her team for the tasty food.

Jan Hakoke writes:

The Harvest Service at Loughton was well attended with some good unaccompanied singing (thanks choir) in our little church which was looking very pretty despite the ongoing need for repairs to the floor.

This was followed by a Harvest Supper of a hot meal with new friendships formed and old ones reconnected after the difficulties around meeting since 2019. It was much enjoyed and we hope it will return as an annual community event. It was wonderful to see Jim Hurford so thanks to Sarah for transporting him.

Thanks, too, to the Loughton team for organising, donating and cooking the food - and washing up!

We welcome Bex James, Rob Rowson, Maisy and Ethan to the village.

Our next **date for your diary** is 10th November at 7.30pm at the Three Horseshoes for a Fish and Chip Supper/ Quiz night. £10 a head, teams of 4 and book 01746-787637.

And Sarah Hurford writes:

I'm actually Welsh (Cymraes y dw i), but moved to Shropshire when I was a small child, though I am back living in Wales now. I grew up in Loughton and the church and the grounds mean a lot to me. I loved the yew tree, which I could climb from the inside up and I loved the peace and calm of the place. The yew tree was my version of The Magic Faraway Tree – if only it had a slippery slip (if you know, you know)!

Many happy times were spent in the church, I even use to help Mum (Doreen) clean it on times and more importantly the Summer Barbeques, Harvest Services and Carol Services were lovely community events, that I don't think I appreciated enough at the time. Dad (Jim) of course was the church warden for several years and carried his duties out brilliantly. The church is such a welcoming place, beautiful and unassuming in its simplicity, I have a huge fondness for it and therefore, wanted to raise some funds to help repair the damaged floor, partly to honour my parents, but partly because I love it dearly myself and want it to be there, in good health, for other people.

I have set up a **Just Giving** page online a little while ago, but it hasn't quite taken off in the way I hoped it would, therefore I'm hoping that by writing here in the Wheatland News (also a part of my life, there was always one lying around at home) it might prompt some of you to donate. I know these are incredibly difficult times, but any donation, however small, will be appreciated and help keep this beautiful church going for all of us.

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/loughtonchurchrepairfund?utm_id=1&utm_term=a9q5Ameev

Thank you/Diolch yn fawr – Sarah Hurford

Burwarton and Cleobury North News

Christmas Social

Our Christmas social event will be held in Burwarton Church by very kind invitation of David Croft, at 3.00pm on Sunday 11th December. Come along and enjoy the festive season in the company of friends with carol singing and light refreshments.

Tickets: Adults £5 Children £2 (refreshments included). Tickets are available from PCC members: Jane Bufton 07716-877421 Carol Radnor 01746-787463 Penny 01746-787206

Lottery winners:

- 1st – Florence Fallows, 2nd – Edwyna Bennett, 3rd – Penny Fallows

Cleobury North & District Village Hall

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

Aston Botterell News

Anne Preece writes:

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Harvest Festival. We had a lovely service followed by the annual auction of produce and yummy refreshments.

See pages 13 and 14 for Anne's article on LICHENS at St Michael's, Aston Botterell

Lottery winners

- £20.00 – Rosa Broom No 3
- £10.00 each – Tom Jones No 11 and Margaret Moreton No 119
- £5.00 each – Brenda Howells No 162 and Chris Derricutt No 26

Wheatland Diary

Thurs	3	Nov	Fireworks at the Pheasant, Neenton – BBQ from 5.30pm
Fri	4	Nov	Ludlow Male Voice Choir – Ditton Priors Village Hall 7.00 pm – see page 10
Sat	5	Nov	Ditton Priors Church – monthly coffee morning – see page 10
Sat	5	Nov	Coffee morning, bric-a-brac, at Chetton Church, 10am – 12 noon. See page 17.
Sat	10	Nov	Fish & Chip Supper and Quiz – 3 Horseshoes, Wheathill. SEE P 11 for BOOKING
Sat	12	Nov	Ditton Priors Fireworks on the playing fields – see page 8
Wed	16	Nov	Flicks in the Sticks, Chetton VH 7.30 – ‘A Walk in the Woods’ – see page 17
Sat	19	Nov	Daddy's Hat – Rockers & Bluesbreakers - starting at Aston Botterell Church, 3.00pm – see page 26
Sat	19	Nov	CM Severn Hospice Crafters Christmas Fair, Broom Park Farm, 11am – 2pm. See page 26
Sat	26	Nov	Glazeley Breakfast at The Down – 9:00am. Contact Marion to book – see page 19
Sat	26	Nov	Christmas Table-top Sale – Farlow & Oretton VH, 10:00am to 2:00pm. See page 25
Thurs	1	Dec	Switching on the Ditton Priors Christmas Lights – 6.30 pm – see page 10
Thurs	1	Dec	Neen Savage WI – Advent Soup Lunches, CM Market Hall, 12.30 – 1.30pm. See page 26
Fri	2	Dec	Chetton Christmas Meal at Church House.
Fri	2	Dec	Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels at the Pheasant, Neenton, 9.00pm
Sat	3	Dec	Ditton Priors Church – monthly coffee morning – see page 10
Wed	7	Dec	Flicks in the Sticks, Chetton VH 7.30pm – The Duke – see page 17
Thurs	8	Dec	Neen Savage WI – Advent Soup Lunches, CM Market Hall, 12.30 – 1.30pm. See page 26
Fri	9	Dec	Paul Parker and All the Right Friends at the Pheasant, Neenton, 9.00pm
Sun	11	Dec	Burwarton & Cleobury North Christmas Social at former Burwarton Church – SEE PAGE 11 for BOOKING
Thurs	15	Dec	Neen Savage WI – Advent Soup Lunches, CM Market Hall, 12.30 – 1.30pm. See page 26
Fri	16	Dec	Cooper & Davies at the Pheasant, Neenton, 9.00pm
Thurs	23	Dec	Neen Savage WI – Advent Soup Lunches, CM Market Hall, 12.30 – 1.30pm. See page 26
Fri	23	Dec	Bluze Box at the Pheasant, Neenton, 9.00pm
Sun	1	Jan	Innocent Criminals at the Pheasant, Neenton, 9.00pm

Rare Lichens at St Michael's, Aston Botterell

A few months ago, Anne Preece, churchwarden of St Michael and All Angels, Aston Botterell, noticed some visitors in the churchyard and went to talk to them.

They turned out to be members of a Lichen Club who had come from around Shropshire to see the rare and beautiful lichens in the churchyard.

Afterwards one of their number, Mr Kemp, whom many will remember as a dentist in Bridgnorth but who is now retired, sent Anne some pictures and information about the lichens, which we're reproducing here and on the back page in colour. Some of the Aston Botterell lichens are very rare indeed. Mr Kemp cautioned – **don't ever clean them off the stone on which they are growing – they are far too important to be lost!**

Mr Kemp wrote:

“The church walls and memorials here support a rich and varied number of lichens. It is worth pausing a while to look and appreciate the wonderful form, textures and colour of these beautiful slow-growing and declining organisms.

Each lichen is a delicate, mutualistic, partnership between species of fungi and photosynthetic, algal and or cyanobacteria species. They generally grow very slowly and so benefit from the stable permanency of the stone surface habitat present on church walls, headstones and memorials. Stone surfaces that may have been left undisturbed for hundreds of years. Because of this permanency, churches and churchyards across the country are important refuges for lichens, often being the only places left in a county where they continue to be found.

Since many lichens only grow on certain types of rock, it is fortuitous that graveyards often contain a variety of different stone types used for memorials. Also churches sport a variety of stone types in their construction. It is no surprise, then, that they can support a good range of lichen species. Sadly, however, in the greater countryside, many lichens are being lost due to habitat destruction, together with agricultural and industrial pollution.

St Michael's supports many species, including a few scarce and unusual lichens for Shropshire.”



Aston Botterell church was listed in 1970. The Historic England information about the church reads: Chancel and nave continuous. C12 in origin. South aisle mid C13 with contemporary arcade. Chancel has a small Norman north window and C13 Priest's Door. Main roof C15. Porch dated 1639. West tower rebuilt 1884. Font late C12. Altar rail C17. Incised slab to John Botterell (1479), and wife. Large canopied monument to John Botterell (1588), and wife.

Lichens at St Michael's Aston Botterell



Caloplaca flavescens



Tephromela atra



Acarospora sinopica

Another Acarospora lichen grows on the dolerite stone of the church tower – currently the only location in Shropshire. Elsewhere in W Wales and Scotland.



Ochrolechia parella



Acarospora versicolor

This tiny lichen has only recently been added to the British list and is mainly restricted to ancient churches. It is often found growing on window ledges or surfaces close by. You may spot it at St Michael's close to the window ledges on the south side of the church.

Neenton News

Bobbie Jarvis writes:

Harvest Celebration

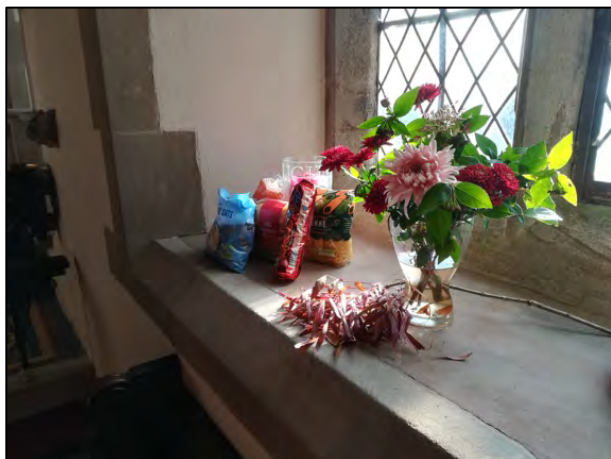
Our harvest celebration was well-attended in a beautifully decorated church.



Thank you to all who helped clean and decorate with the colourful flowers from The Ridges Flower Farm, to Sue for the splendid arrangement of autumn colours from her garden on the font and to those who took part in the service, especially the young people from Brown Clee Primary School who showed us the different animals, fish and birds which inhabit the earth. The singing of the harvest hymns with the help of the group choir raised the roof.



The donations of food for the Food Bank were exceptional this year and gratefully received when delivered to Bridgnorth. As is our tradition we retired after the service to The Pheasant where Mark, Sarah and the team served a delicious stew with crusty bread – thank you to the team.



Gerald Evans - 5th December 1938 - 14th October 2022

It is with sadness that we report that Neenton has lost one of its well-known and much loved residents.

Gerald was born in Willenhall and during his childhood lived in Bilbrook, Wolverhampton. He went to school in Codsall and attended Hereford College where he learnt his skills of blacksmithing and welding.

He moved to work at Rays Farm near Chorley, and then worked at Oldfield. At this time Gerald lodged in the house that was to be his home in Neenton for the rest of his life. He met Ann who worked for the local GP, Dr Smith, they married and brought up their family in this village. During the early days Gerald worked in Bridgnorth and finally at Star Aluminium until he retired. He used his many skills acquired during his working life to become the 'Go To' person for repairing cars and setting up MOTs as well as all the other jobs people called upon him to help sort out.

He is greatly missed and will be known for his cheerful outlook, his ability to find a solution to any problem and his love of a glass of whisky or two for relaxation while reminiscing with his friends.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Ann and her family at this time.

Gerald's funeral will take place on Friday 11th November at 10am in Shrewsbury Crematorium.

REJ

Church service in November

✝ Sunday 20th November – 11:30am – Holy Communion.

Neenton Tote - November 2022

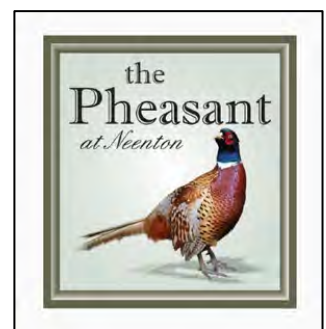
- 1st prize – Pam Pickup 2nd prize – Jeremy Cale

The Pheasant at Neenton

Opening times -

- 🌀 Wednesday/Thursday – 12 noon – 3pm, 6pm – 11pm
- 🌀 Friday / Saturday – 12 noon – 11pm
- 🌀 Sunday lunch 12 noon – 4.30pm

Please call 01746-787955 or email info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk to discuss times and your requirements **or book direct on the website.**



Events at the Pheasant:

- 🌀 Thursday 3rd November – Fireworks, BBQ from 5.30
- 🌀 Friday 2nd December – Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels at 9pm
- 🌀 Friday 9th December – Paul Parker and All the Right Friends at 9pm
- 🌀 Friday 16th December – Cooper & Davies at 9pm
- 🌀 Friday 23rd December – Bluze Box at 9pm
- 🌀 Sunday 1st January 2023 – Innocent Criminals at 5pm
- 🌀

Chetton News

From Pam Downing

St Giles's Church and Parish

Services for November

- ✝ NO SERVICE at Chetton on Sunday 13th November. Remembrance services: see Cleobury North & Ditton Priors.
- ✝ Sunday 27th November, 9.45 Advent Sunday - Holy Communion.

Flowers and cleaning

- Lisa and Mo.

The Church was beautifully decorated for our **Harvest Festival**, thank you to all who helped and to Keith and Andy, Mike and the choir for contributing to the service.

About 40 of us enjoyed a delicious harvest lunch afterwards at Church house, thank you Charles and Lisa.

Also in September we were delighted to welcome Henry Archer into Chetton Church on the occasion of his **baptism**. It was such a happy service with over 20 small children in the congregation.

100 club - October

- £15.00 to Sarah Mottershead no 14
- £10.00 to Sue Teague no 15.

Benefice website

Don't forget that this moved some time ago to be part of A Church Near You.

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

The Brown Cleve Benefice page is here:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/search/?lat=52.512006&lon=-2.496231&place=Chetton%2C+Bridgnorth+WV16+6UG%2C+UK&postcode=WV16+6UG&text=>

Events

We are getting together at the Down on **Saturday 29th October** for our usual breakfast. All are very welcome, 9am start. Contact Sheila or Lisa to put your name down.

On **Saturday 5th November** we are holding a coffee morning in Church 10am -12pm. We would welcome any bric a brac, cakes, books, plants to sell please. Do come and join us for coffee and chat.

Friday 2nd December is our annual Christmas meal, again at Church House.

Our Carol Service will be held on **Sunday 11th December**, 4pm followed by mulled wine & light refreshments.

Chetton Village Hall

For details of hall or equipment hire please telephone Sue on 789239.

Flicks in the Sticks

Our film for November is '**A walk in the Woods**' starring Robert Redford and Emma Thompson. This will be shown on 16th November.

'**The Duke**' will be shown on December 7th, due to the rerun of Downton Abbey, through technical issues.

Please note that the films will now be shown without a break. Coffee, tea and cake will be available from 7pm, before the film starts.

Tickets £4, refreshments £2.

Exercise classes

- Pam's Pilates – 9.30 am on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.
- Chetton Active Friends – from 2.00pm on Mondays
- Zumba – 2.30pm on Tuesdays.

November Molecule of the Month ... the Cerebellins

By David Poyner



Doubtless readers of the Wheatland News spend their weekdays analysing the sermon they heard on Sunday morning and comparing it with what the same preacher said a month ago. Please do not contact me about this; I need my illusions. But whatever you reflect on during the week, even if it is “where did I put my glasses”, it involves memory.

Memory is a very complicated process, with a progression from short-term memory (finding glasses) to long-term (recalling events years or decades earlier); different mechanisms come into play depending on the type of memory involved. But for important things, that we do need to recall months or years after they happened, there seem to be changes in the way nerve cells in the brain connect with each other; the “wiring” of the brain changes to make it easier to remember things.

One of the first things that happens when nerve cells form new connections during memory is that they form what are called “dendritic spines”. The dendrites are thin, finger-like projections that nerve cells send out to communicate with their neighbours. When two adjacent cells regularly “talk” to each other, as occurs when we remember things, the dendrites come even closer together as they develop spines. These are like thorns on a bramble or rose; small, pointed projections that allow very close contact between the two nerves (pictured below).

A number of molecules are important for the formation of dendritic spines but some of the most interesting are a group of proteins called the “cerebellins”. There are four main forms of cerebellin. They are released into the space between nerve cells and they attach themselves to a number of different proteins found on the surface of the cells. By doing this, they act as a kind of glue, to hold adjacent cells together. Sometimes, due to genetic mishap, the cerebellins do not have the correct structure; they are mutated. Mutations with cerebellins have been found in a number of conditions such as autism, schizophrenia and Tourette’s. These are complex disorders with potentially many causes, but cerebellins may play a role in some cases.

For the formation of dendritic spines, cerebellin 2 seems to be particularly important. Dendritic spines can be found all across the brain but they are mainly concentrated at the front of the brain, where complex memories are stored. Interestingly, this is where most cerebellin 2 is found. All mammals make cerebellin 2, but humans make more than other animals, including many of our nearest relatives such as monkeys; again, we have more dendritic spines than these. Recent research has shown why this happens. The body produces two chemicals to control production of cerebellin 2; retinoic acid which promotes its production and a protein called SOX2 which inhibits it. Retinoic acid is produced mainly in the front of the brain, matching the expression of cerebellin. And SOX2 works much less effectively in humans than in monkeys or other animals, so removing the “brake” which normally holds back its production, and hence formation of dendritic spines and memory.



So next Sunday as you sit back to listen to the sermon, think of cerebellin 2; if I am the preacher, that will probably be more interesting than what I am about to say.

A nerve cell. The long thin, branches are the dendrites. The small protrusions, some shown by arrows, are dendritic spines (From Soria Fregozo C, Pérez Vega MI., Neurología. 2012;27:421–31).

Severn Valley Group of Parishes

Rector: Vacant Revd Val Smith, Associate Minister revval14@gmail.com		Revd David Poyner, Associate Minister Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work); email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
St Mary, Billingsley CHURCHWARDEN Vacant	St Peter, Chelmarsh CHURCHWARDEN Derek Arnold: 07956-844854	St Bartholomew, Glazeley CHURCHWARDENS Vacant

Benefice news and services

Church services for September

During the interregnum please check service times in the parish sections below, or with your churchwardens.

Glazeley

Marion Corfield writes:

Services at St Bartholomew's Church

In November:

- ✝ Nov 13th – Remembrance Service at 10.30am lead by Laura Jones
- ✝ Nov 20th – Holy Communion at 10.00am

In December:

- ✝ Dec 18th – CAROL SERVICE with Holy Communion

Our new Vicar

It has been announced that Rev Kira Robertshaw has been appointed Vicar for the Highley Benefice. We would like to welcome Kira to our parish - hopefully by Easter next year after she has completed her notice at Bromyard Benefice.

Bat survey news!

We have had the results of a bat survey for Glazeley Church. We now have sound recordings of what seems to be a brown, long-eared bat in the church itself, and common pipistrelle bats seem to be frequenting the porch, along with the long-eared bats; this is from high-tech DNA analysis of droppings. However, some of us do not need the wonders of science to know that there are bats in the church; at the last PCC meeting, we were joined by a bat who flew up and down the nave during the boring bits of the meeting. It is considering our offer to make it churchwarden....

Roof repairs

We are making progress with the repairs to the ceiling in the church; our contractor is ready to start as soon as he can get scaffolding put up inside the building. Once this is done, the repairs should be fairly simple.

Stop Press – Breakfast News!

**Our pre-Christmas breakfast at The Down will be on
Saturday 26th November 2022 at 9:00am.**

Special Raffle Prizes.

Phone or text Marion on 01746-764585 or 07918559043

David Poyner Tel 01562 68638; email
D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk

Marion Corfield - 01746-764585
marion.corfield@talktalk.net

Billingsley News

The Revd David Poyner writes:

Billingsley church was very busy with visitors in September; we were particularly pleased to see that various members of the Billingsley family from the USA had been to see the church. Whilst there was also a settlement in Herefordshire called Billingsley, I suspect most people with the Billingsley surname did come from our community and would still recognise the church from medieval times. We have done very well with visitors this year; we also have had a number of people searching for the Geocache that is hidden in the church.

For our final evening service this year in the church, we welcomed Jane Peeler from Bridgnorth to talk about her work as an Anna Chaplain. Anna chaplains are there to meet the spiritual needs of the elderly. They cater for all, regardless of the religious beliefs (or lack of them) of those they are invited to meet; atheists can have spiritual needs, particularly as they approach the end of their lives. The chaplains do not preach or try and convert anyone; they simply bring themselves. We had the largest congregation I have seen for quite a while and everyone was kept in rapt attention as Jane spoke.

We hope to have a short act of **Remembrance** in the church at 10.55 on Remembrance Sunday. Details of the **carol service** are to be announced, but provisionally this will again be in Lincoln Fields, with a service in church on Christmas Day.

Follow Billingsley on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch/> or our websites, www.st-marys-billingsley.org.uk , <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10415/>

David Poyner – Associate Minister

Tel 01562-68638; email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk

Here is the Anna Chaplaincy website – Ed. <https://www.annachaplaincy.org.uk>

The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

Rector: Prebendary Mark Daborn

The Rectory, Stottesdon, Shropshire, DY14 8UE

Telephone 01746-718127. Email mark.daborn@hotmail.co.uk

Days off – MONDAY and THURSDAY

November Message

By the time this goes to print there will be yet another Prime Minister. This is written the day after Ms Truss resigned after the shortest tenure in history, and candidates are being touted in the press. Some sections of the press are also calling for a General Election, but I don't suppose that that's likely to happen: whoever comes out as the next PM will still have a very comfortable majority in Parliament, and a hideously low standing in the polls, so probably won't be daft enough to call an election until it's absolutely necessary!

But it makes you think, doesn't it? When we vote at a general election, do we vote for a Prime Minister on the basis of personality, or for a Political Party* on the basis of policies? For myself, I mistrust the cult of personality. One of the weaknesses of the democracy system is that it can encourage our leaders to do what it takes to gain power, and then do what it takes to retain it. Integrity can be difficult to maintain in that situation.

I hope that by the time you read this, the Tories will have sorted out their internal muddles (which sounds like indigestion!) and got down to delivering the promises on which they were elected in 2019. I also hope that we will have a return to collective responsibility in government, where it is not all about the Prime Minister formulating policy on the hoof, but a cabinet working together for the good of the people who have elected them to govern.

St Paul used the metaphor of a body for the community of the Church: we all have valuable talents, which on their own are limited, but used together in co-operation are incredibly powerful. The same may be said of government. Ideally it is a collection of talents all used in the same cause – the good of all people, and especially the good of the most vulnerable. That is really critical at the moment, with the backlash from Covid and from the invasion of Ukraine causing so much potential and actual misery.

If you are concerned that this is yet another example of the Church sticking its nose into politics where it doesn't belong, please note that I have not given support for any political party or policy here! But anyone who professes the Christian faith must be concerned about those who will inevitably suffer from times of insecurity, because they are the poor and the elderly and the marginalised. All those we are taught to love as our neighbour.

(*Before proof-reading, this read 'Political Pasty'; Alex says I should have left it like that!!)

Mark Daborn

If you are, or someone you know is, in need of prayer or a visit, or Communion at home or elsewhere, then please contact Mark direct, or ask your churchwarden to help you to arrange this.

Stottesdon Benefice Group News

St Mary, Stottesdon CHURCHWARDEN Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007	St Giles, Farlow CHURCHWARDENS Nigel Savage-Bailey - 07989-308599	Holy Trinity, Sidbury CHURCHWARDEN Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149
St Mary, Cleeton St Mary CHURCHWARDEN Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583	St John, Middleton Scriven CHURCHWARDEN vacant – so your contact is Preb Mark Daborn - 01746-718127	St Michael, Silvington CHURCHWARDEN Annette Metcalfe: - 01584 890161

Services in Stottesdon Benefice Churches for November

<p>Wednesday 2nd November – All Souls’ Day</p> <p>18:30 Commemoration of All Souls’ Stottesdon</p> <p>Sunday 6th November – 13th after Trinity</p> <p>09:00 HC Farlow</p> <p>10:30 MP Stottesdon</p> <p>Sunday 13th November – Remembrance</p> <p>09:00 HC Cleeton St Mary</p> <p>10:30 Rem Stottesdon</p> <p>18:30 EP Silvington</p>	<p>Sunday 20th November – Christ the King</p> <p>10:30 IW Stottesdon</p> <p>11:30 HC Sidbury</p> <p>Sunday 27th November – Advent Sunday</p> <p>10:30 HC Silvington</p> <p>16:30 XT Stottesdon</p> <p>Sunday 4th December – 2nd of Advent</p> <p>09:00 HC Farlow</p> <p>10:30 MP Stottesdon</p>
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<i>HC</i> <i>Holy Communion</i>	<i>MP</i> <i>Morning Prayer</i>	<i>EP – Evening Prayer</i>
<i>IW</i> <i>Informal Worship</i>	<i>Rem</i> <i>Remembrance</i>	<i>XT</i> <i>Christingle</i>

From the Stottesdon Benefice Registers

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

The next edition of WN is a joint one for December 2022 and January 2023.

Please make sure you send items for BOTH of these months to Chris by first thing on Monday 21st November!

Stottesdon News

Clare Tibbits writes:

St Mary's 100 Club

Congratulations to our October winners, Tony & Alison Williams, Eleanor Marsh and John & Rae Griffiths

Ride & Stride fundraising

Although there was no 'Benefice Pilgrimage' walk for R&S this year, due to late Queen's passing, we are delighted to report that the Just Giving page attracted over **£220** in donations and Gift Aid. This will be divided as usual 50/50 between the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust and the participating parishes.

St Mary's restoration project – see the feature on the back page!

Silvington News

Annette Metcalfe writes:

- ✝ Our services this month will be Evening Prayer at 6.30pm on Sunday 13th and Holy Communion at 10.30am on Sunday 27th.



Farlow News

- ✝ Our next services will be Holy Communion at 09:00 am on Sundays 6th November and 4th December.

See also the flyer on page 24 for details of the Melville Chapel Christmas Table Top Sale at Farlow & Oretton Village Hall on 26th November

Sidbury News

- ✝ Come along and join us for Holy Communion at 11.30 am on Sunday 20th November



Cleeton St Mary News

Gill Jordan writes

- ✝ Our service this month will be Holy Communion at 09:00 am on Sunday 13th November

Latest 100 Club results:

- £20 – Marilyn Wood No 29
- £10 each to Alan Price No 105 and Wendy Dolphin No 114
- £5 each to Gill Jordan No 19 and Sandra Harris No 91.

Middleton Scriven News

Ann Constable writes:

Church service:

- ✝ Our next church service will be the Christmas Eve Carol Service – at 6.30pm - with seasonal mince pies and wine to follow. There is no November service at St John's.

Community Events:

Coffee morning on Saturday 12th November 10-12 in church. Any fresh produce welcome or homemade foods. Do come and catch up with friends and maybe meet new neighbours as we start to welcome

several new families to our community. The **Christmas Coffee Morning** will be on Saturday 10th December. All very welcome!!

Ann Williamson writes:

Thank you so very much to everyone who supported our coffee morning at Damson House, Middleton Scriven on October 19th in aid of **Severn Hospice**. We raised the fantastic sum of **£1,628** which is amazing!!

A special than you to everyone who helped on the day and those who brought along items to sell in order to achieve this figure. **If anyone missed out on Severn Hospice Christmas Cards, I will have a supply of them up until Christmas so just give me a call on 01746-789616.**



South East Shropshire Community Noticeboard

Cleobury Country Farmers Market

...is “under and around the crooked spire” at St Mary’s Church, Cleobury Mortimer, on the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month from 09.30-12.30. Features local producers of plants, meats, cheeses, vegetables, rapeseed oils, gins, cookies, crafts and more.

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

Community and Mobile Library Services

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

- HIGHLEY at The Severn Centre 01746 860000. Open 7 days a week from 9am.
- CLEOBURY at The Cleobury Country Centre 01299 272301. Open 6 days a week.

Brooks Mobile Library also serves our villages direct – see Shropshire Council website and social media.

Our Local Food Banks

Both of these are **always** in need of donations of foodstuffs and other goods, of money to sustain their services, and of volunteers’ time. Find them on Facebook or call 07960 285520 for BRIDGNORTH or 07519 885943 for CLEOBURY MORTIMER.

Stottesdon’s ‘Bloom ‘n’ Blender’ Refills, Yoga and pop-up Café

Ian and Pixie recently moved from Bewdley to Hardwickforge, Stottesdon and are offering a wide range of Eco-Leaf cleaning stuffs and Faith in Nature products for personal use ... in handy “refill” form – along with a Friday pop-up café, yoga and more.

Call to support them 07305-715521 – Ian 07306 618191 – Pj and for more information.



Stottesdon & District Women’s Institute

Meets at 7.30pm on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY** each month, generally at either Farlow or Chorley Village Hall, with a varied programme of entertaining talks, crafting and events. Contact Helena 01746 718012 or Clare 01746 718007 for more details.

More local events across the Wheatland Area

Christmas

Table Top Sale

26th November 2022

10am to 2pm

Farlow & Oretton Village Hall

**Gifts & crafts, cakes & bakes,
refreshments, raffle**

ENTRY TO PUBLIC FREE !

SELLERS: Only £5 a table. Please contact Joanne on 01584 891553 to book. A raffle prize would also be much appreciated.

Organised by Melville Methodist Chapel



**Little Explorers' Pre-School
Christmas Fayre
At Cleobury North Village Hall
Saturday 26th November
From 10.00am**



Fireworks, BBQ and general fun!

at The Pheasant, Neenton

Thursday 3rd November

BBQ from 5.30pm

Fireworks at 7.00pm



ROCKERS AND BLUESBREAKERS!

A lively DH concert to remember "Moz" Mosley.

Starting at Aston Botterell Church at 3.00pm, and finishing later at the Three Horseshoes, Wheathill.

STOP PRESS – NEWS JUST IN

C.M. Severn Hospice Crafters are holding their
CHRISTMAS FAIR at Broome Park Farm
on Saturday 19 November 11am-2pm

Neen Savage WI will be hosting
ADVENT SOUP LUNCHESES at C.M. Market Hall
12.30-1.30pm on Thursdays in December
proceeds to Nightingale Nursing Fund (raffle: Severn Hospice)

Useful Community Contacts

Brown Clee Walkers	Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662
Burwarton & District Garden Club	Meets on the 2 nd Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm. Contact 01584-823723 for details of topic and venue
Burwarton & District WI	Meets in Cleobury North Village Hall. The 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2.30pm. Contact 01746-712466
Burwarton & District Wives Group	Meeting 8pm 1st Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231
Chelmarsh Crown Green Bowling Club	Welcomes old and new members. Contact Sue Jackman 01746-862850
Chelmarsh Friends	Meet every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Jenny Green 01746-862191
Chelmarsh Indoor Short Mat Bowling	Welcomes old and new members. The sessions are every Tuesday evening from 7.30-10.00pm. Further details Sue Jackman 01746-862850
Chelmarsh Jubilee Club	Parish Hall 01746-86525 Jean Davis
Chelmarsh Parent & Toddler Group	Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323
Chelmarsh Parish Hall	Available for hire - booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk
Chelmarsh Walking for Health	Monday 10.00am except Bank Holidays. Parish Hall. Eleanor Haddon 01746-862884. 2 levels of walking available
Chetton & Gazeley WI	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sam O’Sullivan 01746-868225
Chetton Folk Dance Club	Meets Chetton Village Hall, last Wednesday of month except August Tel. Janice Burton 01584-823802
Chetton Village Hall	Enquiries - Sue on 01746-789239
Chorley Village Hall	Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact Jenny or Charlie on 01746-718437
Cleeton & Silvington V H	Zumba - Thursdays 6.30pm 7.30pm all year Ula 01584-890200
Cleobury North Village Hall	Enquiries to 01746-787093 please
Ditton Priors Art Group	Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Mrs Denise Davies 01746-712521
Ditton Priors Book Club	Jenny -01746-712665
Ditton Priors Local History Group	The Local History Centre, next to the Willows Café, opens 12.00-2.00 on Saturdays, and at other times by arrangement. Contact 01746-712850
Ditton Priors Village Hall	Bookings - 07766 392 105 - dittonpriors@ gmail.com
Ditton Priors WI	Meets in Ditton Priors Village Hall on 2nd Wednesday each month at 7.15pm 01746-712473
Domestic Abuse Hotline	Telephone Number 08448-044999
Fun & Fitness for 50+	Cleobury North Village Hall - low impact fitness programme working the whole body every Tuesday 10.00 – 11.15am. Contact 01584-823640
Knowle Sports Club	Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children’s Football Field 01584-890644
Little Explorers Pre-School, Ditton Priors	Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact Wendy Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549
Short Mat Bowling	Every Monday & Thursday 2.30 – 4.30pm at Cleeton & Silvington Village Hall, October to end of April. Pam 01584-89261
Short Mat Bowling	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm except the second Wednesday in the month when it will be Thursday at 8.00 – 10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact 01746-712157
Stoke St Milborough Dance	Mike 01746-712774 - Betty 01746-77515
Stottesdon & District W.I.	Meets in various venues on the 3rd Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746 718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007
Stottesdon Gateway Nursery	Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769
Tae kwon-do	Chelmarsh Parish Hall Tuesday evening. Suitable for children & Adults. Neil Morris Thursday 5.45pm. 07969-996055

St Mary's: "Past, Present and Future" Heritage Project

Chris Tibbits writes:

As the accompanying photographs show, the main roofing and stonework repair contract is making really good progress on the north side of the building, with the new tiles in place across the huge expanse of the North Aisle and Nave (north) roof slope. The vestry roof is nearly complete and a start has been made on the north Chancel slope too. If you've not recently ventured around the tower to the north side then do take a look - a real treat awaits!



In place of the dry-rotten timbers (which have been removed) new floor joists have been laid at the west end ready for the floorboards to be installed in the Baptistry and the kitchen areas - once repairs to the timbers around the pipe organ have been completed. These repairs include adding extra supporting baulks under the



instrument itself and the insertion of extra ventilation grilles into the void there (to help prevent future dry rot recurrence).

One fascinating 'discovery' with the temporary removal of the organ's fascia boards is that – in line with our research into the building's history – the 'direct route' from the (main) West door was still in use after the Victorian 'restoration' work was completed in 1867/8. We know this because the then 'new' floor tiles were laid in a continuous walkway from the Chancel steps to west wall and the Tower beyond.

The organ, which we know was built by Henry Stevenson in Birmingham in "the 1860's", was evidently installed in St Mary's sometime after 1868 – and it was only then that the 'side entrance' via the Porch became the principal way into church, as it is now.

