

THE CORONATION
OF HIS MAJESTY
KING CHARLES III
AND HER MAJESTY
QUEEN CAMILLA

Parish
news

May 2023

Church Services

Sunday May 7th 10.00 a.m.	5th Sunday of Easter Parish Communion	STAWLEY
Sunday May 14th 9.30 a.m.	6th Sunday of Easter Parish Communion	ASHBRITTLE
Sunday May 21st 9.30 a.m.	7th Sunday of Easter Parish Communion	KITTISFORD
Sunday May 28th 9.30 a.m.	PENTECOST (Whitsunday) Parish Communion	BATHEALTON

Observant readers will have noticed the slighter later time for our service on May 7th. This is the day following the Coronation of King Charles III and it will begin at 10.00 a.m.

We will be joined at Stawley by the Village Festival Choir and appropriate festive refreshments will be served.

Everyone is most welcome to join us before their individual village festivities commence.

Churchwardens and Clergy

Ashbittle with Greenham	Charles Doble, The Old Rectory, Ashbittle, TA21 0LQ David Hanks, Manley House, Ashbittle, TA21 0LE	01823 672365 01823 672436
Bathealton	Andrew Lyle, Road Hill House, Bathealton, TA4 2AW Sarah Eustice, Oakwood, Spring Grove, TA4 1NL	01984 629013 01823 401248
Kittisford	Annie Musgrove, Meadow Farm, Greenham, TA21 0JW	01823 672627
Stawley	Penny Hare, Stawley Mill, Wellington, TA21 0HT Graham Henson, Court Place Farm, Stawley, TA21 0HP	01823 672183 01823 672496
Associate Priest	Revd Martin Beaumont, Hilltop, Milverton TA4 1JR	01823 400127

Artists Wanted!

Do you have a painting or photograph which could be used as a cover design for the Parish News? Seasonal and local images are particularly welcome.
Please send hi-res images (300dpi) to Avril at AvrilSilk@aol.com
Portrait format is ideal if possible.

Thought for the Month

I would like to thank Penny Hare for her customary kindness and hospitality in hosting our annual Lent Course at Stawley Mill in February and March. We had five very useful discussions, concentrating our thoughts on the writings of the New Testament.

I always enjoy preparing the material for our Lent Courses, not least because from time to time my research reveals some illuminating details that were, for me at least, previously unknown.

This year, whilst attempting to explain how the very earliest texts of the New Testament were first written and later discovered, I came across the information that one of the earliest texts, written on vellum and without chapters and verses (later inserted by scholars for ease of referencing) is called "The Codex Bezae". Apparently, it dates from about the 4th-6th centuries and is one of the earliest existing documents, currently in the possession of the University of Cambridge.

At the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II "The Codex Bezae" was the New Testament used by the new monarch to take her oaths and I imagine it may have been used at previous coronations. I wonder if it will, once again, be the New Testament used by our new King?

Later in the course, we focussed our attention on some of St. Paul's letters to the churches that he had helped to form, particularly the first epistle to the church at Corinth. It is clear from our reading of these letters and 1 Corinthians in particular, that these new churches faced a number of problems and difficulties. There were uncertainties about faith and practice, with sexual morality, church leadership and the Eucharist amongst the issues addressed by Paul. Another misunderstanding amongst these new Christians was to do with the Resurrection and as we read the later chapters (and particularly 15), we can hear Paul trying to persuade those who doubt the Resurrection.

"If Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead.

If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised then our preaching has been in vain and our faith is in vain." (I Corinthians 15. 12 -14)

It is clear that for St. Paul, the resurrection of Christ is at the very heart of the gospel. But the resurrection is not limited to Christ alone. It is because of Jesus' resurrection, that we can hope to experience the resurrection life of Christ.

Christianity teaches that the resurrection is not just a hope in life beyond death. The true resurrection offered by Christ begins before we are conceived and extends after the end of our earthly life. True resurrection is sharing our life with Christ and living in his presence. This is the daily gift offered to us by Christ himself and all that is required of us is joyful and thankful acceptance.

As the Christian Church encourages us to observe the "Greater forty days" of Easter until it concludes on the feast of the Ascension, I have no hesitation in hoping all our readers will continue to enjoy a Blessed Eastertide.

With my best wishes.

Martin Beaumont

Kittisford Annual Parish Meeting

Will be held at St Nicholas Church at 4.30 pm on Wednesday 17th May. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Refreshments available.

You are cordially invited to:

Books and Biscuits, Coffee and Cake

STAWLEY MILL STUDIO BOOKSHOP
on the
first and third Wednesday of each month

3rd and 17th May 2023

from
10.00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

*All proceeds in aid of Stawley Church
Fabric Fund.*

Village Oil Group

The next oil delivery is due on
Wednesday 14th June

To place an order, please email:
judy.milne@btopenworld.com or contact
Judy or Michael Milne on 01823 672205 by the
Monday before the Wednesday delivery
New members always welcome

Ashbrittle, Stawley & Clayhanger Cricket Club

Thank you to all who attended the St George's Day breakfast morning when we served eighty seven breakfasts. We had some concerns as to attendance because it was a Sunday and not the traditional Saturday, but it didn't seem to matter and we are very appreciative of your support.

A total of £426.00 was raised towards the ground maintenance at the Appley pavilion recreational ground.



Thank-you to the whole team for helping me out, Kath, Liz, Isobel, Lucy, Kristy, Janet and Club President Jon.

Cricket practice

Outdoor practice has now started, every Thursday from 6.30pm at the ground. Contact Rob to learn more on 01823 672266.

1st XI home games in May – Saturday 13th

2nd XI home games in May – Saturday 6th and 20th

Spring Ball - Saturday 27th May

Book your tickets/table asap or you will miss a great night! See p15 for further details.

Suzette Williams

Rainfall Statistics (inches) for March

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
4.64	3.12	2.76	3.15	7.01

Did we have another record month of rainfall between 2001-2023? No, we did not – March 2018 was even wetter (7.56 inches)!

Val Coots



Quaker Meeting for Worship at Spiceland

**We Meet for Worship at Spiceland, every
Sunday at 10.30am till 11.30am**

**Also available on Zoom ID:865 5570 2735
Passcode: 498173**

All are very welcome.

Loyal Address by Quakers in Britain to King Charles III

Quakers from Britain and Ireland visited Buckingham Palace on Thursday, 9th March, to exercise their historic right to address the King, here is their so called 'Loyal Address':~

"As representatives of Quakers across Britain and Northern Ireland, we give thanks for the grace of God as shown in the life of the late Queen Elizabeth and we offer prayers for you on your accession.

We thank you for speaking out for the environment over many decades. Quakers believe that a just solution to the climate crisis requires interrogating and disrupting our existing economic systems, which are not operating within ecological limits or upholding the wellbeing, dignity and equality of all.

For us, equality means everyone feeling welcomed and valued for who they are, that we see their equal spiritual worth as a child of God. Who are we to reject what God has created? Our differences are a blessing, and we should rejoice in them. When we connect with other people then our differences do not divide us.

We have welcomed trans and gender diverse people within our Quaker worshipping communities. We have committed to being an actively anti-racist church, and to making reparations for our past involvement in slavery. It is a moral imperative on us all to try to repair the harm done, as echoes of that harm are still felt today.

We are grieved to see the harms caused by fighting in Ukraine and the many other armed conflicts throughout the world. Every casualty, civilian or soldier, is a valued human life lost or damaged. We may think wars end through force of arms or negotiation, but peace is maintained by building relationships, mutual dependency and shared prosperity.

We hope and pray that you will be guided by the example of Jesus Christ and serve wisely and lovingly and can counsel your governments to do the same."

Coronation Celebrations



Saturday 6th May

9.30 a.m. Bell ringing at Ashbrittle Church

**11.00 a.m. The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla
Watch the ceremony on the T.V.**

7.30 p.m. Bell ringing at Bathealton Parish Church

Just before dusk

**Beacon Lighting at the Trig Point Field above
Hellings Farm - all invited.**

Sunday 7th May

**9.30 a.m. Bell ringing at Stawley Church preceding the Coronation
Service.**

**10.00 a.m. Coronation Service led by the Rev. Martin Beaumont with
the Village Festival Choir in attendance.
'Kir Royal' will be served to celebrate after the service.**

**12 noon 'The Big Lunch' in Bathealton Village Hall.
Posh frocks, tiaras and best wellies.
Bottomless Pimms and a Prosecco for the Loyal Toast
included. (for Bathealton residents)**

1.30 p.m. Bellringing at Kittisford Church

**2.00 p.m. A Celebratory Afternoon Tea with Entertainment at
The Globe, Appley. See p7 for further details.**

Coffee, Cake and Chat a great success

One sunny Saturday morning we three roving reporters set out from Avril's house to cover the second 'Coffee and Chat' event in Ashbrittle village hall. We took our short journey at a somewhat leisurely pace due to our shared infirmities but soon found our peregrinations curtailed by the appearance of an oil delivery lorry which completely filled the lane with barely an inch to spare on either side. This meant some minor rock climbing and rough terrain traversing with yours truly providing some general stabilization and physical heave-ho to ensure Avril and Suzi were able to reach our destination more or less in one piece.

At the door we noticed a couple of bags of hymn books; I wondered if we were required to take one upon entering. A bracing hymn of praise would surely fortify us for the coming tea and cake bonanza. But once inside, we were met by faces familiar and unfamiliar but with many smiles and a great sense of comfort and ease in the company of good neighbours. A delicious selection of cakes and tray-bakes awaited us and as we settled, we were asked for our choice of beverage which was quickly bought to our table.

Suzi was dispatched to interview members of the community and find out their thoughts on the event, fundraising for the hall along with ideas for its wider use and meaning for the village and its social cohesion. Of course, she regularly returned to our table to fuel up on cake and coffee, the deliciousness of which could be gleaned by the various facial and semi-verbal expressions exhibited as she devoured the sweet treat. 'I'm a sucker for buttercream,' she exclaimed as she scoffed the last tasty morsel.

As I viewed the scene and sipped my tea, I thought back through my own times in this hall starting with youth clubs and Saturday night discos in the late 1970s then later Ashbrittle Arts events including the black and white photography workshops for the Millennium book; the Queens Golden Jubilee; music events; more recently the reception after my mother's funeral in the church and this February, the talk and slide show I gave to the lunch club on my time at Highgrove. There are vivid memories here for us all as well as a dynamic space which can be extensively utilized for the benefit of the community going forward and as such should be cherished by us all.

This event will, hopefully, become a regular opportunity to encourage more social interaction within the village and a place for new members of the community to become acquainted with their neighbours as well as raising funds for the ongo-

ing maintenance and running costs. And hopefully with funding assistance, the long-term damp in the walls can be addressed and the heating modernized and made more efficient - to further develop the hall as an effective and efficient as well as warm and welcoming community hub.

An hour flew past in a whirr of conversation and laughter, cake and endless cups of tea. Then to exit again into the very welcome Spring sunshine and the gentle perambulation back to Avril's house.

John Ridgley

Appley Pavilion

**2022-2023 Annual General Meeting
at the pavilion
Thursday 18th May at 7:30 p.m.**

The Pavilion is run by a small band of Trustees and would we would really welcome new members joining us. Please come along to the AGM and think about joining the committee or volunteering for the odd event; we would really welcome new ideas and skills!

New Notice Board

The Pavilion Committee would like to thank Peter Cooper for designing, building and installing a smart new notice board on the bank by the entrance gates. A very welcome addition, with a 'pin board' one side and a blackboard on the other to allow posters or notices for events to be clearly displayed.

Sally Scott, Secretary



Coffee, Cake and Chat

Ashbrittle Village Hall

**Saturday 20th May
10 -12 noon**

**Unlimited Coffee and Delicious
Home Baked Cakes available.
All for £4 per head
Please come and join us!**

— THE —
GLOBE INN
APPLEY

Get in the summer spirit this month
with our exciting array of events...

CORONATION GARDEN PARTY

Join us Sunday 7th May at 2pm for a
traditional afternoon tea and entertainment.

Tickets cost £15

** Please buy your tickets before Wednesday 3rd May*

Enjoy a sumptuous supper with our guest chef nights



Wednesday 10th May

Pasta night

Wednesday 31st May

Curry night



Booking is essential, call us for more details nearer the time.

Open

Wednesday to Saturday 12 noon - 11pm

Sunday 12 noon - 4pm

Food

Served from 12 noon - 2pm & 6pm - 9pm

Pizza Night every Friday 6pm - 9pm

Accommodation

The Smythy, a luxury one-bedroom cottage finished to the highest standard



Appley, Stawley, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 0HJ



01823 673147



stuartdurston@hotmail.co.uk



The Globe INN Appley

An Echo from the Past

Democracy v Monarchy

Call me an Unreformed Reactionary if you like. Or a Traditionalist, even a Stick-in-the Mud. But I have always been a supporter of our monarchy. I don't mean that I admire individual kings and queens. Some of them have been berks while others have been a waste of space. A few have been nothing more than dictators who'd lop off your head just for scowling at seeing rice pudding on the feast day menu! Celebrity monarchs are no more valuable than the barely-known Fame-seekers who drift across our TV screens.

But most have done their best for our country. Because they took the notion of monarchy seriously. Their methods may have been born of the age and culture in which they lived. We wouldn't do it their way nowadays. But they sought the good of our people as they understood it. To serve the nation like that is an early and developing form of democracy, however primitive!

We say we are a democratic nation, which, some think, justifies their opposition to the monarchy. But are we? Just because we put crosses on a voting paper every now and then does not make us democratic. The measure of democracy comes after the results of an election, whether in our parliament or council chamber. If those elected then proceed to pursue their own career prospects, or seek to promote the dogmas and dreams of their party, democracy dies.

The true meaning of democracy

Democracy is about representing the people, and the best interests of us all, in the constituencies and across the nation. It's about being our servants before all other concerns. Of course, there are differences of opinions on everything anywhere, but serving the people is about bringing those views together and working it out. If an MP finds he/she sees a clash between state and local interest, then integrity says they should do what they believe is right – and take the consequences!

When all that fails, as it does, what can be done? If the politicians are clearly bungling this or that, where can the people turn for help?

Now that is where the monarchy comes in. Remember, the civil service, the armed forces, the NHS, even the government etc. carry the title HM.... His Majesty's whatever it is. That is not a meaningless title any more than the king or queen is an expensive pretty figurehead on the top of the national tree. Being above party politics, the monarchy is the one institution capable of standing up for and representing the best interests of us all. Rather than seeking to remove the monarchy, we

should therefore be actively seeking to strengthen it.

When the country is in apparent chaos, or sleaze is dominating parliament, it is the king alone who can ask the PM or relevant minister the question: "What the hell do you think you are doing?" Or "How can you justify your behaviour as being according to the wishes and best interests of the people?" Then the politician in question will know, if they can't answer the challenge, that they are a democratic failure and on the way out – not via the ballot box but by command of the monarch representing the interests of us all.

Democracy is not therefore an alternative to the monarchy. The monarch is the ultimate figure in a democracy, when all else fails, to whom the people can appeal. They are also on continual watch, making sure that those who profess to represent us and serve us are doing just that, being true democrats.

GOD SAVE THE KING!
(for the good of all of us)

Martin Perry

Gardening Club

April's garden visit is planned for the end of the month and will be to South Wood Farm, near Cotleigh, a garden open under the NGS. This garden gem is renowned for its spring bulbs, especially tulips, and provides an excellent example of how contemporary garden design can be integrated around a 17th Century thatched farmhouse.

In early May, members will make a return visit to Burrow Farm Gardens, Dalwood, hopefully to see the azaleas in full bloom. Later in the month, there will be the annual Plant Swap in a member's garden – together with tea and cakes of course!

June and July visits are scheduled for the organic garden at Yeo Valley and the National Trust's wonderful garden at Coleton Fishacre, Kingswear, Devon.

Val Wall and Di Roberts

Mobile Library

at

Greenham Bridge

Next visits

Tuesday 9th May and 6th June 2023

10.00 - 10.20 am

By Popular Request



**BATHEALTON
PLANT SALE**



Saturday 13th May
(note change of date)

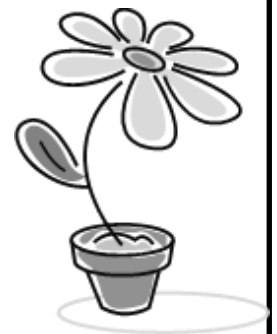
HELLINGS FARM, BATHEALTON
(in aid of Church Funds)

Gate opens at 2.30pm

**BEDDING PLANTS, HERBACEOUS, SHRUBS
POT PLANTS and VEGETABLES**



**Tea
and
Cakes**



Contributions of surplus plants gratefully received.

Please contact

Morag Berthon on 01984 623563 or Sarah Eustice on 01823 401248.

Saint Dunstan



From the Quantock foothills in a misty spring morning, with the M5 beginning to murmur, Glastonbury Tor seems like an island in a vast lake. A thousand years ago, it was. The Somerset Levels are now a scene of pastoral peace – very different from the beginning of the Tenth Century when Dunstan was born there.

Comet-like, Dunstan's career blazed across the religious twilight of Europe. And on May 6th AD 2023, its latest flare will light the land again. On that day, King Charles III will be crowned in a ceremony that Dunstan designed. Central to that ceremony and, to Dunstan more significant than the crowning itself, will be the moment when he anoints the King with oil, a ritual that goes back to Zadoc and Solomon.

Dunstan used the Order of Coronation he had designed when, as Archbishop of Canterbury, he crowned Edgar King of England. He intended the act to symbolise the induction of the monarch into the priesthood, thus combining Church and State, and thereby achieving what he had been working towards all his adult life. He probably saw a coronation not so much as an initiation into a reign but as the celebration of a well-established monarch. That helps to explain why Edgar's coronation was delayed until he was over thirty years old and had been on the throne for half his life.

From this distance in time, sources of accurate information are few. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is a contemporary list of events with tolerably accurate dates. A monk known only as 'B' wrote a biography within twenty years of Dunstan's death, and had been a member of the community at Glastonbury when Dunstan was Abbot. Recent writers often muddle information from reliable sources with legends and fairy tales. While this may frustrate the historian, they do allow amateur speculators some freedom. Although human life in Anglo-Saxon England was vastly different from what we experience in the Third Millennium, people's ambitions and motivations have changed little. It is our understanding of them that has advanced.

The Ninth Century in England had been a period of almost perpetual raid, pillage, destruction, temporary settlement, and fighting, over fertile land. Saxons had settled the home-counties and became dominant, Angles in East Anglia, Danes the Midlands (Mercia) and the north. Scandinavians/Vikings harried the coasts, occasionally occupying parts of the north, and sometimes subverting the remaining Romano-British of Devon, Cornwall and Wales. Thus, Somerset was some-

thing of a frontier. Other Norsemen (the name contracted later to 'Norman') were to settle the south side of the Channel in Dunstan's lifetime and only a century before Hastings).

To give a framework on which to hang the parts of Dunstan's story, below is a list of the Tenth Century kings of the land that was to become England. Dates of death are reasonably accurate because a king was centre-stage but years of birth are less certain because any child's future was likewise. (*n*) = *approximate age at accession*; *n-n* = *dates AD of reign*; [*n*] *years of reign*

Alfred the Great	(23)	871-899	[28]
Edward the Elder	(25)	899-924	[25]
Athelstan	(30)	924-939	[15]
Edmund	(28)	939-946	[7]
Eadred	(23)	946-955	[9]
Eadwig	(14)	955-959	[4]
Edgar	(16)	959-975	[16]
Edward the Martyr	(12)	975-978	[4]
Ethelred the Unredy*	(10)	978-1016	[38]

*I can't resist drawing attention to the play on words here: Ethelred is usually known as 'the Unready', which has a specific meaning in modern English; but '*redig*' or '*redy*' is Anglo-Saxon for 'advised'. Thus his epithet is more correctly as I give. Unhappily, '*ethel*' means 'well' or 'good', so the unfortunate king was known as 'the Well-advised Badly-advised'.

A Somerset birth

Dunstan was born in about AD 909 to a well-connected family who owned and lived on land near Baltonsborough, a few miles east of Street in Somerset. Dunstan's education began with lessons from wandering Irish monks (*peregrinati*) amid the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. He quickly became unpopular among his contemporaries as an inky swot and teacher's pet, making no secret of his ambition to restore the church at Glastonbury. Dunstan's uncle, Athelm, was Archbishop of Canterbury and introduced him to King Athelston's court. As a cocky teenager he managed to so infuriate his contemporaries that they beat him up and trod him into a slurry pit. He was so befouled that, crawling to a friend's house nearby, the guard dogs did not recognise him until he spoke to them.

While staying with another relative, Ælfheah, Bishop of Winchester, Dunstan decided to become a monk. After 'receiving the tonsure', he joined the loose community that occupied Glastonbury Tor and taught himself the artisan skills of metalwork, lettering and making musical instruments. His reputation for giving sensible advice advanced his status at Court. When Athelstan died Dunstan became a senior adviser to King Edmund.

The 940s were a formative time in Dunstan's life, and we can understand the deeper significance of phrases in the recognised historical evidence which included 'he fretted with the desire for marriage', and the legend that he was tormented by the devil and responded by seizing him by the nose with tongs from his forge. There is also the shadowy figure of Lady Æthelflæd, the widowed niece of King Athelstan. 'Shadowy' because so little is known about her. The Glastonbury monks frequently went to her to find aid and solace. Æthelflæd was deeply religious and convinced that funding monasteries and abbeys was a sure way to salvation, rather as the ultra-rich today found universities – or used to. When she died, she left Dunstan enough money for him to rebuild Glastonbury Church. Later, he inherited another fortune from his father, and he spent that too on reviving religion throughout the land.

Æthelflæd was a good deal older than Dunstan but it is entirely possible, in the prevailing mores of Saxon England, that they were lovers and had perhaps achieved that profound intimacy when physical, mental and emotional components were in harmony, and only public opinion prevented marriage. Whatever the personal facts in this case, Dunstan's actions hint that he understood that people could be more easily persuaded to follow a lead if they felt insecure than if they were at peace within themselves. A subliminal way of inducing insecurity could have been to create a social atmosphere in which individuals felt guilty about their deeply-felt desires and affections. What better way than to divide a person against themselves by encouraging them to believe that their sexual drive was unacceptable to God? Even if Dunstan did not articulate this argument in conscious thought, his drive to reform monasticism in England had just that effect. Monks and priests would be celibate.

A lack of discipline

Certainly Dunstan was displeased with the flagrant lack of discipline among the Glastonbury brethren, and also by the absence of a structure to the community's days. Even though he had no experience of it in practice, he chose the Rule of St Benedict and thereafter habitually wore the black robe of the Order.

The advice Dunstan gave King Edmund was clearly sound because the Kingdom flourished and he rose in power and influence so quickly that his contemporary courtiers whispered against him, falsely accusing him of black arts. Edmund decided to expel him from his post as chief adviser but changed his mind when his life was spared by the vision of Dunstan appearing in a potentially lethal hunting accident. Instead of exiling Dunstan, the King installed him as Abbot of Glastonbury.

As Abbot, Dunstan began rebuilding the church and, almost as importantly, restored the precinct walls to keep the monks in. He appointed his brother Wulfric as bursar to oversee the material business of the abbey, and also keep an eye on things when Dunstan was away at Court. This devotion to duty paid off and he was offered bishoprics of Winchester in 951 and Crediton two years later, but he turned them down so that he could better serve King Eadred, Edmund having been killed in a brawl.

Anglo-Saxon Kings were very much hands-on autocrats but they had to be endorsed by the council of elders called the 'Withan'. Debates in the Withan would have silenced even PMQ in today's Westminster, if only by the way votes were assessed. Instead of proceeding decorously through the lobbies, those in favour of a motion held up their weapons and shook them vigorously – a procedure called *wapentake*. It gave the king an impression not only of the number of men supporting a cause but also the quality of their weapons. If sound arguments in today's Westminster, rather than iterated ya-boo assertions, were to be deemed weapons, perhaps *wapentake* has a future.

Steering national policy

In effect, Dunstan created the role of Prime Minister, or Private Secretary to the King. He had great powers of persuasion, as well as access to the King's ear, and he used both to quietly filter what he thought the King should know. This tactic enabled him to gently steer national policy towards what he conceived to be a more genuine version of Christianity.

At this point in his career, Dunstan's reaction to a particular incident cost him his job. When the sickly King Eadred died childless in 955, two brothers were in line of succession. They were the obnoxious fourteen year-old Edwig and his staid younger brother, Edgar. To the cost of the country, primogeniture won. It was actually during Edwig's coronation that Dunstan got into trouble. At a peripheral meeting of Ealdormen, the elders were affronted by the absence of the King himself, so they sent Dunstan to fetch him. Dunstan found Edwig in bed with a noble woman called Ælfgifu – and her mother. It was not immediately clear who was doing what to whom. Dunstan did not enquire but retrieved the crown from the corner of the room, dragged the teenage king to the council, and bade him denounce the women. They and Edwig never forgave him. They plundered Glastonbury and hunted its abbot into exile.

Dunstan found refuge in the Benedictine Abbey of Saint Peter's near Ghent in what is now Belgium. Strangely reminiscent of Glastonbury, Saint Peter's Abbey is built on top of a tor called the Blandijnberg. He was treated as a VIP and

spent his time living the Benedictine Rule and admiring the devoutness and celibacy of monks living under it. Within two years, the Mercians and Northumbrians in England had sickened of Edwig and deposed him. He died conveniently in Gloucester on 1st October 959 and Edgar was chosen *nem. con.* as king of a reunited England. He immediately sent for Dunstan and heaped bishoprics upon him: Worcester, Winchester, London and finally in 959, Canterbury – his predecessor dying of cold while crossing the Alps on his way to receive his pallium from the Pope in Rome.

The power behind the throne

Not for nothing was Edgar known as ‘The Peacemaker’. The black-robed Benedictine monk, Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury, withdrew quietly into the shadows behind the throne, and for two more years, he and Edgar gently managed affairs of state. Their speciality included the notion that talking was better than fighting, and compromise trumped pride as they negotiated liaisons with the minor kingdoms of the British Isles. The zenith of their achievement was displayed near Chester shortly after Edgar’s coronation, when six crowned heads rowed King Edgar on the River Dee and swore allegiance to him.

Edgar died in 973 and was succeeded by his sparkling elder son Edward, in spite of opposition from Ælfthryth who pushed for her son by Edgar, the weakly Ethelred. It is very likely that she arranged the murder of Edward in Corfe Castle three years later. In his last act of public service, Dunstan reluctantly crowned and anointed Ethelred with a dire warning that a reign begun in such a crime would end in disaster. It did.

Dunstan spent the remaining fifteen years of his life praying and teaching at Canterbury. Without a determined and compliant King to translate his advice into action, Dunstan was powerless. He could only watch as many of his reforms were carried too far, and the wealth of the abbeys and churches increased so much that they caused envy and resentment among the traditionally-minded Ealdormen and Earls who ‘redistributed’ the country’s wealth. Dynasties fell and others rose, but we owe to Dunstan at least some measure of credit for the way local courts of justice could accumulate experience and pass it upwards to the King’s Court. Surely he also had a hand too in the notion that the Common Law existed, not as did Roman Law to control the people, but to keep them free.

Martin Jacoby

PS If we ever need to change the patron saint of England, I propose St Dunstan who was there at the foundation of Englishness and did much to shape it.

Lunch Club

Our February speaker was Ken Atherton, well known professional who has visited us many times before. His topic this time was Ghost Ships; many of which are still floating around the oceans of the world. We had no idea just how many ships over the years had either disappeared or just been deserted. As ever we were fascinated by Ken’s discoveries.

In May we will be having a talk by Maurice Stanbury locally known to many of us as an expert on springer spaniels. If the weather is suitable part of the presentation will take place outside on the Green (courtesy of Charles Doble) and there will be a demonstration of Maurice’s training techniques.

The Lunch Club is on Thursday 25th May at 12 noon in the Village Hall. Please let me know if you would like to attend. Telephone 01823 672203 or e mail harlingdelia@gmail.com

Delia Harling

Building works at Wellington Library Closure of current library and move to 55 North Street

The library will close on Saturday 6th May at 1.00 p.m. and re-open in its temporary location on Monday 26th June 2023.

When will I need to return my items?

All items on loan will be automatically renewed to at least 17th July 2023, giving you extra time in which to return them after Wellington re-opens. If you have items out that are overdue prior to closure, they will be automatically renewed, but you will have the overdue charge to pay.

Making a reservation?

You can reserve and collect items from another library of your choice. This service will be available again at Wellington from 21st June, ready to collect after 26th June (if available).

How do I renew my books or check when they are due back?

You can return books to any other Somerset library. You can renew your books and check your return dates via your library account at www.librarieswest.org.uk or use the LibrariesWest app. If you need help logging in, or have any queries about your loans, library staff can assist, email wlnlib@somerset.gov.uk or phone 0300 123 2224

*Darren Smart, Head of Service –
Somerset Libraries*

Stawley Mill

Garden Party and Fete



Saturday 3rd June
2.00 pm

Plants, Cakes, Bottles, Books, Raffles and Bric a Brac

Cream Teas and Strawberries

All Proceeds to Stawley Church

Bathealton Village Hall AGM Minutes **17th April 2023**

Present: Stephen Cottrell (SC), Shelley Ward (SW), Shirley Sawyer (SS), Dennis Sheehan (DS), Jess Bunn (JB), Phil Broad (PB), Morag Berthon (MB), Mike Tarr.

Apologies: Tilly Willis, Nerys Gibb

Minutes: Agreed by all

Chairman's Report:

The attic sale 2022 was a great success. Jessica Bunn was praised and thanked for her efforts. Over £300 was raised.

The portrait painting demonstration was once again a great success.

The jubilee meeting and lunch had attracted fifty people and an excellent lunch with plentiful Pimms was enjoyed by all.

DS and PB were thanked for the painting and refurbishment of the village hall. All agreed it was much brighter in the hall.

The sum of £1428 had been spent in 2022 on repairs and maintenance.

Finances:

The report, produced by the Treasurer, was reviewed and agreed.

Election of members:

All members of the committee are Trustees of the Village Hall.

Stephen Cottrell: Acting Chairman and Treasurer

Shelley Ward: Secretary

Dennis Sheehan: Estates

Tilly Willis: Booking Secretary

Additional Members: Shirley Sawyer, Morag Berthon, Phil Broad

User Group Members:

Parish Council: Phil Broad

Parochial Church Council: Stephen Cottrell

It was commented that many of the previous user groups (WI, silk painters, young persons' group) had been lost due to the effects of an aging population and COVID.

Appointment of Independent Examiner:

David Hugh-Smith

AOB:

SS went through Fire drill.

SC stated that all the fire extinguishers had appropriate certificates.

Shelley Ward (Secretary)

Buttered buns and blue sky thinking

A coffee morning to raise funds towards the Ash-brittle village hall expenses was recently held and very well supported. There were, of course, "Blue Sky" wishes such as a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a lido, all mentioned with tongue in cheek of course!

Speaking to one gentleman present, he was delighted to see this, the second coffee morning to be held this year, so well attended. Indeed, those I spoke to were also very happy to have somewhere to come to enjoy coffee, cake and a chat. It's hoped this will become a regular event. He added that the costs of running the hall are ever increasing, especially with the price of power now.

The hall itself has the benefit of a well equipped kitchen and also a skittle alley, which is available for hire separately. The alley is used regularly, being home to a team who play in the Sampford Peverell league.

Although well used, many thought there might be ways to encourage more groups to utilise this great facility. The local art group has a home here, along with bingo meetings which were recently resumed following the enforced stoppage due to Covid.

A popular lunch group meets here as well. This is particularly appreciated by many of the more mature villagers. Speaking to some, they wondered if it would be possible to extend this group to become a seniors' club, meeting maybe twice a month. It was felt it could become even more of a focal point for socialising and somewhere to have a good chat and catch up. This idea was enthusiastically supported by several of those present.

Parties a speciality

One villager told me how her family had made good use of the hall over the years, holding her children's parties and a 21st birthday party here. She did, however, feel it would be good if the damp ingress could be addressed and wondered if maybe some of the funds raised could go towards this.

Apparently there used regularly to be a visiting GP holding a surgery in the hall. That must have been a wonderful asset. Sadly, doctors are thin on the ground these days, so a repeat of this would probably have to join the list of other "Blue Sky" projects!

Drawing to a close, another villager told me, "As a fundraiser, this has been great; we've all had fun and hopefully raised a bit towards the upkeep of this hall. It is, after all, a central hub for our village."

Suzi Allen

APPLEY PAVILION

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Silent Auction

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Country Matters

Liberate your lawn

Perhaps you have heard of ‘No Mow May’? It’s an annual national campaign started by Plantlife in 2019 to encourage people not to mow their lawns in May and to mow less during the summer. The campaign is a response to the loss of over 90% the country’s wildflower meadows in the last 50 years. Just a few generations ago it was possible to walk from Stratford-upon-Avon to Birmingham without leaving a wildflower meadow. Now they are few and far between.

This loss is a key reason for the decline of many of our pollinators and one we believe No Mow May can help rectify. Embracing a little wildness in lawns helps to increase populations of wildflowers, insects and, by extension, insect-eating birds. Less mowing can also result in a more drought resilient lawn and give gardeners more time to relax and enjoy nature.

Mowing once a month to a grass length of at least 3-5 cm seems to produce the maximum number of flowers. Mowing separate areas at different heights, even leaving some areas unmown, increases the diversity of species. Over 250 plant species were reported in No Mow May gardens including wild strawberries, wild garlic and rarer species such as the bee orchid, green winged orchid, snakeshead fritillary, adder’s tongue fern and meadow saxifrage. This shows how little we sometimes need to do to support rare and declining wild species.

If you want to take a step further and convert your lawn or a bit of it into a more permanent wildflower meadow even less mowing is required: once between July and September then once again between September and February to allow the plants to grow, flower and shed seed. How you go about meadow making varies depending on your soil fertility, the plants already present, your budget, area of land and level of patience. You can find more details at: <https://meadows.plantlife.org.uk>

The Plantlife website also provides guidance for those who wish to restore their fields to traditional species diverse hay meadows or semi-natural flower-rich pasture. These management methods are shown to improve animal health and the quality of dairy and meat products while increasing the area of national wildflower meadows with all their wildlife benefits.

If you have no field to convert or lawn to refrain from mowing, don’t despair, there are other things you can do. You can encourage others to take part (friends and family, schools, work places, community spaces) and don’t underestimate the value of potted plants. Create a little nectar bar on your doorstep, patio or balcony for passing pollinators. Butterfly conservation suggests honeysuckle, jasmine, clematis and hops as great nectar

and caterpillar food plants. Herbs such as rosemary, chives, oregano and sage produce tasty leaves for you and flowers for pollinators.

The point of ‘No Mow May’ is not to stop mowing in May but to make us aware that little changes in how we manage the land in our care can make a big difference to wildlife and that each of our small contributions add up to make a big difference to nature, communities and how we experience life. We invite you to liberate your lawn. Interested in getting involved?

Find more information and register from No Mow May at: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay>

Alësha Naranjit and Frazer Higgins

Climate Adaption Toolkit

I’m reaching out to let you know that **Adapting the Levels** — a partnership project between Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset County Council, and FWAG South West — have recently launched a brand new **Climate Adaptation Toolkit** to help communities prepare for our changing climate.

Climate change is already affecting everyone in Somerset, with flooding and severe heatwaves impacting communities across the county. Unfortunately, extreme weather such as this is only likely to increase as the climate crisis continues. This makes climate adaptation essential. To help, Adapting the Levels have created a **free guide to help communities take action into their own hands**. The new toolkit includes:

- Information about the need for climate adaptation.
 - Actions individuals and communities can take to adapt.
 - Advice on funding, consents, and permits.
- Resources to help create a locally tailored climate adaptation plan.

You can download the toolkit for FREE from our website: www.somersetwildlife.org

Please do take a look if you have a few minutes to spare, and we do hope your communities find this resource helpful. Thank you for your support,

Emily Weatherburn Somerset Wildlife Trust

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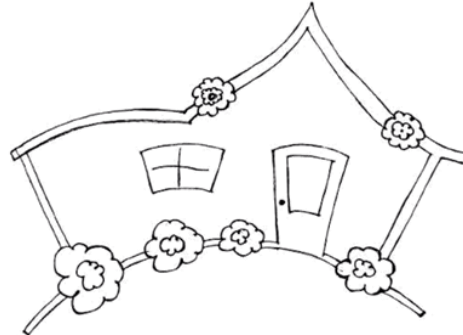
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Opening hours

Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm

Saturday 8.00am to 2.00pm

Sunday 9.00am to 11.00am



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May Bank Holiday Opening Hours

Monday 1st May 8.00 - 11.00am
Monday 8th May 8.00 - 11.00am
Monday 29th May 8.00 - 11.00am

Coronation Day Saturday 6th May

The Shop will be open 8.00 - 10.00am only
No hot food

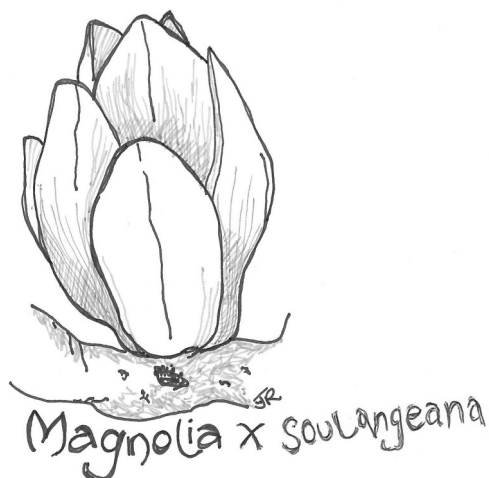
Newspaper deliveries and collections as usual

Due to increased costs we are looking for an alternative source of fresh fruit and vegetables, which are more reasonably priced, while maintaining good quality

In the meantime, we hope you will continue to consider buying locally

The Shop is now facing extensive and costly remedial electrical work
The SCA, which is responsible for the Shop infrastructure has been unable to fund-raise recently due to Covid restrictions
Katie is therefore making this appeal to the Community for contributions towards these costs in order to keep the Shop functional, while the SCA finds additional funding sources
Thank You

***Magnolia*: an arboreal beauty fit for a King**



Although by the time this piece hits the press, many of the Spring flowering Magnolias will have finished blooming or certainly be past their best, there are many of the later Spring and Summer species yet to burst into regal splendour. There are around three hundred known species of *Magnolia* and probably well over a thousand named cultivars, world-wide. They are immensely popular and widely grown ornamental trees and shrubs that are, in the main, relatively easy to grow in a wide range of soils and climates. And, as a family, they flower through all parts of the year apart from the very depths of winter. Some species do require a more acidic soil, or moister soils and some require the more sheltered or temperate coastal regions for undamaged early flowers.

It's no secret that His Majesty, King Charles III is a big fan of magnolias and has a veritable collection of them at Highgrove house. He was awarded a VMH in 2009 (Victoria Medal of Honour, established in 1897 to recognise exceptional horticulturalists and gardeners; there are only ever sixty three at any one time, one for each year of Queen Victoria's reign) and is the patron of the RHS Magnolia, Camellia and Rhododendron group. As such, HM has been able to pick some the best brains in the 'Magnolia world' for advice such as Jim Gardner (Kew), Charles Williams (at Caerhayes) and Karan Junker (at Higher Cobhay) as to which species and varieties would grow best in cold, windy, upland Gloucestershire.

Certainly the very early flowering *Magnolia campbellii* hybrids found it too cold and exposed, appearing in late February to late March, the buds being very prone to cold rain, hail and snow and biting winds. 'The Boss' (as we staff were

allowed to refer to the then Prince of Wales) persevered with one rather impressive but slightly tender species, *Magnolia dawsoniana* from Yunnan and Sichuan provinces of China. Its flowers, appearing before the leaves hang down somewhat with narrow, slightly fluttering petals reminding HM of 'Himalayan prayer flags'.

The longest established specimen

There was a much older, longer established *Magnolia x soulangeana* to one side of the main lawn; I'm not sure if it pre-dated the Duchy of Cornwall's purchase of the property in 1980 but it certainly looked considerably older with a stately shape and its spreading, slightly tiered habit. It was reliably covered in upright, tulip-shaped, blooms every April. The flowers were of a pale pink inside with a flushed darker pink, almost 'slatey' at the base and lightly striated outer petals. The whole bloom has a succulent, almost sugar-coated texture to it and whilst looking very vulnerable, is in fact (compared to many magnolias) pretty resilient to the vagaries of a British Spring.

Also of note and very dear to HM's heart was the vast *Magnolia grandiflora* growing against the house; a massive evergreen tree with shiny, mid-dark green leaves with a ferruginous, felted underside from which burst forth cream-white saucer sized flowers, mostly through the months of late July, August and September though it would spring a flower or two at any mild and settled spell at any time of year. This species comes from the south-eastern states of America and when first grown in the UK circa 1725 (around Exeter and South Devon, incidentally) they were considered tender, so were grown against house walls for training in espalier fashion but inevitably outgrew this format leading to many manors and stately home sporting a tree of 'Gormenghast' proportions sprouting from the base of a wall. 'One doesn't like to think what it's doing to One's foundations...'

John and Julie Ridgley

Donations for the Parish News

Donations received from:

Colin and Annette Haddrell
Sue Batten
Mike Beard
Joyce Norman

Thanks again, for your kind support. Donations may be left at Stawley Shop or sent directly to the Treasurer. Details inside back cover.

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Ashbrittle Village Hall at 2.00 pm

Next Meetings

Wednesdays 3rd May and 7th June

Come and meet some local art and craft enthusiasts, see what's going on and tell us about your favourite craft

If you are interested in joining us please contact Pauline pjw200355@gmail.com

Stawley Parish Council

There will be a meeting of the Stawley Parish Council in the Appley Pavilion at 7:30pm on the 9th May 2023.

All parishioners are very welcome to attend.



Beat Surgery

**Stawley Village Shop
and
Tearoom**

Tuesdays 16th May and 13th June

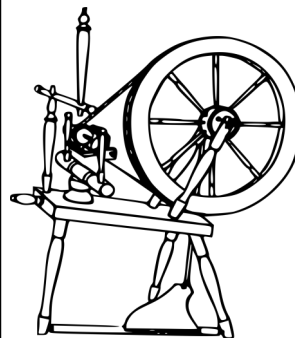
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The group have been holding some meetings at members' houses where a large and well ventilated indoor space is available, but there may still be the need to have a Zoom meeting from time to time.

Meeting arrangements will be confirmed in advance when the reminder email is sent out.

If you would like to join us please contact me and I will add you to the mailing list. Perhaps you would like to come along and learn to spin with us?

Or bring along your knitting, crochet or other needlecraft project. All welcome.

Next Sessions

Tuesdays: 2nd and 16th May
6th and 20th June
at 2.30pm

**Contact Pauline: on 01823 672222 or
email pjw200355@gmail.com**

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**KITTISFORD, TRACEBRIDGE &
APPLEY:** 01823 245101

The VETS numbers are available should you need assistance in an emergency or help to access a defibrillator. Remember, in the event of a possible cardiac arrest in your household: **ALWAYS DIAL 999 FIRST IN AN EMERGENCY AND, IF A CHANCE ARISES, THEN DIAL THE VETS NUMBER, SPECIFYING THAT YOU NEED A DEFIBRILLATOR RATHER THAN GENERAL HELP**

There are four local **defibrillators** which are easy to use and available to anyone. They are permanently located at these places and can be found using the //What3words codes below.

Ashbrittle Village Hall, on outside wall
blurts.flats.crouching

Bathealton Village Hall, on outside wall
relatives.widgets.rolled

Kittisford New House Farm, on wall,
opposite church *bonkers.regime.lyricist*

Stawley Shop, on outside wall
messaging.servers.quaking

These are all accessible 24 hours a day and no access codes are required.

Editorial Policy

Please note that the views expressed in this magazine are the responsibility of the individual author(s) and are not necessarily the views held by the editors of the Parish News.

Local Information

Neighbourhood Watch Contact Numbers

Greenham & Tracebridge	Caro Ayre	01823 672603
Appley	Rachel Chesterton	01823 673063
Ashbrittle	Charles Doble	01823 672365
Stawley	Pat Sweet	01823 672380
Wellisford	William Thomas	01823 673143
Springrove	Doreen Orton	01823 400731

Police-non-emergency number 101

Police Beat Team

PC Rachel Lang 2347 Tel: 07889 655887
Rachel.Lang@avonandsomerset.police.uk

PCSO Louise Fyne 6945 Tel:07889 659476
Louise.fyne@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Parish Councils

Ashbrittle Chairman Charles Doble 01823 672365 / 67261
Email: *charles.doble@ukgateway.net*

Bathealton Chairman Philip Broad 07584 657106
Email: *philip.broad1@outlook.com*

Stawley Chairman Paul Musgrove 01823 672627
Email: *stawleypc@yahoo.co.uk* www.stash.org.uk

Community Halls

Appley Pavilion and Recreation Field
– to book, ring Suzette Williams on 01823 672266 or
email: *williamspsfa@outlook.com*

Ashbrittle Village Hall
– to book, ring Pat Gainey on 01823 672760

Bathealton Village Hall
– to book, ring Tilly Willis on 01984 624459

Local Groups

Stawley under Fives at the Appley Pavilion.
Becky Alder Pre-schools Manager
Swallows, Sampford Arundel 01823 672342 Mon/Tues
Stawley Under Fives 07707 416871 Weds/Thurs/Fri

Rural Community Initiative (RCI) is a local charity set up in 1999 to support the way of life of the people of this rural community. For further information please contact the chair of the committee:

Mike Parkinson *mike.parky3@gmail.com*

PARISH NEWS DETAILS

The Editors and the next issue deadline date are on the back cover. Please send items for publication to the Editors in good time to ensure publication. There is only a short time between the deadline and the printing of the Parish News and late items may not be included. We are pleased to receive items in any form (typed, in long hand, or by email). Naturally, we prefer items by email *ashparishnews@gmail.com* when they should be in Microsoft 'Word' format, as this saves a great deal of typing!

Advertising Our rates are £1.40 per month for a small box, £3.00 for a quarter page, £6.00 for a half page and £12.00 for a whole page. Advertising for community events, charity and church fundraising events in our area are normally carried free of charge. Occasional one-off adverts from residents in our area seeking to sell or buy an article or seeking to acquire or offer a service are also carried free of charge. In all cases the style, layout and size allocated to an advert is at the discretion of the Editors.

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e-mail address: ashparishnews@gmail.com

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May

3rd and 17th	10.00 - 12.30p.m.	Books and Biscuits, Coffee and Cake at Stawley Mill Studio
6th and 7th		Coronation Celebrations. See p5 for full details.
13th	2.30 p.m. Gates open	Bathealton Plant Sale
18th	7.30 p.m.	Appley Pavilion AGM at the Pavilion
20th	10.00 a.m. - 12 noon	'Coffee and Chat' in Ashbrittle Village Hall
24th		The Taunton Deane Morris Men will perform: 8.00p.m. Ashbrittle Village Hall; 9.00 p.m. The Globe, Appley
25th	12 noon	Lunch Club 'Springers - a lifetime with Spaniels'
27th	7.30p.m. - 1.0 a.m.	Spring Ball at Appley Pavilion

June

3rd	2.00 p.m.	Stawley Church Garden Party and Fete at Stawley Mill
3rd	7.30 p.m.	'On again, On again.' A music evening in Bathealton Village Hall
11th	2.00 - 6.00 p.m.	Open Gardens at Kittisford with music by 'Honest John'
17th	10.00 - 12 noon	'Coffee and Chat' in Ashbrittle Village Hall

July

2nd	2.00 - 6.00 p.m.	The Stawley Festival at the Pavilion
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September

10th		Stawley Flower Show and Appley Pavilion Teas
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October

8th		Apple Day at the Pavilion
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Beacon Lighting to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III
at the Trig Point Field above Hellings Farm

Beacon to be lit just before dusk

6th May 2023

A wonderful location to view other beacons, far and wide. Everyone invited.

Next Deadline Date: Friday 19th May 2023

Editors: Maurice and Avril