



Parish news

April 2024

For the Parishes of ASHBITTLE with GREENHAM, BATHEALTON, STAWLEY and KITTISFORD

Church Services

Sunday 31st March

10.00 a.m.

We are pleased to welcome, as officiating ministers, the Right Reverend Dr Michael Langrish (lately Bishop of Exeter). He will be assisted by the Rev Martin Kirkbride (lately acting Team Rector of Wellington). There will be refreshments after the service.

Easter Day

Holy Communion

GREENHAM

Sunday 7th April

9.30 a.m.

First Sunday after Easter

Parish Communion

STAWLEY

Sunday 14th April

9.30 a.m.

6.30 p.m.

Second Sunday after Easter

Parish Communion

Celebration of Spring (see p7)

ASHBRITTLE

STAWLEY

Sunday 21st April

9.30 a.m.

3.00 p.m.

Third Sunday after Easter

Parish Communion

Parish Ramble (see p7)

THORNE ST MARGARET

KITTISFORD

Sunday 28th April

9.30 a.m.

6.00 p.m.

Fourth Sunday after Easter

Parish Communion

Evensong

BATHEALTON

SAMPFORD ARUNDEL

Please note: The West Tone Benefice consists of the parishes of Ashbrittle with Greenham, Bathealton, Stawley, Kittisford, Rockwell Green, Sampford Arundel and Thorne St Margaret.

The full list of services is available at: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11406/>

Churchwardens and Clergy

Ashbrittle with Greenham

Charles Doble, The Old Rectory, Ashbrittle, TA21 0LQ

01823 672365

David Hanks, Manley House, Ashbrittle, TA21 0LE

01823 672436

Bathealton

Andrew Lyle, Road Hill House, Bathealton, TA4 2AW

01984 629013

Sarah Eustice, Oakwood, Spring Grove, TA4 1NL

01823 401248

Kittisford

Annie Musgrove, Meadow Farm, Greenham, TA21 0JW

01823 672627

Stawley

Penny Hare, Stawley Mill, Wellington, TA21 0HT

01823 672183

Graham Henson, Court Place Farm, Stawley, TA21 0HP

01823 672496

During the vacancy and before the appointment of a new priest in charge, any inquiries about services or the occasional offices of the church (weddings, baptisms or funerals) should be made to individual Churchwardens.

Cover page image created by Paul Leyland using AI

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.

The Ashbrittle Guild of Clockwinders

The winding of the Ashbrittle church clock has recently been taken on by Michael Fairfax, Tim Hayward, Philip Wilson and Paul Leyland.

We would like to explain a little bit about what this involves.

The clock is one hundred and fifty years old and is accessed via a very steep, dark and dusty spiral stone staircase. At the top is a small room lit by a single bare lightbulb.

There are two timber doors, one small and the other a little larger. On opening the larger door you are confronted with a splendid looking Heath Robinson blue mechanism - the clock. The smaller door looks down over two floors. This is where the clock weights drop. One weight to power the clock, the other the chimes.

The main task of the winders is to raise those weights to the top of the tower which will then power the clock and chimes for two days. The winding is done using two heavy handles. The chime weight needs to be cranked around fifty times and the clock weight around thirty five times.

A regular committment

The chime and the clock are checked regularly throughout the week for accuracy. Sadly, accuracy is a rare occurrence as one hundred and fifty year old clocks do not have modern timepiece technology. As a consequence the clock needs to be constantly adjusted to be remotely correct.

If it's running fast the pendulum needs to be stalled for a set amount of time. If it's running slow the clock needs to be wound forward. This is done using a spanner on a small clock face inside the tower. The adjustment is automatically replicated on the large clock face outside.

All this can be done, but for some unbeknown reason, two days later it's running thirty minutes slow, potentially causing confusion in the village with misleading chimes. We recently became quite excited thinking we had solved the issue, but it has now developed a mind of its own and is going even further off kilter.

We are all pleased to wind the clock and are fascinated by the history and the thoughts of who may have wound before us. But, it's old and a little bit cranky just like its winders so be patient and enjoy its eccentricity rather than its time keeping.

We hope to have the clock serviced soon and this might, if we are lucky, give the clock a period of accuracy.

The Ashbrittle Clock Winders

Congratulations to Stawley School

A letter from Damian Hinds, the Minister for Schools, has recently been received by the headteacher, Mrs Jacqui Collier, congratulating Stawley Primary School on its achievement in the recently published Key Stage 2 results.

Stawley Primary was in the top 2% of schools in the country in 2023 for achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.

Stawley has consistently been one of the top schools in Somerset for many years now and the Minister congratulated all of the children and staff on their achievement.

We would like to add our congratulations to the children and to the staff for their hard work and dedication in giving all of the children the very best possible education.

Eds



Quaker Meeting for Worship at Spiceland

**We Meet for Worship at Spiceland
every Sunday at 10.30am till 11.30am -
this is a blended Meeting also available
on Zoom -
All are very welcome.**

*"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it
for a few minutes, including you."
- Anne Lamott*

Meeting is the chance to escape from the trivial thoughts of everyday living, and to find answers from yourself or from God. Some people are scared of the silence. Without the noise that serves to reassure us, that blocks out thoughts we'd rather not have, we're vulnerable and find it's time to face ourselves. We can never hide from God, but it's easy to minimise the effect he has on our lives - except in the silence where he can be heard. Don't feel restricted by the silence, it is there to set you free from the pressures of life. No-one is judging your movements, your thoughts... Freedom of expression is the freedom to worship God on your own terms. Value the opportunity to think unguided by the world. Learn what you feel you need to know, let other information pass. No moment of silence is a waste of time.

*Rachel Needham, 1987 - from Quaker Faith and
Practice 2.17*

Appley Pavilion

'Have your say meeting'

Many thanks to everyone who came along on 29th February 2024 to discuss future plans for the Pavilion. It was a great turnout with some new faces and representatives from the main user groups (Pre School, Cricket and School).

Suzette Williams, Pavilion Trustee and Bookings Manager and Chair, gave a brief history of the new Pavilion and what help the Committee needs going into its twentieth year. After the AGM in May the committee will need a Chair and Secretary and two more local representatives.

It seems a sign of the times; all the groups represented have similar problems; rising costs and too few committee members and willing volunteers to help run events. There is a need to be creative when it comes to fund raising and to attract the support of people from further afield.

A collaborative approach

It was agreed that a collaborative approach to fund raising was the most effective and all groups were happy to combine forces for specific events. It was also suggested that the Pavilion has a separate fund-raising group to look at projects, such as the play area and other 'wish list' items.

More ideas were batted around, and everyone present was happy to support the Pavilion by a new 'Friends of Appley Pavilion' *WhatsApp* group. Requests for help with events, work parties, meetings etc. to go out when needed. This is a good way for anyone to give support as and when they can, especially if they are unable to commit to becoming a Trustee.

A positive evening, heart-warming to know that the Pavilion is important to the local community and a willingness to give support – thank you.

If you would like to add your name and number to the *WhatsApp* group or would like to join the committee, please let Suzette have your details - email williamspfa@outlook.com or call on 01823 672266

The next committee meeting is on Thursday 11th April at 8 o'clock at the Pavilion and the 2023/24 AGM is in May (date to be confirmed).

Sally Scott (Secretary)

Stawley Church

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held at Stawley Mill, on Thursday 18th April starting at 7.00 p.m.

Lunch Club

Our speaker in February was Enid Halliwell. She talked about her first hand experience as a young woman growing up in Belfast during the Troubles. Clearly very frightening with no one knowing from day to day whether there would be loss of life or blasted buildings. She described how every day activities were always risky and might directly affect her or family and friends.

Enid was a delightful speaker who fully engaged us in her own personal experiences. We had plenty of questions and comments.

Next month

The next Lunch Club is on Thursday 25th April. Martin Jacoby is giving us a talk entitled 'Heritage Interpretation'. He makes the following comments - 'nostalgia is merely funny in youth but tolerated in old age....I shall indulge myself by taking you on a brief autobiographical ramble...

Heritage interpretation is giving enough information to allow the image on your retina to mean something else.

'This is a horrible jumble of words that cries out for interpretation. Let me see if I can explain...'

Please let me know if you would like to join us on this ramble.

My contact details are:
email harlingdelia@gmail.com or telephone 01823 672203.

Bathealton Village Hall Committee

Are you interested in joining our Committee?

We are looking for volunteers to help us maintain and run the Hall and organise events.

We meet four times a year. Being a committee member isn't onerous and it's great fun.

We are currently refurbishing the kitchen area and will be open again in the summer.

Could you spare the time and energy to help us look after this invaluable community resource?

If you are interested in volunteering, or if you want to have a chat about what's involved, please contact:

Shelley Ward
on 07973 144535 or 01984 248663



Stawley Village Shop & Tea Room

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 8.00 to 5.00
Saturday 8.00 to 2.00
Sunday 9.00 to 11.00

Contact details:

shop@stawleyshop.com
Tel: 01823 674361

The Post Office is here on Thursdays between 11.30 and 1.30pm

The Future of the Shop and Tearoom

This is a preliminary notice that there will be a
Public Meeting
Monday 13th May at Appley Pavilion

Further details and information will be available in the
May issue of the Parish News.

Please come along to support us, and bring any ideas or offers of help
to ensure the future of this valuable community service.

In the meantime:

Why not pop into the shop to see what's going on?
We now carry a good selection of organic fruit and vegetables.

We also have a full range of hot and cold sandwiches to eat in or take away,
homemade teacakes, cheese and sweet scones and fruit cake.

Or just join us for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.
You are always welcome!

ST GEORGE'S DAY BREAKFAST



PLUS MIXED SQUAD vs WIVELISCOMBE CC - 12pm
Sunday 28th April

- **Variety of breakfasts available**
- **Help raise crucial funds for the club**
- **Enjoy our Pre-Season Friendly vs Wiveliscombe CC**

VX3



Happy
ST. GEORGE'S DAY

Fenton Farm Eggs

ENJOY A COOKED BREAKFAST, PANCAKES OR JUST TOAST!
9.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m. in Appley Pavilion

Planning ahead for the Flower Show.

Photographers and artists please take note

The subject for the Flower Show's
photographic competition this year is:
'A West Country Bridge'

The subject for the painting, in any medium, is
'Abstract'

**Meadow Pasture Hay
for sale**

Small Bales - Low Sugar

Perfect for horses

Stawley Area

01823 673303 or 07981 164111

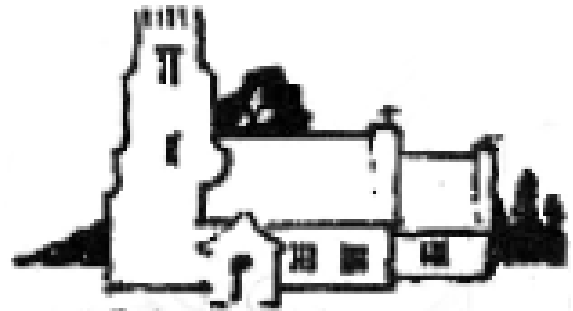
Parish Ramble and Tea

Sunday April 21st

3 pm at the church for the ramble
and 4.30 pm for tea

Join us for a ramble around Kittisford followed by tea and cake at St Nicholas Church, Kittisford. It will be a gentle, sociable ramble suitable for all ages along lanes and footpaths. Dogs are very welcome (leads will be needed at times). Tea afterwards and an opportunity to explore the hidden treasures of Kittisford Church.

Steven Wort, the Hedgerow Chaplain from Milverton will be joining us. For further information contact Annie Musgrove on 01823 672627 or Email: amusgrove@cantab.net



Spring Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy

will be held at
The Old Rectory, Stawley
on Thursday 11th April

10:00 - 12:00 noon

All proceeds in aid of Stawley Church funds.



A Celebration of Spring

Stawley Church
Sunday 14th April
6.30pm

All are welcome to join the Village Festival Choir, led by John Young, in singing some favourite music and sharing readings to celebrate Easter and the arrival of spring.

Followed by refreshments.

Country matters

The Cuckoo's Clock

The days have been getting longer since the March equinox and 'Spring has well and truly sprung'. The dormant plants are now awake: the hedgerows covered by a haze of green leaves and delicate white blossom, the fields are dotted with spring flowers and bluebells are appearing in the woods. The migrants are returning from their winter travels. The animals which were hibernating have emerged.

But this is not your grandmother's spring. She would have been surprised at the mild temperatures, the blooming time of the flowers and the behaviour of the animals. The five warmest springs in the last two centuries were in the last thirty years, with temperatures rising by more than a degree. This seemingly minor change in temperature has resulted in plants flowering a month earlier, nesting beginning weeks earlier and spring migrants becoming resident. While this may sound like a good thing, the rise in springtime temperatures has not come with earlier last frost dates. Thus any new growth or early young are vulnerable to deadly cold spells which they would not have faced previously

Where are the cuckoos?

One of the big differences culturally is the rarity of the cuckoo in our landscape. In your grandmother's time the cuckoo was known widely as the harbinger of spring, a fact included in many folk songs. This spring migrant was so common that people named other springtime animals and plants after it: the most widely known are the cuckoo flower (*Cardamine pratensis*) also called lady's smock, cuckoo spit (the froth seen on vegetation which encases young froghoppers) and the cuckoo pint (*Arum maculatum*) also called lords-and-ladies or bog arum. However, in the last fifty years our cuckoo population has fallen by over 75% and its call is no longer a familiar spring sound.

This may in part be due to the cuckoo's inability to "change its clock". Unlike other plants and animals, cuckoos do not seem to have adapted their activities to the warmer springs. Their host birds* are now breeding earlier so cuckoos are missing their window to parasitise these nests and many fail to reproduce.

So why don't the cuckoos adapt and arrive earlier? To answer this question, scientists set up the Cuckoo Tracking Project to better understand what happens on their arduous migration route from the Congo and across the Sahara desert to Europe and back. The work is still ongoing but indicates that an international collaboration to improve cuckoo habitat throughout its range is

likely to reduce migration mortality. Other research suggests that here in the UK one of the most important things we can do is improve habitat in and around farmed areas specifically for the cuckoo's host species and its prey, which largely consists of hairy caterpillars.

Although we can't reverse climate change quickly enough to halt the decline of species such as the cuckoo, re-establishing and protecting quality habitat may still give our grandchildren a chance to hear the cuckoos in spring.

** You may remember that cuckoos are brood parasites, they lay their eggs in the nest of an unsuspecting host bird which incubates and raises the young cuckoo. A mother cuckoo will choose to lay in the nest of the bird species which raised her and her eggs are often very similarly patterned to that host species.*

Frazer Higgins and Alesha Naranjit

Rainfall Statistics (inches)

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
8.30	4.37	3.86	0.59	8.35

A marked difference between February 2023 and 2024! And we don't need to go back very far to find an equally wet February in 2020. These two months recorded the highest rainfall in February since local records began in 2000.

Wishing us all a drier March – but don't hold your breath.

Val Coots



Beat Surgery

Stawley Village Shop and Tearoom

Tuesday 16th April
and 14th May

9.00 - 10.00am

with PCSO Brianna Whelan
Tel 07761 405460 or email:

brianna.whelan@avonandsomerset.police.uk



BATHEALTON PLANT SALE



Saturday 11th May

HELLINGS FARM, BATHEALTON

(in aid of Church Funds)

Gate opens at 2.30pm

BEDDING PLANTS, HERBACEOUS, SHRUBS

POT PLANTS and VEGETABLES

Contributions of surplus plants gratefully received.

Please contact

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

Wiveliscombe
Lunch
Club

Mondays from 10.30am at

Wiveliscombe Community
Centre

Come and join us for an incredible, two
course, home cooked lunch for just £5



We have many activities, cards, dominoes,
chair Pilates, crafts, a warm place to read
or just come for a cuppa and a chat!

Bring a friend or family member, the more the merrier,
just let us know in advance!

To book a place and for further information
please email: wiveylunchclub@gmail.com
or ring Eileen 01984 624374

Ashbrittle Art and Craft Group

Painting and drawing
Clay work and Textile Crafts

Ashbrittle Village Hall

We hold a monthly get-together as a self-
directed group to do whatever 'arty' or 'crafty'
project takes your fancy. Come and meet some
local art and craft enthusiasts.

Next Meeting:
Wednesday 3rd April
1.00 - 4.00 p.m.

Notice - due to the small membership, the group
can no longer afford to hire Ashbrittle Village
Hall for meetings.

We intend to carry on, but will meet at a mem-
ber's house. Arrangements will be confirmed in
advance, via the monthly reminder email. If you
are interested in joining us please contact
Pauline pjw200355@gmail.com

An invaluable local charity

Somerset Sight is a local charity that has been supporting sight impaired people across Somerset for over a hundred years and in 2019 we proudly won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

One of the services we offer is the Volunteer Visiting Service, whereby volunteers are matched locally with a sight impaired person for regular visits for company and support and to alleviate their loneliness and isolation.

Volunteer visitors help with a variety of tasks such as reading, correspondence, or making appointments, going out for a drive or just a cup of tea and a chat. Many volunteers get great satisfaction and enjoyment from their voluntary work, many friendships are formed and the people they support very much look forward to their visits, some telling us that it is the highlight of their week. Full training is provided and we cover all reasonable expenses.

We have a number of visually impaired people in Somerset who would welcome a volunteer visitor, but they are on a waiting list as we don't have enough volunteers to match them with. Therefore, we just wondered if you might be able to assist us in promoting this service to help us recruit some more volunteers.

Social groups for the visually impaired

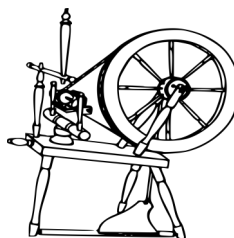
Furthermore, we hold monthly Social Groups for the visually impaired in various towns across Somerset. Our service users come along to have a chat and a coffee, and we are also able to share ideas and information about living with sight loss. Please call Somerset Sight on 01823 333818 to find out more.

We also have a Mobile Advisory Service which travels across the whole of Somerset offering information, advice and visual aids for people with sight loss. We have lots of helpful gadgets and interesting resources on board. The dates are on the website.

We arrange regular outings and events for people who are visually impaired, including an annual trip to the seaside. We deliver regular 'Seeing Life Differently Days' for people who are coming to terms with sight loss. We also provide Low Vision Clinics and we offer Emotional Support sessions via telephone. We have seen a big increase in the use of IT by our service users, so we now offer IT support to our visually impaired service users.

Further information about us can be found on our Facebook page and on our website:

<https://www.somersetsight.org.uk/>



Spinning and Woolcraft Group

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 April
7th and 21st May
at 2.30pm

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

BURROW



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register your interest
in a fully-funded upgrade**



Due to the Phosphate pollution in your local river catchment we are operating a septic tank replacement scheme using private funding.

We install wastewater treatment plants that remove almost all pollutants, with funding secured from planning applicants who need to create a positive impact on the environment.

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burrow-environmental.com 01935 507 508



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Cream Teas

Wine Tastings



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Bathealton Parish Council.
Minutes of Meeting held on
Thursday 15th February

Present: Phil Broad, Chair (PB), Steve Cottrell (SC), Jess Bunn (JB), John Ridgley, Treasurer, (JR), Karen Tarsey, minutes (KT), Dennis Sheehan (DS).

Minutes: no matters arising.

Planning application: 007 03/23/0001 Blackberry Farm TA4 2AH. Outline planning has been approved. The Council will await full details of planning and comment accordingly.

Financial matters:

- i) PB and JR to visit bank to remove previous secretary as signatory, add JR as signatory, and to organise internet banking.
- ii) Approval of invoices: £50.00 for minutes.
- iii) There is likely to be a financial impact to the Parish Council due to the current financial situation of Somerset County Council. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting when the financial situation of the County Council will have been published.
- iv) Community Interest Levy (CIL). Village Hall kitchen refurbishment underway with the help of SC, DS, PB and Chris Campbell.
- v) JR organising audit of the Parish Council's 2023/2024 accounts with Ian Southerland.

Review of Parish Council's Budget including financial plans for 2024/2025 and successive years:

- i) Continue support of the defibrillator located at the village hall.
- ii) Continue maintenance of churchyard paths.
- iii) Continue monitoring of public footpaths, styles and signage. JR to source new way markers. DS offered to replace them where missing. DS informed the Parish Council of the levelling of the footpath at Stone Hill Lane. Concern was raised that if we have more flash floods the mud will wash down on to the road.

JR and JB have met to look at old maps to establish any footpaths that need reinstating; several have been found. These will be logged at the County Council. It was suggested that these be included in the next Parish walk.

JR has retrieved a signpost that was knocked off and will replace. SC has new fingerpost that he will install in due course.

- iv) Village Hall. It was found that the whole floor area of the kitchen needed to be replaced due to damp. A new concrete floor has been laid with damp proofing and insulation installed. Screed and new flooring to be laid once concrete

has dried. It is expected that the kitchen will be out of commission until at least June.

- v) Future charitable contributions will be discussed at next meeting once end of year audit has been completed.

Future Precept: to be discussed at later date.

Roads: Residents advised to identify any problems i.e. potholes, condition of surface to County Council by the end of the financial year.

AOB: The Bathealton Plant Sale will take place at Hellings again this year.

Next Meeting: Thursday 23rd May 2024 7.30p.m.
The meeting closed 8.45 p.m.

Karen Tarsey (Clerk)

Gardening Club

The very end of February saw the Club's AGM and Bring and Share Supper. Member's gratitude is once again due to Pauline Wood who hosted the very enjoyable evening. The event was attended by twenty four members – a record attendance!

Although the supper and generous hospitality of its host were superb, it was the formal part of the meeting which was the key goal of the evening. After a review of the, very extensive, 2023 monthly series of activities, the focus of attention was on the planning for the current year. An excellent programme of monthly Garden Visits and some Member's Open Gardens was established and is already underway!

Next visits

The March Garden Visit, kindly suggested and organised by Freda Parkinson, will be to Broadleigh Gardens at Barr House, Bishops Hull, Taunton. The garden, owned by Christine Skelmersdale, has been a leading light in the propagation and mail order of small bulbs for over forty years and has won many awards. From the members' standpoint the visit's focus will be the delightful, small spring garden which should be showing at its best.

The April visit will be to the National Trust's Dunster Castle Gardens and, of course, the Watermill Tea Room!

Finally, the AGM provided the opportunity for Val to remind members that, as agreed, her two year-term as Chair of the Club will come to an end at the end of June 2024. A volunteer, or preferably two volunteers, will be needed to ensure the continuation of this long running and highly successful Club.

Val Wall



WIVELISCOMBE CRAFT MARKET

LOCALLY MADE ARTS & CRAFTS

COMMUNITY
CENTRE
2024

20TH APRIL
18TH MAY
22ND JUNE
9.30AM - 12PM



Follow us on Instagram [wiveycraftmarket](https://www.instagram.com/wiveycraftmarket)
email wiveycrafts@gmail.com



Our local Band of Bellringers

As many of you will know there are four church towers with ringable bells in our parishes. Stawley and Ashbrittle have six bells apiece and Kittisford and Bathealton four bells each. Greenham has none.

Church bells have been rung for centuries to call people to worship on Sundays and on special occasions such as weddings and funerals and for nationally significant events - war and peace and royal occasions. We tolled for the death of the Queen and we rang all the bells in our four churches for the Coronation of King Charles III.

Recently a national campaign named 'Ring for the King' aimed to introduce new ringers to the art of campanology. The dwindling numbers of veteran ringers worked keenly to train up new blood to boost their local bands and mark the new reign.

We are fortunate to have an expanding group of enthusiastic ringers practising and honing their skills, shattering the peace of Thursday evenings at Stawley church. Apologies to the immediate residents but we are getting better all the time!

For some time now Jill Hansford, the Ringing Master for the Taunton Association, has been regularly and patiently teaching bell handling to half a dozen novices, two ready formed ringers who have moved into the area, and the six 'old hands'.

Mention here should be made of, and thanks given to, Graham Henson and Lena Massie who over many years have encouraged the solid foundation of local ringers. We are making excellent progress and hope to make a good show at the Taunton Branch Striking Competition in April. (Watch this space!)

If any of you would be interested in joining our merry band and learning a new skill you would be warmly welcomed at our Thursday practice (7.00 to 9.00 p.m.) or you could contact Angela on 07955 126068 for more information.

Angela Johnson

Ashbrittle Parish Council - an update

We thought it might be helpful to start a Facebook page for the council as a way to keep in touch with residents and vice versa. Search for Ashbrittle Parish Council and you'll find us. We'll post here any news of forthcoming events and invite feedback about issues of concern to residents.

There is also a website for Ashbrittle, shared with Stawley, which is where we publish official documentation. www.stash.org.uk

Funding

We receive funds each year from Somerset Council, now our only higher tier of local government. For the year 2023/24 we received £2,300. This 'precept' is used to cover the obligatory costs of running a small parish council such as insurance, as well as maintaining a number of features of the parish such as signposts and footpaths. We also support various organisations/activities, such as the village hall, the church and various other non-profit initiatives such as the Parish News, and Wivey Link.

Activities

Our role also includes looking at and making recommendations or comments on local planning applications submitted to Somerset Council (who have the final say on what does or doesn't get the go ahead). We also raise local highways and rights of way issues.

The good news is that we are not seeking any increase in the local precept due to the careful husbanding of our reserves and keeping a tight rein on our expenditure. You will have no doubt read that some town and parish councils in Somerset are planning huge increases. This is because, unlike the county council, they are not restricted by the amount they can increase the local element (or precept as it is called).

Financial consequences

As a result of Somerset Council's dire financial position they are encouraging (they cannot compel) town and local councils to take on additional responsibilities. We do not propose to accede to this although we will keep the matter under review.

Please do get in touch if you have any thoughts, concerns or ideas about the village and community. Better still join us and become a parish councillor. The post is unpaid, and we have never claimed expenses. It is, however, a rewarding role which gives you a considerable "say" in local affairs. We are always looking for new councillors and would particularly welcome younger members to give a different perspective. We meet in the village hall six times a year at most. The current members of Ashbrittle Parish Council are:

Charles Doble (Chairman),
01823 672365
charles@greenandcarter.com
Philip Wilson (Treasurer),
Jeremy Robbins,
Paul Leyland



Dog Training

 **Reward based methods**

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 **allforwoofs@gmail.com**

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Muscle and Fascia release.

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Safe for all age groups and during pregnancy.
Bowen specialist with 20 years experience.

Clinics held at The Terrace, Taunton.
01823 338968/07721 462096
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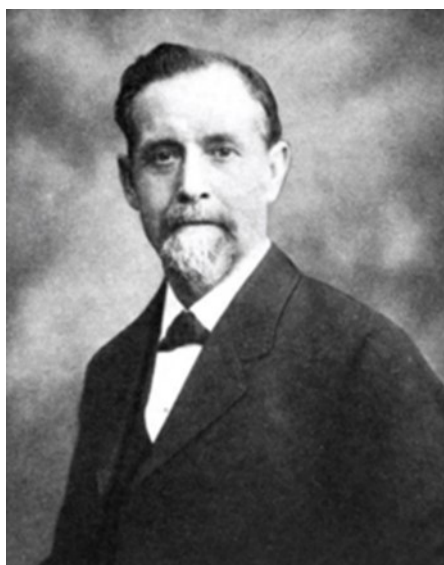
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John Davey – The Tree Expert



John Davey was born at Winkleigh, Stawley in 1846 to Samuel and Anne (nee Shapland). His father was a tenant farmer on the Sweet/Palmer estate. At the age of four, when learning to plant potatoes, his father taught John the motto “Do it

right or not at all” which stayed with him throughout his life. When Anne died, John (then aged thirteen) went to work for William Sweet at Stawley Wood. When he first started work, he could not read or write but, gradually, he taught himself. He was a hard worker and by the time he was eighteen was supervising other workmen on the estate. When he was twenty-one, he moved to Torquay and spent six years learning greenhouse management, horticulture and floriculture.

Emigration to the USA

In 1873, at the age of twenty-seven, John emigrated to the USA. After landing in New York, he travelled to Warren, Ohio and found a job as a caretaker in a private school. He worked hard and traded some of his labour for tuition – learning Latin, Greek, Astronomy and Mathematics. He was a devout Christian and, through attending a local church, met his future wife, Bertha. John moved with Bertha to Kent, Ohio where he was, initially, employed as the sexton in the cemetery.

He developed the landscape of the cemetery by planting trees and flower beds and, in 1880, after his work drew much admiration, he decided to start his own business which focussed on planting and caring for trees. In 1901, he wrote his first book – *The Tree Doctor*. After its publication the demands for his services grew and, with the help of his eldest son (Wellington), he started to train the world’s first tree surgeons.

Another son, Martin (later to serve two terms as Governor of Ohio and take a seat in the Senate in Washington), became the chief salesman. Early clients included many notable American families including the Rockefellers and the Colgates. In 1909, after several successful years, the company was incorporated as *The Davey Tree Expert Company*.

As the company prospered, John left its management to his sons and travelled throughout the USA giving lectures, writing several more books and enjoying his hobby of photography. He died in 1923 at the age of 77.

A very large company

In 1979, the Davey family withdrew from the firm and sold it to their employees. Davey Tree (as it is now known) currently employs approximately 12,000 people in the USA and Canada – one of the largest employee-owned businesses in North America.

Over the last thirty-five years several of John’s descendants, as well as some current employees, have visited Stawley to see his birthplace. Clearly, John is still held in very high regard by them all.

Pat Sweet

Great progress with tree planting at Stawley

Amazingly, we had finished planting by 3.00 p.m. on the Saturday – more than a day ahead of schedule. Many thanks to the larger than expected number of volunteers who helped us. Over the course of Friday we estimate that we had about twenty five volunteers, and more than thirty on the Saturday. Just as well too, because the weather on the Sunday was absolutely foul.

We’ll be planting the remaining three thousand trees around the same time next year. And after that just a few decades’ wait to see the outcome!

Kiran, Adam and Lawrence

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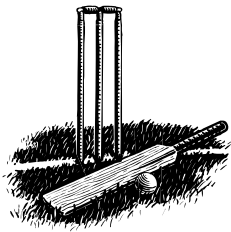
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Ashbrittle, Stawley and Clayhanger Cricket Club

The 2024 Season starts this month

April sees the beginning of the new season, starting with a fixture away to Bridgetown on Saturday the April 20th. The 2nds will be home to Culmstock Cricket Club on Saturday the 27th of April at 2.00 p.m. We will also be hosting Wiveliscombe Cricket Club on Sunday April 28th starting at 12 noon, when Ashbrittle will field a mixed squad of 1st and 2nd team players

The Wiveliscombe fixture is due to start after the club's annual St George's Day breakfast, which is always fantastically run, so please support the club, come and enjoy a breakfast along with some cricket viewing to match.

The breakfast is available from 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and is a joint fundraiser between the Pavilion Committee and the Cricket Club.

A fantastic quiz night

We also would like to thank Alan Rose for running what was a fantastic quiz night for the club, that helped raise crucial funds whilst hosting a really enjoyable night for all. Also, a massive thank you to Suzette Williams, Kath Rose, Liz Burt and Andrew Burt for putting on a great meal for the event.

The club have been very fortunate to be given funds by club supporter Ryan Black, for two new smart tablets for scoring our games on Play Cricket! This is vital with the growth of online scoring and data, and the whole club is extremely grateful for this selfless gesture from Ryan.

This year at Ashbrittle Cricket Club, we are taking on new sponsorship opportunities including our new match ball sponsorship.

This involves having your business logo and name on our social media posts, and multiple local newspapers in our match reports.

For only £50, this is a great opportunity to reach new people and gain even more exposure for yourselves, and helping out a local cricket club as well.

This would cover both our 1st and 2nd XI for a weekend of your choosing.

Callum Hamer

Thus saith the chocolate creme egg

"I don't know about you, but I am not that keen on Easter. It's a people thing. They get all excited about some event or other which means they get a rapacious desire for chocolate.

They buy oodles of chocolate eggs, of all sizes, some of them empty and others filled with more chocolate. They can't get enough. Do you know that they can even have chocolate eggs at Christmas now? Mind you, our jackets are perhaps more suitable for that time of year, brightly coloured and shiny. It goes with the tinsel and cheery wrapping paper.

There's something gloomy about Easter. I hear them talking. They talk about a Very Good Guy who did lots of good stuff. Having said that, he must have upset someone. They put an end to him. They don't want the likes of me as a form of comfort food in those circumstances.

No, but there are some of them who reckon that Very Good Guy came back to life. I don't see how that's possible. I mean, once eaten, none of my brothers or sisters come back! Anyway, that's what they say. And they start scoffing us by the thousands to celebrate. I guess it must mean a lot to them, a people thing.

Sometimes they play games with us. They hide us and the little ones have to find us. They get so excited! Of course, we can't run away, we get found and are gobbled up. They didn't find me, here, under a tree root, in their garden.

Oh dear, it's started to rain. Looks like another fun Easter for them. But not for me!"

Happy Easter.

Martin Perry



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Joyce Wensley
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Anonymous at the Village Shop

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Andrew Millard, Treasurer

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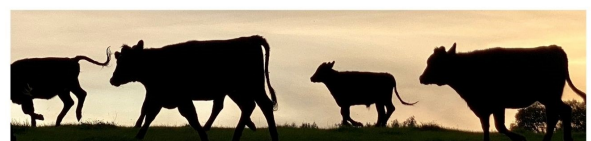


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Bathealton Village Hall, on outside wall
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Kittisford New House Farm, on wall,
opposite church *bonkers.regime.lyricist*

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

PCSO Brianna Whelan

Email: brianna.whelan@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Parish Councils

Ashbrittle - Chairman Charles Doble 01823 672365 / 672618
Email: charles@greenandcarter.com

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

Stawley - Chairman Paul Musgrove 01823 672627
Email: stawleyipc@stash.org.uk

Community Halls

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

Ashbrittle Village Hall
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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

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.

Editors: Maurice Stanbury 01823 672216 and Avril Silk 01823 672131

e-mail address: ashparishnews@gmail.com

Treasurer: Andrew Millard, Barton Barn, Kittisford, Wellington TA21 0RZ

Bank details: Account Name: The Parish News,

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

April

3rd and 17th	10.00 - 12.30 p.m.	Books, Biscuits, Coffee and Cakes at Stawley Mill
11th	10.00 - 12.00 noon	Coffee and Bring and Buy at the Old Rectory, Stawley
20th	10.00 - 12 noon	Coffee, Cake and Chat in Ashbrittle Village Hall
21st	3.00 p.m.	Hedgerow Ramble starting at Kittisford Church
25th	12 noon	Lunch Club in Ashbrittle Village Hall
28 th	9.00 - 11.30 a.m.	Big Breakfast at the Appley Pavilion.

May

11th	2.30 p.m.	Bathealton Plant Sale
------	-----------	-----------------------

June

1st	2.00 - 5.00 p.m.	Stawley Church Garden Party and Fete at Stawley Mill
8th		Ashbrittle Arts - Clock Workshop morning in the Village Hall
30th	2.00 - 5.00 p.m.	Open Garden and teas at Kittisford House
30th	6.00 p.m.	Ashbrittle Arts - Open air performance with Wassail Theatre

September

8th		Stawley Flower and Produce Show
-----	--	---------------------------------

October

6th	10.00 - 3.00 p.m.	Apple Day at the Pavilion
-----	-------------------	---------------------------

VILLAGE LUNCH CLUB
ASHBRITTLE VILLAGE HALL
Thursday, April 25th at noon

HERITAGE INTERPRETATION
A brief autobiographical ramble with Martin Jacoby

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for it gives pleasure to the speaker and, possibly, some insight to the listener.

BOOKING ESSENTIAL
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harlingdelia@gmail.com

Next Deadline Date: Friday 19th April 2024

Editors: Maurice and Avril