



Parish news

March 2026

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

Church Services

Sun 1st March

| | | |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Holy Communion Service | St. Michael's, Stawley |
| 10.00am | Holy Communion Service | Holy Cross, Sampford Arundel |
| 10.30am | Sung Eucharist Service | All Saints', Rockwell Green |
| 6.00pm | Shanty Singing for all | All Saints', Rockwell Green |

*Learn how to sing Sea Shanties with a friendly crowd***Tue 3rd Mar**

| | | |
|--------|---|--|
| | Monthly Day of Prayer | |
| 8.00am | Online, informal, and relaxing. All details at westtone.org.uk/prayer | |

Sun 8th March

| | | |
|---------|---|------------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Benefice All Age Communion with licensing of Revd Sarah Rowden as Curate to the West Tone Benefice | St. Bartholomew's, Bathealton |
| 10.30am | Sung Eucharist Service | All Saints', Rockwell Green |
| 6.00pm | The Pub Explorers | The Martlet Inn, Langford Budville |

*A relaxed conversation over a drink, bring any question and join in***Sun 15th March Mothering Sunday**

| | | |
|---------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Morning Service | St. Margaret's, Thorne St. Margaret |
| 10.30am | Sung Eucharist Service | All Saints', Rockwell Green |
| 11.15am | BCP Communion Service | St. John the Baptist, Ashbittle |
| 6.00pm | Prayer & Praise | St. Margaret's, Thorne St. Margaret |

*A modern worship service with contemporary music, talk and prayer***Sun 22nd March**

| | | |
|---------|---|------------------------------|
| 10.30am | Sung Eucharist Service | All Saints', Rockwell Green |
| 4.00pm | Family@4 | All Saints', Rockwell Green |
| | <i>A time for our youngest to play and learn from a helpful Bible story</i> | |
| 6.00pm | Taizé Reflective Service | St. Nicholas', Kittisford |
| 6.00pm | Evensong Service | Holy Cross, Sampford Arundel |

Sun 29th March Palm Sunday

| | | |
|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 10.00am | Benefice All Age Communion | St. Nicholas', Kittisford |
|---------|----------------------------|---------------------------|

For more information about all our services and events please visit our website westtone.org.uk
or contact Revd Andy at welcome@westtone.org.uk

Churchwardens and Clergy

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|
| Ashbittle | Charles Doble, The Old Rectory, Ashbittle, TA21 0LQ | 01823 672365 |
| | David Hanks, Manley House, Ashbittle, TA21 0LE | 01823 672436 |
| Bathealton | 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 |
| | Colin Haddrell, Tucks Farm, Stawley, TA21 0HS | 07974 804990 |

Priest-in-Charge

Reverend Andrew Barton, 2 White Oaks, Langford Budville, TA21 0RB

Contacts: Home/Office - Phone 01823 924007 or 07795 699737

Email revdbarton@gmail.com

| |
|--|
| Front cover - A breath of Spring at last - native daffodils at Chackeridge. Photo Nigel Paterson |
|--|

Thought for the Month

I hope you enjoyed some pancakes last month on Shrove Tuesday. I wonder what your topping of choice was. Our kids were always crazy for Nutella; however I admit to being a traditional lemon and sugar fan myself. Either way the tasty prelude to Lent has launched us all on a forty day journey towards Easter. Some of you may have chosen to lay down chocolate, coffee, wine, or some other much-loved pleasure. The idea being that Lent gives us a chance to weigh up that which we perhaps rely a little too much on, something which ultimately is not so healthy for us. You could however choose to see Lent though as a season to take things up, to do something, rather than to avoid something.

Rather than fasting, choosing to avoid a tempting pleasure, William Ward wrote a poem that invites us to feast. Here are a few lines to give you a flavour of what he's hinting at:

Fast from hostility; feast on non-resistance.
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal Truth.
Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.
Fast from facts that depress; feasts on truths that uplift.
Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.
Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from shadows of sorrow; feast on the sunlight of serenity.
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence.
Fast from problems that overwhelm; feast on prayer that supports.

*from Fasting and Feasting,
a poem by William Arthur Ward*

There is merit in reading the whole poem, I find it helpful to see Lent as a time to fast from certain things and to feast on others. Done right, Lent is joyful and life giving. If you would like to join your local church over the weeks ahead, and at Easter itself, then look at the range of delicacies that are on offer. You will see some in this month's Parish News, and the whole menu can be found online at westtone.org.uk

It has been encouraging to see many new faces recently at the events and services that have started following last autumn's Vision Day and

Community Lunch. There is now something for those who are young as well as the wiser in years, for those who are just exploring and for those who wish to worship in modern ways. A big thank you to everyone who has stepped forwards to help us widen our doors and welcome a more diverse range of local people in.

I hope your Lent is joyful and you have exciting plans for Easter. Ahead of then have a think about what you can lay down, or fast from, that will help you find joy. Just as importantly though why not make a choice to feast, to take something up, which not only adds value to your life but makes a difference in the lives of others in the community too?

Revd Andy Barton,

Spring Coffee Morning

and

Bring and Buy



Thursday 16th April

10.00 – 12 noon

The Old Rectory, Stawley
TA21 0HP

In aid of Stawley Church funds
(Cash only)

Birthday Girl!

To her complete surprise, Avril turns eighty in April. Pop along to Ashbrittle Village Hall on Saturday, April 4th between three o'clock and ten to help her celebrate.

Land Tax Records - a fascinating source of information

About three years ago I answered an advert from the Somerset Heritage Centre asking for volunteers to help with transcribing the Land Tax Records that they hold; the aim was to make them available on line. This is an enormous undertaking with hundreds of thousands of pages of script to be scanned, deciphered and transferred on to Excel. Having spent hours scrutinising online census documents, parish records and birth and death certificates during my own family history research, I realised that I love looking at old documents and that maybe I should give it a go.

Once signed up I was sent the scans of some Land Tax records for Wellington and an Excel template with which to work. Some help and advice was given at the start and the wonderful Kate Parr from South West Heritage is quick to answer email queries, I have also attended some training sessions at the Heritage Centre. The first few pages I discovered were very difficult to decipher, but found it very satisfying how after staring at the text for a few seconds the name would suddenly “swim into view”. I soon got better at it, but erred on the side of caution with a number of names typed in red so Kate could check my interpretations later.

Background on The Land Tax.

The Land tax originated in 1692 and was to fund the war against France, it was approximately four shillings in the pound or 20% and brought in 35% of the National Revenue! At the end of the eighteenth century the tax became based on a fixed amount that each county had to return, which was then divided up between the parishes within that county. Interestingly, the amount changed very little over the time from 1766 to 1832, although with inflation by the 1830s it was only bringing in 11% of the National Tax revenue. It was paid to the King and so is very different to the tithe payment. The Land Tax ceased in most areas in 1832 but the act was not actually repealed until 1963.

The Land Tax records are important because they tell us the names of both the owners and occupiers of the land as well as the name of the piece of land, so is invaluable for genealogists, or for researching patterns of land ownership. Those paying the land tax were entitled to vote so the Land Tax records acted as a voting register, therefore there was some advantage to paying the money. For more information try: <https://cdn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/the-land-tax-1692-1963.pdf>

The first set of records I transcribed were those for Wellington for the year 1828 which included twenty two scanned pages, of relatively clear handwriting. In 2023 (when I got the first

records) I had lived in Wellington for over thirty years, so it was fascinating to find that so many of the place names were familiar, as were a few of the family names that are still around today. Having moved recently to the Kittisford area, I then asked for these records, and got the years 1766 to 1832, a much bigger undertaking. There are a few years missing in the late eighteenth century, something which is the same throughout Somerset, although there is no record as to why. One theory is that a few years of records were stored together somewhere and then damaged in some way. The civil servant at the time probably kept very quiet about it and hoped no one would notice!

Kittisford starts off with some eighteen or so premises that were charged. The biggest landowner in the late 18th century seemed to be a Mr Thomas Langdon and a John Langdon (father and son), they were also Assessors and Collectors of the payments, which would have been paid positions and could be seen as an early form of farm diversification!

Some of the names of properties taxed would be familiar to us today, there is The Barton, Kittisford Farm and Newhouse, however Kittisford Mill is divided into two properties called Bences Mills and Bences Colses, although originally it was Bences Mills listed twice with two different people working the holdings and Colses was a separate property, possibly just land. Some of the names of owners or farmers are familiar; the Escotts and then the Sweet Escotts own and farm the Glebe lands throughout the time period and Richard Bindon owned a significant amount of land as well as Newhouse, before presumably the family moved Langford Budville way. The Kittisford Parish Records were well kept so it is possible to find out a lot of information about the people registered in the Land Tax records.

To conclude - South West Heritage is always looking for new volunteers, so if you think you might be interested in volunteering contact Kate.Parr@swheritage.org.uk

Kate Holloway

News from the Parish News

Donations this month received from:

Michael Tarr
Joyce Wensley
Val Coots
Margaret Lindup
Ann Henday

Anonymous donors at the Village Shop

Many thanks for your kind donations. Donations may be left at Stawley Shop or sent directly to the Treasurer. Details inside back cover.

Andrew Millard, Treasurer

— THE —
GLOBE INN
APPLEY

**Celebrate Mother's Day with a delicious
Sunday roast on 15th March from 12-2pm.**

Choose from a selection of succulent meats or a
veggie option, with all the trimmings.
Then spoil your Mum with one of our decadent desserts.

We'll treat your mum to a free glass of bubbly
to make her feel extra special.
(*with a main meal)*

MOTHER'S DAY CRAFTERNOON
Saturday 14th March 12.30-3.30pm

Treat your Mum to a relaxing afternoon of crafting. Spend some quality time together making
fragrant lavender sachets, embellished with buttons, ribbons, beads and embroidery.

£39 per person, including all materials (Booking is essential).

To book your place email: mycraftycountrylife@gmail.com

Tea, coffee, cakes and prosecco will be available to buy from the bar.

SUNDAY ROASTS ARE BACK!

Sunday 8th March
Sunday 15th March (Mother's Day)
Sunday 22nd March
Sunday 5th April (Easter Sunday)

Sit back, relax and let us take care of the cooking.
Tuck into our delicious home-reared roast beef or pork,
accompanied by all the trimmings.

£17 PER PERSON

Open

Wednesday to Saturday 12 noon - 11pm

Sunday 12 noon - 4pm

Food

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

📍 Appley, Stawley, Wellington, Somerset, TA21 0HJ

☎ 01823 673147

✉ stuardurston@hotmail.co.uk

📍 The Globe INN Appley

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Quaker Meeting for Worship

Spiceland Quaker Meeting Uffculme
EX15 3AZ

*We Meet for Worship at Spiceland
every Sunday at 10.30am till 11.30am
also available on Zoom -*

*Meeting ID:865 5570 2735 Passcode:
498173*

All are very welcome

"When I feel the hard edge of judgment in my body and hear it in my words and thoughts, I am learning that I need to stop and softly bring my attention to my heart. I like to hold the image of one hand on my heart and one hand on the heart of the other. From this place of compassion, I seek to understand both of us and empower both of us to be in our truths, whatever that may be. I give myself permission to be changed/influenced by the other. I also give myself and the other permission to decide to back away or disengage if that serves Truth. If I decide to disengage, I will do it with loving kindness and not harshness."

Rhonda Ashurst

Gardening Club

Mike and Freda Parkinson have, as agreed, stood down from leading the Club for eighteen months. During which time they have organised a rewarding series of garden visits and other activities. All members of the Club are extremely grateful to them and thank them most sincerely.

Traditionally, the gardening year has commenced with a 'Bring and Share' supper hosted by one of our loyal members. The occasion, as well as being enjoyable, is important as it enables all members to interact to develop the year's programme of events. This year, it will take on additional significance as the Club seeks a new leader; decides to take on a new form or ceases to exist altogether. This year's meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd March, 7.00pm at the Cruck Barn, Appley.

A reminder will be sent to existing club members, but if anyone else would like to join us, please contact Pauline Wood: email pjw200355@gmail.com for more details.

Please do come armed with ideas and hopefully offers to help implement these!

Val Wall 6



**Bathealton
Village Hall**

POP UP CAFÉ

A friendly warm space: time to catch up with old friends or meet new ones.

The next 'Pop - Up' will be on:

Monday 2nd March

We will serve food from 12 noon till 2.00 pm

Main course

Homemade: Chicken, lamb or
vegetarian curry with rice

Sweet

Homemade: Cheese and biscuits

Unlimited Cafetiere of Coffee or a selection
of teas - all for £9.00.

*You can reserve a place by calling Del on
07980 994082 or just pop in.*

D J Stradling Electrical

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Tel 07758 230434

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email davestradling5@gmail.com

Whiteoaks, Langford Budville,

Wellington TA21 0RB



Easter BINGO

Friday 13th March

Apply Pavilion

Doors open 6.30

Eyes down 8

**£10 for 10 games plus 2 flyers
and refreshments**

Raffle

**Amazing 1 line, 2 line
and full house prizes**

**Raising money for
Ashbrittle, Stawley and
Clayhanger cricket club**

Wicker and Sallow - the wonder of Willow



Walking up the hill behind our house with the dogs, in the low angled late afternoon sunshine, I was struck by the beauty of two large willows, *Salix alba* var. *vitellina*, in the landscape below with their gorgeous orange-gold twigs glowing against stormy, charcoal-coloured clouds. These are quite large, mature trees yet the stem colour is still vivid and when pollarded they respond by producing vigorous, lush new stems of amazing intensity. There are many species and varieties of willow, also known as Osiers and Sallows, that produce this fresh growth in a range of colours and hues. It is not only valued for its ornamental qualities but traditionally grown and harvested for basketry, furniture making and garden structures.

'Pollarding' is an old form of pruning in which the height of the tree is reduced by 'lopping' branches to create a structure from which new growth sprouts. This creates the forms of willow trees we see on the Somerset levels and in the Norfolk Broads. When grown with the production of young stems for basket making, the plants are 'coppiced' (pruned down to a lower base or 'stool') though traditionally on a 'leg' so the new growth is produced from about waist-height, keeping it out of undergrowth or above flood-water and making harvesting easier.

As a timber crop, willow is most famous in the production of cricket bats. *Salix alba caerulea* is the variety grown for this purpose with its long straight grain and strong but lightweight timber. It is also used in furniture making, carving and wood turning, specialist musical instrument applications, pallets and packaging and charcoal and biomass production. It is not much use as logs for burning as it's hard to season and when fully dried burns quickly without much heat.

A precursor of Aspirin, Salicylic acid, was originally identified and derived from Willow and named after its Latin family name, *Salix*. It is used as a food preservative, an antiseptic and bactericide and is used in skincare products. Both in classical Greek medicine and many native cultures worldwide, preparations of willow bark and

leaves were often used as an analgesic. Nicholas Culpepper, mentioning Willow in his famous herbal of 1798, said of it that it 'truly belongs to the Moon' reflecting its relationship with water and also its importance in antiquity within pre-Christian cultures.

In a garden setting, there are many varieties that are grown for their vivid coloured stems, fluffy ornamental 'Catkins' and unusual shapes and forms. Many are extremely tolerant of wet, poor soils. The most useful and well known include the following:

- ***Salix gracilistyla*** 'Mount Aso': named after the largest active volcano in Japan, this shrubby variety grows eventually to about nine feet high. With stunningly beautiful fluffy pink catkins in late winter followed by graceful, silvery green leaves, it has rightly become a very popular choice for floral arrangements and for the winter garden, growing beside water or a Japanese style garden.

- ***Salix matsudana*** 'Tortuosa': the 'corkscrew' or 'contorted' willow. This well-known tree, whilst initially slow in growth, becomes a vigorous and impressive looking specimen and can become quite large. But with regular pruning, a more compact shape and size can be maintained and better still, the twisted, curly nature of young growth will be encouraged.

- ***Salix daphnoides*** 'Aglaia': although it can grow into a small to medium sized tree, this willow is mainly grown for its gorgeous purple stems in winter and silver catkins in spring which are excellent for early flying insects and pollinators. It requires regular pruning to keep the superb hues of the new stems fresh and vivid.

- ***Salix alba*** 'Britzensis': the 'Coral bark' willow can grow into a medium to large tree but when pollarded or coppiced, coral-red stems of great beauty and vigour are produced, putting on up to six feet of growth in one year. This is a willow which can be grown to great ornamental effect beside water and in boggy soils, and a valuable variety for weaving and basketry.

- ***Salix repens***: Creeping Willow, a low growing shrubby willow suitable for the rock garden with silvery-green, felted leaves and fluffy silver-yellow catkins in spring. With pruning, this plant can be made into an elegant dome no more than two to three feet high. Sometimes this species is grafted on to a 'Standard' stem to form a small, weeping tree.

John and Julie Ridgley

Mobile Library
at Greenham Bridge
Next visit: 21st April
9.50 - 10.10 a.m.



Bring your outdoor space back to life with a reliable gardener offering quality work and attention to detail. I provide complete garden care – from essential maintenance to full garden improvements.

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Maintain

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- Weed control
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Improve

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Whether you need a one-off tidy or ongoing care, I'll help you make the most of your garden – practical, neat, and thriving all year round.

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Wivey Cares – 2026

Thanks to the generous financial support from our community we were able to start the **Hub & Grub**, a social club for adults. Since October 2025, we have run eighteen sessions with an average of fifteen guests/session. We had a proper Christmas dinner, a Fish & Chips Wednesday and also celebrated Pancake Day. There's chatting, scrabble playing, knitting, bingo, quizzes, speakers etc. We even drove a beetle – something I had not come across before! Come along and join in!

Please note: The Hub & Grub is on the move - from 3rd April onwards we are moving to a Friday, at the Community Centre, to allow for the summer pop-up tearoom to return to the Rugby Club.

We also started the **Wivey Amblers Health Walks** for people who are returning to walking after illness, or want to build up fitness slowly. Surprisingly, so far we did not have to cancel one session and walked every Wednesday, in all weathers. First we do a short walk of about ½ mile before adding a second walk which gets us to just over one mile. We are planning on extending this to 1.5m over time, but there will always be a short walk first, so everyone can take part. And before I forget, we eat cake afterwards and are a very cheerful bunch! Please get in touch if you are interested in joining.

Our **Memory Activity Group** for people with memory loss is coming up to its fourth birthday and takes place every Tuesday morning at the Community Centre. In 2025 we ran forty-nine sessions, with an average attendance of twenty guests. Facilitators from Reminiscence Learning make sure that all guests have a good time, and - do I need to point it out – there is cake...

We raised sufficient funds to run these groups till October 2026 and are already applying to funders for the time beyond.

And this neatly leads me on to telling you about our big Summer Fundraiser:

The Wivey Cares Open Gardens & Arts Weekend on 6th and 7th June

Please save the date! We already have several private gardens confirmed as well as communal spaces. If you would like to join in as a garden host, please get in touch. Alongside the open gardens we are holding an Arts & Crafts Fair in Milverton, so watch this space. Updates will be provided over the coming months.

Valeria Coots, Wivey Cares Trustee,
valeria@wiveycares.net

Join Your Parish Council Make a Difference in Our Community!

Do you care about where you live? Do you want to help shape the future of our parish? We're looking for enthusiastic, community-minded people to join **Bathealton Parish Council**.

This is your chance to:

- Represent local residents and give them a voice!
- Influence decisions on local services, facilities, and planning!
- Work on projects that make our parish a better place to live!

No previous council experience is needed – just a willingness to listen, learn, and get involved, support will be provided.

For more information contact Adele Broad or email broad229@btinternet.com

Village Oil Group

The next oil delivery is due on
8th April 2026

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

Community Radio for the 10Parishes and Beyond



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Contact The Presenter Live :

**Email : studio@10radio.org Text : 07786202240
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Wivey Cares

Open Gardens & Art Weekend

June

Sat.

6

&

Sun.

7

2026

Calling garden owners & artists of all kinds - save the date!

We're hosting a weekend-long open garden and art event, and we'd love you to be involved. Whether you have a garden you're proud to share or creative work to showcase, this event celebrates local green spaces and community spirit. All art forms are welcome - from painting, sculpture, and photography to writing, illustration, cartoons and musicians.

To register interest, contact Valeria on: valeria@wiveycares.net 07733 183825



Wivey Health Walks

Wivey Amblers



wiveycares.net/hub-grub

Charity # 1183575



HUB & GRUB

Enjoy good home cooked food, meet new and old friends in a warm and welcoming space.

Details:



Every Friday from 3rd April!



10:30 A.M. until 2 P.M.



Wiveliscombe Community Centre

Menu:

FREE SNACKS

Free teas, coffees, biscuits and snacks.



Two course lunch for £7

NEW VENUE



Time for socialising & activities

Contact to Book!



co-ordinator@wiveycares.net



07508 331661

Lunch Club

Our January speakers were Judy Webb and Laurianne Cooper of the Wellington Twinning Association. We learnt this is a long standing organisation and for many years we have been particularly associated with Immenstadt in Germany in the Bavarian mountains. As Judy and Gerry Webb have long standing associations with this area, they were particularly welcomed by the Association when they arrived in this area some years ago. Many connections and visits have taken place since that time and our speakers spoke with great enthusiasm about the benefits of this particular twinning and in general between any twinning arrangement.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 26th March at 12.00 noon. Our 'entertainment' will be a little different from usual. We will have a 'human juke box' in the form of Paul Jacques, who will play any tune in his repertoire especially for you at your request. Lists of songs to choose from will be available for each table. (about 200 to choose from). Could be fun!

If you would like to come, please let me know by the evening of Monday 23rd March. My contact details are - telephone 01823 672203 or email harlingdelia@gmail.com

Delia Harling



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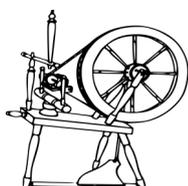
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Spinning and Woolcraft Group

A twice-monthly get-together at a member's house for textile crafting, chat and a cuppa

Perhaps you would like to learn to spin with us?
Or bring along your knitting, crochet or other needlework project

All welcome

If you would like to join us, please contact me and I will add you to the mailing list.

Next Sessions

Tuesdays: 3rd and 17th March
7th and 21st April
at 2.30pm

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

STAWLEY MILL

JOIN US FOR



BOOKS & BISCUITS

COFFEE & CAKE

1ST & 3RD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

4TH & 18TH MARCH

10AM—12.30PM

IN AID OF CHURCH RESTORATION FUND



FILM NIGHT

WATERROW VILLAGE HALL, TA4 2AX

Friday March 20th 6.30pm start

The upcoming film at the ever popular film night will be **MISS POTTER**, a delightful biographical drama with an all star cast. The film is based on the life of Beatrix Potter focusing on her struggles for love, happiness and success in early 20th Century England. The film combines live action with animated sequences, this feel good film is guaranteed to warm the heart.



A delicious selection of soups and rolls will be served along with the ever popular **dessert selections**. Please bring your own drinks.

There will be a raffle taking place with top prizes to be won!

Ticket Information: Tickets can be purchased from:
Liz Kilbride at St Andrews café on Thursday Mornings.
Alternatively you can call - Sarah on 01398 361202,
or Liz on 01984 623431.

Priced at only **£10 for adults - £5 for children** under 12

We look forward to seeing you there!!!

Bathealton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting Tuesday 13th January

Chair Philip Broad (PB)

Note taker/Treasurer Adele Broad (AB)

Welcome/introductions/apologies

Attendees: Adele Broad (AB), Philip Broad (PB), David Mansell (DM), Jess Bunn (JB),

Apologies: Steven Cottrell, Sarah Eustice.

Resignation of John Ridgley received on the 14.11.25

Declarations of interest

No conflict of interests was raised by anyone present.

Minutes of last meeting held 30th September

A copy of the Minutes were circulated to members prior to the meeting for approval/comments. They were ratified as a true representation of the discussion.

Update from Somerset County Council representative DM

The Somerset Council finances still remain in a poor state and the council has approached the government for exceptional circumstances to enable further sale of assets, and to increasing council tax above the rate of inflation

Car parking fees that were to set to start with Sunday charging have not yet occurred.

Car parking charges to free car parks in the outlying villages have also been put on hold until a consultation period occurs.

The Slinky Bus is now picking up specific residents on an individual needs basis as outside the boundary. (JB) highlighted that the Slinky Bus is missed by the residents in the wider villages who cannot afford the Wivey link service.

Planning applications

Planning application for Blackberry Barn 03/25/0005 was discussed; a site visit was carried out on the 28.11.25. This was to review the planning application and was attended by PB, JB and SC. Apologies received from AB, and an invitation was extended to retiring member of the parish council JR. This was to consider the response of Bathealton Parish Council and the implications of the proposed build on the village.

Financial matters

The 2025/26 precept was set at the previous Meeting and the precept 2026/27 form was submitted to Somerset Council.

Balance in account **£2402.40**

Projected spending 2026/27

Review of the Parish Council's budget and/or financial plans for 2026/27 and successive years, include the following:

IED located at the village hall: once invoice produced.

Graveyard upkeep maintenance.

Consider requests for footpath waymarker signage as JR has resigned.

Consider Replacement/Repairing fingerpost sign: Hellings Cross and Springrove Cross.

Support for annual charitable contributions to be discussed at a later meeting.

Village hall hire SC to issue an invoice.

Out going Parish Council person

With the resignation of JR there is no longer a forum of five. JB suggested putting an advert in the Parish News

Roads/pathways

Still encouraged to report potholes via the Somerset Council website

AOB

Speed of large vehicles in the village is still a concern. Near misses and damage needs to be reported on the council website. This will highlight the issue to Somerset Council and the Highways Agency

The response was muted about having 'Welcome to the Village' signs made with 'Please drive slowly' as these don't have to be authorised by Somerset Council – however the parish council would need to purchase three signs or see if any one local could make them.

Next meeting Tuesday 24th March 2026 19.30
Bathealton Village Hall: this will be the AGM.

Adele Broad

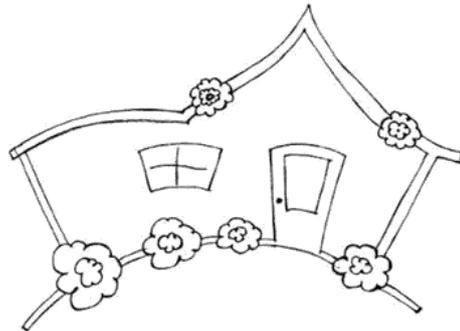
Rainfall Statistics (inches) January 2026

| 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2.52 | 6.85 | 4.41 | 5.94 | 7.40 |

You won't be too surprised to read the first month of the year has been the second wettest January since 2010. Only January 2014 produced more rain - 8.05 inches.

Val Coots

Stawley Community Shop & Tea Room



Opening hours

Week day opening 8.00am to 5.00pm except

Wednesday 8.00am to 1.00pm

Saturday 8.00am to 12.00pm

Sunday 9.00am to 11.00am

The Tea Room will close 30 minutes before shop closure

The Post Office is here every Thursday 11.30am to 1.30pm

Contact us on 01823 674361 or shop@stawleyshop.com

Quality and Value for Money

We often have our regular customers bring their friends and family to see the shop and the usual comment is something along the lines of- "what a wonderful shop, you have such a good range." Yes, we do - anything from organic bananas, garlic, fresh ginger to digestive biscuits, cheese or Fanta!

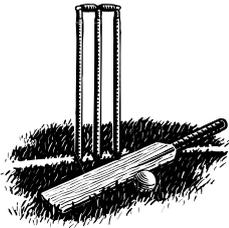
The shop has many items that are price marked so the prices will be the same as many other corner stores or the big supermarkets. This applies mainly to biscuits, sweets and chocolates and some drinks, but other groceries too. Our free-range eggs are very reasonable at £1.70 for half a dozen; at Asda they are £1.80 for their "run of the mill" range.

Our coffee (we use Miles coffee beans and make a very nice Americano with frothy milk) and a tray bake will set you back just over £5.00, whereas Costa coffee and cake deal is around £7.00.

We have some wonderful items that can make great gifts - as an example we have a wide selection of wine or local honey, as well as a good range of cards for all occasions.

If you are not one of our regular customers please do come and visit us and see what we have to offer. If you are one of our regular customers, thank you for shopping with us.

Look forward to seeing you soon at



Ashbrittle, Stawley and Clayhanger Cricket Club

Winter Nets

We are already preparing and looking forward to next season with nets being held in the Sports Hall, Court Fields School, Wellington TA21 8SW.

Sessions are from 8.00 to 9.00 pm.

Next dates are: 26th March,
2nd and 9th April.

**All abilities welcome, do come along
and give it a go!**

Callum Hamer

Bathealton Plant Sale

We will be holding our annual Plant Sale at Hellings Farm on 16th May 2026 by kind permission of Michael and Richard Berthon, in memory of their parents Graham and Morag.

Proceeds to St Bartholomew's Church Bathealton.

Sarah Eustice

News From Stawley School

To say it has been a hectic term would be something of an understatement - we have moved into our new school building!

The past few months have been a blur of sorting, packing, boxing and moving; if it could be packed, we packed it. It truly marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter for Stawley School. I must admit, it feels a little sad to be leaving the classroom I have spent the last twenty-three years teaching in. There are so many memories within those walls, and so many children who have passed through the doors.

As we look ahead, however, we are excited for the opportunities, challenges and many new memories that the future will bring.

I would also like to thank everyone for your patience and support during the building works over the past year. Once everything is complete, we look forward to holding an official opening and inviting the community to come and look around.

One of the last tasks I set the pupils was to write a letter to a future pupil. Here is a letter from Lucas in Year 6.

David Stirzaker

Dear future pupils,

My name is Lucas. The old school has been demolished, and my school has moved into the new building that you now know as your school. By the time you read this letter, my primary school adventure will have ended and a secondary story will have begun for me. Your primary adventure, though, will only just be starting.

I have lots of memories of the old school. I remember how, sometimes, the teachers listened more than you might expect; how school could make you feel happy, sad, excited and nervous all at once; and how limitless the adventure felt.

I will miss the memories of being included, the feeling of making a first friend, and the warmth and kindness that filled the school. I've had good times and sad times - all of them worth remembering.

It's a strange feeling, knowing that one story full of memories is closing and a new one is about to begin. The old school saw so much: people crying, people laughing, and people growing. Now that we are in a new school, it will see all those wonderful things too.

I'm excited knowing there is a story waiting to be told and an adventure ready to begin. I really hope all of you have the best time here. Please be as kind as you can, and always try to see the best in people. This school will be awesome.

I wish you lots of luck and hope you make great memories here, just like I did.

Yours sincerely,

Lucas

Ashbrittle Art and Craft Group

We hold a monthly get-together as a self-directed group to do whatever 'arty' or 'crafty' project takes your fancy

Painting and Drawing - Mosaics - Textiles Crafts - etc.

Come and meet some local art and craft enthusiasts, see what's going on and tell us about your favourite craft. We meet at a member's house. Arrangements will be confirmed in advance, via a monthly reminder email

Next meetings:

**12th March and 9th April
2.00 - 4.0 pm**

If you are interested in joining us, contact me by email below to be added to the mailing list:

Pauline pjw200355@gmail.com

Snowdrops



Snowdrops snuggling in the grass,
Wisely nodding with the wind,
Bright white pennants, bold as brass
Medals in the garden, pinned.

Beneath the trees their empires spread,
Emissaries of kind nature,
To fill the February days ahead
With visions worth the wait for.

Winter's coming to its end,
Bleak weather chill abating.
Frozen earth is on the mend
And buds foretell a fresh Spring.

Life is waking in the earth.
Pale sunlight warms the soil.
Buried bulbs are giving birth
Tender shoots of green uncoil.
White heads of petals tightly curled
Brave harsh and damp humidity
Emerging to the waiting world
Dainty, dancing fearlessly.

January has filled our land
With floods both cold and deep.
We all need a helping hand
To cheer us after season's sleep.
Snowdrops show us hope once more
For warmth and sunlit pleasures
Quietly, without a roar,
Announcing destined treasures.

Snowdrops with their winning ways,
Their gentle whiteness gazing,
Are harbingers of better days.
I think they are amazing!

Angela Medlycott

A decorative poster with a black background and white text and graphics. The poster is framed by a white geometric border. In the center, it reads: "VILLAGE LUNCH CLUB", "ASHBRITTLE VILLAGE HALL", "Thursday 26th March at 12.00 noon.", "PAUL JACQUES", "THE HUMAN JUKEBOX!". Below this, it says: "From his repertoire of nearly 200 songs, Paul will play requests specially for you!". At the bottom, it provides booking information: "BOOKING ESSENTIAL", "Delia Harling 01823 672203", "harlingdelia@gmail.com". There are four illustrations of vintage jukeboxes, one in each corner of the central text area.

Full Fibre Broadband Update

I understand local weather measuring stations across our network area have recorded rain for the last forty consecutive days. To be honest it feels like so much longer than that!

Despite the unrelenting rain, as described here last month we have been able to complete further connections in Appley, Kittisford and Bathealton, after which we carried out some essential maintenance on various equipment (fortunately in the almost dry workshop), before moving on to Clayhanger / Petton where despite the weather we completed installation of nearly 2km of duct, without excessive disturbance to some very wet ground.

Every day has been a challenge, simply picking the appropriate task with the appropriate plant for the conditions that day, but progress is progress. In addition, we have also had the Directional Drilling team back this week, completing a number of complex shots in multiple locations. This sets us up to connect further properties in the coming months, most notably around Kittisford Barton, and we will be planning the works to link these installed ducts to our live network in due course.

We still have some challenges around Appley with access that we continue to work on / around, and hopefully we will soon have our Cabinet live at the school site and the new school connected to Ultrafast Broadband.

Further expansion of the network

BDUK have provided a fairly positive response regarding expanding further towards Greenham, but with some conditions regarding demand. We are particularly keen to have **registered interest from residents in TA21 0JJ**. If you are reading this please do get in touch?

Fingers crossed for consecutive dry days to come!

Jim Weir, Technological



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10.00 - 12.00 noon

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Keeping our parishes tidy

Every piece of rubbish, dropped by a walker, thrown from a car window or that which has escaped from the recycling lorry ends up somewhere; in a hedge, field, a drain, or the stomach of an animal. A visitor to our area recently noticed a lot of litter on the side of the road between Greenham and Appley Cross so I jumped on my bike with an old feed sack in a pannier to have a look at the problem. I half filled the sack with cans, plastic bottles and coffee cups.

Roadside litter pollutes, harms wildlife, and shows that we don't care for our environment. It also sends a message that convenience matters more than care. Walkers and drivers have the power to change this simply by keeping rubbish, whether on their person or in their car, van or tractor until it can be disposed of properly. A clean road reflects respect for the environment, other people and ourselves.

We can all help to keep our parishes tidy, whether it is by not dropping litter in the first place or picking it up while on a walk.

Paul Musgrove



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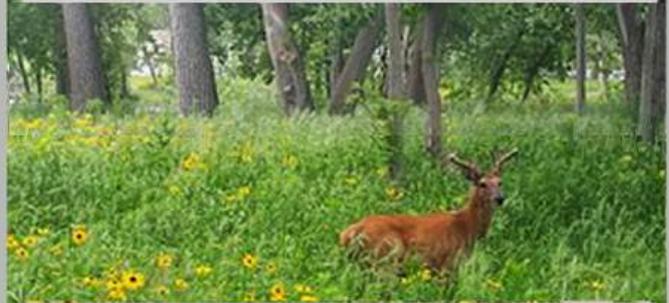
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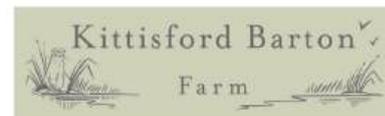
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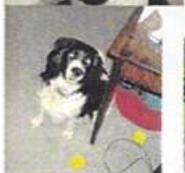


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Defibrillators in our Community

Would you know what to do if someone in your household had a Heart Attack/Cardiac Arrest?

Sudden cardiac arrest is a leading cause of premature death. In cardiac arrest the heart's steady rhythm is often replaced by disorganised electrical activity called ventricular fibrillation (VF). The sooner VF is treated by an electrical shock (defibrillation), the greater the chance of the person's life being saved. Immediate action by members of the public can save many lives.

DIAL 999 FIRST

But, there are four defibrillators within our community which are easy to use with verbal and visual instructions and available to anyone. They are permanently located at these places and can be found using the // What3words codes below.

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

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

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

Stawley Village Shop, on the outside wall
messaging.servers.quaking

Each one can be removed and taken to where it is needed. **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

Police Beat Team PCSO Brianna Whelan
Tel: 07761 405460 or email:
brianna.whelan@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Parish Councils

Ashbrittle - Chairman Charles Doble 01823 672365 or 672618
email: *charles@greenandcarter.com*

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

Stawley - Chairman Paul Musgrove 01823 672627
email: *stawleypc@stash.org.uk*

Somerset Councillors

Cllr Dave Mansell – 01984 623823 or email:
dave.mansell@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr Gwil Wren – 01823 400657 or email:
gwil.wren@somerset.gov.uk

Community Halls

Appley Pavilion and Recreation Field

– to book, call 01823 672266 or email:-
Lucy Williams *info@appleypavilion.co.uk* or book
online at <https://appleypavilion.co.uk>

Ashbrittle Village Hall

– to book, ring Pat Gainey on 01823 672760
or 07713 276656

Bathealton Village Hall

– to book, ring Tilly Willis on 07961 970743

Local Groups

Stawley under Fives at the Appley Pavilion.

Becky Alder Pre-schools Manager - Swallows,
Sampford Arundel 01823 672342 Mon/Tuesday.
Stawley Under Fives 07707 416871 Weds/Thurs/Fri

Parish News information

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. Please send items for publication by email *ashparishnews@gmail.com* preferably as attachments in Microsoft 'Word' format.

Advertising Our rates are £2.00 per month for a small box, £4.00 for a quarter page, £8.00 for a half page and £16.00 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, Sort Code: 30-98-45. Acc. no. 01828373

Distribution: Pat Sweet 01823 672380

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March

| | | |
|--------------|--------------------|---|
| 2nd | 12 noon - 2.00 pm | Pop-Up Café in Bathealton Village Hall |
| 4th and 18th | 10.00 - 12.30 pm | Books, Biscuits, Coffee and Cakes at Stawley Mill |
| 13th | Doors open 6.30 pm | Easter Bingo in the Pavilion |
| 21st | 10.00 - 12 noon | Coffee, Cake and Chat in Ashbrittle Village Hall |
| 26th | 12 noon | Lunch Club in Ashbrittle Village Hall |
| 28th | 7.30 pm | Film night in Waterrow Village Hall |

April

| | | |
|------|--------------------|---|
| 16th | 10.00 - 12.00 noon | Spring Coffee morning at the Old Rectory, Stawley |
| 19th | | St George's Day Breakfast in Appley Pavilion |

May

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 14th | | Appley Pavilion - Annual General Meeting |
| 16th | | Bathealton Plant Sale at Hellings Farm |

June

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| 6th | | Stawley Church Garden Party and Fete |
| 6th and 7th | | Open Gardens and Arts weekend for Wivey Cares |

Artists always 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.



Ashbrittle Lunch Club members enjoy another excellent lunch, as well as catching up on the latest news.
Photo Maurice Stanbury

Next Deadline Date: Friday 20th March 2026

Editors: Maurice and Avril