

The  
**P**arishioner  
YARPOLE LUCTON CROFT BIRCHER BICTON

May 2026

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Thanks to David Cheshire for his photos of Lucton village on this page and the front cover.



## FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Welcome to the May issue of the newsletter. Spring has arrived exceptionally early this year and it seems a good moment to highlight some of the places we don't often feature. The front cover and the photographs on the opposite page were all taken in Lucton village on a recent sunny day in Lucton. Those on the inside back cover were all taken in and around Bircher.

We know that the newsletter rarely includes news or contributions from Lucton, and we'd like to change that. If you live in Lucton, or have memories or photographs from the village, we would be very glad to include them. Short articles, updates, or pictures — current or historical — would all be welcome. The deadline for submitting articles is always the 12th of the previous month, so if you have an item for the June edition, send it to [newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org) by 12 May, or leave a copy in the community shop at Yarpole.

The Lucton delivery round is a large one, covering around 70 households. I'm pleased to report that Morwenna Lloyd and Paul O'Reilly have kindly agreed to share it, each taking alternate months from now on.

Finally I'd like to thank all our regular contributors. Your articles and photographs add a great deal to every issue.

Lynne

To send in articles and news items, please e-mail us at:

[newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org)

Or leave in the box at the shop

The deadline for all submissions is

**THE 12th OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH**

### ADVERTISEMENTS

To place a commercial advert in *The Parishioner*, please email [newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org) and we'll send you more information

Prices start at £5 for a 1/8 page ad

We also print small ads for parishioners for which we suggest that a small donation is left in the yellow collection box in the shop.

## Audio version of *The Parishioner*

*The Parishioner* is also available by email in audio files for parish residents with sight problems. If you'd like to receive it in this format, or know someone who would, please let us know at [newsletter@yarpole.org](mailto:newsletter@yarpole.org).



WhatsApp

### Stay in touch: Yarpole WhatsApp Group

Share local information & news, relevant to our community, via the Yarpole WhatsApp group. We now have 175 members! To join send a message with your mobile number to: Katie Daniels **07786 515922**



WhatsApp



### Calling Facebook Users

To get Yarpole news on Facebook, search for 'Yarpole Community'. See what's on! See what matters in Yarpole! Contribute to the page. Like us and become a friend.



### Yarpole Welcome Packs

If you are aware of new residents who have moved to the parish, or if you have recently moved yourself and haven't received one, please get in touch with Sue Langley:

[susanmarylangley@gmail.com](mailto:susanmarylangley@gmail.com)

### Don't miss out on what's happening!

To be added to the events mailing list, email [events@yarpole.org](mailto:events@yarpole.org)

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## WHAT'S ON

## WHAT'S ON

### Police Community Support Officer meetings



Our local (Leominster) PCSO Steph Harper aims to visit the Gallery Café every 5 weeks on a Friday at 11.00. Her next visit, all being well, will be on **22 May**. Join her in the café for coffee and chat.

Pete Lloyd

### COMMUNAL CRAFTERS

**Next meeting: Monday 11 May – 1.30 - 3.30pm**  
**Needle felting**

At Yarpole Parish Hall, Green Lane, HR6 0BL  
Cost: £3 towards the hire of the hall

We are a friendly group of crafters of all abilities who meet once a month to craft together and learn new skills

NEW MEMBERS VERY WELCOME!  
Please contact Sue Beagley on 07816 060746  
or email [suebeagley@aol.com](mailto:suebeagley@aol.com) for info.

Come and  
**Be Still**

Some music, a reading, a prayer and time for your own quiet reflection.  
Monthly, on the first Wednesday, 5.30 - 6 pm.  
St. Leonard's Church, Yarpole.  
All are welcome



First Saturday of the month 10.00 - 12.00 (last repairs)

**Next session: 2 May at Leominster Sports and Social Club, South Street, HR6 8JQ**  
**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE**

Online bookings open two weeks before: <https://leominsterepaircafe.org.uk>  
Mechanical, household, electrical, toys, furniture, sewing repairs & tool sharpening

For more information email: [repaircafeleominster@googlegroups.com](mailto:repaircafeleominster@googlegroups.com)

Or find us on Facebook.

## WHAT'S ON

## WHAT'S ON



### ★ New Term - New MD Birchpoles

Love To Sing Choir ★

Do you love to sing?

Come and be part of  
something amazing!

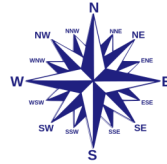
Every Wednesday Term Time  
7:15-9:15pm (Adult Choir)

Refreshments included

St Leonard's Church, YARPOLE

£5/ session Contact details

07915886265 or fb page



### Walking Group

We meet regularly on the 2nd Friday  
and 4th Sunday of every month,  
normally at 10.30 by the church.

**May walks: Friday 8 and Sunday 24**

All are welcome to join our walks but  
please phone to check details, if you  
are not on the email list.

Contact: **Viv 01568 782271** or  
[seiftonbatch@gmail.com](mailto:seiftonbatch@gmail.com)



### Orleton and District Gardening Club

Start preparing NOW for the

## 45th ANNUAL SHOW

on Saturday 15th August at  
Orleton Village Hall

**OPEN CLASSES - Anyone can enter**

Including: **HEAVIEST MARROW COMPETITION - START SOWING NOW!**

Who can ferment the best cider? Challenge your friends and neighbours.

**OTHER OPEN CLASSES**

Alcohol-based Cordial; Heaviest Potato; Longest Runner Bean; Most Amusing shaped Vegetable or Fruit  
JUST 10p PER ENTRY

Save the Date - Saturday 15th August - staging 10 - 11.30 am, viewing 1.30 - 3.30pm

For more details and show rules see **SHOW SCHEDULE** at

[www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk](http://www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk)



## WHAT'S ON

## WHAT'S ON



### **Vikings at the Priory: 30 & 31 May, Leominster Priory**

A weekend of action-packed, family-friendly activities in and around Leominster Priory, celebrating Anglo-Saxons and Vikings in Herefordshire.

- 3pm Sat and 3pm Sunday: Battle on the Grange! Viking re-enactors clash with Saxons defending the town
- Living village: demonstrations of Viking/Saxon life, arts and crafts

Free exhibition inside the Priory 10am - 4pm

- The Raven, a full size Viking ship
- Get a close look at the (replica) Herefordshire Hoard of treasure discovered in 2015
- First viewing of 'Hereford Gospels Today' on loan from Hereford Cathedral
- Plus many other presentations and displays from professional artists, local schools and community groups on the themes of treasure and 'Revealing our Roots'

'Vikings at the Priory' runs from 27 May to 22 June with many free activities and paid events around Leominster. For the full programme listing, visit [www.prioryarts.org.uk](http://www.prioryarts.org.uk).

### **Arts Society Lectures**

Lively and interesting illustrated lectures on arts-related topics at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, 2.15pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. Lectures from nationally recognised experts take about one hour.



**Next meeting: Wed 20 May 2026**

**Trannies, Taste and Teddy Bears: Uncovering the World of Grayson Perry  
Jackie Klein**

Visitors are welcome, paying £8.00 on the door. Membership, which buys you eight lectures and reduced fees for outings and study days, costs £45.

More information: <https://www.theartsocietytemevalley.org.uk>

For help with transport contact:

Membership Secretary Jeff Walker on **01694 781489**

### **Flower Festival, St. George's Church, Orleton**

Saturday 6 & Sunday 7 June

11am - 5pm

Imaginative flower displays celebrating 100 years of TV

**Refreshments available, including light lunch**

**Knighton Pilgrimage of Song 2026**

The Knighton Pilgrim singers have been meeting annually for over 20 years to sing, walk and worship in the Welsh borders. This year the liturgy and music will be on the theme 'At the Still Point of the Turning World', devised by Reverend Annie Ballard, music directed, and in some cases composed, by Geoff Weaver.

We welcome congregation to any of our services, to enjoy good music, inspiring thoughts and a peaceful interlude in the day.

This year our services are as follows:

**Friday 29 May** St. Michael and All Angels, Croft (Croft Castle Estate) at 12.30pm  
St. Leonard's Church, Yarpole at 5pm

**Saturday 30 May** Llandrindod Old Parish Church, Llandrindod Wells at 12.30pm  
Holy Trinity Church, Llandrindod Wells at 5.30pm

**Sunday 31 May** Choral Holy Communion at St. Edwards Church, Knighton at 11.00am

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Or email: [abacusbites@yahoo.com](mailto:abacusbites@yahoo.com)

## Thank you Yarpole

Words do not go far enough.

Jim's untimely death in early March left me and the girls in a parallel universe. Your messages, hugs, cards, visits, food, earlier, equipment loans, and total sensitivity at a time when we were so disorientated made such a difference, and still does, to us as a shocked family.

Yarpole is full of lovely people who always rally round whenever needed. This has been our experience, ongoing and comforting, for which we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Love to all of you, with our sincere thanks. Just as Jim would have wished.

Val, Helen and Jo



## Trees in conservation areas

As I sat down to write this piece, I heard the first swallows flying over our house. Spring is definitely here. Trees and bushes everywhere are turning green again and the blossom season is in full swing. As tree warden I am, like many of you, well aware of the importance of trees in many spheres: habitat, resource, amenity and it is the latter that comes to mind as part of my role. If you live in a conservation area, and quite a few of us do in Yarpole, then our trees are formally protected by the conservation area rules. Conservation areas are often established as a protection of the built (visual) heritage in a community, and this includes the trees within them.

However, trees do grow and what starts its life as a small plant in the corner of a garden can over time come to dominate or even threaten and this is where the planning department needs to be informed via a planning application using a **section 211 notice**. The planning department defines a tree as having a trunk diameter greater than 75mm at a height 1.5m above ground. In general following a period of 6 weeks after the notice the permission sought to manage the tree will be granted. In exceptional cases where the tree has great value a tree protection order (TPO) can be granted to afford the tree protection from interference.

There are exceptions: dead branches may be removed, and dangerous trees can be dealt with, as long as the council receives five days' written notice. Fortunately for Herefordshire, normal orchard management practice is exempt as well.

So for the benefit of our great-grandchildren please plant trees, but with a mind to the paperwork they might encounter.

For more info, see: <https://www.htreeforum.co.uk/trees-and-conservation-areas>.

Tim Ware

# EVENTS DIARY FOR MAY

## Events this month

Date	Venue	Event	Time
Mon 4	The Bell	Car Boot Sale, Pizzas, Quiz	See page 32
Wed 6	St. Leonard's	Be Still	5.30 - 6.00pm
Tues 5	Parish Hall	Parish Council meeting	7.00 - 9.00pm
Fri 8	Various	Walking Group	10.30am
Mon 11	Parish Hall	Communal Crafters	1.30 - 3.30pm
Tues 12	Gallery Café	Tasty Tuesday	1.00pm
Tues 12	Parish Hall	Parish Hall Meeting followed by Annual and scheduled Parish Council meetings	5.30 - 9.30pm
Fri 22	Gallery Café	Police Community Support Officer meeting	11.00am
Fri 22	Parish Hall	4Cs	11.00 - 12 noon
Sun 24	Various	Walking Group	10.30am
Fr 29	See page 8	Knighton Pilgrimage Event	See page 8

## Regular Weekly Activities

Date	Venue	Event	Time
Mondays	Parish Hall	Zumba	6.00 - 7.00 pm
Tuesdays	Parish Hall	Move it or Lose it!	11.00 - 12 noon
Wednesdays	Parish Hall	T'ai Chi	10.00 - 11.00am
	Parish Hall	Art Group	2.00 - 4.30pm
	St. Leonard's	Birchpole Singers	7.15 - 9.15pm
Thursdays	Parish Hall	Pilates	10.45 - 11.45am
Fridays	Parish Hall	Bowls	7.30 - 9.30pm

See 'What's on' pages for more details of events  
 Check [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) for up to date information and any changes

## LOCAL NEWS AND NOTICES

### MORTIMER MEDICAL PRACTICE

#### Patients' Participation Group (PPG) April 2026

##### Covid Spring Boosters

For those who are eligible, a session has been held at Kingsland. Sessions at Leintwardine & Orlelton surgeries will be on **Saturday 9 May**.

##### Holiday Vaccinations

The surgery needs 6 weeks' notice for holiday vaccinations as they may need to be ordered in. Requests can be made by completing the form on the surgery website.

##### Missed Appointments

The number of missed appointments for last month has reduced slightly but we still need to do better! Please let the surgery know as soon as possible if you cannot attend. Interestingly, missed nurse appointments outnumbered missed doctor appointments.

### St. Leonard's Church and Community Hub

Our church and community hub is a superb venue for your next celebration or special event – whether it be for an exhibition, an illustrated talk, a musical soirée, a family gathering, a special anniversary or a public event.

With flexible space, outstanding acoustics, an atmospheric setting and superb support from a team of volunteers, it is a unique location for you.

For booking enquiries email us at : [yarpolechurchbookings@gmail.com](mailto:yarpolechurchbookings@gmail.com)

### Grafted Apple Trees

2-3 year old named dessert, cookers, cider varieties  
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Discovery, Ashmead's, Kernel, Russets & more...

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M111 & MM106 semi-vigorous

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[www.applewoodcourses.com](http://www.applewoodcourses.com)

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- Modern treatment and diagnostic facilities with full in-patient care and out of hours hospitalisation if required
- Preventative health care plans available
- Small animal out of hours advice service using our own vets, supported by Vets Now for emergency treatment if required
- Full 24/7 equine emergency service covering Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire
- Easy access from A49 and A44, ample parking



## CONTACT US AND FIND US:



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Leominster HR6 0SW  
info@mortimervets.co.uk | 01568 601300



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www.oaktreefuneralservices.co.uk



## YARPOLE COMMUNITY SHOP ASSOCIATION LTD.

### Annual Members' Meeting



To be held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 7.00pm  
at St Leonard's Church, Green Lane, Yarpole HR6 0BB

#### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Approval of the minutes of the AMM held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025
4. Matters arising from the minutes of the 2025 AMM
5. Chair's Report
6. Report on the state of membership and the membership strategy
7. Receipt of the Financial Accounts for 2025
  - a. Acceptance by the members of the 2025 accounts
  - b. To agree that the 2026 accounts may be prepared without an audit and presented with an accountant's report.
8. Appointment of Accountants for 2026
9. Election of the Management Board

*A summary of the 2025 unaudited accounts will be posted on the shop website at [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) prior to the meeting. A full set of the 2025 accounts will be made available for inspection at the shop after the AMM.*

*Nomination forms for the election of members to the Management Board are available at the shop and on the shop website at [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org). Please return completed forms for the attention of the Company Secretary, Lindsay Slade, via the Shop or emailed to [secretary@yarpolshop.org.uk](mailto:secretary@yarpolshop.org.uk) by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2026.*

**Please stay with us for a glass of wine or a soft drink after the meeting**

## The Power of Love

In any 45-year relationship, there are bound to be one or two ‘stress points’, which could make or break the whole affair. These have an especial effect early in a partnership, and that of Gill and myself is no exception. Here are a couple of tricky episodes that could have spelled disaster.

The first occurred very soon after we met and started dating, probably early in 1980. At that time, I was living in a rather tacky, but romantic seaside flat in Kemp Town, the bohemian end of Brighton. (I couldn’t afford to live there now, of course!) I had invited Gill to our first, romantic dinner together. The table, set in a large bow window, overlooking the sunset sea, was set with candles, the wine was breathing nicely, and the chicken curry, my signature dish (or rather, my only dish) was simmering on the stove. Gill was seated in some anticipation (or maybe it was trepidation!)

I carried in the pan with the rice and set it on the table. And then turned my attention to my *piece de resistance*. Now, the pans, cutlery, etc. all came with the flat. Furnished was the usual way of renting back in the day. The saucepan holding the curry had been ‘round the block’ a bit. The handle was originally held on by three rivets, in a triangular bracket. The bottom rivet had long since given up the ghost, so the handle was somewhat insecure. This should have been a warning to me, but it wasn’t, and, just as I had stepped into the living room, the remaining rivets popped out. The pan and its contents did a somersault and landed, upside down, on the carpet. I was left, horror-stuck, holding the now redundant handle.

I thought it was all over, but Gill graciously came over to assist and, lifting the pan off the steaming pile on the floor cheerfully remarked, “It’s alright. We can still eat some of that!”

So together, we scraped off as much of the curry that wasn’t actually touching the carpet, put it back in a different pan, warmed it up and ate it. It was delicious. We then had to clean up the carpet. Luckily, it was dark brown, so hardly stained at all, but on warm summer days, when the sun was beating through the south-facing windows, a pervasive smell of chicken korma permeated the room.

A year or so into our relationship, when I was trying to set myself up as a freelance author and editor, I took a job as a part time van driver for a clothing sweat shop in Shoreham. This involved delivering completed garments to a warehouse in the West End of London and bringing back rolls of cloth for the next batch. Gill had, by now, moved into the flat and was anxious to improve the look with some house plants. I suggested therefore, that I give her a ride in the van to the Homebase store in Croydon. This I did, agreeing to meet her in a little café over the road around 1 o’clock.

At the time, I was writing a book for children, on the life of Fidel Castro. (How times have changed.) So, having finished at the warehouse, I drove the van to Holborn library, where I knew they had some books that would be useful in my research. I left the van parked on a double-yellow line, just off Theobald’s Road, and locked it, leaving the hazard lights flashing.

I must have been longer than anticipated because when I returned to the van, it had vanished. Now, Holborn Police Station was just along the road, so I hot-footed it there and reported to the desk sergeant that my van had been taken.

“Yeah, we’ve got it,” was his curt reply. “It’s in the police pound in Tottenham Hale, and it will cost you £70 to get it back!” Needless to say, I didn’t have that sort of money, so I had to go back to the warehouse, cadge the cash and then make my way almost to the end of the Victoria Line and retrieve my transport.

Meanwhile, back in Croydon, Gill had been happily shopping for home improvements. She’d bought a large Swiss cheese plant, a huge rubber plant and various other bits and bobs. With both hands full, she staggered over to our point of rendezvous and eagerly awaited my arrival. Remember, that this was way before mobile phones became standard, and I had no idea what the café was called. So she waited, and waited. 1 o’clock passed, then 2 o’clock. Finally, at 3 o’clock, assuming I had forgotten her, she made her way unsteadily to East Croydon station, and took the train, and then the bus back to the flat.

Funnily enough, and my memory could be failing me here, I don’t remember her being particularly cross. More sympathetic with my desperate plight. Bless her.

That’s just two incidents. I’m not going to mention our aborted honeymoon, when the exhaust pipe, which I was supposed to have got fixed, fell off Gill’s mini; the same mini I later wrote off by driving over an unlit traffic island.

As the saying goes, love conquers all . . . and thank goodness for that.

Paul Humphrey



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## YARPOLE COMMUNITY SHOP



### Who doesn't need a little ice cream....

The sunny days we have had have lifted spirits amongst retailers despite the gloomy forecasts being made of food inflation hitting 10% by Christmas because of the war in Iran.

Here in Yarpole we have used this as inspiration to offer our ice creams below the recommended retail price- so we can all enjoy a little treat for a bit less.

Don't forget we can often be more competitive than imagined and with rising petrol prices adding to the cost of popping to the supermarket we hope you will bear us in mind as we all try to keep our household outgoings down.

If there is something you fancy and you don't think we stock it do make an enquiry - many of the lines we stock are a result of customers asking if they could be available and this has helped to ensure the shop is the excellent pantry resource that it is.

### Home-from-home delivery

Did you know that if you order online, you can ask for your parcel to be delivered to Yarpole Post Office?

This can sometimes be a cheaper option, and it also means that you don't have to wait around for your parcel to arrive. It is also great news for the shop as every transaction results in a small payment to us which all helps with our running costs.

### Annual Members' Meeting

Please also see the agenda for our 2026 Annual Members' Meeting on page 13 - hope to see you there.

Jon & Rowena

### SHOP AND POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS

	Shop	Post Office
<b>Monday - Friday</b>	9.00am - 5.00 pm	9.00am - 12 noon
<b>Saturday</b>	9.00am - 1.00 pm	9.00am - 12 noon
<b>Sunday/Bank Holidays</b>	closed except for pre-ordered newspapers	

Tel: 01568 780148 Email: [yarpoleshop@mail.com](mailto:yarpoleshop@mail.com)



## THE GALLERY CAFÉ



### **Tasty Tuesday will be on Tuesday 12 May at 1.00pm**

***Honey Mustard Chicken with new potatoes and green vegetables - veggie option too! - followed by lemon pots and shortbread, with tea or coffee***

Please book by 3.00pm on Friday 8 May

Please inform us of any allergies; we are happy to cater for individual needs where possible. To book please email: [gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com](mailto:gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com), call the café during opening hours on 01568 780594 or drop in to see us in person. There will be a booking sheet on the tall cupboard.

### **Join us for a Cream Tea**

**Thursday 28 and Friday 29 May 2.00 - 4.00pm**

Please book using the contact information above

**£7.50 per person**

**A volunteer is needed to help on Thursday lunchtimes: 12.00 - 2.00pm**

**Please get in touch! [gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com](mailto:gallerycafeyarpole@outlook.com)**

Thank you to all the people who support the Café

### **Gallery Café Opening Hours**

Monday – Wednesday 10.30 - 12.30 for drinks & cakes

Thursday – Friday 10.30 - 3.00, serving lunch 12.00 - 2.00pm

Saturday 10.30 - 12.30 for brunch

For enquiries/bookings, drop in to see us in person or

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At this time, we are reminded of the last occasion on which the disciples saw Jesus prior to his ascension into Heaven. At this time Jesus gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit and instructed them to spread His message throughout the world. At the end of St. Matthew's Gospel Jesus also says, 'Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time'.

When I consider this, two things occur to me. Firstly, I think that what He asked of the disciples was quite a tall order, especially given the persecution they were to experience. As a modern-day Christian, I too am a disciple of Christ, who received the gift of the Holy Spirit when I was baptised. When I think of what I should do to spread the word of Christ, I often struggle to know how to do this. Whilst I may not experience the persecution that early Christians faced, I know that being a Christian is not very fashionable and can lead to judgement and derision from others. But like the early Christians I have the most powerful of friends and allies in the Holy Spirit.

Over the 62 years of my life, like most people, I have experienced times of difficulty, pain and anguish, but I have always had the strength to get through these challenging times. Looking back, I now realise that this strength did not come from me alone but also from the working of the Holy Spirit within me.

As a Christian, I can harness the power of the Holy Spirit to spread the message of Jesus. The most important message that Jesus gave us was to love one another. How I behave towards others, in my actions, words and deeds, helps to share Jesus' message of love with those around me. Being kind, charitable, having a friendly ear and being forgiving, can be ways in which we can all be disciples of Christ.

Secondly, I am struck by Jesus telling the disciples that He would always be with them, even to the end of time. No matter what is happening in our lives or what is happening in the world, Jesus is always there walking beside us. We may not see Him and may not know that He is there. But, in our darkest moments He is with us. All too often we feel anger and turn our backs on Him, at the times when we need Him the most. But if we turn to Him and rest our heads on His shoulder, He will be there for us, and we will feel His comfort and strength.

*Dear Lord, thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit and the strength you give us. Thank you for being with us always, and never abandoning us, even though we may abandon you. Help us to use the strength you give us, to lead lives of love and caring for each other.*

*Amen*

Jane Higgins, Local Minister

Go to <https://www.hereford.anglican.org/news/parish-newsletter/>, the Diocese of Hereford's website to see the Dean of Hereford's message.



The funeral of our beloved Audrey was a fitting celebration of her life both as a mother and as a long-serving and valued member of the Yarpole Community. In recent months, Shanthi Menon has acted as Audrey's understudy and the trustees are delighted to report that she will now step fully into the role of SLM treasurer. By the time this edition of the magazine is published, we are confident that Shanthi will have a comprehensive grasp of this key role.

We are also delighted to report that Phil Daniels has been appointed as a trustee, joining Sebastian Bowen, William Talbot-Ponsonby and myself. Many of you will know Phil from his regular help in the shop and from his ten years as a resident in Yarpole. His professional background will bring added skills and experience to SLM as he has qualifications in Structural and Civil Engineering. With additional experience in Public Health systems, he has extensive knowledge of water supply, drainage (foul and surface water) as well as fire-prevention systems. So Phil is definitely the go-to person when the St. Leonard's toilets play up! He wants to continue to give back to his local community in his retirement and we are very pleased to welcome him to the team. Phil will have oversight of general repairs and maintenance of the church and Bell Tower and will have the additional support of a great background team of Jeff Woodfield, Tim Ware, Chris Howell and the Yarpole Men's Shed.

Over the weekend of 19 - 21 June our beautiful church and the Bell Tower have been hired by a couple with links to Bircher for their wedding reception. This will have an impact on the opening hours of the Gallery Café and shop, and we are working very closely with the PCC, Jackie Thomas, Jon Pitts and Rowena to minimise any disruption to normal village life. We will provide updates via the village WhatsApp group so that everyone is well-informed about the event. We understand that the Parish Hall has also been booked for 20 June with support from The Bell for the running of the bar. So there promises to be strong community involvement.

The audio system in the Bell Tower has not been functioning for some time so it has been removed in the hope that Matt Morgan can revive the superb recording of the oral history of this magnificent building – the tenth oldest wooden structure in England. As in previous summers, we will be promoting our extensive social history archives alongside the historic church and Bell Tower during the Herefordshire Histories Festival, and we hope that the audio system will be reinstated by then.

Gordon Ewing, Trustee

## Audrey Bott 1933-2026

My mother was born in Handsworth in 1933. Her father was a house painter, and her mother was an accounts clerk, which no doubt stood her in good stead in dealing with the various roles she would later have in Yarpole!

She grew up in the war years and the blitz, and the austerity of those times would never leave her; she was never one for replacing anything until it was beyond repair or for frivolous extravagance.

She passed the 11 plus and went to King Edward's Grammar School, then on to teacher training college in Coventry. She was very sporting in her day and played hockey at college and county level and did sport as part of her teacher training.

A life-long West Bromwich Albion supporter, she was a regular at the Hawthorns in her younger days. Being a 'Baggies' fan may have been the source of her best-known expression in the family: 'very disappointing' with the emphasis on 'very'.

Her teaching career started in Birmingham primary schools and here she would meet my father. Married in 1960, they lived in a large Edwardian house heated only by coal fires and I think it was in reaction to this that, in later years, her heating was never set below 25 degrees.

In 1968 we moved to Coventry where she worked at Woodlands School along with my father. She taught the 'remedial' class but also ran the 'reprographics' department. Always at the forefront of technology, in later years she became a 'silver surfer' and even adopted internet banking although not without the odd incident!

My parents moved to Yarpole in 1984 and in time my mother became involved with many aspects of village life. In the early 1980s she was elected to the Parish Council and would serve for 29 years, resigning only a few weeks prior to her death, a record innings for Yarpole. For many years she was Chairman – never Chairwoman – and oversaw a more professional approach to running the organisation and meetings. She always considered that her greatest achievement was the acquisition of the community field, having worked tirelessly behind the scenes for many years.

In 2004 she became one of the original volunteers at the new community shop and would remain a regular there until this January, latterly forming the Cherries and Berries dream team with Ann. She had many other roles in the village, including working in the Gallery Café, the Living History Group and latterly as Treasurer of St. Leonard's Management.

Her final illness was thankfully short and borne with wartime stoicism and she was very comforted to spend her final days at St. Michael's Hospice.

We will miss her, but I'm sure she will be watching down and keeping a close eye on us all – woe betide us should we be found to be 'very disappointing'.

Martin Bott



## John Hargreaves 1936 - 2026

John was delivered at home in Pensby, Wirral by the godmother of Yarpole's very own postmistress, Rowena Bennett-Jones. He was the youngest of 3 with 2 older sisters. His father, a ship's captain, was away for much of his childhood especially during the war years and he died when John was 13.



John enjoyed an eclectic work life which began with a ten-year spell in Canada which included 3 years in the Royal Canadian Airforce.

Soon after his return to England in 1964 he met and married his wife Dorothy, and it wasn't too long before the couple welcomed sons James, Adam and Matthew into the family.

In 1975 John and Dorothy moved their young family to White House, Bircher Common and stayed there.

After retirement in 2006 John enjoyed playing golf, meeting friends and generally getting "out there". His highly sociable nature meant he was one of the first to volunteer to help run the new Yarpole Shop when it opened in St Leonard's Church. This role in the community brought him a lot of joy and he was sad to have to give it up after covid.

John's passing sadly follows very closely that of his beloved wife Dorothy with whom he spent nearly 60 years.

James, Adam and Matthew miss you both terribly and can only hope you are happily reunited. R.I.P. Mum & Dad with love from 'The Boys'.



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## PARISH HALL

May 2026

Parish Hall activities are listed on the Events Calendar (on page 10 this month). To make a booking please contact Amanda Hordern on 01568 701996 or [parishhall@yarpole.org](mailto:parishhall@yarpole.org) or go to [www.yarpole.org](http://www.yarpole.org) and click on 'Church & Parish Hall bookings' to book online.

If you are interested in joining one of the classes please email Amanda, who will put you in contact with the class organiser.

### Parish Hall future dates

**3 June: Parish Hall AGM**

**27 June: Summer BBQ and Ceilidh**



We are still looking for new Committee members. Three of our longstanding members have stepped down or are about to do so. We have had one new member join us recently, which is a great boost. She will take over as Secretary at the June AGM. However, we would really welcome more new members, to enable us to continue to run the Parish Hall. If you would like to help, please contact Amanda on 01568 701996 or email [parishhall@yarpole.org](mailto:parishhall@yarpole.org) for an informal chat before taking any decision.

Together with St. Leonard's Management we have reviewed the hire charges for the two venues. It is 3 years since rates last increased and it has been agreed to implement a modest increase in August. We have seen a rise in our annual expenditure especially over the past year and a small rise in hire rates will help us to balance our annual budget. The hire charge for the main Parish Hall will increase by £1 per hour; that for the Committee Room will remain at £10 per hour. A full list of rates is published on the Yarpole website.

The library in the Hall Committee Room sees some usage, but we feel that we currently have a good variety of books available to loan. If you have books to donate, why not consider the bookshops at Berrington Hall or Croft Castle, or one of the local telephone box libraries?

Amanda Hordern



# PARISH HALL

## May 2026

### 200 Club winning numbers for April

4: £50 53: £20 155: £10

Jan Tandy – Lottery Administrator



Don't forget that books can be taken out from the Parish Hall Library whenever the building is open for an event. Just sign your book out in the register and there is no time limit. DVDs and blu-rays of recent Flicks films are also available to borrow.

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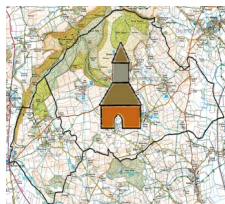
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## Yarpole Group Parish Council

Two members of public were welcomed to the meeting on 7 April.  
Topics discussed –

A date for your diary! Meetings have been arranged for **Tuesday 12 May** as follows: Starting at 6pm in Yarpole Parish Hall, the **Annual Parish Meetings for Lucton Parish and Croft & Yarpole Parish**. These meetings are for electors to discuss parish affairs and ask questions. They are aimed at enhancing community engagement. Discussing the pros and cons of buying exercise equipment for the Community Meadow will be on the agenda. This meeting will be immediately followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting and the scheduled May meeting. Everyone is welcome – stay for all three meetings or leave when you wish to do so!

A donation of £45 to Wigmore High School. This year, made in memory of former Councillor Audrey Bott, who will be honoured in the awards programme.

Herefordshire Council funding scheme for Drainage (maintenance and creation of new assets). A tour of the Parish, arranged by Cllr Cadwallader, with the Lengthsman and Cllr Hill, provided information on potential projects, for which they are thanked.

Public Rights of Way funding is also available, and a kissing gate on the YP7 (exit to steps at the Community Meadow) will be considered. Advice will be taken on whether the steep slope at entrance to LK14A opposite Lucton War Memorial can be improved. If you know of problems on the network, please contact the Parish Footpaths Officer, David Teale 01568 780613 / 07973 195062 [davidteale@email.com](mailto:davidteale@email.com), or Maggie Brown, [clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk).

At the request of the Parochial Church Council, whether to adopt paths to the east of the church (from Green Lane, by the phone box) and from the church towards the C1039 was discussed. The Parish Council did not agree to take on responsibility but is happy to explore ways it may assist with maintenance.

A WhatsApp poll on whether residents would use exercise equipment at the Community Meadow recorded fifty-four who would use it, and eleven who would not. Discussions included where items might be placed, the space that would be needed, potential guidelines regarding proximity to the playground, not promoting one area of fitness over another, e.g. exercise equipment versus rounders games or similar using the green space. Residents are invited to discuss this at the Annual Parish Meeting on 12 May at 6pm at the Parish Hall.

The Men's Shed group is thanked for maintenance work taking place on the Community Meadow picnic bench, and for offering to help arrange painting of the post and rail fence by the stream in Yarpole.

Do come along to a meeting or contact the council with questions or concerns. Upcoming dates are 12 May, 6pm Annual Parish Meetings, followed by the Annual and Scheduled meetings of the Parish Council, 2 June and 7 July normally at 7pm at the Parish Hall.

Mrs Maggie Brown, Clerk. [clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@yarpolegroupparishcouncil.gov.uk) 0739 8222310

## **News from our County Councillor**

So far April has been a very strange month weather-wise; we have had rain, hail, snow showers, frost and temperatures reaching 21°C, all in the space of 12 days. I hope the weather will settle down not least of all because many of the vegetables I have planted recently are very much not frost-proof!

On Tuesday 31 March I attended the funeral of former Cllr Audrey Bott. I was not surprised to see the church full, with standing room only. For those of you who don't know, Audrey was the longest serving Parish Councillor in the history of Yarpole having served for 31 years. Whilst I only had the privilege of knowing Audrey for a few years, I will always remember her passion for the village and her sense of duty to the area. She will be missed but I am sure her legacy will continue in all the areas of village life she contributed to.

The Parish Council is currently working through two grant applications to Herefordshire Council. One of these is for Public Rights of Way improvements and the other is for Highways Drainage (both maintenance and improvement) so if you have any ideas or a particular project in mind then please do get in touch.

Between 13 and 29 March, Herefordshire Council (like many in the country) supports the Great British Spring Clean which is organised by Keep Britain Tidy. The purpose of this is to highlight littering and encourage volunteers to get out and about in their communities picking up litter and improving their local environment. I managed to get out several times doing litter picks of my own, but I also wanted to thank the Yarpole volunteers who cleared up the layby by Cockgate and other areas of the B4362; I for one have certainly noticed the improvement. Why people feel the need to litter the countryside I will never know. On the subject of litter, I have also helped facilitate the removal of the litter bin on the B4361 in the layby as you head towards Orleton. The amount of fly-tipping and litter adjacent to the bin has been causing an issue for some time and the bin has been removed on a trial basis to see whether the situation improves. So far, I am pleased to report that it has, and we will be looking to make the removal permanent subject to the views of parish councillors and residents at the next council meeting.

As always if you have any concerns, issues or would just like a chat then please do get in touch.

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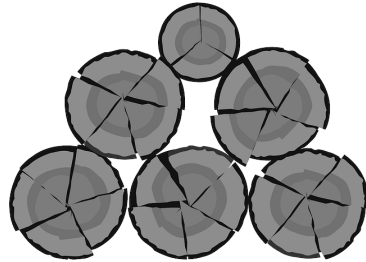
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## The Bell is Changing...

After two and a half remarkable years of the committee managing and running The Bell, we're excited to share some big news: new tenants will be taking over from June.



Looking back, the past few years have truly been a roller coaster. We started with a closed pub and a blank slate, and together we've built something very special: a thriving, welcoming business at the heart of the community. Today, over 70% of our trade comes from outside the parish, a testament to how far The Bell has come.

We couldn't have done it alone. So many people have supported us along the way. In those early days, Graham and Lynn were instrumental, generously sharing their knowledge and teaching us the basics of running a cellar and a pub. Their guidance helped lay the foundations for everything that followed.

Since then, we've gone from strength to strength. Our Sunday lunches are now regularly sold out, and we're incredibly proud to have recently been awarded a 5-star hygiene rating. These are achievements we can all celebrate.

As this chapter comes to a close, we invite you to join us for a proper send-off. Our final day of trading will be the May Bank Holiday on **4 May**. Let's make it a day to remember! Graham and Lynn will also be saying goodbye to Yarpole, and we'll be marking the occasion with Streetfood Collective (Josh's pizzas): good food, good beer, good company, and a chance to celebrate everything we've built together. And there will be a quiz for all ages! We started with a quiz. What better way to finish!

Following the Bank Holiday, the pub will close briefly for refurbishment as our new tenants, Michelle and Blaine, prepare to take over. They bring with them 20 years of shared experience in hospitality and they spent the last 7 years successfully running their previous pub, The Crown at Clunton. We're delighted to be handing The Bell into such capable hands, and we know they're looking forward to becoming part of village life.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey; our dedicated staff, tireless volunteers, and fellow committee members. Your support, hard work, and belief in what we could achieve have made all the difference.

Here's to the next chapter of The Bell.

**Monday 4 May Bank Holiday.** Join us at the Bell for our last working day. Enjoy the **Grand Bell Car Boot Sale** from 10.00am till midday. Enjoy a pizza. Help us clear the cellar; there can be no draft beer or cider left. Also, opened bottles need to be finished. Let's make our last day of trading be a day to remember! Even if you've never been before it's your last chance to enjoy the Bell as it is. A community-managed pub for everyone!

Julian Stokes

*Use Local. Or Bye Bye Local.*

# Yarpole Men's Shed



We could measure the success of the Men's Shed by the number of community projects it has already undertaken. We could also look at how many new projects are already on the list and being planned. Perhaps, though, its greatest success is in bringing together an increasing number of men who enjoy the friendliness, male companionship and good-humoured banter of the group.

When we work together or meet up for a drink and a chat we get to know each other better through the stories we tell. There is a lot of life experience within our group and many stories to be told. (Possibly not all suitable for the Parish Newsletter!)

At another time, where we lived and our very different working lives might have meant that we had very little in common with each other. Now, though, we are all 'Shedders' and members of a supportive group with common aims. We can't fix the whole world, but we can do our bit for Yarpole Parish. That's our real success.

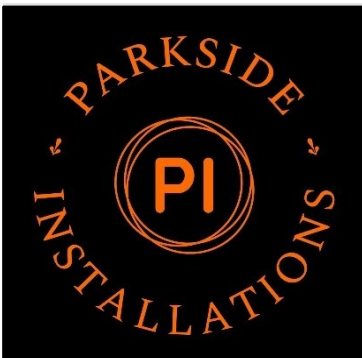
**Interested in joining us?** Membership is open to men residing in Yarpole Parish and surrounding areas. Whether you are interested in helping with community-based projects, just socialising or feel you would like to get involved in developing the group's activities, we would like to hear from you. Here's how to find us:

**On email:** [yarpolshed@gmail.com](mailto:yarpolshed@gmail.com)

**At the Mens' Shed:** Our shed, located behind The Bell, is open every Wednesday from 10.00am. to 11.30am. Shed members meet here to work on one of our current projects or to just get together for a cup of tea and a chat.

**At a social evening:** We meet at The Bell on the third Thursday of each month at 7.00pm. This is a good time to come along, meet some of us and find out more about the Men's Shed.

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# Mayglöthling

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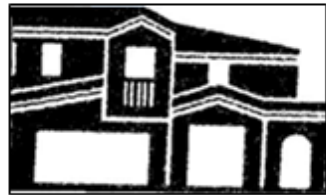
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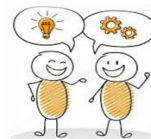
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### WHAT'S ON AT 4Cs?

Our summer programme is already arranged, awaiting your attendance on the 4th Friday of each month. Company, chat, coffee, and cake in abundance. Join us; it's fun.

#### **Friday 22 May**

Roz Johnson will tell us about the activities of Local group ECHO, dealing with clients with learning difficulties.

#### **Friday 26 June**

Well-known local resident Adam Scott, currently Chair of our Parish Council will explain what the PC can (and can't!) do and how it operates.

#### **Friday 24 July**

Murdo White will demonstrate how to play the bagpipes, a rare and unusual treat indeed.

Need a lift? Ring Val on 01568 780807

### MOVE IT OR LOSE IT

Summer is a good time to begin the habit of taking regular exercise. Move it or Lose It continues to offer just such an opportunity on Tuesday mornings from 11.00 until noon.

The usual coffee and cake are on tap after you've had your fun and benefitted healthwise.

Men, are you listening? Join us!



## News from the Leominster Area Branch



### Seeing is Bee-lieving: A Fascinating Insight into Our Local Pollinators

Leominster Area Branch of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust hosted this engaging and eye-opening talk from local expert Martha on one of nature's most important creatures: the bee. The Forbury Chapel was filled with members and local residents keen to learn about these pollinators.

The afternoon began with a light-hearted photo quiz, challenging us to distinguish bees from other similar-looking insects. Many were surprised to find how tricky this can be, as several species cleverly mimic bees in appearance. Using her own photographic slides, Martha introduced the audience to the remarkable diversity of bees found in the UK. There are over 240 species of solitary wild bees, alongside more than twenty types of bumblebees, including the aptly named cuckoo bumblebee.

The talk highlighted the appearance, life cycle and wide variety of nesting habits among bees. Contrary to popular belief, only honeybees and bumblebees live in colonies. The fat bumblebees spotted early in spring are the queens emerging from winter hibernation, now searching for suitable nesting sites. These may include underground burrows, spaces beneath sheds, or even compost heaps. Other species prefer to nest above ground, making homes in thick grass or mossy vegetation.

Gardeners were encouraged to support local bee populations by leaving undisturbed areas in their gardens to provide natural nesting opportunities. Martha also showed some simple 'bee houses' which we could make for solitary bees. These can be easily created using everyday items such as plant pots, cardboard cartons, or old bird boxes, filled with bamboo canes. The talk finished with a lively Q&A session and served as a timely reminder of the crucial role bees play in our ecosystem—and how small changes in our own gardens can help ensure their survival.

Our next talk, 'Gardening for Resilience, Wildlife and Productivity' by Chris Evans of Applewood Permaculture Centre, Orleton takes place on Thurs 21 May, 19.00 - 20.30 at the Forbury Chapel, Church St., Leominster, HR6 8NQ. Members £2, non-members £3

Diana Emes [leominsterbranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk](mailto:leominsterbranch@herefordshirewt.co.uk)

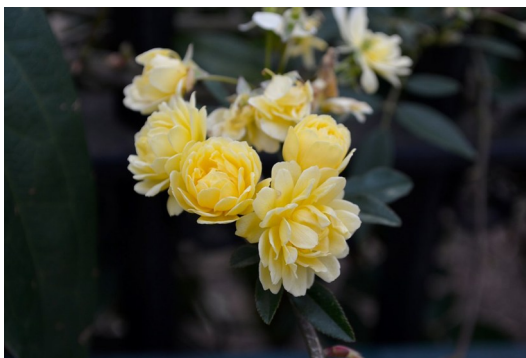
## THE CURIOUS GARDENER

### Portrait of a lady

It was an accepted part of the English horticultural scene in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that if a particularly beautiful plant was discovered it would be named after someone either very rich or very famous. One of my favourite plants in the garden, *Rosa banksiae* 'Lutea', commonly known as Lady Banks' Yellow Rose, was named after the wife of Sir Joseph Banks. Sir Joseph was a famous botanist who was appointed Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in 1797, and when a particularly lovely yellow rambling rose was sent to Kew from China by a plant hunter it was named in honour of Lady Dorothea Banks.

You might assume that Dorothea was a keen plantsperson like her husband, but no. Gardening didn't interest her: she was nuts about old china and collected porcelain as obsessively as her husband collected plants. Perhaps this exquisite rose was chosen to bear her name because she was a great beauty? Well no, unfortunately not. Portraits show a cheerfully plump person with several chins, a florid complexion and a nose that grew increasingly stout with age. But contemporaries commented on her good humour, and this is something Lady Banks' Yellow Rose has in abundance.

For a start, the shiny, bright green stems are thornless, so you can train it, prune it and cut buttonholes from it without gloves. Then it's such an early flowerer: you can expect to see the buds starting to open any time from mid-April onwards. The blooms are like tiny yellow pompoms, produced in neat little clusters, and the quantity is astonishing. It's like a fountain of shimmering yellow shooting up into the air and cascading down again in great long tresses. By the time you read this, ours should be in full flight, so take a walk up Welshman's Lane and see it for yourself. You won't get the full effect from the road because we have to cut it back on the roadside to stop it being a nuisance to passers-by, but if you peep through the garden door you'll get some idea of how tremendous it is on the garden side.



The main thing you need to know if you're thinking of planting one, as well as the fact that it's a real sun-lover, is that if it's happy it will go wild. And I mean wild. Peter savages ours each year in a way that makes me wince, but it just keeps coming back with undimmed enthusiasm. Like its namesake, Lady Banks, the older it gets the bigger it gets – but if you want a good-humoured companion, you couldn't ask for anything better.

Sue Russell



# ORLETON AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB



## Raised-Bed Vegetable Gardening

On 31 March we welcomed Marion Stainton, a horticulturist with an interest in sustainable, environmentally-friendly gardening. She has been involved in planning domestic, commercial and community projects.

Vegetables have been grown in raised beds since medieval times. In monastery gardens the beds were edged with wattle fences. Victorian bedding schemes were planted on raised beds but it was not until the 1970s that these became fully enclosed. Timber is ideal, modern treatments will not harm plants, but railway sleepers should be avoided because of the creosote content.

Marion advocates the no-dig method. Double digging can result in a pan; it damages soil mycorrhiza and brings weed seeds to the surface. Mulching enriches the soil and the organic matter acts like a sponge. Healthy soil begets healthy plants and they have been found to grow better in a firmer soil. The optimum width of a bed is 1.5m to allow access from either side. Pathways should be wide enough to accommodate a wheelbarrow, approximately 0.5m.

Crop rotation is advised to prevent the buildup of pests and diseases and a minimum of three beds is required. Potatoes make a good first crop followed perhaps by brassicas and then legumes. Harvesting times should be checked as often a second crop can be grown, salad crops may be grown alongside brassicas for example as they will be ready before the latter have matured. Vigilance is needed to spot pests and diseases. Brassicas can be grown in a cage, and salads and carrots do well under fleece draped over wire hoops. Homemade cardboard collars may be used around strawberry plants.

Marion accompanied her informative talk with slides of her enviably well-ordered vegetable garden and provided leaflets detailing advice on crop rotation.

Ghislaine Arundale

On **Sunday 17 May** we hold our **Annual Plant Sale** at Orleton Village Hall. Opens 10.30. Refreshments tea and coffee, sausage and bacon rolls and cakes. A big variety of annuals & perennials will be for sale. Sharpening service for tools.

On **Tuesday 26 May** Timothy Walker will give a talk entitled **Scent in The Garden**. The talk is based on an award-winning Chelsea Flower Show garden and explores types of plants, how to make your garden more fragrant and why plants are scented.

At Orleton Village Hall. Doors open 7.15pm for 8pm start. Non-members welcome at £2.50 per person which includes tea or coffee. Annual Membership £15.00

[www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk](http://www.orletongardeningclub.co.uk)

Hello everyone! Welcome to another edition of 'Lisa's Book Nook'. As I sit writing this, the sun is shining, the evenings are getting lighter, and spring is well and truly here. In other words, it's the perfect time of year to sit down with a good book. Not that there is ever a bad time, of course. I am going to be doing something a little bit different this month and only reviewing one book. However, I enjoyed it so much I felt it deserved a more in-depth review than I normally do on here. I hope you enjoy reading about it, and I will see you all next time.



***Echolands: A Journey in Search of Boudica*** by **Duncan Mackay** - I went into this book knowing very little about it. In fact, I had not even heard of it until it came up as a recommendation on my Goodreads page. I came away pretty much certain it will be one of my favourite books of 2026. Yes, I know we are only in April, but that is how good this book is.

Part historical investigation, part travelogue, archaeologist Duncan Mackay takes the reader on a thrilling journey of discovery around the UK, as he traces the Boudican Revolt of AD 60-61. Using both written evidence (which is very limited in quantity) alongside physical archaeological evidence, he quite literally follows in the footsteps of Boudica and the Iceni, visiting sites such as Camulodunum (Colchester), Londinium (London) and Verulamium (St Albans) whilst investigating what might have happened during that turbulent period in British history. In so doing, he not only brings this violent echo from the past to life, but he also demonstrates that history is all around us, in buildings, in archaeology, in nature, in the landscape, everywhere. You just have to take time to look for it.

This is a beautifully written book. It is the perfect mix of scholarly and fun, and Mackay's passion for his subject radiates from every page. His enthusiasm is infectious, as reading this made me want to go on my own little Boudican pilgrimage. I also like how he makes sure to explore the rebellion from both sides, which allows the reader to build up as full a picture as possible. After all, you cannot understand a story if you only read about half of it. Where evidence is lacking, and it sometimes is, or there are question marks about its reliability, he applies common sense and logic to come up with plausible explanations and theories. He also takes care not to apply 21<sup>st</sup> century morals and sensibilities to this near 2000-year-old event, which is a big plus as far as I am concerned. After all, as the famous L.P. Hartley quote goes: 'the past is a foreign country: they do things differently there'.

As you will probably have guessed by now, I absolutely adored this book. Lovers and enthusiasts of Roman history will lap it up, but it is also a book that will appeal to lots of other people as well as it has so much to offer within its pages. Basically, if it sounds in any way appealing to you, pick it up and give it a go. I could not get enough of it, and I was actually sad when I reached the end. I can now only hope the talented Duncan Mackay will write more books like this in the future.

Lisa North

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## Stop feeding the birds this summer

The RSPB is advising bird lovers to remove all seed and peanut feeders between May and October, especially bird tables and flat-bottomed feeders, as these are encouraging the spread of avian diseases. For those of us who enjoy watching wild birds in our gardens this may seem a sad thing to do. However, with the dramatic decline in bird numbers, we really need to think about anything that may inadvertently be harming the birds we love. Millions of greenfinches and chaffinches have died from disease in recent years and greenfinches are now on the red list for endangered birds. It is especially important to act now and remove the feeders to prevent disease being passed on to this year's fledglings. You can still feed birds during the winter months and put out small amounts of mealworms or fat balls all year round. I have gradually been reducing the quantity of seed that I put out for the birds, but they haven't disappeared from my garden.

Whatever feeders you do use they must be cleaned regularly, and any water put out for the birds should be changed daily.

Finally, the RSPB suggests planting or encouraging bird-friendly plants like sunflowers, teasels and ivy flowers.

Gill Humphrey



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Tree creeper - Bircher (KS)



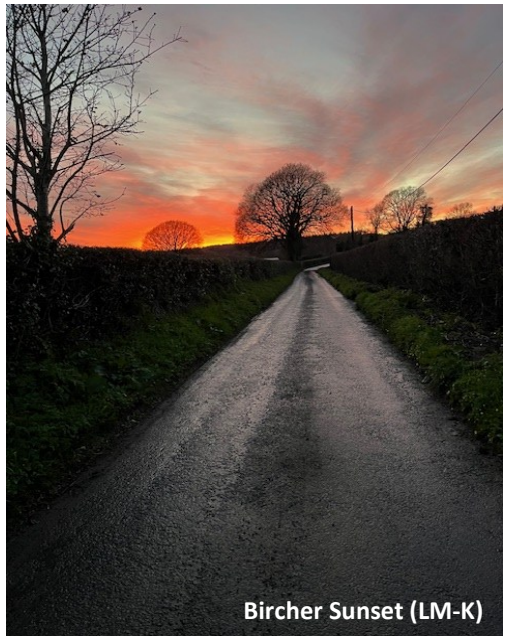
Siskin, Greenfinch & Goldfinch (KS)



The Gates to The Knoll, Bircher (KS)



Scattered sheep - Bircher Knoll (KS)



Bircher Sunset (LM-K)

Thanks to Keith Smith and Luzili Mulindi-King for the photos on this page.

**Croft with Yarpole and Lucton**  
**Parish Church Services for May and June 2026**



Date	Service	Church	Time
<b>May 2026</b>			
Sunday 3 May	<b>Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer</b>	Croft	09.30
Wednesday 6 May	<b>Be Still</b>	Yarpole	17.30
Sunday 10 May	<b>Holy Communion Common Worship</b>	Yarpole	09.30
Monday 11 May	<b>Café Church</b>	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 17 May	<b>Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer</b>	Yarpole	08.30
	<b>Celtic Worship</b>	Yarpole	15.00
	<b>Annual Parochial Church Meeting</b>	Yarpole	16.00
Sunday 24 May	<b>Lay-led Service</b>	Yarpole	09.30
Monday 25 May	<b>Café Church</b>	Yarpole	19.30
<b>June 2026</b>			
Wednesday 3 June	<b>Be Still</b>	Yarpole	17.30
Sunday 7 June	<b>Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer</b>	Croft	09.30
Monday 8 June	<b>Café Church</b>	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 14 June	<b>Holy Communion Common Worship</b>	Yarpole	09.30
Sunday 21 June	<b>Holy Communion Book of Common Prayer</b>	Croft	08.30
	<b>Celtic Worship</b>	Croft	16.30
Monday 22 June	<b>Café Church</b>	Yarpole	19.30
Sunday 28 June	<b>Lay-led service</b>	Yarpole	09.30

Anyone wishing to contact a priest please phone or email:  
 Rev. Matthew Burns on 01568 614399, [teamvicarwest@leominsterteam.org.uk](mailto:teamvicarwest@leominsterteam.org.uk)

To book a funeral, interment, wedding or baptism and for other information please phone:  
 Priory Office (01568 612124) Monday to Friday 9.30 – 1.00  
 Churchwardens: Jane Higgins (01568 708390) Anna Morley (01568 780321)



And a good time was had by all...



Thank you to everyone who came along to our craft session at St. Leonard's on Maundy Thursday.