

**NOW COVERING:**  
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Frome, Castle Frome, Stretton Grandison & the Eggletons



# the **cider** press

**Summer**  
June - Aug 2025  
Issue No.107

*Photo: Annie Skittery*



A big thank you to everyone in and around Putley and Aylton who played a part in welcoming visitors over the early Bank Holiday weekend.

Whether it was standing in a field directing cars, ferrying visitors by tractor, making or serving cakes and salads, offering tastings of ciders and perries, leading guided walks, stewarding talks or keeping stallholders warm with cups of coffee – this was a huge undertaking for our small parishes. Thanks too to the venues – Putley Parish Hall, Court Farm, Yew Tree Farm and Dragon Orchard, and to Dermot Daly for use of the field and the Skittery family for the tractor service, making it possible to keep vehicles off the road as far as possible. Visitor numbers were more or less the same as last year, but they held up well given the cold

wind and competition with VE day events – and the fact that so much of the blossom had gone over! At the time of writing, it's too early to report on money raised for local causes. That's for another day.

As some of you will know, the weekend kicked off with the Big Apple Cider and Perry Trials when almost 60 makers enter their cider or perry for peer judging. We were thrilled to welcome our MP, Ellie Chowns, to present the prizes, including handing out the trophies for Champion Cidermaker to Will Chambers of Smith Hayne Orchards in Devon and Champion Perrymaker to Geoff Newman from Kempley.

Next stop – Harvestime in and around Much Marcle on 11/12th October!

Join in the fun, do please get in touch with **Jackie Denman (01531 670544)** or **Mary Fielding (01531 670389)**

or email [volunteers@bigapple.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@bigapple.org.uk).

Keep up-to-date with what's going on by visiting our website, [www.bigapple.org.uk](http://www.bigapple.org.uk)



Yarle Cyder Co - Best Draught Dry Cider



Alistair Smith - Best Bottle Conditioned Dry Cider



99 Pines - Best Draught Medium Perry



Stephen Farrer - Best Novice Cider



## Cider & Perry Trial Results

Thank you to all participants and a special thank you to Ellie Chowns for presenting the prize winners' certificates and commemorative tankards to the overall best cider and perry makers.

### NOVICE CIDER

Stephen Farrer  
Peter Donovan 'Beyond the Pond'

### BOTTLE CONDITIONED PERRY

Geoff Newman  
Alistair Smith  
99pines

### BOTTLE CONDITIONED CIDER

Alistair Smith  
Sam Everitt  
Troggi

### DRAUGHT SWEET PERRY

Geoff Newman  
Gregg's Pit Cider & Perry  
Ross-on-Wye Cider & Perry Co

### DRAUGHT MEDIUM PERRY

99pines  
Gregg's Pit Cider and Perry  
Luke Bettison

### DRAUGHT DRY PERRY

Troggi  
Gregg's Pit Cider and Perry  
Luke Bettison

### DRAUGHT SWEET CIDER

Palmer's Upland Cyder  
William Chambers  
Crispin Hack

### DRAUGHT MEDIUM CIDER

William Chambers  
Henhope Cider  
Geoff Newman

### DRAUGHT DRY CIDER

Yarle Cyder Co.  
Crispin Hack  
Angus Robinson

**BEST PERRYMAKER** - Geoff Newman

**BEST CIDERMAKER** - William Chambers

## HOUSE FULL?



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# A word from *the Editor* by Julie Crompton

Photo: David Murdoch



## Welcome to the summer edition of *The Cider Press*

The long, sunny days have arrived, bringing warmth, colour, and a renewed sense of energy to our idyllic slice of the country.

As I write this, I'm being serenaded by a wonderful choir. My bird app highlights the current singers as: goldfinch, chaffinch, greenfinch, blackbird, blackcap, goldcrest, robin, song thrush, wren, and several wood pigeons.

Gardens are blooming, hedgerows are buzzing with insects, orchards are showing signs of harvests to come, and the fields around us are bursting with new life – both arable and livestock.

As ever, in this issue, you'll find news from around all the villages, updates from our local parish councils, churches, and contributors.

There are reports from recent events and dates for those to look forward to.

As you may know, *The Cider Press* is a not-for-profit publication, so we'd like to thank all those who enable us to bring you our seasonal magazine – the distributors, advertisers, and contributors.

We're proud to share the stories and images from our wonderful communities. So, pour yourself a drink, find a quiet spot, and enjoy reading all about the summer happenings in our corner of the shire.

Have a glorious summer, everyone!

**Julie**

*If you have any events, stories, photographs or news, please let me know. If you don't tell me I can't pop it in our very own little mag!*

**Copy deadline for the next issue:  
Friday 1st August**  
[julie@monster-creative.com](mailto:julie@monster-creative.com)

# 'Mulch' ado about nothing

by Rosa Mundi

## Is there anything more satisfying for a gardener than a deliciously fermenting compost heap?

To pile on the grass cuttings, leaves, weeds, fruit and vegetable waste and the never-ending chippings of "The Mulcher" and then in perhaps a year's time to open up the lid and see a lovely dark mass of fine soil conditioner waiting to be wheelbarrowed off to the beds. D.B. is an avid recycler, who tends his three "Dalek" bins and five big wooden bays, all in varying degrees of decomposition, like prizewinning plants. A little fluffing up of the top layer, a gentle turning over, a careful mixing in of exactly the right depth of green and brown layers. But as years have gone by the wooden ones have rotted in places, and the repairs now resemble a council recycling tip. Patterned linoleum fills in the backs, assorted bits of plastic sheeting cover the full bins and a marvellous selection of scraps of poles, planks and pallets holds up the sides and fronts. Squares of wire netting cover any odd holes. But so what? This isn't Chelsea and the worms and the grass snakes don't care.

Summer may be here now, but it started very early as far as flowering plants were concerned. Lilies and paeonies were well

up by end of April and the lemon tree went outside for its summer holiday in the sun. It is getting too heavy to handle but was looking very yellow and sorry for itself, despite having about eight decent sized fruit on it, so we tipped it out and sawed off about a third of its roots, refilled the pot with gravelly compost and stuck it in a bucket of water for a day. Kill or cure, but it is pretty tough, as was the friend who gave it to us many years ago, whom we remember every time we catch the lovely scent from the seemingly never ending flowers.

Managing "The Wild Patch" is more difficult than the rest of the garden. Grass and wildflowers are one thing, hogweed, brambles and docks quite another. Reluctantly, when the fritillaries finished, part had to be mown because it was impossible to control the really invasive plants by hand and we don't do chemical control. But it is now being allowed to regrow and as we will have prevented seeding, shouldn't need doing again for a while. The balance between being a horticultural control freak or abandoning everything to nature, is one which we find tricky to negotiate. It is very satisfying to weed a bed and stand back and see order restored. But it is equally fulfilling to go for an evening stroll and see the heads of the tall grasses waving in the evening breeze and the daisies and buttercups gleaming underfoot. Either way, to be in the garden is surely be in Paradise.

# Wildlife Rescue

by **Kate Wollen**



clearly injured, abandoned or the parents dead then it needs help. If the bird has no feathers, if possible, find the nest and place it back in the nest. If this is not possible, it needs help.

Remember to put your safety first when rescuing wildlife. An injured animal will not realise that you are there to help and will often be stressed so keep calm. Muntjac deer have sharp tusks, badgers have sharp teeth and hedgehogs have prickles. Wear gloves or use a towel or similar to pick up and move or contain animals. You may have to leave larger animals such as deer where they are until help arrives. Take advice from the Rescue or website such as the Bat Conservation Trusts website which tells you what to do if you find injured animals.

Vets will help with wildlife, but being animals that they do not usually treat, they nearly always contact a specialist wildlife carer to take on the animal. So, if you can, contact a specialist wildlife carer first.

Below are a few suggestions as to your first port of call. There are other Rescues and plenty of advice on the internet.

- Bat Conservation Trust- 0345 1300 228- If you find an injured or grounded bat contact this number and they will put you in touch with a member of Herefordshire Bat Rescue (below)
- Herefordshire Bat Rescue- herefordshirebatrescue@gmail.com or via Facebook messenger. We do have a bat carer in Putley who can be contacted via the village WhatsApp group
- Vale wildlife Rescue, Tewkesbury- 01386 882288 ( staffed 24 hours a day).

Spring and summer is a time of breeding for most of our wildlife and like children, young animals often get to into trouble.

With roads, and many human activities, adults too often get injured. Sometimes humans can, where appropriate, help injured wildlife.

Do however remember that sometimes we should not intervene. In spring and summer it is common to find young birds on the ground. If the bird has feathers it has likely just left the nest before it can fly. This is normal. Leave the fledgling alone and monitor it so long as it is safe to leave it there and wont get injured by pets or vehicles. The parents are usually nearby and will be feeding the bird. If the bird is

Patients can be brought in without phoning first if before 10pm.

- Athena Animal Rescue, Bromyard- 07919 002062
- Brockworth, Gloucester, Hedgehog Rescue- 07789 268296
- Help for Hogs, Shobden -0568 708059
- Herefordshire Wildlife Rescue, Bodenham, run by Sasha Norris and can be contacted on 07802 460884 or via Facebook
- The RSPCA- 0300 1234 999

As well as helping injured wildlife there is much that we can do to help our healthy animals over summer.

Put out a very shallow dish of water daily. Ensure that it is either shallow enough for any newts etc to get out of or out a rock etc as an escape route out. Empty buckets of unwanted water as bees or baby birds can drown in them.

Provide refuges for animals in your garden- a wild area, create a meadow in the garden, log piles, hedgehog house etc that will not get disturbed.

Leave wild flowers growing on verges outside of your property- wildlife need the plants for food.

Check before you light fires if the wood has been left for a while- you may have a bird nest within or other hedgehog sheltering. If you have to cut a garden hedge in spring or summer, check thoroughly for nests. Ideally leave it until autumn.

If feeding birds ensure that you clean feeders and water bowls regularly and thoroughly at least every 2 weeks.

Above all, just think wildlife , they need all the help that we can give them.




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# Farming in the Shire

by Missy Ferguson

As we wave goodbye to the beautiful awakening that spring brought, packing away the endless hurdles, medicine and milk powder and reflecting on the exhausting days that became even more exhausting nights, and newborns becoming bouncing healthy lambs and of course, the trusty radio that became all of our friend during the graveyard shift, we can start to appreciate that it was all of these things that made our lambing shed such a bustling and joyful maternity suite.

After one of the wettest winters on record we moved into one of the driest springs, which with each season brings it new set of challenges. Too cold in spring and you risk the crops not germinating and a frost killing off the vulnerable young plant. Too hot in Spring, and you risk the crops becoming weak with the stress of the sun and lack of water. We are lucky in Herefordshire with our red clay soil being able to retain moisture so if we experience a spring like we have just had, the crops should do well.

Farmers have a notorious reputation of complaining about the weather and I can confirm that this is true. Having witnessed numerous chats around the kitchen table of 'we need it to rain a little bit - but not too much,' 'if

it could just stay like this for a few more days' to 'I don't know why the weather is doing this?' it is safe to say they're a tough bunch to please. But as a family we press on regardless of weather and always make the most of whatever it brings.

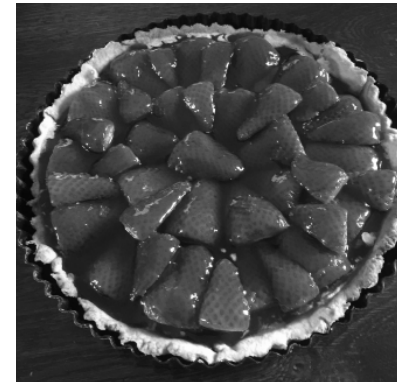
With lambing done and dusted and crops all growing happily, we move to a time when farmers are around a little more which means all of those jobs that they have tried so desperately hard to avoid, can now be done. For us that's painting, pictures hung, shelves built, the vegetable and cut flower patch rotavated and the greenhouse panes replaced as well as a little bit of childcare.

Emerging from the chocolate coma that Easter inevitably brings, we've been trying our best to explore our surroundings. Family walks through carpets of bluebells, Gruffalo hunting in the wood discovering all of nature's weird and wonderful happenings and picnics watching the sun set across the parish. - All whilst planning our harvest and diversification projects.

It won't be long before we'll be picking blackberries and wondering where they've all magically disappeared before we've got home.

So, what's next on the farm?

We'll soon be welcoming another pet pig, Nelly, to the family and also taking up beekeeping, the circle of life continues as we look forward to the long, hot (I'll keep my fingers crossed) and dry (and my toes) days that summer and harvest brings.



# BAKED OFFERINGS

by John Meringue  
**Strawberry Tart**

Strawberries are a summer treat, and this recipe just ramps them up to another level.

This recipe starts with the pastry case, then you just need to assemble the tart and resist temptation until it's time to serve.

## *Rich Shortcrust Pastry:*

- 250g Plain Flour
- 125g Butter
- 1 Egg Yolk
- 1 Tbsp Caster Sugar
- 2 Tbsp Cold water
- 2 Tspn Lemon Juice
- Pinch of Salt

## *Pastry Case Method*

Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl, add the butter and rub lightly into the flour with your fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar, make a well in the mixture and add the egg yolk and the lemon juice and enough of the cold water and mix to create a slightly crumbly stiff dough. Knead very lightly to bring it together, cover with cling film and chill it for at least an hour before you use it.

Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface to a size that will line a 20cm flan ring. Trim the edges, prick the base with a fork, then line the inside with greaseproof paper, fill with baking beans or uncooked rice and bake on the middle shelf of your oven set at 180°C (fan oven) for

15-20 minutes. Remove paper and beans/rice, and return to the oven for 10 more minutes or until golden brown.

Once baked, leave to fully cool on a wire rack.

## *Filling:*

- 180ml Whipping Cream
- 1 Tbsp Caster Sugar
- 1 Tbsp Kirsch
- 1 punnet of Strawberries

## *Glaze:*

- 3 Tbsp Redcurrant Jelly
- 2 Tsp Kirsch
- 1 Tsp Arrowroot
- 1 Tsp Lemon Juice

## *Method*

Whip the cream and flavour with the sugar and kirsch. Cover the bottom of the cooled pastry case with the whipped cream and arrange the strawberries attractively on the top. It's easier to make it look lovely, if the strawberries are of a similar dainty size. If your Strawberries are tasty whoppers, slice them or quarter them. Whichever suits your fruit.

Gently heat the redcurrant jelly in a pan, add the arrowroot, blended with a little cold water and boil gently for 2 minutes, stirring all the time. Add the lemon juice and kirsch and glaze the fruit while the mixture is hot.

Allow to cool before enjoying a slice or two with a Pimms in the garden!

# Pixley and District Parish Council



## Good news to report on bridges

### BRIDGE OF SIGHTS

Pixley and District Parish Council have been concerned for many years about the fitness for purpose of the railway bridge at Ashperton on the main A417 trunk road. The road over the bridge is unrestricted (60mph single carriageway) but has blind bends on its approaches and is not wide enough for two large vehicles to pass each other safely, let alone at 60mph! Last year an HGV travelling towards the Trumpet ran clear off the road on the immediate approach to the bridge, luckily no casualties were reported. After over a year raising the matter with the Highways Department and Network Rail, the council has finally agreed that additional speed calming measures are required. These calming measures will take the form of chevrons and more detailed road signage to alert drivers who are unfamiliar with the road of this approaching hazard. Progress of a sort!

The council are still discussing with Network Rail the need for barriers to be erected at the four corners of the bridge for pedestrian and

vehicle safety. Hopefully we will have some news in the next edition.

### BRIDGES OF CHEERS

Not one but two footpath bridge improvements to report. After being closed for at least 10 years, the footpath LM8 from Little Marcle Court heading south west towards Kynaston was officially reopened in April when Hereford Council replaced the old footbridge that had fallen in to the stream. Hooray!! Please see attached image. And the footbridge on the Hereford Trail AL7 between Aylton and Putley by Morris' Orchard has been treated to wooden decking repairs and a slip resistant surface. This top-quality work was carried by Councillor Andrew Riga in good time for the Big Apple weekend. Hooray again! Many thanks to Councillor Riga.

### KEEP IN TOUCH

Don't forget to check our new website PIXLEY-PC.GOV.UK for details of forthcoming meetings, latest parish news, and other items of local interest.

# Prancing Pony at Putley Parish Hall

by Andy Booth & Jayne Creswell

What a fantastic first quarter we have had at the Pony.

Thank you to of you who have come along and supported your local pop-up pub.

We are still busy planning the rest of the year, but this is what we have planned so far:

- **30th May** Food by Alfies and amazing music with Y Rock.
- **21st June** we have found a fish and chip van. **NOTICE THE CHANGE OF DATE.**
- **25th July** sees us returning to the barn in Aylton, with music with the Mushrooms and an ice cream van. We are hoping to get someone to come along with food.
- **22nd August** see a special celebration for Nigel and Deb, who got married in April. We have food cooked by the Flying Fillets and a surprise band. **NOTICE THE CHANGE OF DATE**
- **26th September** sees the return of the popular food van, Hillbillies.
- **31st October** we shall be listening to Goldfelix
- **28th November** we have the fabulous Hillbillies returning.

December we are still working on, but I'm sure it will be the usual variety of talent.

We have had lots of you renew your membership, but if you are yet to renew or would like to join, please contact Summer and she will willingly take your money.

If you have any ideas for food vans or bands that you would like to see at the Pony, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Looking forward to seeing you on 30th May.

Fenella, Summer, Mike, Ross and Jayne  
putleyprancingpony@gmail.com

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## School Sports Day & the Parent's Race

by Sally Smart

If you are a parent perhaps you remember school sports day?

Perhaps you will be watching your child this summer? When my children were at primary school there was always the 'parent's race' I dreaded this. I have no idea if this still happens. Why did I dread it? Well I was a marathon runner and the parent's race was about 30 metres from a standing start over the school sports field which was rough and uneven ground. This did not suit my style. However, the alternative would have been to do a proper warm up and change into my running spikes. Imagine how embarrassed my children would have been!

Do you know how much physical activity children aged 5-18 years old should do on a daily basis? Only 31% of parents surveyed knew that children should be active for an average of 60 minutes a day.

The Youth Sport Trust is a national children's charity with a vision to create a future where every child enjoys the life-changing benefits of play and sport. They champion 60 minutes of PE, sport and play every day to help all young people be always active. This year they are celebrating their 30th anniversary and as part of that are calling everyone to get involved with their biggest ever National School Sports Week (June 16th to 22nd). Want to get involved? Find out more at [www.youthsporttrust.org](http://www.youthsporttrust.org)

Closer to home -

### The Putley Fitness Walk:

(Monday 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August & 1st Sept) Meet at the Parish Hall to set off at 10am followed by refreshments. We have a shorter, slower walk (20 to 30 minutes) as well as our current 2.5m Walk. All for £1! We also do 4 walks in the year which are a bit longer (6 to 8m) For further information ring Sally on 07468 793405



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# PUTLEY CHURCH

by Sue Ashe



## We have some new signs in the Churchyard.

They give a brief explanation of the way we manage the grass cutting and plants for now and the future. This has changed during the last few years as Churches are asked to protect their Churchyard and the flora and fauna in it as 'God's Acre'. Our aim is to manage the Churchyard sympathetically for wildlife, while respecting that it is also a special place of remembrance and place of quietness and spiritual refreshment.

As part of our commitment to biodiversity, during the Easter service this year attended by thirty-four people of different ages, everyone was invited to plant a wildflower plant somewhere in the Churchyard. These will be a feature for generations to come.

On 16th August at 3.30 we have our Churchyard Service, which is a dedicated time to remember those who are buried or interred there. Families come from miles around to remember their loved ones and meet up with friends who they may have grown up with but who have now moved away. If you would like to find out more or let us know you are coming so we can cater adequately with cake and teas, please contact our Churchwarden Elaine: 07979690899 or elainevspalding@aol.com

Thanks to all those who enrolled in the new Church register, the Electoral Roll. We now have 41 registered (six more than last year), including two young people under twenty, which we are delighted about. The increase in numbers is especially pleasing as we said goodbye to some who have moved out of the Parish and Peter Tyrrell and Ken Treherne,

who both died in the last few months and were long standing members of the Parish register. If you missed the deadline and want to support the church as an asset to the community, you can still join. Please contact Sue 07759546487 or Sue.ashe@hotmail.com

We are updating InfoPoint, our digital Church tour, and new pages and items will be added over the next few months. If you have not taken the tour yet, please do come and try it out, but make sure you bring your smartphone!

We have applied for a grant to support the Church in managing the colony of bats of six different species which lives in the Church. Some of the money will contribute to the increased cleaning costs, particularly in the Summer, but the rest will provide resources and refreshments for an evening to share information about bats and their fascinating lives and value. To this end we are planning a Bat walk/Talk in late August/Early September with Putley Wildlife group. Once the date is confirmed it will be circulated via our email lists, whatsapp message groups, Putley Facebook page and our Church website.

Another date yet to be confirmed is the village Harvest Supper (probably in October). A band, food and good company will be had at the Parish Hall. More in the next Cider Press and on our website <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10695>. Also on the website is our Annual Report of Church news for 2024, including information and photos and our Evaluation Report on InfoPoint provided by a business company who assess success of lottery bids. Have a look and see how we did!



Community Litter Pick Saturday 15th March

The day dawned clear and most importantly dry for the Litter Pick organised and radiating out from Putley Parish Hall (PPH).

A motley, but willing crew of locals, with friends from away, were drawn into the fray and a couple of dogs just for good measure. We all assembled in the hall at 10.30am.

Our esteemed organiser, Sally Smart, ensured that everyone had a litter pick buddy. So old friendships were renewed and new ones established before we chose our respective routes from those available on the map.

The more seasoned of us already had our own "grabbers" whilst these were distributed to anyone else needing one. The all important Herefordshire Council purple bags were given out and we were off!

There were about 15 of us ready to delve into hedgerows, ditches and even through a hedge into a field beyond, to make our community a cleaner and safer place to be.

### *What did we discover and pick up?*

Mostly we found take-away coffee cups and associated lids, energy drink cans and glass bottles various. Wrappers, wine bottles, tyres, packaging, wool and even broken ovenware, all featured somewhere along the way. Passers-by (friends) in cars were flagged down and persuaded to drop the heavier bags off to PPH.

The purple bags mounted up in the car park as people returned to a welcoming hot drink and even better, homemade soup with rolls.

Some even came back after in-depth flora and fauna discussions on the Cockshoot, having discovered little litter on that particular route.

Despite the number of throwaway cups in the roadside, we all felt positive about our communal efforts and many of us took home a new litter grabber and/or spare purple bags to keep picking up.

By a seasoned litter picker.

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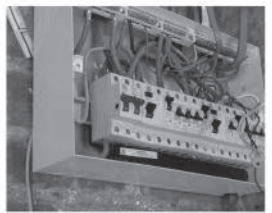
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# Putley WI *More than Jam & Jerusalem*

In orchards where Herefordshire's apples grow sweet.  
 Putley WI makes each gathering a treat.  
 We're not just about doilies or recipes spun.  
 We're spirited women who get things done.

Forget all the clichés, the outdated lore.  
 We're not just jam and Jerusalem anymore.  
 We're a force of learning, of laughter and care.  
 With stories and speakers  
 we're eager to share.

Julie Mackay came with a tale so profound.  
 A former detective where justice was found.  
 She spoke of cold cases, of truth brought to light.  
 A reminder of courage, of wrong turned to right.

Then Melissa and Kim, with a confident grin.  
 Taught us the power of the right fitting in.  
 From 'The Bra Boudoir' with lace and good cheer.  
 They lifted our spirits (and more) while here!!

And Ben Crossley, humble with grease on his hands.  
 Spoke of 'Vehicles for Victory' and faraway lands.  
 Helping Ukraine with each vehicle he drove.  
 Proof that compassion still runs in a drove.

We stitch in our craft group, with colour and thread.  
 Ideas and creations that lovingly spread.  
 While the gardening club, with green-fingered flair.  
 Visits lush gardens with stories to share.

We meet each month on a Wednesday night.  
 The second of the month, to be exact and right.  
 With tea in the pot and a warm welcome near.  
 It's the highlight of many a month round here.  
 New faces, new voices, there's always room.  
 Whether you're bold, or quietly bloom.  
 We welcome all ages with a wide open door.  
 Come as you are, and leave with much more.

So here's to our circle, both grounded and free.  
 To the past and the present and what's yet to be.  
 Putley WI, not just jam and a song.  
 We're strong, we're inspired and we all belong.

## Upcoming guest speakers


May 14th Lisa Fisher-Look Good & Feel Fabulous. Hints & tips on colour, style & makeup.

June 11th Effie Williams-Milliner. Mad as a hatter. Millinery & its history.

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# Health & Wellbeing

by Summer Knight

## Basking in the Benefits:



Vitamin D, often called the “sunshine vitamin,” is essential for health and wellbeing.

It plays a vital role in bone strength, immune function, and mood regulation. Here in the UK, long winters and limited sunlight are the norm. So understanding the importance of natural vitamin D from the sun becomes even more crucial.

### Why Vitamin D Matters

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium and phosphorus, two minerals that are vital for building and maintaining strong bones and teeth. It also supports muscle health, reduces inflammation, and contributes to a well-functioning immune system. Low levels of vitamin D are linked to conditions such as Rickets in children, Osteomalacia (basically the adult form of Rickets), increased susceptibility to infections, and even depression.

### The Sunlight Connection

Natural vitamin D is synthesised in the skin when it is exposed to ultraviolet B (UVB) rays from sunlight. This process is the body’s most effective way of

producing vitamin D. Unlike dietary sources or supplements, vitamin D from the sun is readily available, free, and comes with added health benefits.

In the UK, between late March and early October, the sun is strong enough to stimulate vitamin D production. Just 10–15 minutes of daily sunlight on the face, arms, or legs — without sunscreen and ideally during midday hours — can help maintain healthy vitamin D levels. The exact amount of sun exposure needed depends on skin tone, age, and time spent outdoors.

Glass effectively blocks the UVB rays for your skin to produce vitamin D, so time in the greenhouse, conservatory or sat in a sunny window don’t contribute to your vitamin D stores. You can however still get enough vitamin D producing light onto your skin on cloudy days, but the effect is lessened by the density of the cloud cover. You simply need to spend more time outdoors with some of your skin exposed to the elements.

### Beyond the Vitamin: Added Health Benefits

Spending time in the sun offers more than just vitamin D. Exposure to natural light helps regulate the body’s internal clock, or circadian rhythm, which is essential for restful sleep and hormone balance. Sunlight also increases serotonin levels, a neurotransmitter associated with improved mood and mental clarity, making time outdoors a natural mood booster.

Additionally, being outdoors in sunlight often goes hand in hand with physical activity — walking, gardening, cycling — which brings further health benefits for the heart, joints, and mental wellbeing.

### Challenges in the UK

Despite the benefits, the UK’s northern latitude presents a seasonal challenge. From October to March, the sun’s UVB rays are too weak to produce adequate vitamin D. During this time, the body relies on stores built up in the summer or on dietary sources and supplements. People who spend most of their time indoors, cover their skin for cultural or health reasons, or have darker skin — which naturally blocks more UVB rays — are at greater risk of deficiency year-round.

### Natural First, Supplements as Backup

While supplements are a useful safety net, they should not replace natural sun exposure when it is available. The body is remarkably efficient at regulating vitamin D production from sunlight, reducing the risk of overdose and ensuring a steady, natural supply. Supplements, while necessary for some, don’t offer the mood-lifting, rhythm-regulating effects of time spent in nature.

### Conclusion

In the UK, making the most of natural sunlight during the warmer months is a simple and powerful way to support overall health. Whether it’s a walk in our countryside, time in the garden, or lunch outdoors, regular exposure to sunlight nourishes the body and mind in ways that supplements simply can’t match.



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# PUTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

[putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## The Parish Council has a new user friendly professional website.

On the site you can find out about the parish council and read minutes of the meetings. You can also sign up to receive parish council agendas and newsletters. There are also links to other parish and community groups – if your group would like to be added please contact the clerk.

With a new lengthsman now registered with the council, work has been carried out to remedy the flood problem areas. A parish tour has been undertaken to note any other works needed and a plan of priorities made to carry out further works over the next few months when funding is confirmed. Many drainage chambers and gullies will be cleared of debris. The clerk continues to report to Herefordshire Council potholes in need of repair. Footpaths through the parish have been cleared and some bridge repairs carried out.

The Parish Council has purchased a picnic bench for the play area and are in the process of purchasing further benches, one for by the parish hall and one for Putley Common. The Parish Council has also purchased litter pickers for regular litter picks to keep the parish clean and tidy.

Finally, the council are still in need of more

councillors. If you are interested in your parish surroundings and want to have a say on parish matters then please come and join us and get in touch with our clerk.

If you wish to report any issues in the parish please send an email or use the contact link on our website.

Email:

[clerk@putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Parish Council website:

[putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

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## CANON FROME COURT

### UK COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

**11th-13th July** - Calling all communards, aspiring communards, and supporters of communal living!

We're delighted to be hosting the UK Communities Conference this July. The conference aims to promote co-operation between UK intentional communities and build the movement for communal living in Britain.

The theme will be Community in a Changing World. We'll have talks, a ceilidh, good food and chat! Tickets include camping and meals from Friday lunchtime to Sunday lunchtime. More info on the Canon Frome Court events page.

### IMPROV WORKSHOPS

**Saturday 20th September 2-4pm.**

Dates on website. **Tickets: £10/£5.**

Come & have lots of fun with a friendly bunch creating stories, scenes & sketches out of nothing!

We have a small team of locals - 'The Frome Society' - who deal with bookings, make plans, and arrange events at the Court. Meetings are once every couple of months. Let us know if you'd like to come.

**fromesociety@canonfromecourt.org.uk**

### INFORMATION & TICKETS

Full listings: **www.canonfromecourt.org.uk/events** + join our mailing list.

Queries: **events@canonfromecourt.org.uk**

### POP UP PUB and OPEN MIC First Friday, monthly (except August), 8pm

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### TEA & TABLE TENNIS

**Selected Sundays: 3-5pm**

Regular Tea and Table Tennis, hosted by Stretton Parish Council, Monthly on a Sunday - more info on the Parish Council Page!

### ROOM HIRE

Our meeting room, large hall and kitchen are available to hire.

More details on our website.

# Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council



Photo: Helen Heathfiled

## Hello to everyone in Stretton Grandison, Castle Frome, Canon Frome and the Eggletons!

Here's what's going on in the Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council area.

The parish council meets every other month. There's always part of the agenda for residents to raise any concerns. Recently those included blocked drains in Stretton Grandison, which have now been remedied.

An important part of the agenda covers local planning applications. We've discussed about a dozen over the last year, and our support or objections are used by Herefordshire Council planners as they prepare their decisions. This includes the application for a large anaerobic digester at Whitwick Manor. The parish council has objected to this application three times over the past couple of years.

We also make sure any highway and footpath problems are noted and reported to be fixed. Furthermore we get the opportunity to request priority action from the police, with hot topics being speeding, fly-tipping and hare coursing. Sadly there was hare coursing reported locally earlier in the year.

Happier discussions included giving a donation towards the Bishops Frome VE Day celebration. Outside of meetings parish councillors do local litter-picks. We also organise and fund a monthly tea and cake date at Canon Frome Court:

### *Tea and cake ... and table tennis*

Monthly on a Sunday: 3-5pm

(18th May, 22nd June ... a break for July and August ...

then 28th September)

Join us for chat, cake and a bit of ping pong if you fancy.

A great way to meet more people in the area.

### *Get involved*

Catch up with our parish council news at [strettongrandisonpc.org.uk](http://strettongrandisonpc.org.uk). We currently have vacancies on both Stretton Grandison and Eggleton parish councils: please join our team!

### *Education fund*

Stretton Grandison benefits from a special fund set aside to pay towards education and training opportunities. If you live in that parish and want to start a new course or need some books and materials to support your learning, whatever the subject, whatever your age, please contact Emma the clerk on [clerk@strettongrandisongpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@strettongrandisongpc.org.uk)

Thank you! Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council



# LEDBURY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

## Klinik update

Our new online triaging system has been running for almost 2 months now. For safety and capacity reasons we have been unable to make Klinik available for the full duration of our opening hours. We understand how frustrating this is for our patients and we are creating a solution that will allow Klinik to be available from 7am – 6.30pm on each LHP working day.

Currently all submissions are reviewed by a GP on the same day, but it is not possible for a GP to safely review over 100 submissions per day without some form of limitation, which is when we have had to switch off Klinik and allow only urgent queries to be made by phone or in person.

We will need to change the way in which we review submissions, with only the most urgent being reviewed on the day by the Triage GP. All other submissions will be reviewed within a set number of days. We will keep you informed.

## Flu and Covid vaccination campaign for Autumn and Winter 2025/6

We would like to advise all of our patients who fall into the eligible groups below to contact us starting from mid to late August to book into a clinic for your Flu and/or Covid jabs:

- Aged 65 years and over
- Aged 18 years to under 65 years in clinical risk groups (as defined by the Green Book, Influenza chapter 19)
- Patients in long-stay residential care homes
- Carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
- Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- Frontline workers in a social care setting without an employer led occupational health scheme including those working for a registered residential care or nursing home, registered domiciliary care providers, voluntary managed hospice providers and those that are employed by those who receive direct payments (personal budgets) or Personal Health budgets, such as Personal Assistants

Housebound patients falling into the above categories should call and ask to be added to a list and we will contact you to arrange a time to visit you.

We will start vaccinating in October 2025; the exact start date to be confirmed by NHS England in due course:

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# PUTLEY PARISH HALL



by Josephine Felton

## Litter Pick and Maintenance -

On a Saturday in March a group of village volunteers and Trustees assembled to do a full Putley Litter Pick and odd jobs round the hall and grounds. Tea, Coffee and Biscuits were on the go and at lunchtime delicious home-made soup was served. One table had been laid, but then another was added and finally a third so it was quite a party. Everyone sat round and chatted, some not having met before and some just visiting friends. Many thanks to all who helped out with both tasks and with the refreshments too. This could become an Annual Jamboree!

**Putley Open Gardens** - It is a long time to 20th September, but just to remind you that we would be grateful for produce, cut flowers and larger plants to sell on the day. We will use the old Post Office room for jams, chutneys and fruit and vegetables and have some plants

and buckets of cut flowers outside. This is a departure from the usual plant stall, so we do hope you are able to contribute. Proceeds are, as you know, divided between Putley Church and Putley Parish Hall.

**Bookings** - Please think about booking the hall for any family party or special occasion. The hall has been hired for birthday parties for small children, supper and dancing for grown-ups, and singing on a Sunday. There are regular W.I meetings and the Prancing Pony Pop up Pub on the last Friday of every month as well as twice monthly coffee mornings, to which everyone is welcome. Running costs are escalating so do support and enjoy your own local community facility.

Queries to [jakeherbst@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jakeherbst@yahoo.co.uk) or [secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk](mailto:secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk)  
01531 670425



## Putley WI - A warm welcome awaits

If you are looking for fun, friendship and inspiration, join Putley WI! We meet at Putley Parish Hall at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday of each month. If you need more information just contact Ginny.

Text **07854 160073** or email [ginnymccoy@btinternet.com](mailto:ginnymccoy@btinternet.com)

# AYLTON NEWS



## Aylton Church:

We now have a new suffolk latch on the church door which is more functional. Also, we have had work done on the hedge for a new fence which has been funded by a donation from the late Thelma Holland from Yew Tree Farm. The recently repaired noticeboard was partially funded by a grant from the Big Apple 2024 and Pixley & District Parish Council are hoping to be able to contribute too. We have also installed a 'Collectin' for card payment donations. It is on loan from the Herefordshire Diocese for 3 months.

## Opera in Aylton

Opera Anywhere will be bringing Mozart's *Così fan tutte* to Court Farm Barn on Friday June 27th. For tickets & further details see [www.operaanywhere.com](http://www.operaanywhere.com)

## Strawberry Tea

In aid of Aylton Church & Martha Trust at Selina Marcon's (The Stowage, HR8 2RQ) at 3pm on Sunday 10th August.

## Charity Roadside Stall

We will be setting up the stall again once the plums arrive (June/July). As usual we are always grateful for any excess fruit or veg you may have.

## Our chosen Church charity for 2025 is :

Martha Trust Hereford - Established in 1996, Martha Trust in Hereford is a registered charity, providing lifelong care for people with profound intellectual and physical disabilities.

## Autumn Quiz

Watch out for our quiz night coming soon.



Last Spring, it was joyful to watch a pair of robins raise two separate broods each of four chicks, from consecutive nest builds in my greenhouse.

This year, I am thrilled to observe from a little further distance, a pair of blue tits repeatedly leaving a nest box on the fence to forage in the trees behind. Rapidly returning to re-enter the nest with tasty morsels. Their consistency and dedication to the task of parenting is quite awesome, and I can only imagine how many beaks there may potentially be inside that nest box to provide for, after reading 8-10 eggs is their usual single clutch laid.

Like many others, I love to be outside as the days lengthen, and the warmth returns to the land each Spring and Summer. The bursting forth of new life comes in the sights of new colour and form, in the sounds of humming insects and birdsong, and in the scents of plants and trees. All is literally heartwarming. Time spent actively or passively observing and engaging with the diversity of God's creation, is both

fascinating, and inspirational. No wonder then, that being in creation improves our wellbeing, and those deprived of that joy, are diminished by its absence.

I thoroughly enjoy the opportunities that the warmer days offer for outdoor worship in creation. Raising our hearts and minds with a sense of awe and wonder of the world in which we dwell, and its Creator. Already this year, all have been invited to witness and follow the donkey procession on Palm Sunday in Much Marcle. To light the fire at the sunset Vigil at Pixley on Easter Eve. And to ask for God's blessing upon the fruits and crops of the fields during the annual walk in the Cider Churches parishes – this year from Little Marcle, to Aylton and Putley, on Rogation Sunday.

Still to come in the great outdoors, are the Churchyard Services planned for Wellington Heath (Saturday July 19th at 3pm), and at Putley (Saturday August 16th at 3.30pm). A time to gather, to pause, and engage the senses. A time to remember those known, and unknown, to us. Those who have lived as part of the community of these parishes. Churches and their burial grounds have been marked out and cherished as 'sacred spaces' for centuries, each embracing all to their eternal place of rest still within those bounds of their ancient communities. Afterwards, over refreshments, time for the continuation of that thread of connection into the living community over cake and conversation. ALL ARE WELCOME.! Look out too for more locally advertised gatherings for outdoor worship as they arise. (e.g. last year a 'pre-berry harvest' walk with reflections

in the fields at Pixley, and an exploration of the Churchyard during one of the informal 'Come and See' services at Putley)

Several of the Churchyards of the Cider Churches are intentionally managed with reference to cherishing God's creation and to enable the flourishing of biodiversity within them. Spending time within these small, but precious ancient landscapes, invites us with a sense of expectation and

hope to an encounter with the living God, through whatever ways our attention may be drawn. For God 'speaks' not only through words within an ancient building, but invites us into the 'conversation' of a relationship through the inspiration of creation's diversity, and resilience.

May we be open to this season's invitation and encounter .....

*Best wishes Val*

Rev. Val Tait - email: [valtait@live.co.uk](mailto:valtait@live.co.uk) Tel: 01531 634035



*March Results:*

First prize no 38 Second prize no 3

*April Results:*

First prize no 40 Second prize no 57

*May Results:*

First prize no 43 Second prize no 27

  
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## AYLTON

Church Selina Marcon - marconselina@gmail.com 01531 670900  
 Parish Council Allen Mawby - cllr.allen.mawby@pixley-pc.co.uk 01531 670185

## LITTLE MARCLE

Church Jim Glanville - jimglanville@btinternet.com 07800 714011  
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Church Rev 'd Linde Melhuish - l.i.melhuish@gmail.com 07967 690412  
 Parish Council Brendan Sugden - cllr.brendan.sugden@pixley-pc.gov.uk 01531 670182

## PIXLEY

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 Prancing Pony Jayne Cresswell - jaynecresswell@btinternet.com 07854 841966  
 Parish Hall Josephine Felton - secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk 01531 670425  
 Wildlife Group Kate Wollen - ayltonwollen@gmail.com 01531 670834  
 Tree Warden Sally Webster - sally@sallywebster.net 07836 389369  
 Hedgehog Rescue and Advice 01531 670837

## STRETTON GRANDISON GROUP

Parish Council Emma Thomas - pcgroupclerk@gmail.com

## Cider Press

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 Munsley David Murdoch - david@dunmurdie.plus.com 07518 921300  
 Pixley Lesley Clothier - lesley.clothier@yahoo.co.uk 07957 435276

## CONTACTS

# Parting shot

The lighting of the beacon in Aylton to mark 80 years since the ending of WWII in Europe.  
 Words and picture - Andrew Riga.



At 21.30hrs on May 8th saw friends and neighbours from Aylton & Putley congregate at Yew Tree Farm, Aylton to witness the lighting of the beacon, and as requested by the Pageantmaster to the hymn of 'I Vow to Thee My Country' written by Sir Cecil Spring Rice and set to the tune 'Thaxted' by Gustav Holst, sung by Katherine Jenkins at the commissioning of the new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth into the Royal Navy, during which gave us all time to reflect on the occasion. The evening rounded off with a hot toddy of mulled perry and cider.

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# CHURCH SERVICES

	Aylton	Little Marcle	Much Marcle	Munsley	Putley	Wellington Heath	Yatton
1st June	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
8th June		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
15th June	11.00am		9.30am		11.00am	9.30am	
22nd June			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
29th June					10.30am		
3rd July				6.00pm Bringing in the Light			
6th July	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
13th July		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
19th July						3.00pm Churchyard Service	
20th July	11.00am		9.30am		11.00am	9.30am	
27th July			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
3rd Aug	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
10th Aug		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
16th Aug					3.30pm Churchyard Service		
17th Aug	11.00am		9.30am		11.00am	9.30am	
24th Aug			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
31st Aug	10.30am						

## CHURCHWARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Aylton</b> -	Anne Blandford: 01531 670274 Selina Marcon: 01531 670900	<b>Pixley</b> -	Anna Ralph: 07980 680809
<b>Little Marcle</b> -	Jim Glanville: 01531 670125	<b>Putley</b> -	Elaine Spalding: 01531 670554
<b>Much Marcle</b> -	Richard Brooks: 01531 660241 John Chapman: 01531 660664	<b>Wellington Heath</b> -	Derek Barnes: 01531 248472 Amanda Wright: 01531 633325
<b>Munsley</b> -	Mike Robinson: 01531 670356 Linda Warner: 01531 632344	<b>Yatton</b> -	John Reed: 01989 780439 Chris Oulton: 07582 807361

Please get in touch Rev'd Val Tait Rector 01531 634035 / Email [valtait@live.co.uk](mailto:valtait@live.co.uk)

Designed by [Monster-Creative.com](http://Monster-Creative.com) Edited by [Julie Crompton](http://JulieCrompton.com)