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Frome, Castle Frome, Stretton Grandison & the Eggletons



the **cider** press

Spring
Mar - May 2026
Issue No.110



Please Help!

We are running a 3-day Flower Festival to celebrate St Michael, patron saint of artists through colourful floral displays inspired by well-known painters (Monet, Degas etc). The theme is "Art in Flowers" and each display will celebrate a famous artist. There are more than 20 arrangements planned, together with refreshments and activities for all the family. We are reaching out to ask for help to make the Festival a success. Proceeds from the event will help to fund repairs to the roof and internal décor.

We particularly need help with the following;

- Sponsorship of the arrangements
- Flower Arrangers
- Stewarding during the event (*rota*)
- Cake-making
- Serving refreshments (*rota*)
- Loan of equipment – marquee, gazebos, tables and chairs, a gate arch, portaloos
- Set up and dismantling event team

Thank you for your support. Please contact:
 Chris Lynch Festival Coordinator: 07794934091 - chris.lynch54@btinternet.com
 Jim Glanville Church Warden: 07800714011 - jimglanville@btinternet.com



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A word from *the Editor* by Julie Crompton

Welcome to the spring edition of *The Cider Press*. After the calm slumber of winter, our countryside should be about to burst back to life with colour, warmth, and the joyful sounds of nature.

This winter, has been one of the most damp and dreary ones I can ever remember. It seems like an age since I was able to wear clothing and footwear that wasn't waterproof or built for boggy conditions.

In this issue, there seems to be a consensus from most of our contributors and columnists to get outside and enjoy the fresh air. Both Rosa Mundi (p9) and Sally Webster (p12) inform us about different aspects of tree care. Sally Smart (p16) has been on her local travels as a pilgrim and Kate Wollen (p11) has been tracking down Tigers in Putley!

Missy Ferguson (p8) has really got me dreaming of those wonderful spring days with her tales from the farm, and Pixley & District Council (p10) have a plan, which I hope materialises, to designate some of our smaller local routes as 'Quiet Lanes', to allow us all to enjoy them with less trepidation of speeding vehicles. They ask for nominations for which routes would be most suitable, so please get involved.

Looking a little further ahead, The Big Apple Blossomtime event (p21) is happening at the beginning of May and they are on the search for willing volunteers to help with the events. If you have musical talent, they are also looking for performers to entertain the visitors too.

On a musical theme, Jane Priestman is organising a fundraising concert in Malvern for the Amber Trust (p17). The headline performer is one of the UK's most talented pianists, Derek Paravicini, so it is sure to be a fabulous and memorable afternoon of entertainment.

The Prancing Pony had their AGM in January, and have set out the calendar for this year's entertainment (p15) along with their new committee line-up.

Moving on to health and wellbeing, Ledbury Health Partnership (p26) are welcoming a new doctor and nurse to the practice, While Jenneke's column (p19) informs us of the small changes we can all make to prevent ourselves and elderly loved ones from falls. These seemingly innocuous events can be life changing or even life limiting, so it's worth a read.

Sue Ashe (p18) tells us a little about the life of one of our older residents, Gerald Maddox, who sadly left us just before his 100th birthday.

Val Tait writes about the celebrations for a milestone historic event on (p32), the founding of the diocese of Hereford in 676, an astonishing 1,350 years ago.

Another achievement worth celebrating was the record breaking amount raised

by the Trumpet and District Agricultural Society Tractor run (p20).

But if you still need the cockles of your heart warmed with some simple, wholesome food, John Meringue has been batch baking to fill the family freezer to the brim with some, easy to make and bake, mini cottage pies (p6).

In the last issue I wrote about the effects of rising print and production costs we at The Cider Press have been contending with. From our very humble beginnings, we now deliver to over 5 times the amount of households that we used to cover. Our main cost has always been the print – now well over £2000 a year. Our costs have historically been covered by the patronage of the local parish councils covering the areas we deliver to and the businesses who want to be promoted in our local magazine.

Our committee has discussed ways we can reduce our costs, including sending out our magazine to email subscribers, but realised that not all of our readership have access to view an on-line document, coupled with the minefield of complying with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), then linking those safely stored email addresses to physical addresses to avoid any overlap. We also concluded that the information held in our magazine is relevant for three months, which makes a physical newsletter far more accessible for most people.

As a 'not for profit' organisation, we strive to make enough money to cover our costs, and as such, we are blessed by having so many wonderful volunteers who, deliver, organise, set aside their time to contribute articles, images, and put together our little

local publication.

Last year was a financial tightrope and we would like to thank some of the organisations we support in our magazine for their generous donations which go a long way to make sure we can continue to provide our community magazine.

To Putley Parish Hall for their wonderful annual donation, and the Big Apple Association for their generous one-off grant. To all of our Parish Councils, and churches, whose continued support we value greatly, and who we know all appreciate The Cider Press as a cost-effective method of communicating with their residents and parishioners.

Also a big thank you to all of our advertisers for continuing to support us.

Designing the magazine in-house, means that we can make bespoke adverts that appeal to our increasingly large readership.

Our 2026 advertising rate card is on page 34 and now includes more options, should you want to advertise your business. To discuss your requirements, please email julie@monster-creative.com with your 'phone number, indicating the best time for me to give you a call.

If you don't have a business to advertise, but would like make a small donation towards The Cider Press printing costs, please contact our treasurer, Jim Glanville: jimglanville@btinternet.com or any member of the Cider Press team (see page 34 for contact details). Thank you very much for your continued support.

Have a fabulous Spring 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:
1st May 2026**

julie@monster-creative.com



Batch baking at its best. We make these and freeze them for an easy, mid-week meal.

We've used all kinds of filling and mash options by using lamb, chicken fish or vegetable pie fillings and alternative, mashable veg for the top, but this is the starting point for them all. A simple mince beef filling with a mashed potato topping. The pie case is shortcrust pastry, so feel free to use your favourite pastry recipe, or pre-made pastry of choice. The ingredient quantities are a guide only as this is batch baking. More equals more in the batch! This is the super simple version which uses store cupboard ingredients to make things quick and easy, but you can always make everything from scratch if you want to make a gourmet version

BAKED OFFERINGS

by John Meringue

Mini Cottage Pies

Ingredients (makes 24+ muffin sized pies)

FOR THE FILLING

- 500g Minced Beef
- 1 large Onion - finely chopped
- 1 large Carrots - finely diced
- 500ml Beef Gravy

FOR THE TOPPING AND BASE

- 2Kg White Potatoes
- Large Knob of Butter
- Milk
- Grated Cheese for the top
- Ready Rolled Shortcrust Pastry

Method

Brown the minced beef in a frying pan, try to let the meat get a few crispy edges, as this caramelisation will add to the depth of flavour in the final filling. Reduce the heat of the pan and add the onion and carrot to the pan. Mix together and let the vegetables soften in the pan for around ten minutes. In the mean-time, make up your jug of gravy. Basically, just gravy granules and boiling water. Add this to your mince mix and bring back to a simmer. There's quite a

lot of seasoning in gravy granules, so don't season the filling until you've added all of the ingredients and tasted it. It might only need a bit of black pepper and maybe some mixed herbs. Once cooked, take your pan off the heat and let it cool down.

While you wait for the filling to cool, it's time to get your mash on the go.

You can peel your potatoes for a traditional mash, or if you want to have a more rustic version, thoroughly wash your spuds but leave the skins on. We almost always peel them for a more creamy finish.

Boil the potatoes until they are soft in salted water. Drain and mash them. Add butter and milk to your taste. You don't want them to be too sloppy though. They need to stand up to more cooking when they are on the top of the pies.

Take your pre-rolled pastry from the fridge and cut out disks of the pastry to fit your muffin dish, both the bottom and sides. Add in enough of your filling to bring the mix just below the top edge of the pastry

cases, then top with your mash in a rustic dome. The rougher the topping, the more crispy bits you get. We roughen ours up with a fork, then top with a grating of strong cheddar.

Pop them into a pre-heated oven onto a pre-heated baking tray 180-200°C for 30-35 mins.

You may find you have excess of any of the pie components. We usually have enough for a separate pie for two hungry people, so we usually have that for our meal and save all of the mini pies for future enjoyment.

Release the cooked pies from their muffin tin and let the uneaten pies cool on a wire rack. Once cooled, pack them into freezer bags or freezer tubs and freeze.

When you want to eat them in the future, just defrost and re-heat at around 180°C for 20 mins. Serve with your veg of choice, and a small glow of self satisfaction that you are now a batch baking guru.





As the beautiful blooms awaken the countryside from the slow, dull winter it's this time that really makes me feel that the year is beginning, and excitement builds for what it will bring.

After spending the end of last autumn struggling to plant what felt like a tonne of bulbs - that were rearranged by little helping hands and checked every day to see if they were growing - we finally get to see them flourish.

From the delicate snowdrops to the vibrance of the golden hues of the daffodils, bringing with them the hope of warmer days to come, we can't wait for more family walks through the bluebells that drift through Hill wood and picnics overlooking the village watching the sun set. Getting

outside and appreciating what we have on our doorstep never ceases to amaze me especially with new special games of finding magic sticks and rocks that will no doubt be made into a den or kept in beds for the rest of summer!

Lambing is now in full swing with the maternity suites filling up nicely and although we are all feeling a little jaded, the winter Olympics have been a great distraction when waiting for lambs to arrive. As we can see the light at the end of the tunnel we are now hoping for a kind April with a little rain, a bit more sunshine and lots of grass for the ewes and lambs to be turned out in the fields.

What's next on the farm? It'll soon be time to plant some of this year's spring crops and those hazy summer days won't feel so distant. But for now it's back to the veg garden and flower patch and hoping to plant them in straight lines!!!

Trees

by Rosa Mundi

After 20 years some needed attention.

A fat, fluffy conifer went brown at the bottom and blocked the view. Chainsaw and stump grinding job. A very tall pine situated perilously between adjacent property and electricity cable, which had to be sheathed, and over a footpath, decided to give up the arboreal ghost. It had always swayed terrifyingly in a storm but now it decided to drop its needles and die, slowly. This needed a man with the ability of a squirrel to shin up to the top and nip it off a couple of feet at a time. It was multi stemmed and none of the trunks looked capable of supporting more than a pigeon, but up he went and down it came.

DB was most envious of the array of tools and scene of destruction. Nothing he likes better than chopping things back, off or down. He had to content himself with breaking up smaller branches for kindling and stacking the big pile of cut timber to dry out for the wood burner next winter.

Then there was the mulberry tree. This had been trimmed over the years but that just stimulates it to grow like the clappers and its huge canopy shaded more and more of the garden. It was braced with a wire rope holding the four splayed trunks together as mulberry trees like to drop down, put down roots and wander off to come up a bit further on. Now it looks dreadful. Pollarding is such a harsh procedure but severe branch pruning was the only option. At least with a reduced canopy the lawn will less resemble the aftermath of a traffic accident when the fruits drop in summer.

However into darkness a little light must fall in the way of ordering new plants and seeds. A "Simple Life" rose for an arch where a jasmine died and two white lavenders which attract bees until late summer, even when there don't seem to be any flowers left. A decision has yet to be taken about planting artichokes, both globe and Jerusalem. The former will take years to grow and the latter will run amok, but they are so delicious.

Meanwhile white japonica on the terrace, scented yellow mahonia and green spears of all the bulbs to come have heralded the lengthening days. Roll on Spring.



QUIET LANES – WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT!

Following a very positive meeting in our parish with Hereford Council Traffic Department, we have been encouraged to take steps to implement a number of actions to improve the safety and usability of roads in our neighbourhood. Not least amongst these is the “QUIET LANES” scheme - prominent signage that can be erected to alert vehicle drivers to the regular use of our narrow lanes by other road users – pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. In an area such as ours where there are no pavements or street lighting it is hoped that the QUIET LANES signs could play a part in educating visiting white van drivers to reduce their speed and show more consideration for local

road users on foot, bicycle or horse...

If you would like to nominate a local lane which you feel could benefit from QUIET LANES signage, please contact Pixley Parish Council [clerk@pixley-pc.gov.uk] with your suggestion. The more “votes” cast for a particular stretch of road will make it easier for us to make the case for this traffic calming action to be implemented!

MAIN ROAD A4172 aka THE RACETRACK

Hereford Council has agreed to reinstate a Herefordshire Welcome sign on the A4172 when you approach the county from the Preston Cross roundabout. In addition, the Parish Council are in discussions with HC to install white village gates with appropriate welcome signs when entering the parishes of Little Marcle, Aylton and Pixley along the A4172. As you are aware speed is an issue along the A4172 and the council are hoping that these gates will act as a traffic calming measure to reduce the number of incidents on this stretch of the highway.

SMART WATER SECURITY KITS

Still available! If you have not yet received your FREE Smart Water property security kit, please contact us without delay [clerk@pixley-pc.gov.uk] or via the website. One security kit is available for every home in the parish.

Tigers in Putley

by Kate Wollen

I have been lucky enough to be able to enjoy an abundance of caterpillars and the brightly coloured adults at home in Putley over the last few years.

Not, as it would have been some years ago, the once common Small Tortoiseshell or Peacock butterflies, but the beautiful Scarlet Tiger moth.

They first appeared about 4 or 5 years ago and at first ate the Comfrey in the garden, which is plentiful, but this year they are munching their way through the comfrey and other plants including a non- native Elm tree, Lung-wort, nettles and even some Rudbeckia.

In the winter I usually find the caterpillars around the metal containers outside which hold the bird seed. These are in a sheltered corner by the house. The caterpillars often end up in the seed, so they have to be rescued to prevent becoming bird food. There must be something about metal that they like, heating up in the sun perhaps as in late September, I found 4 sheltering on the wheel of a little used trailer. Photo attached. There were also 2 on my old wellies. In early February, when you would think any self respecting caterpillar would be sheltering somewhere from the elements, I found a caterpillar on a fence post.

With only one Small Tortoiseshell butterfly seen this year, despite the abundance of nettles, and mainly Small and Large White butterflies, the Scarlet Tiger moths brighten up the day in summer and the



caterpillars in winter. I leave all of my comfrey and let it spread and am careful to not clear the dead stems in the garden in winter, until just before spring. I just hope the Tigers stay.

HOUSE FULL?



If you have a houseful of visitors on the way, why not put them up just around the corner in one of our five charming cottages? Perfect for family gatherings and special occasions.

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Trees in Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest.

They typically include buildings and natural features such as trees and open spaces. In Herefordshire there are 64 designated Conservation Areas all varying in character and extent. Some are in the historic parts of urban centres such as Hereford and Ledbury while others cover extensive areas of rural settlement e.g. Fownhope and Weobley.

Within Cider Press country, there are three Conservation Areas: Putley, Aylton and Stretton Grandison, all designated in the early 90's and categorised as rural hamlets because of their relatively small size and rural locations.

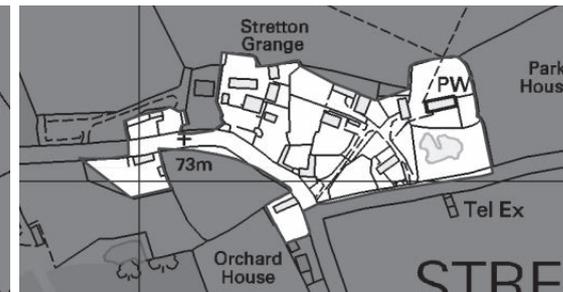
A full listing of the county's Conservation Areas can be found on the Herefordshire Council website.

What is not always well understood by those living in Conservation Areas is that trees in general and not just trees with Tree Protection Orders (TPOs) are afforded some protection.

If anyone wishes to carry out works to trees within the boundaries of one of the 64 Conservation Areas, they must give Hereford Council 6 weeks' written notice. In practice, this means filling out a simple free application form describing the tree(s) so it can be identified, the nature of the proposed works and the reason for carrying them out. Once registered, the application is posted online and open to public scrutiny like any other planning application.

Conservation Area tree regulations apply to all trees with a diameter over 75cm (3 inches), at 1.5m above ground level. The only exceptions are trees smaller than 75cm in diameter, orchards or those trees presenting an immediate risk to safety. Even then works need to be restricted to the removal of the risk and a written notice submitted to Herefordshire Council within 5 days of 'emergency' work being carried out, ideally accompanied by photographic evidence.

Generally, consent is given to works on trees in Conservation Areas however, the Local Authority reserves the right to place a TPO



The Conservation areas of Aylton, Stretton Grandison and Putley

on a tree, if they deem the proposed work a threat to that tree or to the special character of the area.

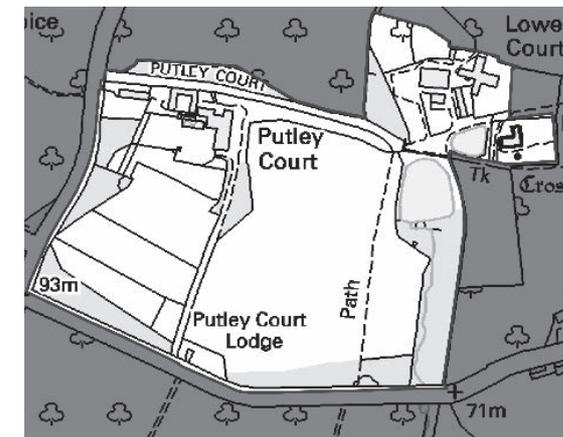
The Herefordshire Tree Forum website has more detailed and practical information in the section entitled Trees in Conservation Areas. It also lists recent Conservation Area applications.

www.htreeforum.co.uk/trees-and-conservation-areas

Given the role that trees can play in a Conservation Area – the stunning parkland trees of Putley being a case in point, good practice guidelines in managing the trees are best adhered to.

The root systems of mature trees often extend well beyond the extent of the tree canopy and sensitive mycorrhizal networks fan out just below the ground surface. To prevent damage to roots and the mycorrhizae which facilitate nutrient uptake and help safeguard trees, please do not have bonfires, spray herbicides or compact the soil by parking machinery in their vicinity. Piling soil or rich compost close to a tree (or a hedgerow) is also potentially damaging and will weaken the tree over time.

When work on trees is complete, try to avoid having woody 'waste' material and leaf litter removed from



the site. Shredded chippings can be used for paths and mulch, brash can be made into habitat piles or dead hedges, logs can be left in piles and dead standing and fallen wood left in situ for birds, bats and beetles to use. It is amazing how quickly woody waste will rot down.

From a wildlife conservation perspective, please remember that trees are entire ecosystems and will be home to mosses, lichens and ivy and many other living organisms. Make sure too that the tree is checked for signs of nesting birds and roosting bats before any work, however minor, begins.

If in doubt about any aspect of tree work in Conservation Areas, get advice from Herefordshire Council, a qualified arboriculturist/tree surgeon or your local Tree Warden.

Sally Webster

Tree Warden for Putley & Coordinator of Herefordshire Tree Warden Network



Funding for energy-saving home improvements in Herefordshire

Funding

Grants are available for a variety of energy-saving upgrades, including:

- Air source heat pumps
- Solar electricity
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- You own or privately rent the home you live in
- The property is inefficient
- You have a household income of under £30,000 or a member of the household receives means-tested benefits

Call to see if you are eligible and apply today

0800 677 1432

keepherefordshirewarm.co.uk/home-improvements



Prancing Pony at Putley Parish Hall

A new year for the Pony!

We held a very well attended AGM in January, it's great to have such an engaged and interested membership...nothing to do with the availability of alcohol at the meeting of course! We were delighted that many of last year's committee have chosen to stay on for another year. A huge thank you to Jayne Cresswell, who stepped down as Chair, for her many years of dedication to the Pony.

The new committee for 2026 is:

Chair – Nick Beaumont

Treasurer – Mike Quilleash

Entertainment – Fenella Bennett

Secretary – Summer Mughrabi

Last year's efforts have left us with a surplus of £1,100 and it was agreed at the AGM that the full amount would be donated to Putley Parish Hall for upgrades as the hall committee see fit. Membership remains at £5 per year with guests paying £1 on the night.

Thank you to all our volunteers who help to make running the Pony such a pleasure. You can volunteer via email (putleyprancingpony@gmail.com), WhatsApp or the good old fashioned sign-up sheet next to the bar!

See you all at the pub soon,

The committee

email: putleyprancingpony@gmail.com

Dates for 2026:

February 27th

Alfie's Kitchen & Ambient Folk

March 27th

Miniyakis & Bluenotes Jazz

April 24th

Alfie's Kitchen & Y Rock

May 29th

June 26th

Hooked & Crooked

July 31st – Summer Party!

Alfie's Kitchen & The Remnants

August 28th

September 25th

Miniyakis

October 30th

November 27th

Sorrel and Sage & The Mushrooms

December 18th

Christmas Party!

Entertainment and food can be subject to last minute changes so do keep looking at our Facebook page and become a member to join the mailing list.



The Golden Valley Pilgrim Way – Herefordshire

by Sally Smart



Those eagle eyed amongst you will remember just 12 months ago the title of our Cider Press Fitness article was: ‘Be inspired by a Pilgrimage.’ Clearly I was!

In September 2025 after experiencing a ‘3 day taster’ in 2024 Charlie and I set off on a route described as: ‘A magical 60-mile circular trail along ancient paths, starting at Hereford Cathedral taking in the Wye Valley, Golden Valley and foothills of the Black Mountain.’

Since returning I have discovered there are not many Churches in the UK that open their doors to Pilgrims....clearly Herefordshire is a leading light. I wanted to share with you some of our lasting memories and maybe you too will be inspired to either do a short trip (there are local buses too) or the complete circuit. You don’t have to sleep in the local church but we found it a very special experience. Below is my story:

‘We were well looked after at every church we visited. We enjoyed the variety of gifts

that different churches left for Pilgrims... The Holy Communion service at Madley, Coffee & locally made biscuits & the wood burner at Bredwardine Village Hall (not strictly a church but the church was not available to pilgrims), Hot water bottles, blankets and pillows at Michaelchurch Esley with a personal letter, a warm welcome from Chris who was cutting the grass at Clodock, Ewyas Harold with its beautiful church... we noticed the lovely note asking the builders not to start the morning work until the pilgrims had left at 9am. Our final destination was Kingstone and we received an amazing welcome as Bill was still around for the church run cafe.... generously offering tea and cakes.

Of course there were all the other churches along the way that we visited. Craswall being a favourite but also St Peters Llancillo -Friends of the Friendless... what a beautiful setting. A wonderful trip.’
Go to: visitherefordshire.co.uk/see-do/routes-road-trips/golden-valley-pilgrim-way

The Putley Fitness Walk:

First Monday every month. Meet at Putley Parish Hall ready to set off at 10 a.m. for a one hour, 2.5 mile walk along the lanes, followed by refreshments, and all for £1! We also offer a shorter, slower walk of 20 to 30 minutes. Next dates: 2nd March, 6th April (Easter Monday) and 1st June, but not 4th May when Big Apple walks are available instead. 4 Longer walks of 6 to 8 miles arranged quarterly. For further info ring Sally on 07468 793405.



Fundraising Concert

To celebrate 30 years of The Amber Trust, local fundraiser, Jane Priestman, has organised a concert at Malvern St James School.

The Amber Trust is organisation which provides musical opportunities for blind and partially sighted children, and children with more complex needs

This heart-warming afternoon of music and song will feature the extraordinary talent of the Queen's nephew, Derek Paravicini, England Pianist of the Year 2026, the choirs of New College Worcester, Malvern St James and other talented musicians.

19th April, 2pm-4.30pm

York Hall, Malvern St James School, Avenue Road, Malvern, WR14 3BA

Tickets for this one-off event are £20 and are available by calling: Jane on 07919 665 752 or Malvern St James 07763 723 619

PUTLEY CHURCH

by Sue Ashe



Our Easter services offer some quiet times for reflection to music as well as Celebration Communion. Please see back cover for times of services and events at ours and the different churches in the area.

The church was full for the Funeral of Gerald Maddox on 20th January which would have been his one hundredth birthday. During the service we heard of his long and interesting life before he came to Putley as well as what he did once he came here, including standing on the backs of cows! It was an emotional and fitting tribute to a notable figure in the community. The picture shows Gerald laying the wreath at the memorial during a Remembrance service at Putley Church.

As the weather moves from Winter to Spring, do visit the church and see the wild flowers emerging making our church one of the prettiest in Herefordshire. As the historical society Britain Express wrote about the idyllic setting-

If there is a more delightfully situated country church In England, I want to see it! Putley's church stands in rural splendour, reflected in a small pond, surrounded by tall trees and farm fields.

Happy Spring everyone.

Many thanks to all those who supported our Christmas Appeal for Save the Children.

Through Christingle, Carols and Crib services we raised just over £177. Thanks to all that gave financially and of their time for vulnerable children and young people.



December Results:

First prize no 8 Second prize no 41

January Results:

First prize no 27 Second prize no 9

February Results:

First prize no 2 Second prize no 6

Health & Wellbeing

by Jenneke Bryant

Preventing Falls – Small Changes, Life-Changing Results

Falls are one of the biggest risks for older adults – but they don't have to be inevitable. In this third part of my Live-in Care series, I'll show how the right support at home can prevent falls, rebuild confidence, and keep loved ones safe and independent for longer.

Falls are one of the biggest reasons older people lose their independence, but the good news is that many falls can be prevented with the right support. Live-in care has proven to be one of the most effective ways to keep people safe and steady on their feet.

A live-in carer provides constant supervision and reassurance. They can ensure that walking aids are always within reach, help with safe mobility, and support gentle exercises recommended by physiotherapists. They also keep a close eye on hydration – a simple but powerful factor in preventing dizziness and improving balance.

I once supported a gentleman who had suffered several serious falls. His carer made small but meaningful changes: removing loose rugs, rearranging furniture to create clear pathways, and encouraging

regular drinks throughout the day. They also coordinated with an Occupational Therapist, who recommended handrails in key places. Over time, this gentleman regained the confidence to walk independently, with his family saying, "We finally feel like we're not living in fear of the next fall."

The emotional impact is just as important. Many people who have fallen once become so frightened that they stop moving altogether, which only weakens them further. Having a live-in carer nearby offers reassurance – and that reassurance can be the first step towards rebuilding confidence and strength.

Falls don't have to mean losing independence. With the right support, many can be prevented – and even when they can't, live-in care ensures someone is there to help, every step of the way.

About the Author:

I'm Jenneke (Jenny) Bryant, and I've spent years working closely with older people, their families, and healthcare professionals to create safe, supportive home environments. If you'd like advice on reducing fall risks at home, email me at jennekebryant@gmail.com.

TRUMPET TRACTOR RUN

A record breaking £4,267.61 was raised by the Trumpet and District Agricultural Society on their Annual Christmas Tractor Run.

The money raised will be equally divided between: St Michael's Hospice, Bartestree; The Midland Air Ambulance; Ely Memorial Fund; Bromyard Lights. Held on Saturday 13 December 2025, this popular tractor run started with tea and cakes at Baddy Marsh Farm, Lower Eggleton by kind permission of Robert and Shirley Breese and proceeded via the A4103 to Bishops Frome and Bromyard, returning via Stoke Lacy to Baddy Marsh for fish and chips.

The event attracted 66 tractors and cars decorated with a fantastic array of lights, trees, gift wrapped parcels and reindeer to celebrate Christmas which lit up the Herefordshire evening sky. This was especially effective as the convoy drove up Bromyard High Street with it's fantastic Christmas

Lights. Tractor drivers put a lot of work into decorating their tractors to make such a memorable spectacle for the gathered crowds who so generously give donations to the elves who emerge from Santa's Grotto. Donations, draw money and tractor drivers' entry fees all go towards charity to make this such a worthwhile event.

Highlight of the evening was the Grand Draw with an amazing 106 prizes ranging from MOTs to food and fruit hampers. The Trumpet would like to thank those individuals and businesses in and around Bromyard who supported us by donating draw prizes and all the people who sold tickets prior to the event and of course the people who bought tickets and put money into the collection buckets to support local charities and those gathered in every gateway, some sitting on their deckchairs along the route. Photos and the full list of our sponsors can be found on Facebook. This is an event not to be missed. Why not join in this fun event next year?



The Big Apple Blossomtime

Sunday 3rd and Monday 4th May – May Day Bank Holiday

Blossomtime 2026 will see Big Apple ringing some changes, with the introduction of a new venue to explore alongside some of the old favourites:

- Putley Parish Hall will be the first port of call, a hub for information about what is going on, ticket sales, coffees, lunches and teas and the meeting point for guided walks
- Sales and tastings of a great array of ciders and perry will be located in the heart of Dragon Orchard, courtesy of Norman and Annie Stanier
- At Birchley in Aylton, the Skittery family will be sharing a behind-the-scenes look at the production of their single variety Apple Juice & Cider

Visitors arriving by car will be asked to park at the Parish Hall where a £5 ticket will give access to all three venues. With support from Westons and Skittery Apple Juice & Cider, a tractor and trailer will be available to take people on a set route between the venues. Live music could pop up at any of the venues – watch the programme.

As always, we welcome offers of help! To 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

And do keep up-to-date with what's going on by visiting our website:

www.bigapple.org.uk

Calling all musicians!

For the past couple of years at The Big Apple's Blossomtime event we have had the pleasure of hearing some really good bands, musicians and choirs.

We would like to hear from anyone who might be interested in a gig to entertain visitors and stallholders alike. Come as a group or as an individual, we'd be happy to hear from you. Contact Mary: volunteers@bigapple.org.uk or phone 01531 670389 if you're interested."

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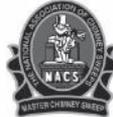
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Putley WI *More than Jam & Jerusalem*

In our monthly meetings we are inspired by a varied range of talks and activities.

In November Andrew Mouldsley, owner of The Cheese Pantry and Mews Bouche Cafe in Ledbury, came to tell us about making cheese. In what was a fascinating evening, we learnt lots about local cheeses, and of course we got to sample some.

In December we had our Christmas party, where we enjoyed mulled cider and delicious nibbles brought by members for everyone to share. We then settled down to make some beautiful fabric Christmas baubles, with guidance from Linda, one of our craft group members. There was much laughter and everyone was delighted with their bauble. The December meeting is always a highlight and we are already thinking about what we can do next year.

In January we held our annual baking competition. This year's challenge was a frosted carrot cake, made to your own recipe. The standards were high, and we enjoyed sampling the entries. We loved the talk by professional musician Liam Fleet. He played many of his extensive collection of bassoons and oboes to demonstrate how they developed from Tudor times to the present day.

We have additional events and get together for our sub groups. The craft group meets at Sorrel and Sage Café at Trumpet, on Monday afternoons and on Wednesday mornings each week. It offers a great

opportunity to be productive and sociable at the same time. Projects and abilities are varied, so come and see what we're up to. The garden group have just planned their garden visits for 2026, the next one is to Ashwood Nurseries in Kingswinford.

Last year we took part in Big Apple Blossomtime and Much Marcle Shindig which enabled us to generate funds to donate to good causes. At our December meeting members voted to support the following:

- Putley Stay and Play for supplies
- Putley Parish Hall towards the new fridge
- Much Marcle Community Shop towards building costs
- St Michaels Hospice
- Much Marcle Brownies and Guides towards a new storage shed

Being a part of such a flourishing WI is a real joy. Why not come along and be inspired? We meet at 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Putley Parish Hall. If you'd like to test the waters before attending a full monthly meeting, you will find a small group of us at The Nest every Friday at 10.30am – just ask for the WI table – or contact our President, ginnymccoy5@gmail.com.

Upcoming meetings: March 10th: AGM and board games, April 8th: talk on John Masfield, May 13th: history of Croome Airfield

PUTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

We are pleased to report that recent work on flood management in the village has been successful up to now despite some relentless precipitation these winter months.

Councillor Parr has done some good work in honing our Emergency Resilience Plan and liaising with insurers so that we are all clearer about roles and responsibilities should we ever be faced with a serious emergency in the village.

On that note, the Parish Council would like to take this opportunity of thanking and recognising the selfless work undertaken by Nigel Rollinson late last year in removing a large oak that had blocked the road near Underhill.



Talking of oak trees (neat segue) Adrian Hope, one of our local tree surgeon/arborists

has generously provided a rustic oak bench at Putley Common. It is hoped that the bench will provide an opportunity of rest for locals and visitors alike, especially those negotiating the Putley Open Garden walks and such like.

Talking of benches (another neat segue), some of you will have seen a bench appear outside the Parish Hall, and those of you with a very keen eye will have spotted that it now has a very smart brass plaque with a dedication to one of our parishioners, Ken Traherne; sadly missed by all of us in Putley and beyond. It was mentioned that 'he was like an oak of the village' and it was felt that this comment deserved wider recognition, so that is the phrase that we have used on the bench to remember Ken, a generous and kind hearted man who will be greatly missed by us all. There will be a formal 'unveiling' of the bench on Monday 23rd February.

Finally, Putley Parish Council will be organising a CPR/AED Training Session for the community to be delivered by Community First Responders – Ledbury scheme.

The 2 Hour session will provide advice and training on the use of the defibrillator currently located in the car park of the village hall. The date has been provisionally set for Thursday 26th March. Please keep your eyes open for updates and more information.



CANON FROME COURT

Events and hire are always popping up and we have a few things in the pipeline for the new year. Folk gigs, Alexander Technique, Open Days/Weekends and more. Sign up to the mailing list for a monthly update.

Monthly Pop Up Pub - 7-11pm With Open Mic - 8-10pm

First Friday, monthly, 8pm - Free entry. Come and have a pint and a chat from 7pm, and stay for an eclectic friendly mix of creativity from 8.30!

About the Pop-Up Pub: It's a warm room ... with booze and zero/hot drinks, a few snacks and a friendly bunch of people

About Open Mic: Music, songs, comedy, spoken word, poetry, impromptu singalongs, short quizzes... everything is welcome here! 5 mins (words) and 10 mins (music) slots. Please book ahead if you want to be sure of a slot, there are generally 10 max.

See you there!

Monthly Improv Saturdays most months

see the website for dates and details

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

Spring Fair! - FREE

Saturday 21st March – 11 am-4pm

Seedlings and produce, Tours of grounds
Welly wanging, Free lunch! Meet local groups,
stalls from local producers & lifts from Ledbury

For more information and please
Book on website, so we know numbers!

Skye Consort & Emma Björling Singing Workshop and Concert March 13

Workshop - 6-7pm, Concert - 7.45pm

Skye Consort & Emma Björling perform trans-Atlantic arrangements of songs and tunes from Sweden, Ireland, USA and more, as well as original compositions. Each musician brings their own individual interpretation to these traditions to create this extraordinary collaboration, consisting of voices, fiddle, nyckelharpa, bouzouki, and banjo.

Collectively, the band presents an assortment of whirling polskas, groovy reels, passionate love songs, breathtaking hymns, and original compositions.

Ali Burns: GOLDEN OLDIES
April 18 – 19 **SOLD OUT**

Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council

Our next parish council meeting is:

Monday 16th March – 7.30pm
at St James church, Canon Frome

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

Our January council meeting was a relatively quiet one. The agenda included the need for a drainage ditch along the C1153 towards Homend Park, from the A417 and the upkeep of the Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) at each entrance to Stretton Grandison on the A417. Both have been affected by lack of light to recharge the batteries and updated signage along the A417 blocking the lines of sight since they were installed. A team of our councillors are on the case.

Another topic of conversation was how we could amend our Tea, Cake and Table Tennis sessions at Canon Frome Court. These were originally scheduled for one Sunday afternoon each month. This started really well, but as the summer months rolled in, it seemed that Sunday afternoon, was perhaps not the best time to serve the parishioners we had initially sought to entice. After talking to several of my neighbours, the idea of a 'morning coffee' style event, mid-week, seemed to be the favoured idea. Is this something you, our parishioners would like to happen? It would be a free event. One we would like to host to get people together for a cuppa and a chat, and possibly the odd game of table tennis for those who like a spot of fun with a sporting bent. If this is something you'd love, please get in touch with me by email: r.crompton@strettongrandisonGPC.org.uk so we can make it happen.

Another talking point that has surfaced while

out and about in the hamlets has been about the number of vehicles using our usually quiet lanes. Some traversing them at speeds that, although 'legal', feel far too fast for the comfort of those of us using these routes on foot to visit friends, walk with our families, exercise our pets, ride our horses or bikes, or just grab a spot of rural calm.

There is a scheme by which we, as your parish council, can seek to designate these rural amenities as Quiet Lanes. It doesn't change anything but the awareness of those driving or riding along it that there is a very high chance that they will come across people using the lane for recreation or pleasure. This is done by additional signage where the 'Quiet Lane' starts. Such a simple idea, which could make such a difference to all of us who enjoy our locality for its quiet, calm beauty. If you'd like to nominate a 'lane', please get in touch with our clerk, Emma on the email below, so it can be added to our next meeting agenda.

Still in 'highways mode', the incredible amount of rainfall this winter has made traversing the C1153, through Homend Park quite a lottery in a vehicle, and visually, quite a few have only just made it through, but ploughed a quagmire of devastation behind them as they slid off the narrow band of tarmac. Please be safe and careful. If in doubt, go via Newtown Cross.

We currently have vacancies on both Stretton Grandison and Eggleton parish councils – to join our team, please email our Clerk, Emma, at: clerk@strettongrandisonGPC.org.uk

Thank you! Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council

Catch up with our parish council news at www.strettongrandisonpc.org.uk.





LEDBURY HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

We are delighted to announce that our GP Registrar, Dr Das, has passed his final exams and will be joining us as a permanent member of staff in April.

Many of you have seen Dr Das and we have received excellent feedback about his patient care. He will have his own patient list, so if you would like to be on it, please let Catherine Simonini, Practice Manager, know: catherine.simonini@nhs.net

The Nursing Team is changing in February; Becky Morris is leaving and a new Nurse, Bec Griffin, will be joining the team. Sadly our Care Home Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) has moved on, but interviews are being held in January and a new ANP should be appointed by the end of February.

Nordic Walking

One of the Practice's staff members is a qualified Nordic Walking team leader. She is holding sessions for patients and would welcome more participants. If you are interested in having a go, please contact Catherine Simonini, Practice Manager, who can give you more information. All levels of fitness and abilities are welcome!

Support your Patient Participation Group!

The PPG Committee is seriously under strength at the moment – please consider offering to join it, or help the PPG in other ways. To find out more, please email ledburyhealthppg@gmail.com or visit the PPG page on the LHP website.

Flu jabs

If you are eligible and have still not had the chance to book your jab, please get in touch. The Practice still has vaccines in stock.

Klinik

How are you getting on using the Klinik online system? We hope that familiarity is making it easier, but remember that you can still speak to the surgery by 'phone or by visit and the reception team will help you complete the form. If you have any feedback or suggestions for improvements, do contact the Practice Manager, Catherine Simonini: catherine.simonini@nhs.net

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PUTLEY PARISH HALL

by Josephine Felton

Donations:

The hall has recently received welcome support to purchase much wanted items.

A most generous donation for the gleaming new six burner LPG kitchen range, which replaces the old one, itself a second-hand gift many years ago.

Big Apple Association has enabled us to buy a hand dryer for the Ladies to save all that paper and bin emptying.

Putley W.I. kindly contributed to a new fridge as the old one gave up the ghost.

The Prancing Pony has kindly given a most welcome contribution towards current and future projects. There is always at least one in the pipeline!

Putley Open Gardens:

This will be on Saturday 20th June so this is advance notice of needing help in the way of cakes and helpers (just a two hour slot would be most welcome) on the day if you can spare the time. Funds raised go to the Hall and the Church.

Maintenance Day and Litter Pick

This will be on Saturday 21st March from 10.30 a.m. We ask for volunteers to carry out basic maintenance tasks in the hall and garden itself and others to join in a village litter pick. Helping to keep Putley spick and span is a lovely way to spend an early Spring Saturday! Tools and bags provided.

Afterwards you are most welcome to have tea or coffee and a bowl of soup and a roll. Last year it turned into quite a community event, sitting on long tables and chatting well past lunchtime.

Queries to jakeherbst@yahoo.co.uk or secretary@putleyparishhall.co.uk
01531 670425

Putley Parish Hall
10-12 noon

Coffee, Tea and Home-made cakes
Drinks £1 – Home-made Cake £1

March: Monday 9th & 23rd
April: Monday 13th & 27th
May: Monday 11th & 25th
June: Monday 8th & 22nd

Also 30mins 'Walk & Talk'
10am at each coffee morning – All welcome

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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 **ginnymccoy682@btinternet.com**

AYLTON NEWS

The Roadside Charity Stall

The final total of money collected for Martha's Trust, Hereford and Aylton Church was £1,236! Huge thanks to Sally Smart and all who contributed to the effort.

Upcoming Events

Our Charity for this year is The Midland Air Ambulance. Wassailing has already contributed £284 for this charity. We look forward to adding more over the year through other events. The Blossom Time Big Apple in May – over the weekend of 2nd to 4th May – will be the first fundraiser, followed by Opera Anywhere in the summer and a Quiz later in the year. Details to follow in the summer edition of the Cider Press. We shall also be running a tombola at the Christmas Fair in the Ledbury Rugby Club on November 26th.

Church Times

April 5th Easter Communion at 11.am (there will not be a Good Friday vigil in Aylton but there will be one in Putley

April 19th will be a Family Morning Prayer service.

May 3rd There will not be a service in Aylton as we shall be serving Big Apple lunches in Putley Village Hall.

May 10th Rogation Sunday. This year the walk is starting at Putley Church at 9.30 am, moving on to Aylton Church for 10.00 am and ending at Pixley Church at 11.00. The walk will use local footpaths or quiet lanes. You can do the whole walk or part as you wish – or even drive to meet up for a prayer/blessing at the various churches.

Parish Giving Scheme

Aylton Church has now been registered with the Parish Giving Scheme which is a way of giving donations online. Regular or One-off donations can be made and also Gift aid can be applied. You do not have to be a churchgoer to support the church. The building needs constant upkeep to maintain it for future generations. Do search for www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish. Search for Aylton, and click on donate. Thank you.

by **Sue Moger**

POST OFFICE

NEW - Mobile P.O.

at Putley Parish Hall

Wednesdays from 9.00 - 10.15am



This year – 2026, marks the celebration of the 1350th anniversary of the founding of Hereford Diocese in the year 676.

It was amongst the earliest of the Dioceses, or 'See's' to be created as Christianity spread and gradually became established in Britain. The first Bishop of Hereford is recorded as 'Putta' who was exiled from his post in Rochester. The current Bishop – Rt Revd Richard Jackson, is the 106th Bishop of Hereford. A dozen or more of the Bishops from the past half millennium have portraits hanging at the Diocesan Office and Bishop's Palace. I find on my very occasional attendances at meetings there, that changing styles of clerical fashion/grooming over time are interesting to observe, but their expressions are severe and disapproving. I am thankful that the Bishops under which I have served in this Diocese have a friendlier looking demeanour, visually reflecting the concept of the 'God of Love' in our midst who invites us to 'draw near.' The 1350 Diocesan Anniversary Celebrations will include

- Hereford Cathedral's 'Year of Storytelling' with dramatic performances, exhibitions and lectures. (See Hereford Cathedral website).
- Hereford Dioceses' - 'Spiritual Question Times' in various venues,
- 'Pilgrimage days' in Leominster, Much

Wenlock and the Golden Valley. Also celebrations of faith, music and lay ministry. See Hereford Diocese website

- Locally each Parish, Benefice or Deanery are invited to host their own events too. Here in the Cider Churches, there will be a Flower Festival - 'Art in Flowers,' at St Michael and All Angels' Little Marcle from July 3rd to July 5th 2026
- The Ledbury Deanery gathering will be 'Choral Evensong' at St Michael and All Angels Church Ledbury on Sunday May 17th at 5.30pm.

Each planned celebratory event gives opportunity for communities to draw near to one another and to God in thanksgiving not only for the long years of our Christian faith and heritage of the past, but also to continue to be inspired afresh by the life-giving Spirit in the present, whilst faithfully anticipating its ongoing presence in the millennia that are yet to come.

The Church's daily reflections for the 40 days of Lent this year are on the theme of 'Draw Near: Life giving habits for Lent.' Following the rhythm of those 40 days gives opportunity 'to cultivate the habits and practices that will draw us nearer to God. And find that, in doing so, God will draw nearer to us, too.... especially as we prepare to celebrate the great mystery of God's saving love at Easter." To receive the daily Lent reflections in your inbox, either search for the title above OR download the 'Church of England Everyday Faith' app where they are available from Ash Wednesday (February 18th) to Easter Sunday (April 5th). All are welcome to continue to nurture your explorations in person at any of the Holy Week, Easter, or regular services in any of the Cider Churches - see back page for all dates/times and venues.

Draw near... to celebrate God's life and love.

Best wishes Val

Rev. Val Tait - email: valtait@live.co.uk Tel: 01531 634035



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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
 Parish Council Kelvin Lynch - cllr.kelvin.lynch@pixley-pc.gov.uk 01531 670037

MUNSLEY

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

Church Beata Davison - beata.davison@googlemail.com 07989 108237
 Parish Council Steve Swaithes - cllr.steve.swaithes@pixley-pc.gov.uk 01531 670433
 Parish Clerk Ella Wayman - clerk@pixley-pc.gov.uk

PUTLEY

Church Eric Porter - epepepe@aol.com 07527 444949
 Parish Council Janet Chester - clerk@putleyparishcouncil.gov.uk 01531 670036
 WI Ginny McCoy - ginnymccoy682@btinternet.com 07854 160073
 Prancing Pony Summer Mughrabi - putleyprancingpony@gmail.com
 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
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STRETTON GRANDISON GROUP

Parish Council Emma Thomas - clerk@strettongrandisongpc.org.uk

CIDER PRESS TEAM

Editorial Julie Crompton - julie@monster-creative.com 07767 471097
 Accounts Jim Glanville - jimglanville@btinternet.com 07800 714011
 Distribution Sally Smart - sallysmart1000@gmail.com 07468 793405
 Design Richard Crompton - rich@monster-creative.com 07788 560082
 David Murdoch - david@dunmurdie.plus.com 07518 921300
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CONTACTS

Parting shots



Percy Peacock *Update* by John McStea

Residents around Stretton Grange befriended and fed the Peacock and named him Percy. He got so friendly that he would often come into our home. He seemed fascinated by our kitchen, until we realised that he was looking at his reflection in the glass oven door. We realised that he was probably lonely, so we contacted Sasha at the Herefordshire animal rescue centre in Bodenham. Unfortunately while transferring him to an enclosed pen, he surprised her with his strength and he escaped. She regularly has to handle fully grown swans, and she says he was much stronger. Anyway, he hasn't strayed far from

the centre and regularly returns where he stays for hours surveying his new territory and waiting to be fed, all this despite a Peacock colony of over a dozen birds living a few hundred yards away!

So all appears well for Percy at the moment. The environment suits him, he has plenty of natural protection and high roosting perches which Peacocks prefer. He also appears to have plenty to eat - even before Sasha feeds him, and remains in very good health.

If he is accepted by the others, he may one day join the local colony.

If you have a great photo that could grace the front cover or be our 'parting shot', send it to our Editor, at julie@monster-creative.com



CHURCH SERVICES

	Aylton	Little Marcle	Much Marcle	Munsley	Putley	Wellington Heath	Yatton
1st Mar	11.00am					9.30am	9.30am
8th Mar		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
15th Mar	11.00am		9.30am			9.30am	
22nd Mar			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
29th Mar Palm Sunday			10.30am		6.00pm		
2nd Apr Maundy Thursday						7.30pm	
3rd Apr Good Friday			2.00pm	2.00pm Meditation	2.00pm	2.00pm	
4th Apr Easter Eve	Easter Eve Service - Pixley 8.00pm						
5th Apr Easter Sunday	11.00am	11.00am	11.00am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	9.30am
12th April		11.00am	9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
19th April	11.00am		9.30am			9.30am	
26th April			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
3rd May						9.30am	9.30am
10th May Rogation Sunday	10.00am Rogation walk prayers	11.00am		9.30am	Walk 9.30am Putley Service 11.00am Pixley	9.30am	
17th May	11.00am		9.30am			9.30am	
24th May			9.30am	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am	
31st May							10.30am

CHURCHWARDEN CONTACT DETAILS

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

Please get in touch Rev'd Val Tait Rector 01531 634035 / Email valtait@live.co.uk

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