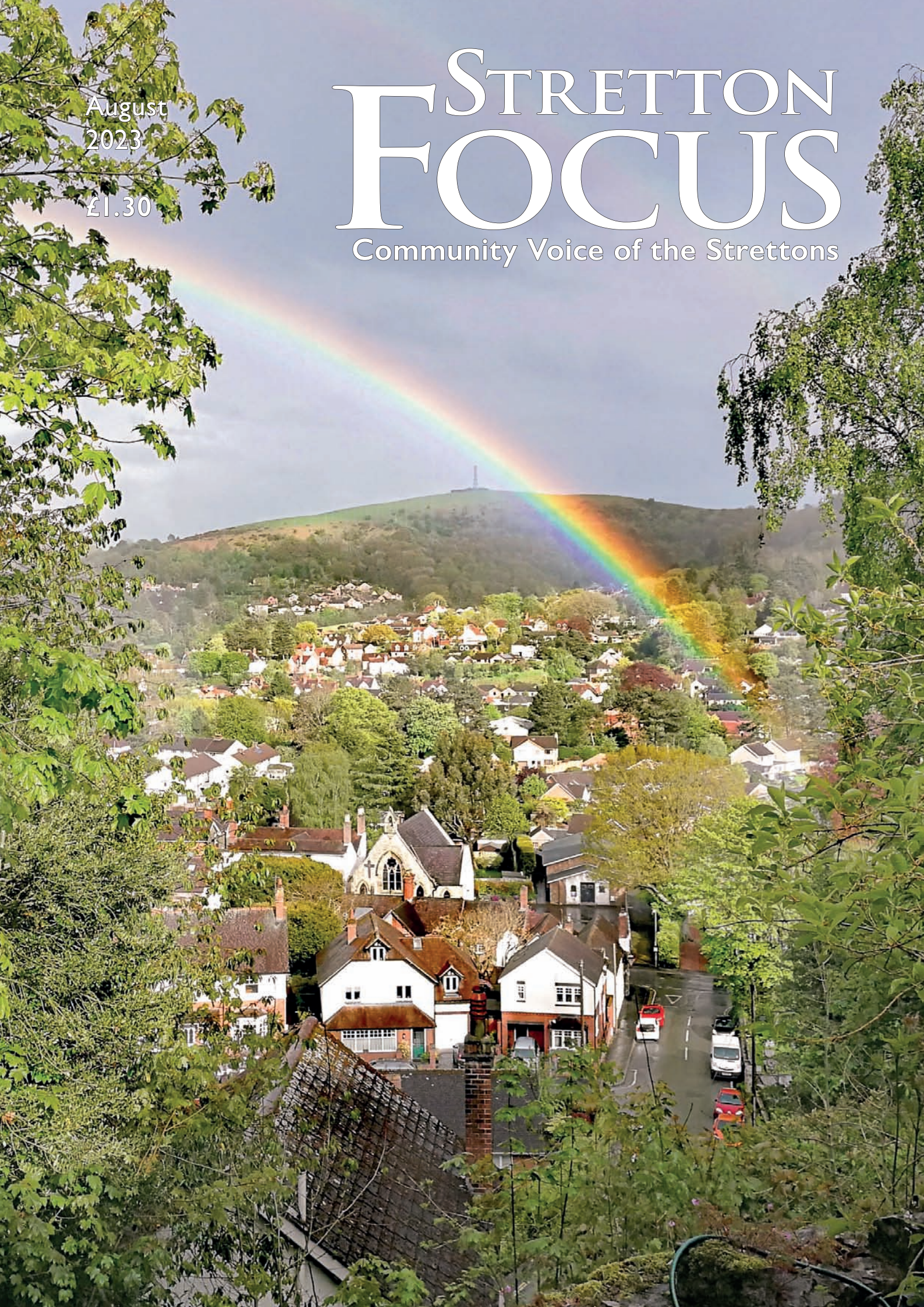


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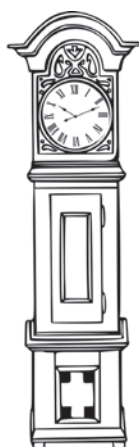
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Welcome



On a recent train journey, I sat behind two people who started every sentence with the word “so” and managed to also insert “like” more than once into each phrase. I stopped reading my book and after counting 159 instances of one and 200 of the other, I moved seats. Some people’s spoken language has always annoyed others by the constant use of a few words or phrases. Try standing behind someone in a shop queue who probably doesn’t even notice that they are using a swear word as an adjective every few minutes. Even BBC presenters now insist that we have to be bored “of it” instead of with it. Perhaps unfortunately, the English language is driven by usage and every year new words are added to the Oxford English Dictionary and new norms creep in. It will be interesting to see how many of those words are still in common use in twenty years’ time.

Perhaps this doesn’t bother you. Does it really matter? Well it matters to a lot of people and why would we not use English, that wonderfully varied language, to the full?

I was thinking back to the Sixties when I’m sure my vocabulary contained the words “wow” and “cool” far too often, especially in conversation with friends. I’m certain my parents despaired. Yet now I’m a stickler and an editor.

Written language, as in *Focus*, will obviously be very different from spoken language and we hope to make our articles readable and interesting. Most of them already arrive in that state, as we have a wealth of contributors with wide vocabularies. It doesn’t matter if some haven’t; that’s what editors are for. We also have a great team of proofreaders to check everything. An editor’s job is to ensure that the literary camel passes unnoticed by the reader through the eye of a needle. Yet books are now published without any obvious editing and with glaring mistakes in spellings and meanings. There must be an automatic spellchecking of some kind going on which doesn’t always work. A few people take this into their own hands and pencil corrections and comments into library books.

I haven’t deleted any instances of “so” or “like” this month. Venting my feelings in this Editorial has helped a lot. However, anyone bored “of” anything is now definitely bored “with” it until further notice.

Clare Editor



Stretton Focus prints a wide range of articles and letters. The views expressed in these are those of their authors and not necessarily those of the Board of Directors. The Editors exercise their right to edit any articles, letters, etc submitted for publication at their discretion without consulting the author.

Stretton Focus

Community Voice of the Strettons

Average monthly sales 1,500 copies (About 65% of the dwellings in Church Stretton)

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Paul Harding, Tel: 01694 722289

EDITORS (editor@strettonfocus.co.uk)

David Lyons
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Clare Patterson
Sandra Davies (Events Diary)

IN-HOUSE JOURNALIST

Christine Williams

COVER EDITOR

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DESIGN AND LAYOUT

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PROOF READERS

Bronwen Taylor, Cynthia Wood
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SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DISTRIBUTION

Chrys Bonds, Tel: 01694 724184
Peter Whitlock, Tel: 01694 725533

ADVERTISING (BUSINESS)

Sara Hewitt, Tel: 01694 658086

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Submission of Articles and Photographs for Publication

These should be made to the editors by email to

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Please use this address if you are contacting an individual editor. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours please check the address carefully and send your email again.

If you are unable to use email, your material may be submitted to
Wrights, Estate Agent,

32 Sandford Avenue, Church Stretton SY6 6BW
clearly labelled 'Stretton Focus'. These items are collected on the deadline date.

When are the deadlines?

The deadline for receipt of all submissions by all methods is

12 noon on the first Monday of each month

for the following month's edition.

If the Monday is a Bank Holiday, the deadline will be
12 noon on the Tuesday of that week.

No submissions will be accepted after the deadline unless
prior arrangements have been agreed with the editors.

For the **September** issue the deadline is

Monday 7th August, at 12 noon.

For the **October** issue the deadline is

Monday 4th September at 12 noon.

The **September** issue will be distributed on **Friday 1st September**

Advertising (Business)

Rates for block and occasional business advertisements may be obtained from the Advertising Manager, Sara Hewitt, 71 High St, Church Stretton SY6 6BY or email to adverts@strettonfocus.co.uk to whom copy should be sent.

The *Stretton Focus* Directors cannot accept responsibility for any product or service advertised. Acceptance of an advertisement does not imply any form of approval or recommendation. Advertisers are required to comply with the British Code of Advertising Practice.

Community Awards

Stretton Focus has a scheme whereby clubs, societies and organisations can apply for a grant up to £1,000 for projects which have a direct benefit to the community. For details and an application form go to the *Focus* website www.strettonfocus.co.uk

Subscriptions

Stretton Focus can be purchased by subscription and delivered to your door for £12 per year. If you wish to use this facility, please phone the Subscriptions Manager on 01694 725533 or 724184 or email focus.subscription@gmail.com

Outlets

Stretton Focus may be purchased by annual subscription (delivered) or directly from Vine & Co (Sandford Avenue), Co-op, Family Shopper, Church Stretton Library and Mayfair.

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This Month

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Again one of our highlights, always the best summer entertainment with the art exhibition, concerts, organ recitals, drama and talks. The coffee concerts are a wonderful bonus.

22 Talking Machines

With a wealth of eye-catching photos, Christine's article about Tim Wood-Woolley's collection makes fascinating reading.

44 Family Fun Day

The photos from Rotary, the Town Council and others show that a great day was enjoyed by all. Another landmark summer event in the Strettons that we can all be proud of.

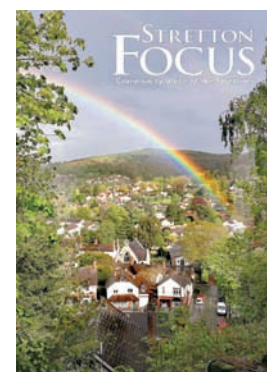
17 Strettonia Boxing

We publish a lot of articles about nature and the arts, so this was a real surprise. So good to see local youngsters (and older boxers and strongmen) having a great time.

18 Electric vehicles

A thought-provoking article from Stretton Climate Care. Even if you are wedded to your ten-year-old diesel car, it's good to see all the pros and cons stated so fairly. David obviously holds strong opinions but is not out to browbeat you. An article to divide opinions perhaps and start discussions.

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This month's cover

*Stretton rainbow,
photo by Julia Williams*

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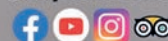
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Arts Festival Excitement Builds

The buzz and excitement of the Church Stretton Arts Festival is now building to a climax. We hope you're planning to join us in this celebration of visual and performing arts.



CHURCH STRETTON ARTS FESTIVAL

29th July - 12th August

Starting with the visual arts, our **Art, Crafts and Photography Exhibition** opens with a reception on Monday 31st July at 7.30pm. From thereon it's open every day (including Sunday) between 10.30am and 5pm, until Saturday 12th August. Entry is still only £1, but the show is bigger and better than ever. Over 160 artists have entered more than 900 pieces of work this year!

While the Exhibition workshops are now sold out, there are still a couple of events to note. On Saturday 5th August, between 11am and 4pm, you can watch and ask questions as **Sue Christian** works at her loom to produce one of her beautiful woven textiles. Then on Sunday 6th August, between 1pm and 4pm,

the exhibition team will be serving refreshments while you take a rest and decide what to buy. Their cakes are famous and not to be missed, so why not purchase a cup of tea, coffee or soft drink and a slice of delicious home-made cake?

If you haven't booked for a performance yet, it isn't too late. Ticket prices are actually lower this year than last and some tickets are still available. Waiting lists have been set up for those that have sold out. You can book all Festival events online at strettonfestival.org.uk, or you can take your chances and purchase tickets at the door. There is no need to book for the Free Concerts.

Do you have youngsters at home or visiting on Monday 7th August? Treat them to a fun-filled afternoon of music and drama at the Silvester Horne Institute. **Finding Chester** is a search for a missing moggy told through puppetry, mask, dance, song and lots of laughter. Specially designed to entertain 5-12-year-olds, tickets cost only £3 per person, regardless of age.



The performance by the **Meraki Duo** on Wednesday 9th August should be intriguing too. With the unusual combination of flute and guitar, the Duo explore many genres of music. You can expect some jazz and folk-rock along with a classical component. James Girling last visited us with the impressive and well-received Aquarelle Guitar Quartet. This time, he has teamed up with Meera Maharaj to present an interesting and diverse programme.

But don't stop there! Our popular series of free morning concerts and organ recitals starts on Monday 31st July and there are a wide variety of other events to engage and entertain you. Pick up a brochure from a local shop, the Visitor Centre or the Silvester Horne Institute or go online to strettonfestival.org.uk.

Joan Arnfield

strettonfestival.org.uk

Church Stretton Town Council Community Matters

Sunday 2nd July

It is Sunday morning. The jackdaws are cackling and the town is not yet awake. I'm sitting outside, drinking tea and reflecting on what was a thoroughly splendid day yesterday. The Family Fun Day itself is reported fully elsewhere in *Focus* with pictures of children in fancy dress, of brass bands and of helicopters, yet as I sit here reflecting, I'm struck by what a fantastic sense of community it all represented. The whole town was involved. Returning furniture last night we delivered chairs to the Parish Centre, tables to All Stretton Village Hall and have benches to deliver to St Lawrence's School tomorrow. It was a real joy to be there and when Andy Buxton on Radio Shropshire asked whether I was proud to be the Mayor I said yes, and added also very lucky, lucky to be surrounded and supported by so many wonderful people. Thank you all for yet another maximum effort.

Behind the scenes the smoothness of the operation belied its complexity with over a hundred people involved in serving food, providing entertainment, running dog shows and staffing the charity stands. However, without months of organisation nothing would have happened. Who thought six weeks ago to arrange to borrow those chairs? Step forward Cllr Bob Welch, Sue Welch and Cllr Ryan Foulkes for leading the team.

Ice cream in the rain

After many months of planning and building, local children flocked to the opening of the Brooksbury Play Park on 23rd June to try the new equipment and receive a free ice cream. With this winning combination no amount of rain was going to deter them.



Focus readers will know that the park had been closed for several months after the old wooden equipment had been condemned. The new play equipment cost £55,000 and is the first half of a two-phase project, with the Town Council now fundraising to develop a second phase aimed at younger children. Readers will also know how important play equipment is to children's development and that public parks are open to everyone.

The site was cleared for free by S J Roberts, who recycled all of the materials, whilst the new equipment was installed by Wickstead.

A49 Flooding near Botvyle

Thanks are due to the team from National Highways who have been working to address issues with flooding to the east of the A49 around Botvyle, after being contacted by the Town Council. A relief drain installed a few years ago by Shropshire wasn't able to clear the water, and the team from National Highways were on site for three nights and have

now surveyed the area, identified some issues and jettied the under-carriageway culverts.



Botvyle is the very northern part of the parish and thanks are also due to farmer Doug Gwilliam, whose local knowledge helped lead the way with the survey. He also pointed out the remains of two coal mines. Located right at the top of the parish, the mines mark the southern extent of the Leebootwood coal field. Although the coal was of poor quality, being high in sulphur, it formed an important local resource in an area away from rivers and canals before the coming of the railways.

Neighbourhood Plan – Stakeholder Group

At its meeting on 27th June, the Town Council formally adopted the structure to be employed for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP). The full paper setting out the details is available on the Town Council website using this short link: cutt.ly/cs-nhp-structure.

There are four roles within the agreed structure:

- The Town Council, which is the qualifying body and has legal responsibility to deliver the plan,
- The Stakeholder Group, which will use its expertise and knowledge to inform the project,
- The Delivery Group, which will be responsible for the drafting, delivery and day to day work of the project, and
- The Technical Support Group, employed contractors with specialist knowledge.

The project is keen to recruit members of the public to populate the Stakeholder Group. There will be a maximum of 27 people on the Stakeholder Group – the Chair, seven invited members drawn from organisations with significant local influence like the AONB, Shropshire Council and the Town Council, and the balance, nineteen members of the public who will have applied to take part.

The method of selection will be for interested residents and other local people to complete a short application form stating their areas of interest and any expertise they have and explaining what skills and experience they possess. A shortlisting process, followed up if necessary by a short interview, will help populate the Stakeholder Group. Application forms can be downloaded from the Town Council website or obtained from the Council Offices.

The areas of interest are:

1. Youth	11. Farming and Landowners
2. Aging Population	12. Design and Heritage
3. Housing	13. Arts
4. Fitness and Leisure	14. Faith Groups
5. Health	15. Technology
6. Climate and Environment	16. Local Business
7. Biodiversity	17. Finance
8. Transport	18. Developers
9. Tourism	19. Landlords
10. Town Planning	

Although the geographic area covered by the NHP is exactly the same as the Town Council boundary, as a matter of courtesy the NHP will consult with all communities within the wider Place Plan Area 5.1 – Church Stretton. This reflects the reality that surrounding villages look to Church Stretton for their services and 17% of inbound spend comes from these communities. One invited member will come from this wider Place Plan Area.

In some instances where it may not be possible to appoint an individual to the Stakeholder Group, they will still be asked if they are prepared to help out with the evidence-gathering task groups which will be formed from time to time.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023

The Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23, the Accounting Statements 2022/23 and the Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) 2022/23 are available in full on the Town Council website. Find the papers for the Council meeting held on 27th June 2023, and the reports are provided in Appendices B1 to F.

The overall conclusion of the auditors for the year was:

“On the basis of the internal audit work carried out, which was limited to the tests indicated above, in our view the Council’s system of internal controls is in place, adequate for the purpose intended and effective, except for the recommendations included in the action plan overleaf. As part of the internal audit work for the next financial year we will follow up all recommendations.”

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There were two recommendations raised this year. Firstly, the notice announcing the inspection period whereby residents can review the Council’s books was given on the same day as the start of the inspection period, when it should have been the day before. Secondly, it is recommended that a fresh valuation of some of the Council’s land is obtained to confirm that a fair value is carried on the balance sheet. Both recommendations have been accepted.

And finally...

Like many residents I’m looking forward to the Arts Festival which starts on 29th July, just as you will be reading this edition of *Focus*. Good luck to the massive team involved.

Cllr. Andy Munro, Mayor

Eaton Manor

Focus featured local visitor accommodation Eaton Manor in our July issue and since then there has been another reason to celebrate there.

Eaton Manor won the Bronze award at the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence on 7th June, placed third in the country for self catering. The staff are understandably thrilled.

Nichola Cariss and her father, Tony Madeley, attended the awards ceremony.





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Long Mynd Camera Club – New season, new focus

Our 2022-23 season was possibly the most ambitious to date and we now look forward to opening our new season on 6th September, building on those experiences and further developing our range of activities.

You will notice that the cover photograph for this month's *Focus* magazine was taken by one of our members, Julia Williams. This was a result of a competition at the club where the brief was to produce images suitable for a *Focus* cover. Geoff Taylor, one of the Directors and cover editor of the magazine, has the ongoing challenge of finding suitable fresh cover images, so this was an opportunity to showcase the work of club members. Geoff kindly agreed to appraise the entries and select those with the potential to go to print at a later date.

Over the past two years we have been able to attract a number of new members to the club, somewhat bucking the downward trend for many small activity clubs. We are a friendly club, but, whilst modest in stature, we nonetheless pride ourselves in achieving high standards and produce some very capable work as evidenced by the quality of imagery displayed in our website galleries. You will also see examples of pictures taken at our 'still life' (table top) and exotic animals workshops.

For those unfamiliar with club photography our programme consists of a variety of guest speakers, competitions, photo-walks and workshop activities. We welcome and encourage people with a range of photographic experience, including those new to photography. Our club meetings are held from September through May. Details of the programme are available on our website, where you can also view the range of imagery taken by members. Whilst much of our work is viewed digitally through the URC Hall's excellent audiovisual equipment, we also continue to encourage print photography. We are affiliated to the Midlands Photographic Federation, and also take part in the annual Shropshire Inter-Club Photographic Competition.

If you are interested in photography, at any level, we would be delighted to see you. Simply enjoy the contributions of members and speakers, or get involved



Richard Greswell

with building up a portfolio and developing your own levels of competence.

From September we meet on alternate Wednesdays at 7.30pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, High Street, Church Stretton, SY6 6BY. If you are interested in finding out more and would like to join us one evening, come along to the next meeting and we will look after you. Alternatively, make use of the contact form on the website. Visitors to the area are also welcome to join us for an evening of entertainment to enhance their stay. Membership is by a subscription of £25 each year. A nominal fee of £3 (£4 for visitors) which includes

refreshment, is payable at each programmed meeting to cover our costs. Students (FTE) are offered a 50% discount.

For a review of our activities and further information please see our website

www.longmyndcameraclub.com

Ron Parnell, LMCC Chair

What an excellent idea, a club competition to produce a picture suitable for the *Focus* cover. These were judged in-house by club members, although I was very happy to provide my own feedback. The outcome, apart from enjoyment by club members, is that I now have several new images for future covers, also some that are candidates for a future Friends of the Library calendar. Two of the pictures from the competition are shown here.

Geoff Taylor



David Kennedy

Mayfair News

Time together

As mentioned in last month's article, we've had some lovely events and celebrations at Mayfair recently. In mid-June we held a party for our volunteers. Volunteers collectively contribute over 470 hours a week to supporting Mayfair and helping us deliver all our activities and services to the Strettons Community. The Party is an important date on the Mayfair Calendar, our opportunity to spoil our fantastic volunteers and thank every one of them for their contribution. Volunteers give so much to Mayfair and in return we try to ensure that volunteering with us is a rewarding experience – an opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills, and hopefully have fun.

As part of Carers Week, MAYSI (Mayfair Supporting Independence) also held a group visit to Attingham Hall and gardens recently – with free entry kindly offered to all carers by the National Trust. On a beautiful sunny afternoon, sunhats, ice creams, and even parasols were much



needed. The walled gardens at Attingham are looking at their very best, and those who wanted it were kindly given a guided tour and on-site transport.

It was great to also be joined by Church Stretton Dementia Friends who have recently launched as an independent charity working to make Church Stretton dementia-friendly. If you would like to complete their short survey about living with dementia in the Church Stretton Area, you can get a copy, or find out more, by emailing csdementiafriends@gmail.com.



John, our volunteer Ring and Ride driver for the day, enjoying a well-earned ice cream!

Promoting 44Bs

It was a pleasure to attend Severndale Specialist Academy recently to meet some of the pupils and parents there and to promote our 44Bs service to those who are considering their next step in the transition from school or college. Our 44Bs day opportunities, for adults with learning disabilities and autism, is open Monday to Friday at Mayfair and our members take part in a wide variety of activities to promote independence and wellbeing. As such an integral part of our community here at Mayfair, it's always great to talk to others about 44Bs, and hopefully welcome more members to join us.

Upcoming Book Sales

Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th August, 10am to 1pm

If you're a bookworm, don't forget to pop into our Health and Wellbeing Centre for our upcoming book sales. We will be selling a wide variety of second-hand non-fiction, maps and music as well as some quality fiction on the 3rd and 4th August. Come along to purchase some bargains and perfect holiday reading material. All profits will go to Mayfair.

Sew beautiful!

We have been given an extremely generous gift of a hand-stitched quilt from Marianne Smith. Marianne started stitching these beautiful hexagons together in the 1970s and the quilt is full of stunning vintage fabrics. There are even some very early hand-printed Laura Ashley fabrics in there. After over 40 years, Marianne asked our Crafty Ladies to help complete the quilt, so it was lovingly machine finished by Lynne, who added the backing and Quilters Dream wadding. A huge thank you goes to Marianne for such a generous donation, and to Lynne who gave her time and the materials to finish it.

Marianne would like us to sell the quilt in aid of Mayfair so we have decided to hold a raffle for it. Tickets cost £2 and give you the chance of winning this beautiful quilt, with all proceeds going to Mayfair. At 201cm x 249cm (79" x 98") the quilt is large enough to cover a king size bed, and would be an envied addition to any home. Pop into Mayfair to purchase your chance to win.

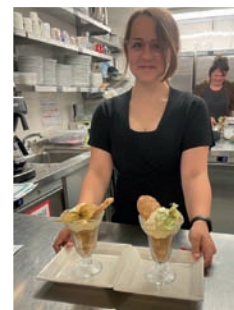


Youth activities, run in partnership with SYA and Church Stretton Town Council

It was great to chat to so many people at the Family Fun Day about the Youth Drop-in and to find some more volunteers to help us run this fantastic provision for young people in the Strettons. If you can spare an evening a month and are interested in supporting young people in the area, please get in touch with us as soon as possible on 01694 722077 to find out more. We'll be having some training events over the summer in readiness for Autumn term in September. The Youth Drop-in and proposed Youth Club for years 6 and 7 are run in partnership with Shropshire Youth Association (SYA).

Theatre Screenings – exciting news!

We had lots of lovely feedback following our gourmet lunch and *Sleeping Beauty* Ballet Screening in early July. The meal,



prepared by talented local chef Sylvie Jones, was fantastic, and our new cinema equipment and black-out blinds provide a great viewing experience.

continued overleaf...

Whilst there is a break in theatre productions over the summer, look out for news of our new programme of screenings from September. You can also sign up to our screenings mailing list at www.mayfaircentre.org.uk/whats-on.

We're excited to announce that we now also have satellite equipment in place to show live broadcasts and we have signed up with the Royal Opera House to bring you world class operas and ballets for our 2023-24 season.

All our screening events are supported by a fantastic group of volunteers. If you are interested in joining this team please get in touch with Naomi or Eve at Mayfair on 01694 722077. Whether you can offer knowledge of the arts and can help us with our events programme, or you can help in a more practical way with serving meals and drinks, we'd love to hear from you.

A Fun and Social Way to make new Friends

Dancing is not just a form of physical exercise or artistic expression, but also a social activity that can bring people together. Whether you're a seasoned dancer or a complete beginner, joining a dance class can be a great way to meet new people and expand your social circle.

Firstly, dance classes provide a common interest and shared experience that can break the ice and create a sense of camaraderie among participants. When you sign up for a dance class, you'll be joining a group of like-minded individuals who share your passion for movement and music. As you learn and practice new dance steps together, you'll have plenty of opportunities to interact with others, ask for feedback, and offer support. Over time, you may find that you have developed a bond with your dance classmates that extends beyond the class.

Secondly, dance classes offer a diverse and inclusive environment that welcomes people of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. Unlike other social settings where cliques or hierarchies may exist, dance classes are designed to encourage collaboration and teamwork. You don't need to be a natural performer or have a perfect body to join a dance class – all you need is a willingness to learn and have fun.



Finally, dance classes can lead to other social opportunities outside of the class. As you get to know your dance classmates and instructors, you may discover shared interests or hobbies that you can explore together. You might plan outings to see live dance performances, attend dance parties or social events, or simply hang out and have fun. By joining a dance class, you'll be opening yourself up to a world of new experiences and possibilities.

In conclusion, dance classes are more than just a way to improve your dancing skills – they're a fun and social way to make new friends and expand your social circle. By joining a class, you'll be joining a community of like-minded individuals who share your passion for movement and music. You'll have opportunities to interact, learn, and grow with others, and you may find that your dance classmates become lifelong friends. So, if you're looking for a way to connect with others and have fun, why not give dance classes a try? You never know who you might meet on the dance floor!

For further details of classes in the local area please see What's On.

Matt Heenan

Strettondale Patient Participation Group

Your committee met on 19th June. There were three comments in the surgery waiting room box. These included some appreciation of the work and helpfulness of the reception team and the efficiency of eConsult. There was also some frustration at the waiting time for a receptionist to finish dealing with a patient phone call in order to be free to attend to reception and the time to get a doctor face-to-face appointment. The Medical Practice welcomes all types of feedback and takes patient concerns and feedback seriously. We are working on developing a designated email address for those who would prefer to communicate with the committee this way.

A pharmacist from Hillside spoke to us about the role of a pharmacy in assisting the medical practice. There are changes in the pipeline concerning services offered and prescribing by pharmacies. We await details. Phoning 111 may well point patients in the right direction for receiving help.

Further to my article in June's *Focus* – the rapid response team cannot deal with patients under 18 years of age.

A short AGM followed by an open meeting for any patient interested will take place on 28th September at 6-8pm

in the Mayfair Jubilee room. Several members of the Practice team will be in attendance and a GP will address the meeting on current issues, there will then be an opportunity for comments and questions. We would like a few more committee members to join us. If any of you are interested please let us know via the comments box well in advance of the meeting. We shall need contact details so we can discuss with you what is involved.

Alison Phillips (chair)

Strettondale

Patient Participation Group

Mayfair Lottery

Please note that the draws for June and July will be announced next month

(We take a break for administrative purposes)



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Strettonia Boxing

The Club's boxing and strongman competition took place for the second year running and the show was bigger and better than ever, with over 600 in attendance.

There were ten competitors in the Strongman section, which included a maximum deadlift (they got to 350kg), an overhead log (they got to 140kg), a Farmers walk (110kg each hand), a loading race (5 objects weighing 60kg), an Atlas stone (80kg-120kg) and a Granite diamond walk (100kg for 80 meters).

Nick Pugh from Church Stretton won the novice and Sam Hope from Stoke won the open class.

The Shropshire Arms held their arm-wrestling championship there too and there was a car show, bouncy castle and live music throughout the day.

There were twenty bouts of boxing including three Shropshire Lad titles up for grabs with Strettonia Boxing Club up against Oswestry, Shrewsbury, Birmingham, Telford, Bridgnorth and Stoke. Church Stretton won eleven, drew two and lost seven. Luke Evans from Strettonia won the junior Shropshire Lad title sponsored by Shropshire Builders. Lewis Sear from Strettonia won the welterweight Shropshire Lad title against Adrian Emsley from Shrewsbury, sponsored by The King's Arms. James Proctor from Strettonia won the lightweight Shropshire Lad title against Liam Marston from Shrewsbury

Steven Rickets and Micky Wilding are the head coaches down at Strettonia Boxing Club and organised the show. They would like to thank BFG Groundworks for sponsoring the trophies and t-shirts for every competitor.



The Reality of Driving an Electric Vehicle

There have been an increasing number of negative and misleading articles in the press recently about Electric Vehicles (EVs). As an EV driver for the last seven years, I thought it might be useful to share my real-world experiences.

Firstly, driving a car is never good for the environment. If we can avoid making a journey, walk, cycle, or use public transport, these are all better options. However, living in a rural county like Shropshire, with large distances to cover and poor public transport, it is inevitable that many people will need to use a car some of the time.

I first started driving an electric vehicle owing to my concerns about pollution. When investigating oil pollution in the Niger Delta as part of an MSc project, I learnt just how devastating oil extraction can be for the environment and lives of local people. I couldn't justify contributing to these kinds of problems by buying petrol or diesel. My feelings have only strengthened as the climate crisis has worsened thanks to our continued use of fossil fuels.

Despite what some elements of the press would have their readers believe, I have never regretted making the decision to go electric, and I haven't yet met an EV driver who would switch back to using a petrol or diesel vehicle. The main benefits of driving an EV for me include:

- The car is remarkably cheap to run, the annual car tax is currently zero, and the car requires very little maintenance. Some charging stations provide electricity at no cost (e.g. some supermarkets and garden centres), or allow free parking, though I usually charge at home taking advantage of low overnight electricity rates. It's like have a petrol station at home without the inconvenience and pollution!
- There's rarely a need to stop to charge-up at a public charging point. When I do occasionally make a long journey (e.g. to Cornwall or London) I've always been able to charge at the destination or on the way. The car will charge from a regular 3-pin plug if needed, so wherever there's electricity I can re-charge.
- I use 100% renewable energy at home to charge, and most public charging networks also use renewable energy.
- While I've broken down, and run out of fuel when driving vehicles with petrol and diesel engines, I've never yet suffered these problems driving an EV.
- Overall, the car is a joy to drive, and very straightforward, being an automatic. The car produces much less pollution and carbon emissions throughout its lifecycle than a petrol or diesel vehicle. However, like all vehicles, over a third of the environmental impacts result from the initial manufacturing process, and the car does still shed microplastics from the tyres and release brake dust. In totality though, an EV's environmental impact is significantly lower than that of a comparable petrol or diesel vehicle.



Stretton Climate Care provided the first public charging point in the area

Some downsides of buying and driving an EV include:

- The high upfront purchase costs – While EVs work out cheaper to own over time, the initial purchase costs are roughly double the cost of an equivalent diesel or petrol model. This puts EVs out of reach of many people at the moment.
- The production of batteries involves the mining of elements such as cobalt and lithium. Like many extractive industries, this can cause both negative environmental and human rights implications. Nevertheless, these impacts are relatively small when compared with those associated with extracting, processing, and burning fossil fuels.
- While home charging works very well and is what I do 95% of the time, there are times on long journeys when I have to use a public charge point. Today the national charging infrastructure, while improving, is not yet fit for purpose:
 - The availability of charging points is very patchy, and there are a plethora of companies providing a wide range of charging solutions. I currently carry four different charging cards and have 14 EV charging apps on my phone!
 - There are often no instructions at the charging points, so every new charger becomes a learning experience. Fortunately, there's a very useful app, Zap Map (App 15) which includes helpful advice. There's a pioneering camaraderie amongst EV

owners that often means you can get help from other drivers.

- The public charging infrastructure is poorly maintained, and I've found that a significant number of charging points will be malfunctioning at any one time. That's often not clear until you plug in and try to charge. Occasionally, there will be a support number to call, and about a third of the time someone will answer the phone and manage to fix the problem.
- The rollout of public charging points hasn't kept pace with the increasing number of EVs on the road. So, queues to use the points are increasingly common at popular stops such as motorway service stations, and the charging rate often declines the more vehicles plug in. Earlier this month, I plugged into a charge point at a motorway service station that was running at just 14% of its advertised rate.
- It can be very expensive to charge on the motorway, up to seven times what it costs at home.

The above issues mean that I always plan long journeys carefully with Zap Map, with several backup options available to work around potential issues with chargers. This has always worked for me and has involved some visits to locations that can best be described as 'off the beaten track'. But this really shouldn't be necessary.

The range of the car varies with the air temperature. My car isn't the latest model, and has a range of about 180 miles in the summer. On a cold day in the winter, this can drop to 140 miles, as the batteries are working less efficiently. A common fear when I first bought an EV was that battery performance would decline significantly over time. So, I opted to lease the batteries. However, the industry evidence

is that this decline hasn't happened, and likewise I haven't seen any deterioration in the performance. This bodes well for the use of second hand EVs.

While I've had no maintenance problems, I do know of a couple of EV drivers who have had battery issues, and the vehicles had to be transported some distance away to be repaired owing to a lack of facilities and skills locally.

Finally, EVs are not an easy option for people living in flats and terraced houses unless there is sufficient provision of chargers at work-places, in local car parks, or on the kerbsides. Both of my sons live in terraced houses, and while both are keen to switch to EVs, neither see this as feasible at the moment. Nevertheless, given typical commute distances, many EVs may only need to be charged once a week. This issue could be resolved through improved public and work-place provision of charge points, and wider use of existing points. There are currently government grants available to fit charging points at work-places, public buildings and apartment blocks, and some drivers share access to their private home charging points through apps such as Zap Map and Co-Charger.

In summary, despite the inconveniences of public charging points, I am very happy to have made the switch away from fossil-fuelled vehicles to electric. I strongly support the use of EVs when there is no alternative option to using a car.

Consultation on Walking and Cycling in Church Stretton

Many thanks to those of you who participated in the consultation events on walking and cycling during May and June. You can find our response on our website at: strettonclimatecare.org.uk

David Matthews, Stretton Climate Care

Methodist Voice

I'm writing this towards the end of June. Several news items recently have been about food. We are so lucky in this country that we are able to buy fresh wholesome food even though it is more expensive than it was a year or so ago. We often see or hear of those living in other countries where even basic food is very difficult to get at any price. I wonder how you react to some news items about situations where food is scarce, even nonexistent. Do you avert your eyes and think of something else? Do you find it painful to think of other human beings in such horrendous circumstances? In some cases no amount of money can ease the situation because the people in power do not recognize or care about what is happening to those they have power over. Food has become a weapon of control and war.

I don't know about you but personally I know when it's getting near to a meal time. In our household we have always had three regular meals a day at about the same time with possible snacks in between. We're very lucky to be able to afford to do this. Over the years exactly what we have eaten has changed. Balanced diets containing the right amount of protein, carbohydrates, fat etc. to stay healthy are the present aim. Five (or is it seven) helpings of fruit or vegetables a

day, as little processed food as possible, drinking plenty of water – are tea and coffee good for us or not? Then there are those of us who have to avoid certain foods due to allergies and intolerances which complicate things even more. All this without thinking about where our food comes from and how it is produced.

Ten years ago the churches in Church Stretton were looking into setting up a Foodbank. Some in the town thought it wasn't needed. Perhaps it wasn't needed as much then as it is now but there are many who live locally who rely on the food they get each Friday to help them manage their basic needs of food and paying their essential bills. They are always so grateful for the help they get, it's a pleasure to help them but of course we would much rather they didn't need to come. Thank you to all those who support the foodbank by donating food or money to buy the more perishable items. We hope and pray that supply continues to meet the demand and that in due course the foodbank will not be needed at all.

Enjoy your next meal.

Ann Cooke



StrettFest23



In Rectory Field on a glorious summer day StrettFest was called out by CASBA, Craven Arms samba drummers, inviting the community to come and celebrate the local arts and culture in the Strettons and its environs. In a market place of diverse arts opportunity, a wide range of cultural activities was offered for all ages. People were free to participate in trying out the instruments provided by Shropshire schools music service, or dance with the local Scottish Dancers, dressed in full Scottish attire, sporran and all. Inspiring the very young, our Longmynd Academy of Music gave students their first experience of publicly performing the piano. Whilst our Shropshire Academy of Performing Arts offered a workshop for parents and toddlers 'by parachute'.

The Stretton Strummers entertained with a number of songs well-known to the older generation and the SASKIA rock band appealed to younger people and to those who wanted an experience of the musical talent of youth now. There were the Eastern Mystique dancers, who brought colour and grace to the proceedings and managed to lure a number of spectators into their performance and into a subsequent workshop.



The event was also an opportunity to promote other cultural activities, such as the upcoming Arts Festival. Other organisations working with youngsters, and Stretton Climate Care and the Police had stands there. For the Scouts and Guides, it was a way to recruit not only new members but also much-needed adult volunteers.

Scrappies was busy all day with all participants crafting their attire or symbols for the Parade, which was led by the Kidical Mass, a national campaign to promote cycling to the next generation. For the first time in the Strettons youngsters had the opportunity to ride on closed streets, accompanied by adults on bikes and some on e-bikes. However with no strong band lead and a thin engagement of local organisations it had lost its potential energy early on – something to work on within the community.

What happens next?

StrettFest was always conceived as a community-led event involving residents of all ages, showcasing the wide range of cultural activity across our local communities and encouraging even greater participation in future. Building on this year's experience, the Arts Forum would like to invite anyone interested in promoting this collaborative cultural activity to make themselves known to the Arts Forum Chairman, Noel Beattie, noelbt8@talktalk.net

What is the difference between StrettFest and the Forum?



The Forum is a new body created to draw the arts sector together and with partners in other sectors, growing a more diverse and inclusive cultural offer for residents, for all ages and tastes, and to attract visitors to the town itself.

StrettFest is one provision which the Forum initiated and will help the community to grow. StrettFest is a festival that encourages people to participate in some cultural form for pleasure, or perhaps even as a future career.

The Forum has the ambition to explore other ways in which collaborative activity can promote the cultural well-being not only of residents but also of visitors. In the autumn we will create the opportunity to have that conversation about how local collaborative activity in the arts can benefit businesses and the local economy.

The Strettons Arts Forum is grateful to the shops, firms, funding bodies, CSTC and individuals who helped to sponsor this event and also to the Scouts for loaning their marquees. It was encouraging that the event was so well attended, especially by families, spending the day together and enjoying the performances as well as taking part.

Forum Contact: Claire Riley-Walsh
claire.riley-walsh@mayfaircentre.org.uk

Some comments about the day...

“It was a good location, great weather. Interest was shown across all ages – a must, but with a community-led team”

(Kidical Mass)

“It was a really well thought out programme” (Public)

“There was a great atmosphere on the Rectory Field but what a pity about the parade” (Public)

“I am really surprised it was free” (Public)

“delighted with the attendance ... very enjoyable” (Volunteers)

“We enjoyed the lively and lovely atmosphere”

(Longmynd Academy)

“there was interest from all ages with very good engagement; it was definitely worthwhile” (Scrappies)

“It's such a lovely thing to have all ages at the same event and thoroughly enjoying themselves” (Public)



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Talking Machines

All journalism is, in different parts, fascinating, educational, frustrating (oh, those deadlines!), controversial and, occasionally, emotional and humbling, but this article had me almost fidgeting with delight like a child waiting for a pantomime to begin. Does the title give you a clue, perhaps?

On the website of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society I found a spoken-voice sound clip from a recording dated 1906, and I'm so sorry that I can't reproduce the sound here for you, but this is the transcript. "No sound I have, no hands nor yet a voice; Yet talk, or sing, or play – which is your choice?" It goes on "All languages are mine, with wondrous skills ..."

This, and other voices, have fascinated Tim Wood-Woolley since he was a boy. Tim says, "I was given 78s, early discs for playing on gramophones when I was young. I began collecting phonographs and gramophones, with a cylinder phonograph player as my first purchase, when I was 17. Coincidentally, it cost £17, which was a lot of money then, and especially as it had to come from my Friday evening job."



From left to right: Edison "Amberola" 1A Cylinder Phonograph 1909-1911; Edison "Amberola" VIII Cylinder Phonograph 1913-1913; Pathé "Diamond" Horn Gramophone 1914-1919

For those who are too young to remember 78s, these were made of a hard but brittle material that contained shellac resin, and they revolved on the gramophone's turntable at 78 revolutions a minute (rpm). They were replaced by smaller, double-sided discs made of tougher vinyl, which revolved at 45 rpm, or larger ones that revolved at 33 rpm. There's been a revival of vinyl records during the past few years, with new gramophone models being manufactured to take advantage of the nostalgia phase.

Tim hails from Middlesbrough, and came to Church Stretton via Harrogate, Leeds, London and Westcliff-on-Sea after a career in railways. Church Stretton beckoned because of his love of walking the hills and for its welcoming community, to which so many people respond. Space for his collection was, of course, a priority when choosing a new home. "I have about 40 talking machines now. Space

for more has always been an issue, because I also have about 1,000 of the first wax cylinder recordings and I've no idea how many 78s, LPs and other records, as well as the phonographs and gramophones." Tim's collection is housed in three rooms of his attic space. Everywhere one turns there are wooden covers that mimic those of early sewing machines, trumpet-like shapes like those of early hearing enhancers, and cabinets full of carefully stored wax cylinders and early vinyl disks. A small museum of delights.



Case from a Columbia Type "Q" Graphophone c1899

The phonograph, a machine that played sound from a wax-coated cylinder through a trumpet-shaped speaker via a pick-up stylus that moved along the cylinder from left to right, was invented in 1877 by Thomas Edison. These were manually operated machines, wound up by hand with a handle and then left to run until the spring unwound.

Compared with today's recordings, the sound was poor quality, but people were able to hear concert hall productions, lectures, plays and readings – including voiced introductions – in the comfort of their own homes for the first time. In our sound-soaked lives, it's hard to imagine the sense of wonder and excitement that created.

Edison also worked on inventions discovered by other people, including the telegraph, telephone and incandescent lightbulb. He was self-educated, so never give up, gentle reader – there's hope for all of us! He applied for his first patent in 1868, when he was just 21, a machine for recording legislative votes. He went on to register over 1,000 patents in the USA, with several hundred more for ideas that he abandoned later.

In the 1890s, Emile Berliner began to develop flat discs to replace the fragile cylinders of Edison's invention, coining the term "gramophone". The rest, they say, is history. Except, of course, for CDs, tape recorders of various kinds, the portable iPod and CD player, and now on-line streaming services heard via tiny speakers such as Alexa and Siri. That's quite a journey in a century and a half, which begs the question "Whatever next?"

Tim shares his passion for those early machines with many other people, and is a member of the City of London Phonographic and Gramophone Society, or CLPGS for



The mechanism of an Edison "Amberola" 1A Cylinder Phonograph 1909-1911

short, which was founded in 1919. Thomas Edison became its first Patron, and its current Patrons are Oliver Berliner (grandson of the inventor of the gramophone), Simon Blumlein, (son of the inventor of stereophonics) and Dave Roberts, who has contributed significantly to the Society for many years. The Society's magazine is called *For the Record* and there is a small but glorious library of sound recordings on the website at www.clpgs.org.uk, along with a guide for beginners, a picture library and more. There's a Facebook page too, at www.facebook.com/clpgsinfo/, if you're so inclined. According to the website the nearest contact is in Bridgewater, where you can email rabbington@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01278 691884.

Christine Williams, Focus Journalist

Researched with thanks to the CLPGS website and Wikipedia

Photographs by Christine Williams

Anglican Voice

What are your plans for this summer? By the time you are reading this, a week of the school holidays will already have passed. Some of us will be preparing to go away for a break. Others will avoid going away during this busy period and spend time at home or maybe have family visiting. I suspect that several parents will already be counting the days until school restarts again!

This year a team of us are busy planning for a children's holiday club, 'Landlubbers', which will be held in St Laurence's church and the Parish Centre between 29th August and 1st September. This will give all children a chance to have a holiday without having to travel far and a little break for those providing care for them. The church is going to be transformed into a desert island for the week as our 'treasure-seekers' take part in some pirate adventures. There will be drama, games, crafts, jokes, lots of fun and many shouts of "Ahoy there", "Shiver me timbers" and several more. Our treasure-seekers will be looking at the life of Paul, who was slightly younger than Jesus, and thinking about all the adventures and travels he undertook in his life. As a young man Paul persecuted Christians for their faith but then he had an encounter with God that completely transformed his life. After this Paul travelled many miles, and to several countries, telling people all about Jesus. He was shipwrecked, imprisoned a few times, and suffered persecution but, as he wrote in a letter to the



people of Philippi, Greece: *Nothing is as wonderful as knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have given up everything else and count it all as garbage. All I want is Christ and to know that I belong to him... God accepted me simply because of my faith in Christ.* (Philippians 3:8-9)



We are looking forward to saying "Welcome, me hearties!" to all our treasure-seekers, from those who are about to start Reception in September to those who have just completed Year 6. So, if you have children, grandchildren or know neighbours with children, please do invite them to join us for four days of adventure. For more information and to book places please look on our website www.strettonparish.org.uk, call the Parish Office, 01694 724224, or scan the QR code.



Too old for our Landlubbers holiday club? Feel like some treasure is missing in your life, or would you like to see a transformation in your life? Perhaps you have some big questions about God, Jesus, or life that you have never asked? Well, I can't offer you a holiday club but, as Steve mentioned last month, in September we will be starting an Alpha course which gives an opportunity to explore faith, life and its meaning. For more information look on our website for details or call the Parish Office (details above).

Happy holidays and treasure-seeking, whatever you do and wherever you go.

Sally Clilverd, Children's and Families Worker

National Garden Scheme

Hilary Taylor and Peter Vickers opened their garden at 1 Scotmansfield for the NGS for the first time this summer. Taking a barren hillside plot, they have created a wonderful series of gardens.

The garden of three-quarters of an acre had been neglected for many years but has lovely views of the surrounding hills and woods. Just a few trees remained, including an English oak, *Quercus robur*, probably about 150-180 years old, carefully preserved when the site was cut and filled to create a platform for the house.



The couple have celebrated their favourite plants here and there is a wide variety of roses, a lily pond, a fernery and expertly arranged mixed borders, with some interesting topiary birds.



Local sculptor Luke Kite has provided a couple of ravens in wood and metal swooping down at the top of the terraces.

Last year NGS donated over £3 million to nursing and health charities in the UK. By the end of the day, Hilary and Peter had raised almost £1,500 to add to this year's total. They were delighted to welcome so many visitors and grateful to meet friends, old and new. Extra special thanks must go to James and Molly Baker, owners of Entertaining Elephants, and their wonderful staff and friends, who provided exceptional



support, and lent the tea urn, chairs, tables and tablecloths and a gazebo (for use if it had rained) and baked an astonishing number of marvellous cakes. They were all quite delicious – and all had disappeared by the end of the day!



EXHIBITION

Celebrating 140 Years of Bottled Water in Church Stretton

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In the Library from 25th August to 27th September


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Exciting Discoveries at High Leasowes



Have you visited High Leasowes recently? The flowering meadow nearest to Leasowes Close looked really delightful in June with a wide range of species flowering, including pignut and cuckoo flower.

An ecologist who was surveying the fields was quite excited to discover adder's tongue (pictured), a tiny fern which is an indicator species for ancient meadows. The plant gets its unusual name from the fertile frond that bears the spores, which is sometimes forked, like a snake's tongue.



on Cwms Lane and built steps with a handrail leading to the kissing gate in Watling Street.

During June and July you might also have noticed some work parties, led by Chris Naylor, to control the bracken, thistle and dock, ensuring that these 'problem' plants don't take over the fields.

A very enthusiastic group of volunteers did an excellent job controlling these plants. Shropshire Wild Teams also did a great job of clearing shrubby growth away from kissing gates and stiles to ensure that visitors can access the fields without difficulty.

continued foot of next page...

She was also thrilled to discover several bilberry bumblebees (*Bombus monticola*) foraging in the meadows. This beautiful but declining bumblebee feeds predominantly on bilberry and heather, but needs meadows such as these for the 'hungry gap' when neither the bilberry nor the heather are flowering. High Leasowes provides many of the plants that this bee needs and we are glad to see that this species loves the meadows as much as we do!

Since purchasing the fields, we have also secured the entrances with new vehicle gates in Cwms Lane and Watling Street, and a new kissing gate at the end of Cwms Lane. We are very grateful to John Ellis for donating his time and expertise to install the gates, ably assisted by volunteers Aidan Foster, Rob Furlong, Neil MacDonald, Tony Poole and Peter Whitlock. We are also very grateful to Mike Carter, Will Priestley, Tim Parker, Mark Tocknell and John Webb of the Parish Paths Partnership who installed the new kissing gate



Bridgemaster

Many slam hands will start with one STRONG hand and a much weaker hand, typically:

Hand 1

♠	AK	♠	xx
♥	AKJx	♥	Qxx
♦	AQJx	♦	Kxx
♣	KQx	♣	xxxxx

West plays in 6NT (requiring 12 tricks) and receives the lead of ♠Q, plan your play:

Count your certain tricks: (2 ♠s, 4 ♥s, 4 ♦s = 10 tricks). You need to make 2 extra tricks and they must come from clubs. It is easy to force a trick by playing the ♣KQ but that is not enough.

However, if the ♣A is in the South hand you can lead towards the KQx twice and make both the K & Q, assuming you have 2 entries to the East hand (ensure you don't waste them).

Hand 2

♠	AK	♠	xx
♥	AKJx	♥	Qxx
♦	AKQJ	♦	xxx
♣	KQx	♣	xxxxx

A similar hand but now only having one entry to Dummy (East hand). How can you make your contract of 6NT? Again, you receive the lead of ♠Q.

You still have your 10 certain tricks and can force another with ♣KQ so what is needed this time?

With your precious one entry to Dummy, lead towards ♣KQx and hope the A♣ is in the South hand. Good news the ♣Q wins. What now?

You should note that you have 8 cards in the club suit and the chances of the outstanding cards splitting 3-2 is 68% (the normal split). Therefore, if the outstanding ace is in the hand with a doubleton (Ax) then you can exit with small cards from both hands and see the ace beat little cards. Now your king is your 12th trick.

Tuition: The Strettons bridge club is restarting in September (www.bridgewebs.com/churchstretton) and will be offering tuition at minimum cost both for improvers and for complete beginners. Contact Dom on dwbridge@hotmail.co.uk if you are interested in learning this great game (or want to improve your present standard).

Exciting Discoveries at High Leasowes, continued

We are very grateful to everyone who has helped us to look after this special place.

We welcome walkers to the fields together with their four-legged friends, but we do ask that you keep to the paths around the edges of the fields and clean up after your dog.

If you would like to receive an email copy of our newsletter or have any questions or comments, please email highleasowes@gmail.com.

Sandra Whitlock on behalf of High Leasowes Management Committee and Middle Marches Community Land Trust

Photos: Caroline Uff, Pete Whitlock, Graham Porter, Chris Naylor

Thanks

Footpath Volunteers I would like to thank the Footpath Volunteers (Parish Paths Partnership) for their prompt response to my request for help in repairing the two stiles either end of Hall Meadow in All Stretton. The volunteers give their time to help maintain a network of public footpaths enabling a safe access to our countryside for both locals and visitors. I'm sure all walkers are grateful for their efforts.

Lesley McIntyre.

Family Fun Day – Thank you from the RNLI. We would like to thank all the people involved in organising the 'Family Fun Day' on Saturday 1st July. A lot of time and effort had been put into arranging everything.

It was lovely to see the park and its facilities being enjoyed by so many people. Thank you to everyone who came and visited our stall. We were impressed by the knowledge that many of the children had about 'Keeping Safe Near Water'. A bonus was that we raised just over £70 for the RNLI. A special thanks to our supporters who helped us on the day.

Brian and Alison, Church Stretton RNLI Fundraising Committee

Having been involved in many events in past years in Church Stretton I must congratulate the Town Council for the well-planned, well-organised, and well-attended Family Fun Day in the Town Park on Saturday 1st July. The atmosphere was cheerful, and one could see the total enjoyment by the children, adults of all ages, and the togetherness of a community. A big thank you to the Town Council, all the staff involved and all the volunteers, who enabled the day to run smoothly and efficiently. Well done!

Tom Beaumont

Christian Aid Week

The final total collected / donated was £3,500 exactly (thanks to a very kind 'rounding-up' gift). Although this is less than in recent years, it is a good result considering the current financial constraints many people are experiencing. Incidentally, it is very close to the overall average since 1997, so 'par for the course'. Thank you so much to all who contributed, both envelope deliverers and donors, some very generously, and to Mayfair for receiving envelopes.

Anthony Peck

Trivia Corner

by Ken Willis

1. What is the sixth planet from the Sun?
2. What is the deepest ocean on Earth?
3. How many prime numbers between 10 & 20?
4. Who wrote *Northanger Abbey*?
5. *The Sleepy Lagoon* is the theme tune to which popular radio show?

Stretton Area Community Wildlife Group

Curlew, Lapwing, Kestrel, Cuckoo, Dipper and Red Kite Project Leader Leo Smith

A big 'thank you' to *Focus* readers who have already reported any of these species to us. If you have information about the location of any of these birds since March, and haven't told us yet, please send reports to leo@leosmith.org.uk.

Cudwell Meadow Bioblitz 29th June

Project Leader Isabel Carter

Choosing the date for a bioblitz three months ahead of time means the somewhat crucial weather will be a complete unknown. Most invertebrate species will only emerge if the sun shines! But this year the weather for the Cudwell meadow bioblitz was just perfect – sunny all day but not too hot. We had lots of good folk come and help identify fauna and flora. We were blessed with two spider experts from Shropshire Spiders, Nigel and Jim, complete with their 'Heath Robinson' spider catchers (which also gently scooped up loads of other species too). They were very pleased to identify 31 species of spiders within the meadow. Spiders can be very attractive, and they included the pink Candy Stripe (*Enoplognatha ovata*) and the bright Cucumber Green spider (*Araniella cucurbitina*).

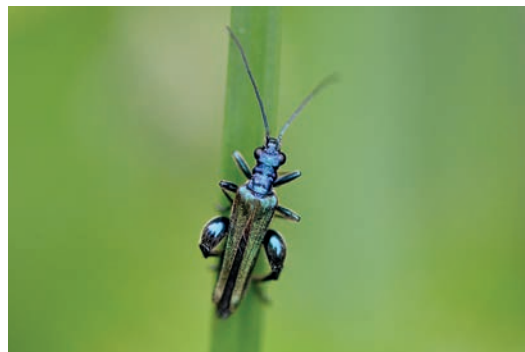


Lots of shield bugs were scooped up by them too, together with plenty of their juvenile stages known as 'instars' which reveal they are happily multiplying in the meadow. We identified six species

Hazel leaf roller
Photo: John Baines

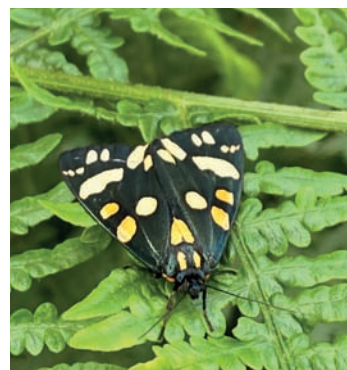


including the Bishops Mitre Shield Bug (*Aelia acuminata*) not seen there before. There were plenty of beetles with several new species of ladybird and weevils not found in previous years. Beetles included a splendid large red Hazel Leaf Roller weevil and the ridiculous Swollen-thighed beetle.



The ridiculous Swollen-thighed beetle! Photo: Shutterstock

In the afternoon the regular monthly bee walk was held but with extra eagle-eyed assistants, and an impressive total of ten different bumble bee species were recorded including two gypsy bumble bees and the first sighting of bilberry bumble bees in the meadow. There was a varied mix of moths and butterflies – 13 species – with a lovely view of the beautiful Scarlet Tiger (*Callimorpha dominula*), pictured, which has dramatic scarlet underwings seen when flying.



Nine members of the Strettons botany group came to look at the vegetation and they were pleased to identify two new species for the meadow, Ragged robin around the pond and teasel. However other species may have been lost.

The very wet winter and spring meant that no sheep could come in to graze the mostly flooded meadow in the early spring, resulting now in an abundance of long grass. It seems that some yellow meadow ants are moving in and busily constructing two large nests by the bank. They are usually an indicator of undisturbed meadows.

For full reports on the bioblitz findings please look on the SACWG website or sign up for our newsletters.



Ragged robin

Isabel Carter, who also took the rest of the photos

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Spotted Flycatchers



Towards the end of May, my neighbour phoned to say the spotted flycatchers were here. They are one of the last migratory birds to return to us for the summer. These small, neat birds use the ivy above her back door to construct a rather flimsy nest out of moss and wool, which they bind together with cobwebs. Greyish, brown birds with a streaky crown, it is the young that have the spots. A bit drab, maybe and often overlooked, they have a sweet, alert expression.



We had decided to capture these little birds on our trail camera. The male, with his sharp beak and upright posture, would perch in a tree a short distance from the nest site. His high pitched “tsee” was not easy for us to hear, especially during the early morning chorus. But he was not too shy and we could always find him amongst branches, waiting for suitable prey. Then he would dart and ‘snap’ – the insect was caught. This was repeated nonstop, throughout the day, sometimes from the tree and at other times from an old gate propped against a wall.

It is this unique way of snatching prey that identifies spotted flycatchers. As the chicks grew, snuggled safely into their well-hidden nest, so did their appetite and the parents were constantly hawking insects. We watched them leaping into the air, then back and forth to the nest site.

They eat practically nothing but insects and the decline of invertebrates is not helping spotted flycatchers. A bird

that was once common in country gardens has become quite rare.

We have much to learn about setting up trail cameras. Their flight to and from the nest was so rapid, it was difficult to see any distinguishing features. But it had been a fun thing to do and we learnt much about these little birds while observing their busy lives.

Carol Wood, with photos by David Arbuthnot



Apologies from the Focus editors who managed to rename the garden warbler pictured on p34 of July's issue. It is definitely not a pied flycatcher, as a sharp-eyed reader noticed.

RSPB - What's on in the Strettons

Friday 11th August

Walk in the Corvedale and social evening, start 6.30pm

Park and meet at The Swan pub at Aston Munslow Grid Ref SO 51228 86656.

Approx 2 hour evening walk mainly through mixed farmland beside woodland with fine views over the Corvedale followed by a meal and/or drinks in the Swan pub afterwards. (Pre-booking recommended)

Contact: Val Francis on vafrancis@hotmail.co.uk

Sunday 13th August

Moth Morning – 10am start at Swallow Barn SY7 9HT near Tugford, Brown Clee

We will look at the moths that I have trapped the night before and help each other to identify them in the books I will provide (bring books too if you have them), then release them safely. Hopefully you will be amazed by their beauty and diversity and we will all learn a little more about them.

Please contact me if you are coming so I can let you know if we have to cancel due to bad weather and also to ensure there is enough parking available.

Directions: what3words lined/flirts/handrail otherwise call or email for directions. Tea/coffee and cake will be provided.

Contact: Cathy Beardes 07828 056428, cathy.beardes@hotmail.co.uk

The South Shropshire Local Group of the RSPB

has a programme of talks and walks throughout 2023. Talks (including refreshments) are £2 to Local Group Members and £5 to visitors, under 18s half price.

Walks are £2.

See What's On for details of August events.

For further information visit our website:

group.rspb.org.uk/southshropshire

or Facebook: RSPB South Shropshire Local Group

Recent Walks: Saturday 10th June at Much Wenlock. This walk was very popular and it was delightful to be walking in woodland during the heat of this particularly warm day. Thanks to Reg and Paul who led eighteen of us on a very enjoyable walk, sharing their expert knowledge along the way. We were treated to sightings of several bird species.

These included: chiff chaff, chaffinch, blue tits, robin, blackbird, pied wagtail, goldfinch, juvenile grey wagtail, wren, whitethroat, goldcrest, song thrush, swallow and spotted flycatcher. We also heard: stock dove, blackcap, garden warbler and coal tit.

Unusual flowers are found on this limestone-rich area and the orchids were especially popular. Flowers seen included: butterfly orchid (pictured), pyramid orchid, common spotted orchid, spurge laurel, woodruff, birdsfoot trefoil, small flowered cranesbill, woolly thistle and herb paris.

The sunshine brought out an array of butterflies to enjoy the rich vegetation. We were delighted to see fleeting images of: speckled wood, meadow brown, small heath, common blue and green veined white.

The highlight was definitely seeing and hearing a spotted flycatcher which lingered in the trees long enough for many of us to get our binoculars on it.

Cathy Beardes



Historic Church Stretton – James' Garage



*Below:
Advert from
Church Stretton
Illustrated, 1926*

Opposite the Buck's Head Inn on the other side of the road were two barns and a primitive toilet belonging to the inn. The southern barn has been restored and is now occupied by Entertaining Elephants. The northern barn was part stuccoed and part weatherboard cladding and was probably used as stabling for the Buck's Head Inn.

This barn was demolished in 1922 to allow the erection of James' Garage, which had petrol pumps originally at the side and later at the front. The company later became Caradoc Motors and the property was eventually taken over by the Church Stretton Carpet and Furniture Centre.

For many years the area around was overgrown with trees and became derelict and an eyesore. The land was eventually cleared as part of the construction of the Lion Meadow road and associated works in the mid 1990s. The remnant of the garage and furniture store was demolished in 2002 as part of the Queen's Court development scheme and Co-op car park.

Barrie Raynor and Tony Crowe from Church Stretton through the Ages

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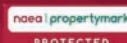
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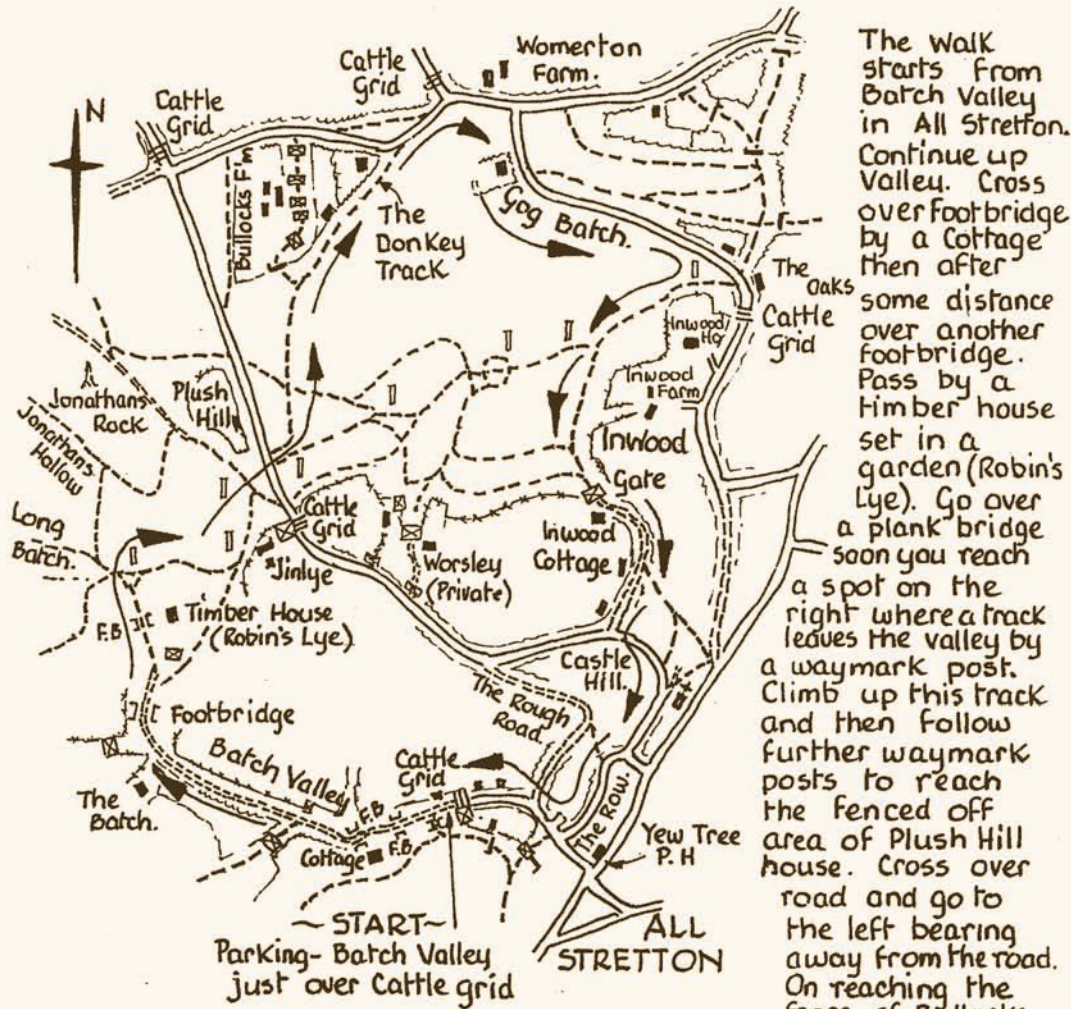
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An Ian Jones Walk – Gogbatch

This is our second reproduction in *Focus* of one of Ian's walks, with the kind permission of his family. We hope you enjoy this lovely route, but please remember that gates and stiles may have changed and do carry a map with you. Very dry or wet weather will make parts of this walk a little difficult.

WALK N° 14 GOG BATCH Approx 4 miles



Following the fence which will be on your left. Continue until you reach the road. Turn right. Do not take the turning to the left, but take the turning on the right soon after passing Womerton farm. Go down the steep road which takes you into Gog batch. Keep ahead and just before the cattle grid by a house, turn right up a track. After climbing for some time bear to the left, and generally keep near to the fence. Keep ahead and at the next junction bear to the left. Keep near to the fence. Go through a gate, cross over a stream and continue along a well defined track. On reaching a road, turn left and drop down Castle hill. On reaching the junction at the bottom turn right up the 'Row'. On reaching a fee junction turn right. Go over Cattle grid and back to start.

Latest Church Stretton Rotary Activity



The Rotary year begins on 1st July each year and this new Rotary year will be very different for Church Stretton Rotary with our first female President.

On Wednesday 28th June Pat Stokes-Smith obtained the chain of office to become our new President. Pat can be seen in the photo having received the chain from outgoing President Graham Shackleton. Pat stated that one of her chief aims was to attract more female members to join Rotary and to enjoy supporting our local community, at the same time as having a lot of fun and making new friends. She also stated she was a polio survivor and it made her very proud that Rotary's efforts to eradicate polio worldwide were very close to being achieved. In addition to a new President, we have a new Secretary, Marcus Cash and a new Treasurer, Mark Redhead. All change at Rotary!



70th Charter Night Being Planned

On 23rd December 1953, Church Stretton Rotary Club obtained its charter to formally be part of the worldwide Rotary organisation.

To commemorate our 70 years of existence we are planning an excellent fun event to take place on 1st November. More details will be issued nearer to the time. We are very proud to have served all our local communities and many international communities when they needed support and help for such an extended period. I am sure we will continue our efforts considerably into the future.

This photo (below) shows the celebration at the Long Mynd Hotel to celebrate our 60th Charter night.



Church Stretton Fun Day

We are here to serve our community, so Rotary were at the second annual Fun Day, managing the main gate, distributing programmes and explaining what delights the 2,500 plus visitors could enjoy. We were also part of the new volunteer and community area with 16 groups represented, where our new President Pat Stokes-Smith was pressing the flesh, explaining how Rotary contributes to the local community and talking to potential new members.



The highlight for many visitors was the helicopter from RAF Shawbury

If you want to know more about helping our local community or joining Rotary, contact Don Lovejoy on don@djlovejoy.co.uk.



Glorious August on Long Mynd

The heather on the plateau of The Long Mynd is one of its outstanding features for beauty and wildlife. It gives The Long Mynd a wild feel and can feel like something akin to Scotland or the Welsh uplands. The heather is semi-natural however and has been created by human activity. The plateau of the Mynd has been an open habitat clear of woodland for thousands of years. Early people cleared upland forest likely to have been birch and willows to create grazing. Poor acidic soils allowed the generation of heather to cover the hill. Woodland would soon return however without the present management of grazing and burning and cutting of the heather. You can see evidence of this around the reservoir in the new pool hollow which was formerly Church Stretton's water supply and was fenced off from grazing animals around 1906. In the intervening century tall birch woodland has developed.

The hill is a common part of the Common lands of the Manor of Stretton en le Dale and the livestock belongs to and is cared for by the Longmynd commoners, who have held grazing rights for many hundreds of years. The ponies range widely across the hill, while the sheep graze more defined areas known as hefts. The knowledge of the boundary of the heft is learnt and is passed down through generations of sheep from ewe to lamb. Grazing is a valuable management tool and helps to keep the balance of grassland, heather and other shrubs and trees that form the



they were much more widespread, but the decline of heathland habitat has reduced its range to only two sites.

August is the month to see the heather on Long Mynd at its best. The timing of peak flowering varies from year to year. Traditionally the 12th of August was often seen as the peak flowering of heather and was traditionally the Glorious Twelfth, the start of the grouse-shooting season. In a good year the hill is covered in purple flowers of common heather or ling.

Recently impacts of climate change and disease have reduced the flowering of heather. High temperatures and dry conditions can cause die-off. To date heather recovers from this but sometimes throws up some unusual growth forms. New diseases e.g. phytophthora have had an impact on bilberry as well as heather.

Grouse are no longer shot on Long Mynd and elsewhere grouse-shooting has become the centre of controversy. One issue is the burning of heather on peat soils which hold large amounts of carbon, which is released during burning. We still burn heather on Long Mynd where there is no peat present. Burning and cutting of heather regenerates patches of young heather shoots which grouse and grazing animals eat. A patchwork of managed heather is important as grouse need tall heather to nest in and short heather to feed on. They also need grit to help digest the woody heather in their digestive systems. Maintaining a balance between old and new heather is key for grazing animals as well as grouse.

Currently the grouse population has dropped after a steady rise in numbers from the late 1990s to over sixty calling males. The population is counted by volunteers led by ornithologist Leo Smith. The counters plot the location of displaying males defending a territory. The records are plotted by Leo on a map and his experienced eye interprets the records to produce an estimate of the number of males and hence the number of pairs. This will be monitored to try to understand the reasons for this and if possible, to adjust the management work to support the grouse population.

Peter Carty, Countryside Manager for South Shropshire



Barristers Plain, Photo: Dick Ward

important wildlife habitats found on the hill today. Several species are associated with the heather; meadow pipit is the commonest bird, followed by skylark, but the real heather specialist is the red grouse.

Heather and red grouse go hand in hand and the grouse are dependent on the heather for food and nesting. No heather, no red grouse. Red grouse are only present in Shropshire on Long Mynd and Stiperstones. Historically



Hymns

It's not that Quakers are against singing hymns; indeed, there is actually a Quaker hymn book though it is rarely used in British Quaker communities nowadays – unlike many Quaker churches overseas – and the author of *Dear Lord and Father of mankind* was a Quaker. But to be sure it is normal for meetings for worship in this country to be hymn-free. How come?

We believe what matters above all is that worship be unrehearsed, spontaneous, straightforward, never second-hand, 'in plain speech', as we say, as plain as any Quaker Meeting House. The silence of Quaker worship is the silence of waiting for the Spirit to move and to be voiced aloud should anyone be led to minister. Those who minister may be confident and fluent but not always: sometimes Friends struggle to find words to tell what is on their hearts in worship. That does not matter; what does matter is that it is authentic, right for the moment, spoken in love from the depth of the heart, not composed or finessed by any third party. Anyone can be given to speak, young or old, confident or diffident, man or woman, newcomer or lifelong member of the Meeting.

Moreover, Quakers find it hard to identify with many hymns. There are some which run completely counter to what we believe – *Onward, Christian Soldiers*; there are some whose theology is outdated – *Gentle Jesus, meek and mild*; there are some whose texts are convoluted and mangled to make them rhyme and fit the melody; there are some which survive primarily because the music is beautiful or familiar, and sometimes questionable words get tolerated perhaps because the singers don't look at them too closely.

However, there are surely other hymns that are well worth keeping alive and using in worship, even if they use language that is a bit old fashioned, requiring some thought to grasp their full meaning. Many who watched the coronation will remember how the ceremonials seemed to go on interminably but eventually the moment came for everyone to sing *Praise, my soul, the king of heaven*. The music is glorious, the words make good sense and the singing was enthusiastic and joyful; the congregation were united and uplifted in heart, mind and spirit.

And may I offer another hymn that rewards careful attention? Strictly speaking, it is not a hymn so much as an aid to spiritual health, like a workout for the soul, but none the worse for that. There are several verses, but here are the first three:

*Awake, my soul, and with the sun Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise to pay thy morning sacrifice.*

Redeem thy misspent time that's past, Live this day as if t'were thy last;

Improve thy talent with due care; For the great day thyself prepare.

*Let all thy converse be sincere, Thy conscience as the noon-day clear:
Think how all-seeing God thy ways And all thy secret thoughts surveys.*

An Anglican bishop composed that in 1695, but it is as fresh for anyone as a new morning. As we Quakers say, "Be open to new light, from whatever source it may come."

Roger Seal

Our Student Journalists 2022-2023

This afternoon, on a beautifully sunny day in June, I'm reliving this morning's event at the Church Stretton Secondary School. After an incredibly rewarding and enjoyable year – notwithstanding the odd hiccup as 'the best laid plans o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley' reminds us – myself and the Chair of the *Focus* Directors, Paul Harding, said farewell to our most recent cohort of student journalists. We presented them with a certificate and other tokens of our appreciation for the work they produced, which has proved to be very popular with readers. We wish these young people good fortune as they look forward to two years of Sixth Form college and, if they so wish, their university careers.

Christine Williams, Focus Journalist



Teas to Please

Sunday 27th and Monday 28th August – All Saints' Church, Little Stretton, 2pm to 5pm

All Saints' Church, Little Stretton is delighted to invite you to Teas to Please again this year.

The Stretton Strummers will serenade us on the Sunday and the Church Stretton Accordion Band on the Monday, and the Manor House garden will be open on both days. We are very grateful to all these friends for their support.

All proceeds will be given as follows:

50% to All Saints' Church; 25% to the Church Stretton Food Bank; 25% to the Community Responders

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Defibrillator Installation at the URC

Church Stretton URC in the High Street has installed a publicly accessible defibrillator on the front wall of

the URC Hall. A defibrillator can be used to provide immediate treatment for someone suffering a heart attack. They have saved lives.

“Many people using our Hall, the Church next door and the Silvester

Horne Institute across the road are vulnerable. While we hope that this will never need to be used we recognise that it offers an additional level of support should such an event arise,” said Roger Wilson, one of the Church elders.

The defibrillator is a model which is simple to use. It is accessible from the street and easily reached from three of the most widely used meeting venues in the town, or from a 435 whose bus stop is outside the Hall. When opened and switched on the system teaches the user, even a first-

time user, how to use it with audio guidance and video instructions on a screen. Defibrillators are also available at

the Co-op (24-hour access) and at Mayfair (when open).

“We are a church in the community and hope that by extending the availability of emergency aid equipment of this kind we demonstrate that our concerns are for everyone in



the town,” added Roger Wilson.

Anyone interested in further information about defibrillators and to watch a short training video which runs for about 10 minutes, can scan the attached QR link or access via bit.ly/URCdefib



Scrappies



School Holiday Craft Workshops will start again in August!

We're looking forward to welcoming children back to the store for crafty fun on Tuesday mornings during the school holidays on 1st, 8th and 15th August from 10am to 12 noon. Children should be over five, and under sevens must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. A maximum of eight children per session.

The cost is £3.50 per child for each session. Booking essential: 01694 328508.



Westhope Village Hall

Well, with June and July come and gone, all of our events were well attended.

The community lunch was again a great success with another one booked for Thursday 7th September.

Another date for your diary is Saturday 14th October for our annual Harvest Supper.

Also booked for September is another rummage sale, more details next month.

Our skittles social evenings have been very much enjoyed, and we're looking forward to holding more of these in the future. The time has now come to close our hall for refurbishing the kitchens and the toilets. June was our last Bingo until after the refurbishments, so look out for further news and updates

Thank you everyone for all your support.

Betty Manley

Church Stretton Library Diary

4th July-21st August – Art Café Artists Exhibition

Art Café Artists are an informative, supportive and sharing network of professional artists promoting contemporary art in the Marches region.

25th August-27th September – Bottled Water Exhibition

An exhibition celebrating 140 years of bottled water in Church Stretton.

Summer Reading Challenge for children

Running all through August. Sign up and read all sorts, with a sign-up pack to collect stickers, freebies and the Library's treasure hunt and craft table available. Please keep an eye out for events and sessions during August at the Library and if you complete the challenge, you receive a free swimming voucher to use. It's all free!

Tuesday 1st August (and every Tuesday): Rhyme time for children under 5, 10.30-11am.

Thursday 3rd: Citizen Advice. Trained advisors will be available to give advice on issues such as benefits, pensions, debt and money, housing and consumer problems and work-related issues. Sessions will be by appointment on their Freephone Number 0808 278 7894 (Mon-Fri 10am-4pm) Textphone 18001 0800 144 8884. Sessions on the first and third Thursday of the month between 10am-12 noon.

Local & Family History Session: Every Thursday, 1-4 pm. Let our history volunteers guide you in your local and family history research. There is free internet access to Ancestry at your library.

Friday 4th (and first Friday of every month): u3a Reading group 2, 1-2.30pm.

Saturday 5th: Free summer reading challenge 2023 – for ages 0-12 years. Come and sign up for this year's reading

challenge. Ask in your library or check it out online, with events

and activities happening during August and the theme this year is 'Ready, Set, Read'. Help the Ready, Set, Read team complete the obstacle course, collecting all six golden books to cross the finish line! With a treasure hunt to do in the Library and many different types of books to bury your head into. Come and sign up! It only takes six books over the summer to complete the whole challenge and you can complete it as many times as you like or just sign up and read what you can. We look forward to seeing you at Church Stretton Library.

Tuesday 8th: Rhyme time for children under 5 10.30-11am. u3a Writers group 2pm-4pm with Jenny O'Shea (always second and fourth Tuesdays of the month)

Wednesday 9th (and the second Wednesday of every month): Memory Café 1pm-3pm – Please ask for more information at the Library.

Friday 11th (and the second and fourth Friday of every month): u3a Writers group 1 with Lesley Dench, 10am-12 noon.

Saturday 12th (and the second Saturday of every month): Councillor Hilary Luff's drop-in session, 10-11.30am

Monday 28th (and the fourth Monday of every month): u3a Family and Social History, 2-4pm

Tuesday 29th: ZooLab is coming to the Library for the end of the summer, with creepy-crawlies and other animals. Check in with the Library for more details, times and booking information.

Please check the What's On pages for full details of this schedule.



Come and Sing with Stretton Choral Society

Saturday 9th September

Have you ever thought it would be fun to sing in a choral society with its blend of voices singing different parts? Or perhaps you sang in a choir before the Covid pandemic struck the country and closed everything down, but felt nervous about returning once restrictions were lifted? If so, Stretton Choral Society invites you to join its members for an afternoon of light-hearted music-making on Saturday 9th September. Singing with us can be lots of fun – we aim to do our best but don't take ourselves too seriously and there is plenty of help for those

who struggle to read music. Under the guidance of our Music Director, Mike Turner, we will explore a selection of choral 'encores' written or arranged by twentieth-century composers as well as choruses from Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. We will meet for the Come and Sing afternoon in the URC church at 2pm, aiming to finish at 5pm after taking a mid-afternoon break for tea. There is a charge of £5 to cover the costs of the event. If you would like to book a place, please contact Mark Tocknell on 01694 722969 or at mark.tocknell@hotmail.co.uk.

WHO is my Neighbour?

Our neighbours often are not chosen: they are thrust upon us, such as in the example story of the Good Samaritan, and he responded effectively. This is a story that is known by many adults in Britain today who have come across it at some point. The theme of hospitality has been picked out from the opening Christmas nativity myths. I say myths, because they are stories. They did not actually happen, but they convey some deep and lasting truths about our humanity. I am thinking particularly about the visit of the Magi to the nativity scene.

What is happening here is that the nativity stories have been created sometime after Jesus, as a prologue to the main drama. They capture the themes in the body of his teaching – really what he stood for, expressed in his life and inspired his followers and people around him to practice in life. The Magi, i.e. the wise men, Sages, or enquirers searching for knowledge, meaning, fresh ideas etc. represent ‘the stranger’ from abroad. In the story they are welcomed at his birth; but not by the elites in power, except only as prospective informers.

How we welcome strangers is a big theme in Judaism and subsequently Christianity. Although across history churches and societies behaved badly towards people who are different, and still do, hospitality and refuge is frequently given by churches and other faiths. Then why, in a supposedly Christian country, did the Home Office conduct a campaign to remove the Windrush generation, simply because they did not have the right papers at the time? They contributed so much, and still do, to the servicing and economy of this country. A reparation scheme with compensation has still not been made to the majority of those who had suffered such humiliation, loss and pain.

Something is happening within our governmental structures which continues to repeat the same kind of policies that simply don’t work, when it comes to ‘the stranger’. Migrants are fleeing poverty, war, oppression and

climate change impacts. UN sources say 110 million people are displaced in our world today, likely to grow as climate change impact becomes more entrenched.

This is an international problem that we cannot resolve in the same tired old ways of sending refugees to ‘prison hulks’ off-shore, or exporting out of mind, to Rwanda.

Human despair cannot be contained and the boats will keep coming. Every one refugee has a good reason to flee; no one willingly flees their home. Is there a solution to be found in keeping people in their native countries? Surely, one option needing exploration. A joined-up development plan, in collaboration with neighbouring nations, who are facing the same, together with the home country, might go a long way. It would need aid, though collectively, and be less expensive than running the inhuman failed schemes thought up so far.

Besides, could there be opportunities to employ those with skills in our own country as we regenerate into a green and dynamic state, as once did happen with the Windrush generation. Is this beyond the imagination of governments?

What is apparent right now is that the problems facing nations are beyond governmental institutions without the best minds of the country being in on the debate.

Here is an opportunity for the churches and our allies to express some constructive anger at the appalling lack of imagination, rather than thinking larger, wider, collaboratively, for more humane solutions. It is a crisis that is growing more intense as climate change affects the capacity of people to survive where they are.

Is this too political? Well, the story of the Good Samaritan at the time was a political bomb. Samaritans were Jews, but not the right kind! It is a subversive story in a deeply conflicted land.

Noel Beattie



Scout Group News

At the time of writing (June) the focus was particularly on the two Cub Scout Packs of the 2nd Longmynd and, in particular, the Tuesday Pack. Jane Wrench, who has served the Group for well over thirty years, has taken a step back as Cub Scout Leader and handed over to Adele Parker. Jane will remain as Assistant Leader.

Adele has a long background with the Girl Guides and only switched to Scouting eighteen months ago, since when she has gained the coveted Wood Badge Training Award.

The Pack has recently been concentrating on the Scientist and Astronomer Badges in conjunction with Crest

Awards, a national organisation which encourages children to take an interest in science and engineering.

The Wednesday Pack had an intense month which included a week-end camp on a site provided by a friendly farmer near Cardington. The programme was mainly ‘back to basics’ with emphasis on shelter-building and pioneering and included a hike to the top of Caer Caradoc. Also in the programme were special sports events which resulted in winning the Athlete Badge.

There are no meetings in August.

Fred Reeve



Trivia Answers

1. Saturn
2. Pacific
3. Four (11,13,17,19)
4. Jane Austen
5. Desert Island Discs

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Contemplation Corner

A small team of volunteers have kept the new plants and trees in Contemplation Corner well watered this summer. The team, comprising Graham Porter and Pat Stokes-Smith from Rotary, together with Jo and Tony Stanley and Peter Whitlock watered everything in a record-breaking 15 minutes every Friday afternoon unless we had rain in the few days beforehand.



The mini-meadow is only in its first year of management as a flower-rich meadow but there have been plenty of flowers and attractive grasses to see. The yellow rattle, sown in the meadow because it reduces the vigour of the coarser grasses, did particularly well and next year we



hope to see a greater variety of flowers than are there at present.

Contemplation Corner has become a delight to sit in. The benches are well used, the meadow is colourful and the shrubs are growing well. It has been lovely to hear so many compliments from visitors to the corner, who are all enjoying the transformation.

As we approach high summer the grass will be cut and the cuttings removed after allowing seed to fall. This will help to reduce the fertility in the meadow, which will encourage the flowers but reduce the grasses which might otherwise smother them. The grass will then be cut regularly for the rest of the season.

Sandra Whitlock

Can You Help with *Focus* Production?

STRETTON FOCUS

Stretton *Focus* has a vacancy for someone who is confident working with computers to join our production team. The work involves the design and layout of the pages of *Focus* each month and will also involve uploading some content onto the new *Focus* website each month. No previous experience of working with magazine or website production is necessary since the procedures involved are very straightforward and full training and support will be given. The work is carried out

partly in the *Focus* office and at home if desired and takes between one and two days each month.

This is an opportunity to work for the well-respected community magazine in a friendly and co-operative atmosphere with other like-minded volunteers. If you are interested or would like to learn more about *Focus* production please contact Andrew Fenton, by email on fentonapf@gmail.com.


Focus Subscriptions Manager (Payments) Wanted

Applications are invited for a newly created volunteer position with *Focus*. The Subscriptions Manager (Payments) will work closely with the Subscriptions Manager (Rounds), in all aspects of requesting, receiving, and depositing annual subscriptions. Much of the activity around this role occurs between October and February when most annual subscriptions are paid. There is currently

a small amount of on-going work during the rest of the year. Should the post holder be interested, there will be other complementary roles emerging in the future that could be added to provide more of a year-round activity.

If you are interested in joining our team of volunteers, and you have some accounting or book-keeping experience, please contact Paul Harding at sfocuschair@gmail.com.

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Family Fun Day

Young and old came together again to enjoy themselves at this year's Town Council Family Fun Day in Sandford Avenue Park, compered this year by Peter Latchford. The weather was slightly less kind than last year but a light passing shower did not detract from the fun. The staple attractions of the Fancy Dress competition, run by Louise Jackson, the fun Dog Show, run by Barbara Walker, and the Skate Jam, run by Tom Rochester, were as popular as ever, as were the inflatables and the Have-A-Go Archery with the Bowmen of Caradoc.

Because of the water shortage, children were this year denied the chance to aim fire hoses at cones again, but they could at least clamber over a fire engine, as well as sit in a police car, sounding the siren! They had the bonus too this year, of clambering into a helicopter, flown in specially from RAF Shawbury, as well as trying out a United Services tank simulator, both stationed in the Coppice Leasowes Nature Reserve.

A new addition were the stalls, provided by the St Lawrence Friends, raising school funds, with their Lucky Dip, Teddy Tombola, Funky Hair and book stall. There was also the opportunity to contribute to the Shropshire Fund for Refugees on their craft stall. Scrappies again provided a popular craft workshop, run in association with a storyteller, generously sponsored by *Focus*, who also covered the cost of the ever-popular Climbing Wall.

The event this year was opened up to no less than fourteen local community groups and sports clubs to promote their activities, to attract new members and to seek to enlist new organising volunteers, particularly needed by the youth groups. The event, being held in the Park, provided another opportunity to promote more use of its facilities by offering free coaching in croquet, tennis and skateboarding, with the bonus of free access to the Crazy Golf.

Children had the opportunity to try out some of the new play equipment recently introduced into the Park. The Town Council also invited contributions towards the cost of the second phase of new play equipment to be installed in the Brooksbury Recreation Ground (off Churchill Road). The first phase has recently been completed, but the second phase will cost a further £50,000. Grant funding is being sought, but the community is being asked to contribute as well, as it was for the new playground in All Stretton. Those who would like to contribute are encouraged to go to the Town Council website: www.churchstretton-tc.gov.uk/town-council-services/brooksbury-recreation-ground.

For sustenance through the day, attendees had the options of beefburgers, pizzas and doughnuts, washed down either with milk shakes from the local Proper Good Dairy or drinks from the bar, provided by Joule's Brewery (Kings Arms), which again sponsored the Dog Show. Drinking water was provided free of charge by Wenlock Water.

Local performers, organised by Sue Welch, provided entertainment through the day, starting with a rousing performance by the St Lawrence Primary Singing Club.

This was followed by contributions from the Stretton Strummers, the Broad Band, the Garden Singers, Sax in the Sticks and the Eastern Mystique dancers. Younger performers included local students from the Longmynd Music Academy and dancers from the Shropshire Academy of Performing Arts.

The Lower Deckers, the local sea shanty group, now gaining national recognition, relished the opportunity to perform in their home town. The entertainment programme was generously sponsored by SWS Broadband.

As ever, the Council was grateful to all those who volunteered to steward the event and to those who kindly stayed on to complete the clearing-up. It truly was an event involving the whole community.

Cllr. Bob Welch



Fancy dress girls



St Lawrence Primary Singing Club



The RAF Shawbury Helicopter



The Lower Deckers



A Scrappies crafter

Why (I) bother to go to Church

We have a wonderful variety of different churches in our area and I wanted to write an article on why we should all go to church. It was going to be a strong list of very good reasons. Good music, welcoming, friendly social interaction, free childcare, to hear something thought-provoking or encouraging, and of course there is always the tea, coffee, cake and biscuits! It can also be argued that church is a place where people do good or charitable work in their community.

As I compiled my list of reasons, I found them to be woefully unconvincing, because I realize that in my attempt to make the church look distinctly attractive, there are many other clubs or societies who do something similar or even better.

So what is church? Because it is certainly not a certain type of building. Yes, we sometimes meet in places especially constructed for the purpose of gathering together for worship, but church can also be in people's homes, in prisons, cafés, the gym, hospitals and in empty shops or street corners. Neither is there a particular style or pattern

of service because services vary from complete silence to the extremely noisy, from very traditional to modern.

So what is church, because for an increasing number of people in the UK, neither church nor even Christianity seem relevant in their lives. For them, social interaction, free childcare and tasty tea, coffee or cake is not enough and does not inspire them to become regular churchgoers. Furthermore, some might have suffered abuse, bullying or coercion by the church. Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) once famously said, "I would be a Christian if it were not for Christians."

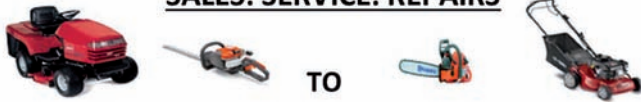
So why do I and so many bother to go to church? Since a child, I have learned about Jesus, His teaching makes sense to me and over the years I have grown to know Him and love Him personally. I know what Mahatma Gandhi says about me, but I find church to be a place where I, with others, can worship the Jesus I know and love and seek to be more like Him in daily life. Oh! And then there is the tea, coffee and cake of course!

Justin Thort (Jon Hughes)



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Traditionally August is a month when everything goes quiet, or at least certainly in our cities, towns, schools and parishes. In terms of agriculture, it is a time of worry (weather) and hard work as the grain harvest begins. The first, traditionally speaking, caused by the other.

August is also a popular month for celebrating the saints, with many El Festejo (Spain) or La Festa (Italy), and Fête (France) with local, national and international patronal feast days being celebrated. Sadly, this joint civic-religious tradition of whole town or village celebrations of patron saints was broken at the English Reformation. These holy-days (holidays) were periods of prayer, rest, and play that broke the periods of hard work and existential struggle. When celebrating major feast days, I like to emphasize with parishioners at St Milburga's that what we celebrate in church then needs to continue in the day ahead, either by resting or by eating and drinking something to celebrate the feast, as a reminder to root our faith in the life we lead.

This is not something new, as our forebears developed particular foods to celebrate various religious festivals which have entered popular culture. We may be more aware of certain foods such as pancakes, Christmas cake and hot cross buns, but our English forebears would have eaten at Easter the Easter Biscuits flavoured with oil of cassia, symbolic of the perfumes used at Jesus' burial, or Simnel cake (a favourite of mine) used to break the fast of Lent with a marchpane (marzipan) decoration of eleven balls representing the Apostles (without Judas). On 29th September for Michaelmas, St Michael's cakes would have been served,

which are like a modern butterfly cake but the wings represent those of the archangel. North of the border there's Michaelmas Bannock, or St Michael's Bannock (*Struan Micheil*) which is a Hebridean bread. Medieval England had the practice of distributing Soul Cakes or soulmass-cake which were small bread-like cakes on All Souls Day. Those who ate them would offer a prayer for the deceased family of the donor.

If we were to look around the world we could include Agatha Buns (Minni di Virgin, Minne di Sant'Agata), Baklava (made with 33 layers symbolising the 33 years of Jesus' life on earth), Christopsomo, Vasilopita or Saint Basil's cake Koulourakia and Lampropsomo (Greece), Fanesca (soup from Ecuador), Galette des rois (the French Epiphany cake or pastry), Paska (Poland and Ukraine), Pretzel (southern France circa 615AD), St Lucia Buns, Religieuse (France), Stollen (Germany) and Świeconka (Poland). These are but a few of the many culinary traditions associated with Christian religious festivals, to say nothing of other religious faiths which are now part of our culture.

I realise that the retail industry is about providing choice and making money, but it is sad that we can lose sight of the seasonality of foods – hot cross buns are now available year round, as are strawberries and soft fruits, asparagus (before anyone cries "Physician heal thyself", I'm guilty of buying this out of season), but is there not something special about trying to keep to the seasons and religious cycle – both spiritually, economically and ecologically speaking?

Canon Jonathan

Letters

Defibrillators

May I suggest you publish an article on this subject? Though I know much too little about it to compose it myself, I believe it could attract real and compelling interest. Several questions of my own around the subject include the following: How can you tell if someone is in crisis and needs a defibrillator? Where in the Strettons are defibrillators? How do you access and operate one? Are there different types? Who, confronted by someone in crisis, may operate a defibrillator? Who must operate a defibrillator? What must be done at the same time? What responsibilities and risks do you run by getting involved? Apparently they are expensive to buy (about £1,500?) and therefore replace if stolen and reportedly they are therefore often targeted by thieves, so what could be done to make them secure while still being readily accessible?

I am aware that the National Trust organised a first aid training day for volunteers which touched on defibrillators. The tutor was well informed; perhaps he could compose an article and I am sure there are many other questions an expert could raise and answer.

I commend this to you.

Roger Seal

I enclose a photo of the remains of Weary Will's house at Womerton, All Stretton, on the Long Mynd, in a small wood below Bullocks Moor.



Trevor Morris, who lives nearby tells me that a Mr William Davies, known as 'Weary Will' lived in this tiny house with his wife and then a Mary Ward from London, both of whom sadly died, dates unknown.

I am not sure when Weary Will moved away or died, but his house was apparently demolished by the Council as a 'rural slum' and some say that he was taken to the Workhouse.

I don't know who owns it and wonder whether anyone else has any information on this old place – surely another romantic tale of the Long Mynd worthy of preservation or restoration. The house looks as though it was built from second-hand bricks and the fireplace was certainly well built for what some called a hovel in the hills!

W F Kerswell

School Governors

Our lovely readers might not be aware that another of the roles of your intrepid *Focus* journalist (that's me, by the way) is to work with and mentor our student journalists. These wonderful, and occasionally startling, young people fill the centre pages of the magazine for several months each year with their passionate and original articles. Working with them sparked my curiosity about another important factor of school life: the role of school governors. Here's what I learned.

Governors are responsible, collectively, for overseeing the strategic plans, policies, budgets, premises management, staffing levels and more in their school. There's no getting away from the fact that there's a time commitment. There are meetings where issues are discussed, decisions are made, and implementations agreed, but the time that governors contribute allows teachers to concentrate on the education and welfare of the children and young people in their care.

A board of governors should have, in their membership mix, a range of skills and expertise including finance, law, running a business, premises management, human resources and working with volunteers. Much of this will come from experience, and not necessarily by qualification. Governors are the key strategic decision makers in every school, and all this on a volunteer basis.

Mike Collinson, local businessman and Chair of the Church Stretton School Board of Governors, says "I was previously a school governor in mid-Wales, a small Welsh village called Pont Robert, at the school my children attended in 1998, and I really enjoyed it. I became a Governor at Church Stretton in 2017 because I believe that we all need to contribute what we can to our communities."

So, what about that time commitment? It's often one of the issues that prevents people from considering a volunteer role. Each school governing body has a number of sub-groups working on specific issues, and most governors are members of one or two of these. These groups feed their work back to the full Board, helping to spread the workload so that everyone contributes to the whole but no-one becomes overloaded. Mike Collinson again: "In our full meetings, which are generally about once a term, every governor has the chance to air their views, ensuring that there is a fair debate on each topic, so that everyone understands the issues and can contribute fairly to decisions."

In between those meetings, governors occasionally visit their school during a day, which helps them understand the reality of school life and the impact their work has on pupils at classroom level and the school as a whole. Mike says, "I've been on a finance committee previously, and have also been the link governor for English. I'm currently the link governor for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and I became Chair of Governors in September 2018. I meet monthly with the school's Business and Operations Manager at TrustED, the multi-academy educational Trust to which Church Stretton School belongs. We've invested significantly in upgrading our IT systems, with interactive screens in most classrooms and a Wi-Fi system that allows all our students to access the internet. We're also updating the tables



Image: Shutterstock

and chairs in the dining room and investing in the school's infrastructure."

School governors have, sadly, the unfortunate image of being slightly stuffy, and almost always of an older generation. A survey undertaken in 2022, by the National Governance Association (NGA), reported that more than 90% of state school governors were white despite the fact that more than a third of students across the UK primary and secondary school system come from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Just 1% of governors who responded were under 30 and only around 6% were under 40. These are the career and family-building years for most people, so it's understandable that their time has to be balanced with great skill. Still, it's discouraging that more people with school-age children don't think of becoming a school governor, especially, one might assume, since they have a vested interest in their local school.

Shekeila Scarlett is an exception to the average. She's 26, and one of the youngest people in the UK to ever be elected as a school governor. She was excluded from school when she was 12, and sat before her school's board of governors at her appeal. Her determination and personality convinced them, and she won back her place. The experience was a lesson she didn't forget. She's now the Chair of Governors at Stoke Newington school, bringing to the role her experiences of youth volunteering and management when she was still in her teens. "I'm a lot closer to the education system experience than almost all of the governors who sit on current governing bodies," says Shekeila. She is a rarity, but examples like hers might encourage other young adults to follow her. She shows us that commitment, management skills and authority aren't restricted to people over 50. Or even 30, come to think of it.

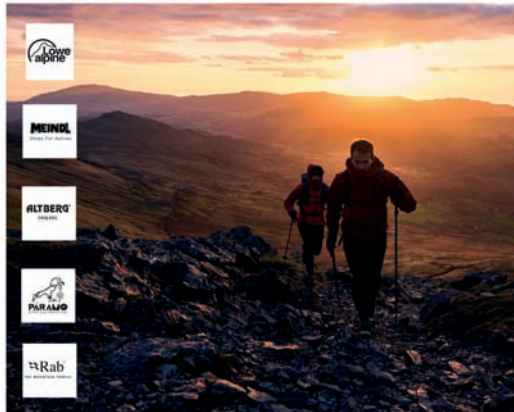
Do you think you might have some useful skills to offer? Perhaps you have some ideas about your local school that you'd like to test at board level. If you'd like to know more, or to put your toe in the water (metaphorically, of course), check out www.nga.org.uk and the website of your local school.

*Christine Williams, Focus Journalist
With thanks to the National Governance Association and
Church Stretton School websites.*

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Churches in the Strettons



ANGLICAN CHURCH, STRETTON PARISH: St Laurence, Church Stretton, St Michael & All Angels, All Stretton, and All Saints, Little Stretton. Rector: Rev'd Steve Johnson (Tel: 722585)
Website: www.strettonparish.org.uk

Sunday Services

St Laurence's

Weekly	8.30am	Holy Communion
1st & 3rd Sundays	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Deeper
2nd Sunday	10.30am	Morning Worship
4th Sunday	10.30am	Altogether

On the 1st-3rd Sundays in the month the children's activities are in the Parish Centre. Children join the service at 10.30am and then are taken over to the Parish Centre by the leaders.

St Michael's

1st & 3rd Sundays:	10.30am	Morning Worship
2nd & 4th Sundays:	10.30am	Holy Communion (URC on 2nd Sunday)

All Saints

1st Sunday:	11.00am	Holy Communion (Order 2)
2nd Sunday:	11.00am	Morning Prayer
3rd Sunday:	11.00am	Holy Communion (Order 1)
4th Sunday:	3.00pm	Evensong

Where there is a 5th Sunday in the month, all three churches join together for a United Parish Service at 10.30am in St Laurence Church.

Midweek Service

Holy Communion will be held weekly in St Laurence at 10.30am every Thursday

Online Service

As well as the services above, you can join us from home for our pre-recorded online service available from 10am each Sunday. Please visit www.strettonparish.org.uk and click on the "Online Services" blue button.

The Parish Office is in the Parish Centre, Church Street. (Tel: 724224).
Open 9am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday. Email: office@strettonparish.org.uk



METHODIST CHURCH Minister: Rev'd George Heinz (Tel: 07538 480626)

Website: www.churchstretton-methodistchurch.org.uk

Hall bookings: Carole Coles (Tel: 724958)

Sunday Services

10.30am Morning Service

Wednesday Activities

Babies and Toddlers (School term time only) 10am-12noon

Cuppa and Chat 2.30-4pm. All welcome



RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS) Co-clerks: Lesley Richards and Charles West (Tel: 722068)

Email: csqm@gorswen.co.uk

Sundays:

10.30am Meetings for Worship in the Silvester Horne Committee Room; Children on 4th Sunday in month

For details of home discussion groups please telephone the Clerks.



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH Priest: Canon Jonathan Mitchell (Tel: 01694 658091)

St Milburga's, Church Stretton

Email: stmilburga@gmail.com

Sunday: 9.30am Mass

Tuesday-Saturday: 9.30am Daily Mass

Saturday: 5.30pm Evening Mass

St Walburga's, Plowden

11.15am Sunday Mass



UNITED REFORMED CHURCH Minister: (vacant)

Website: churchstrettonurc.org.uk

Sunday Services

10.30am Morning worship, followed by refreshments in the church hall

Communion is celebrated on Sundays notified in URC Church Newsletter

Weekday Activities

Mondays/Wednesdays: Monday Group and Ladies Link are currently suspended

Wednesdays: Discussion and prayers – currently suspended

Fridays (non-denominational): Meditation – in the Vestry at 2.00pm

Church Contact: 722123; Email: urcchurchstretton@gmail.com

Church and Hall bookings: 722390

Clubs and Societies in Church Stretton with names of Secretary and contact details

Allotment Gardens Association	Ben Warren	07779 437871	greenhillsallotments@gmail.com
All Stretton Amateur Dramatics Society			allstrettondrama@gmail.com
All Stretton Village Hall	allstrettonvillagehall@gmail.com		www.allstrettonvillagehall.org.uk
All Stretton History Society	Ruth Grafton	723187	janegra@waitrose.com
All Stretton Village Society	Caroline Crump	723283	carolinecrump68@icloud.com
Alzheimers Carer's Support (Mayfair)	Jackie Pennington	722077	[Monthly, 2nd Friday, 2.00pm] www.mayfaircentre.org
Amnesty, Church Stretton Group	Barbara Parnell	720040	
Ancient Greek Study Group	David Langslow	723538	stretlang@gmail.com
Archers: Bowmen of Caradoc	Ros Healy		Roshealy1@gmail.com
Archers, Long Mynd	Sue Williamson	722767	sue@chelmickforge.co.uk
Army Cadet Force	Lt Wheelden	01743 231779	info.shropshireac@rfca.org.uk
ArtsAlive (Church Stretton)	Michael Walker	720132	fontenay1@btinternet.com
Arts Festival, Church Stretton & South Shropshire		07763 985707	info@strettonfestival.org.uk
Badminton Club (Monday 8-10pm)	James Kirkwood	07979 474326	home@jameskirkwood.co.uk
Badminton Club (Junior and Adult, Wednesday)	Alan Fox	725588	alandavidfox@live.co.uk
Beacon (Activities and Care at Mayfair)	Joy King	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Books (Mayfair/Health & Wellbeing Centre)	Sue Hird	724235	smhird@btinternet.com
Bowling Club, Church Stretton Probus	Glyn Morgan	722388	crocrus2@tiscali.co.uk
Bowling Club, Indoor	Alan Mileson	723999	amilson@lineone.net
Bowling Club, Ladies'	Lucy Taylor	720115	
Breathing Space (Singing for health and wellbeing)	Kate Buttolph	720358	kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk
Bridge Club (Thursday 1-5pm, All Stretton Vlge Hall)	Maxine Lainchbury	07971 191664	www.bridgewebs.com/churchstretton
Bridleways Association, Long Mynd and District	Lynn Townsend	722667	
Brownies, Church Stretton	Judy Russell	724056	davejudy1@googlemail.com
Busy Bees Preschool	Church Stretton School	722209	
Camera Club, Long Mynd	Amanda Page		secretary@longmyndcameraclub.co.uk
Cancer Research UK	Sue Toghill	722713	susantoghill@outlook.com
Cancer Support Group, Stretton	Lesley McIntyre	723427	
Chamber of Trade, Church Stretton	Stuart Wright	722237	
Chess Club, Church Stretton	Tom Williamson	722767	tswilliamson337@gmail.com
Choral Society, Stretton	Mark Tocknell	722969	strettonchoral@gmail.com; www.strettonchoral.org.uk
Churches Together	Canon Rosamund Seal	07925 969821	rosamund.seal@gmail.com
Citizens Advice Bureau			at the Library, by appointment only: 0808 278 7894
Civic Society, The Strettons	Janet Martin	722361	jmartin1947@btinternet.com
Climate Care, Stretton	David Howard	722904	
Country Market (ex WI)	Ann Lloyd	07889 143057	or (01694) 731274
Credit Union	c/o Mayfair	722077	(Mayfair) [Wednesdays] www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Cricket Club, Church Stretton	Rob Whittall	07967 571044	churchstrettoncricketclub@gmail.com
Croquet Club	Joe Manifold	01588 660534	cscroquet@gmail.com; croquet-websites.org.uk/churchstretton
Cub Scouts, Longmynd (Tuesday Pack)	Jane Wrench	723923	janewrench2@gmail.com
Cub Scouts, Longmynd (Wednesday Pack)	Andrew Spurling	723429	aspurling@btinternet.com
Cycle Group, Stretton Steadies	Clive & Fiona Hunt		strettonsteadies@gmail.com
Darts, Church Stretton and District League	Mark Davies (Verd)	07588 517955	verddavies72@gmail.com
Dementia Carers' Support	Emma Wilde	01743 341800	
Dominoes, Church Stretton and District League	Martin Salisbury	723253	
Explorer Scouts	Angie Walshaw	723477	angiewalshaw@hotmail.com
Extend (Gentle Exercise) Mayfair	Nicola Daniels	722077	[Thursday mornings] www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Fitness Instructor	Pam Allsop	723899	pamallsop@churchway.plus.com
Fitness for the Young at Heart	Pam Allsop	723899	pamallsop@churchway.plus.com
Flicks in the Sticks (All Stretton)	Kate Latchford	723378	terri@artsalive.co.uk
Flicks in the Sticks (Church Stretton)	Andrew Hall	07508 072206	aahall2002@yahoo.co.uk
Football Club, Church Stretton Town	Nick Cole	724362	nick@eloc.eclipse.co.uk
Football Club, Magpies (5-16 years old)		07816 686139	enquiries@csmf.co.uk
Football Club, Stretton Red Rovers (6-15 years old)	Martin Watts	723543	contact@redrovers.org.uk
Footpath maintenance volunteers (Parish paths Partnership)	Tim Parker	07493 659514	tim.parker111@gmail.com
Friends of Church Stretton Library	Sheila Davies	723455	www.strettonlibraryfriends.org.uk
Gardening Club, Acton Scott	Terri Clegg	781572	actonscottgc@gmail.com
Gardening Club, Church Stretton & District	Evelyn Dapling	723648	evedapling@waitrose.com
Gliding, Midlands Gliding Club Ltd	Office	01588 650206	office@midlandgliding.club
Golf Club	James Townsend	722281	secretary@churchstrettongolfclub.co.uk
Good Neighbours Care Group	Office	724242	churchstrettongoodneighbours.org.uk
Guiding, 2nd Church Stretton	Jane Hurst	771622	janehurst77@hotmail.co.uk
Harmony In The Hills	Kate Buttolph	07974 382989	kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk
Hockey Club, Stretton Juniors (5-15 years old)	Martin Watts	723543	mlwatts@yahoo.co.uk
Hope Bowdler Hand Bell Ringers	Ruth Jenkins	724919	
Hope Bowdler Village Hall	Evelyn Dapling	723648	
Horse Show, Church Stretton	Sarah Davies	771370	daviesblackhurst@aol.com
Interfaith Forum, South Shropshire	Canon Noel Beattie	725530	
Judo, Junior	Roger Houston	01743 358415	RogerHoustonJudo@aol.com
Karate Club	Dave Shephard	724212	daveshepard1379@gmail.com
Keep Fit, Stretton	Lisa Ryan	751369	
Languages Group	David Langslow	723538	stretlang@gmail.com
Leebotwood Village Hall	Colin Bore	07970 523591	cbore@btinternet.com
Leisure Centre, Church Stretton	Sue Wells	720051	info@teme-leisure.co.uk
Lesbian & Bisexual Women, Border Women Social Group			borderwomen.net
Line Dancing	Dave Bishop	07527 264846	southerncrossldc@gmail.com
Lions Club, Middle Marches	Brian Dawson	01584 831508	thefirs38@btinternet.com
Local History Group	Madeline Haigh	723627	csalhg@outlook.com
Long Mynd Adventure Camp	Peter Jenkins	724919	
Martial Arts, Freestyle	Phil Hatton	07852 961675	freestylemartialarts.com/stretton
Masonic Lodge (Caer Caradoc)	Graham Williams	07939 109726	secretary@caerocaradocldodge.org.uk
Masonic Lodge (Longmynd)	Charles Hennell	01584 856716	charles@hennell.net; www.longmyndlodge.org.uk
Mayfair Health Walks	Trish Howard	722077	trish.howard@mayfaircentre.org.uk
MAYSI Project (Mayfair Supporting Independence)	Janet Williams/Shaz Malins	722077	maysi@mayfaircentre.org.uk
More Singers, The	Alistair Auld	07981 399482	
Mothers' Union, Church Stretton	Diana Coles	723548	
Music: Strettons Classical Music Group	Barbara Hall	724578	
Netball Club, Flames			hello@flamesnetball.co.uk; www.flamesnetball.co.uk
Netball Club, Stretton Scarlett's	Amy	07837 596297	
Ornithological Society, Stretton Branch	David John	724772	poolbrook12@gmail.com
Parkinson's UK	Hilary Bowman	07823 523696	hjb Bowman@live.com
Photography, Marches Independent	Geoff Taylor	723301	gtaylor.photo@btinternet.com
Pickleball Club	Carol	07803 329106	
Pilates (exercise)	Sandra Liebrecht	781660	selenaorme@yahoo.co.uk
Play On Performing Arts	Kate Buttolph	07974 382989	kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk
Pride of Place, Church Stretton	Trevor Halsey		trevorhalsey@btinternet.com

Probus, Strettondale	Alan Stockbridge	722317	alan.stockbridge@btinternet.com
Rail User's Association, Church Stretton	Alison Bradley	722138	strettonrailusers.org.uk
Radio Control Model Club, Church Stretton	Tim Goodwin	720392	tmgdwn@gmail.com
RAF Roundel Club	John L Davies	724703	
Rainbows, Church Stretton	Judy Russell	724056	davejudy1@googlemail.com
Ramblers, The South Shropshire Group	Darren	07837 021138	
Rangers (Girl Guides) Church Stretton Group	Ana Ireland	723390	anairland001@gmail.com
Readers Group at the Library	Felicity	722535	churchstretton.library@shropshire.gov.uk
RNLI	Brian Bradley	722138	b.glenmoar@gmail.com
Rotary Club of Church Stretton	Marcus Cash	07957 133316	marcuscash205@msn.com
Royal British Legion	Les Mackey	724992	sulesmackey@btinternet.com
Rugby Club, Church Stretton Samurai	Martyn Longhurst		martynlonghurst@hotmail.com
Rushbury and Cardington WI	Kaye Smith	771554	
Save the Children	Ann Hurst	771622	ann.hurst46@gmail.com
Scottish Dancers, Stretton	David Thomas	722107	
Scouts, 2nd Longmynd Group	Terry Davies	723477	mrterrydavies@hotmail.com
Scrappies - Shropshire Children's Scrapstore		328508	info@scrappies.org
Singers, The More Singers	Alistair Auld	07981 399482	alistairauld@gmail.com
Soaring Association, Long Mynd (model gliders)	Tim Goodwin	720392	info@lmsa.org.uk www.lmsa.org.uk
Soaring Club, Long Mynd (Hangliding & paragliding)	Tim Dunn	01588 672919	coaching@longmynd.org
Stepping Stones Nursery	Anne Arkwright	722341	
Stretton Players	Simon Cleaton	07510 390981	strettonplayers@gmail.com
Stretton Pool Action	David Betton	07977 221171	dmbetton@googlemail.com
Stretton Stitchers	Katy Webster	720200	or Frances Williams 722656
Stretton Strummers	Dave Wilkinson	07554 624662	
Stroke Group, Church Stretton and District	Hilary Parker	723419	
Swing Band, Stretton	Jamie Wrench	723923	jamie.wrench@lineone.net
Table Tennis, Church Stretton	Leisure Centre	720051	
Table Tennis, Leebotwood	Will Priestley	724223	
Table Tennis, Rushbury	Ian Pennington	771410	ianpennington133@btinternet.com
T'ai Chi	Marc Lacey	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Taiko Drumming	James Barrow	720169	James@taikowest.com
Taoist Tai Chi, Longmynd	Jo London	01743 369787	jolendon@hotmail.co.uk
Tennis Club	Claire Hatfield	720123	mail@strataassociates.co.uk
Theatre & Concert Group, Stretton	Jenny or Graham Heath	722216	heath@knollcrest.co.uk; strettontheatreandconcert.net
Thursday Lunch Club (Ley Gardens)	Margaret Hamer	722407	or Dawn Longmore 722328
Traidcraft (fairly traded goods)	Maureen Clow	722000	
Tree Group, Church Stretton	Hilary Hymas	723208	hilaryhymas7@gmail.com
United Nations Association, Shropshire Branch	Ruth Davies	724304	daviescs@btinternet.com
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Lesley Brown	724330	u3asites.org.uk/churchstretton/contact
Upright and Active (falls prevention strength & balance)	c/o Mayfair	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Walking Football	Ken Willis	328514	gordonwillis@go-plus.net
Wildlife Group, SACWG, Community	Julie Cowley	722310	sacwg@shropscwgs.org.uk
Wildlife Trust, Strettons Branch	Wally Blake	724040	
Women's Institute, CS Marmaladies WI	Carol Greswell	07803 581580	marmaladieswi@gmail.com
Women's Inst., Rushbury and Cardington	Kaye Smith	771554	kayerubetta.smith@btinternet.com
Women's Institute, All Stretton	Jean Huff	723706	allstrettonwi@gmail.com
Yoga (Mayfair)	c/o Mayfair	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Youth @ St Laurence's	Sally Ciliverd	724224	sally@strettonparish.org.uk

Additions and corrections to this list should be addressed to: The Editor, Stretton Focus, by email: editor@strettonfocus.co.uk

Church Stretton Town Councillors

Town Clerk: Nicky Hook; **RFO:** Gillian Bailey; **Office Hours:** Monday to Friday 10.00am - 1.00pm and 2.00 - 4.00pm
Council Office: 60 High Street, Church Stretton SY6 6BY. Tel: 722113, Fax: 723608. email: reception@churchstretton-tc.gov.uk

South Ward		North Ward		Little Stretton Ward	
John Burns	07767 477334	Nicola Carter	07581 300498	Colin Carson	722784
Ryan Foulkes	07528 372471	Sheila Davies (Deputy Mayor)	723455	Julie Lawton	723750
Charlie Jones	07971 523125	John Luck	725596	All Stretton Ward	
Mark Morris	722741	Bob Welch	722998	Andy Munro (Mayor)	725554
Andrew Williams	07577 516453			Helen Stowell	07879 848168

Shropshire (Unitary) Councillors for the Area

David Evans 01588 672179 email: david.evans@shropshire.gov.uk
Hilary Luff 07890 056084 email: hilary.luff@shropshire.gov.uk

MP for Ludlow Constituency: Philip Dunne, 54 Broad St, Ludlow, SY8 1GP, 01584 872187.

StrettonDale Local Joint Committee (Details pending)

Responsibilities for Public Services

Domestic rubbish: Shropshire Council 0345 678 9007 Street cleaning: Shropshire Council 0345 678 9006
Electricity power failure: 105 Gas emergencies 0800 111999
Last collection at Family Shopper letter box Weekdays 6.00pm, Saturdays 12.00 noon, No collection Sundays and Bank Holidays

Some useful numbers

Medical Centre		Church Stretton School	722209
appointments and general enquiries	722127	St Lawrence C of E Primary School	722682
out of hours	111	Sports and Leisure Centre (Teme Leisure)	720051
NHS Choices	111	Church Stretton Library	722535
Ring and Ride	720025	South Shropshire Furniture Scheme	01584 877751
Shropshire Council (Shrewsbury)	0345 678 9000		

Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 783 1359 - 24hr support
Visitor Information Centre and Shropshire Customer First Point: 723133
South Shropshire Housing Association: 0300 3031190 (Housing and Support)

Police - Non emergency only 101, Emergency 999

Church Stretton Safer Neighbourhood Team: Sergeant Jenni Price; Constable Steve Mellor: 07870 218762

Team contact: 101 ext 7704505 or csca.snt@westmercia.police.uk

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs):

Daz Barnett: 07866 215007; David Baron: 07870 163156; Julia St John Martin: 07870 163199

Neighbourhood Watch Crime stoppers: 0800 555 111. Twitter: @SouthShropCops

Police Station closed, but there is a 24 hour telephone service there connected to another centre.

Support at Mayfair Community Centre - run by the Community for the Community 722077

For activities and support groups at Mayfair, please refer to the entries under 'Clubs and Societies' and to their advertisement.

Accommodation see Hotels, B&B, Self Catering	Clock & Watch Repair Adrian Donnelly Clock Repairs... 2	Garden Design, Services, Supplies Ben Carter Landscaping..... 41 Homden Excavations..... 37 Integral Gardens..... 41 John Stephens Services..... 41 Keith Warrington..... 37 Mike Russell Designs..... 37 Paul Forrester..... 15 Paul Tinsley..... 16 Peter Tipton..... 41 Shropshire Lawn Co..... 37 Tidy Garden..... 37 Unique Landscapes..... 41	Outdoor Clothing and Equipment The Outdoor Depot..... 49
Accountants and Bookkeeping James, Holyoak & Parker..... 50 RLW Accountants..... 50	Clothes Entertaining Elephants..... 49	Garden Machinery Newington Garage..... 46	Painters & Decorators Andrew Webster..... 37 D R Tipton Painter & Decorator 43 DWS Property Services..... 37 E B Jones..... 37 G H Jones & Son..... 37 Paul Forrester..... 15
Architects, Town Planning Batch Valley Design..... 21 Christopher Roscoe Assocs..... 21	Coaches Caradoc Coaches..... 46	Hairdressers, Health, Beauty Anthony's Hair Studio..... 43 Health & Beauty Clinic..... 29 Katerina White..... 43 Nails by Nancy..... 43 Shampers..... 43	Pest Control Chris Sansom Pest Control..... 60 Keith Warrington..... 37
Bathrooms see Kitchens, Bathrooms	Community Centre Mayfair..... 10	Health, Therapies see also Chiropodists & Physiotherapists Birch Tree Reflexology..... 25 Bodylogic Mobile Massage..... 29 Cate Gowlett..... 25 Mayfair..... 10 Shropshire Acupuncture..... 25	Pet Food and Pet Care John R Thomas..... 6
Beauty, Slimming see Hairdressers, Health, Beauty	Computing, Graphic and Web Design Jason Gough..... 2 Nic Sansom..... 2 Stretton Internet..... 2 Webbex Technical Services..... 2	Hobbies Books by Moonlight..... 6 Burway Books..... 6 Harold's Toy Store..... 6 Long Mynd Music Academy..... 6 Peter Youngs Photography..... 10 Philip Hooper..... 6 The Prolific Crafter..... 6	Pharmacy Hillside Pharmacy..... 43
Bed & Breakfast, Self Catering see Hotels, B&B, Self Catering	Decorators see Painters, Decorators	Home & Garden Harold's Toy Store..... 6 The Prolific Crafter..... 6	Physiotherapists Chris Turner..... 43 Marion Murdoch..... 43 Physio Pilates..... 43
Bookshop Books by Moonlight..... 6 Burway Books..... 6	DIY & Hardware Cyril Bason Hardware..... 41 Mynd DIY..... 41	Home Furnishings Abbey Carpets..... 6 Louise Watney..... 6	Piano Tuner and Repairs Philip Hooper..... 6
Builders, Plant & Equipment A J Lewis-Price..... 16 A Morgan..... 15 A.2.Z Construction..... 16 E J & G J Groom..... 15 Homden Excavations..... 37 Joe Drury..... 16 K J Morris..... 15 Keith George..... 16 Mark Terry..... 15 Morris Maintenance..... 41 Paul Tinsley..... 16 Richard Sherratt Builders..... 15 Telford Building Contractors..... 16	Domestic Appliances & Repairs Continental Fireplaces..... 2 Norman Jones..... 2	House and Garden Clearance Peter Tipton..... 41	Plumbers, Heating Gary Paris..... 25 Gasco..... 25 Homefix..... 29 J Morris..... 25 Lee Brown..... 29 Morris Maintenance..... 41 Pete Carroll..... 25 Peter Floyd..... 29 Whitfield Plumbing..... 29 Whiting Heating..... 25
Cafés see Restaurants, Cafés, Pubs	Electrical Services, Lighting AMP Electrical..... 46 Boxall's Electrician..... 46 Charles Ephraim..... 46 M C Electrical..... 46 Stephen Morgan..... 46	Hotels, B&B and Self Catering Eaton Manor..... 50 Mynd House..... 50 Willowbatch..... 50	Printing, Copying, Photo Products Craven Design & Print..... 49 Stretton Print & Supplies..... 49
Cards and Gifts Entertaining Elephants..... 49 Stretton Print & Supplies..... 49	Estate Agents Bluestone..... 32 Miller Evans..... 32 Samuel Wood..... 32 Wrights Estate Agents..... 32	Insurance see Financial Services, Insurance	Restaurants, Cafés, Pubs Berry's..... 49 Royal Oak, Cardington..... 49
Care - Homes and At Home Bluebird Care..... 10	Event Venues Eaton Manor..... 50	Keep Fit see Health, Therapies, Keep Fit	Skip Hire John Stephens Services..... 41 Peter Tipton..... 41
Carpenters & Joiners E J & G J Groom..... 15 Keith George..... 16 Mark Terry..... 15 Mike Webster..... 15 Paul Forrester..... 15	Employment Bluebird Care..... 21	Kitchens, Bathrooms A J Lewis-Price..... 16 A.2.Z Construction..... 16 Homefix..... 29 Lee Brown..... 29 Mark Terry..... 15 Paul Forrester..... 15	Solicitors FBC Manby Bowdler..... 21 PCB Solicitors..... 21
Carpets Abbey Carpets..... 6	Financial Services & Insurance Caleb Roberts..... 50 Philippa Gee Wealth Mngment. 50 Wrights Yorkshire Building Soc. 50	Mobility Stretton Mobility Store..... 10	Storage Churton Self-Storage..... 60
Catteries and Kennels see Pet Food, Pet Care	Florist John R Thomas..... 6 Shropshire Flower Company..... 6		Sweep Shropshire Sweep..... 60 Stanton Sweeps..... 60
Chemist Hillside Pharmacy..... 43	Food, Delicatessen Entertaining Elephants..... 49 Saxtons Deli..... 49		Taxi Church Stretton Taxi..... 46
Chiropodists Caroline Crump..... 43	Funeral Arrangements A S Morris and Son..... 10 South Shropshire Remembrance Park..... 10		Watches, Batteries, Straps The Outdoor Depot..... 49
Cleaning and House Care Chris Sansom Pest Control..... 60 Cleanrite Services..... 60 Gordon Ribbons..... 60 In Depth Cleaning..... 60 Shaw Clean..... 60 Shropshire Sweep..... 60 Stanton Sweeps..... 60	Garage Services Burway Garage..... 46 Central Garage..... 46 MOT Clinic..... 46		Windows A Morgan..... 15
			Window Cleaning Handyman Services..... 60

What's On in the Strettons in August

If you wish to make contact with societies and groups, please see the list in the yellow pages

The 'What's On' diary may also be viewed for free on our website: www.strettonfocus.co.uk.

Any amendments and entries too late for the print edition may be added to the website WO by emailing us at editor@strettonfocus.co.uk.

WEEKLY EVENTS/MEETINGS:

Balance/Strength: Be Strong Be Steady

Improve your balance and strength with Wendy Southorn. £7 per session (cheaper block booking price available)
Every **Tuesday**. Book at Mayfair.
12.15-1.15pm Mayfair

Bridge Club, The Strettons

Duplicate Bridge in a relaxing atmosphere for players of all standards.
Teaching for those new to the game.
Visitors are welcome. Contact:
Maxine Lainchbury 07971 191664
www.bridgewebs.com/churchstretton
Every **Thursday**
1-5pm All Stretton Village Hall

Chess Club, CS

All ages and abilities welcome.
Contact: Tom Williamson 722767
Please enter via rear entrance to avoid contact in the bar area.
Every **Thursday**
7.30pm Kings Arms, CS

Christian Meditation (online via Zoom)

We are a non-denominational group welcoming everyone. Christian Meditation is a modern name for a form of contemplative prayer found in early Christian monastic communities and in other major faith traditions. More information from John Dennison: 1johndennison@gmail.com
Every **Tuesday** and **Thursday**
8pm via Zoom

Christian Meditation (meeting in person)

Details as above. More information from Janice Hicking: 07889 850265 or email janice@hicking.co.uk
Every **Friday**
2pm URC Vestry

Cuppa and Chat at the Methodist Church

Members of the public are invited to drop in for tea, cake and conversation. This is a good way to meet friends and make new friends.
Every **Wednesday**
2.30-4pm Methodist Church Hall

Dancing: Learn 2 Jive

Great fun, improves fitness, no partner needed, join anytime, easy to learn and no experience needed. £6 per class.
Contact Matt or Sarah: 01989 750354, info@coolmovesdance.co.uk, www.coolmovesdance.co.uk
Every **Monday**
7.30pm beginners/8.30pm intermediates SHI

Energy Advice from Stretton Climate Care

Our knowledgeable volunteers will be on hand to offer advice on a wide range of issues to do with energy saving, renewable technology and the growing climate emergency.
Info from Jon Cooke: 720353
Drop-in session, every **Thursday**
10am-12 noon HWBC

Family History Research

Our history volunteers will guide you in your local and family history research. Free internet access to Ancestry.
These sessions are open to everyone.
Every **Thursday**
1-4pm CS Library

Football: Three Touch Passing

All over 50s welcome.
Contact Ken: 328514
Every **Wednesday**
5-6pm CS Leisure Centre

Gardening: Glyn's Garden Work Parties

Friendly volunteer working party at the site in Cemetery Road, CS. Bring gloves and suitable footwear for gardening or just drop in to hear about the project.
Every **Tuesday**
7pm Glyn's Garden

Handbell Ringers, Hope Bowdler

New members are most welcome; you do not need to be able to read music.
Contact: Ruth Jenkins: 724919
The group is available to ring for local community groups and care home residents in return for a small donation towards their new bell fund.
Every **Thursday**
2pm Hope Bowdler Village Hall

Knit & Natter Group at Ley Gardens

Would-be knitters welcomed.
Details from: 722328
Every **Monday**
2.30pm Ley Gardens, SY6 6GA

Music: Stretton Strummers Ukulele Group

All abilities welcome to our ukulele group to enjoy playing and singing.
Every **Thursday**
10am-12 noon at The Scout Hut

Netball Club, Stretton Scarletts

A fun, sociable club with the focus on enjoyment and taking part, for players of all standards, ages (18 years plus) and experience. £3 pp
Contact Amy: 07837 596297
Every **Tuesday**
7.30-8.30pm CS Leisure Centre

Pickleball Club, CS

Pickleball is a fun sport that combines many elements of tennis, badminton and table tennis. £3 per hour.
Contact Carol: 07803 329106
Every **Monday**
7-8pm (or 9pm) CS Leisure Centre

Rhyme Time

Fun, songs, stories and rhymes for children under 5 years of age.
Booking may be required.
Every **Tuesday**
10.30-11am CS Library

Singing: Breathing Space Singing Groups

Singing for health and wellbeing.
1. Dementia-friendly group – open to people with care needs plus their carer (carer comes free). 1.30-2.30pm
2. Wellbeing group – supporting stress relief and chronic conditions. 3-4.15pm
Fees per session: £5 trial session, £10 thereafter or £7.50 (block booking rate)
Contact Kate: 720358 or 07974 382989 or kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk
Every **Wednesday** at Mayfair

Singing: Harmony In The Hills

Stretton's Natural Voice community choir, welcoming all who would love to sing. People who have lost confidence or have been told they can't sing are especially valued.
Contact Kate: 07974 382989 or kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk
Every **Thursday**
7.30-9pm Mayfair Activity Room

Strength Balance and Flex with Nina

Gentle approach to exercise: no jumping or floor work. Ideal for 55years plus. Standard class includes more seated exercises. £7 per session (cheaper block booking price available).
Book with Mayfair.
Every **Thursday** 12.15-1.15pm Mayfair

Continued overleaf...

What's On continued

Strength Balance and Flex PLUS with Nina

Details as above. Plus class is mainly standing exercises, but still no floor work.
Every **Thursday**
1.30-2.30pm Mayfair

Table Tennis

New players are most welcome.
Contact Chris Smith:
rushburytabletennisclub@gmail.com
7-9.30pm every **Monday** (all standards)
9.30am-12 noon every **Saturday**
(intermediate and above)
Rushbury VH

Thursday Lunch Club (Good Neighbours)

Join us for a two-course lunch with tea and coffee for £8. Everyone welcome.
Contact Lin Brown 781634 or Good Neighbours 724242
Every **Thursday**
12 noon Ley Gardens, Lawley Close, SY6 6GA

Volleyball

Enjoy playing volleyball and socialising. Teens upwards. Taster session is free, then £5 per month (waged) or £5 for whole summer (unwaged).
Every **Wednesday** from May 2nd until the end of August. Contact Steve:
thebiggestredofall@yahoo.co.uk or 07962 785612
7-9pm Richard Robinson Field, next to Russell's Meadow, off Churchill Rd

Whist Drive at Westhope

Come along and join our friendly band of whist players.
Every **Monday**
7.30pm Westhope VH, SY7 9JL

Yoga at Mayfair

With Liz Curtis. £7.50 per session (cheaper block booking price available). Small class for all levels of experience. Beginners welcome. Includes floor work. Contact Mayfair: 722077
Every **Monday**
5.15-6.45pm Mayfair

Yoga at Westhope

With Sue Pugh. Numbers are limited.
Contact Betty Manley: 07860 447397
Every **Thursday**
10.30-11.30am Westhope VH, SY7 9JL

Yoga: Vita Bona Yoga at CS Library

Booking: Sue 07432 349933
Every **Monday**
9.30-10.30am Improvers
11-11.45am Chair Yoga

Yoga with Becca

£7 per class or £36 block of 6 classes.
Contact Becca on 07905 236805 or yogawithbecca@hotmail.com
Tues: 6.30-7.30pm Mayfair
Wed: 9.30-10.30am Scout Hut
Wed: 6.30-7.30pm SHI
Thurs: 7-8am Scout Hut
Thurs: 9.30-10.30am Leebotwood VH

REGULARS NOT MEETING IN AUGUST:

Babies and Toddlers Group

Badminton Club

C.A.M.E.O.

Back on 6th September, with a talk by Les and Maggie Cameron.

Dancing: Scottish

Re-commences on Monday 18th Sept.

Gardening Club

Last trip of 2023 is on 14th Sept and indoor meetings restart on 26th Sept.

Long Mynd Camera Club

New season starts in September.
www.longmyndcameraclub.com/programme

Marmaladies CS WI

Back on 14th September with a line dancing evening at the SHI.

Singing: Stretton Choral Society Rehearsals

Rehearsals begin again in September.

Yoga at SHI with David Hedge

Youth Club For School Years 6 to 7

Youth Club For School Years 8 to 11

GENERAL DIARY:

29 JULY – 12 SATURDAY

Church Stretton Arts Festival

Overview given below, but full details are on the website: strettonfestival.org.uk

Arts Festival Art, Crafts and Photography Exhibition

Tuesday 1st – Saturday 12th August
Over 160 artists have entered more than 900 pieces of work. Entry is £1
10.30am-5pm daily (inc. Sundays)
St Lawrence Primary School, Shrewsbury Road, SY6 6EX

Arts Festival Main Events

Saturday 29th July 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £18:
The Katona Twins – "The classical world's best known guitar duo"
Tuesday 1st August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £16:
Reiko Fujisawa and Friends: Forests and Flowers – Pianist Reiko, joined by flautist and horn player friends
Wednesday 2nd August 3pm, Parish Centre £10:
Pauline Prior-Pitt – Award-winning poet from North Uist
Wednesday 2nd August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £14:
Callum Smart & Richard Uttley – Violin and piano duo
Thursday 3rd August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £16:
Fontanella – 17th century recorder music from a virtuoso quartet
Friday 4th August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £16:
Kensington Brass – Glorious acoustics for this ten-piece brass ensemble
Saturday 5th August 7.30pm, Silvester Horne Institute £14:
Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels – Rock 'n' Roll music from the 50s and 60s
Monday 7th August 3pm, Silvester Horne Institute £3:
Finding Chester – Fun-filled fantasy show for the younger audience
Monday 7th August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £14:
Harmoniemusik – A return visit for this five-piece classical ensemble
Tuesday 8th August 7.30pm, Silvester Horne Institute £12:
Where is Mrs Christie? – Fascinating drama about Agatha Christie's 11-day disappearance
Wednesday 9th August 3pm, Parish Centre £10:
The Bayeux Tapestry: 950 years of propaganda, intrigue and spin (Sorry, sold out)
Wednesday 9th August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £12:
Meraki Duo – Diverse arrangements of music for flute and guitar
Thursday 10th August 7.30pm, Silvester Horne Institute £16:
The Trials of Cato – "One of the real discoveries on the folk circuit in recent times" (Sorry, sold out)
Friday 11th August 7.30pm, St Laurence's Church £16:
Dante Quartet – Classical string quartet
Saturday 12th August 7.30pm, Concord College, Acton Burnell £20:
She'Koyokh – Multi-talented, award-winning Balkan and klezmer band

What's On continued

Arts Festival Free Coffee Concerts

31st July: Baritone Paul Mcroft with pianist John Jenkin.

1st August: Piano duet team Gill Styles and Richard Walker.

2nd August: A rare performance of Herzogenberg's *Quintet for Piano and Wind*.

3rd August: Harpist Gina Taylor

4th August: Mark and Claire Tocknell with pianist Brenda Stephenson.

5th August: 'Band on the Edge'

Coffee concerts this year take place in St Laurence's Church, 10.15-11am

Arts Festival Free Organ Recitals

8th August: Richard Walker plays at All Saints Church, Little Stretton SY6 6RD. The Ragleth Inn will be open from 11.15am for coffee and afterwards for lunch (booking recommended!)

10th August: David Thomas plays at St Margaret's Church, Acton Scott SY6 6QQ. Refreshments at Acton Scott Hall from 11am.

12th August: Timothy Morris plays at St Laurence's Church, Church Stretton SY6 6DQ.

1 TUESDAY – 21 MONDAY

CS Library Art Café Artists

An informative supportive and sharing network of professional artists – promoting contemporary art in the Marches region. Opening hours CS Library

Libraries Summer Reading Challenge 2023

For ages up to 12 years – come and sign up for this year's free reading challenge. Ask at the library or check it out online, with events and activities happening during August. The theme this year is 'Ready, Set, Read'.

1 TUESDAY

Scrappies School Holiday Craft Workshops

We're looking forward to welcoming children back to the store for crafty fun. Children should be over 5, and under 7s must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Maximum of 8 children per session. Cost is £3.50 per child, per session (also on 8th and 15th)
Booking essential: 328508
10am-12 noon Scrappies, Beaumont Rd

2 WEDNESDAY

CS Amnesty Group

Meet first Wednesday of the month. All are welcome; we are a friendly inclusive group.
Contact csamnesty@outlook.com
7.30pm SHI

3 THURSDAY – 4 FRIDAY

Mayfair Book Sale

Come along and browse our wide variety of second-hand fiction, non-fiction, maps and music.
10am-1pm HWBC

3 THURSDAY

Citizen Advice at CS Library

Trained advisors on hand to give advice. Sessions by appointment, 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.
10am-12 noon CS Library

Cudwell Meadow Work Party

Volunteer work parties take place on the first Thursday of each month. All welcome.
1.30-3.30pm Cudwell Meadow

Westhope Clover Club

A friendly, social group for the over 60s, meeting on the first Thursday of the month with a varied programme of events in the hall and occasional outings. All welcome to come along. Enquiries to Kathleen 01584 841254
2.30pm Westhope Village Hall

4 FRIDAY

Hearing Loss Support Hub

Monthly service, offering hearing aid tube changing, battery collection and advice on hearing aid care. Staffed by NHS audiology trained volunteers. Appointments must be pre-booked: 01743 342168.
10am-12 noon Mayfair

u3a Reading Group 1

First Friday of the month.
2-3pm CS Library

5 SATURDAY

Shropshire Hills Shuttle Bus Service

The two-route service will run on weekends until Sunday 8th October. For routes, timetable, prices and donation information, search 'Shropshire Hills Shuttle Buses'

7 MONDAY

Royal British Legion 'Drink & Chat' Hour

If you are ex Service or have a connection to the Services and would like to join us, do come along and say hello. Non-RBL members welcome.
5.30-6.30pm King's Arms, SY6 6BY

8 TUESDAY

u3a Writers Group 2

With Jenny O'Shea
2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month
2-4pm CS Library

Scrappies School Holiday Craft Workshops

10am (see Tues 1st for details)

9 WEDNESDAY

Memory Café at CS Library

Please ask at the library for details.
2nd Wednesday of the month
1-3pm CS Library

10 THURSDAY

CS Stroke Support Group

Support for stroke survivors, friends and family. The role of the group is to provide a friendly secure environment where people can chat and feel supported. Meetings take place on the second Thursday of each month.
2-4pm Jubilee Room, Mayfair

11 FRIDAY

u3a Writers Group

With Lesley Dench
2nd and 4th Friday of the month
10am-12 noon CS Library

RSPB South Shropshire Local Group Walk

Walk in the Corvedale / Social Evening. See main RSPB item for more details.
6.30pm Park/Meet at The Swan Pub at Aston Munslow (Grid Ref SO 5122886656) for walk and meal and/or drinks in the pub afterwards. Contact:
Val Francis: vafrancis@hotmail.co.uk

12 SATURDAY

Monthly Drop-In Council Surgery

With Councillor Hilary Luff.
Second Saturday of the month.
10-11.30am CS Library

Stretton Climate Care Repair Café

Please contact us to book in your item, giving details and a photo if possible:
info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk
Walk-ins accepted after 11am.
10am-12 noon Scout Hut

CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

Come and enjoy an informal evening of socialising and dance (Ballroom, Latin and Modern Sequence with the odd line dance thrown in!) £7 per person.
All abilities welcome, with or without a partner. Bring your own refreshments.
Info from Christine: 723386
8-10.30pm SHI

13 SUNDAY

RSPB South Shropshire Local Group Event

'Moth Morning' – we will look at and identify the moths that I trapped the night before. See main RSPB item for more details.
Tea/coffee and cake will be provided.
Contact: Cathy Beardes 07828 056428, email:cathy.beardes@hotmail.co.uk
10am start at Swallow Barn SY7 9HT near Tugford, Brown Clea

Continued overleaf..

What's On continued

Cricket Tournament & Family Fun Day

Organised by Acton Scott Village Cricket Club to raise funds for Prostate Cancer UK, in memory of cricket team founder member, Mike Lole.

With barbecue, bar, stalls and much more. All day from 11am Acton Scott Cricket Ground, Acton Scott Estate

14 MONDAY

Coffee Hour Drop-In with CS u3a

Opportunity to chat with a u3a member and find out about our groups. We meet 2nd Monday of the month. 10-11am HWBC

15 TUESDAY

Scrappies School Holiday Craft Workshops

10am (see Tues 1st for details)

16 WEDNESDAY

All Stretton Women's Institute

Afternoon trip out. No evening meeting. Contact: Jean Huff 723706 Email: allstrettonwi@gmail.com

17 THURSDAY

Citizen Advice at CS Library

Trained advisors on hand to give advice. Sessions by appointment, 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. 10am-12 noon CS Library

19 SATURDAY

CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

8-10pm (see Sat 12th for details)

20 SUNDAY

Eaton Manor Classic Vehicle Show

Classic vehicles from 10am, general public from 11am. Classic cars will need to be registered (£5 suggested) www.eventbrite.co.uk/ Please note new location for 2023. 10am-4pm Ticklerton VH, SY6 7DQ

22 TUESDAY

u3a Writers Group 2

With Jenny O'Shea 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month 2-4pm CS Library

23 WEDNESDAY

Yoga with Sue at CS Library

4th Wednesday of the month. Booking: Sue 07432 349933 3-4.30pm CS Library

25 FRIDAY – 27 SEPTEMBER

Stretton Waters Exhibition

Celebrating 140 years of bottled water in Church Stretton. During opening hours CS Library and Information Centre

25 FRIDAY

u3a Writers Group

With Lesley Dench 2nd and 4th Friday of the month 10am-12 noon CS Library

Good Neighbours Friday Lunch Club

We meet on the last Friday of each month at a local pub or restaurant. Members pay for their own meal and contribute to the cost of transport. For further information, please contact Lin Brown on 781634 or email us at csgoodneighbours@gmail.com.

26 SATURDAY

CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

8-10pm (see Sat 12th for details)

27 SUNDAY & 28 MONDAY

'Teas to Please' Annual Fundraiser

With music from The Stretton Strummers (Sun) and the Church Stretton Accordion Band (Mon) Proceeds to All Saints Church, CS Food Bank and Community First Responders. Info from Mike Bourke: 722910 2-5pm each day All Saints Church garden, Little Stretton.

28 MONDAY (BANK HOLIDAY)

u3a Family & Social History Group

Members of the public are welcome but will need to join the u3a. We meet 4th Monday of the month. 2-4pm CS Library

Parkinson's Support Group, CS

We meet on the fourth Monday of the month. Members, guests and visitors are all welcome. 2.30-4.30pm Jubilee Room, Mayfair

29 TUESDAY

ZooLab at CS Library

Creepy crawlies and other animals. Check in with the library for more details, times and booking info.

29 TUESDAY – 1 SEPTEMBER

'Landlubbers' Holiday Club

A holiday club for children aged 4-11. Bible stories, challenges, sports, crafts. For more details, visit: www.strettonparish.org.uk Register from 9.45am. Club runs from 10am-1pm. Parish Centre and St Laurence's church

Key to Abbreviations/Addresses:

CS – Church Stretton
CS Leisure Centre – Shrewsbury Rd, SY6 6ER. Tel: 720051
CS Library – Church Street, SY6 6DQ Tel: 722535
CS Medical Practice – Easthope Rd, SY6 6BL. Tel: 722127
St Laurence's Church/CS Parish Centre – Church St, SY6 6DQ
Mayfair – Mayfair Community Centre, Easthope Rd, SY6 6BL. Tel: 722077
HWBC – Health and Well Being Centre, next to Mayfair, SY6 6BL
Methodist Church – Watling St South, SY6 7BG
SAPA – Shropshire Academy of Performing Arts, Lutwyche Close, Lutwyche Rd, SY6 6AT
Scout Hut – Church Street, SY6 6DQ
SHI – Silvester Horne Institute, High St, SY6 6BY. Tel: 720132
St Milburga's Catholic Church – Watling St North, SY6 7AR
URC – United Reformed Church, High St, SY6 6BY
VH – Village Hall
VIC – Visitor Information Centre, in library, see above.
Contact Numbers – only numbers OUTSIDE the CS dialling code area (01694) will include the full number.

Home – a Site-Sensitive Dance Film

Mayfair is delighted to be showing a beautiful local dance video on our reception screens this summer. Pop into the Community Centre or the Health and Wellbeing Centre before the end of August, to watch *Home*. The dance, choreographed and directed by Church Stretton resident Ruth Seager, is filmed in our wonderful local landscape by local cinematographer, Paul Westall (WorkerDronesUK). Covering themes of identity and home, this video is a great community arts project that we are pleased to support.

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Occasional adverts are
not indexed

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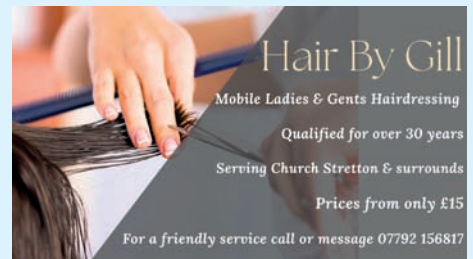
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Focus Directors Wanted

The *Stretton Focus* provides an active voice for the community of the Strettons and is a source of creative expression and useful information for residents and visitors alike. It reaches more than 60% of households and sells about 1,500 copies each month.

To produce, publish and distribute a 60-page, high quality, monthly magazine requires the coordinated efforts of almost 100 volunteers, to whom we are all very grateful. Among these volunteers are the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors has oversight of the performance of the magazine and is also responsible for the governance and commercial success of the company (we aim to make a small profit each year, much of which is returned to the local community through our Community Award Scheme). The Board must also be forward-looking with regard to

our policies
and strategies
in order to
maintain or

improve the quality and success of the magazine.

With the recent retirement of two long-serving Directors, *Focus* is now seeking two new Directors. Applicants should be residents who are familiar with contributing at Board level or its equivalent. We welcome applicants with a variety of experience in either public service or the commercial sector, with administrative, marketing, financial, or legal expertise, among others.

Should you be interested, please contact Paul Harding at sfocuschair@gmail.com.

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