

# STRETTON FOCUS

JUNE 2023

COMMUNITY VOICE OF THE STRETTONS £1.30



## STRETTON FOCUS



The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

Founded 1967

Average monthly sales 1,550 copies  
(About 67% of dwellings in Church Stretton)

### Chairman

Paul Harding 722289

### Editors (editor@strettonfocus.co.uk)

Patricia Thomas  
Sandra Davies (Events Diary)  
David Lyons, Janet Du Cros  
Clare Patterson

### In-house Journalist

Christine Williams

### Cover Editor

Geoff Taylor 723301

### Design and Layout

Barrie Raynor 723928  
Graham Cossins, Rowland Jackson  
Steve Moore, Andrew Fenton

### Proof Readers

Catherine Macartney, Bronwen Taylor,  
Catherine Redfern, Linda Bishop,  
Cynthia Wood, Nina Marsh

### Subscriptions and Distribution

Chrys Bonds 724184  
Peter Whitlock 725533

### Advertising (Business)

Sara Hewitt 658086

### Finance Director

John Rowlands

### Secretary

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Paul Harding, Sandra Davies, Andrew Fenton,  
Barrie Raynor, John Rowlands, Geoff Taylor,  
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### Outlets

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

© 2023 STRETTON FOCUS LIMITED  
Registration No. 06237590, Inc in England  
Registered Office: 8 High Street,  
Church Stretton, SY6 6BU  
ISSN 1479-7356

Printed by WPG, Welshpool

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Church Stretton & The Long Mynd  
from Helmeth Hill



Photo: Simon Whaley

## SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES AND PHOTOGRAPHS FOR PUBLICATION

should be made to the editors by  
email at

[editor@strettonfocus.co.uk](mailto:editor@strettonfocus.co.uk)

Please use this address even 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 **July** issue the deadline is  
**Monday 5th June, at 12 noon**

For the **August** issue the deadline is  
**Monday 3rd July, at 12 noon**

The **July** issue will be distributed on  
**Friday 30th June**

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Focus can be purchased by  
subscription and delivered to your  
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If you wish to use this facility, please  
phone the Subscriptions Manager on  
01694 725533 or 724184 or email  
[focus.subscription@gmail.com](mailto:focus.subscription@gmail.com)

## COMMUNITY AWARDS

Focus has a scheme whereby clubs,  
societies, organisations and individuals  
can apply for a grant up to a maximum  
of £1,000 for projects which have a  
direct benefit to the community of the  
Strettons. For details and an application  
form, please see the Focus website

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

# Editorial

Hello again. I'm writing this at the end of a cold and damp April, but signs of spring are all around. You will be reading it at the beginning of summer, a time for flowers and sunshine. At least we can rely on the flowers, if not the weather. One of the articles we have for you this month is a piece from the National Trust about flower meadows, a sight everyone took for granted 50 years ago but which has become much rarer in Britain today. Over the last few years there has been increasing interest in encouraging a come-back for wild flower meadows and many of us are trying to do our bit even if it's only on a very small scale. Our household is one of those putting a small section of lawn aside as a wild area with no mowing during the summer. It's a work in progress but the yellow rattle is well established and we have a few other flowers coming up. Out and about it's a pleasure to see gardens with similar patches and roadside verges where the grass and flowers have been left to grow, not to mention the occasional real hay meadow in the countryside.

On an unrelated note, did you all enjoy the Coronation? It's all set to happen next week as I write, and I know some of you have been thinking about it. For some it awakens memories of the last Coronation in 1953 – you

can read about one reader's memories of life in Britain on that day in this issue. Others may be busy preparing their own celebrations, making memories for the future. The world and the countryside have changed a lot since the beginning of Elizabeth II's reign. Notable occasions like the Coronation, and other unusual or unexpected events whether good or bad, become the milestones for our lives and serve as a trigger for our future thoughts and reminiscences.

Well, enough of the philosophizing. I have some bad news for the crossword enthusiasts among you: our hard-working crossword compiler, Stan Yelds, has decided to take a break for a few months. His brain needs a rest (maybe yours does too) but we hope to welcome him and his puzzles back in a few months' time. In the meantime, enjoy the summer and the flowers, and of course the magazine.

Patricia Thomas



## Stretton Focus Board News

At the Annual General Meeting in April, two long-serving members of the *Focus* Board retired.

Richard Fillenham had served for 14 years, in a variety of roles, including in the production team, as web editor, and on the Board as Finance Director and Chairman. Chris Moores had served for 12 years, as web editor, Director and Company Secretary. Both played key roles in keeping *Stretton Focus* going throughout the Covid pandemic, so that we did not miss a single issue.

In appreciation for their long and varied contributions to *Stretton Focus*, framed certificates of service, on a background of the May 2023 *Focus* front cover, were presented to them by the in-coming Chairman, Paul Harding. Our Board members, other volunteers, and our readers have much for which to thank Richard and Chris – we wish them long and healthy retirements.

Paul joined the *Focus* Board last year and took on the chairmanship with effect from the 2023 AGM. He moved to Church Stretton in 2017, having retired from 40 years of working overseas, mainly in developing countries, where he was an agricultural researcher, Director of Research and Government Adviser. Paul has been Editor-in-Chief of a technical journal and is currently the Chairman of the Tropical Agriculture Association (TAA) International. You may have seen him swimming in the pool, or running and cycling around Church Stretton at odd hours, because he is still, perhaps foolishly, competing in triathlon races.

**STRETTON  
FOCUS**

## May Crossword Solution





# What's On in the Strettons in June

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

Regular weekly meetings are now listed separately from the main diary of less frequently occurring and one-off events.

With three bank holiday Mondays in May, some events may move from their usual week, so please check if your regular Monday event is taking place.

The 'What's On' diary may also be viewed for free on our website: [www.strettonfocus.co.uk](http://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](mailto:editor@strettonfocus.co.uk)

## WEEKLY EVENTS/MEETINGS:

### Babies and Toddlers Group

A friendly, informal group for babies and children until they start school. Children to be accompanied by a responsible adult. Parents-to-be are also welcome. Every **Wednesday** in term time. 10am-12noon Methodist Church Hall

### Badminton Club

Including Junior, Adult and Disability Badminton. All abilities welcome from age 7 to adult. Sports wheelchairs and rackets available free of charge. Info from Alan Fox 07977 060303 Every **Wednesday** in term time. 6.30-8pm CS Leisure Centre

### Balance/Strength: Be Strong Be Steady

£7 per session (cheaper block booking price available) Improve your balance and strength with Wendy Southorn. 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](http://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 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:info@coolmovesdance.co.uk), [www.coolmovesdance.co.uk](http://www.coolmovesdance.co.uk) Every **Monday** 7.30pm beginners/8.30pm intermediates SHI

### Dancing: Scottish

There will be no Scottish dancing meetings in June, July or August. We shall re-commence on Monday 18th September and then each following Monday at 7.30pm.

### 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-12noon 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

### 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-12noon at The Scout Hut

Stretton Focus  
Website



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





## What's On continued

### **Nature: Cudwell Meadows Open Sundays**

From late May until early August.  
The meadow (SY6 6AB) will be open from 10am onwards for you to come and enjoy the wild flowers and the numerous invertebrates that enjoy the wild flowers in the meadow and wild edges. Please respect the 'no dogs' sign (with the exception of guide dogs on leads).

### **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 Group**

Singing for health and wellbeing.  
Contact Kate: 720358 or 07974 382989 or kate@playonperformingarts.co.uk  
Every **Wednesday**  
3-4pm Mayfair

### **Singing: Harmony In The Hills**

Formerly Stretton Community Singers.  
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**

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

### **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-12noon every **Saturday** (intermediate and above)  
Rushbury VH

### **Thursday Lunch Club**

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**  
12noon 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 SHI**

£8 per session. Open to all.  
Call David Hedge: 07870 936889  
Every **Tuesday** in term time.  
10-11.30am SHI

### **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

### **Youth Club For School Years 6 to 7**

A new club for ages 10-12.  
Sessions are staffed by trained and DBS-checked youth workers. Contact: Richard 01743 430005 or email at info@sya.org.uk  
Every **Tuesday** in term time  
4-5.30pm Pavilion, Russell's Meadow

### **Youth Club For School Years 8 to 11**

A relaxed and inviting space for ages 12-16 to meet up outside of school hours to participate in a range of activities or just chat. Sessions are staffed by trained and DBS-checked youth workers. Contact: Richard 01743 430005 or email at info@sya.org.uk  
Every **Tuesday** in term time  
6-7.30pm Pavilion, Russell's Meadow

*Continued overleaf..*



# What's On continued

## GENERAL DIARY

### 1 THURSDAY

#### Citizen Advice at CS Library

Trained advisors on hand to give advice.  
Sessions by appointment, 1st and 3rd  
Thursday of the month.  
Book on 0808 278 7894.  
10am-12noon 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

### 2 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-12noon Mayfair

#### u3a Reading Group 1

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

#### Comedy String Quartet 'Graffiti Classics'

Classical concert, gypsy-folk romp, opera,  
stand-up comedy, and a brilliant dance show  
all rolled into one.  
The show is suitable for ages 7+. Tickets:  
£15 adults, £7.50 under-18s, available from:  
silvesterhorneevents.co.uk, CSTC Office or  
The Outdoor Depot  
7.30pm SHI

### 3 SATURDAY – 30 FRIDAY

#### Sarah Mann Photography Exhibition

The exhibition is the result of a two-year  
project based on seascapes.  
During opening hours CS Library

### 3 SATURDAY

#### Shropshire Hills Shuttle Bus Service Resumes

The two-route service will run on weekends,  
until Sunday 8th October. The bus has a  
reduced and simplified ticket pricing scheme  
but will no longer be free to concessionary  
bus pass holders. For routes, timetable,  
prices and donation information, search  
'Shropshire Hills Shuttle Buses', or see article  
on p51.

#### Ticklerton Fete

Delicious teas, plant stall, bric-a-brac,  
nearly-new toys, homemade cakes and  
produce, books, raffle, and musicians.  
Entrance £1.  
2pm Ticklerton Village Hall

#### 'Friends in Tune' Concert

With Claire Tocknell (Violin) and Mary Cotes  
(Piano) and their special guest Anastasia  
Vasyliuk (Soprano).  
Free entry to the concert, with donations  
invited to assist the aid work being done in  
Ukraine by CS resident Paul Nottingham.  
7.30pm URC

#### 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

### 4 SUNDAY

#### Churches Together Picnic

Bring your own picnic and also chair, if able.  
We'd love to see you there.  
If the weather is inclement, the picnic will be  
in the Methodist Church Hall.  
1.15pm St Milburga's Presbytery Garden

### 5 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

### 7 WEDNESDAY

#### CS Library Reading Group

Friendly, informal group.  
With Felicity Thomas.  
2.15-3.15pm CS Library

#### C.A.M.E.O. Meeting

'Painting Pakistan' – with David and Mary  
Mackie. All welcome to attend.  
Contact: Margaret: 07802 513315  
2.30pm Parish Centre

#### CS Amnesty Group

Meet first Wednesday of the month.  
All are welcome; we are a friendly inclusive  
group. This month we have a speaker:  
Regional Organiser Graham Minter.  
Contact csamnesty@outlook.com  
7.30pm SHI

### 8 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

#### Mayfair Volunteers Party

Celebrating our volunteers, who are invited  
to join us for refreshments and a celebration  
of the fantastic contribution that they make  
to Mayfair.  
6-8pm Mayfair

#### Marmaladies CS WI Talk

Training women to be secret agents in WW2.  
Hear from author Bernard O'Connor on how  
women changed the course of the Second  
World War.  
Open to all – tickets are £5 for non-  
members from Vine & Co or pay on the door  
(cash only, please)  
We welcome new members to join us  
for creative, informative and discussion  
sessions. marmaladieswi@gmail.com  
7.30-9pm URC



## What's On continued

### 9 FRIDAY

#### CS & District Gardening Club Outing

To Brobury House and Gardens, Hereford, HR3 6BS.

If you would like to join this trip or the outing on the 22nd June, contact Wendy Lee on 07484 824100 or wendylee874@btinternet.com and she will fill you in with all the details. We look forward to having you join us.

### 10 SATURDAY – 11 SUNDAY

#### Scouts Beer Festival

Featuring real ale and live music.  
Rectory Field.

Look out for more details locally, nearer the day.

### 10 SATURDAY

#### Monthly Drop-In Council Surgery

Second Saturday of the month.  
With Councillor Hilary Luff.  
10am-12noon 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-12noon Scout Hut

#### RSPB South Shropshire Local Group Walk

Walk at Wenlock Edge.  
See main RSPB item for more details.  
Picnic or pub lunch. Sorry, no dogs.  
Walk Leader. Reg Dixon 01952 727892/  
mobile: 07984 282990  
10.30am Meet at first NT carpark on the right coming out of Much Wenlock on the Stretton Road Grid ref: SO 612996

#### More Singers Summer Choral Concert

'A Feast of Madrigals and Songs'  
Entry is £10 at the door or go to  
www.ticketsource.co.uk/The-More-Singers.  
Enquiries: 07896 761149  
7.30pm URC

#### CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

8-10pm (see Sat 3rd for details)

### 12 MONDAY

#### Coffee Hour Drop-In with CS u3a

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

#### Stretton Cancer Support Group Meeting

Informal chat with tea and biscuits.  
We welcome anyone who has been affected by cancer in any way.  
For more information contact:  
Rosemary Williets: 722112  
Jane Potts: 771264  
2.30pm Jubilee Room, Mayfair

### 13 TUESDAY

#### Stretton Stitchers

We are a small, friendly group with varied experience who enjoy sewing in all its forms.  
For more information, please contact Katie 720200 or Frances 722656  
10am-1pm URC Hall

#### u3a Writers Group 2

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

#### Mayfair Quiz Party with Ken Willis

Tickets cost £5 per quizzier and can be booked by calling Mayfair on 722077.  
Maximum of 6 per team. You are welcome to bring your own refreshments.  
7pm HWBC

### 14 WEDNESDAY

#### Strettons Classical Music Group

This is the last meeting before we take our summer break. A small fee is requested to cover expenses.  
Contact Barbara Hall: 724578  
10am-12noon URC

### 15 THURSDAY

#### Citizen Advice at CS Library

Trained advisors on hand to give advice.  
Sessions by appointment, 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.  
Book on 0808 278 7894.  
10am-12noon CS Library

#### Friends of CS Library AGM

Future plans for the library, with a speaker from Shropshire Library Service. All members welcome.  
Weather permitting, we shall have refreshments in the URC garden.  
7.30pm URC Hall

### 16 FRIDAY

#### u3a Writers Group 1

With Lesley Dench  
2nd and 4th Friday of the month (this date is rearranged from 9th June)  
10am-12noon CS Library

### 17 SATURDAY

#### CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

8-10pm (see Sat 3rd for details)

### 19 MONDAY

#### CS Area Local History Group (CSALHG)

Committee member Mary McKenzie is our June speaker and will present a talk on '30 years at Shropshire Archives'.  
Non-members: £4, pay on the door.  
Talks are popular so please arrive in plenty of time for the 2pm start.  
Contact: csalh@outlook.com  
2pm URC Hall

### 20 TUESDAY

#### All Stretton Women's Institute

'Love Your Weeds' – the secret medicines in your garden, with guest speaker Hannah Chapman.  
Contact: Jean Huff 723706  
Email: allstrettonwi@gmail.com  
7.30pm All Stretton VH

### 22 THURSDAY

#### CS & District Gardening Club Outing

To Cruckfield House and Gardens, Shrewsbury.  
If you would like to join this trip or the outing on Friday 9th June, contact Wendy Lee on 07484 824100 or wendylee874@btinternet.com and she will fill you in with all the details. We look forward to having you join us.

### 23 FRIDAY

#### Mayfair Theatre Screening: *Good(15)*

A 'National Theatre Live' production.  
Adults £15, Under 18s £10.  
Bar and refreshments available to purchase.  
Bookings/enquiries: 722077  
See main Mayfair item for more info.  
7pm Mayfair

#### Bingo Night at Westhope

Licensed bar. Eyes down 7.30pm  
Fourth Friday of the month.  
Contact Amie on 07486 414742 or Betty on 07860 447397  
7.30pm Westhope VH, SY7 9JL

*Continued overleaf...*



## What's On continued

### 24 SATURDAY

#### CS Amnesty Group

Come and enjoy tea and cakes at our AMNESTEA.  
2.30-4.30pm at Park House, Churchway SY6 6DJ

#### CS Ballroom & Sequence Dance Club

8-10pm (see Sat 3rd for details)

### 25 SUNDAY

#### RSPB South Shropshire Local Group Walk

Walk at Whixall Moss and Prees Heath. See main RSPB item for more details.  
Duration: six hours.  
Bring a packed lunch. Sorry, no dogs.  
Walk Leader: Geoff Hall and David Stafford.  
07407 150213  
10am Meet at Whixall Moss car park SY13 2RT – situated over the canal bridge.

#### Healing in the Hills Sound Bath

Deeply relax while you are bathed in the healing sound frequencies of Crystal and Himalayan Singing bowls, Wind Gong, rain stick and Koshi chimes. Aids stress and anxiety reduction, rebalances. Suggested £10 donation. Booking essential.  
Contact: Maria 07985 744038  
7pm Scout Hut

### 26 MONDAY

#### u3a Family & Social History Group

Members of the public are welcome but will need to join the u3a.  
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

### 27 TUESDAY

#### Stretton Stitchers

10am (for details, see Tuesday 13th)

#### u3a Writers Group 2

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

### 28 WEDNESDAY

#### Yoga with Sue at CS Library

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

### 29 THURSDAY

#### Bioblitz in Cudwell Meadow

All welcome to come along and enjoy surveying the flora, invertebrates, birds and mammals of the meadow.  
From 10am Cudwell Meadow

#### Little Stretton Talk

Illustrated talk by David and Madeline Haigh: 'The lives and times of the people of the Tan House'  
£5 including refreshments.  
Booking essential, ring 723627 or email MHaigh3@aol.com.  
2.30pm Little Stretton VH

### 30 FRIDAY

#### u3a Writers Group 1

With Lesley Dench  
2nd and 4th Friday of the month (this date is rearranged from 23rd June)  
10am-12noon 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.

### WHAT'S ON IN EARLY JULY

#### 1 SATURDAY

##### CS Annual Family Fun Day/Dog Show

Music, entertainment, have-a-go sports, face painting, fancy dress, climbing wall, demos and much more.

Website: [www.churchstretton-tc.gov.uk/council\\_events/family-fun-day-2023/](http://www.churchstretton-tc.gov.uk/council_events/family-fun-day-2023/)  
11am-4pm Sandford Ave. Park

#### 2 SUNDAY

##### Ballet: Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty*

Show tickets are £15 (£10 for under 16s) and can be booked by telephoning 722077 or visiting Mayfair reception.  
A pre-show gourmet 2 course lunch can be booked at an additional £15 per person. For menu choices, visit: [www.mayfaircentre.org.uk](http://www.mayfaircentre.org.uk)  
1pm lunch, 3pm matinée screening Mayfair

#### 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.



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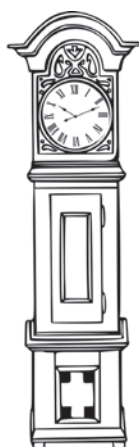
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# Mayfair News

Mayfair opened its doors on Thursday 27th April for a Community Open Day. Over thirty people attended from various local organisations such as care agencies, Shropshire Council and local charities. The feedback received was all very positive, and it was a pleasure to be able to spread the word about just how many services Mayfair offers to the Strettons



community (81 different services at our last count!). People were genuinely surprised and overwhelmed at the breadth of our work, and the huge role that volunteers play at Mayfair.

Thank you to all those who attended on the day and to our staff and volunteer team who made the day such a success. If you couldn't join us on the 27th, please don't worry. Our doors are always open to people who would like to learn more about Mayfair. Pop in Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and have a look around. Or give us a ring on 01694 722077 and we can arrange to give you your own tour of Mayfair.

## A royal presence

King Charles has kept a close eye on Beacon in the lead up to the Coronation!

Thank you to Nancy from Nails by Nancy for lending us her life-sized royal cut-outs which added an additional regal feel to the flurry of red, white and blue decorations.

Both 44bs and Beacon (our day services) produced some beautiful coronation decorations this May.



## A buzzing Saturday

Thank you to everyone who contributed to, volunteered at or supported our Plant, Craft and Book sale on 29th April. We were fortunate to have a sunny morning and placed some tables and chairs outside for those who wanted to enjoy their tea and cake in the sunshine. It was lovely to see so many people visiting our Health and Wellbeing Centre.

The morning was extremely well attended and has raised a fantastic sum for Mayfair. We can't announce a total yet as, at the time of writing, a second plant sale is still due to take place.

We are extremely grateful to the Crafty Ladies and our Mayfair Card Makers for producing a beautiful array of hand-crafted items and cards, and to the Book Team and the Plant Team for gathering a great selection of plants and books to sell.

## Quiz reminder

Don't forget our next Quiz Party, which takes place on Tuesday 13th June, hosted by Ken Willis. Join us for a relaxed, fun evening of trivia in the Health and Wellbeing Centre at 7pm. Tickets cost £5 per quizzier and can be booked by calling Mayfair on 01694 722077. Get your team together (maximum of 6 per team) and help us raise some funds for Mayfair. You are welcome to bring your own refreshments.

## Celebrating our volunteers

On Thursday 8th June we will be holding a volunteer party here at Mayfair – open to all our wonderful volunteers. From 6pm to 8pm we invite any of our volunteers to join us for nibbles, drinks, and a celebration of the fantastic contribution that they make to Mayfair.

This will mark the culmination of National Volunteer Week from 1st to 7th June – a chance for us to join other



organisations nationally in saying a huge 'thank you' to our vital volunteers. Be part of something amazing! If you, or someone you know is interested in volunteering at Mayfair, we have a huge variety of opportunities for people of all ages and interests to get involved with. You'll be part of a friendly, caring team of hundreds of local residents without whom Mayfair simply couldn't survive. In particular at the moment we are seeking volunteers for the following opportunities:

- Helping at our Youth Drop-in sessions for young people aged 10-16 on Tuesday evenings.
- Serving in our Coffee Shop and Lunch Hub – helping with food preparation and washing up.
- Supporting our Calmer Café on Thursday evenings which provides mental health support.

Please contact our volunteer coordinator Eve for more information: [eve.simmonds-jones@mayfaircentre.org.uk](mailto:eve.simmonds-jones@mayfaircentre.org.uk).

### New youth service opportunities

We're looking forward to welcoming a new group of young people to our youth drop-in sessions on a Tuesday evening. From 6th June we will be running two drop-in sessions at Russell's Meadow Pavilion (Lutwyche Road, SY6 6AT). Young people in school years 6 and 7 are invited to join the fun from 4 to 5.30pm and our existing session for years 8 to 11 will continue from 6pm to 7.30pm.

These sessions, provided through a partnership between All About Youth (SYA), Mayfair and Church Stretton Town Council, are a great way for local people to get to know each other, gain confidence and try out a fantastic selection of activities in a safe environment. Each week includes a mixture of baking, art, crafts and games, all for just £1 a session.

We absolutely rely on volunteers to keep this service running. So if you feel you could help out on a Tuesday evening during term time (even if just once a month), please get in touch with Eve or Nicola at Mayfair on 01694 722077. All our helpers work alongside an experienced SYA youth worker. They will be DBS checked and provided with full training and ongoing support.

### Mayfair Theatre Screenings

We're pleased to announce the installation of some new solar-powered electric blinds in our Activity Room. This new addition to our state-of-the-art cinema equipment will now allow us to screen films on summer evenings and at matinée performances (such as our *Sleeping Beauty* ballet screening in July). We also hope to provide shows for our day services, family screenings, and perhaps birthday parties. We are very grateful to The Millichope Foundation which has kindly contributed towards the cost of our blinds. Any other donations towards the cost of these would be very much appreciated.

### Friday 23rd June, 7pm: National Theatre Live Screening of *GOOD* (cert 15)

by CP Taylor, directed by Dominic Cooke (please note this is a re-booking of the screening from April which had to be postponed).

David Tennant (*Doctor Who*) makes a much-anticipated return to the West End in a blistering reimagining of one of Britain's most powerful, political plays.



As the world faces its Second World War, John Halder, a good, intelligent German professor, finds himself pulled into a movement with unthinkable consequences.

Olivier Award-winner Dominic Cooke (*Follies*) directs CP Taylor's timely tale, with a cast that also features Elliot Levey (*Coriolanus*) and Sharon Small (*The Bay*). Filmed live at the Harold Pinter Theatre in London.

Adults £15, under 16s £10; bar and refreshments available to purchase. Call 722077 to book. Check out [www.mayfaircentre.org.uk/whats-on](http://www.mayfaircentre.org.uk/whats-on) for a full line up of shows and to sign up to our mailing list for future screenings.

### Sunday 2nd July, 3pm: Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* Ballet

**Pre-show lunch at 1pm for 3pm Matinée Screening**  
Matthew Bourne's *Sleeping Beauty* is coming to Mayfair's big screen as part of its 10th anniversary celebrations. Now established as a firm favourite in the New Adventures repertoire, this "utterly brilliant" (*Sunday Mirror*) award-winning production has enchanted audiences throughout the UK and across the globe. Enter a wondrous world of magical fairies and vampires, where the timeless tale of good versus evil is turned upside-down, creating a supernatural love story that even the passage of time itself cannot hinder. Get ready to be transported in time from the halcyon days of the late Edwardian era through to the modern day in this "dazzling" (*Sunday Express*) gothic romance.

On Sunday 2nd July, Mayfair will be screening this enchanting ballet as a matinée show at 3pm. A gourmet two-course lunch can be booked and will be served before the show from 1pm, providing a wonderful afternoon of food and entertainment, with all proceeds going to Mayfair Community Centre.

Show tickets are £15 and £10 for under 16s and can be booked by telephoning 01694 722077 or visiting Mayfair reception. Booking is essential for both the lunch and the show, and we recommend booking early to avoid disappointment.

The two-course pre-show lunch costs an additional £15 per person. Menu choices will be available to view soon on [www.mayfaircentre.org.uk](http://www.mayfaircentre.org.uk).

If you would like to be on our mailing list for all future screenings, you can sign up by calling Mayfair reception.

Naomi Coleman



### Rotary Club News – Latest Activity

Church Stretton Rotary has been very active supporting our local community in the last few weeks – here are some of the activities:



#### Vehicle for Church Stretton First Responders

Tracey and Warren Prosser, our Church Stretton First Responders, have finally obtained their replacement vehicle with the help and support of our local community and the organisational skills of Rotary. We have organised various fund raisers and can be seen presenting Tracey with the latest large cheque.

#### Church Stretton Food Bank

Rotary continues to empty the Food Bank bins in the local Coop three times a week and deliver the community donations to the Parish Centre, where the Food Bank is based. In the current financial climate, the number of people using the Food Bank is increasing and the kindness of the community in providing donations is vital. The picture shows Moira and David Matthews of Rotary delivering two trolleys of donations to the Food Bank.



#### Supporting the Town Council Maintenance Team

In preparation for the Coronation of King Charles III, Rotary has been helping the Council repaint plant troughs, bollards and lampposts in the Market Square. The council have now found a longer list of things they would like Rotary to help with! This highlights again the motto of Rotary “Service above Self”.

#### Glyn's Garden Project

A few months ago, Hilary Clarke gave our Rotary a talk on her project initiative of developing a patch of wasteland into a community garden under the banner of Glyn's Garden Horticultural Therapy.

The Club agreed to help this brilliant project in various ways and recently, with funding raised by the Club, a new tarmac drive was installed.

If you want to know more about helping our local community or joining Rotary contact me Don Lovejoy on [don@djlovejoy.co.uk](mailto:don@djlovejoy.co.uk).

*Don Lovejoy*

## Trivia Corner

by Ken Willis

1. What is the better known name for an alligator pear?
2. What is the name of the mermaid in Disney's *The Little Mermaid*?
3. What was the name of the prison in the TV show *Porridge*?
4. Which group had hits with *Roll with it* and *All around the world*?
5. What does the Statue of Liberty hold in her left hand?





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4pm - 6pm



# The 2023 Arts Festival: Old Friends and Fresh Faces



## CHURCH STRETTON ARTS FESTIVAL

We look forward to welcoming the ever-popular **Katona Twins** guitar duo to launch the 2023 Arts Festival with their latest programme *Hollywood & Swing* on Saturday 29th July in St Laurence's Church. Over the following fortnight, Festival events will showcase a wide variety of artistes, some already familiar to our audiences and many appearing in Church Stretton for the first time.



Japanese-born pianist **Reiko Fujisawa** is one of this year's newcomers. In her latest creative project illuminating the relationship between music and nature, she will be joined by **Paul Edmund-Davies** (flute), **Laurence Davies** (French horn) and broadcaster **Peter Quantrill** for an evening inspired by *Forests and Flowers*.

Violinist **Callum Smart**, winner of the 2010 BBC Young Musician Strings Category Final, will be making his first appearance here in a duo recital with pianist **Richard Uttley**. **Meera Maharaj** will also be giving her first Festival recital partnered with **James Girling**. With their distinctive pairing of flute and guitar, Meera and James will explore music ranging from Schubert classics to Gismonti folk rock.

Another fresh take on traditional folk music will be delivered by the award-winning and talented trio **The Trials of Cato** with their homage to traditional folk music, captivating stories and toe-tapping tunes. **Dirty Rockin' Scoundrels** may also be new to the SHI stage but their energetic programme of 50s and 60s Rock 'n' Roll is guaranteed to have you rockin' in the aisles! *C'mon Everybody!*

It has been some years since we last heard the **Fontanella** recorder quartet in Church Stretton and we look forward to their presentation of *The Delightful Companion*, a recital focused on English music of the seventeenth century, in St Laurence's Church.

**Kensington Brass** – ten exceptional young brass players who arrange a wide variety of repertoire themselves – filled St Laurence's with magnificent sound on their previous visit in 2016 and will no doubt do so again this year. We

will also welcome back versatile wind and piano ensemble **Harmoniemusik** to perform a programme spanning 250 years, from the French baroque of Louis XV to the world of Italian film music composer Nino Rota.

Although Friday 11th August will see the **Dante String Quartet** appearing for the first time in St Laurence's, their Shrewsbury-based leader Zoë Beyers is no stranger to our venues having given a memorable solo recital in the 2019 Festival. The Quartet's programme will include works by Beethoven and Shostakovich.

Afternoon events in the Parish Centre will feature a recital by Hebridean poet **Pauline Prior-Pitt**, a poet of rare warmth and humour, whose focus is women's lives and the beauty of the Hebrides. Later in the fortnight, respected art curator **Timothy Wilcox** will explore the political origin and creation of the Bayeux Tapestry as well as its use as propaganda. Also this year we are very keen to include younger Festival-goers, who can encourage **Rhubarb Theatre** in their search for Chester, the missing cat, in their family-oriented and fun-filled fantasy, *Finding Chester*.

**Liz Grand**'s one-woman stage show *Where is Mrs Christie?* will revisit another missing-person search - the mysterious temporary disappearance of the world-famous crime novelist in 1926. This play explores what happened to Agatha Christie during the eleven days for which the police were searching.

And for the Grand Finale – something completely different. In their first Festival appearance, Klezmer band **She'Koyokh** will perform a rousing evening of Balkan music in the spacious auditorium at Concord College. Saturday 12th August – an evening not to be missed!



Tickets for all events are available now for purchase through TicketSource (see [strettonfestival.org.uk](http://strettonfestival.org.uk) for details) or in person on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 12 noon at the Visitor Information Centre, Church Stretton Library SY6 6DQ.

*Claire Tocknell and Sandra Whitlock*

## Join the great Festival team!



## CHURCH STRETTON ARTS FESTIVAL

Every year for over 50 years, bar two (you can guess which), the Church Stretton Arts Festival has run for two magnificent weeks in July and August.

In 2022, the Festival:

- welcomed over 1,000 visitors to the Exhibition; they viewed more than 750 exhibits of art and craft work from talented local artists and makers,
- offered a hugely varied programme of professional events – drama, spoken word and music of many genres,
- ran six free concerts and three organ recitals,
- served the equivalent of 71 bottles of wine and 67 cartons of juice,
- distributed 35,000 promotional brochures and many posters, flyers and banners.

All this was achieved through the efforts of over 80 volunteers drawn from our local communities.

We are in full swing to deliver another great Festival to you this summer (29th July-12th August: [www.strettonfestival.org.uk](http://www.strettonfestival.org.uk), tickets on sale now). We look forward to your support once again by attending the concerts and events, visiting the exhibition and participating in the art/craft workshops.

And we also need your help to run the Festival. The population of the Strettons and around has the most

amazing range of skills, talents and experience and a generous attitude towards volunteering. So, if you have a few hours, a day or two or more to spare, please get in touch.

There are many opportunities – for example, handing out programmes, stewarding at the Exhibition or serving refreshments. You could organise an activity. Or you could even shape the future of the Festival as a member of our small, friendly and hugely dedicated Committee. We are on the lookout especially for people to take on ticketing and marketing. It's really rewarding to do – many of our volunteers come back to help us year after year.

If you're interested and you know a Committee member already, do have a chat; or call or email me on 07508 072206, [aahall2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:aahall2002@yahoo.co.uk).

We will be delighted to hear from you and look forward to welcoming you to the team. Thank you.

*Andrew Hall*

*Chair, Church Stretton Arts Festival Committee*

The Festival is an Educational Charity Reg. No. 511905  
[www.strettonfestival.org.uk](http://www.strettonfestival.org.uk)

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## SHI Event – Graffiti Classics

If you think you know classical music, then think again. Comedy string quartet Graffiti Classics aim to burst the boundaries of the traditional string quartet with their all-singing, all-dancing musical comedy show, which comes to the Silvester Horne Institute in Church Stretton on Friday 2nd June.

16 strings, 8 dancing feet, and 4 voices with one aim: to make classical music wickedly funny and exhilarating for everyone.

Audiences should expect a classical concert, gypsy-folk romp, opera, stand-up comedy, and a brilliant dance show all rolled into one. Graffiti Classics never fail to get audiences laughing, clapping, and singing along. Adults love the uplifting and virtuosic variety of styles, all tied together with cheeky audience interaction. It's a musical experience not to be missed.

Originally scheduled for last December, we are now delighted to host Graffiti Classics, following worldwide tours of major theatres and festivals, as well as national TV and radio appearances in the UK, Ireland and Spain. This fantastic show proves that classical music can be for everyone.

The show is suitable for ages 7+. Tickets are £15 for adults and £7.50 for under-18s and can be purchased from [silvesterhorneevents.co.uk](http://silvesterhorneevents.co.uk), CSTC office or from The Outdoor Depot, Sandford Avenue. If you've not already got your ticket, be quick – it promises to be a sell-out! For more info: 720132.







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## Time for a Spot of Lunch!

When Covid swept through in 2020 everything went into hibernation, and the ever-popular lunch clubs organised by Good Neighbours were forced to close their doors. Now, however, they are back in business and eagerly looking for new members.



The Thursday Lunch Club is held weekly at the Ley Gardens retirement complex. For the past 33 years,



organiser and head chef Margaret Hamer BEM has provided a hot two-course meal, with tea and coffee, as well as an excellent opportunity for local residents to get together over lunch.

- Tea and coffee available from 11.45 to 12.15;
- Lunch served at 12.30, followed by (more) tea and coffee;
- Cost £8;
- Raffle every fortnight;
- Open to Ley Gardens residents and to any local people who wish to come along for a good lunch;
- Ring and Ride transport available.

The Friday Lunch Club meets 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 01694 781634 or email us at [csgoodneighbours@gmail.com](mailto:csgoodneighbours@gmail.com).*

## Ticklerton Fete

**Saturday 3rd June at 2pm at Ticklerton Village Hall and the orchard of Ticklerton Hall, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Farquhar and Mrs Sidaway**

Delicious teas, excellent plant stall, quality bric-a-brac, great nearly-new toys, homemade cakes and produce, books, raffle, and musicians. Entrance £1.

## 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 1,550 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).

# STRETTON FOCUS

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](mailto:sfocuschair@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](mailto:sfocuschair@gmail.com).



# Historic Church Stretton – The Raven Inn



*The Raven Inn early 1900s looking up the High Street.*

The Raven Inn stood on the southern corner of The Square. It was built on a piece of land known originally as The Lower Living, then as Bright's Messuage. The Raven was an inn as early as 1733 when the Manor Court records describe how John and Jane Phillips surrendered into the hands of the Lord of the Manor:

"All that customary messuage, tenement and yard with backside leading from the buttery end to the workhouse door together with the stable and all other outbuildings, thereunto belonging called or known by the name of The Raven Inn, being part of a certain messuage known by the name of Bright's House."

According to the 1838 tithe assessment it was then owned by John Robinson (who also owned The Plough) and included the adjacent yard and stables as well as a yard and gardens opposite which is now the entrance drive to Queen's Court. David Evans was the landlord at the time and was still there in 1851, but by 1861 Sarah Marston was the licensee. The Raven had good stabling for eight horses and for a time the stagecoach changed horses here.

For a time in the last century The Raven offered accommodation and advertised itself as a Commercial and Family Hotel. It remained a public house until the 1970s.

*Barrie Raynor and Tony Crowe  
From Church Stretton through the Ages*



*The stables, old toilets and yard of  
The Raven Inn*



# Church Stretton Area Local History Group

## 30 Years at Shropshire Archives

19th June 2pm at the URC Hall

Committee member Mary McKenzie is our June speaker and will present a talk on '30 years at Shropshire Archives'.

Mary retired from Shropshire Archives in 2021 after an archive career of 36 years, 30 of which were spent in Shropshire, including over 20 as Head of Service. Since retirement she has continued to keep her hand in archives and heritage with voluntary roles in local, county and regional bodies. She is also enjoying having time to pursue her own family and local history research.

Her illustrated talk reflects on her time at Shropshire Archives and the huge changes over that period. She is also interested in your experiences of researching in archives (good and bad!) and hopes you will share those at the end of the talk.

Visitors are welcome to attend Mary's talk. Pay £4 on the door and please arrive in good time for our 2pm start.

*Madeline Haigh*



*Shropshire Archives building, 1995*

## Little Stretton Village Hall Talk *As You Like It* at Acton Scott Hall

The Lives and Times of the People of the Tan House

Little Stretton Village Hall

2.30pm Thursday 29th June

The illustrated talk by David and Madeline Haigh will describe the lives of leading residents of the Tan House in Little Stretton starting with the Bridgman family of tanners in the 18th-19th century and moving on into the 20th century.

David will introduce the historical context in which they lived and Madeline will describe their lives and families.

Booking essential. £5 including refreshments. To reserve a place call 01694 72362 or email [MHaigh3@aol.com](mailto:MHaigh3@aol.com).

All proceeds to support the maintenance of the Village Hall.

*Madeline Haigh*

Wednesday 26th July 7pm – Acton Scott Hall

*As You Like It*, by William Shakespeare



You are invited to the splendid grounds of Acton Scott Hall to watch Shakespeare's chaotic comedy, *As You Like It*, presented by innovative touring theatre company The Three Inch Fools.

The Fools are acclaimed for their fast-paced and musically driven approach to theatre and this production is no exception: it will be bold, vibrant and energetic as it tells the story of rustic revelry in the Forest of Arden. What better way to spend a summer evening!

"One of the best Shakespeare plays I'll ever watch" –  
*The Bristol Post*

**Tickets: adult £20, under-18s £10, under-5s free; family ticket (2+2) £50; booking fee applies.**

Advance booking is essential – no tickets on the door. More details and booking information can be found on the Acton Scott website: [actonscott.com/whats-on](http://actonscott.com/whats-on).



*The Tan House prior to extensive additions made by the Maw/Wood family in Victorian times.*



# Coronation Day 2nd June 1953

At 13 Manse Road in Hadley the day started fine but dull. Dad sliced a couple of rashers off a haunch of bacon hanging from the ceiling and wrapped in muslin to keep the flies off. They went in the frying pan along with a couple of fresh eggs from the free-range hens at the top of the garden. There was also a couple of slices of fried bread and that was his regular breakfast with a cup of tea. Today was a holiday so his first job was to feed the two pigs then the dozen chickens and to catch and pull the neck of the largest cockerel which was destined to be lunch. A bucket full of early spuds was dug up and some peas and broad beans collected.

I was not much of a meat eater at the time, so my breakfast was three Shredded Wheat, soaked in fresh milk and coated with a lot of sugar. My drink was a mug of cocoa made with milk and loads more sugar. My supper that day and every day would be the same. At ten years old I was an adventurous young jockey and hyperactive, so I did not put on any extra weight. My two older sisters Beryl 15 and Jean 12 would scrape the spuds, shell the peas and beans then help with the preparation of the lunch and tidy up the house as we expected two visitors.

Mum, Adelaide, was a Preen from near Church Stretton and she grew up on a small farm up Walls Bank so was adept at plucking and dressing fowl. So, it was soon ready for the oven with the offal heading for the pigsty. The down would go towards the bedding for the next broody hen to sit on a dozen fertilized eggs for the next flock of chicks.

The visitors, Mum's sister Lal and her husband Jim, arrived in their Austin Ten and gasped at the new TV set which was a Regentone Consul set with a 9 inch round screen just covered over top and bottom to resemble an oblong screen. It was also a radio and the signal was gained from a 40-yard-long cable hooked on the troughing at one end and at the top of the pear tree up the garden. The TV was powered by the typical H bolted to the chimney. It had cost a staggering £100. We all settled down to watch the start of the Coronation and were enthralled by it all but when there was a break, Dad, Uncle Jim and me, went out on to the lawn to kick a football about whilst the others set the meal on the table. We had rice pudding and as always Dad and me fought over who should have the skin.

It was all over by teatime. That was just a few sandwiches filled with damson jam or raspberry jam from up the garden and cups of tea or another glass of pale ale or stout. We youngsters had to settle for a bottle of Vimto.

Next day, also a holiday, was sports day and me and my best mate Cliff Bennett achieved third place in the three-legged race and my share of the prize was a Ludo set. That turned out to be my best athletics achievement as, two years later I came 6th of six in the discus which was very embarrassing.

My wife and I have been royalists since that rather special day.

*Derek Gash Gambie*

## Methodist Voice

### Peace and Justice for Palestine and Israel Quilts

Over 24 years ago a small group of women in Brighton, realising that they were not able to demonstrate as they used to, met together each week in a café to make quilts which could be used as wall hangings. Their aims were to raise awareness and support for the wider campaign for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel and to exhibit the quilts in as many places as possible and then send them to Palestine to show our love and support.

I started making quilts when I was living in Portsmouth and continued in the Northeast. In workshops, Women's Meetings, Sunday Schools, Quaker Meetings, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Catholic and URC Churches, WI Meetings, Towns Women's Guild, Probud, Rotary and wherever a speaker was needed, I was there and squares were made and most of all Peace and Justice for Palestine and Israel was talked about.

Over the years I have made 10 quilts. They have gone to Gaza with representatives of Medical Aid for Palestinians, Hope School, a school for Muslims and Christian girls and boys, in Beit Jala near Bethlehem, others were taken to Jerusalem and Hebron and

Azoun. Tom and I took one to Jayous, a village in the West Bank where Tom lived for three months with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme for Palestine and Israel. There we stayed with Abu Azzam, Tom's former landlord. When we gave his wife the quilt, as she looked at it the tears rolled down her cheeks and she said, "Thank you, thank you. We didn't know you were thinking of us. Tell everybody thank you, thank you. We will hang it in the Community Hall, and I will tell everybody where it came from."

I asked her what I should call her. "Call me Ukti and I will call you Ukti." "What does that mean?" I said. "Sister," she said as she hugged me. Then my tears started to flow.

The squares for my last quilt were made by over 20 young women from around the world, in Durham while their husbands were studying at the University. They kept it for a while in Durham to show it in the University and around the city then I brought it to Church Stretton. I was pleased to give it to Sally Azzam Cooke when she spoke at the Engaging Issues meeting in February. She is going to take it to Nazareth with our love and good wishes.

*Gillian Patton*





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# Strettons Area Community Wildlife Group



## Cudwell Meadow Project Update – Project Leader Isabel Carter

There have been recent sightings on trail cameras of both male and female otters in the Quinny brook that runs alongside Cudwell meadow. In the spring they come to feast on the frogs and toads that lay their eggs in the meadow. The delight of seeing otter was somewhat mitigated by the carnage of chewed up frogs and toads left behind all over the meadow. Hopefully quantities of spawn in and around the scrape, will bring a new generation of amphibians.

The meadow (SY6 6AB) will again host open Sundays from Sunday 28th May until harvest time at the beginning of August. The meadow will be open from 10am onwards for you to come and enjoy the wildflowers and the numerous invertebrates that enjoy the wild flowers in the meadow and wild edges. If you see any unusual or interesting species, please do report this, either to us ([strettonwetlands@gmail.com](mailto:strettonwetlands@gmail.com)) or via iRecord. Please respect the 'no dogs' sign for the sake of the range of small mammals and nesting water birds that make the meadow their home (with the exception of guide dogs on leads).

Volunteer work parties continue the first Thursday of each month 1.30 to 3.30pm. All welcome.

We have a few dates for your diary:

**Thursday 29th June:** Bioblitz in Cudwell Meadow. All are welcome to come along and enjoy surveying flora, invertebrates, birds and mammals from 10am onwards.

**Sunday 16th July:** Spider Survey. Shropshire Spider group is surveying areas of the Stretton wetlands. If interested in joining them, please email: [shropshire.spiders@gmail.com](mailto:shropshire.spiders@gmail.com).



*Summer view of meadow. Photo: Isabel Carter*

## Swifts in the Strettons – Project Leader Julie Cowley

Swift nest bricks and boxes have now been installed on three more homes in the Strettons, thanks to local residents, and thanks to Darren Hall for installing the swift boxes. Swifts have experienced a 58% decline over a 23 year period in the UK, in part due to a loss of nesting sites. As they are only here to breed for around three months, it is important that they quickly find these sites, so call attraction systems have been installed to encourage displaced birds – where their existing nest site has been lost due to renovation – and/or new breeding birds. Swifts are faithful to each other and to



their nest site, so when a breeding location is lost, they have very little time to find a replacement and raise young.

House martins are in a similar predicament and the installation of nest cups can give these birds a chance to breed too, particularly as we experience dry summers and there is limited access to mud for these birds to build and maintain their nests. If you would like to help these wonderful summer visitors, please contact Julie Cowley at [juliecowley463@gmail.com](mailto:juliecowley463@gmail.com) or mobile 07580 159183.

If you find a grounded swift or house martin (or indeed any injured animal) please contact Cuan Wildlife Rescue Centre on 01952 728070 or visit [www.cuanwildliferescue.org.uk](http://www.cuanwildliferescue.org.uk).

*Dr Penny Bienz*



*Bilberry bumble bee on bramble. Photo Isabel Carter*



## Nature Notes

**H**ave you been on a dawn chorus walk this spring? Despite the unusually early time these occasions take place, they are very enjoyable. Most are followed by a cooked breakfast which, after the fresh, morning air, is especially delicious.

In spring our resident birds are calling to attract a mate and others are announcing their arrival from far distant lands. They are keen to start breeding and are also warning others of their species that this is their territory and it's best to keep out.

I'm of the pre-double glazing generation and remember listening to birdsong before school. It always seemed so joyous, I do hope it will always be enjoyed. We should all do what we can to help.

This is something you might consider. House martins use the eaves of our homes to build their nests. They have been doing this for generations but like all of nature are in decline.

A recent survey by the British Trust for Ornithology suggested that where artificial nest cups had been installed, these tiny birds, which have flown from sub-Saharan Africa, produce more chicks.

Usually they need to collect mud to construct or repair their nests, but where an artificial nest has been installed, some of the work is already done. They will start laying eggs sooner and hopefully produce two healthy broods.

Our summers seem to be getting a lot hotter. Mud dries out quickly with disastrous results as nests collapse onto the ground. This is upsetting for us too.

Though too late for this season, if you observe birds nesting on your property you can give them a helping hand ready for next year.

Seeing the tiny faces of these little birds, peering down from their nest sites, is such a delight. We really must do all we can.

*Carol Wood*

## Local Group – Recent Walk on Sunday 30th April at Gilfach and Afon Marteg Nature Reserve led by Dave Stafford

It was pretty wet to begin with, but it did clear up and the visibility was good. This area was originally a traditional hill farm and is now a good spot to see birds of western oak woodlands particularly wood warbler, pied flycatcher and redstart. Along the stream dippers and grey wagtails

were seen. In all 42 different species were noted including kites, ravens, wood and willow warblers, blackcap, curlew, crossbill, wheatear, nuthatch and gold crest.

## Walks in June

### Saturday 10th

#### Walk at Wenlock Edge – 10.30am start

Meet at first NT carpark on the right coming out of Much Wenlock on the Stretton Road, grid ref: SO 612996.

The route will include Wenlock Edge and the surrounding hollows and meadows. We are hoping to see numerous orchids, butterflies, song birds, warblers and raptors etc.

Bring a packed lunch, or there are several pubs in Much Wenlock where you can have a pub lunch.

The terrain is generally good, but

walking boots are advisable.

Sorry no dogs.

Walk Leader: Reg Dixon 01952 727892/mobile: 07984 282990

### Sunday 25th

#### Walk at Whixall Moss and Prees Heath – 10am start

Duration 6 hours.

This is a special 'double-bill' for birds, dragonflies and butterflies.

Meet at Whixall Moss car park SY13 2RT situated over the canal bridge.

The walk will be along the canal, edge of Whixall Moss and Sinkers Field wetlands in the morning and then along to Prees Heath early afternoon stopping for a picnic lunch in between. Bring a packed lunch.

Sorry no dogs.

Walk Leader: Geoff Hall and David Stafford, 07407 150213

## The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

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.

For further information visit our website [www.group.rspb.org.uk/southshropshire](http://www.group.rspb.org.uk/southshropshire) or Facebook RSPB South Shropshire Local Group



*Photo: Shutterstock*





# A Buzz in the Meadows

A species-rich hay meadow in early summer is a magical place. The hum of insects forms a gentle background to the waving of tall grasses and the nodding and bobbing of wildflowers. If you're able to spend a few moments lying on your stomach, you enter a new world. The stems and leaves become a thronging high-rise sci-fi city, the vegetation and air zooming with beetles, bees, flies, ants and spiders. Literal blade runners.

In the UK 97% of these wonderful flower-rich meadows have been lost, mostly in the last 100 years.

habitat themselves but also help to link up fragments of remaining meadow.

The National Trust is restoring several meadows locally, including Jinlye Meadows at All Stretton, Fir Tree Farm Meadows near Asterton, and Ragleth Meadow on the side of Ragleth Hill. Already the results are promising. The fields are filling up with flowers, and surveys have recorded increasing numbers of the rare bilberry bumblebee feeding on Jinlye and Fir Tree Farm Meadows.



*Jinlye Meadows, Photo: Charlie Bell*

## Find out more

The Stepping Stones Project is working across the Shropshire Hills and Onny Valley to create and restore patches of wildlife habitat, including meadows, and link them up via a network of wildlife corridors such as road verges and hedgerows. To find out more about Stepping Stones, including events and volunteer sessions, email Stepping Stones Project Officer Charlie Bell: [charlie.bell@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:charlie.bell@nationaltrust.org.uk).

The Marches Meadow Group was formed in 2015 in response to the widespread loss of meadows. It promotes the conservation, protection and enhancement of species-rich hay meadow in the Marches area, with much of its activity focused in south Shropshire. The group is open to all and provides advice and practical help to members who would like to create a meadow, whether on their small garden lawn or in a 10 acre field! ([www.marchesmeadowgroup.com](http://www.marchesmeadowgroup.com))

*Charlie Bell*

The cause of this loss is predominantly changing agricultural practices, driven by the focus on increased production. One example is the widespread change from a hay cut in late summer to a silage cut in late spring or early summer. Because of this many meadows are now cut before the plants within them have chance to flower and set seed. This change from hay to silage also affects ground nesting birds such as curlews, with many being lost to machinery.

Many old meadows have also been ploughed up and re-seeded with more productive mixes of coarse grasses. Fertilisers are often added to increase the growth of these dominant productive grasses, at the expense of finer grass species and wildflowers. Wet meadows, which host their own unique plants and invertebrates, have been drained.

This loss has had a devastating impact on the plants and animals that use meadows for shelter, food and places to raise their young. Meadows can support a huge range of species including wildflowers, fungi, bees, flies, beetles, spiders, moths, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, bats and birds. As well as being incredibly beautiful, meadows also provide many benefits for people including carbon storage, reducing flooding, and providing food for pollinators.

However, there is still hope! Locally, farmers, smallholders and conservation organisations are restoring many species-rich hay meadows. Anyone with a garden lawn can also add to this growing network of meadows, by creating a mini meadow. You may also have noticed signs along various road verges: "Don't mow let it grow" and "Late cut planned". Road verges offer a real opportunity because, if managed correctly, they could form long, linear meadows. These would provide



*Common Spotted Orchid, Photo: Peter Carty*



# Exciting Developments Down at the Allotments!

There have recently been a number of exciting developments at the Church Stretton allotments. In response to requests highlighted in a survey of plot holders last year, we have now purchased a composting toilet. Huge thanks go to *Stretton Focus* who helped us with £750 of matched funding. This is a real community project that will allow plot holders to stay down at the allotments longer caring for their plots and will also enable us to hold more social events at the site.



*The new composting toilet down at the allotments, tucked against the railway embankment. Purchased with huge thanks to Stretton Focus for their matched funding.*



metre dry hedge of woody material to be a haven for insects and other wildlife. There are plans for a beehive to be installed later in the year.

In the last year we have also created a social area for plot holders (with huge thanks to the Kings Arms and the Town Council for the donation of some garden benches) and have set up 'seed swap' and 'plant swap' events where people

meet to share ideas and resources.

If you are interested in taking on an allotment plot, please contact me. My details are in the yellow pages of every *Focus* edition. We do have a waiting list, but plots regularly become available. Then you too can enjoy the quite unique satisfaction (and money saving benefits) that come from growing and eating your own fruit and vegetables!

*Ben Warren  
Secretary, Stretton  
Allotment  
Gardens  
Association*

wildlife friendly. We have been inspired by the work we have seen in other local developments such as Cudwell Meadow which we all pass on our way down to the allotments. We have sown yellow rattle seed (kindly donated by the National Trust, Cardingmill Valley) in the orchard area. This has the effect of suppressing grasses and therefore encouraging more wildflowers. We have also installed two wonderful bug hotels (created by allotment holder John Garnet) and created a 30



*The newly created social area, with benches kindly donated by The Kings Arms and Church Stretton Town Council*

## Church Stretton and District Gardening Club

The Gardening Club Spring Show on 25th April was enjoyed by about 50 members on one of the few sunny days April had to offer. There were a good number and standard of entries for the Floral exhibits, and some amusing craft entries. We were very honoured to have Howard Franklin, an RHS judge who began his career in Stretton, come and judge for us, despite a last-minute message informing us he was ill and unable to attend. Maggie and Les Cameron bravely agreed to stand in, but in the event Howard appeared, looking slightly fraught, and told us he had been the victim of a scam. He very ably got straight down to judging, gallantly employing Les as his Steward, and Lynne Fosse and Bee Allwood turned their attention to the Craft classes while the assembled company partook of tea and cake and exercised their brains with a light-hearted quiz.

Sue Swallow won the cup for the best overall entry which was presented to her by Howard, and Margaret Mercer, as President, gave a vote of thanks to the judges along with some amusing reminiscences of past shows when her children were involved.

On 27th April the Club ran an outing to the lovely gardens at Hodnet Hall, and to Oakgate Garden centre, which was much enjoyed despite the miserable and cold weather.

Our next outing will be on Friday 9th June to Brobury House and Gardens. If you would like to join this trip, please contact Wendy Lee on 07484 824100 or wendylee874@btinternet.com.

*Sue Forster*





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# A Quaker Voice

*"I am disabled because I live and work in a world that disables me."*

(Rose Ayling-Ellis in an interview for *Radio Times*, April/May 2023)

This is a sentence that is worth thinking about. What is this world that disables Rose? The world is of course both the place we inhabit, and the people in it. Us. Should it not shame us to think that we are part of a world in which people are dis-abled, prevented from being able to participate fully in aspects of their lives? So one way or another surely we need to be aware of ways in which our world – and we – might be causing, or contributing to some people's feelings and experiences of disablement, or even exclusion.

Certainly over recent years there has been much done to improve access for and involvement of people with a number of physical disabilities, though a blind friend of mine will tell you of the many difficulties that she still encounters, ones which – with the will and greater awareness – could have been addressed. And the fact that Rose, who is deaf (see quote above), chooses to head her interview with these words is a reminder surely that we have not yet got the right level of 'ablement' rather than dis-ablement.

There has been considerable attention paid of late to the questions of 'inclusivity' (we see how our buildings, churches included, are putting in ramps, handrails, accessible toilets etc.), and the Worcestershire and Shropshire Area Meeting, the grouping together of Quaker local Meetings in these counties, is certainly not alone in trying to address, increase awareness of and seriously think about equality, diversity and inclusion. Equality is one of the bedrocks, the Testimonies, of Quaker belief, that everyone is of equal value. Everyone. This can be a challenge to think about, and to live by.

Diversity? Our local Quaker Meeting in Church Stretton is not, on the face of it, particularly diverse... sadly. We are

white, privileged, educated (variously), living in a beautiful place. But those factors, which generally reflect the local population, are superficial, what we can see and hear. But is there not rather more to the people who attend our Meetings (and any other gathering of people) than just those factors? What about age and its effects, health, and efficiency or impairment of the senses (cf. Rose), sexual and gender identity, emotional well-being or distress, past traumatic or damaging experiences, and many other hidden disabilities – I think of autism, dementia? Of course we are diverse, and it behoves us both to be aware of and to welcome diversity.

Inclusion (or inclusivity): we have referred above to the efforts which have been made to try to get rid of physical barriers which can exclude people. That surely is the comparatively easy part! It is all too easy to say, and feel, that we are being truly inclusive, yet by our behaviour or words we can cause others to feel that they are being excluded. After all, we can all have strong views and opinions, sometimes formed and honed over many years. I would like to believe that I would do all in my power to avoid causing others to feel excluded, yet I know I am as likely as anyone else to be clumsy with my words or actions, thus causing unnecessary hurt and feelings or perceptions of being excluded.

The Cambridge English Dictionary definition of inclusivity is interesting: "the fact of including all types of people, things or ideas and treating them all fairly and equally."

While inclusion and equality are very different concepts, and while treating people equally is not the same as fundamentally believing that all have equal value, it suits this article that the above definition brings us neatly back to what I referred to as 'one of the bedrocks of Quaker belief': equality.

Sally Gillions



## The More Singers Summer Choral Concert

**A Feast of Madrigals and Songs**

**Saturday 10th June, at 7.30pm, United Reformed Church, Church Stretton**



The More Singers are a chamber choir, founded in 1973 and based in Church Stretton. They are directed by Alistair Auld.

Entry to the concert is by programme which can be purchased at the door or ordered online (see below).

Concert details:

- Concert begins at 7.30pm. Doors open 7.00pm.
- Venue: URC, High Street, Church Stretton.
- Parking and full wheelchair access.
- Duration of concert approx. 60 minutes. There will be no interval.
- Entry to the concert is £10 at the door or go to [www.ticketsource.co.uk/The-More-Singers](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/The-More-Singers).

For any enquiries please call 07896 761149.

After concert expenses, all profits and donations will go to a chosen charity.



The More Singers are affiliated to Making Music, a UK organisation for voluntary Music-making.




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## A Seat at the Table

I am fascinated by film and television. I find the way in which cinematographers can draw us into a completely different world incredible. Merely by watching a television screen, we can be made to feel so much and become completely, unconsciously absorbed in someone else's story. The fact that we find ourselves crying at someone else's heartbreak or elated by someone else's victory is, in my opinion, completely captivating. We become so invested in other people's stories that the latest television drama can hold the nation captive – I know I'm not the only one who went completely nuts awaiting new episodes of *Line of Duty*. Film and television offer respite; an escape from the problems of our own worlds by delving into those of others. I love how communal film and television is: I love the way people rush to talk to friends and family about the newest episode of their favourite show and I think the way in which people theorise about the coming series is brilliant. However, television and film can be isolating if not everyone is represented. In recent years, there has been a real attempt to create diverse representation across many genres. Unless people are openly prejudiced, you'd think they would be delighted. However, this is not always the case. When Jodie Whittaker became the first woman to play Doctor Who, why did so many take to social media to express outrage and disbelief that a twin-hearted, time-travelling alien could be portrayed by a woman? Was that really the part that was so hard to fathom? When Simone Ashley joined *Bridgerton's* colourblind cast, why, if race was not a theme in the plot, would it matter who played the part? When Cerrie Burnell became the first disabled CBeebies presenter, why did people write letters to the BBC, distressed on their child's

behalf? Are the people complaining about this keeping their children blindfolded? All these examples are simply everyday representations of humanity. If we are continually shown that only those who look a certain way can be heroic, happy or beautiful, we'll eventually believe it. If we see only those who look a certain way represented as criminal, violent and underhand, we will view those people with suspicion. The idea of representation is that it breaks down harmful stereotypes that prevent us from aspiring to be whatever we like. I recently overheard a conversation between two women of a certain age, discussing how refreshing it was to have Prue Leith on *Bake Off*: "Otherwise, you'd think women over 60 just do not exist." That is representation.

If you don't think representation is important, I would suggest this is because you have always been represented. If you don't think representation can make people feel seen and valued, I encourage you to search online for the reactions of young girls to Halle Bailey playing Ariel in *The Little Mermaid*. Humanity includes people of all ages, races, genders, sexualities, abilities, ethnicities, body types, religions and accents and to pretend that it doesn't, raises uncomfortable questions about our true views. If you want an accurate representation of people, then everyone needs to be seen. Representing everyone creates beautifully diverse films and television shows that demonstrate that anyone can be anything; good and bad. What someone looks like, how they talk, who they love, how old or how mobile they are, is not what keeps us spellbound whilst watching. It's the character. We're seeing the full range of human traits, represented in the full range of human packaging. How can we not support that?

*Daisy Deards*

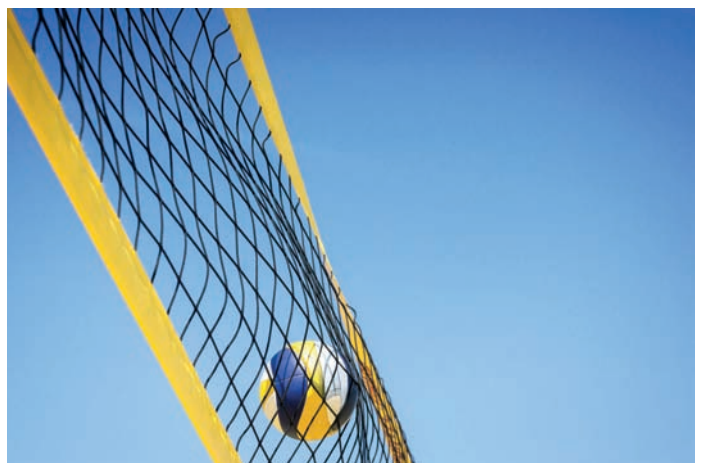
## Stretton Summer Volleyball

As I'm writing it's just warmed up in time for outdoor volleyball in the town. So that's the summer bit off to a good start which hopefully means some of you will have already ventured along. If not then come along in June – after work, study and dinner. Bring a snack, water and a friend and you're sorted.

We play to enjoy and socialise (nothing serious), knocking a ball over a net, in two teams of up to six players, one each side of the net. We have a full-size net and court, teams are mixed gender and ability. Good exercise, lots of short bursts of activity.

Age-wise, teens upwards welcome, you don't need to have played before, I can give some light coaching. First session free, then fiver a month if you're waged, fiver for whole summer if you're a student or unwaged.

We play Wednesday evenings between 7pm and 9pm in the Richard Robinson field. Please let me know if you have any questions. Hope you can make it.



*Steve*  
thebiggestredofall@yahoo.co.uk, 07962 785612

## The Crown Jewels

As the new King settles into his throne, the crown jewels used at the coronation return to their housing in the Great Tower of London, where they have been protected since the 1660s. Despite popular belief, this priceless collection does not only consist of the orb, the sceptre and crown used during the event; the sacred Coronation Regalia is only a small portion of over 100 items and 23,000 gemstones. The collection has deep roots with the royal family and British empire, making its security system one of the finest and most intricate in the country due to its immense monetary and historical value. Over the centuries, however, the treasures have not always been as safe as you might think; in fact, the medieval crown, said to have belonged to Edward the Confessor himself, was destroyed in the 1600s.

When the parliamentarians took hold, memory of the monarchy was destroyed, and in 1649, the 11th century crown that had been said to belong to a saint, the last Anglo-Saxon king of England, was melted down. This led to the creation of St Edward's Crown in 1661 for the coronation of King Charles II. Although this new crown was based on the design of the medieval treasure that was lost, it is not identical and is adorned with 444 semi-precious stones, including garnets, rubies and sapphires. The crown is the centre of the Coronation Regalia and is only used for the moment of crowning itself, making it the most sacred and important item in the collection.

The destruction of the ancient crown was not the only threat in history to the Crown Jewels. In 1671, an attempt to steal them came very close to fruition. Colonel Blood was once a soldier fighting against the monarchy in the civil war, and after the restoration of the monarchy, he continued his scandalous endeavours against the King and received a bounty on his head for his efforts. Despite this, Blood was still able to make fast friends with the keeper of the Jewels, Talbot Edwards, and abuse this friendship for personal gain. The plot came to pass on the 9th May 1671. Edwards was knocked unconscious by his false friend Blood and the iron grille that protected the crown jewels in the basement of the Tower of London was removed. The Orb was stuffed into Blood's breeches while the Crown was flattened with a mallet and stuffed into a bag by Blood and his accomplices. The group were arrested when they tried to flee, despite Blood shooting one of the guards, and the plot was foiled. Since then, they have never been stolen by a scoundrel such as Blood, but they are once again in the limelight, so who knows when an attempt could happen again!

Each topaz, amethyst, ruby and diamond in the collection has a detailed and controversial history, but for now, may this brief account of the fraught history of the Coronation Regalia give you an insight into the diverse and deep past of the treasures that are brought into the public eye only on the rare occasion to crown a new monarch.

*Evie Jackson*

## ~ Thank you ~

### Ukrainian Evening

As some of you will be aware, there is a small group of local individuals who have been raising money and collecting supplies to support those affected by the Ukrainian conflict. Early this year we were approached by a lady called Mila who lives in Shrewsbury; Mila is Ukrainian but has lived in the UK for several years. Since the conflict began she has been heavily involved in supporting refugees coming to Shropshire and trying to support those living in Ukraine with all the horrors that the war has brought.

We agreed to help her arrange an evening of Ukrainian culture with traditional singing, dance, poetry and food. The event had been planned for March but the British weather had other ideas and snow and ice prevented us from going ahead. Hence we rearranged and eventually held it on 16th April. It was a wonderful evening show-casing the culture that Ukrainians hold dear and the traditions that the Russian invasion threatens to erase. The support shown by the Church Stretton community was heart-warming, evidence of which was shown by the enthusiastic applause, delight in the delicious food and appreciation for the singing and dancing.

We raised an amazing sum of £3,215, and we are truly thankful to everyone who supported us, particularly John Vine for helping to sell tickets and to Graham, whose technological support was essential to the success of the evening.



Every penny raised will go directly to people affected by the conflict and once again we thank you for your continued support.

*Caroline Crump*



# Midlands Gliding Club



feet) to 30 metres (101+ feet). They can be launched via a giant mechanical winch, such as the one at the Midland Club, or be pulled upwards behind an engine-powered light aircraft.

The capabilities of a true glider might surprise you. For example, at the Midland they often achieve altitudes of over 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) and, occasionally, 6,100 metres (20,000 feet). The British altitude record is just over 11,000 metres (37,959 feet), which is higher than most commercial aircraft. The Perlan Project, which uses a zero-emission plane that doesn't have an engine, explores the stratosphere to the very edges of space, achieving over 23,000 metres (76,124 feet) which is as high as a U2 spy plane.

During the summer, flights of between 300 and 500km are often made from the Long Mynd, but gliding isn't just about the joy and thrill of flying. Learning and gaining that special licence can change lives, as James explains, "I can think of many examples of how we've changed young people's lives. Holly Harris, from Church Stretton, learned to fly with us, and she went solo at just 14. She became an instructor at 18 and, at 21, she is now a commercial helicopter pilot. Parents tell us how gliding has transformed the interpersonal and team working skills of their children. For those keen on a career in aviation, gliding helps provide a motivation to do well at school."



The Club has around 120 members, of whom 30 are qualified instructors. It attracts around 500 people to the area every year for experience flights and gliding courses. They fly when weather permits, generally between April and September each year. Readers might have seen the long, graceful trailers that carry the gliders by road, travelling through the town, or been up onto the top of the Long Mynd to watch the gliders launch and land. Why not take a picnic up there one day, and watch while you munch? The club has a café open to visitors.

Gliding offers a host of opportunities for thrill-seekers, bucket-listers, learners and experienced fliers alike. So, fancy a flight, just for the experience? Think you might like to learn? Or would you like just the social side of the Club, or perhaps volunteering there? You can learn more about gliding and how the Club operates by phoning 01588 650206, email: [office@midlandgliding.club](mailto:office@midlandgliding.club) or searching the website at [www.midlandgliding.club](http://www.midlandgliding.club).

*Christine Williams, Focus Journalist.  
Photos by Club members*

**H**ave you ever thought what it would be like to soar over Church Stretton, in a craft with no engine, with no sound around you except the rush of wind? Some of our readers will, no doubt, be baffled by the desire to do such a thing, but others would be enchanted.

Stories of manned flight have been around since the myth of Icarus, who came to a sticky end when his feathered and waxed wings melted in the heat of the sun. The next is from the 9thC, when a Berber, a polymath poet named Abbas Ibn Firnas, crash landed, injuring his back severely. Since the account wasn't written until sometime in the 17thC, it's impossible to know for sure if it's true. The next account features a monk, namely the 11thC Eilmer of Malmesbury, who apparently flew off the roof of his Abbey. He glided about 200 metres before crashing and breaking his legs. That's quite a distance, so perhaps it might be classed as a success. Broken legs notwithstanding.

Early gliders were built of wood and metal, but composites of glass, carbon fibre and heat-resistant synthetics are used nowadays, making gliders lighter, easier to manoeuvre in the air and to transport by road.

Church Stretton is blessed by its very own gliding club, the Midland Gliding Club, which began with a group of enthusiasts who travelled by train from Birmingham to take advantage of the Long Mynd ridge with its prevailing westerly winds. The Club was officially formed in 1934 and the site is designated by Sport England as a Nationally Significant Area for Sport, gliding specifically, and the Club has recently been accredited by the British Gliding Association as a Junior Gliding Centre.

James Moore, Chairman of the Club, explains, "This means that we have the credentials and safeguards to teach young people to fly from the age of 12, and go solo at 14. Becoming a glider pilot teaches life skills, and we make it as affordable as possible to learn with grants and reduced fees."

Paragliders and hang-gliders are foot-launched by the pilot or rider, who runs into the wind underneath the craft until the up-draft of a steep downward slope lifts them off the ground. The pilot hangs below the craft in a cradled seat for the duration of the flight. Some hang-gliders have small engines. They allow the pilot to travel further than might be possible on the wind alone. Perhaps readers have heard one of these buzzing around above the town on occasion.

The hang-glider frame contains rigid structures, whereas that of a paraglider is more supple, a bit like a giant kite.

True gliders are different. Larger and with enclosed cabins their wing span can vary from around 12 metres (40+

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# Church Stretton Town Council Annual Report 2022-23

## Introduction

The Church Stretton Town Council presents its report to residents for the year ended 23rd May 2023. 2021-22 saw the new Council focus on fixing the Council's finances and internal controls, and with this done attention shifted to the condition of the outdoor spaces and of the Council's buildings. Expenditure increased by £102,650 to pay for this work with much of these funds coming from Ear Marked Reserves (EMRs). The financial report (below) confirms that the Council's financial systems are operating effectively, and that with overall reserves of £488,275, the Council's finances are robust.

The year witnessed the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, her sad passing and the Proclamation of Charles III, to each of which events the town responded with dignity and patriotism.

This report provides an update on what has been achieved and sets out plans for the future.

## Council Membership

The Town Council has 13 Councillors across four wards, and overall, positions were occupied. During the year we were sorry to lose Cllr Graham Lewis, who sadly passed away in November, and Cllr Danny Hartshorne who resigned. We are pleased to welcome Cllr Charlie Jones and Cllr Andrew Williams who were co-opted to replace them on 28th March 2023.

All Councillors are independent. This reflects the operation of the Council which does not align with any political party and seeks to develop policy which is in the best interests of the town, its residents and the local businesses. Councillors are unpaid, and in 2022-23 Councillors did not claim any expenses.

## Finance and Internal Control

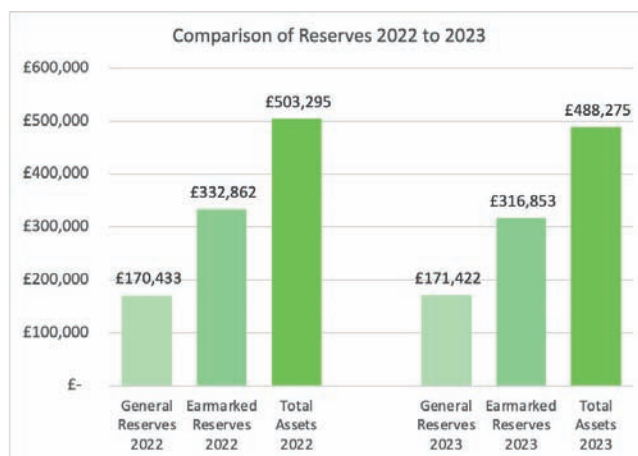
The Council's finances have remained strong throughout the year and the auditors' reports confirm that the Council's systems of internal control are in place and operating. Full audit reports are available on the Council's website. The figures below are for the year ended 31st March 2023, and as is normal these have not yet been audited.



The precept of £404,969 amounts to 79% of total income of £512,450, up £13,901 (3%) on the previous year. Expenditure increased by £102,650 (24%) reflecting

the utilisation of EMRs to tackle historic issues like tree maintenance and playground equipment. The Council believes that residents pay their precept to provide services and facilities and where monies have been put aside for specific projects in the past these funds should be spent.

Overall reserves, at £488,275, are down £15,020 (3%), which represents the net of transfers to and from EMRs of £16,009 and a small increase in general reserves of £989. The value of general reserves held is a reflection of the Council's expenditure, and as this increases so too must general reserves.



Overall, the relative strength of the Town Council's finances allowed the Council to minimise the increase to the 2024 precept to 1.8%, below inflation and a reflection of the balance which is needed between providing services yet recognising the impact of cost-of-living increases.

## Staffing

In May 2021 only two out of nine permanent positions were filled, and the Personnel Committee have worked to stabilise this position. The Council is pleased that the historic aspects of this work are now completed, and that the new Town Clerk, Mrs Nicky Hook, is in post. The Council is very grateful for the large number of volunteers who support our activities, whether it be outdoor work, tree wardens or committee work without which we could not function. Councillors are also volunteers. In December the Council recognised Mrs Rachel James for her 20 years service.

## Website and new logo

The new website and logo, trailed at last year's parish meeting, was launched on 4th July 2022 and has been well received. All Council papers are posted on the website together with details of meeting and agendas.

## Emergency Plan

The Town Council's Emergency Plan has been published and a redacted version is on the website. Whilst the Council has no legal responsibility for emergency planning, the Council feels strongly that this is something which should be undertaken. The idea that in the event of a fire or flood

*Continued overleaf...*



elderly residents could be left out at night, or during heavy storms and power cuts that vulnerable residents might be left uncared for cannot be right. There may not be a statutory duty, but there is a moral one. During the year a network of volunteer wardens are being recruited (a few more would be helpful) to look out for and report back on those in need. Leaflets will be distributed to every household and are on the CSTC website. This work, in partnership with agencies in Church Stretton, has had its first desktop test exercise and the preparedness will be further tested this summer.

### **Christmas Lights, Santa's Grotto and the Jubilee Fun Day**

The past year has seen growing financial pressures on many residents: the Food Bank is now seeing around forty families each week and the Church Stretton Consolidated Charities distributed £4,400. The Town Council therefore believes it is important to maintain civic events which are free to access in order that all families and residents can attend irrespective of their economic status.

Consequently, Christmas saw several new lights added around the town and Santa's Grotto was back in full swing after last year's disruption by Storm Arwen. Meanwhile, the Jubilee weekend enjoyed good weather and saw the town decorated with Commonwealth flags as a backdrop to a range of events including the Jubilee Fun Day. Attended by around 1,500 residents, the Town Council has acknowledged the mood of the town and has agreed that there should be another event on 1st July 2023.

### **Local Nature Reserve and Cudwell Meadow**

The Town Council is responsible for over 200 acres of public space and the Jubilee weekend also saw the formal declaration of Rectory Wood and Field as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), making Church Stretton the only town in the county to have two LNRs. The Jubilee also marked the opening of Cudwell Meadow, purchased by public subscription for use as a community-owned wetland. The town also witnessed the astonishing fundraising led by Mrs Sandra Whitlock of £400,000 to purchase 16 acres adjacent to Coppice Leasowes LNR, further demonstrating the resolve of the community to protect the countryside which makes the town so special. Over the next two years this resolve will find expression in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Contemplation Corner**

During the year the Town Council and a team of volunteers transformed a parcel of land in the north west corner of Russell's Meadow. Leased for no cost to the Council by Connexus, the land has been planted by the volunteers and the outdoor team and benches installed to allow residents a quiet space to admire the hills.

### **Housing Needs Survey**

The Housing Needs Survey was published in November 2022 and is available on the Council website. Completed by a remarkable 40% of households (20-25% is more typical), this high participation generated good quality data which made the conclusions more powerful:

"Firstly, the town has made it abundantly clear that the future need is to build new one and two-bedroom homes, and that these are wanted by both new households (including first time buyers) and also by residents who want to downsize. There is a strong feeling against building any more new large

detached homes. Residents feel that the town has plenty of detached homes, and that a reasonable supply will continue to become available through the existing resale market. This supply will increase if existing residents have an opportunity to downsize and remain within the community.

"Secondly, the town believes that the 'countryside' outside of the town's development boundary should continue to be protected, and work to assess the supply of new one and two-bedroom homes demonstrates that the number of homes needed can be built on brown field sites within the existing development boundary." [HNS 2022, P6]

The Council's strategy is therefore consistent. From the community commitment to preserving the Local Nature Reserves and wider countryside, the hard-fought planning decisions resisting development outside of the development boundary, and the conclusions from the Housing Needs Survey, the message is clear: if we prioritise one and two-bedroom homes sufficient numbers can be built inside the development boundary to satisfy Shropshire Council's targets, allowing the community to preserve the countryside which surrounds the town. The town has no need of the 1,060 new homes proposed by developers to be built in open countryside and for which there is no infrastructure.

### **Church Stretton Neighbourhood Plan**

Shropshire Council, at its Cabinet Meeting on 15th February 2023, appointed CSTC as the qualifying body to develop a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the parish of Church Stretton. It is a significant undertaking and the Town Council will establish a parallel, arms-length structure to lead this work. It will need a lot of help to make the NP as good as it can be, and it will be one of the Town Council's highest priorities over the next two years.

### **All Stretton Jubilee Park**

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire, Mrs Anna Turner, was the guest of honour at the opening of the All Stretton Play Park. Named the Jubilee Park, the project was completed jointly by the Town Council and the All Stretton Village Society, with the Council granting £20,000 and the community raising £18,500 including securing a grant of £8,500.

It is a tremendous example of what can be achieved when the community and the council work together.

### **Town Parks and new play equipment**

Play equipment in 2023 bears little resemblance to that which existed in the 1970s and 1980s. It is now designed to be inclusive, safer, tactile, stimulating and exciting. And expensive. The current two-phase project to replace the play equipment in Brooksbury is costed at £110,000. However, during the year the Town Council and the charities associated with the playing fields identified £55,000 to deliver the first phase of the new equipment which will replace the now sadly rotten wooden play equipment. After a competitive tender exercise, a company called Wicksteed Leisure have been chosen and the new equipment will be ready for 1st July 2023. There will also be a new play tower costing £14,000 to supplement the equipment in Sandford Park.

Together these improvements to the play equipment in the town will cost £124,000, yet children need to be able to access such equipment to develop. Physical activity helps children to relax and settle, whilst stretching, climbing and balancing

improve body strength, spatial awareness and cognitive performance. Play areas also provide important opportunities for socialisation and crucially, access to the play equipment is not limited by economic or social status.

### Youth Drop-In

Numbers have increased significantly since the beginning of the year, and the Council has set aside funding for a Youth Club for years 6 to 7 to begin after the forthcoming May half term break. This will take place on the same evening at the earlier time of 4.00pm to 5.30pm.

Vital to the success of both activities is our team of volunteers, and in order to continue this important provision for our young people, a recruitment drive is underway.

### Planning Committee

During the year 127 planning applications were received (2022: 155). Of these 48 related to trees within the conservation area and 57 involved the building or improvement of existing buildings. All applications are visited by either councillors or volunteer tree wardens and this local knowledge is used to inform decisions by Shropshire Council.

### Parking

Compared to many other small towns Church Stretton enjoys a wide range of cafés and independent shops, and the explanation lies in the town's attractiveness to tourists. However, the popularity of Carding Mill Valley often results in overflow parking which if not managed can cause congestion and difficulties. Shropshire Council and the NT have previously pushed for double yellow lines along the Shrewsbury Road but this was unpopular with residents and consequently has been resisted by CSTC. Last year a deal was struck between the school and the NT to use the school premises for overflow parking. Staffed by the NT, with revenue being shared, this generally works well.

The situation will be continually monitored. If yellow lines are demonstrated to be the only answer, this will be supported by the Town Council and this can be the case for any roads off of the Shrewsbury Road. However, this case has not yet been made. Further, the school overflow and occasional use of bollards retains the control of parking within the community. The residents of Little Stretton agreed to limited yellow lines in their village a couple of years ago but as at the time of writing they have not been painted, and meanwhile there are no solutions.

### Trains and Transport

Whilst the Town Council has no power over public transport, it nevertheless takes an active interest in both road and rail transport and where appropriate lobbies strongly to protect local transport services.

This year Transport for Wales (TfW) have been engaged in the wholesale introduction of new and refurbished rolling stock and proposed a number of timetable changes to accommodate the new trains, and in particular removing Church Stretton as a station stop. The Town Council successfully lobbied TfW to get these changes reversed but the challenge continues.

The Town Council also contributes £1,500 annually to the Shuttle Bus in partnership with the AONB, the NT and Shropshire Council, and the new proposals by the AONB which will sustain the Shuttle Bus are welcomed.

### All Stretton Polling Station

After a long period of lobbying by the Town Council, Shropshire Council agreed to add All Stretton Village Hall to the register of Polling Stations for the County. It will be ready for the next General Election and for the next local elections expected in 2025.

### Citizens Advice

The Town Council was pleased to arrange and fund a Shropshire Citizens Advice Service in the library on the first and third Thursdays of each month. Appointments can be arranged by calling 0808 278 7894.

### Proclamation of Charles III, death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Remembrance Sunday and other visits

The death of HM Queen Elizabeth II was marked by the immediate flying of the Union flag at half-mast and the opening of a book of remembrance, and over the following week the town held ecumenical church services to honour the memory of the late Queen. The town was represented in Shrewsbury to receive a Proclamation Scroll which was read in the Town Square and attended by around 350 residents. A letter confirming the Proclamation has been kindly acknowledged by the King.

In addition to a visit by the Lord-Lieutenant, the town also welcomed the High Sheriff of Shropshire, Mrs Selina Graham and was joined by Col Michael Evans DL on Remembrance Sunday to lead the procession organised by the RBL.

These visits are very important, and as well as ensuring that the town is understood in Shrewsbury when decisions are made, it is an effective way of recognising some of the volunteers and community leaders who give so very much to our parish. During the year nearly 200 residents had an opportunity to be thanked personally.

### Coronation of Charles III

The Town Council was honoured to receive a commemorative plaque organised by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant which was unveiled on 7th May to coincide with similar events across the county. A Coronation Exhibition was held in the library and featured plaques from earlier jubilees and coronations dating back to Queen Victoria. An oak tree was planted continuing a long tradition in the town. A permanent memorial featuring both the new and old plaques will be created after public consultation. Souvenir mugs featuring the Coronation cypher, the date and the Town Council logo have been given to children in the primary school.

### Speeding

The Town Council has flagged the challenge of speeding in the parish as one of its top three priorities in the community's contract with West Mercia Police. Further, the Town Council has match-funded the fundraising by the All Stretton and Little Stretton Village Societies, and St Michael's Church, to purchase two VAR cameras – to the north and south of the parish near to the junctions of the B5477 where it meets the A49.



*Continued overleaf..*



## Flooding

The Town Council has been lobbying Severn Trent Water (STW) to address issues with the sewers around Essex Road which struggled to remove the surface water run off from Sandford Avenue. STW have undertaken a number of surveys and have opened up the road, discovering that there have been two collapses and that the sewer was largely blocked by silt and debris. More work is still required, but local residents do report improvements. In the medium term a project to replace the entire sewer has been added to STW's 'risk assessment' although no timetable exists for this work.

The Council has also been working with National Highways regarding flooding caused by a blocked culvert under the A49 near Botvyle, and a contract to repair the culvert has now been let. A short road closure will be required, probably overnight.

## Section 137 Local Government Act 1972 Grants

In the past year the Town Council has made grants under powers granted by s137 totalling £9,000. The Council budgets £2,500 per quarter to support the work of local organisations whose activities benefit the town. A typical example is 'Pride of Place' who received a grant of £174 to pay for insurance to cover their volunteers as they work to pick up litter around the town on Sunday mornings.

## Summary

Last year the annual report concluded that "It had been a tough year but your Councillors feel that much had been achieved, and we look forward to reporting further progress next year." Twelve months on, and the conclusion is much the same. The Council will continue to advocate for worthy causes which impact the town irrespective of whether it is our responsibility or not. We continue to need your support, but I am sure the town will give it and we look forward to reporting further progress next year.

*Cllr. Andy Munro, Mayor*



## Why are people so slow to react to the dangers of climate change?

Risks that creep up on us slowly tend to be ignored. Ignoring the risks for the future means we don't need to make changes now, e.g. change to an electric car, future-proof our homes to better cope with extreme heat, ignore the carbon emissions caused by the goods we buy, change to a truly green energy supplier rather than sticking with the supply generated by oil and gas power stations. Climate-related disasters, e.g. wildfires in Australia, droughts in California, are at the moment far away, abstract, we don't need to concern ourselves now so we see no need to take action.

The future is more uncertain than now, so we tend to value it less.

Fast forward 30 years. Possibly global temperatures will have risen 4 degrees (it will happen if we continue to burn fossil fuels at current rates). We will have weeks of 40+ degrees temperatures, causing the deaths of hundreds if not thousands of the frail and elderly. Our taps will run dry, everything in our gardens will wither and die because there is a total hosepipe ban. Our favourite seaside resort is permanently under water due to rising sea levels. There is a shortage of the food we normally import from parts of Europe (that already happened this spring).

What changes are you willing to make, knowing that for the next generation there will be catastrophic consequences because of our inaction? Are we enriching our lives now at the cost of future generations, living our lives selfishly without regard for our children and grandchildren?

The above is a summary of a lecture given by Art Markman, Professor of Psychology at University of Texas. He was trying to answer the question "why are people so slow to react to the dangers of climate change?"

It is well known that governments tend not to think much beyond the next election, yet the **Stern Review** back in 2006 concluded that "There is still time to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, if we take strong action now. The scientific evidence is overwhelming; **climate change is a serious global threat, and it demands an urgent global response.**" Stern went on to say "This Review has assessed a wide range of evidence on the impacts of climate change and on the economic costs, and has used a number of different techniques to assess costs and risks. From all these perspectives, the evidence gathered by the Review leads to a simple conclusion: **the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic costs of not acting.**"

Climate change will affect the basic elements of life for people around the world – access to water, food production, health, and the environment. Hundreds of millions of people could suffer drought-caused hunger, water shortages and coastal flooding as the world warms.

The Stern Review was published 17 years ago. Have we left it too late?

No, but only if everyone, governments, and the general population take the warnings seriously.

Stretton Climate Care have for the past 16 years been expressing concern about lack of action to take climate change seriously and are available to give advice at our weekly drop-in service every Thursday at the Wellbeing Centre 10am-12 noon. We can also be contacted by phone on 07528 493181 or via our email [info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk](mailto:info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk). Together we can make a difference.

*Jon Cooke  
Stretton Climate Care*



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# Scout Group News

The Explorer Scout Unit of the 2nd Longmynd was in the limelight last month when John Loines, District Explorer Commissioner, made a special visit to present the Chief Scout's Platinum Award to Freddie Westall, who next month will be flying off, with Alex Berry, to the World Jamboree in South Korea.



*Award-winning Freddie Westall (centre) with Explorer Commissioner John Loines and Explorer Leader Angie Watts*

The Award is part of the progressive training which can eventually lead to the UK's top Youth Award, the King's Scout Badge.

Each Section of a Group has a Chief Scout's Award to aim for, Bronze for Beavers, Silver for Cubs and Gold for Scouts, and it is this latter one which can be of great value to a young person. For many years I worked for an employers' organisation and I was told on numerous occasions by

employers "A-Levels are all very well but we look for things that show character and something like a Chief Scout's Award does that."

Both my sons got the jobs they wanted because they held the Gold Award. It was Sir Richard Branson who said "I learned more at Scouts than I ever did at school" – and we know where that got him!

We encourage parents to take an interest in their Scout's activities. You never know, you might have the next Sir Richard Branson – or the female equivalent – in your home!

In other Group news the Town Council has made the wood next to the Scout Hut available for Group outdoor activities and has fenced the area off accordingly.

The Beer Festival held last year was so successful that it is to be repeated this year on 10th-11th June, but bigger and better with more live bands over both days.

All meetings are held at the Group headquarters in Church Street and are open to both boys and girls. All information from the Group Scout Leader on 07484 717317.

## Monday 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th June

Beaver Scout Colony. Ages 6-8: 5.30-6.30pm

Scout Troop. Ages 10½-14½: 7-9pm.

Explorer Scout Unit. Ages 14-18: 7-9pm.

(Check with GSL for Explorer dates).

## Tuesday 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th

Cub Scout Pack (Tuesday). Ages 8-10½: 6.30-8pm

## Wednesday 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th

Cub Scout Pack (Wednesday). Ages 8-10½: 6.30-8pm

*Fred Reeve*



## URC Voice

### When is a box not a box?

One of the privileges of being a URC member is that you can think outside the boxes which package religion. These boxes were designed several hundred years ago. We can recognise that they have changed over the years, but they are still boxes. Being naturally open and questioning I look around at life and wonder how relevant such boxes are today. I would prefer no boxes at all, even though lots of people get comfort from their boxes.

Like many *Focus* readers I have experienced life from a time when the milkman had a horse and the streetlamps were gas. Perhaps the most striking difference in how things have changed over those years is communication. I recall gathering round the radio for the funeral of the King, clustering round a TV to watch the Coronation of the Queen, events which now have echoes 70 years on. Then came colour TV, the advent of computers, the explosion of media with satellites and then with digital technology.

We can now witness an earthquake as it happens and watch while a Prime Minister tells porkies to Parliament. There is also so-called artificial intelligence, about which the great and good are expressing their concerns. Modern life surrounds the boxes of religion when once it was trapped inside. The boxes package religious certainty – which does not sit comfortably with modern life.

What questions should we be asking? Spirituality is evident in today's world, being realised through service in society, personal charitable work, food banks, volunteering in health and social care, rather than through belonging to a church. So, who (or what) is God? And why? No doubt someone will ask artificial intelligence to seek an answer to these obvious and futile questions. They will get trivialised by the media, extracting what they can in humour and ridicule. A better question, but less likely to be asked, might be "what is faith?" Questions of spirituality and faith should be asked, and they are challenging to answer.

Why not bring us your answers. They will be very welcome. When they come from being open and questioning, they will help challenge the boxes.

Intriguingly two thousand years ago a young philosopher in Palestine used open thinking and questioning to come up with answers which have proved timeless. He did not describe a box, although a fanciful range of decorated boxes has resulted from interpretations of his teaching, trapping him inside their false certainties.

We must get him out of those boxes, foster spirituality, refresh faith, help people live their lives in modern times.

*Roger Wilson*



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# Church Stretton Family Fun Day and Dog Show

Saturday 1st July 11am-4pm, Sandford Avenue Park

Following the success of the Family Fun Day and Dog Show last year, the Town Council has decided to make it an annual event. There will be many of the same attractions that proved popular last year, such as the

bringing their list to registration. It is hoped this will speed the registration process, starting at 10.30am, The Dog Agility Run will be available from 11am and the Dog Show itself will start at 1pm.

There is another Skate Jam at 2pm with Prizes (Best Trick, Best Half-Pipe Run, Longest Ollie). At 2.30pm there will be another guided tour of the adjacent Coppice Leasowes Nature Reserve, which proved so popular last year. As an added attraction this year, a helicopter from RAF Cosford will be parked in the Nature Reserve for people to look over.

There is a full programme of entertainment through the day of local singers, dancers, and musicians of all ages.

As a new feature this year, on entering the Park, people will pass through a succession of stands by community care groups, setting out what they do and encouraging people to consider joining them in their activities. Church Stretton is fortunate to have so many such groups with such wide-ranging interests, so this is

an opportunity for residents to learn more about them.

The Fun Day is an opportunity for everyone to come together and enjoy themselves, hopefully aided by another sunny day!

*Cllr. Bob Welch*

inflatables, the have-a-go sessions with archery and the fire hoses. *Stretton Focus* is this year generously sponsoring the Climbing Wall and the craft/story-telling tent. There will again be opportunities for free taster coaching sessions in bowls, croquet, tennis, and skateboarding. The Crazy Golf will again be free but there will be the opportunity to contribute to community funding of new play equipment on Brooksbury Recreation Ground.

There will be a repeat of the children's Fancy Dress competition, which this year will be judging carnival costumes. Registration of entries is from 10.30am, with the competition itself starting at 11.30am. St Lawrence Friends will be adding new attractions, such as Funky Hair, Lucky Dip and Tombola – so please bring cash as well as bank cards!

The Dog Show is again being sponsored by Joules Brewery: The Classes for this year's event have been posted on the Council website. Entrants are encouraged to print off the Class listing, make their selection of Classes, costing £3 each class and



*Photos by Steve Aze, from Family Fun Day 2022*



# Bowmen of Caradoc

If you have ever fancied doing something different, releasing your inner Robin Hood or Maid Marion and replicating the skills of the English and Welsh archers at the battle of Agincourt then why not try traditional archery. Bowmen of Caradoc, situated on the Long Mynd, is a traditional archery club that was started in 2012 by a small group of archers who wanted to do something different to the modern archery of today. They decided to follow a more traditional style of archery using the longbow and other wooden bows and arrows and today the Bowmen of Caradoc club, along with only a few other clubs, pride themselves in the continuation of our country's long bow heritage. Although our members can use any wooden bows and arrows the majority use the longbow. This is a totally different concept to modern archery systems that use sights, stabilisers and release mechanisms.

The longbow was originally used as a fighting weapon by the Welsh. It was during Edward I's reign, when trying to subdue the Welsh, that Edward was first aware of the longbow and was so impressed with what he saw that he employed the Welsh archers and introduced it as a weapon for the English in their war with the Scots. It was at this time that it became known as a war weapon instead of just a method of hunting. It continued to be used for the rest of the Medieval period right up to the early Tudor period. When the Mary Rose was discovered at the bottom of the Solent and subsequently lifted to the surface among the artifacts were many longbows and arrows which proved that they were still considered to be a worthwhile weapon. As the use of gunpowder advanced and more sophisticated gunpowder weapons were introduced the longbow fell out of use.

Traditional archery is the very basic and first form of archery using natural sight, a steady hand on the bow and the strength you acquire from practising the art of shooting a longbow. It is a wonderful form of exercise and is able to strengthen the whole upper body area without having

to spend hours in a gym; it also strengthens the lower body with walking and mental wellbeing improved as it is a wonderful stress reliever. It is not just for Bowmen either, we have plenty of Bowwomen too.

The club has a thriving membership and we now have vacancies for new members both adults, men and women, and responsible juniors. Juniors must at all times have a parent or guardian with them and be 14 or older. We offer Taster Sessions to give you a feel for the sport and our club

and to meet the members – we are a friendly lot and will enjoy making you feel welcome. If you would then like to continue, we offer a six-session training course, starting in the first week by being able to shoot arrows to 10 yards and by week five you will be shooting to 60 yards. In the final lesson you will be introduced to our course in the woods where you will be shooting at 3D targets.

All equipment required for training will be provided by the club. We also offer the opportunity to shoot at one of the most picturesque clubs with the most fabulous scenery and facilities. We have a target shooting field with its own separate training area, a wood with at least 40 3D targets and a 'rove' area where you can practise 'clout shooting'.

Don't worry we will explain all the technical terms too. We also have an equipment shed to pop into if it rains.

We also hold events at our site in the Shropshire hills and take our equipment out to public shows to give them a taste of our passion for archery at our 'Have A Go' events. We will be at the Church Stretton Family Day event on Saturday 1st July in the Sandford Avenue Park with our 'Have A Go' set up so why not come along and have a chat with us there. Alternatively see our advertisement in this month's *Focus* (inside rear cover).

*Linda Langley*



## PICNIC

**4th June 2023, 1.15pm**  
**St Milburga's Presbytery Garden**


**Bring your own picnic and chair (if able)**  
 (In the Methodist Church Hall if wet)

**See you there!**





**Church Stretton**



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Contact: Lucy Thomas  
churchstrettonpilates@gmail.com  
07894 294362

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*Registered with the H.P.C.*

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REFLEX THERAPIST**

"Gleneldon", 94 Watling Street South,  
Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 7BH  
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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](http://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](http://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](mailto:office@strettonparish.org.uk)



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

Website: [www.churchstretton-methodistchurch.org.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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	Nicola Simcock		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	amileson@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	Lesley Richards	722068	
Church Stretton School Theatre	Alan Fox	725588	or 07977 060303; alandavidfox@live.co.uk
Citizens Advice Bureau	c/o Mayfair	722077	(Mayfair) [Thursdays] www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
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
Cricketer 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	
Dominos, Church Stretton and District League	Martin Salisbury	723253	
Dramatic Society, All Stretton Amateur	Nicola Simcock		allstrettondrama@gmail.com
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 Hutton	07852 961675	freestylmartiaarts.com/stretton
Masonic Lodge (Caer Caradoc)	Graham Williams	07939 109726	secretary@caercaradocldodge.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	www.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	anaireland001@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	Pat Stokes-Smith	723189	patstokessmith@hotmail.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	mrtterrydavies@hotmail.com
Scrappies - Shropshire Children's Scrapstore	Alistair Auld	328508	info@scrappies.org
Singers, The More Singers	Tim Goodwin	07981 399482	alistairauld@gmail.com
Soaring Association, Long Mynd (model gliders)	Tim Dunn	720392	info@lmsa.org.uk www.lmsa.org.uk
Soaring Club, Long Mynd (Hangliding & paragliding)	Anne Arkwright	01588 672919	coaching@longmynd.org
Stepping Stones Nursery	Simon Cleaton	722341	
Stretton Players	David Betton	07510 390981	strettonplayers@gmail.com
Stretton Pool Action	Katy Webster	07977 221171	dmbetton@googlemail.com
Stretton Stitchers	Dave Wilkinson	720200	or Frances Williams 722656
Stretton Strummers	Hilary Parker	07554 624662	
Stroke Group, Church Stretton and District	Jamie Wrench	723419	
Swing Band, Stretton	Leisure Centre	723923	jamie.wrench@lineone.net
Table Tennis, Church Stretton	Will Priestley	720051	
Table Tennis, Leebotwood	Ian Pennington	724223	
Table Tennis, Rushbury	Marc Lacey	771410	ianpennington133@btinternet.com
T'ai Chi	James Barrow	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Taiko Drumming	Jo London	720169	James@taikowest.com
Taoist Tai Chi, Longmynd	Claire Hatfield	01743 369787	jolondon@hotmail.co.uk
Tennis Club	Jenny or Graham Heath	720123	mail@strataassociates.co.uk
Theatre & Concert Group, Stretton	Margaret Hamer	722216	heath@knollcrest.co.uk; strettontheatreandconcert.net
Thursday Lunch Club (Ley Gardens)	Maureen Clow	722407	or Dawn Longmore 722328
Traidcraft (fairly traded goods)	Hilary Hymas	722000	
Tree Group, Church Stretton	Ruth Davies	723208	hilaryhymas7@gmail.com
United Nations Association, Shropshire Branch	Lesley Brown	724304	daviescs@btinternet.com
University of the Third Age (U3A)	c/o Mayfair	724330	u3asites.org.uk/churchstretton/contact
Upright and Active (falls prevention strength & balance)	Ken Willis	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Walking Football	Julie Cowley	328514	gordonwillis@go-plus.net
Wildlife Group, SACWG, Community	Wally Blake	722310	sacwg@shropscwgs.org.uk
Wildlife Trust, Strettons Branch	Carol Greswell	724040	
Women's Institute, CS Marmaladies WI	Kaye Smith	07803 581580	marmaladieswi@gmail.com
Women's Inst., Rushbury and Cardington	Jean Huff	771554	kayerubetta.smith@btinternet.com
Women's Institute, All Stretton	c/o Mayfair	723706	allstrettonwi@gmail.com
Yoga (Mayfair)	Sally Ciliverd	722077	(Mayfair) www.mayfaircentre.org.uk
Youth @ St Laurence's		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

<b>South Ward</b>		<b>North Ward</b>		<b>Little Stretton Ward</b>	
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	<b>All Stretton Ward</b>	
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.

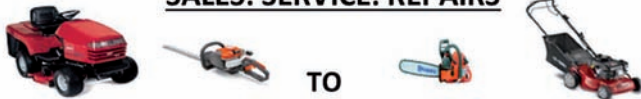


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# Messy Church

Those of us of a certain age will remember Sunday schools, which tens of thousands of children attended every week, often in addition to fidgeting alongside their parents at a weekly church service. But when and why did Sunday schools begin? The first was established by William King, in 1751 in Dursley, Gloucestershire. Robert Raikes, editor of the local newspaper, started a similar one in Gloucester in 1781. The aim was to teach working-class children how to read, write and be numerate, alongside the religious education they received at home and in church. Many of these children worked long hours in factories, mills and on farms, with no access to formal schooling. There were already, however, schools run by minority faith leaders in England, even among the poorest communities, and these children were sometimes better educated in the 'three Rs' than their Christian counterparts.

Throughout the late 18th and the 19th centuries, the Sunday School movement grew. Dedicated school rooms were built, mainly by the Methodists and Anglicans in England but by other denominations in Scotland and Wales. Fast forward to the 20thC and the introduction of compulsory universal education, when Sunday schools and their buildings became the fore-runners to our modern national system of schooling. Sports, concerts and more were added to Sunday school activities as childhood leisure time increased alongside legislation that restricted the exploitation of child labour.

The buildings also began hosting a growing number of alternative youth activities, such as Boy Scouts, the Boys' Brigade, Girl Guides and youth clubs, dancing and even theatre and library facilities. Many others were repurposed to become mainstream classrooms because of the needs of a growing population, especially after WWII. Gradually the number of children attending Sunday schools diminished in the face of competition from many other Sunday activities, and the growth of wider and more effective universal education systems. The link between church and state education was broken.

Until, that is, Portsmouth in 2004. A group at St Wilfrid's church in Cowplain, Portsmouth, led by Lucy Moore, became concerned that children's Christian education, almost alone among the many faiths practised in England, was being neglected. So Messy Church was born, and it's now an international movement. But why 'messy' church? Well, if you've ever been to one, you'll know what that means. It's fun and creative, with a little science and nature study thrown in. There's quite a bit of glue and paint, and occasionally a mini-volcano (old clothes are recommended!) plus games, stories and puzzles. Parents, carers and older siblings are welcome to join in the fun. There's generally a theme, such as Easter or a Bible story, and activity levels gradually wind down to a shared family meal.

Clearly, there's a strong Christian faith aspect to Messy Church. Yet it isn't pushy, or judgmental; the days of preachers thundering from the pulpit for hours are long gone. Children are introduced to a multitude of subjects in schools today, including a background in the many beliefs held in our multi-faith nation. Yet few children understand the history of Britain in terms of how it has been made and framed by its Christian faith, including, sadly, how it's gone wrong in the past. Is that important? The 'cancel culture' evident among many of our institutions suggest that it is. But

knowledge promotes understanding, and understanding can take the heat out of many disagreements. That's something we can all welcome.

A Church Army research project found that 40% of those who attended a Messy Church project had no meaningful understanding or contact with a church and a further 21% had had some contact in the past, but had allowed it to lapse. Yet the report, published in 2019, found that 81% of Messy Church workers saw evidence of lives being changed for the better among those who attended. That's quite impressive by anyone's standards.

So now our *Focus* readers know a little more about one of the outreach activities of our Parish church, which is yet another offering for our community's children and young people. A town of old people? Mm. Perhaps we need to think again.

Most Messy Churches meet once a month during school term time, so if you'd like to know more, please check out the website for St Laurence's Church at [strettonparish.org.uk/messy-church](http://strettonparish.org.uk/messy-church) or call the Parish Office on 01694 724224, email [office@strettonparish.org.uk](mailto:office@strettonparish.org.uk).

*Christine Williams*  
*Focus Journalist*

*Photo by Messy Church volunteers*  
*Source – [www.messychurch.org.uk](http://www.messychurch.org.uk)*



## Mayfair Lottery Results for April

601	150	95	159
£100	£50	£20	£10

# Shropshire Hills Shuttle Bus

## New Routes for the Long Mynd and Stiperstones Shuttles

Expectation for details of the new route and timetable has been considerable in the last month. It is with great pleasure that the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is publishing details of the route plan and proposed fares in this month's *Focus*.

The service will run on weekends from Saturday 27th May until Sunday 8th October. In order to extend the season, we've decided to focus on running the service on Saturdays and Sundays. This has allowed us to run into early October. We will extend the service into October if it proves popular.

### Hop on, Hop off

As before this remains a flexible service, allowing you to meet or leave the bus at fixed locations, and flag the bus down or ask for a 'request stop'. The drivers will do their best to accommodate you.

### Route A: Round the Mynd

In response to local demand, and to provide a new attraction for the area, that links more of our delightful villages, we are trialling the new 'Round the Mynd' circuit. This will run once in the morning, and once in the afternoon, the first starting at All Stretton just before 10am. They will do a 'clockwise' circuit linking Carding Mill Valley, Church Stretton Train Station and the communities south of Little Stretton around the bottom of the Mynd. This route opens new possibilities for walkers. Getting off in the Plowden/Myndtown area for example, opens up walks south into Craven Arms, along the Onny Trail and Shropshire Way, and north over the Mynd to starting points along the Stretton Gap. From Craven Arms it is possible to return to Church Stretton station by bus and train.

Once at Bridges, the bus takes its usual journey westwards passing the Bog, Stiperstones Village, and Snailbeach Mine to terminate at Plox Green (with connections to the Shrewsbury-Bishops Castle bus). From here the bus returns to Bridges and its route around the Mynd continues clockwise – but with a new link, as it drops down through Woolstaston to Leebotwood and the A49. The circuit terminates at Carding Mill Valley (but stay on if you want to get back to the station).

### Route B: The Cross Mynd Dasher

This route crosses the Mynd to Bridges in the early afternoon, where it turns around. It returns on the same route as Route A, again linking to Leebotwood, The Pound Inn, caravan site and the 435 bus service.

### Cheaper Fares

We've taken the decision to charge for all tickets, although these will be at a significantly reduced price. A single ticket will be £2 for one stop, and £4 for a multi-stop single. A Day Rover will be a very affordable £5, giving passengers the ability to hop on and off any service, all day. The new season ticket will be £50 allowing unlimited travel throughout the season.

### New Timetable Leaflet

The new printed timetable will be available from Church Stretton Library, Carding Mill Valley Tea Room, Church Stretton Town Council Office, The Bog Centre as well as businesses, pubs and cafes around the route. We will also distribute them to libraries, visitor centres and attractions

in the area, such as Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Shrewsbury Museum and Ludlow Assembly Room Visitor Information Centre. Full details are also on the website [www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk).

### 40 is the magic number!

We are hoping the new service will be welcomed by regular users of the old service, attract new users, and provide new ways to enjoy this outstanding landscape. We have set ourselves the target of 40 passengers a day to make the service sustainable for the longer term. Please help us achieve this by using the bus, and telling your friends, family and visitors about it. Please let us know what you think of the new service too by commenting on our Facebook site (ShrophillsAONB) or contacting the AONB Office through the website.

### Thanks

We'd like to thank all users who have given us their views on the bus and have helped us keep the service running. Thanks also to Church Stretton Town Council, The National Trust, Natural England, and Shropshire Council for providing the grants to subsidise the service. We hope you enjoy it, see you on the bus!

*Nigel McDonald*

## Friends In Tune

**Saturday 3rd June, 7.30pm**

**Church Stretton United Reformed Church**

**Claire Tocknell (Violin) and Mary Cotes (Piano) with special guest Anastasia Vasyliuk (Soprano)**

Claire and Mary met at school when they were eleven, giving their first performance at a form concert when they were aged twelve. They have remained firm friends ever since, playing as a duo despite often living many miles apart. On Saturday 3rd June they will perform at Church Stretton URC a programme of popular classical music previously given in Milton Keynes and St Albans. The music will include some of their earliest duo repertoire as well as their more recent discoveries such as the *Elegaic Capriccio* by Ukrainian composer Mykola Lysenko.

Their special guest Anastasia Vasyliuk came to Britain as a refugee from Ukraine in 2022 and has been awarded a place to study singing at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

There will be free entry to the concert with donations invited to assist the aid work being done in Ukraine by Church Stretton resident Paul Nottingham.

*Claire Tocknell*





# Contemplation Corner springs into life

Spring has brought so much colour to this little area by Russell's Meadow. The cold days of early spring were brightened by some of the newly planted bulbs, with aconites, snowdrops, crocus and scilla all looking beautiful.



Even in this cold spring, some of the shrubs in the border were adding interest, especially the mahonia and viburnum, and these attracted several bees just as soon as the sun appeared.

The warmth of the sun also generated weeds, lots and lots of them! So a small team spent a couple of Saturday mornings carefully weeding the border, followed by coffee and cake.

Would you like to join us occasionally to help care for this area? We really could do with an extra couple of pairs of hands, especially as two of the team are currently out of action.

In late April, the newly planted trees began to come into leaf and then to blossom. As these trees mature they will add blossom for both bees and people to enjoy, then summer shade before the autumn fruits add their colour and much-needed food for birds.



*Weeding team: Julian Hargreaves and Graham Porter from Rotary, Julie Cowley, Lynne Hargreaves, and Peter Whitlock*

The benches have also been popular, providing a lovely place to sit and take a rest, to enjoy the views or to watch the children – or adults – playing sport in Russell's Meadow. You might also like to see if you can spot the birds discreetly popping in and out of the bird boxes... do let me know!

*Sandra Whitlock  
strettoncalmcorner@gmail.com*

## Catholic Voice

When preparing a 'Catholic Voice' I look back at the previous year's reflection to ensure that I am not repeating myself. How things have changed! Last June reflected the Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee and her life of dedicated service. When preparing this reflection, the country is preparing to celebrate the coronation of her son King Charles III and Queen Camilla. The engine of State continues: "the Queen/King is dead, long live the King". The ceremonies surrounding the coronation can speak to the nation (and the world) in a counter-cultural way.

Our culture is marked by the rise of an emotive-psychological individualism, which is orientated to self-actualisation achieved through exercising personal choice including self-definition, the avoidance of suffering, difficulties, and limitations and pursuit of momentary happiness (pleasure).

Such attitudes are not Christian. Christian (Catholic) anthropology is orientated towards our right relationship with God. We are to live in partnership with Him, and our personal fulfilment lies in embracing our life in God, through

recognising that we are known, wanted, and called by God and given a vocation in which we are to live in partnership with Him. We find our true selves in Him by embracing His will in our life. Our identity is God-given. This does not mean human beings are left without agency or choice, we have been given free will, but our true happiness and fulfilment are found in living in accord with God's vision for each one of us.

King Charles has been given the vocation of monarchy, he did not slavishly pursue power, celebrity, or position; if anything, whilst conferring great privilege, it also involves sacrifice of certain personal freedom and choices. This is true of all vocations which involve a mix of choices and sacrifices (surrendering other paths/choices) in order to embrace the life to which we are called.

As King Charles begins his reign, may we discern and embrace God's plan for us and strive to love and serve those around us.

*Canon Jonathan Mitchell*

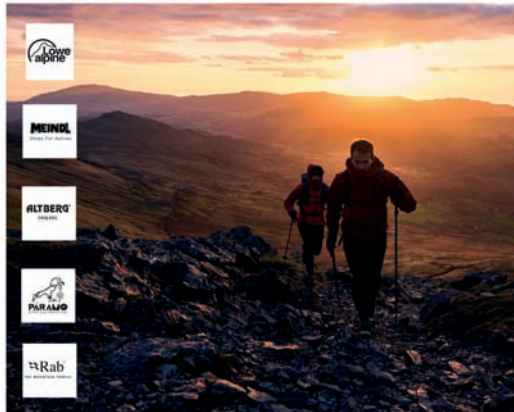




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## Haiti – part 3, Colonialism’s Greatest Heist

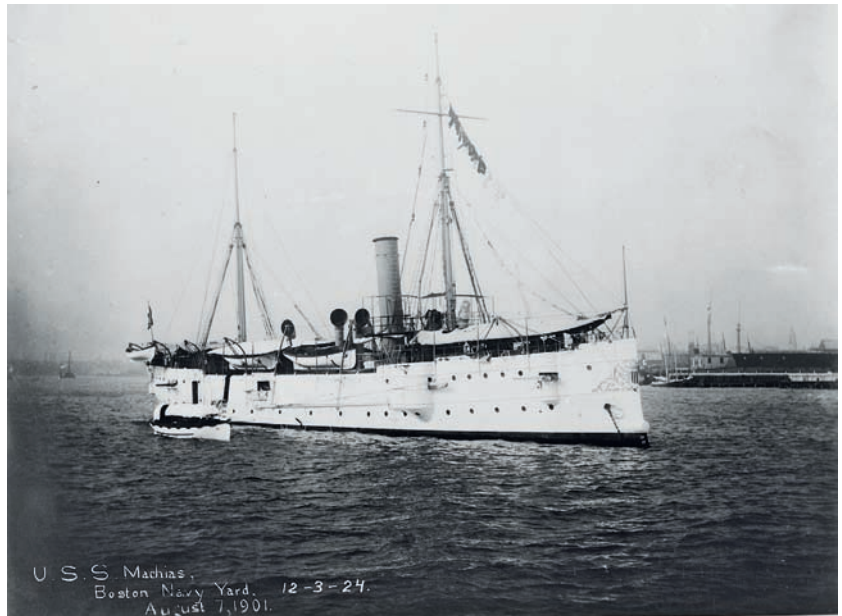


Haiti had become the crown jewel of the French Empire in the Caribbean and the most lucrative colony in the whole world. It had a global trade in sugar, coffee and other cash crops, and like other colonies, on the back of enslaved labour for hundreds of years. This system worked well for empires until the French and American revolutions helped to inspire in 1791 the largest ever slave revolt in the world. Against all the odds the slaves defeated the Napoleonic army and became the first independent nation to permanently abolish slavery.

It was then a threat to the existing world order. The West feared that it would inspire slave revolts elsewhere. President Thomas Jefferson worked out ways of isolating Haiti diplomatically and strangling it economically because the price of slaves and cotton gin had become more expensive. Initially, Haiti trade powered ahead, competitive with other sources and as a free nation of black people, it had a bad influence on restless slaves elsewhere. It was not officially recognised by America until 1862, as slavery began to be abolished there.

To achieve that independence from France, with guns trained on the island, Haiti caved into French demands for reparation to former slave owners and planters. The Treaty being signed here set the payments high, creating a double debt with the interest on the loans. France would receive a direct annual payment and Haiti would pay French bankers a high interest charge.

\$30 billion, which was finally paid off by 1947, 122 years and 90 million French francs later. Professor Marlene Daut (African American Studies, University of Virginia) has written that this was immediately some 50% of the GDP and crippled the newly independent country’s capacity to prosper.



*The USS Machias shipped Haiti gold to New York*



France demanded 150 million francs over 5 years. The first 30 million needed a 24 million bank loan. French ships carried this in gold francs and then across Paris from the vaults of Ternaux Gandolphe et Cie and on to the French Treasury.

By the late 1800s 80% of Haiti’s wealth was being used to pay foreign debt. France was the highest collector, followed by Germany and the United States. Haiti took out two large loans at 40% interest, increasing the national debt. A similar arrangement is today being used by China and Russia in Africa. The French economist Thomas Piketty described the loans as an early example of ‘neo colonialism’ through debt. In today’s values it amounted to between \$20-

### Reparative justice

In 2003 Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of Haiti, demanded a payment of \$21 billion, the equivalent of the 90 million gold francs it was forced to pay Paris after winning its freedom from France. *The New York Times* published a claim that Aristide’s calls for reparations led to French and Haitian officials collaborating with the United States on removing Aristide because France feared that reparations would set a precedent for other former colonies such as Algeria.

In February 2004 a coup d’état occurred. The UN Security Council, of which France is a permanent member, rejected an appeal by CARICOM (Caribbean Council) for an international peace-keeping force to be sent into its member state of Haiti. Three days later, just hours after Aristide’s controversial resignation, the force was dispatched.

In the present, Thomas Piketty wrote to the French President in 2020 arguing that France owes Haiti at least \$28 billion, which is unlikely to be paid anytime soon. Recently, the US had sent thousands of Haitian workers home, where there is no work – a policy that was started by President Trump and continued by his successor Joe Biden. These workers had boosted the Haitian economy by sending home \$3 billion in 2018, almost a third of the nation’s entire GDP.

There is no doubt that the legacy of slavery hangs heavy in Haiti and in many former colonies. This crime against humanity is the root cause of the failure of affected countries to govern well and make their way out of dire poverty – that, and the continued paternalism of larger

nations that use these countries for their own ends. There is also the hypocrisy of ignorant leaders such as Trump, who describes Haiti and others as the 'shit-holes' of the world.

In the West racism and inequality are deeply embedded in our culture, which has refused to acknowledge that we succeeded in increasing our enormous wealth because of black enslavement.

Reparation is on the agenda now, forced upon us by the growing anger and frustration of people who had come to Britain when we needed skilled workers, or who imagined this country as the model of democracy, or as a haven where they are welcome. All these assumptions are now being seriously challenged.

How do we repair the harm that was done at the time of our imperial expansion? It goes quiet if we start to talk about payment. Perhaps, if we use the phrase of 'restorative justice' where legal obligation becomes less legal and more moral. Maybe this is looking beyond payment towards engaging in a dialogue of respect, starting with a genuine apology that our forebears took this very wrong path. There is not any logic in the argument that it was a different time. If it is wrong now, it was so then. There has to be a collaborative exercise. Handing over money does not cancel out the wrong. There has to be a new relationship whereby we can learn from the present descendants of slavery; hear the stories they have discovered about their families; and work with them to make a new relationship of trust and mutual understanding. And yes, at some point we must be prepared to finance their rehabilitation in places like Haiti.

It is not enough to publish our values of inclusion, diversity and equality. We all must see evidence of how life has been made better in places like Haiti, and in the streets of Birmingham and London. It cannot be a top-down solution which determines how things are going to be – rather, a long commitment to walk together in restoring justice.

Actually, Pazapa in Jacmel is a model of collaborative partnership, where orthopaedic surgeons from the US visit and perform operations and the highly qualified resident Tony Antoine, an expert in the non-invasive Ponseti casting technique, carries out countless club foot repairs.

Please book the Pazapa annual concert in your diary now: always a delight.

*Noel Beattie, Chairman, Pazapa Church Stretton*

## Strettondale

### Patient Participation Group

Your committee met on the 17th April and the Practice manager reported that, having now fully recruited into the reception and administrative teams, the pressure has been eased a little, especially during periods of sickness and holiday. The new staff are integrating well and enabling other staff to now concentrate on other tasks including website development. A new additional GP will start at the Practice in early May. A successful spring Covid Booster vaccination clinic was undertaken on 22nd April, which over 500 eligible patients attended. There was a second one organised for 20th May 2023 for anyone over the age of 75 years and the immunocompromised patients. Eligible patients were sent an invitation either by text, email or letter with a designated time slot. The Practice remains below the national average in waiting times for an appointment.

We received no comments in the box in the surgery. A notice has been put just above it to make it more obvious. We are working on creating a dedicated email address for the SPPG for those who prefer this way of contacting the committee. We emphasise that all comments should be of a general nature. It was reported by our member on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee that Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals are bottom of the league table for A and E waiting times. The Rapid Response Team here in Church Stretton provides a very valuable service in dealing with those cases who otherwise would have to go to A and E.

Their phone number is 0345 678 9071 and they will advise if they will be able to assist or patients need to go to A and E. We would like more members on the committee. If you are interested, please put your details on a slip of paper and put it in the comments box in the surgery waiting room

*Alison Phillips (chair)*

## The Pazapa Annual Concert



**Saturday morning 8th July, URC**

Sarah Westwood, soprano, Chris Lacey, flute  
and Richard Silk on the Bechstein

Music from Gershwin and Purcell

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## Trivia Answers

1. Avocado
2. Ariel
3. Slade Prison
4. Oasis
5. A book





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# Future Plans for the Library

## New Library Strategy

Shropshire Council recently approved a new five-year library strategy which states that, in order to stay relevant in the future, libraries need to attract new users whilst retaining their traditional role. To do this they need to develop additional services that support local communities.

Church Stretton Library has already begun to implement new services.

Examples include providing free digital training to help local residents access the NHS App and find reliable medical information online. This helps people support their own health and wellbeing, which can lead to a more efficient use of our stretched NHS resources. The

library also recently offered training in online and telephone banking. In addition, a Citizens Advice Service is now available twice a month, funded by the Town Council.

Friends of Church Stretton Library work to support keeping the Visitor Information Centre open on days when the library is closed. This helps the library meet the Shropshire Library Strategy target of promoting economic recovery and growth.

The Visitor Information Centre attracts visitors into the town, which helps keep local businesses financially viable.

## New Self Service facility

All libraries are to be provided with a self-service facility. People will still be able to take out or return books at the counter, but it is hoped this automation will free up library staff time so that they can handle other face-to-face enquiries.

It makes sense to develop libraries in small market towns such as Church Stretton so they can provide additional services. It can mean people no longer have to

travel to Shrewsbury or Ludlow to access these services. However, this needs to be done carefully, so that library staff do not find themselves overwhelmed, or without the time to support more traditional library functions.



## Refurbishment

Church Stretton Library is to be completely refurbished with new display units and movable bookcases, which will allow a more flexible use of space when hosting events and school visits. This refurbishment is only taking place because Friends of Church Stretton Library are making a substantial

donation to help Shropshire Library Services cover the costs of the work.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible through making donations, supporting events and purchasing our popular calendar.

We are delighted that the old lighting in the library has recently been replaced with LED lighting. Friends requested this two years ago after we discovered that people with poor eyesight struggled to read the Large Print book titles because the lighting was poor. LED lighting will also help bring down the energy costs of running the building and reduce carbon emissions.

## AGM

You can hear more about all of these proposals and ask questions at our AGM on 15th June at 7.30pm in the URC Hall. There will be a speaker from Shropshire Library Services to tell you more about the future plans for the library and the talk will be followed by wine, soft drinks and nibbles in the URC garden.

# Church Stretton Library News

## Exhibition 3rd-30th June (excluding Sundays)

Sarah Mann presents A Moment in Time: a photography exhibition at Church Stretton Library and Visitor Information Centre.

This exhibition is the result of a two-year project based on seascapes. Sarah creates work without using filters, combining photography and painting to capture genuine moments in time.

## New! Reading Device

Thanks to a generous donation to the library

we now have available an Optolec reading device. This reading device can help those who struggle with sight problems or require magnification of small text. Please ask at the library desk for more information.





# Recipe of the month

## Rhubarb, orange and ginger crumble cheesecake

**M**y recipe plan for June started out as something quite different but, as so often happens, an opportunity came along, and this was born instead. It fits well with a potential rhubarb glut at this time of year and so couldn't be put off.

I was about to embark on a fairly ordinary lemon and lime cheesecake to take to friends but discovered that my rhubarb had stirred into life earlier and better than usual and I felt it might benefit from a little being pulled.

I like to think that I can 'imagine in flavour' and so I got to thinking about what works well with rhubarb, however since our hosts for the evening have an abundance

### Ingredients

#### Base:

2 level tbsp golden syrup  
50g butter  
225g low sugar digestive biscuits, crushed

#### Filling:

Gelatine of choice  
340g cream cheese – I use full fat, but you can use lower fat varieties  
75g caster sugar  
Couple of drops of vanilla extract

150ml double cream

Stewed rhubarb – no sugar added

Juice and zest of 1 orange

2 balls stem ginger chopped plus some syrup from the jar

Deconstructed crumble – optional topping

### Method

Melt butter and syrup together in large bowl over a pan of simmering water or in microwave. Stir in the crushed biscuits. Press into a greased 20cm springform/loose-bottomed tin or flan dish, bringing the mixture a little way up the sides. A potato masher works well to firm the bottom. Chill.

Dissolve the gelatine according to instructions on pack.

Beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla together then stir in the dissolved gelatine and the cream.

Add the orange zest and juice to the rhubarb along with the chopped ginger and

a tablespoon of the syrup from the jar.

Swirl the rhubarb through the cheese mix to give a ripple effect then spoon this over the biscuit base.

I added a little leftover deconstructed crumble mix (Google it) over the top, but this is purely optional.

Refrigerate until needed.

The amount of rhubarb and ginger that you use is down to taste. You can use biscuits of choice for the base – ginger or Biscoff would be nice although the latter will increase the sweetness. You could swap some of the cream cheese for yoghurt for a less sweet version, and you could top your pud with soured cream and a swirl of warmed orange marmalade instead of the crumble for more impact.

Although this didn't hang around for long, the flavour did develop by the next day and the rhubarb really came to the fore.

*Heidi*



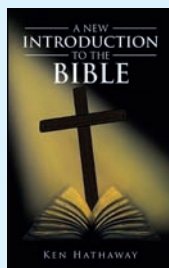
of the stuff, I didn't want to do anything too obvious. Eventually I decided there was no reason not to stick with my original cheesecake plan as the tartness of rhubarb would sit nicely against the sweetness of the cream and biscuit combo.

I like to 'stew' my rhubarb in the oven simply cut up, covered and baked with a teeny, tiny bit of liquid as this gives a lovely intense flavour and it tends to keep its shape better. Obviously with fuel bills such as they are you may prefer to gently simmer it in a pan on the hob unless you happen to have the oven on already and have space. Because this is being stirred into a sweetened cream cheese mixture, I omitted any sugar when cooking the rhubarb.

I like to use leaf gelatine and four leaves works with these quantities. Sachets also serve their purpose and there are vegetarian options too – one sachet is needed. Simply follow the packet instructions for your chosen variety.

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## Church Stretton Parkinson's Support Group

Parkinson's Disease is a progressive neurological condition that affects movement, speech and sometimes facial expression. Around 145,000 individuals in the UK have this disease, and it is the fastest growing neurological condition in the world. Because it mainly impacts on the elderly, it is no surprise that there are many people with Parkinson's in Church Stretton.

Parkinson's can be a very isolating affliction and one that can place heavy demands on those who care for us. Our aim is to live well for as long as we can, with the support of the wider Church Stretton community.

We benefit from the existence of a Church Stretton Parkinson's Support Group. The group offers information, support and social events, including guest speakers and visits to local attractions. All are welcome, and meetings regularly include family members, carers, friends and health professionals. These relationships and networks are the lifeblood of the group.

We meet on the fourth Monday of every month in the Jubilee Room at the Mayfair Centre from 2.30 to

4.30pm. Last month, we held our first joint meeting with the Ludlow Parkinson's Support Group (at The Clive Arms, Bromfield, who provided brilliant coffee and cake) and we hope to continue this collaboration on a quarterly basis.

We are affiliated with Parkinson's UK ([www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)) and have information packs they have created, available for people newly diagnosed with Parkinson's. In addition, we have members of our group who are happy to speak confidentially to individuals impacted by Parkinson's, and their families.

If you would like more information about the group or an informal chat, please do not hesitate to contact us, using the information provided in the 'Clubs and Societies' (Parkinson's UK) section of this magazine.

And if you want to know more about living with Parkinson's, try listening to the new podcast featuring Rory Cellan Jones, Mark Mardell, Jeremy Paxman and others. A short link to it is: [bit.ly/parkinsons-movers-shakers-podcast](http://bit.ly/parkinsons-movers-shakers-podcast).





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